

# Public Document Pack



## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 21ST JANUARY 2026  
AT 6.00 P.M.

### PARKSIDE SUITE - PARKSIDE

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

### AGENDA

#### WELCOME

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

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

3. **To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the Council held on 19th November 2025 (Pages 7 - 24)**

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

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

7. **Urgent Decisions** (Pages 25 - 28)
8. **Changes to Committee Membership**

To receive a verbal update from relevant Group Leaders on changes to the following:

- Substitutes on Overview and Scrutiny Board.
- Any other Committees (as relevant).

9. **Independent Remuneration Panel 2026/27** (Pages 29 - 44)
10. **Wythall Neighbourhood Plan** (Pages 45 - 138)
11. **To receive and consider a report from the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing** (Pages 139 - 160)

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

Please note that following changes to Cabinet remits in late 2025, this Portfolio Holder Annual Report covers Health and Wellbeing only.

12. **Recommendations from the Cabinet** (Pages 161 - 162)

To consider the recommendations from the meeting of the Cabinet held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

13. **Background Information on the recommendations from the Cabinet**
  - (i) Particulate Monitoring (Pages 163 - 182)
  - (ii) Pay Policy Statement 2026/27 (Pages 183 - 194)
  - (iii) Business Rates - Discretionary Rates Relief Policy 2026/27 (Pages 195 - 208)
  - (iv) Council Tax - Empty Homes Discounts and Premiums 2026/27 (Pages 209 - 218)
  - (v) Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27 (Pages 219 - 222)
  - (vi) Medium Term Financial Plan 2026-27 to 2028-29 Fees and Charges and Consultation Outcomes including Worcestershire Regulatory Services Budget Recommendations (Pages 223 - 280)
14. **To note the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 7th January 2026** (Pages 281 - 304)
15. **Questions on Notice** (to follow)

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

A period of up to 15 minutes is allocated for the asking and answering of questions. This may be extended at the discretion of the Chairman with the agreement of the majority of those present.
16. **Motions on Notice** (to follow)

A period of up to one hour is allocated to consider the motions on notice. This may only be extended with the agreement of the Council.
17. **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**

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

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

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

19. **Medium Term Financial Plan 2026-27 to 2028-29 Fees and Charges and Consultation Outcomes including Worcestershire Regulatory Services Budget Recommendations (Pages 305 - 308)**

J. Leach  
Chief Executive

Parkside  
Market Street  
BROMSGROVE  
Worcestershire  
B61 8DA

13th January 2026

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

**Parkside, Market Street, Bromsgrove, B61 8DA  
Tel: (01527) 64252 Ext: 3031  
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**Please note that this is a public meeting and will be live streamed for general access via the Council's YouTube channel.**

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

**Notes:**

**Although this is a public meeting, there are circumstances when Council might have to move into closed session to consider exempt or confidential information. For agenda items that are exempt, the public are excluded and for any such items the live stream will be suspended and that part of the meeting will not be recorded.**



## **INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC**

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- You can inspect minutes of the Council, Cabinet and its Committees/Boards for up to six years following a meeting.
- You can have access, upon request, to the background papers on which reports are based for a period of up to six years from the date of the meeting. These are listed at the end of each report.
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- A reasonable number of copies of agendas and reports relating to items to be considered in public will be made available to the public attending meetings of the Council, Cabinet and its Committees/Boards.
- You have access to a list specifying those powers which the Council has delegated to its Officers indicating also the titles of the Officers concerned, as detailed in the Council's Constitution, Scheme of Delegation.

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

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# Public Document Pack Item 3

Council  
19th November 2025

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 19TH NOVEMBER 2025, AT 6.00 P.M.

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

Officers: Mr J. Leach, Mr. G. Revans, Mrs. C. Felton, Mrs. D. Goodall and Mrs. J. Bayley-Hill

58\25

### TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S. Baxter, A. Dale and R. Lambert.

59\25

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor C. Hotham declared an Other Disclosable Interest in respect of Minute Item 63/25 - Quarter 1 2025/26 Finance and Performance Monitoring – in his capacity as a Trustee for the Artrix. Councillor Hotham remained in the room for consideration of this report and took part in the vote thereon.

There were no other Declarations of Interest.

60\25

### TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 8TH OCTOBER 2025

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2025 were submitted for the consideration of Members.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2025 be approved as a true and accurate record.

61\25

### URGENT DECISIONS

The Chairman advised that there had been one Urgent decision taken since the last meeting of the Council in respect of the Appointment of the Section 151 Officer.

62\25

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION: TRANSFORMING WORCESTERSHIRE LOCAL GOVERNMENT THAT WORKS FOR PEOPLE, POWERED BY PLACE AND BUILT FOR THE FUTURE - THE NORTH AND SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION PROPOSAL FOR WORCESTERSHIRE**

The Leader presented the Local Government Reorganisation: Transforming Worcestershire Local government that works for people, powered by place and built for the future - The North and South Local Government Reorganisation Proposal for Worcestershire report for Members' consideration.

It was noted that the purpose of the report was to provide the Council with a proposal to be submitted to Government by 28<sup>th</sup> November 2025 for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Worcestershire, following 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025 Full Council meeting where Members supported a North and South Unitary Council model be developed based at the time on what was termed Option B. This option comprised of either entirely separate Councils or a shared service model.

Working with KPMG, who were subsequently commissioned, and Mutual Ventures who had developed the options appraisal for a two Unitary model. Bromsgrove District Council, Redditch Borough Council, Malvern Hills District Council, Worcester City Council and Wychavon District Council had worked together to produce a proposal that best met the Government's six criteria for LGR based on a North and South Worcestershire footprint as directed by Members. The North being Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest Districts and Redditch Borough Councils and the South being Malvern Hills District, Worcester City and Wychavon District Councils.

The North and South two Unitary Council LGR proposal for Worcestershire was entitled "Transforming Worcestershire: Local government that works for people, powered by place and built for the future." It was noted that this was the only Worcestershire LGR proposal informed by the views of local people from across the whole of Worcestershire following the "Shape Worcestershire" survey that was supported by all six District councils in the County. This ensured that Criteria Four (see below) of the Government's specific requirements for LGR was met.

- Criteria Four - Proposals should show how Councils in the area had sought to work together in coming to a view that met local needs and was informed by local views.

# Agenda Item 3

Council  
19th November 2025

It was noted that not only had local people's views been taken into account in this proposal, in addition all Members across the five commissioning Councils had been given an opportunity to further shape the two Unitary proposal for Worcestershire. This approach recognised the democratic mandate of Councillors as representatives of their community and the very people who received Council services. Further to this, key stakeholders such as partners in the health sector, police, fire, business and voluntary and community sector, including town and parish councils had been asked for their views as well. The output of all this work was a proposal for Worcestershire that was a product of true collaboration.

The vision for a thriving Worcestershire North and South was included within the report along with a number of key challenges and a pledge that should this proposal be accepted by Government and be delivered then: -

1. Public services would shift from crisis to prevention
2. Communities would feel more connected and empowered
3. Local services would respond faster to everyday issues
4. Vulnerable adults would live healthier, happier, and safer lives
5. Children and families would be supported to stay together
6. Young people would have better access to skills and jobs
7. Better housing would support healthier lives
8. People and businesses would benefit from stronger local economies

The approach to the implementation of LGR, should it be accepted by Government, was also detailed in the report.

It was stated that the case for two Councils in Worcestershire was clear and that changes needed to take place. If the County services were merely rolled into a County Unitary Council, this would result in the same outcomes. In addition, to ignore the challenges and potential disruption caused by aggregating District services into a large one size fits all model was naive. The proposal allowed services to provide focussed delivery and leadership at a local level and focussed delivery and leadership at a Countywide level where it made sense to do so. This approach acknowledged that one size did not fit all. This was an opportunity to take forward a new operating model for local government in Worcestershire by supporting a proposal that demonstrated flexibility, collaboration and the ability to navigate complex challenges in a rapidly changing environment.

# Agenda Item 3

Council  
19th November 2025

Further detail was provided in respect of the North and South model and it was noted that it supported long-term financial sustainability through prevention-led reform and neighbourhood-based services. The North and South unitary model would save approximately £9 million a year whilst delivering services people wanted, as opposed to perhaps saving more money but delivering services people did not want through a remote, large, digital by default one size fits all council.

In addition to this the north and south model reflected the strong and consistent preference of residents, staff, and partners across the County and incorporated the views of the 62.5 per cent of people who took part in the Shape Worcestershire survey and had stated a preference for a north and south model. That survey showed more residents believed that two unitary councils would better improve services, support local identity and strengthen community engagement. In contrast, the one-unitary model was seen as remote, less representative and more likely to dilute local priorities.

The proposed model delivered stronger local accountability and decision-making, with Councillors closer to the communities they served and enabled tailored service delivery and planning that responded to the distinct needs of North and South Worcestershire.

Members were also informed that the North and South model embraced the opportunity for genuine transformation and that it was the only option shaped by genuine engagement, backed by evidence – both qualitative and quantitative - and designed to deliver better outcomes for Worcestershire.

Following the presentation of the report Members considered the proposal in detail. In doing so the following areas were highlighted:

- The collaborative nature in which the Councils involved in the North and South Unitary proposal had worked together. This included the way in which local residents had been included and consulted with to understand their needs and requirements for the future. It was noted that Officers had informed Members of the process and progress at every opportunity and this had been gratefully received by Members.
- The North and South Unitary model was the best option for Bromsgrove and its residents and that the data and consultation information gathered had helped to substantiate this. This model

# Agenda Item 3

Council  
19th November 2025

also provided long term financial sustainability and had been prepared following consultation with residents.

- Members expressed the importance of local champions with local accountability who understood their local places, their identity, strengths, and how to harness them. All these areas had been included in the Devolution White Paper provided by Government at the beginning of the LGR process. The North and South unitary model also ensured that the Councils would not cover too large an area ensuring deeper understanding of the needs of local people and would retain the identity of the local area. This had happened in other Councils and Members were extremely keen to avoid this for Bromsgrove.
- What was meant by the term 'powered by Place'? – It was confirmed that this term described the local nature of the governance in the future including neighbourhood committees and decision making at a more local level. It was hoped that this type of governance would enable local communities to flourish. The proposals included in the report emphasised the importance of localism and this would enable improvements to take place in areas such as connectivity and transport.
- It was a requirement that each authority had a separate directorate for both Adult Social Care and Children's Services.
- Would a Cabinet Member with specific responsibility for LGR be appointed? It was confirmed that as previously agreed there would be a Cabinet Member appointed with specific responsibility for LGR.
- The pressures on Council Tax for the financial years 2026-2027 and 2027-2028.
- The liability of assets contained within the District and how future authorities would take on debts and Capital Reserves in the future.
- That the decision for the future governance model for Worcestershire lay with central Government.
- Members expressed that although it seemed unlikely there still needed to be some awareness of the other local authorities that lay on the boundary of the County.
- Consideration of the establishment of a Town Council in the future for Bromsgrove, to ensure that assets were maintained and decisions could still be made at a local level.

A Member expressed that they were in favour of the One Worcestershire approach in the future. In particular in terms of the expenditure on Adult and Social Care Services which were a significant proportion of local government budgets and a huge pressure on local authorities. Members

# Agenda Item 3

Council  
19th November 2025

raised that there would be savings made if the One Worcestershire approach was taken.

It was also raised that the number of responses received as part of the consultation process only equated to six per cent of residents within the County. It was felt that there should have been more face-to-face meetings with residents in order for them to understand the options being proposed as part of the consultation.

It was felt by a Member that Worcestershire County Council (WCC) had been criticised in the proposal considered at this meeting and that WCC were operating under extreme financial pressures and with a particular financial burden of Adult and Children's Services.

In response to the areas raised in support for the One Worcestershire approach to local government it was explained that Members at Bromsgrove District Council had a free vote on this matter and as such could support the model they wished to. It was noted that WCC had spent £320,000 on the One Worcestershire proposal which was to be submitted to central Government. However, there had been no engagement with the politicians at County level and the proposal had been prepared solely by Officers. Members explained that there needed to be some changes made in the way in which local government was structured, and this was an opportunity to make the necessary changes to improve localism in the future and in turn improve the services for the residents within the North of Worcestershire. Again, the area of Adult Social and Children's Services were highlighted as an area where it was hoped would see a significant improvement particularly in light of the aging population within Worcestershire. The North and South model of governance would align these services more effectively and help to deliver a sustainable care system tailored to demographic. It was acknowledged that the One Worcestershire approach would deliver initial savings however the two unitary approach would offer resilience and be locally rooted and compassionate to residents' needs in the long term.

Following the detailed discussion, it was noted that the Minister for Housing Communities and Local Government would ultimately make the decision of the future governance model for Worcestershire. It was hoped that whatever the decision was, Bromsgrove could continue to thrive and build on the work that had been carried out and was currently underway.

# Agenda Item 3

Council  
19th November 2025

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor K. May and seconded by Councillor P. Whittaker.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 18.3 a recorded vote was taken in respect of the Local Government Reorganisation report.

Members voting FOR the resolutions:

Councillors S. Ammar, A. Bailes, R. Bailes, J. Clarke, S. Colella, J. Elledge, S. Evans, E. Gray, D. Hopkins, C. Hotham, R. Hunter, B. Kumar, M. Marshall, K. May, P. McDonald, B. McEldowney, D. Nicholl, S. Nock, S. Peters, J. Robinson, S. Robinson, K. Taylor, H. Warren-Clarke, S. Webb and P. Whittaker (25).

Members voting AGAINST the resolutions:

Councillors D. Forsythe, H. Jones and J. Stanley (3).

Members voting to ABSTAIN on the resolutions:

No councillors (0).

Therefore, on being put to the vote, the resolutions were carried.

**RESOLVED to NOTE**

- 1) the matters set out in the Local Government Reorganisation Transforming Worcestershire proposal: Local government that works for people, powered by place and built for the future - The North and South Local Government Reorganisation Proposal for Worcestershire attached at Appendix 1; and

**RESOLVED**

- 2) To adopt the Local Government Reorganisation Transforming Worcestershire proposal: Local government that works for people, powered by place and built for the future - the north and south Local Government Reorganisation Proposal for Worcestershire, as the Council's final submission to the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government ("MHCLG") on the issue of Local Government Reorganisation.
- 3) That authority be delegated to the Chief Executive and the Assistant Director of Legal Democratic and Procurement Services

# Agenda Item 3

Council  
19th November 2025

to make any final amendments to Appendix 1 following consultation with the Group Leaders and thereafter to submit the document to the MHCLG by the deadline of Friday 28th November 2025.

63\25

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET**

### Quarter 1 2025/26 Finance and Performance Monitoring

The Quarter 1 Finance and Performance Report was previously brought to the Council meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2025.

At that meeting, Members requested that Officers double checked the figures in respect of the projected deficit and the report be rescheduled for consideration at this meeting. A revised report had therefore been brought back to this meeting.

Members were asked to note the following points:

- The Full Year Variance of £173,361 on the 'Totals Line' remained the same as the report brought to Council previously.
- The Full Year Projected Forecast has been amended from £587,360 to £173,361 on the 'Totals Line'.
- The Narrative within the report had been reviewed and improved, with a view to ensuring that full explanations were given for all variances.
- There were two areas within the report where the narrative had been materially adjusted:
  - Paragraph 4.4.6 which stated that In the previous report it seemed that the Artrix costs were unbudgeted. However, it was clarified that these were budgeted as part of the 2025/26 Medium Term Financial Plan however, the budget was not within Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services.
  - Information included in the previous report stated that there was a shortfall in income of £220,000 which related to carparking revenue and was as a result of the first two hours being free. This should have stated that £82,000 of

# Agenda Item 3

Council  
19th November 2025

the £220,000 related to carparking was the result of the first half hour being free.

- Reference should have been to £0.191m overspend rather than £0.170m overspend stated in the previous report.
- The total savings should be £725,000 in the 2025-26 column and £488,000 in the adjusted 2025-26 column.

Members were reminded that there was also a query at the previous Council meeting in respect of rent revenue relating to Nailers Yard. For information, GJS Dillon had received several enquiries for office space and two enquiries for the GF food and beverage unit. The service charge schedules had also been prepared for the commercial building. Heads of terms were due to be issued to an incoming tenant that wished to let one and a half floors. The next stage was to instruct Bruton Knowles to undertake the property management role of the commercial building.

Following the presentation of the report, Members queried some areas further. These included the following:

- The costs of Bed and Breakfast (B&B) Accommodation – Members highlighted that there were differing spends included in the report on the costs for B&B accommodation. The Interim Section 151 undertook to provide Members with the correct amount following the meeting.

Members were reassured that the errors contained within the report were one off and that the finer details were being looked at by the Finance Team to ensure that the reports such as these were accurate going forward. Some Members requested that Internal Audit be involved in looking at the areas where errors had been identified within this report previously in order to ensure that this did not happen in the future. The Chairman of Audit, Standards and Governance Committee suggested that this be an area looked at by this Committee.

It was noted that should Members wish to be involved in these areas in the future they could volunteer to sit on the Finance and Budget Working Group when reports such as these were pre-scrutinised prior to being considered by Cabinet and / or Council. There were currently three vacancies available on this Working Group.

Some Members raised that there were a number of items that had not been included in the Quarter One report, nor had any commentary been

# Agenda Item 3

Council  
19th November 2025

provided including Play Area investment across the whole District and 'legacy' projects for the Council prior to Local Government Reorganisation. This had been an area that Members had been asked to provide suggestions on previously. However, to date, no further information had been provided. It was noted that in terms of the Play Area Investment the Strategy was to be implemented as planned and that a new Cabinet Member would be appointed to this portfolio in the near future.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor K. May and seconded by Councillor P. Whittaker.

**RESOLVED** that

- 1) the Balance Sheet monitoring position for Quarter One be noted;
- 2) the Treasury performance for Quarter One for the financial year 2025/26 be noted;
- 3) the position in relation to the Council's Prudential Indicators be noted.

**Expansion of Commercial Waste Collection Service**

The Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Community Safety presented the Expansion of Commercial Waste Collection Service for Members' consideration.

Members were informed that the existing commercial waste service had been successful in growing its customer base and delivered a sustainable income for the Council. The service had delivered and exceeded the returns forecast since the service was previously expanded with additional investment in 2019.

However, the existing service now had no capacity to take on additional customers and required full availability of staff and vehicles to operate each week as there was no surplus staffing to give resilience to the service. The service faced both opportunities such as increased demand following Dudley Council's exit from the market and further legislation that required businesses to ensure they were recycling all of their waste. Alongside this, pressures had arisen from vehicle shortages, staffing constraints, and limited capacity to accept new business.

The report outlined the need to expand the commercial waste collection service to support generation of further income with investment required to fund three key elements.

# Agenda Item 3

Council  
19th November 2025

Firstly, capital funding of £489,760 was required in order to purchase two additional waste collection vehicles to expand and secure the service. Secondly, two ongoing capital funding amounts of £35,000 annually to procure waste containers to support new customers and deliver the service. Thirdly, revenue funding of £334,342 for the recruitment of staff and associated costs of operating the expanded service was needed.

This investment was forecast to generate a related net surplus from 2026-2027 onwards allowing the Council to support more businesses to meet their statutory obligations, whilst also strengthening the resilience of the existing service.

In essence, these proposals were concerned with securing compliance, protecting income, and ensuring the Council's commercial waste service was able to continue to provide the high standards of service that has attracted over two hundred local businesses to trust the Council with their waste management arrangements to date.

Following the presentation of the reports, Members requested further clarification on several areas. These were as follows:

- Staffing Levels – Members queried the number of extra staff required to operate the two additional waste collection vehicles and whether the correct amount of revenue funding had been allocated. Members were informed that the revenue funding did include the appropriate amount of funding to provide two new crews for the additional waste collection vehicles along with a coordinator role in order to provide greater resilience for the service.
- Biofuel and Electric Fleet Vehicles – Members queried whether the Council was close to replacing its fleet with Biofuel or Electric vehicles. It was noted that electric vehicles were not suited for use with the heavy vehicles for commercial and domestic waste. Currently the Council used Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) in thirty per cent of its fleet. When smaller new vehicles were purchased for the fleet electric vehicles were to be considered.
- Members expressed that this service had been a success since its introduction and the commercial nature of this service should be a model used in the new structure of local government.
- The VAT treatment of anticipated revenues from the expanded commercial waste service and clarification of what VAT should be charged. It was noted that VAT was not applicable for commercial

# Agenda Item 3

Council  
19th November 2025

waste collections within Bromsgrove but was for collections outside the District.

- The presentation of the risk contained within the report was clear and concise.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor P. Whittaker and seconded by Councillor K. May.

## **RESOLVED that**

- 1) Capital Funding of £489,760 be added to the Capital Programme for 2026/27 to purchase two Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCVs)
- 2) The Council allocates Capital funding of £35,000 annually in the Medium-Term Financial Plan from the 2025/26 financial year to fund wheeled bins for Commercial Services.
- 3) The Council allocate £334,342 Revenue Funding in the Medium-Term Financial Plan to fund operational costs of providing the expanded service from 2025/26.
- 4) The Council allocate £100,000 Revenue Funding in the Medium-Term Financial Plan across 2025/26 and 2026/27 for interim vehicle hire.

## **Business Rates Retention (BRR) Pool 2026-2027**

The Chairman informed Council that this report had been withdrawn and would therefore not be considered at this meeting.

64\25

## **MOTION ON NOTICE**

Councillor J. Robinson presented a Motion on Notice for Members' consideration. In doing so, he highlighted that he was altering the wording of the Motion that he had submitted, and which had been included in the agenda to read as follows:

"The A38 Bromsgrove Route Enhancement Programme has been an unmitigated disaster for our town.

Hundreds of trees have been felled, and the project will not resolve the issues of traffic in our town.

The Council resolves to ask the Leader of the Council to urgently write to the Leader of Worcestershire County Council placing on record

# Agenda Item 3

Council  
19th November 2025

Bromsgrove District Council's opposition to the project and call for a full review and consultation with the community."

Councillor Robinson clarified that he had decided to remove reference to placing schemes that had not started on hold as circumstances had changed since the Motion was first submitted for Council's consideration in July 2025.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Robinson and seconded by Councillor R. Hunter.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Robinson commented that in his view the A38 Bromsgrove Route Enhancement Programme (BREP) had not worked well. Councillor Robinson had attended consultation events with the public and in doing so had heard from local residents about their concerns regarding the scale of the project. Members were asked to note that many trees had been felled during the works which had been opposed by many residents. Reference was made to the intention of BREP and it was suggested that these works had been launched to address traffic congestion in Bromsgrove. However, Councillor Robinson suggested that BREP was unlikely to resolve problems with traffic congestion in the town.

In seconding the Motion, Councillor Hunter commented that there was a need to learn lessons from the BREP works and to ensure that the current situation was not repeated once a new unitary authority was serving Bromsgrove. Councillor Hunter expressed concerns about the impact that BREP had had on residents' lives and the delays to traffic caused by the works. The suggestion was also made that an opportunity had been missed to undertake a modal shift to more sustainable forms of transport in the town.

Members subsequently discussed the Motion and in doing so expressed concerns about the impact of the works on traffic congestion in the town. It was noted that the Leader had previously been asked at a Council meeting to write to Worcestershire County Council regarding this matter and that she had done so. The suggestion was made that in this context, as the issues causing concern had persisted, Members needed to continue to raise this matter with the County Council.

Clarification was provided regarding the background to the BREP works. Members were asked to note that the Department for Transport (DfT) had provided enhancement funding. In addition, the Midlands Engine was driving forward the project. Concerns had been raised with the DfT

# Agenda Item 3

Council  
19th November 2025

that the works were unlikely to resolve challenges relating to traffic congestion.

During discussion of this item, consideration was given to the potential for an action plan to be provided for the BREP works. The suggestion was made that this might be made available by Worcestershire County Council to the County Councillor representing the division within which the works were taking place. A request was made for such a plan, should it be provided, to also be shared with Bromsgrove District Councillors.

Concerns were raised about the disruption that had been caused to residents, businesses and visitors to Bromsgrove during the time in which the BREP works had been taking place. Members commented that people were having to follow detours over lengthy periods of time in order to reach their destinations. It was noted that forthcoming public consultation events, organised by County Councillors, might help to provide further clarity on arrangements moving forwards.

During consideration of this item, a request was received from Councillor K. May to alter the Motion to refer to a letter being sent on behalf of political Group Leaders, rather than just the Leader, to Worcestershire County Council regarding this matter.

The Motion would then be altered to read as follows:

“The A38 Bromsgrove Route Enhancement Programme has been an unmitigated disaster for our town.

Hundreds of trees have been felled, and the project will not resolve the issues of traffic in our town.

The Council resolves to ask *Group Leaders* to urgently write to the Leader of Worcestershire County Council placing on record Bromsgrove District Council’s opposition to the project and call for a full review and consultation with the community.”

This alteration was proposed as it was suggested that this would help to demonstrate the strength of feeling at the Council regarding this matter.

Councillor Robinson, as the proposer of the Motion, indicated that he would be happy to accept this amendment and this therefore became the substantive Motion.

# Agenda Item 3

Council  
19th November 2025

Consideration was given to the number of trees that had been felled during the BREP works. Members noted that plans had been announced to plant 3,000 new saplings in the town in mitigation.

Concerns were raised about the impact that the BREP works had had on other public sector infrastructure projects and developments in Bromsgrove. Members noted that, until the A38 works had been finalised, it would not be possible to introduce a new roundabout on Worcester Road. This would impact on residents living in the area, at least in the short and medium-term.

The funding that had been provided for the BREP project and the intention of this funding was discussed. Some Members commented that they had been under the impression that part of the funding had been allocated to enhancing pedestrian and cyclists' routes in the town.

Questions were raised about how any consultation proposed under the terms of the Motion would be organised as well as about the sources of funding required to pay for the consultation. Members also queried whether a letter to Worcestershire County Council would have any impact on the works. However, it was also noted that a letter would help to highlight the strength of feeling amongst Members regarding this matter.

During the debate in respect of this item, there was an adjournment between 20.20 and 20.39.

Following the adjournment, an amendment was proposed to the wording of the Motion by Councillor H. Warren-Clarke. The amended Motion read as follows:

“The A38 Bromsgrove Route Enhancement Programme has been an unmitigated disaster for our town.

Hundreds of trees have been felled, and the project will not resolve the issues of traffic in our town.

The Council resolves to ask Group Leaders to urgently write to the Leader of Worcestershire County Council placing on record Bromsgrove District Council's *concerns* and call for a full review and consultation with the community.”

The amendment was proposed by Councillor Warren-Clarke and seconded by Councillor P. Whittaker.

# Agenda Item 3

Council  
19th November 2025

In accordance with Procedure Rule 18.3, a recorded vote was taken on the proposed amendment to the Motion.

Members voting FOR the amendment:

Councillors A. Bailes, R. Bailes, S. Colella, J. Elledge, D. Forsythe, E. Gray, D. Hopkins, C. Hotham, H. Jones, B. Kumar, M. Marshall, K. May, P. McDonald, B. McEldowney, S. Nock, J. Stanley, K. Taylor, H. Warren-Clarke, S. Webb and P. Whittaker (20).

Members voting AGAINST the amendment:

Councillors S. Ammar, J. Clarke, S. Evans, R. Hunter, D. Nicholl, J. Robinson and S. Robinson (7).

Members voting to ABSTAIN on the amendment:

No Councillors (0).

(Councillor S. Peters had left the meeting prior to this recorded vote taking place.)

Therefore, on being put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

The amended Motion thereby became the substantive Motion and on being put to the vote it was

**RESOLVED** that

The A38 Bromsgrove Route Enhancement Programme has been an unmitigated disaster for our town.

Hundreds of trees have been felled, and the project will not resolve the issues of traffic in our town.

The Council resolves to ask Group Leaders to urgently write to the Leader of Worcestershire County Council placing on record Bromsgrove District Council's concerns and call for a full review and consultation with the community.

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**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,**

# Agenda Item 3

Council  
19th November 2025

**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 8.45 p.m.

Chairman

# Agenda Item 3

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## **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN UNDER URGENCY PROCEDURES**

**Subject:** Appointment of an interim Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer

**Brief Statement of Subject Matter:**

On 12<sup>th</sup> November 2025 the Joint Appointments Committee met to discuss arrangements for the appointment of a Section 151 Officer and Director of Finance following the departure of the previous office holder. Members agreed to delegate authority to the Chief Executive to shortlist potential candidates and to establish an Appointments Panel to undertake interviews. Unfortunately, whilst this process commenced, it was not possible to progress with this process.

The current acting Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer has been acting up in her role since late October 2025. In the context of the busy budget setting period, she now needs to concentrate on her substantive role of Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services and Deputy Section 151 Officer and has highlighted the value in appointing another candidate as interim Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer.

In line with the Councils procurement rules the Chief Executive has approached Penna recruitment consultants via a framework and they have considered potential agency candidates. Penna have identified an experienced candidate, who would be an agency member of staff, who could be appointed interim Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer: Ms Julie Lorraine.

The position of Section 151 Officer is a statutory officer post. As such, the Council is required to nominate an officer under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to be responsible for the proper administration of its financial affairs. The relevant wording states that: - "Without prejudice to section 111 above, every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs." Section 113 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 requires that the officer appointed as the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) must be a member of a specified accountancy body.

It is a legal requirement that the appointment of the Section 151 Officer, as a statutory officer, is made by full Council. This is set out in the relevant regulations (The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) Regulations 2001 (as amended) Schedule 1 Part II) which are reproduced in the Officer Employment Rules at Part 17 of the Constitution. Unfortunately, there are not due to be any Council meetings prior to 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026. This would also not provide sufficient time to follow the structured appointments process to employ a new permanent Section 151 Officer, involving the work of the Joint Appointments Committee.

The Director of Finance and Section 151 post is a senior officer position that is shared between Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils. Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972 permits Councils to enter an agreement to place the services of their staff at the disposal of other local authorities.

Bromsgrove District Council is the employing authority for the position of Section 151 Officer. Subject to Members' approval of Ms Julie Lorraine's appointment as interim Section 151 Officer,

# Agenda Item 7

she will need to be made available by Bromsgrove District Council under the shared services arrangements to perform such duties as are required by their post for Redditch Borough Council.

The position of Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer has been evaluated by West Midlands Employers to be £114,282 - £118,694. Whilst funding is built into the budget to support employment of a Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer on a permanent basis, additional financial support would be required to support these proposed interim arrangements due to the additional costs associated with agency staffing. All costs for the position will be divided equally, on a 50:50 ratio, between Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Council.

It has been identified that the costs are likely in the region of £180k for a period of six months (to be shared by the two Councils). This figure includes the payment made to the individual and the fee attached by the recruiting agency.

The current budget of £140k for the post of Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer has been fully committed for 2025/26. The additional requirement of £60k in 2025/26 can be accommodated from within the Finance Reserve.

For 2026/27, it is estimated that of the £120k covering the remaining four months, £48k will be funded from within the existing budget and £72k will be funded from the Finance Reserve. It is proposed that this interim appointment will continue until such time as a replacement Section 151 Officer commences employment with Bromsgrove District Council.

**Decision: To consider and agree the temporary appointment of an interim Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer for the Council.**

**Date: 13<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) **To approve the temporary appointment of Ms Julie Lorraine as interim Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer, to fulfil the purposes of Section 151 of the Local Government 1972, until such time as a replacement Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer commences employment with Bromsgrove District Council; and**
- 2) **Subject thereto, Ms Julie Lorraine to be made available under the shared services arrangements with Redditch Borough Council to perform such duties as are required in her capacity as acting Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer for Redditch Borough Council.**

**Grounds for Urgency:**

This decision needs to be taken urgently because it has not been possible to appoint a replacement Section 151 Officer in a timely manner and the current acting Section 151 Officer now needs to return to her substantive post during the busy budget setting period.

**DECISION APPROVED BY:**

.....  
Chief Executive

.....  
Dated

# Agenda Item 7

.....  
Monitoring Officer

.....  
Dated

.....  
Leader

.....  
Dated

.....  
Chairman, Overview & Scrutiny Board

.....  
Dated

.....  
Chairman

.....  
Dated

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#### **Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel – recommendations for members' allowances for 2026-27 and the members allowances scheme**

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Cllr May, Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling; Cllr Nock, Cabinet Member for Finance
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Claire Felton
Report Author	Job Title: Darren Whitney, Electoral Services Manager Contact email: darren.whitney@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881650	
Wards Affected	All	
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A	
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	N/A	
Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

#### **1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Council is asked to RESOLVE**

- 1.1 whether or not to accept all, some or none of the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for 2026-27;**
- 1.2 having considered the Panel's report and recommendations, whether or not changes are required to the Council's scheme of allowances for Members arising from this.**

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Each Council is required by law to have an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) which recommends the level of allowances for Councillors. The IRP is made up of suitably skilled members of the public who are completely independent of the District Council. It also makes recommendations to four other District Councils in Worcestershire.

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

### **COUNCIL 2026**

**21 January**

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- 3.1 The full report of the IRP is included in Appendix 1 and recommends basic allowances, special responsibility allowances (SRA), travel, subsistence and dependent carer allowances.
- 3.2 The Council can choose to implement the IRP's recommendations in full or in part, or not to accept them and choose their own.
- 3.3 If the Council decides to choose to differ from the panel's recommendations it must provide transparent and accountable reasoning for that decision.
- 3.2 Once the Council has agreed the allowances for 2026-27 Officers will update and publish the Members' Allowances Scheme as appropriate.

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

- 4.1 The IRP recommends a basic allowance of £6,095 which is a 4.62% increase from its recommendation from last year (£269 per councillor on the basic allowance).
- 4.2 If the Council makes changes to the current amounts of allowances there will be additional budgetary costs. If the Council implements all the recommendations of the IRP budgetary costs across the year would be increased in the region of £3,500 assuming four cabinet members or £12,600 with five cabinet members. This does not include Chairmen of overview and scrutiny task groups as they are paid pro rata for the length of the task group.
- 4.3 Although not part of the Independent Renumeration Panel's work Members may also wish to consider increasing the Chairman's allowance in line with the basic allowance, an additional £269.
- 4.4 A budget bid has been made to reflect any changes made from the recommendations in this report, but the future costs will need to be covered in the medium-term financial plan.

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

- 5.1 The Council is required to "have regard" to the recommendations of the Panel. However, it is not obliged to agree to them. It can choose to implement them in full or in part, or not to accept them.
- 5.2 If the Council decides to review its scheme of allowances for Councillors, it is also required to take into account recommendations from the Panel before doing so.

**6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**

**Local Government Reorganisation**

6.1 No direct implications at the current time.

**Relevant Council Priority**

6.2 None as this report deals with statutory functions.

**Climate Change Implications**

6.3 None in this report.

**Equalities and Diversity Implications**

6.4 None in this report.

**7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

7.1 Payments to Councillors can be a high-profile issue. The main risks are reputational. However, the Council is transparent about the decisions made on allowances. The Allowances scheme and sums paid to Councillors each year are published on the Council's website.

**8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix 1: Report and recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel for 2026-27.

Background papers:

Members Allowances Scheme – in the Council Constitution at part 19:

[Constitution of Bromsgrove District Council](#)

# Agenda Item 9

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**COUNCIL**  
**2026**

**21 January**

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### **9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Name and Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Portfolio Holder		
Lead Director / Assistant Director		
Financial Services		
Legal Services		

## **Independent Remuneration Panel for Worcestershire District Councils**

### **Annual Report and Recommendations for 2026/27**

#### **Bromsgrove District Council**

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**December 2025**

# Agenda Item 9

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
Recommendations to Council	1
1/ Introduction and Context	2
2/ Background Evidence and Research Undertaken	2
3/ Comparative spend on Allowances across Worcestershire	3
4/ Average Payment per Councillor across Worcestershire	3
5/ Consideration of Allowances for the financial year 2026/27	3
a/ Basic Allowance	3
b/ Special Responsibility Allowances	4
c/ Mileage and Expenses 2026/27	5
d/ Dependant Carers	5
6/ The Independent Remuneration Panel	5
7/ Support and Thanks	6
Appendix 1 – Summary of Allowance Recommendations	7
Appendix 2 – Summary of Research	8

# Agenda Item 9

## Recommendations to the Council

The Independent Remuneration Panel recommends to Bromsgrove District Council the following:

1. A Basic Allowance for 2026/27 of £6,095, representing a 4.62% increase from the previous year's recommendations.
2. A range of Special Responsibility Allowances as set out in Appendix 1
3. That travel allowances for 2026/27 continue to be paid in accordance with the HMRC mileage allowance
4. That subsistence allowances for 2026/27 remain unchanged
5. That the Dependent Carer's Allowance remains unchanged

# Agenda Item 9

## 1. Introduction and Context

The Independent Remuneration Panel (the Panel) has been appointed by the Council in accordance with the Members' Allowances Regulations. The role of the Panel is to carry out reviews of the allowances paid to Councillors, as required by the Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent legislation.

This Panel is commissioned by the following City and District Councils:

- Worcester City Council
- Malvern Hills District Council
- Wychavon District Council
- Redditch Borough Council
- Bromsgrove District Council

The report sets out recommendations for the Basic Allowance (as recommended to be paid for all Councillors), the special responsibility allowances (for those councillors with additional responsibilities) and allowances for mileage, subsistence and for those with dependent carer responsibilities.

The purpose of such allowances is to enable people from all walks of life to become involved in local politics if they choose. This continues to remain an important consideration for the Panel when submitting its recommendations.

The Panel acknowledges, however, that in the current challenging financial climate there are difficult choices for the Council to make. The Council will need to 'have regard' to the recommendations of the Panel, but ultimately, it is for the Council to decide how or whether to adopt them in full or in part.

The Panel's recommendations are based on thorough research and benchmarking taking into account a range of comparative data as set out below.

## 2. Background Evidence and Research Undertaken

There is a range of market indicators on pay which can be used for comparison purposes. As background for the decisions taken by the Panel this year have:

- Analysed and considered the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) statistics for 2025, which set out a mean hourly wage rate for Worcestershire of £20.80
- Benchmarked the Basic Allowance against those paid within comparable local authorities to Bromsgrove as set out in the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) 'nearest neighbours' list
- Taken account of the 2025/26 National Pay Award for the majority of Local Government employees
- Considered the Consumer Price Index Information as of September 2025.

Details about these areas of research are set out in Appendix 2 to this report.

In determining a recommendation for the basic award for 2026/27, consideration has once again been given to the average number of hours spent by councillors on Council business. For 2026/27 this has again been informed by a time-recording exercise carried out by Worcester City Councillors in 2015, as updated by a similar exercise in 2022.

# Agenda Item 9

## 3. Comparative Spend on Allowances across Worcestershire 2024/25

As part of the research, consideration has been given to the Members' allowances budget for Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances in the previous year (2024/25) as a cost per head of population for each Council, and also as a proportion of net revenue budget. This is set out in the table below:

Authority, population <sup>1</sup> and number of Councillors	Total spend Basic Allowances £	Total spend on SRA £	SRA as a percentage of total Basic Allowance %	Cost of total basic and SRA per head of population £	Total of basic and SRA as a percentage of Net General Revenue Fund expenditure %
Bromsgrove DC (31) 100,569	171,586	93,991	54.78	2.64	1.34
Malvern Hills DC (31) 79,445	163,450	76,532	46.82	2.96	2.30
Redditch Borough (27) 85,568	132,618	104,312	78.66	2.77	1.76
Worcester City (35) 100,265	177,897	117,673	66.14	2.94	1.82
Wychavon (43) 131,084	235,685	110,872	47.04	2.64	1.39

## 4. Average Payment per Councillor across Worcestershire 2024/25

In addition to the above, the following table also sets out the average payment per member of each authority of the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances for the previous year (2024/25):

### Average allowance per Member of each authority (Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances, 2024/25 figures)

Authority (number of Councillors)	Amount £
Bromsgrove District (31)	8,567
Malvern Hills District (31)	7,741
Redditch Borough (27)	8,775
Worcester City (35)	8,444
Wychavon District (43)	8,059

## 5. Consideration of allowances for the financial year 2026/27

### a/ Basic Allowance

<sup>1</sup>ONS population estimates mid 2020. Totals for Basic and Special Responsibility allowances paid are as published by each authority for the 2024/25 financial year.

# Agenda Item 9

The Basic Allowance is paid to all Members of the Council to reflect:

- Their roles and responsibilities as Elected Members of the Council
- Their time commitments, including the total average number of hours worked per week on Council business
- A public service discount of 40% to reflect that Councillors volunteer their time

Whilst each Council may set out role descriptions for Councillors, the Panel accepts that each Councillor will carry out that role differently, reflecting personal circumstances and local requirements.

In setting out its recommendations, the Panel considers the Basic Allowance to include Councillors' roles in Overview and Scrutiny, as any non-Executive member of the Council can contribute to this aspect of the Council's work. It is for this reason that the Panel does not recommend any Special Responsibility Allowance for members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Panel also considers that the Basic Allowance should cover the need for Councillors to use ICT and social media support and communication systems as part of their role. However, it is accepted that specific local decisions may be made about how ICT support is provided.

As indicated in section 2 of this report, in formulating its recommendations, the Panel has once again reviewed the levels of wage rates for Worcestershire as set out in the ASHE data and the benchmark information available from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) "nearest neighbours" authorities. Consideration has also been given to the nationally agreed pay award for local government employees for the financial year 2025/26 and the latest CPI (consumer price inflation) figure as of September 2025.

**Based on all the above considerations, the Panel recommend a Basic Award of £6,095 for the financial year 2026/27. This again aligns with the increase in the average pay levels as reflected in the ASHE data whilst acknowledging the CPI increase, CIPFA data and Local Government Pay Awards. It represents a 4.62% increase on the previous year's recommendation.**

The recommendation takes strong account of the ASHE data and is set at an appropriate level in the context of the local government pay award. The Panel is conscious of the current financial challenges but also mindful to avoid increasing any gap in allowances between Bromsgrove District Council and its "nearest neighbours."

The research information used in the consideration of the Basic Allowance is set out in appendix 2.

## **b/ Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA)**

Special Responsibility Allowances are paid to a small number of Councillors to reflect responsibilities undertaken by them in addition to their day-to-day roles as Elected Representatives. Such allowances are paid in addition to the Basic Allowance and calculated as a multiplier of the Basic Allowance.

Any recommended changes in such allowances would be based on proposals made to the Panel each year and reflecting, for example changes in committee structures, new responsibilities or increases/decreases in existing responsibilities.

**Following a meeting between the IRP Chair and two Bromsgrove councillors (both group leaders), the Panel reviewed an SRA to be paid to Licensing Committee members but having compared activity to that of the other councils, it did not feel a change was required. There were no further requests for changes, so the recommended values for all SRAs remain unchanged for 2026/27.**

The full list of recommended SRA multipliers and values is set out in Appendix 1.

## **c/ Mileage and Expenses**

The Panel notes that the Council has used the HMRC flat rate for payment of mileage for all types of vehicles and recommends that this continues.

## **d/ Dependant Carer Allowance**

The Panel notes that the Council's Scheme of Members' Allowances provides that Dependant Carer Allowances are payable to cover reasonable and legitimate costs incurred in attending approved duties and recommends that this provision continues.

## **6. The Independent Remuneration Panel**

This Council's Independent Remuneration Panel is set up on a joint basis with four of the other five District Councils in Worcestershire. Separate Annual Reports have been prepared for each Council. The members of the Panel are:

**Tim Hunt (Chair)** – Tim is a qualified journalist with more than 25 years' experience in media and communications. He spent seven years covering community and local authority news in Worcestershire and Warwickshire, including four as editor of two local newspapers, before going on to work in corporate communications and events. Tim now runs his own PR agency.

**Susan Moxon (Vice Chair)** - Susan has worked in the Education sector for over 20 years, working in schools in Warwickshire and Birmingham and then with the Department for Education, where she worked in the 6th form funding team, analysing data from incoming enquiries, mainly from schools and colleges regarding the calculation of their funding statements. She has acted as an independent observer at Teacher Disciplinary Hearings ensuring that the panel members followed procedures and were unbiased in their decision making. Previously she was an Exams Support Officer providing advice to schools and colleges in Hereford, Worcester and Gloucester about entering students for external exams and assessments, her particular area of expertise. She is currently Clerk to two local charities. She organises meetings, manages the accounts and is the main point of contact with applicants, local providers and the Charity Commission.

**Reuben Bergman** – Reuben is a Fellow of the CIPD with significant senior HR leadership experience across a range of public sector organisations in both England and Wales. He currently runs a HR Consultancy Business in Worcestershire providing advice and support on managing change, employment law, HR policy development, mediation, management coaching and employee relations. Reuben has led successful equal pay reviews in three separate local authorities and is known for his successful work in managing change and developing effective employee relations. He is a qualified coach, mediator and a Shared Service architect.

**Xenia Goudefroy** – Xenia is a Management Accountant with experience in the financial controlling and forecasting for a range of companies in the private sector. She holds an Advanced Diploma in Management Accounting and has completed a Master's degree in

# Agenda Item 9

Business Administration at University Vila Velha and in International Management at the Steinbeis University Berlin. As a focus topic of her thesis she has developed the order-to-cash process for new business models. Since she moved to the UK in 2017 in her free time she has been volunteering to help people in need and is also working as a volunteer at the Worcester fish-pass to help preserve the natural habitat of migrating species. She is fluent in three languages and enjoys learning new skills.

**Caroline Murphy** – Caroline has over 20 years' experience of working in public and voluntary sector organisations, including three West Midlands Local Authorities and the Civil Service. She was a senior Education Manager at Wolverhampton City Council until 2011. She has a wealth of experience at building partnerships. Caroline now works as freelance adviser supporting individuals and organisations with strategic management. Caroline is also an active Governor of a Special School and Vocational College in Wolverhampton and a trained Mediator.

## 7. Support and Thanks

The Panel has been advised and assisted by:

Claire Chaplin and Margaret Johnson from Worcester City Council

Darren Whitney and Jane Oyenuga from Bromsgrove & Redditch Councils

Bronwen Tompkins representing Malvern Hills District Council and Wychavon District Council

The Panel wishes to acknowledge its gratitude to these officers who have provided advice and guidance in a professional and dedicated manner.

**Tim Hunt, Chair of Independent Remuneration Panel**

# Agenda Item 9

## Appendix 1

### Independent Remuneration Panel for District Councils in Worcestershire

#### Summary of Basic Award and SRA recommendations

Role	Rec'd Multiplier 2025/26 (IRP)	Current Multiplier (Council Agreed)	Rec'd Allowance 2025/26 (IRP) £	Current Allowance 2025/26 (Council Agreed) £	Rec'd Multiplier 2026/27 (IRP)	Rec'd Allowance 2026/27 (IRP) £
<b>Basic Allowance:</b>	1	1	5,826	5,826	1	6,095
<b>Special Responsibility Allowances:</b>						
Leader	3	3	17,478	17,478	3	18,285
Deputy Leader	1.75	1.75	10,195	10,195	1.75	10,666.25
Executive Members (Cabinet Portfolio Holders)	1.5	1.5	8,739	8,739	1.5	9,142.50
Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Board	1.5	1.5	8,739	8,739	1.5	9,142.50
Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Task Groups	0.25	0.25	1,456.50	1,456.50	0.25	1,523.75
Chairman of Audit and Standards and Governance Committee	0.25	0.25	1,456.50	1,456.50	0.25	1,523.75
Chairman of Planning Committee	1	1	5,826	5,826	1	6,095
Chairman of Licensing Committee	0.3	0.3	1,747.80	1,747.80	0.3	1,828.5
Political Group Leaders	0.25	0.25	1,456.50	1,456.50	0.25	1,523.75
Chairman of Electoral Matters Committee (BDC only)	0.03	0.03	174.78 per meeting	174.78 per meeting	0.03	182.85 per meeting

## Appendix 2

### Independent Remuneration Panel for District Councils in Worcestershire

#### Summary of Research

a/ Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) “Nearest Neighbour” authorities’ tool.

No two Councils or sets of Councillors are the same. Developed to aid local authorities in comparative and benchmarking exercises, the CIPFA Nearest Neighbours Model adopts a scientific approach to measuring the similarity between authorities. Using the data, Bromsgrove District Council’s “nearest neighbours” are:

- Eastleigh
- Epping Forest
- Lewes
- Rochford
- Stroud
- Surrey Heath
- Tandridge

Information on the level of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances was obtained to benchmark the levels of allowances recommended to the Council. The average basic award across all the “nearest neighbour” authorities was £5,983 as at November 2025.

b/ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) Data on Pay

[Earnings and hours worked, place of work by local authority: ASHE Table 7 - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/ashe/earns-and-hours-worked-place-of-work-by-local-authority/ashe-table-7)

Published by the Office for National Statistics, the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) shows detailed information at District level about rates of pay. For benchmarking purposes, the Panel uses the levels for hourly rates of pay excluding overtime (£20.80 as at October 2025).

For benchmarking purposes, this is multiplied by 11 hours to give a weekly rate, then multiplied by 44.4 weeks to allow for holidays and then discounted by 40% to reflect the element of volunteering that each Councillor undertakes in the role.

The 11-hour multiplier is felt to reflect the average number of hours spent on Council business by frontline Councillors as reported in a previous survey of Worcester City Councillors in 2015 and updated in 2022. As a benchmark indicator this would produce a figure of £6,095 per annum which amounts to an increase of £269.

c/ CPI (Consumer Price Inflation)

In arriving at its recommendations, the Panel has taken into account the latest reported CPI figure as published by the Office for National Statistics. This was 4.10% in September 2025. The uprating of the 2026/27 recommended basic award by the CPI figure would give a revised Basic Award of £6,064, which amounts to an increase of £238.

d/ Local Government Pay Award

# Agenda Item 9

The Panel was mindful of the current local government pay award offer of 3.2%. Uprating of the 2026/27 recommended basic award by the same percentage would give a revised Basic Award of £6012, which amounts to an increase of £186.

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### Council 2026

21<sup>st</sup> January

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#### **The Neighbourhood Plan for Wythall Parish ('Wythall Neighbourhood Plan')**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Kit Taylor, Cabinet Member for Planning, WRS and Strategic Housing
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Ruth Bamford, Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services
Report Author	Euan Hardy Job Title: Senior Planning Officer Contact email: <a href="mailto:euan.hardy@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk">euan.hardy@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk</a> Contact Tel: 01527 881694
Wards Affected	Drakes Cross, Hollywood, Wythall East and Wythall West
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	Yes
Relevant Council Priority	All Council priorities
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

#### **1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

- 1) the letter at Appendix 2 is sent to Wythall Parish Council as the District Council's response to the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan submission version;**
- 2) a six-week statutory ('Regulation 16') representation period on the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan is held by the District Council;**
- 3) delegated authority is given to the Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services to make minor modifications, as necessary, to the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents with consent of Wythall Parish Council;**
- 4) delegated authority is given to the Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services to appoint an independent examiner to undertake examination of the Wythall**

### **Council 2026**

**21<sup>st</sup> January**

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#### **Neighbourhood Plan following the statutory representation period; and**

- 5) delegated authority is given to the Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services to arrange a referendum on the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the recommendations set out in the examiner's report.**

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan for Wythall Parish ('Wythall Neighbourhood Plan'), attached at Appendix 1, was re-submitted to the District Council on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2026. The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the District Council's response, attached at Appendix 2, to Wythall Parish Council ('the qualifying body'), on their submission under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 2.2 This report also seeks the approval of Council for the District Council to publish the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan for a statutory six-week representation period in line with Regulation 16 of the above Neighbourhood Planning Regulations.
- 2.3 Finally, the report seeks delegated authority to the Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services to make any necessary minor modifications to the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents with consent of Wythall Parish Council; to appoint an independent examiner to carry out an examination of the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan, including consideration of representations received by the District Council during the representation period; and to proceed to a referendum should the examiner's report recommend this course of action.

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

- 3.1 Despite responsibility for the production of the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan belonging to the qualifying body (Wythall Parish Council), the District Council has worked closely with the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group in the preparation of the plan, since designation of the neighbourhood area in September 2020.
- 3.2 During this time, considerable officer resource has been spent advising and supporting members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Officers have advised on matters concerning planning legislation and regulations, alignment with the District Council's statutory planning

### **Council 2026**

**21<sup>st</sup> January**

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framework, and provided information to help comply with other legal requirements such as strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and habitat regulation assessment (HRA).

3.3 The Wythall Neighbourhood Plan includes an overall vision and objectives for the plan up to 2040, as well as planning policies set out within the following topic areas:

- Community Infrastructure, Assets and Services
- Housing Requirements
- Design and Development Form
- Local Heritage
- Green Infrastructure
- Sustainable Travel

3.4 A series of supporting documents are also submitted alongside the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan. These are listed under the background papers section at the end of this report. Amongst these documents is a Basic Conditions Statement submitted by the Parish Council to outline how they consider the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions it will be examined upon before it can proceed to referendum.

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

4.1 The District Council should be eligible to claim funding of £20,000 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) once a date has been set for the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan referendum. One window to secure funding exists per financial year, which usually opens for applications in November/December. The next available opportunity for BDC to apply for grant funding to support the work involved will be dependent on the progression to referendum of the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan.

4.2 BDC officers have worked to assist Wythall Parish Council in preparing the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan since designation of the Wythall Parish neighbourhood area in September 2020. This officer time has been subsumed into previous and existing departmental budgets and workloads for the Strategic Planning and Conservation team. Securing the MHCLG neighbourhood planning grant will allow the Council to recoup departmental costs as well as contribute to examination and referendum costs.

4.3 Officer time from the Council's Elections Service will also be required to organise the referendum.

### **Council 2026**

**21<sup>st</sup> January**

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

- 5.1 Following submission of the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan to the District Council originally in March 2025 and the latest revised submission in January 2026, officers have reviewed all the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan submission documents and are satisfied that the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan is able to proceed to the Regulation 16 statutory representation period and subsequent independent examination.
- 5.2 It is the view of officers that the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan has been produced in accordance with the relevant neighbourhood planning regulations arising from the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 5.3 Subject to Council approval, the Council will be responsible for publicising the Regulation 16 statutory representation period and arranging for the independent examination and local referendum to take place. The Council is required to publicise the submission of the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan for a minimum six-week period and invite representations, which will then be forwarded on to an independent examiner for their consideration.
- 5.4 The requirement that the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan is subject to an independent examination is to ensure and verify that the neighbourhood plan meets the 'basic conditions', as defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), before it can proceed to a referendum. This report seeks approval from Council that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services to appoint an independent examiner to undertake this task.
- 5.5 Should delegated authority be given, and once an independent examination has been carried out on the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan, the Council will receive an examiner's report making one of three recommendations:
  - The Wythall Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions and can proceed to referendum;
  - The Wythall Neighbourhood Plan can meet the basic conditions subject to suggested modifications to the plan, and subject to these modifications being made can proceed to referendum; or
  - The Wythall Neighbourhood Plan does not meet the basic conditions and should not proceed to referendum.

### **Council 2026**

**21<sup>st</sup> January**

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- 5.6 Should the examiner's report recommend the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan can proceed to referendum, and should the Council be satisfied with the examiner's recommendations<sup>1</sup>, delegated authority is sought for the Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services to organise a referendum<sup>2</sup> on the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.7 The referendum would pose the question of whether those eligible to vote (those eligible to vote in the designated neighbourhood area of Wythall Parish) would want Bromsgrove District Council to use the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area.
- 5.8 Should a referendum result in a 'Yes' vote that the neighbourhood plan be 'made', the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan is proposed to be reported back to Council to approve the adoption of the neighbourhood plan.
- 5.9 In terms of anticipated timescales, the Regulation 16 six-week representation period would commence shortly after the Council meeting, if approved. Following the conclusion of the representation period, the Council will appoint an independent examiner, in consultation with Wythall Parish Council, to examine the Neighbourhood Plan. Depending on what arises during the examination process, the Council should receive the independent examiner's report approximately two months after the examination begins, projected to be late spring/summer 2026. The Council will then consider the examiner's report, any necessary modifications will be made to the Neighbourhood Plan, and a decision will be made whether to send the Neighbourhood Plan to referendum. The referendum is anticipated to be held in autumn 2026 with a decision to 'make' the Neighbourhood Plan at a Council meeting likely to be in winter 2026.
- 5.10 As Members will be aware, work on the emerging Bromsgrove District Local Plan is in its early stages. The Wythall Neighbourhood Plan is separate from this process and the Neighbourhood Plan can be developed ahead of the adoption of the emerging Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the adopted development plan. This requirement will be assessed during independent examination to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions.

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<sup>1</sup> The Council has 5 weeks from the date of the examiner's report to publish its decision on whether the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan will proceed to referendum.

<sup>2</sup> The relevant documents advertising that a referendum will take place must be published not less than 28 working days before the referendum date.

### **Council 2026**

**21<sup>st</sup> January**

---

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

##### **Local Government Reorganisation**

6.1 On the 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025, the then Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution on behalf of the MHCLG made a statement which included the following:

*"I am also aware that developing proposals could distract councils from their essential day-to-day activities. However, residents and businesses depend on councils to provide vital services and continue the work necessary for creating successful new unitary councils. This is especially true for progressing local plans, to allocate land for the new homes we so desperately need. Accordingly, as stated in my invitation letters, I continue to expect local planning authorities to work towards the adoption of an up-to-date local plan as soon as possible. Local Government Reorganisation should not hinder this essential work; and neither should the introduction of the new legal framework for local plan-making later this year, or our strategic planning reforms. Significant financial assistance has already been provided to eligible authorities to support plan-making and I urge authorities to make the most of other support available through the Local Government Association's Planning Advisory Service. Together, we can ensure that our reorganisation efforts are successful and deliver the high-quality public services our residents deserve."*

6.2 Although the Government's expectations only explicitly stated that Local Government Reorganisation should not hinder work towards the adoption of an up-to-date local plan, neighbourhood plans form part of the Council's statutory development plan and form part of the Council's day-to-day activities.

##### **Relevant Council Priority**

6.3 The Wythall Neighbourhood Plan, being a plan for the development and use of land, supports the following Council priorities:

- Economic Development – the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan includes a policy on the protection of community facilities which support the day-to-day lives of local residents and creates employment opportunities (Wythall 1 – Local Community Facilities).
- Housing – the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan includes a policy on affordable housing provision (Wythall 2 – Affordable Housing

### **Council 2026**

**21<sup>st</sup> January**

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Tenure) and housing mix (Wythall 3 – Housing Types and Sizes in Wythall).

- Environment – the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan includes a policy supporting measures to reduce carbon emissions from building operations (Wythall 5 – Environmental Performance of Buildings), protection of designated Local Green Space (Wythall 7 – Local Green Space Sites) and securing biodiversity net gain from eligible new developments (Wythall 8 – Biodiversity Gains from new development in Wythall Parish).
- Infrastructure – the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan includes a policy which supports developments that contribute to new community infrastructure within the Parish (Wythall 1 – Local Community Facilities). Additionally, the Neighbourhood Plan supports developments that contribute to bus service improvements (Wythall 9 – Support for Bus Services), rail service and station improvements (Wythall 10 – Support for Rail Services and Station improvements) and walking and cycling route improvements (Wythall 11 – Support for improvements to priority walking and cycling routes).

#### **Climate Change Implications**

6.4 A green thread runs through the Council Plan, the adopted Bromsgrove District Plan and the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan. The Wythall Neighbourhood Plan supports measures to reduce carbon emissions from building operations (Wythall 5 – Environmental Performance of Buildings), protection of designated Local Green Space (Wythall 7 – Local Green Space Sites) and securing biodiversity net gain from eligible new developments (Wythall 8 – Biodiversity Gains from new development in Wythall Parish).

6.5 Additionally, the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan includes policies supporting public transport and active travel improvements (Wythall 9 – Support for Bus Services, Wythall 10 – Support for Rail Services and Station improvements and Wythall 11 – Support for improvements to priority walking and cycling routes).

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

6.6 The Wythall Neighbourhood Plan has been subject to numerous Parish Council led events and public meetings to publicise the preparation of the plan and inform its development. A pre-submission (Regulation 14) public consultation was undertaken to enable further community

### **Council 2026**

**21<sup>st</sup> January**

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engagement and allow changes to the plan to be made prior to its submission to the District Council. Details of the various forms of engagement and consultation to date can be found within the Consultation Report prepared by Wythall Parish Council listed within the background papers section at the end of this report.

6.7 The Wythall Neighbourhood Plan acknowledges that engagement with the local community is essential in developing a vision and objectives for the future development of neighbourhoods and to provide the detailed information to support non-strategic policies that can make a difference to localities.

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

7.1 The Wythall Neighbourhood Plan is not a plan produced directly by the District Council, however if 'made' it will become part of the statutory development plan for decisions made by the local planning authority within Wythall Parish (the designated neighbourhood area).

7.2 The District Council has a duty to support the progression of the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan, including publicising the statutory representation period and arranging independent examination and referendum, where the plan is deemed to meet the basic conditions.

7.3 The recommendations in this report are made in the context of the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan being deemed to be likely to meet the basic conditions at examination and being able to proceed to referendum.

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

##### Appendices

- Appendix 1 – The Neighbourhood Plan for Wythall Parish, Regulation 15 Draft (Version of 09 January 2026: APL.Wyth.100.D)
- Appendix 2 – BDC Regulation 15 response to Wythall Parish Council

##### Background papers

The following supporting documents can be accessed on the Council's website – <https://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/council/policy/planning-policies-and-other-information/neighbourhood-plans/wythall-neighbourhood-plan/>

### **Council 2026**

**21<sup>st</sup> January**

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- Appendix A – Wythall Parish Local Heritage Sites
- Appendix B – Local Green Space Sites Assessment
- Wythall Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map –  
<https://shared.xmap.cloud/?map=b3b11e60-9d4b-4090-88d7-7b702a139a53>
- Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan 2021-2040 – Basic Conditions Statement (January 2025)
- The Neighbourhood Plan for Wythall Parish – Consultation Report (January 2025)
- Wythall Housing Needs Assessment (October 2022)
- Wythall Design Guidelines & Design Codes (October 2023)
- Wythall Audit of Community Facilities and Infrastructure (July 2024)
- Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan – Habitats, Nature Networks and Agricultural Land (January 2024)
- Historic Environment Record Search (November 2022)
- Assessment of existing housing developments in Wythall – Good design and development form in relation to achieved housing densities (2024)
- Local Bus Services
- Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulation Assessment (July 2024)
- National Trust 8 Hills Regional Park Spatial Framework (June 2023)

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## THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR WYTHALL PARISH REGULATION 15 DRAFT FEBRUARY 2025

*(Version of 09 January 2026: APL.Wyth.100.D)*

Prepared with  
support from Andrea  
Pellegram Ltd



Andrea Pellegram Ltd.

## FOREWORD

Wythall Parish Council formed a Steering Group to develop this Neighbourhood Plan in 2020. The group, consisting of committed local volunteers; both councillors and members of the public, has worked hard over the intervening period to formulate a plan that will, once formally adopted by our community at referendum, form a part of the legal planning process.

Wythall is in a unique position, situated in the northeastern corner of Worcestershire and Bromsgrove, sharing borders with Solihull, Stratford Upon Avon and Birmingham as well as other Parishes within Bromsgrove. The Neighbourhood Plan area covers the whole civil Parish of Wythall, some 4,768 acres or 1,929 hectares and a population of 12,269.

The population is spread amongst several settlements including Hollywood, Major's Green, Drakes Cross and the village of Wythall, as well as several smaller areas and rural hamlets including Headley Heath, Walkers Heath, Tanners Green and Inkford. Preserving the distinct character of each locality is of paramount importance.

Outside of the settlement boundaries of Hollywood, Wythall, Major's Green and Walkers Heath, all of the Neighbourhood Area falls within the Green Belt, the landscape of which reflects the farming history of the area.

The Bromsgrove District Plan 2011-2030 is being reviewed to meet the future development needs of the area, driven by new Government housing targets. The Neighbourhood Plan emerges as an important tool for guiding future development within Wythall Parish where development strategy options include significant housing provision in the area.

Wythall (including Drakes Cross, Hollywood and Grimes Hill) is categorised as a Large Settlement by Bromsgrove District Council. There is significant developer interest in development within the area on land which is at present Green Belt. The Neighbourhood Plan strives to safeguard Wythall's rural heritage while expecting to accommodate a share of new housing development.

Wythall enjoys 'the best of both worlds' with connectivity to Birmingham and surrounding towns, as well as a rural character with the countryside 'on our doorstep'. This Neighbourhood Plan serves as a unique opportunity to influence development and shape the future of the Parish.

I extend my gratitude to all who have contributed to this endeavour, from those who participated in public consultations to the diligent members of the Steering Group, dedicatedly led by Cllr Les Turner and guided by Lee Searles from Andrea Pellegram Ltd and our Deputy Clerk Anne-Louise Henderson. Together, we have laid the foundation for a vibrant and sustainable future for Wythall.

**Councillor Dianne Taylor**  
**Chair, Wythall Parish Council**

## Contents

<b>Contents .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. Introduction to Wythall Parish.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. The Role and Scope of the Neighbourhood Plan .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>3. Our Vision and Development Objectives .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>4. Community Infrastructure, Assets and Services .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Wider Actions to Deliver Community Aspirations and Priorities .....	20
Neighbourhood Plan priorities for Community Infrastructure .....	21
<b>5. Housing Requirements .....</b>	<b>27</b>
Wythall Housing Needs Assessment .....	27
<b>6. Design and Development Form .....</b>	<b>36</b>
Character Areas .....	36
Development Form and Density .....	45
Sustainable Buildings .....	48
<b>7. Local Heritage .....</b>	<b>50</b>
Local Heritage Assets .....	52
<b>8. Green Infrastructure .....</b>	<b>55</b>
Local Green Space Sites .....	56
Biodiversity Gains from New Development.....	57
<b>9. Sustainable Travel .....</b>	<b>60</b>
Public Transport Service in Wythall Parish .....	60
Rail Services from Wythall Station.....	63
Access to local services on foot .....	64
<b>10. Monitoring, Delivery and Review .....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>APPENDIX A - Wythall Parish Local Heritage Sites.....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>APPENDIX B - Local Green Space Sites Assessment .....</b>	<b>79</b>

# Agenda Item 10

## Tables and Figures

Table 1 - Achievement of Sustainable Development objectives .....	12
Table 2 - Basic Condition for broad conformity and no conflict with Strategic Policies .....	14
Table 3 – Community Aspirations and Priorities .....	20
Table 4 – Design Principles for Wythall Parish Character Areas .....	38
Table 5 – Design Guidance Codes for New Development in Wythall Parish .....	39
Table 6 – Approximate Housing Densities within Wythall Parish Character Areas.....	46
Table 7 – Densities achieved within selected housing developments in Wythall Parish .....	47
Table 8 – Nationally Designated Heritage Assets in Wythall Parish – Grading and Locations ....	51
Table 9 - Assessment of priority walking and cycling routes – quality and investment priorities	72
Table 10 - Monitoring for Neighbourhood Plan delivery .....	77

Figure 1 – Wythall Neighbourhood Area Boundary .....	10
Figure 2 – Neighbourhood Plan Survey Main Findings, May-July 2021.....	16
Figure 3 – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats for Wythall Parish.....	18
Figure 4 – Housing Tenure of Household in Wythall Parish in 2021.....	28
Figure 5 – House Price Trends in Wythall Parish, 2012-2021 .....	29
Figure 6 – Affordability Thresholds for different types of home in Wythall.....	30
Figure 7 –Accommodation Types in Wythall Parish, Bromsgrove and England, 2021 .....	33
Figure 8 – Accommodation size in Wythall Parish, Bromsgrove and England, 2021 .....	34
Figure 9 – Character Areas within Wythall Parish .....	37
Figure 10 – Local Character Areas within Wythall .....	46
Figure 11 – Nationally Designated Heritage Assets in Wythall Parish – Mapped Locations .....	50
Figure 12 – Criteria for Non-Designated Heritage Assets .....	53
Figure 13 – NPPF policy on Local Green Space Designation .....	56
Figure 14 – Opportunities for habitat network enhancement, expansion and connection .....	59
Figure 15 – Bus Service 50A from Redditch to Birmingham through Wythall Parish .....	61
Figure 16 – Bus Services 664 and 665 Around Wythall Parish .....	62
Figure 17 – Bus Service 150 Route through Wythall Parish.....	62
Figure 18 – Key Parish Facilities .....	65
Figure 19 – Walking access times to community facilities .....	66
Figure 20 - Priority walking and cycling routes in Wythall Parish .....	69
Figure 21 - Close up of location of Potential Parking Area 2.....	69

## Policies

WYTHALL 1 – Local Community Facilities.....	24
WYTHALL 2 - Affordable Housing Tenure .....	32
WYTHALL 3 - Housing Types and Sizes in Wythall .....	35
WYTHALL 4 – Good Design and Development Form in Wythall Parish .....	48
WYTHALL 5 – Environmental Performance of Buildings .....	49
WYTHALL 6 - Wythall Parish Local Heritage Assets .....	53
WYTHALL 7 - Local Green Space Sites .....	57
WYTHALL 8 – Biodiversity Gains from new development in Wythall Parish .....	59
WYTHALL 9 – Support for Bus Services.....	63
WYTHALL 10 – Support for Rail Services and Station improvements .....	64
WYTHALL 11 – Support for improvements to priority walking and cycling routes .....	71

## 1. Introduction to Wythall Parish

### History and Character of Wythall Parish

1. Wythall is a civil Parish, of some 4,768 acres or 1,929 hectares, situated in the northeastern corner of Worcestershire. The civil Parish was created in 1911 when Wythall was divorced from the Parish of King's Norton which was absorbed into Birmingham. Wythall has since shared the county boundaries with Birmingham and Warwickshire.
2. The name Wythall is said to be derived from the name Wythworth, with ‘worth’ meaning an enclosure where Withies or Osiers (typically used for thatching, basket making, and constructing woven wattle hurdles) are grown or prepared.
3. Wythall has a rural heritage with a pastoral farming landscape which is still evident in the western parts of the Parish away from the main settlements of Wythall, Hollywood and Majors Green. There is some industrial heritage too, with flax production and tanning being significant industries in the Parish up until the 19th century.
4. Wythall has 19 historic buildings designated as Listed Buildings by Historic England. The buildings are dispersed throughout the Parish, reflecting a settlement pattern historically characterised by farmsteads and clusters of dwellings along ancient thoroughfares.
5. Chapel Lane and Station Road appear on the oldest existing road map dated 1330 and were used on the route from Droitwich to Coventry. Both roads are where some of the Neighbourhood Area’s oldest buildings are located, including several Listed buildings such as St Mary’s Church and The Old School House. Silver Street is another historic road, once a salt track extending between Houndsfield and Droitwich used for carrying timber to the salt works.
6. Between 1904 and 1917 historic mapping demonstrates residential development underway at Inkford, Tanners Green and Grimes Hill, and by the time of the 4th edition OS Map 1938 settlement is also underway at Hollywood and Major’s Green.
7. Clay pits are present throughout the Parish suggesting Brick Kiln sites are likely to have been more frequent than recorded on the available historic mapping.
8. In the south of the Parish, the site of the current Phoenix Group headquarters and surrounding land was previously RAF Wythall (from 1939 to 1960). The military base was a balloon barrage centre (No.6 Barrage Balloon Centre) defending southern Birmingham and Coventry during the Second World War. After the war it became a demobilisation centre for all Women’s Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) members nationally. Then, between 1952 and 1957, it was a Joint Services School for Linguists, which catered for all three services by teaching servicemen Russian, Chinese, Polish, Czech, and German, for them to become interpreters and translators.
9. There is one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the Neighbourhood Area; Berry Mound Pastures, an 11.84 hectare site comprising of horse grazed pastureland and meadow. The site was first designated in 1994 due to diverse seminatural grassland. The site lies to the southwest of Berry Mound Camp.
10. The Neighbourhood Area is served by a network of 20 miles of Public Rights of Way (PROW), most of which are footpaths providing connectivity throughout the area’s open landscape. These are well used for recreational purposes and many PROW provide active travel links between key

# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

places within the Neighbourhood Area, including between Hollywood and Wythall and north from Hollywood to Birmingham.

11. As well as footpaths, there are several bridleways to the north of Kings Norton Golf Course as well as around Gay Hill further north. These are well used by horse riders and recreational walkers alike.
12. Route 55 of the National Cycle Network runs through the northwest of the Neighbourhood Area, entering via Primrose Hill before following Icknield Street where it leaves the area at the junction with Redhill Road.

### Wythall Parish Today

13. Whilst situated just beyond the edge of a major conurbation, Wythall Parish lies within Green Belt open countryside with a landscape which has many of its historical elements preserved. The protection afforded to the green belt has meant that essential rural characteristics of quiet lanes, rural footpaths, heritage features remain in place, alongside more modern settlements which grew up within defined settlement boundaries and which support commuting by train, bus and car into Birmingham, out to Stratford upon Avon and, through connections to the M42 motorway, by road to the wider area. The A435 provides a dual carriageway link to the M42 and into Birmingham, whilst Wythall Rail Station provides services into Birmingham.
14. The main settlements of the Parish are Hollywood, Wythall village and Majors Green. These are set within settlement boundaries and are separated from each other by Green Belt. Walkers Heath, whilst within the Parish, is part of the Birmingham conurbation. With the exception of the Wythall Green Business Park, other smaller settlements including Shawbrook, Tanners Green, Silver Street and Bateman's Green are washed over by Green Belt.
15. The settlements of the Parish are served by local community services – There are primary schools and a secondary school, a leisure centre and a medical practice located in Hollywood, where most of the key services located in the Parish are based. Other than that, each settlement has a local shopping parade and a pub. Petrol Filling Stations are located at two locations within the Parish, in Hollywood and on the A435 south of Wythall at Shawbrook.
16. Business and Retail activities are located to the west of Wythall village off the A435, including a retail village, the Wythall Transport Museum, a Caravan park and the current Phoenix Group. Other businesses are located throughout the Parish in rural locations.
17. The countryside within the Parish hosts a number of urban fringe activities including golf courses, animal sanctuaries and equestrian facilities.
18. Bromsgrove District Council's 2019 Green Belt Purposes Review indicated that the Green Belt of Wythall Parish plays an important role in preventing sprawl beyond the current edge of Birmingham. The main settlements in the Parish are separated by Green Belt and it plays an important role in preventing the coalescence of these communities to form a larger urban area. As of January 2025, Bromsgrove District Council has not published further technical work or policy proposals regarding the future status of Green Belt in Wythall. This is a strategic policy consideration beyond the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan.
19. Notwithstanding strategic planning considerations which will unfold over time, the residents and businesses of Wythall Parish are, through this Neighbourhood Plan, setting out a positive vision for the future of the community, clear objectives to contribute to the achievement of the vision, and concrete policies which will guide new development along their path.

## Population

20. In 2021, the population of Wythall was around 12,269 people living in 5,100 households. The population grew from 11,678 in 2011. The population is weighted towards older people, with Wythall's population containing comparatively few people in every age cohort under the age of 50 than the England average, and comparatively more in every age cohort from 50 years and older. There are approaching double the proportion of people 75 years and older than the England average. More of the population is female than male, with a proportion of females greater than the England average (over one percentage point more at 52.1% of the population of Wythall). Less than 35% of households in Wythall contain more than two people. Around 43% of people aged 16 years and over are economically inactive.
21. At the time of the Census in 2021, working patterns were affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic – Over 34% of people in employment were working mainly from home. 31% travelled less than 10km to their place of work and a further nearly 18% travelled between 10km and 30km. Despite the presence of bus and train services serving the Parish, nearly 59% of the working population travelled to work by car or van. 2.3% took the bus or train and 3.5% percent walked or cycled.
22. By and large, occupation and socio-economic classification information confirms that people are generally employed in higher-level occupations and are in more comfortable socio-economic positions than the England average.
23. The overwhelming majority of people living in Wythall own their own home (84%), many outright without a mortgage (49.5%). The homes are mostly houses and not flats, and they are larger properties than the England average in terms of bedrooms – 77.5% are three or more bedroomed properties. On the whole, with smaller households than average, homes are under-occupied with 77% of households having at least one spare bedroom. A larger proportion of residential properties in Wythall are Bungalows than in the rest of Bromsgrove or England as a whole.

## Economy

24. The economic landscape of Wythall is diverse, shaped by a mix of industries, businesses, and employment opportunities.
25. The farming heritage of Wythall is still evident with working farms maintaining the local landscape. Additionally, the popularity of horse-riding schools, livery stables, catteries, dog kennels, veterinary practices, and animal sanctuaries underscores the community's affinity for animals.
26. Only one single employment site is designated in the Parish in the Bromsgrove District Plan, at Wythall Green, currently home to Phoenix Insurance Group and others. However, Wythall hosts various other commercial and industrial sites, including industrial parks, packaging and printing firms, car maintenance and fuel sales, construction industry firms, landscaping and roofing centres, and the Head Office of Acorns Children's Hospice charity. These businesses contribute to the local economy and provide employment opportunities.
27. There are numerous self-employed individuals and small businesses, including consultancy firms, which operate from residential addresses, reflecting the entrepreneurial spirit of the community.
28. While lacking a central retail area, Wythall has several smaller shopping areas dispersed throughout populated areas, offering groceries, hairdressing services, pharmacies, and food

# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

outlets. There is however, a lack of local shops in Major's Green and, the facilities provided in neighbouring Birmingham are closer and more convenient for Walkers Heath residents.

29. The hospitality industry is also growing, with pubs, coffee shops, and takeaways providing a variety of food options.
30. Perhaps reflecting the demographic of Wythall residents, there are several care homes in the area, the biggest being Moundsley Hall Ltd in Walkers Heath. At the other end of the spectrum, several children's nurseries and child minders add to the local economy reflecting the needs of local families with working parents.
31. Sports enthusiasts are well catered for with three golf clubs, a driving range, local amateur football and rugby clubs, and a gym/sports and fitness centre. A recent planning permission for a swimming pool further enhances recreational opportunities.
32. Attractions like the Transport Museum and Camping and Caravanning Club approved campsite at Chapel Lane attract visitors, contributing to the local tourism industry.
33. Wythall benefits from good road transportation links, thanks to its proximity to Junction 3 of the M42 and other major roads, providing connectivity for businesses and residents alike.
34. Commuters can also use the local train service to Birmingham and Stratford Upon Avon (although this is only once per hour each way). Wythall Station has no car park but there is a large car park at Whitlocks End (just over the Solihull border but still on the same railway line).
35. The local bus services, although not particularly regular, take residents to Solihull, Redditch, Kings Heath and Birmingham.
36. Overall, the economic landscape of Wythall is characterized by a mix of traditional industries, growing sectors like hospitality and tourism, and supportive infrastructure that contributes to the community's vitality and resilience.

### **Culture**

37. Wythall may be unusual in that it does not have a specific 'centre' but rather is spread over several smaller settlement areas. Nevertheless, there is a rich cultural life, with a strong sense of community and a multitude of activities and events available to residents.
38. Wythall has a vibrant community life with various clubs, activities, and events catering to different interests and age groups. This includes sports clubs, golf clubs, a library, a comedy club and a memory café for those living with dementia and their carers, fostering a sense of belonging and engagement among residents.
39. The presence of parks, play areas, sports facilities, allotments, and local coffee shops indicates a focus on recreation and leisure activities within the community. This provides opportunities for relaxation, socialization, and outdoor enjoyment.
40. Wythall hosts a range of cultural events throughout the year, such as bonfire displays, pantomimes, craft markets, and seasonal celebrations like Christmas lights switch-on and Remembrance services. These events contribute to the cultural identity of the community and provide opportunities for people to come together and celebrate.
41. There is a strong connection to the area's heritage and history including the War Memorial, historic buildings like Wythall Village Hall, Kingswood Meeting House and the Church of St Mary.

# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

This connection is emphasized by the existence of the Wythall History Society. Preserving and celebrating this heritage adds depth to the community's cultural fabric.

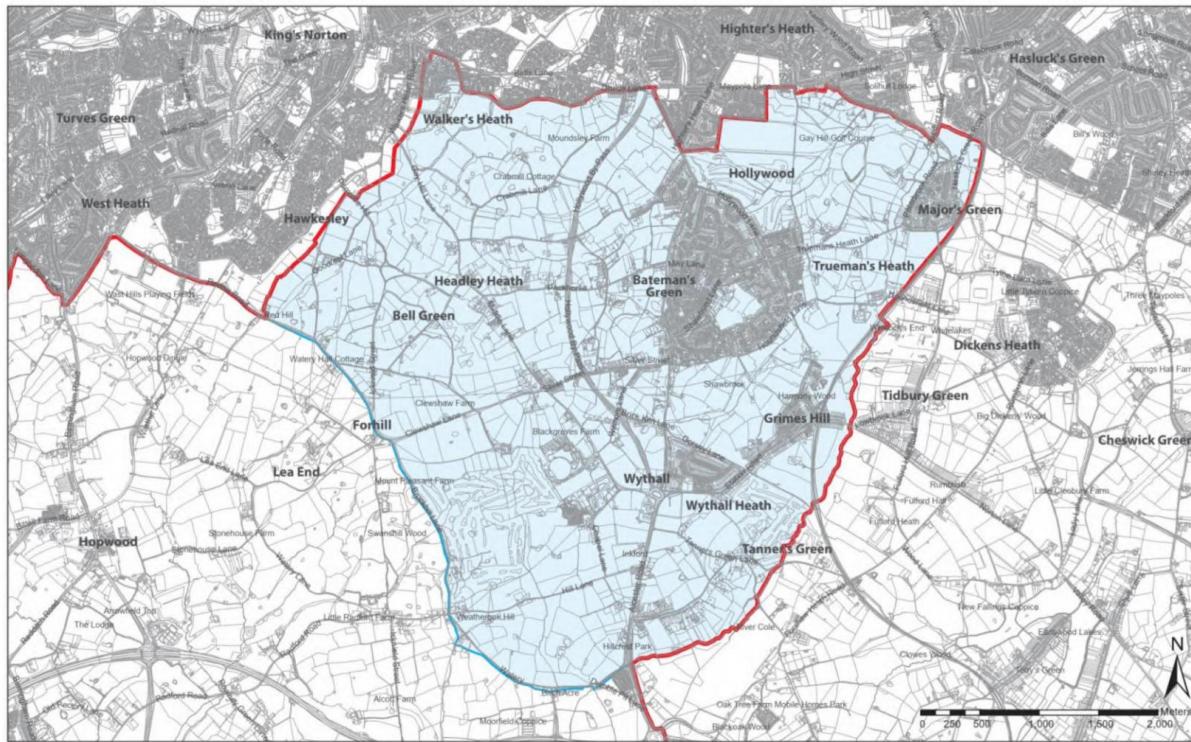
42. The active involvement of volunteers in various community initiatives, from litter picking to maintaining public rights of way, demonstrates a strong spirit of volunteerism and civic engagement among residents. This volunteerism plays a crucial role in sustaining community activities and amenities.
43. Local schools, churches and the library serve as focal points for community activities, including educational programmes, social gatherings, and religious services. These institutions contribute to the holistic development and well-being of residents.
44. The emphasis on outdoor activities like walking, cycling, and horse riding, as well as initiatives to improve the local train station with planters and art installations, highlights the community's appreciation for nature and the environment. This integration of natural elements into the cultural landscape enhances the quality of life for residents.
45. Overall, the cultural scene in Wythall is driven by a strong sense of community spirit, historical consciousness, and a commitment to fostering engagement and well-being among its residents.

## 2. The Role and Scope of the Neighbourhood Plan

### Neighbourhood Plan Area

46. Wythall Parish Council applied for designation of the Neighbourhood Area for its Neighbourhood Plan with an area based on the boundary of the Parish. This was approved by Bromsgrove District Council on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020. The Neighbourhood Area is set out in Figure 1.

**Figure 1 – Wythall Neighbourhood Area Boundary**



Wythall Neighbourhood Plan  
**Neighbourhood Plan Area**

Wythall Neighbourhood Plan Area — Bromsgrove District Boundary

**Bromsgrove**  
District Council  
[www.bromsgrove.gov.uk](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk)

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### Policy Framework for the Neighbourhood Plan

47. Neighbourhood plans must operate in accordance with guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which says that succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings. This applies to plans at all levels and so neighbourhood plans should play their part in the planning system in the same way.

48. A key reference to the role of neighbourhood planning is set out in Paragraph 30 of the NPPF. Here, it says neighbourhood plans give communities the power to develop a shared vision for their areas and through them shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan.

49. Neighbourhood plans are required to meet Basic Conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as applied to Neighbourhood Development Plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A Basic Conditions Statement has been prepared alongside the neighbourhood plan to demonstrate how the plan meets basic conditions.

# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

50. Importantly, neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies. A key requirement is that neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area.
51. Once the neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, its policies will be considered alongside Local Plan policies under section 38(6) of the 1990 Act when determining planning applications. Where they are in conflict, neighbourhood plan policies will take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the local plan covering the Neighbourhood Area, until they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.

### National Planning Policies

52. The current version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in December 2024. The NPPF sets out national planning policies in a single document and in so doing sets the framework for plan-making and decision-making on development proposals. The Framework explains the relationship between the NPPF, Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans. This influences how local planning authorities approach the development of local plan policies and how they regard policies as strategic or non-strategic in nature. The NPPF identifies matters on which the government thinks local communities through Neighbourhood Plans can contribute to the achievement of national policy goals and also express their own ambitions and objectives.

### Local Plans Context

53. The adopted Development Plan for the area is made up of the following documents:
  - Bromsgrove District Plan 2011-2030 (adopted 25 January 2017)
  - Waste Core Strategy for Worcestershire, Adopted Waste Local Plan 2012-2027 (adopted November 2012)
  - Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan 2018-2036 (adopted July 2022)

### Emerging Local Plan Review

54. In accordance with a Local Development Scheme published in February 2025, Bromsgrove District Council is preparing a Bromsgrove District Local Plan to set out where new housing, employment and other development, alongside its supporting infrastructure, will take place over the plan period to 2043.

### Setting a Time Period for the Neighbourhood Plan

55. The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to ensure it conforms with strategic policies in the development plan, the NPPF and, as far as possible in the emerging local plan in preparation. The Neighbourhood Plan end date has been set to 2040 which was the end date of the emerging local plan during Neighbourhood Plan Preparation, but which has since been extended to 2043.

# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

**The proposed time period for the Neighbourhood Plan is 2021-2040.**

### Supporting Documents to the Neighbourhood Plan

56. Several documents were prepared or are referred to as supporting documents to the Neighbourhood Plan, as follows:

- Wythall Housing Needs Assessment (AECOM) (October 2022)
- Wythall Design Guidelines & Design Codes (AECOM) (October 2023)
- Wythall Audit of Community Facilities and Infrastructure (July 2024)
- Wythall Parish Habitats, Nature Networks & Agricultural Land (January 2024)
- Historic Environment Record (November 2022)
- Assessment of existing housing developments in Wythall – Good design and development form in relation to achieved housing densities (2024)
- Local Bus Services
- Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulation Assessment (July 2024)
- National Trust 8 Hills Regional Park Spatial Framework Report (June 2023)

### Neighbourhood Plan Contribution to Sustainable Development

57. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that plans seek to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development through meeting economic, social and environmental objectives (set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF). The Wythall Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with these requirements in mind. Table 1 below demonstrates how each of the policies within the plan contribute to the achievement of one or more of the overarching objectives which mutually support the achievement of sustainable development.

**Table 1 - Achievement of Sustainable Development objectives**

Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Economic objective	Social Objective	Environmental Objective
WYTHALL 1 – Local Community Facilities	Ensuring a good network of community facilities and assets supports a well-balanced community which is an economic advantage. Would support the retention of services in Wythall Parish.	It is an important aspect of sustainable development that community facilities are present and available locally. Would meet an important community objective to retain existing local facilities used by schools and residents.	Local community facilities allow people to use their cars less in accessing key local services. Would support local availability of facilities reducing the need to travel to other places for services used by the local community.
WYTHALL 2 - Affordable Housing Tenure	Supports the availability of homes affordable to the local working population on average incomes.	Supports the retention of a balanced community and over-concentration of the elderly, based on affordable housing provision.	A supply of homes affordable to people who work in the area should contribute to objectives which seek to reduce the need to travel by car.
WYTHALL 3 - Housing Types and Sizes in Wythall	Local policies which support a range of housing to meet identified local needs will help the	The policy targets specific requirements where lack of provision may be preventing life stage-related access to the right kind of housing, which	Local housing provision to meet local needs will reduce the need for people to move away and

# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

	economy of the area to function better.	supports a balanced community.	travel back to work in the area by car.
WYTHALL 4 – Good Design and Development Form in Wythall Parish	Promotes an attractive living environment which is important to attract workers.	Ensures that new developments complement existing communities and integrate with them.	Will ensure that the character of the villages is retained as new housing is provided.
WYTHALL 5 – Environmental Performance of Buildings	Will support businesses in reducing and managing energy costs.	More energy efficient buildings will support local people to manage energy costs more effectively.	Will make a contribution to net zero carbon objectives
WYTHALL 6 - Wythall Parish Local Heritage Assets	Supports retention of interesting features which add to the attractiveness of the area.	Provides support for local features of heritage cultural value to local residents.	
WYTHALL 7 - Local Green Space Sites	A key part of providing a high-quality local environment which is attractive.	Supports health and well-being for local residents.	Supports linked-up and improved green spaces and habitats and supports local alternatives in the Parish to reduce pressure on sensitive habitats.
WYTHALL 8 – Biodiversity Gains from new development in Wythall Parish	An attractive and biodiverse local environment will be more attractive to businesses for people to locate within the area.	Greater local biodiversity encourages local people to appreciate and connect with nature and to foster well-being.	Clear environmental benefits accrue from a co-ordinated attempt to improve biodiversity from new development and to ensure habitats are strengthened and connected.
WYTHALL 9 – Support for Bus Services	Good public transport services facilitate take-up of available job, shopping and leisure opportunities for a wider section of the population.	Supports greater mobility and access to jobs and services for sections of the population who rely on public transport.	Greater use of bus services helps to reduce carbon emissions from private cars
WYTHALL 10 – Support for Rail Services and Station improvements	Good public transport services facilitate take-up of available job, shopping and leisure opportunities for a wider section of the population.	Supports greater mobility and access to jobs and services for sections of the population who rely on public transport.	Greater use of train services helps to reduce carbon emissions from private cars
WYTHALL 11 – Support for improvements to priority walking and cycling routes	Safe and convenient routes to key services, places of work or transport hubs increase the available employment opportunities for local people and support healthy living	Supports healthy living and provides means of sustainable travel for all sections of the population.	Greater active travel reduces carbon emission from all forms of transport and encourages healthy living.

### Meeting the Basic Conditions

58. Neighbourhood Plans are required to meet Basic Conditions one of which is that policies in the Neighbourhood Plan must be in broad conformity and must not conflict with the NPPF, guidance from the Secretary of State and with adopted local plans. Table 2 below provides references to the NPPF and adopted local plans which are relevant to and support the inclusion of policies within the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan.

**Table 2 - Basic Condition for broad conformity and no conflict with Strategic Policies**

Neighbourhood Plan Policy	NPPF 2024 References	Adopted Bromsgrove District Plan Policy Support
WYTHALL 1 – Local Community Facilities	NPPF Para 88(d), 98, 100, 101 109, 110, 111, 128	BDP6 (Infrastructure Contributions), BDP12 (Sustainable Communities), BDP25 (Health and Well-being)
WYTHALL 2 - Affordable Housing Tenure	NPPF Para 64-66,	BDP7 (Housing Mix and Density), BDP8 (Affordable Housing), BDP9 (Rural Exception Sites) and BDP10 (Homes for the elderly)
WYTHALL 3 - Housing Types and Sizes in Wythall	NPPF Para 64-66 and 71	BDP7 (Housing Mix and Density), BDP8 (Affordable Housing), BDP9 (Rural Exception Sites) and BDP10 (Homes for the elderly)
WYTHALL 4 – Good Design and Development Form in Wythall Parish	NPPF Para 29, 115(c) 125(e), 129-130, 131-136, 139	BDP19 (High Quality Design)
WYTHALL 5 – Environmental Performance of Buildings	NPPF Para 164-165, 167	BDP19 (High Quality Design), BDP22 (Climate Change)
WYTHALL 6 - Wythall Parish Local Heritage Assets	NPPF Para 202-203, 216 and footnote 75	BDP20 (Managing the Historic Environment)
WYTHALL 7 - Local Green Space Sites	NPPF Para 106-108	BDP24 (Green Infrastructure, BDP25 (Health and Well-being)
WYTHALL 8 – Biodiversity Gains from new development in Wythall Parish	NPPF Para 187(d), 192	BDP21 (Natural Environment), BDP24 (Green Infrastructure,
WYTHALL 9 – Support for Bus Services	NPPF Para 109-110	BDP16 (Sustainable Transport)
WYTHALL 10 – Support for Rail Services and Station improvements	NPPF Para 109-110	BDP16 (Sustainable Transport)
WYTHALL 11 – Support for improvements to priority walking and cycling routes	NPPF Para 109, 111(d)	BDP16 (Sustainable Transport)

## Consultation With The Community

59. Engagement of the local community is regarded as essential in developing a vision and objectives for the future development of neighbourhoods and to provide the detailed information to support non-strategic policies that can make a difference to localities. The Wythall Neighbourhood Plan has been supported by engagement and consultation in a variety of forms. These are detailed in the Consultation Report published alongside the Neighbourhood Plan with a brief summary below..

*Survey of Residents, May-July 2021*

60. From May to July 2021, Wythall Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group invited responses to an online questionnaire. The purpose was to invite residents to identify the main issues and challenges facing the Parish and to inform the development of key priorities for the NDP. It asked residents to indicate what they valued most about the Parish and what they would like to see improved. It covered community, environmental, transport and services-related matters. The results are presented in the Consultation Report. A total of 518 responses were received.

61. Figure 2 summarises the main points which demonstrate that local residents value the area's position within and close to local countryside but with (potentially at least) good access to metropolitan services. Public transport is a key concern. The need to provide a better local offer and to retain existing commercial services and community facilities is also a high priority. The

# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

survey also indicates support for greater investment in environmental and public realm infrastructure. With regard to new housing development, planned and controlled development is a key priority so that impacts can be minimised and current settlement characteristics can be maintained.

### *Wythall Unlocked, 14 August 2021.*

62. As part of the Parish Council's work to engage with the local community on the development of the NDP, the Parish Council ran a stall at the Wythall Unlocked 2 fair which took place on 14 August 2021. A map of the Parish was set out and visitors were invited to review the sites which had been submitted as part of the Bromsgrove District Council's call for development sites for housing and employment exercise and indicate where they viewed development would be potentially acceptable or potentially undesirable.

### *NDP Consultation Event, 2 February 2022*

63. The NDP consultation event was held at Wythall Village Hall. Around 65 people from the Parish attended the event. Members from the Parish Council, District and County Council members also attended. Many people participated in discussion and at the end of the event, residents came forward who expressed an interest in contributing to the development of the NDP.

### *Formation of NDP Working Groups*

64. Based on the matters identified through consultation and engagement on the development of the NDP, a number of suggested policy themes were discussed with potential actions. This led to the formation of the following working groups:

- Sustainable Transport – traffic generation and routes, car parking, rail and bus services, cycling and pedestrian routes and access.
- Maintaining and protecting local identity and assets (including design approach and the protection of local non-designated heritage assets).
- Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure (linked with pedestrian and cycle networks and local identity).
- Community infrastructure, assets and services.
- Housing Mix.

### *Annual Meeting of the Parish, 20 April 2023*

65. The Annual Meeting of Wythall Parish takes place every year between March and June and is designed to provide a forum for local residents to hear about the work of the council and to raise issues with the council. The Annual Meeting attracted approximately 30 attendees. A presentation was given and this was followed by questions and answers about local planning matters and the role of the NDP.

### *Regulation 14 Consultation*

66. Regulation 14 Consultation was carried out between 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024 and 20<sup>th</sup> December 2024. The Consultation Report published alongside the NDP provides full details of the consultation.

**Figure 2 – Neighbourhood Plan Survey Main Findings, May-July 2021**

What residents value about their local area	What improvements are needed	Perspectives on housing development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Services</li> <li>• Wythall Park</li> <li>• Appearance and village feel</li> <li>• Open spaces, play areas and access to countryside</li> <li>• Community/social aspects, local facilities, accessibility, public transport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police presence and control of crime and anti-social behaviour</li> <li>• Control of traffic speeds through traffic calming in a wide number of locations</li> <li>• Public transport services and facilities</li> <li>• Pedestrian routes, surfaces, lighting and cycle lanes and crossings at key locations</li> <li>• Parking at key facilities such as schools and the hub</li> <li>• Wythall Park and facilities</li> <li>• Public Realm - verges, flower planting, litter, fly-tipping etc</li> <li>• Services and facilities - better restaurants, pubs, youth, health and recreation and community facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to control of ad-hoc development.</li> <li>• Balance of private/ affordable /social / retirement type housing, mix of house sizes constructed – family to single person, new housing spread throughout the Parish.</li> <li>• Fewer new build houses in Wythall</li> <li>• Retain the village feel</li> <li>• Protect Green Belt and Open Spaces</li> </ul>

## 3. Our Vision and Development Objectives

### Wythall Parish Within a Wider Development Context

67. The Parish of Wythall occupies a strategic position to the south of the West Midlands Conurbation at the north-eastern end of Bromsgrove District. It borders the City of Birmingham and the Metropolitan Borough of Solihull.
68. The Parish has a long history as an agricultural area with a pattern of settled village communities which, over time, has developed transport infrastructure through and skirting the area. The Parish has become host to an important range of social, recreational and other activities and services located in the countryside green belt but serving wider urban areas as well as its own needs.
69. The area provides a good mix of heritage assets of value nationally and locally. It provides a good quality environment for residential communities in the Parish. The Parish hosts high quality leisure businesses and an important headquarters office.
70. The railway station serving Wythall Parish is located on the eastern side of Wythall Village. As such it is accessible for commuters into Birmingham from the adjacent Parish of Tidbury Green within Solihull. The Solihull MBC ‘emerging’ Local Plan was withdrawn in October 2024 due to concerns over a significant shortfall in housing land supply. A new Local Plan is now being prepared and is expected to propose substantial development across the borough. In the meantime, several speculative and large-scale housing schemes are already coming forward, with at least one citing the proximity to existing train stations- including Wythall - as a key advantage.
71. The M42 motorway runs west to east outside the southern boundary of the Parish but which provides a junction (Junction 3) and partly dualled A435 road connection north to Wythall and then by single carriageway into Birmingham and Solihull. Road connections from adjoining Parishes to the east into Wythall are seen as poor in the local community. The Stratford upon Avon Canal clips the north-east corner of the Parish by Majors Green.
72. The Parish has local shops and services, but supermarkets and larger shops are located at the Maypole within Birmingham to the north. Bus service connections to this location exist but have been reduced in recent years.
73. The Bromsgrove District Plan was adopted in January 2017 with an acknowledged deficit in the identification of housing land sufficient to meet housing needs over the plan period to 2030. Bromsgrove District Council is now working on a new District Local Plan with an extended period to 2043. Draft Development Strategy Options include de-designation of green belt land and new housing site allocations in Wythall Parish.

### Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

74. Engagement with local residents helped to identify issues, challenges and opportunities for the Parish in the context of potential new development in the area, as the basis for identifying key themes and priorities in the NDP. Figure 3 summarises points raised by residents.

## Figure 3 – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats for Wythall Parish

### Strengths

- Green Belt offers clear development boundaries and should continue to do so.
- The area has excellent countryside walks and countryside resources.
- Train station.

### Weaknesses

- Lack of planning with Solihull over potential development sites there. There is potential to generate significant traffic from these sites across Wythall (East-West) to access A435. These roads are local and narrow.
- Access to local shopping opportunities for pedestrians are limited.
- Bus services are limited.
- Train services are limited.
- Cycling networks are poor.

### Opportunities

- Currently, there is no car parking provided at Wythall Rail Station. New development would provide an opportunity to remedy this.
- Need to upgrade telecommunications – mobile phone signals, broadband/fibre.
- Strengthen green corridors and ecology.
- New development could provide affordable housing for young people.
- Better design of new developments.

### Threats

- Community infrastructure and services will come under increased pressure from new development.
- An increase in local housing development will increase traffic to local services and schools and worsen parking problems.
- Concern that changes to Green Belt to allow new development could lead to the area being overwhelmed by Birmingham and Solihull development.
- The area could lose its identity.
- Ribbon development along the A435 in the direction of the M42 Junction 3.

### Challenges and Opportunities

75. In this context, the challenge for the Parish is to ensure that, in the face of new development, Wythall Parish remains recognisable as the community it has developed into and its quality of life is maintained as defined by access to green spaces, access to services, the effective management of traffic and the quality of the built environment.
76. Development also brings opportunities to improve transport services, promote more sustainable travel networks for walking and cycling, address parking issues, improve the provision of local services and establish strong networks for green infrastructure and biodiversity. New housing

development can meet specific local needs and new commercial development can create local jobs.

77. Matters of principle on strategic developments will be decided through the creation of the Local Plan. With good evidence to support its policies, the Neighbourhood Plan can make sure that development is delivered in a way which meets local needs and local aspirations.

## **Vision**

78. The Neighbourhood Plan sets a vision for the Parish up to 2040. This matched the original end date of the emerging Bromsgrove District Local Plan, which is going to set a clear context for future development in the area. The emerging Bromsgrove District Local Plan period has since been extended to 2043 whereas the Neighbourhood Plan period remains unchanged. The Vision is formed in this context and is set out below.

By 2040, Wythall Parish will remain a distinctive local community. New development will be well-accommodated based on good design principles. People will use walking, cycling and public transport opportunities more and use their car less. Good local services will meet the needs of the local population. Local people will have a choice of housing to meet their needs. The environment, made up of heritage assets, green infrastructure and habitats for wildlife, will be much improved. Overall, the quality of life for people living in Wythall will be excellent.

## **Objectives**

79. The Neighbourhood Plan Group has examined a number of possible actions that could be taken to help to deliver the Vision. Consultation and engagement revealed a number of clear community concerns and priorities. Objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan are set out below:

OBJECTIVE 1 - To improve travel and transport to reduce traffic congestion and promote alternatives to the use of private cars, including by providing safe walking and cycle routes.

OBJECTIVE 2 - To promote good quality design in new developments which supports sustainable travel and green and blue infrastructure objectives.

OBJECTIVE 3 - To identify and deliver a green and blue infrastructure network comprised of Local Green Space, Green travel corridors, formal and incidental open spaces, watercourses, ponds, wetlands and connected habitats which meet a variety of public realm, travel, health, well-being, biodiversity and other functions.

OBJECTIVE 4 - To make sure new housing development delivers housing of a size and type and level of affordability which meets the needs of people living in the area.

OBJECTIVE 5 – To ensure that the provision of local services, community facilities and assets keeps pace with development to meet the needs of the local community.

## 4. Community Infrastructure, Assets and Services

80. This section of the Neighbourhood Plan sets out priorities for local community infrastructure, assets and services that it may be possible to deliver through development. The development of the Neighbourhood Plan has involved a wide-ranging conversation with the local community of the Parish. Through this dialogue, the community have raised important issues which they want to see tackled to improve their lives. Not all of these can be addressed by planning policies which are necessarily focused on influencing land use and development within carefully set limits. This section of the plan also considers the wider matters raised and provides potential ways in which action can be taken to address them. This is an important complementary strand of future priorities that sit alongside but not within Neighbourhood Plan policies.

### Wider Actions to Deliver Community Aspirations and Priorities

81. Wythall Parish contains a number of distinct and culturally linked settlements surrounded by extensive Green Belt. The Communities living within Wythall, Hollywood, Majors Green, Tanners Green and other settlements in the Parish have identified specific aspirations and priorities. Some of these apply within local areas and some across the Parish as a whole. Table 3 sets out aspirations and priorities for different places within Wythall and indicates the actions required to move forward on these. Where these relate to Neighbourhood Plan policies, this is indicated otherwise actions required are outside the Neighbourhood Plan to be led by the Parish Council and/or other partners.

**Table 3 – Community Aspirations and Priorities**

Theme	Aspiration/Priority	Potential Actions (WPC = Wythall Parish Council)
Community	Bigger village hall site potentially incorporating community kitchen and adult learning centre	Secure provision or contributions through new development.
Community	New Parish Council office in a combined community site (eg new village hall site)	Wythall Parish Council (WPC) capital project.
Community	Elderly day care including exercise classes	WPC & Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) Revenue expenditure.
Sport & Recreation	Leisure centre with pool (depending on level of development)	Capital Spend BDC/Developer .
Sport & Recreation	Youth facilities e.g. skate park/bike track (possibly at Wythall Park?)	Secure provision or contributions through new development and plan for capital project for WPC
Employment/ Retail	Expansion of technology park, Middle Lane	Discuss with Bromsgrove DC about how to secure the expansion.
Employment/ Retail	Additional local shopping area including post office (dependent on level of development)	Secure provision through new development.
Health	Proactive health interventions – use of new village hall site	WPC & Community Groups to develop
Environment	Protect Local Green Spaces	Deliver through Neighbourhood Plan policies.

Transport/Environment	Improved/additional Public Rights of Way and bridleways	Deliver through new development in accordance with Neighbourhood Plan policies and Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan (LCWIP).
Transport	Improved Bus services to Birmingham, Solihull, Shirley and Bromsgrove (to enable more use of BDC funded facilities). Review locations of bus stops.	WPC to lobby Worcestershire County Council and Bus Service Providers and support Demand Responsive Transport initiative .
Transport	Increased train services from Wythall Station, to tie in with bus service to create a transport hub	WPC to lobby Worcestershire County Council and other service providers.
Transport	Improved cycle routes, including the possible introduction of 'Quiet Ways'	Deliver through new development in accordance with Neighbourhood Plan policies and Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan (LCWIP)
Transport	Cycle parking at local facilities including shopping parades	WPC to obtain agreement in principle from land owners of shopping parades & other facilities eg village hall to site cycle parking, then investigate funding.
Transport	Improve speeding/parking issues	WPC to lobby Worcestershire County Council and West Mercia Police.

## Neighbourhood Plan priorities for Community Infrastructure

82. The Neighbourhood Plan can take two direct actions in policy to protect and enhance local community infrastructure and services. The first action is to identify important local sites in community uses and protect them from change of use where appropriate. The second is to identify the type and pattern of community infrastructure required to maintain existing communities within the Parish and to address the need for additional facilities when if and when new development comes forward.

### The protection of important sites and facilities

83. The policies map (<https://shared.xmap.cloud/?map=b3b11e60-9d4b-4090-88d7-7b702a139a53>) identifies the location of important local community uses and these are listed in Important local sites in community use. Local Community Uses are identified within the Use Classes Order as F2 Local Community Uses. There are no permitted development rights to change use from F2 uses. It is possible to regard certain developments as F2 uses if they meet certain conditions. The most relevant example of this is the ability to regard local shops selling a range of day-to-day goods including food as F2 if they are located at least 1,000 metres from the next nearest similar shop (and floorspace is smaller than 280 sq.m.).

84. Other facilities may be regarded as F2 Local Community Use dependent on how they are used. For example, a church is an F1 use but may be regarded as having a F2 use alongside if used by the community for wider purposes.

# Agenda Item 10

Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

85. Neighbourhood Plan policies can seek to protect Local Community Facilities by identifying that they perform these uses and meet the relevant criteria and then identifying them as to be protected in policy.
86. A supporting document to the Neighbourhood Plan is called 'Wythall Audit of Community Facilities and Infrastructure'. It sets out the work undertaken to assess the number and use of community facilities in the Parish and to assess future requirements. This has been informed by a survey of organisations which operate infrastructure and delivery services in the Parish. This includes core sites in local community use and also schools, libraries, churches and health facilities.
87. The audit has also included the full range of commercial facilities and local shopping parades which are important in providing a range of shops and services for daily use. Some commercial facilities provide important community benefits and these include childcare provision and care homes.
88. The audit also identifies important social provision including public houses, local parks and play areas, allotments, cemeteries and leisure facilities. It indicates the role each plays in meeting local community needs and highlights where further provision is necessary.
89. The audit also highlights which facilities are vulnerable to permitted changes of use without planning permission under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). This means important local commercial facilities can be lost to different uses, most commonly housing. Some changes require 'prior approval' which means there is a mechanism to highlight the importance of the potential change, and to ask for it to be considered in a planning application. Unless the community highlight this importance, there is every chance permitted development rights changes will go through without scrutiny. The table provides a means by which the importance of local community facilities has been documented.

## **Community infrastructure requirements**

90. The audit describes the current provision and use of facilities within the Parish and, where possible, establishes whether and how capacity is fully utilised and requires further expansion or investment.

## **Policy Considerations**

91. NPPF Paragraph 98 is clear in its requirement that planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of a wide range of community facilities. It says they should take into account the delivery of local strategies for health, social and community well-being and should guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would impact on the ability of the community to meet its day-to-day needs. It says that there should be an integrated approach to the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.
92. Policy BDP6 of the Bromsgrove District Plan addresses infrastructure requirements to support new development that will be delivered in part through S106 Planning Obligations. This would be informed by an Infrastructure Development Plan.
93. Policy BDP25 supports proposals and activities which promote better health and wellbeing. Associated with this are important standards for the provision of parks, gardens, play, sports and allotments.

# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

94. It is important for Wythall Parish to understand what current provision there is of local community facilities, what use is made of them and what is needed to maintain and improve them so they can continue to fulfil their important functions. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies facilities in local community use and demonstrates their current use, capacity and future development needs.
95. Planning Obligations can be secured only insofar as they are required to make development acceptable, are directly related to the development and are reasonable in scale and kind to the development. Within these constraints, Neighbourhood Plan policy identifies the role, capacity and importance of existing facilities in community uses and will expect new developments to demonstrate how they will affect local availability of community facilities and services where they are likely to give rise to increased demands on their use. Policy WYTHALL 1 asks Bromsgrove District Council to take into account the impacts of new development on the availability of local facilities and to ensure that reasonable contributions are secured to address the impacts from new development. Wythall Parish Council will continue its wider engagement with key partners to ensure local community facilities are improved over time.
96. The audit of community facilities and infrastructure identified a range of facilities as important components of community infrastructure that are not regarded as sites in local community use in the Use Classes Order. These are shown below.

### *GP Surgeries:*

- 6      *Hollywood Medical Practice, Beaudesert Road, Hollywood B47 5DP*
- 7      *Hollyoaks Medical Centre, Station Road, Wythall B47 6ET*
- 8      *Dentist: Omnia Dental Spa, Station Road, Wythall B47 6ET*
74.     *Dentist: Hollywood Dental Practice, 279 Alcester Road, Hollywood B47 5HJ*

### *Pharmacies:*

- 9      *Hollywood Pharmacy, May Lane, Hollywood B47 5PA*
- 10     *Wythall Pharmacy, Station Road, Wythall B47 6ET*

### *Public Houses:*

- 44     *The Packhorse, Alcester Road, Hollywood B47 5HA*
- 45     *The White Swan, Alcester Road, Wythall B47 6JG*
- 46     *The Drawbridge Inn, 5 Drawbridge Road, Majors Green B90 1DD*

### *Social Clubs*

- 47     *Wythall Community Club, 52 Silver Street, Wythall, B47 6LZ*
- 48     *Royal British Legion, Houndsfield Lane, Wythall B47 6LS*

### *Local Shopping Precincts/Facilities:*

- 52     *Drakes Cross Shopping Parade, Drakes Cross, B47 5HD*
- 53     *Shops and services, Hollywood Lane, Hollywood, B47 5PY*
- 54     *Shops and services, Station Road, Wythall, B47 6ET*
- 55     *Shops and services, May Lane, Hollywood, B47 5PA*
- 56     *Tesco Express, 71 Alcester Road, Hollywood B47 5PN*
- 57     *Rose Bank Stores & Saddlery, 1 Middle Lane, Birmingham B38 0DX*
- 58     *Select & Save, 262 Station Rd, Wythall, Birmingham B47 6EY*
- 59     *Shops and services, Alcester Road, Hollywood B47 5HJ*

## **WYTHALL 1 – Local Community Facilities**

Proposals which avoid the loss of community facilities in use class F1, F2, or Sui Generis which are essential local services will be supported. Where it is proposed to remove existing community facilities, planning applications should demonstrate that:

- a. Equivalent alternative provision exists within the relevant village, or will be provided; or,
- b. It can be clearly demonstrated that the facility is no longer needed. To demonstrate lack of need, developers should submit evidence that all reasonable efforts have been made

# Agenda Item 10

Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

to market the site/facility for its current use without success over the preceding 12 months.

This policy applies to the facilities listed below (which are detailed in the Audit of Community Facilities and Infrastructure in Wythall Parish Supporting Document and shown on the policies Map:

Ref	Use Class	Community Facility
1	F2(b)	Village Hall, Alcester Road, Wythall B47 6JL
2	F2(c)	Wythall Park, Silver Street, Wythall B47 6LZ
3	F2(c)	Walkers Heath Park, Walkers Heath Road, Walker's Heath, B38 9HP
4	E(d)	Woodrush Community Hub & Leisure Centre, Shawhurst Lane, Hollywood B47
5	F1(d)	Wythall Library
12	F2(c)	Hollywood Play Area, Hollywood Lane (aka Spider Park)
13	F2(c)	Hollywood Drive Play Area, Hollywood
14	F2(c)	May Farm Close Play Area, Hollywood
15	F2(c)	Franklin Close Play Area, Wythall
16	F2(c)	Burnham Road Play Area, Wythall
17	F2(c)	Wythall Park Play Areas, Silver Street, Wythall
18	F2(c)	Walkers Heath Park Play Area, Walkers Heath Road, Walkers Heath
76	Sui Generis	Kingswood Chapel Graveyard, Packhorse Lane, Wythall B47 5DQ
75	Sui Generis	St Mary's Churchyard, Chapel Lane, Wythall
19	Sui Generis	Wythall Cemetery, Middle Lane, Wythall B47 6JX
20	Sui Generis	Wythall Allotments, Baccabox Lane, Wythall B47
21	Sui Generis	Walkers Heath Allotments, Druids Lane, Walkers Heath B14 5QF
22	F1(a)	Woodrush High School, Shawhurst Lane, Hollywood B47 5JW
23	F1(a)	Coppice Primary School, Shawhurst Lane, Hollywood B47 5JN
24	F1(a)	Meadow Green Primary School, Meadow Road, Wythall B47 6EQ
26	F2(c)	Woodrush Rugby FC, Icknield Street, B38 0EL
27	F2(c)	Wake Green Amateur FC, Drawbridge Road, Majors Green B90 1DD
29	F1(f)	St Mary's Church, Shawhurst Lane, Hollywood B47 5JW
30	F1(f)	Hollywood Christian Life Centre, Simms Lane, Hollywood B47 5HN
31	F1(f)	Kingswood Meeting House, Packhorse Lane, Hollywood B47 5DQ
32	F1(f)	New Life Church Centre, Middle Lane, Headley Heath, B38 0DG
33	F1(f)	Kings Norton Christadelphian Hall, Harbinger Road, Kings Norton B38 0AD
44	Sui Generis	The Packhorse, Alcester Road, Hollywood B47 5HA
45	Sui Generis	The White Swan, Alcester Road, Wythall B47 6JG
46	Sui Generis	The Drawbridge Inn, 5 Drawbridge Road, Majors Green B90 1DD
49	F2(c)	Hollywood Golf Club, Hollywood Lane, Hollywood B47 5PP
50	F2(c)	Kings Norton Golf Club, Brockhill Lane, Alvechurch, B48 7ED
51	F2(c)	Fulford Heath Golf Club, Tanners Green Ln, Wythall, B47 6BH
61	F2(c)	Wythall Driving Range, Becketts Farm, Alcester Road, Wythall B47 6AJ
72	F1(c)	Transport Museum Wythall, Chapel Lane, Wythall B47 6JA
73	Sui Generis	Chapel Lane Club Campsite, Chapel Lane, Wythall B47 6JX

# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

Where appropriate, proposals for new development should identify and propose contributions to meet investment priorities outlined in the Audit of Community Facilities and Infrastructure in Wythall Parish Supporting Document for important community infrastructure within Wythall Parish. This includes:

- A - Parking provision at Wythall Station
- B - Additional parking for Wythall Village Hall or an alternative community centre site
- C - Improvements to, and sustained maintenance of, community buildings in Wythall Park
- D - Provision of primary health care services
- E - Car park provisions for primary healthcare services
- F – Replacement larger site for Meadow Green Primary School
- G - Sports facility improvements at Woodrush Hub (Leisure Centre)
- H - Sign for Wythall Library
- I - Additional adult education facilities at Wythall Library
- J - Second site for allotments
- K - Second site for cemetery
- L - Energy efficiency improvements at Coppice Primary School
- M – In the long term a new high school
- N – Cycle Parking at key shops and facilities

## 5. Housing Requirements

97. A key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to make sure new housing development delivers housing of a size and type and level of affordability which meets the needs of people living in the area. This has several dimensions including providing homes that new households and families can afford to maintain community cohesion and balance, to facilitate life stage changes in accommodation such as downsizing, thereby releasing larger houses, and to ensure housing is affordable for all sections of the community.
98. Wythall's population grew by 591 people between 2011 and 2021 to a total of 12,269, according to 2021 Census. A total of 324 new dwellings were completed between 2011 and 2022. Since 2016, 204 dwellings have been completed and of these 31.4% were classed as affordable homes.
99. The development plan for Bromsgrove is out of date with regard to its housing land supply. The updated National Planning Policy Framework and increased Local Housing Requirements applying to Bromsgrove District will increase the likelihood of Green Belt land releases within the district to facilitate development, or development on Green Belt land through speculative development proposals, including in Wythall Parish.
100. The Neighbourhood Plan can only address matters within the Neighbourhood Area as defined, which is the Wythall Parish boundary. Clearly, Wythall Parish shares boundaries with two other areas where development is taking place and which have potential to meet local housing needs.

### Wythall Housing Needs Assessment

101. A valuable role of the Neighbourhood Plan is to provide specific local information on housing affordability and on population which gives rise to different housing requirements. A robust Housing Needs Assessments has been prepared in support of the Neighbourhood Plan to complement district-wide assessments of housing need and allow for the application of Local Plan policies to take account of needs within Wythall based on robust information.
102. Technical support has been obtained through Locality from AECOM to provide a Housing Needs Assessment for Wythall (published October 2022). The period covered by the assessment is from 2023 to 2040. This has examined the tenure profile, prices and affordability of housing in Wythall Parish. It has examined the quantity of affordable housing needed and how this should be provided in terms of tenure. It has also considered the need for different types and sizes of homes reflecting age profiles and household composition, to suggest a future mix of dwelling sizes. In the context of the age profile within the Parish, it has also considered the need for specialist housing for the elderly. The Housing Needs Assessment results and policy considerations for the Neighbourhood Plan are addressed in turn below.
103. Adopted Bromsgrove District Plan Policies relevant to the matters addressed in the Housing Needs Assessment are set out in , BDP7 (Housing Mix and Density), BDP8 (Affordable Housing), BDP9 (Rural Exception Sites) and BDP10 (Homes for the elderly). In all cases the Housing Needs Assessment provides information which supports policies in the Neighbourhood Plan which aids the effective implementation of these strategic policies in the Wythall context.

### Housing Requirement for Wythall

104. The Adopted Local Plan does not provide a sufficient basis for setting a forward housing requirement for Wythall Parish. The Emerging Local Plan has not so far produced proposals which would help to set future housing requirements in the Parish. A working housing

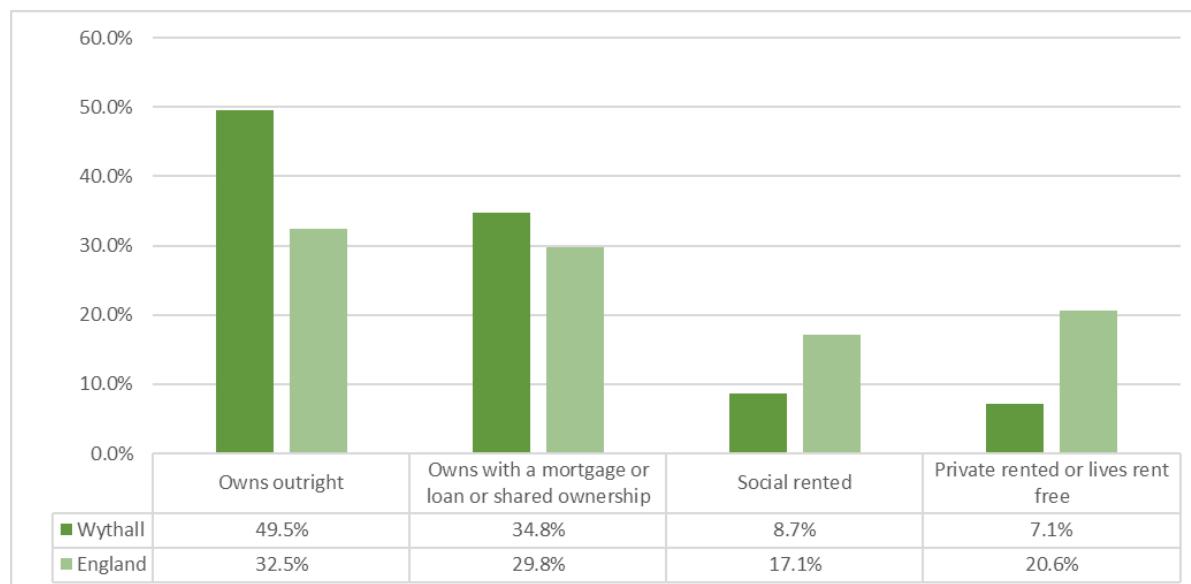
requirement is not available from Bromsgrove District Council and therefore an understanding of a total housing requirement was not available for the Housing Needs Assessment. The Housing Needs Assessments has identified a proxy total housing requirement across Bromsgrove District over the Neighbourhood Plan Period, drawing on the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment published by Bromsgrove District Council in 2022. It pro-rates the total by population to Wythall as a potential guide to likely totals required in the Parish.

105. This is not considered further in the Neighbourhood Plan because no assumption can be made that this total will need to be met in Wythall as the only means to do that would be to release land from the Green Belt. To date, there is no indication when this will occur. Consideration of the amounts of housing likely to be provided in the Parish and therefore of the amount of affordable housing delivered through that is therefore currently not known. The Neighbourhood Plan concentrates on matters that should guide affordable housing provision based on assessed housing needs, whatever total the Parish is eventually asked to accommodate.

## Housing Tenure in Wythall

106. 2021 Census information for Parishes was not published at the time of the Housing Needs Assessment but has been used in Figure 4, which shows that in 2021 Wythall had a significantly higher proportion of households living in owner occupied homes than the average for England and was also higher than the Bromsgrove district average. Correspondingly smaller proportions of households were living in shared ownership or rented homes.

**Figure 4 – Housing Tenure of Household in Wythall Parish in 2021.**



Source: ONS, Census 2021

## Incomes and House Price Affordability in Wythall

107. The Housing Needs Assessment has provided Land Registry data for the period 2012-2021 on different house types within the Parish. Figure 5 presents the median house price in each year of the period for detached, semi-detached and terraced houses, and for flats. The overall average for all types of home is also included. Over the period 2012-2021, the median price of all homes grew by an average 45.6%. The price of flats grew by 30.6%, terraced house prices grew by 40.3% and detached house prices grew by 35.4%. The largest growth in price was of semi-detached

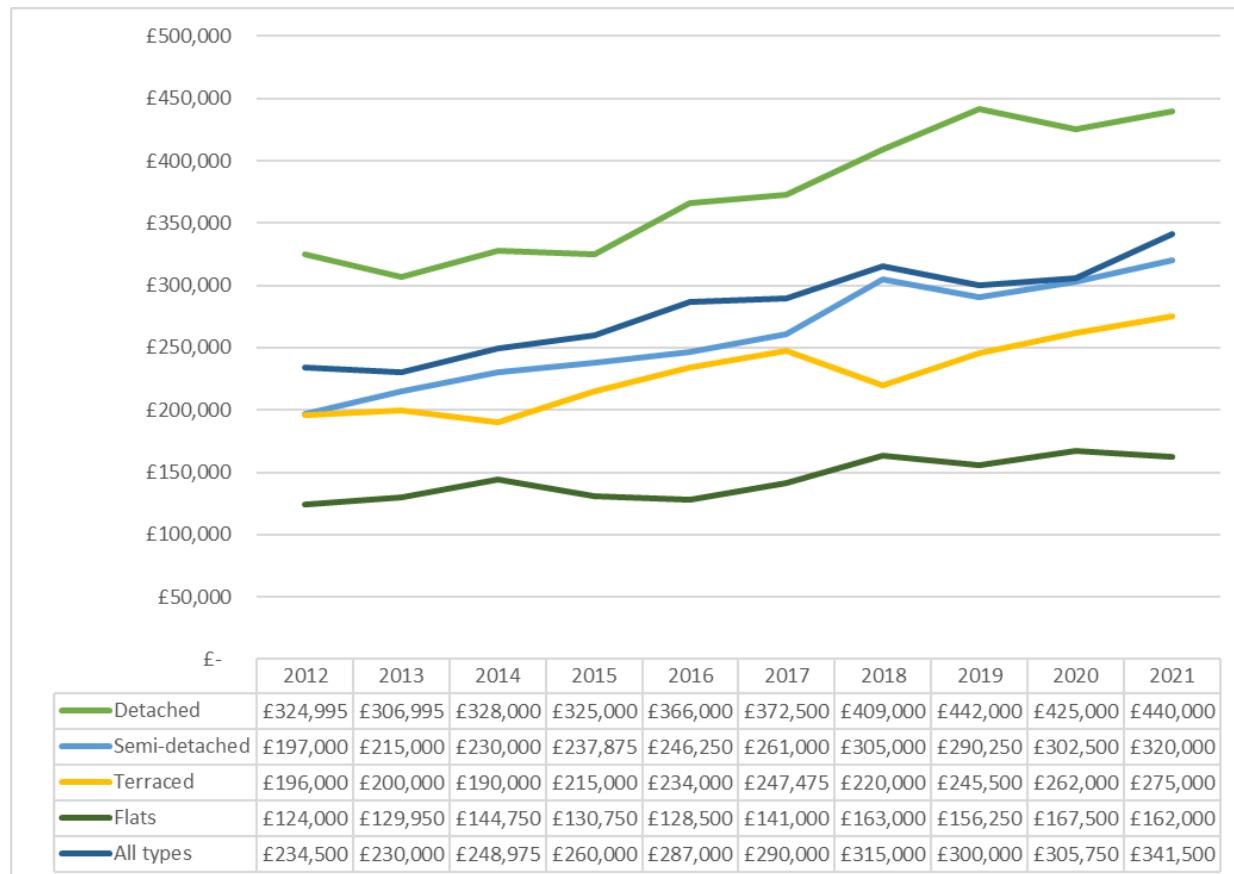
# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

houses, the median average price of which grew by 62.4%. The data does not indicate the volume of sales.<sup>1</sup>

108. An important consideration is the price of cheaper housing. Lower Quartile (cheapest 25%) house prices grew by 57.7% between 2012-2021 (from £186,625 to £294,375).

**Figure 5 – House Price Trends in Wythall Parish, 2012-2021**



Source: data from Land Registry PPD, taken from AECOM Housing Needs Assessment, October 2022

109. How affordable the price of housing is to local people depends on whether their income levels are sufficient to access it. Affordability will be in relation to owner occupation through purchase of homes, through renting, and through shared ownership.

110. The Housing Needs Assessment gathered available data to determine that (in 2018) average total household incomes within Wythall were £43,800. It also provides district-wide data on lower quartile individual earnings, which were £15,030 in 2020<sup>2</sup>. Two lower quartile earners in a household would therefore have a total household income of £30,060.

111. An Affordability matrix is presented in Figure 6. This lists the different types of market and affordable housing products that are available, and the income required to access them in terms of affordability. The colour coding indicates Unaffordable housing products (in red), housing products which are marginally affordable (in yellow) and affordable housing products (in green).

<sup>1</sup> Wythall Housing Needs Assessment, Table 4-3

<sup>2</sup> Wythall Housing Needs Assessment, para 87-90

112. The Housing Needs Assessment makes assumptions that mortgages will be limited to 3.5 times single salary and 2.75 times joint salaries, and that housing costs would not exceed 30% of household income. On this basis, households on average incomes and lower quartile earning households with two incomes are not able to access local market housing for sale, including entry-level housing unless there is very large deposit. Private renting is not affordable for households with two lower quartile incomes, unless a higher proportion of income is devoted to paying rent.

**Figure 6 – Affordability Thresholds for different types of home in Wythall**

Tenure	Mortgage value (90% of price)	Annual rent	Income required	Affordable on average incomes?	Affordable on LQ earnings (single earner)?	Affordable on LQ earnings (2 earners)?
<b>Market Housing</b>						
Median House Price	£307,350	-	£87,814	No	No	No
Estimated NA New Build Entry-Level House Price	£279,323		£79,807	No	No	No
LQ/Entry-level House Price	£264,938	-	£75,696	No	No	No
LA New Build Median House Price	£296,996	-	£84,856	No	No	No
Average Market Rent	-	£14,875	£49,584	No	No	No
Entry-level Market Rent	-	£11,919	£39,731	Yes	No	No
<b>Affordable Home Ownership</b>						
First Homes (-30%)	£195,526	-	£55,865	No	No	No
First Homes (-40%)	£167,594	-	£47,884	No	No	No
First Homes (-50%)	£139,661	-	£39,903	Yes	No	No
Shared Ownership (50%)	£139,661	£3,879	£52,835	No	No	No
Shared Ownership (25%)	£69,831	£5,819	£39,349	Yes	No	No
Shared Ownership (10%)	£27,932	£6,983	£31,258	Yes	No	Marginal
<b>Affordable Rented Housing</b>						
Affordable Rent	-	£5,936	£19,766	Yes	No	Yes
Social Rent	-	£4,883	£16,260	Yes	Marginal	Yes

Source: AECOM Housing Needs Assessment, October 2022, Table 4-4

### *First Homes*

113. Turning to affordable housing products, the ‘First Homes’ product works by discounting and capping the price of market housing for first time buyers with the ability to prioritise their availability for local people and for key workers. First Homes provision was formerly a required element of affordable housing, but this is no longer the case although it is still available as a way for eligible first-time buyers to purchase new-build or developer-allocated homes at a discount. Legal restrictions ensure discounts are retained for future purchasers. Neighbourhood Plans can apply additional criteria such as a lower income cap and a local connection test. The level of discount is a minimum 30% and the maximum price after the discount is £250,000 outside London. Increased discounts can be justified and applied, also through Neighbourhood Plans.

114. The Housing Needs Assessment has assessed whether households on average incomes could afford First Homes and has determined that with a maximum 50% discount on local newbuild median house prices, these households would be able to access this type of housing. Lower

Quartile Earners in two-earner households would need a discount larger than the scheme allows for entry level new homes and so would not be affordable.<sup>3</sup>

### *Shared Ownership*

115. Shared ownership housing products combine payments to acquire equity in a property (traditional 25% stake which is being reduced to a minimum 10% stake) with rent. The combined costs can be expensive to levels approaching those of private rent. Based on 10-25% equity stake, shared ownership homes would be affordable to households on average incomes in Wythall, but not to lower quartile income households with one earner. A lower quartile income household with two earners would marginally afford shared ownership housing with the minimum 10% equity stake.

### *Affordable and Social Rent*

116. Social Rent tenure is housing owned by local authorities and housing associations and is usually available based on income and other eligibility criteria. Affordable Rent is available at no more than 80% of the local market rent with similar eligibility criteria. Figure 7 shows that lower quartile single income households in Wythall cannot afford to access affordable rent accommodation and have only marginal affordability of social rent accommodation. Two-earner lower quartile income households can afford both affordable rent and social rent.
117. The Housing Needs Assessment reviewed August 2022 Bromsgrove District Council Housing Register data for Wythall Parish to show that, at that time, 55 households were unable to access affordable rented homes suitable for their needs in the Parish (such households may be currently housed in other accommodation).

### **Affordable Housing Policy Implications**

118. Adopted Bromsgrove District Plan policy BDP8.1 requires developments proposing a net increase of 11 or more dwellings to provide up to 40% affordable housing on greenfield sites or any sites accommodating 200 or more dwellings; or up to 30% affordable housing on brownfield sites accommodating less than 200 dwellings. In practice, within Wythall, just over 31% of new homes were affordable in developments since 2016, which would include schemes of 10 or fewer dwellings where no affordable housing requirement applies. Wythall is broadly in agreement with the Issues and Options document from the emerging Bromsgrove District Plan Review which suggested that a 70% affordable rented to 30% affordable ownership is appropriate. However, we would go further and state that within the 30% affordable ownership portion, 5% should be shared ownership housing with equity stakes from 10. In addition, discounts for first time buyers such as the ‘First Homes’ product should also be available, with affordable housing prioritised for people with a local connection in the first instance. This would ensure that average and lower quartile income households can access the housing made available.

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<sup>3</sup> Wythall Housing Needs Assessment, Table 4-5

## WYTHALL 2 - Affordable Housing Tenure

Affordable Housing provided in Wythall Parish should ensure that as many households as possible based in Wythall can afford to access it. Whilst the precise mix of affordable housing will be decided on a site-by-site basis, applications should demonstrate how proposals have considered the following housing affordability factors in Wythall Parish:

1. Social Rent and Affordable Rent should form around 70% of affordable housing provision through new development in Wythall. Social Rented homes should be provided in larger schemes to ensure that provision is made for lower quartile income households.
2. Affordable home ownership should form around 30% of affordable housing provision in Wythall Parish, including a maximum 5% provision of Shared Ownership dwellings.
  - i. First Homes are affordable to local people on average incomes, but only with a 50% discount and where viable they should be provided on this basis.
  - ii. Shared Ownership housing is of marginal affordability in Wythall Parish. Equity stakes should be set at a 10% minimum.

Local Connection Requirement - First Homes, shared equity homes, social rented and affordable rented homes should be prioritised for people with a local connection in the first instance. Criteria for demonstrating a local connection are set out below:

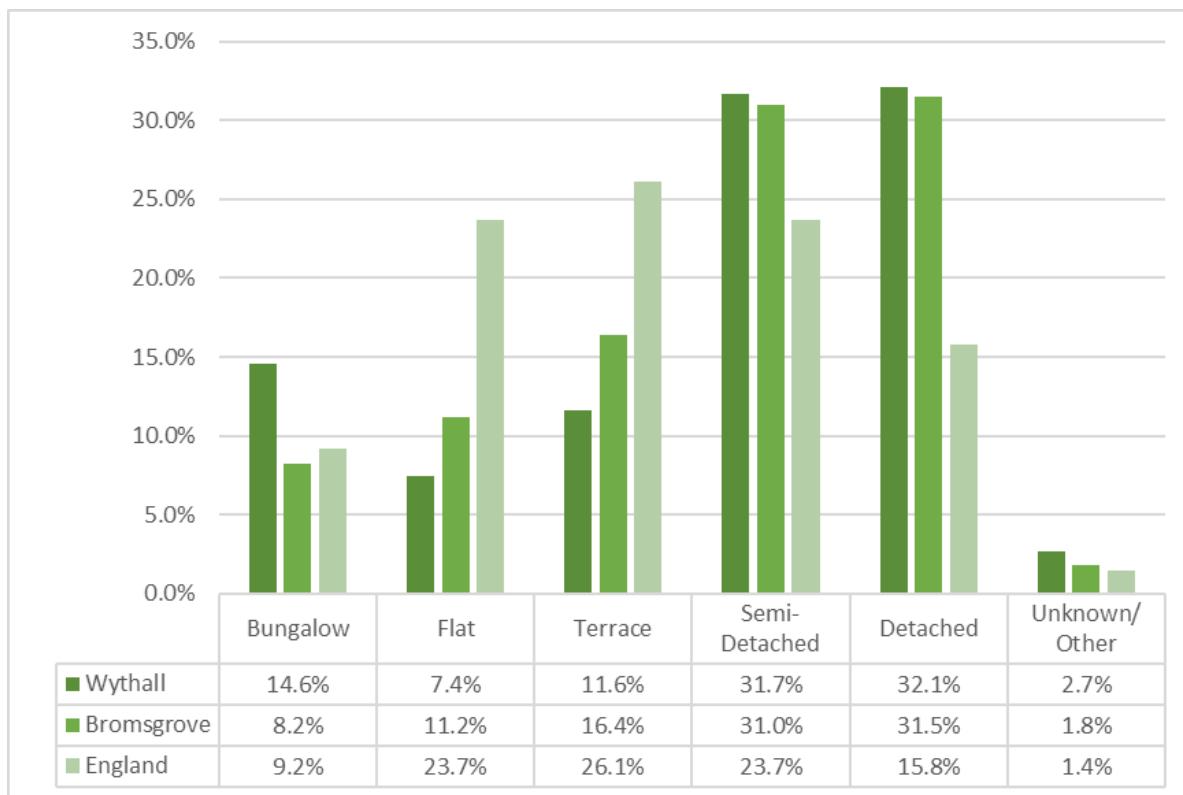
- a) Residency in Wythall Parish for the last 2 years consecutively or 3 years out of the last 5 years from the time the planning application was submitted to the Council.
- b) Close family continuous residency in Wythall Parish (parents, siblings, non-dependent children) evidenced for at least 5 years from the time the planning application was submitted to the Council.
- c) Paid employment in Wythall Parish of 16 hours per week average for minimum period of 1 year from the time the planning application was submitted to the Council. (including zero hours contracts).
- d) Offer of permanent employment to social tenant in Wythall Parish of 16 hours per week average for period no less than 1 year (including zero hours contracts) from the time the planning application was submitted to the Council and where it is unreasonable to travel from current social housing property.

## Housing Type and Size in Wythall

119. Understanding the composition of existing local housing in Wythall is important to identifying what priorities should be adopted for future provision in the Parish. The Housing Needs Assessment for Wythall prepared by AECOM provides a baseline default scenario onto which the considerations of the strategy can be applied. The following charts provide current and trend information on housing stock and changes to it in the period 2011-2021.
120. Figure 7 shows the proportion of different types of property in Wythall Parish compared to Bromsgrove and England, revealing that Bungalow provision is a particular feature of the housing stock in Wythall over the other areas and flats and terrace houses are less evident compared to Bromsgrove more generally and the England average.

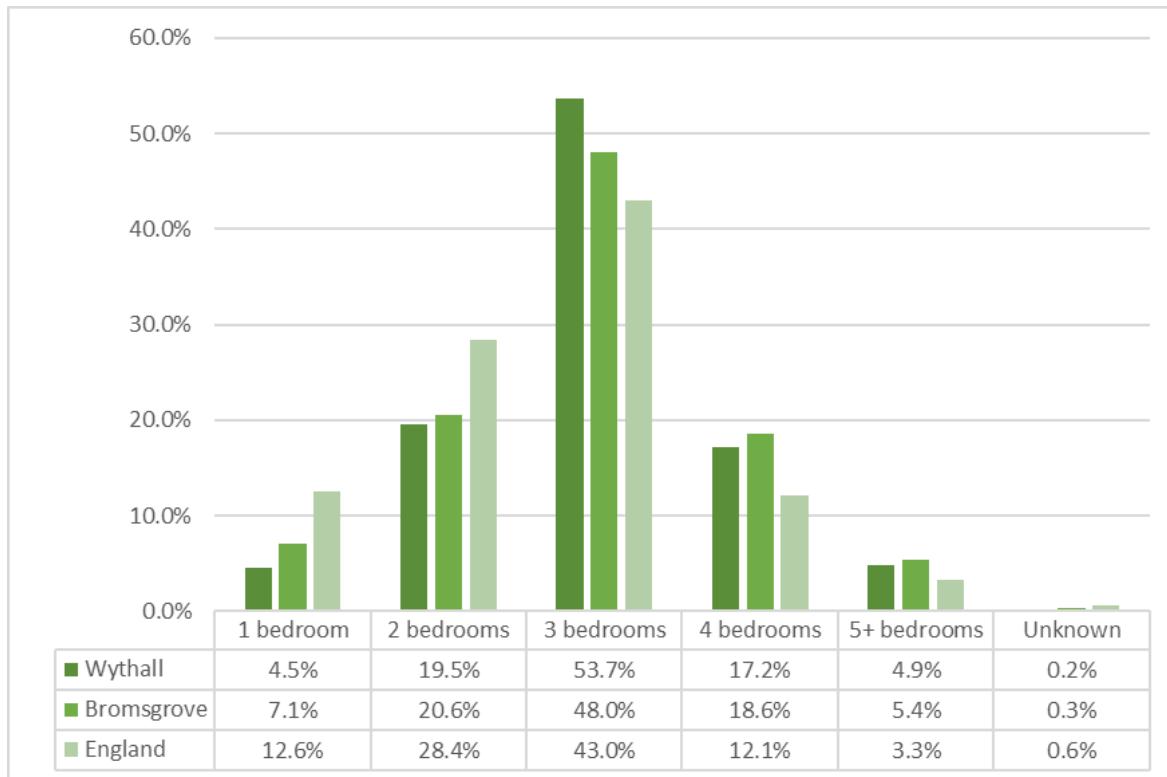
121. Figure 8 shows that, compared to the rest of Bromsgrove and England as a whole, 1-bedroom properties are a significantly smaller proportion of the housing stock in Wythall Parish. In addition, there is a greater proportion of 3-bedroom properties in Wythall compared to the whole of Bromsgrove and England. The graph also shows a slightly lower proportion of large 4 and 5 bedroom properties in Wythall, compared to the whole of Bromsgrove, although these figures are both higher than for England as a whole. 2-bedroom properties within Wythall and Bromsgrove generally make a significantly lower contribution to house types than for England as a whole. This may relate to the low proportion of flats in the area.

**Figure 7 –Accommodation Types in Wythall Parish, Bromsgrove and England, 2021**



Source: AECOM Housing Needs Assessment, Table 5-2

**Figure 8 – Accommodation size in Wythall Parish, Bromsgrove and England, 2021**



Source: AECOM Housing Needs Assessment, Table 5-4

### Policy Considerations

122. In considering what types of houses are required in the Parish for the Neighbourhood Plan period to 2040 and what size of accommodation is needed, a consideration is needed of the current housing stock, the population composition and household size – this points to an ageing population and a predominance of three bedroom semi-detached and detached properties.
123. The Neighbourhood Plan strategy for meeting future community objectives must also be considered. These are focused on restoring a well-balanced community in terms of a population comprised of a spread of households across all life stages, who are able to access local housing in accordance with their income and needs. That balance argues in favour of ensuring that all types of houses are provided for smaller and larger households, but recognising that in terms of the current population structure and in terms of the housing likely to be accessible to younger households necessary to attain a balanced community in Wythall, a particular focus on smaller properties is needed.
124. The Bromsgrove District Plan sets out a local housing requirement for housing provision to meet the wider needs of the community as a whole in the district, including family housing for the period to 2030. The emerging Bromsgrove District Local Plan will set out new local housing requirement for Wythall Parish going forward to 2043. In meeting these requirements, proposals for new development should reflect local needs. A larger proportion of housing in Wythall Parish is under-occupied by smaller, more elderly households. A particular requirement for the Parish is accommodation for downsizers who are releasing houses and using equity to acquire smaller properties, ideally apartments. Their requirement is for good quality accommodation in accordance with their buying power and life stage. The release of larger homes will improve availability for larger households, including families.

## **WYTHALL 3 - Housing Types and Sizes in Wythall**

New housing provision in Wythall should meet a range of housing needs which assists in maintaining a balanced community within Wythall Parish. This requires housing of all sizes and different sites might meet specific local housing needs or a broad range of local and strategic housing needs with each considered on their merits. Proposals which would provide 2-bedroom open market properties, including accessible low-rise apartments or houses to meet the specific housing needs of the local population, will be welcome in principle.

## 6. Design and Development Form

125. The neighbourhood plan has an important focus on ensuring that new development and infrastructure design maintains and enhances the quality of existing settlements in the Parish. The local community have expressed clear objectives to ensure that new development complements existing development and that design approaches reflect the realities of modern living in relation to car parking, bin storage and space requirements. There is clear desire to create new developments which are high quality expressed through appropriate densities, distinctive design which takes inspiration from local design and through quality construction, materials and public realm infrastructure.
126. A further consideration is how local design priorities will shape housing growth, should this occur. At the time of writing, the preferred spatial strategy for the location of additional housing within Bromsgrove District is not published or known. It has been a widely held assumption that land will need to be identified for green belt release and allocation within an updated local plan. Wythall Parish, among others, is a potential location for this to occur.
127. Whether it is planned or is speculative, strategic housing development on greenfield green belt sites in Wythall Parish would have a transformational effect on its existing settlements. As well as considering how development within existing settlements should be designed, it is therefore important to also consider how future development outside settlements should relate to existing settlements in design terms and in terms of housing densities, development form and scale.
128. AECOM were appointed to prepare design codes to provide clear guidance for new development within and adjacent to current built development in the Parish. Whilst Bromsgrove District Council's spatial strategy options were not known at the time of this work, AECOM were briefed to consider how development on land adjacent to existing settlement should be planned to protect existing character features and existing amenities. The Design Guidelines and Design Codes Report (October 2023) (DGDC), prepared as a supporting document to the Neighbourhood Plan, has identified area-wide design codes and individual design codes for seven Character Areas identified in the Parish, shown in Figure 9.

### Character Areas

129. AECOM undertook analysis of settlements and countryside within the Parish to identify similarities and distinctions between different areas as expressed through building styles, era of development, settlement characteristics and sense of place. From this, seven separate character areas were established, described below.

#### 1 - Walkers Heath

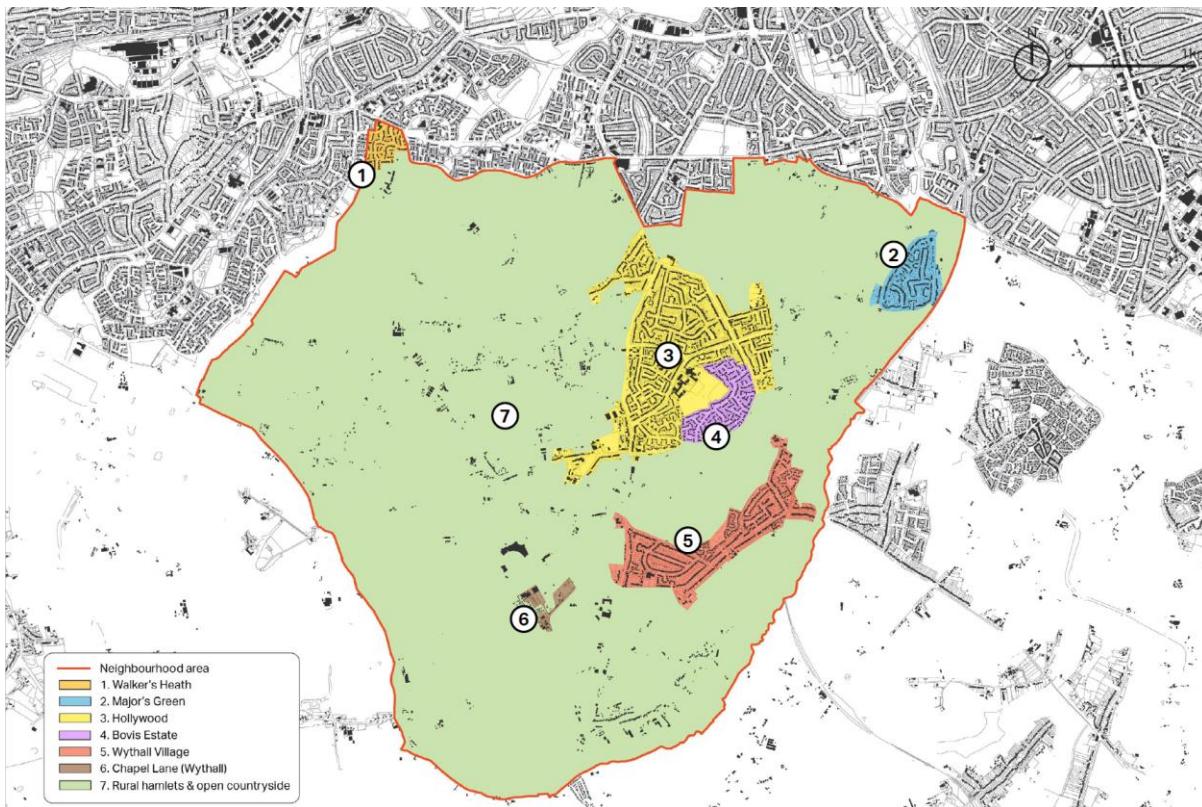
130. Whilst part of Wythall Parish, Walkers Heath is part of the Kings Norton suburb of Birmingham and clearly interacts with and relies on services within Birmingham. Typical development within Walkers Heath is mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> Century housing including maisonettes, semi-detached and detached houses. Walker Heath Park and Moundsley Hall Care Village are notable features of this area.

#### 2 - Major's Green

131. Located in the northeast corner of Wythall Parish, Major's Green is primarily a residential settlement which lacks community facilities apart from the Drawbridge Inn public house and the Wake Green FC ground. The distinct village envelope encloses mostly mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century

detached and semi-detached houses. Nearby, Berry Mound Hill Fort and the Stratford-upon-Avon Canal provide historic points of interest.

**Figure 9 – Character Areas within Wythall Parish**



Source: AECOM 2023

### **3 - Hollywood**

132. Hollywood is the largest settlement in Wythall Parish. It contains several housing estates which differ in style, including significant bungalow development in addition to areas of 20<sup>th</sup> Century and 21<sup>st</sup> Century semi-detached and detached houses. Most of the community facilities serving the Parish are located in the settlement.

### **4 - Bovis Estate**

133. Located within Hollywood, the Bovis Estate is a single development with a distinctive style and character setting it apart from the rest of Hollywood. The area is well-regarded locally for the larger plot sizes, extensive greenery in public and private areas, and on-plot parking provision.

### **5 - Wythall Village**

134. Separated from Hollywood and located to its south, Wythall Village hosts Wythall Train Station which serves the Parish with rail services to Birmingham and Stratford-upon-Avon. Wythall is a historic village, linear in form and which possesses some heritage buildings, but which also contains significant mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> Century housing developments of primarily semi-detached, detached and bungalow houses. More recent 21<sup>st</sup> Century developments at Burnham Road and Selsdon Close (excluded from the area) are regarded locally as introducing unwelcome character changes to be avoided in future developments, as they concentrate buildings within the development at high density and this is not mitigated by adjacent open areas, and overall does not complement the existing Character Area.

## 6 - Chapel Lane (Wythall)

135. The age and heritage of buildings and streets within the Chapel Lane area sets it apart from the rest of Wythall and worthy of its own Character Area. St Mary's Church and the Transport Museum are located in this area, whilst a range of mixed uses are also present including the Wythall Cemetery and commercial uses. The Character Area is quite open and has a rural character emphasised through the presence of agricultural fields and hedgerows in the area.

## 7 - Rural Hamlets and Open Countryside Character Area

136. Outside the main settlement of the Parish, the countryside forms a natural open landscape of arable land interspersed with small hamlets and isolated development. All is washed over by the green belt. Tanners Green is a small hamlet of mostly detached houses and Inkford has a mix of semi-detached and detached houses. Owing to the isolated and sporadic nature of development throughout a large area of open countryside, the styles are varied and range from historic farmhouses to modern 21<sup>st</sup> Century infill houses. The area contains a wildlife corridor for the River Cole, two Sites of Special Scientific Interest and has a strong rural character.

137. Design Guidelines and Codes were prepared by AECOM to guide development within the Character Areas identified which are set out in Table 4. Further Design Guidance and Codes were prepared to guide new development in the Parish as a whole, set out in Table 5

**Table 4 – Design Principles for Wythall Parish Character Areas**

Design Principles for Walkers Heath Character Area
Encourage fewer hard boundaries (i.e. closed-board fencing) within the area, and replacing with natural boundaries such as hedgerow and planting
Maintain the area's community planting and green spaces such as the area's green verges, street planting, parks and allotment space
Improve the area's permeability by providing pedestrian routes through / extending cul-de-sacs where possible
Protected pedestrian links to the south of the area to maintain connectivity with the rest of the Neighbourhood Area
Provide a sensitive landscape treatment where development borders the open landscape/green spaces to the south of the area
Design Principles for Major's Green Character Area.
Utilise Peterbrook Road at the aqueduct (from Solihull), Haslucks Green Road at Bill Lane Junction (from Solihull) and at Tilehouse Lane (from Solihull) to create a sense of arrival in Major's Green (see Code F: Village Gateways).
To maintain the village's distinct settlement boundary and separation from adjacent settlements
Coalescing with nearby developments should be avoided by maintaining green gaps
Provide sensitive settlement edge development to ensure a soft transition (i.e. natural buffers such as verges, pedestrian routes, street trees) between development and surrounding landscape
To preserve the amenity and identity of the village's historic assets including the drawbridge and Berry Mound hill fort
To enhance the boundary treatments of existing and new development via red brick wall and hedgerow boundaries
Design Principles for Hollywood Character Area
Utilise Houndsfield Lane railway bridge (from Solihull) and at Alcester Road at Maypole Island (from Birmingham) to create a sense of arrival in Hollywood (see Code F: Village Gateways).
To encourage fewer hard boundaries (i.e. closed-board fencing) within the area, and replacing with natural boundaries such as hedgerow and planting
To maintain the village's distinct settlement boundary and separation from adjacent settlements
Coalescing with nearby developments should be avoided by maintaining green gaps
Provide sensitive settlement edge development to ensure a soft transition (i.e. natural buffers such as verges, pedestrian routes, street trees) between development and surrounding landscape
To preserve and enhance Hollywood's green infrastructure such as its grass verges, street trees and parks

# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

Design Principles for the Bovis Estate Character Area	
To replicate the open character of the estate in future development in the areas adjacent to the Bovis Estate, as well as across the whole Neighbourhood Area	
To maintain the green character of the area by preserving and enhancing its green infrastructure (i.e. grass verges, street trees, front gardens)	
To maintain the area's openness by ensuring on-plot parking remains a key feature of residential plots within the Bovis Estate, as well as within plots across the Neighbourhood Area.	
To utilise junctions at either end of Hollywood Lane as gateway locations for creating a sense of arrival to Hollywood (see Code F: Village Gateways)	
Design Principles for Wythall Village Character Area	
To utilise either end of Station Road as gateway locations for creating a sense of arrival to Wythall as well as the whole Neighbourhood Area (see Code F: Village Gateways)	
Promote the area's local vernacular by referencing the style and features of its historic development, in new proposals	
Provide sensitive settlement edge development to ensure a soft transition (i.e. natural buffers such as verges, pedestrian routes, street trees) between development and surrounding landscape	
Uphold the village's settlement boundary by ensuring new development avoids coalescing with surrounding settlements (i.e. Tidbury Green to the east)	
Utilise Norton Lane at the River Cole to create a sense of arrival in Wythall Village (see Code F: Village Gateways).	
Design Principles for Chapel Lane (Wythall) Character Area	
Promote the area's local vernacular by referencing the style and features of its historic development (i.e. Chapel Lane cottages), in new proposals	
Provide sensitive settlement edge development to ensure a soft transition (i.e. natural buffers such as verges, pedestrian routes, street trees) between development and surrounding landscape (where this is located in what is currently countryside).	
Uphold the area's rural character by ensuring new development incorporates hedgerow / landscape features within proposals	
Design Principles for the Rural Hamlets and Open Countryside Character Area	
Utilise entry points into the Parish from adjacent areas at A435 at Watery Lane entrance (from Beoley Parish), Weatheroak Hill/Hill Lane (from Alvechurch Parish), Redhill Road at Redhill Farm (from Alvechurch Parish), Gayhill Lane/Walkers Heath Road (from Birmingham) and Crabmill Lane/Druids Lane (from Birmingham), to create a sense of arrival in Wythall Parish rural areas (see Code F: Village Gateways).	
Promote the area's local vernacular by referencing the style and features of its historic development (i.e. farmhouse-style heritage), in new proposals	
Provide sensitive settlement edge development to ensure a soft transition (i.e. natural buffers such as verges, pedestrian routes, street trees) between development and surrounding landscape (where this is located in what is currently countryside).	
Uphold the area's rural character by ensuring new development incorporates hedgerow / landscape features within proposals	
To protect and enhance the area's natural/wildlife assets (i.e. River Cole)	

Source: AECOM, 2023 and Neighbourhood Plan Working Group, 2024

**Table 5 – Design Guidance Codes for New Development in Wythall Parish**

Built Character Features
<b>A1 - Architectural detailing:</b> Decorative brick, stone and wood detailing is encouraged to provide reference to the area's historic character. Such detailing should reference the Neighbourhood Area's local vernacular, which is outlined in Section 3 of the DGDC. Please note, these features will vary slightly depending on the character area in which a site lies and/ or relates to. <b>Some areas have a modern style or a mock-tudor style and this can work also provided that design and materials are high quality and that they do not negatively impact on existing character.</b>
<b>A2 - Contextual colourways:</b> The choice of colour and finish is an important design consideration in mitigating adverse visual impacts on village-scapes and character. Subtle or muted colours should be used to ensure cohesion with existing high quality development.
<b>A3 - Boundary treatments:</b> Residential plots should include either red brick wall, hedgerow, wrought iron fences, or include a hybrid mix of these as boundary treatments.

# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

**A4 - Avoiding overly complicated design:** Proposals should adopt a simple and focused palette that responds to the streetscape and space in which it relates. Overly complicated and random mixes of materials / palettes should be avoided. For example, some of Wythall's Victorian terraces and cottages have a distinct but simple character, with uncomplicated red brick facades.

**A5 - Avoiding low quality precedent:** Existing and/or nearby examples of low quality design should not be referenced or replicated. Instead, proposals should refer to high-quality contextual features such as those illustrated in the built form features graphic in Section 3 of the DGDC.

**A6 - Character area response:** Proposals must respond to the character area with one of the following three approaches, considered in the following order; **1. Harmonise** – clearly respond to existing characteristics within the character area, street and site, including scale, form and appearance; **2. Complement** - doing something slightly different that adds to the overall character and quality in a way that is nonetheless fitting, for example, additional high quality materials but harmonising in scale, form and positioning; or **3. Innovate** – doing something of high design quality that is different but adds positively to the built-form and character and is considered an exemplar approach for others to follow. For example, develop innovative building form and use low embodied energy, high quality materials that add to the overall design quality, sustainability and richness of the area. NOTE: When adhering to 'harmonise' or 'complement', low quality precedent should be avoided in the design stages

### Infill Development

**B1 - Scale and massing:** Building scale and massing should be in keeping with the prevailing development pattern and not be overbearing on existing properties or deprive them of light, including over-looking or over-shading of windows and amenity space.

**B2 - Fenestration:** Building fenestration and pattern should be in keeping with the predominant positive buildings character on the street or harmonise with adjacent buildings of good character.

**B3 - Access:** Building entrances will address the street with a main access and main fenestration. Corner buildings should address both streets with fenestration but the main entrance could be on either subject to access requirements.

**B4 - Setbacks:** The building line should reflect the street and be set back no more than a maximum of 1.5m from adjacent buildings unless additional landscaping or tree planting is being introduced to the street scene; where buildings are set back from the pavement a boundary feature should define the plot and link up to adjacent buildings.

**B5 - Enclosure:** Building scale and position on plot should help to define and enclose the space within the street corridor or square to an appropriate degree based on the existing street section (building to building) and level of enclosure (ratio of street width to building height).

**B6 - Façade design:** Building façade design should respect the horizontal rhythm of plots and building subdivisions on the street in order to integrate and maintain visual continuity or add to the visual interest where required.

**B7 - Building height:** Buildings heights should vary from 1.0 – 2.5 storeys depending on adjacent plots. A variable eves line and ridgeline is allowed to create interest but variation between adjacent buildings should be a maximum of 0.5 storey in general.

**B8 - Refuse storage:** Bin storage amenity should be provided with stores big enough for 3 bins per dwelling being integrated within plot boundaries. Ginnels / alleyways should be considered for terraced buildings with 4 or more units in order to accommodate bin storage and access.

**B9 - Parking provision:** Parking should be integrated on plot where possible with parking spaces set behind the building line. Off-street parking should be provided within all residential developments to alleviate the area's chronic on-street parking and congestion issues, particularly in new developments including Selsdon Close, Burnham Road and Coppice Gardens.

### Conversions, Extensions and Outbuildings

**C1 – Quality and durable construction:** Conversions, extensions and outbuildings should be made from high-quality and durable materials so to maintain their integrity and aesthetics over time. They should use both the high-quality construction methods of nearby development as well as the latest sustainable construction techniques on the market at the time. The lifespan of any new construction should be maximised wherever possible.

**C2 - Matching the existing dwelling:** Conversions, extensions, and outbuildings should emulate or reference the architectural detailing and character of the primary dwelling. The architectural details (i.e. finials, coping, string courses, and window and door surrounds) of the existing dwelling should be carefully considered in any new construction within the plot.

# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

<p><b>C3 - Dormers:</b> Dormer windows should be modest in size and either match, complement, or reference the existing building.</p>
<p><b>C4 - Doors and windows:</b> New windows and doors should reflect the character of each village, as well as that of the original dwelling. Both the material and colour of doors and windows are an important design consideration and should complement both plot and setting.</p>
<p><b>C5 - Chimneys:</b> Chimneys contribute to the local roofscape and overall character of the area. They should therefore be retained, referenced, or emulated.</p>
<p><b>C6 - Screening outbuildings:</b> They should ideally be positioned behind screening so to be out of public view (e.g. trees, planting, existing buildings). Outbuildings (not including garden structures such as sheds, greenhouses etc.) should be positioned close to the primary dwelling. This will help to minimise the visual impact of any outbuilding due to screening provided by the dwelling.</p>
<p><b>C8 - Outbuilding aesthetic:</b> Where screening is not possible, the aesthetic quality of the structure should be of a higher quality, so to positively contribute to the character and context of the surrounding area.</p>
<p><b>C9 - Outbuildings as secondary tier buildings:</b> There should be a clear building hierarchy with outbuildings being secondary to the primary dwelling within a plot.</p>
<p><b>Green Infrastructure and Habitat Creation</b></p> <p><b>D1 - Retaining landscape habitats:</b> Existing landscape features such as trees, ponds, streams, hedgerows, verges and ditches should be retained where possible. The creation, maintenance and extension of wildlife corridors will be encouraged. All proposed planting should be native species in order to promote biodiversity.</p>
<p><b>D2 - Replacing landscape features:</b> Where trees and other landscape features cannot be retained, they should be replaced with a proportional or higher quality landscaping scheme. Replacing a mature tree for example on a 1-for-1 basis is not proportional due to the reduction in the canopy cover, habitat, and public amenity. The size and amenity of the original landscaping should be accounted for in any landscape replacement. For now native UK plant species trees should be preferred or non-native where a specific reason exists.</p>
<p><b>D3 - Wildlife habitats:</b> New developments must provide habitat creation by installing wildlife-friendly spaces and movement corridors such as solitary bee bricks, bumble bee boxes, swift bricks and hedgehog highways. Opportunities to improve water-based habitats should be considered. All homes within a development should include some form of wildlife-friendly installation to ensure a cohesive network of spaces for wildlife is created.</p>
<p><b>D4 - Interconnectivity:</b> Landscaping and public realm should be interconnected to create a network of green and blue infrastructure both within any site, whilst connecting to the wider routes and places across the Neighbourhood Area.</p>
<p><b>D5 - Recreational green spaces:</b> Open spaces should be located within walking distance of residential areas and linked through a series of green networks or corridors. Such linkages support a green infrastructure approach to development, allowing wildlife to move along corridors to access foraging opportunities and habitats and people to access a range of different recreational facilities.</p>
<p><b>D6 - Natural offsets:</b> Include suitable offsets to boundary vegetation such as hedgerows and provide additional planting on sensitive landscape edges. Screen planting may be required on some sites and should be designed in conjunction with results of any landscape and visual impact surveys.</p>
<p><b>D7 - Street trees and grass verges:</b> New street proposals should include street trees and/or grass verges and should be provided in accordance with Worcestershire County Council's Streetscape Design Guide. Grass verges in particular are commonplace throughout the Neighbourhood Area, making the continuation of such features important in retaining local character. Grass verges should vary in shape and size dependent on location, but should be no narrower than 1.5m.</p>
<p><b>Sustainable Design and Climate Resilience</b></p> <p><b>E1 - Resilience to Climate Change:</b> All new development should work to moderate extremes of temperature, wind, humidity, local flooding and pollution within the Parish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoid siting homes in high risk flood areas and mitigate increased risk of storms/flooding with sustainable drainage systems. These reduce the amount and rate at which surface water reaches sewers/watercourses. Often, the most sustainable option is collecting this water for reuse, for example in a water butt or rainwater harvesting system.</li><li>• Plant trees as part of major development for habitat, fuel and sustainable building materials.</li><li>• Ecosystems cannot adapt as fast as the climate is changing leading to loss of biodiversity. Protecting and enhancing the Neighbourhood Area's watercourses and green infrastructure can combat this. Aim to increase ecology through biodiversity net-gain (BNG) on major development sites.</li></ul>
<p><b>E2 – Assessing Alternative Energy Sources:</b> Key considerations in the assessment of alternative energy sources may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Optimise solar orientation of streets and buildings. Aim to orient buildings within 30° of south (both main fenestration and roof plane) for solar gain, solar energy (solar panels) and natural daylighting;</li><li>• Ground</li></ul>

conditions to accommodate loops for ground source heat and space for air source heat pump units; • Links to local estates for sustainable coppicing, harvesting or recycling of biomass fuels; and • Local wind speed and direction for micro-grid wind turbines. • Applicants must be mindful noise and visual pollution by providing appropriate screening measures.

**E3 - Energy efficiency measures towards Net-Zero carbon:** By default, new development should adopt a fabric first approach in line with the government's emerging Future Homes Standard, to attain higher standards of insulation and energy conservation. • Reducing energy demand further by employing passive design principles for homes is desirable and can make some forms of development more acceptable to the community (window orientation, solar gain, solar shading, increased insulation, ventilation with heat-recovery); • Maximise on-site renewable energy generation (solar, ground source, air source and wind driven); Consider building form and thermal efficiency: point-block/ terraced / semi-detached / detached all have different energy efficiency profiles. This must be balanced with local design preference and character considerations to ease acceptance for development.

**E4 – Electric Vehicle charging:** Current transition to electric vehicle technology and ownership comes with related issues that must be addressed by new development. Design issues to address for EV charging at the home include: • Convenient on plot parking and charging points close to homes • Potential to incorporate charging points under cover within car ports and garages • Still need to integrate car parking sensitively within the street scene. For example, parking set behind the building line or front of plot spaces lined with native hedgerow planting • Need to consider visitor parking / charging needs • Potential for providing secure, serviced communal parking areas for higher density homes • Existing unallocated / on-street parking areas and feasibility to provide electric charging infrastructure not linked to the home.

### Village Gateways

**F1 - Placemaking:** Designers must set out a clear response to the character of the individual settlements in which development is sited or adjacent to. This should be achieved by respecting and/or referencing both the built and natural character features within the village. Suggested locations for village gateways are listed in the Design Guidelines and Design Codes document.

**F2 - Entry Treatments:** Entry treatments are often used at the sides of roads to notify drivers of their arrival into an area with a different character. They can be employed to indicate the beginning of traffic calming measures or that the driver is entering a different speed zone.

**F3 - Location:** A gateway should be positioned so that motorists do not encounter it unexpectedly as this could be dangerous. Consideration should be given when putting gateways on lengthy curves where they might not initially be visible to the vehicle. Gateway placement ought to avoid obstructing access to frontage properties, and there should be a sufficient clear verge to accommodate any vertical elements. A gateway placed close to the first structures in a neighbourhood can accentuate a shift in the nature of the journey in rural settings.

**F4 - Road Surfaces:** A rumbler device provides a visual, audible and vibratory effect for motorists. These can take the form of a surface with contrasting colours, and/or a textured surface. In order for the surface to be clearly seen from a distance, it should typically be at least 5 meters long, with longer lengths increasing the conspicuity, but lessening the impact of the entryway. Edgeline hatching markings can provide the impression that the roadway is smaller than it actually is whilst allowing larger vehicles to pass through these spaces if necessary. To provide a narrowing impression, one can also use build-outs, chicanes, and pinch-points.

**F5 - Signage:** Signs create the opportunity to enhance the sense of place in the neighbourhood by establishing initial impressions. Settlements should utilise this by reflecting the local environment, culture and history. Utilising natural materials, muted colors, and placing gateway signs in open spaces can help to achieve simplicity and visual appeal.

**F6 - Landscaping:** Transitioning from naturalistic planting to more formal schemes helps to delineate the change from a rural to urban setting. Tree planting enhances the feeling of enclosure and creates a threshold to the village, separating it from the rural environment and other settlements.

### Shop Frontages

**G1 - Placemaking:** Designers must set out a clear response to the character of the individual settlements in which development is sited or adjacent to. This should be achieved by respecting and/or referencing both the built and natural character features within the village.

**G2 - Design:** The unique character of the host building should be considered while designing a shop front. • The design of the shop front should reflect the overall character and proportions of the building. • When the host building lacks architectural significance and it would be improper to replicate its style within a proposed shop front, crucial aspects such as design, materials, and height should be pulled from neighbouring structures. • Materials should complement the building's and the surrounding character. Traditional storefronts should be made of natural materials as well as being designed, coloured, and polished in traditional fashion. Modern designs offer more freedom, but the finish and colour should compliment rather than conflict with the

# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

surroundings. • Signage can be made to enhance both old and modern storefronts, and it can significantly improve the quality of the street scene.
<b>G3 - Retail boundary treatments:</b> There is currently no uniformity in boundary treatments across existing shopping parades. New treatments should be in keeping with the immediate surrounding area such as low brick walls or hedging, not necessarily with the other parades.
<b>G4 - Parking:</b> There should be parking provisions made for new shops or parades, including disabled spaces and EV charging points. To prevent damage caused by parking on grass verges, the implementation of class II kerbs will prevent the encroachment of parking vehicles whilst allowing emergency vehicles to climb them.
<b>Street Furniture</b>
<b>H1 - Location:</b> Consider the location of street furniture and routes of utilities from the early stages of the design process. Analyse how all the elements will be seen and perceived when placed and viewed at once.
<b>H2 - Usage:</b> All public space should be clearly defined and designed to fulfill specific roles and functions for different range of users.
<b>H3 - Rest Stops:</b> Provide seating places in convenient locations and gathering spaces such as public green spaces. Recycled composite benches in a natural wood finish is preferred over timber or metal due to its sustainability and longevity credentials.
<b>H4 - Design:</b> Create a palette of street furniture and signage that is complementary and is likely to stand the test of time.
<b>H5 - Paving Styles:</b> Existing local pavements, shop fronts, and parking have tarmac surfacing, providing a practical and uniform finish across the Neighbourhood Area. Block paving could be used in pedestrian only areas as it can easily accommodate tactile paving at crossings.
<b>H6 - Lighting:</b> Proposed lampposts are to be of similar style to the existing 6m steel columns with TRT mini LED lamps.
<b>H7 - Bollards:</b> Both plastic and concrete bollards are found throughout the Neighbourhood Area. Plastic mounted bollards are preferred from both an aesthetic and practical standpoint.
<b>H8 - Bins:</b> Bromsgrove District Council have agreed black and gold wastebins, either square or circular, for use around the Neighbourhood Area's as well as any future developments.
<b>H9 - Cycle Racks:</b> Creating opportunities for active travel throughout the area is encouraged, with cycle racks being implemented in key locations, such as nearby shopping parades. These should be simple in nature, both covered and uncovered designs are encouraged.
<b>H10 - Noticeboards:</b> Existing shopping parades and other urban areas have timber mounted community noticeboards which should be incorporated into larger future developments.
<b>Car Parking</b>
<b>I1 - On-street parking:</b> On-street parking is the only parking option for several dwellings within the Neighbourhood Area. In order to reduce the visual impact of parked cars, on-street parking should be avoided in future development. Where on street parking is unavoidable it should be broken up by landscaping and tree planting.
<b>I2 - Front of dwelling driveway parking:</b> Parking provided on driveways directly in front of dwellings should be restricted due to the visual impact that cars have on the street. Therefore, a maximum of 2 dwellings in a row will be permitted to provide parking in this way. Front gardens should be a minimum depth of 6m to allow movement around parked vehicles and also be well screened with hedgerows when providing parking space to the front of a dwelling. Where appropriate, porous surfaces should be used.
<b>I3 - Side of dwelling driveway parking:</b> Parking being provided on a driveway to the side of a dwelling should be of sufficient length (5m minimum) so that a car can park behind the frontage line of the dwelling. This will reduce the visual impact that cars will have on the street scene. When parking is provided to the side of a dwelling a minimum front garden depth of 3m should be provided. Where appropriate, porous surfaces should be used.
<b>I4 - Garage parking:</b> Parking being provided in a garage to the side of a dwelling should be set back from the frontage line of the dwelling to reduce the visual impact of cars on the street. Garages should also provide sufficient room for cars to park inside them as well as provide some room for storage. The minimum internal dimensions of a garage should therefore be 6m x 3m.
<b>I5 - Car parks:</b> Generally runs of car parking spaces should not exceed 6 spaces in width before being interspersed by planting. All landscaping and car park surfaces should be chosen to respect the rural setting of the Neighbourhood Area and should be of a good quality and appropriate appearance for their immediate context. Where appropriate, porous surfaces should be used.
<b>I6 - Planting buffer:</b> All car parks and parking spaces should incorporate appropriate planting as a landscape buffer. Parked cars have a negative visual impact on streetscape character and should therefore be softened by planting such as street trees, planters, and planted grass verges.

# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

Settlement Edges
<p><b>J1 - Avoiding ribbon development:</b> New development should be sensitive to the surrounding landscape. Inappropriate ribbon development away from the principal settlement should be avoided where it has an adverse impact on landscape character.</p>
<p><b>J2 - Avoiding settlement coalescence:</b> Landscape gaps between settlements should be retained to ensure the distinctiveness of each settlement and avoid coalescence.</p>
<p><b>J3 - Maintaining distinctive settlement edges:</b> Development should not be proposed which breaches a distinctive settlement edge.</p>
<p><b>J4 - Planting buffers at the settlement edge:</b> Development at the settlement edge should be buffered with dense vegetation belts that help mitigate the visual impact from any new developments.</p>
<p><b>J5 - Integrating green corridors:</b> Green corridors are recommended so as to integrate the new development with the surrounding landscape, as well as providing additional pedestrian and habitat links.</p>
<p><b>J6 - Lower density at the settlement edge:</b> Consider using lower density development at the settlement edge in fostering a gentle transition between built form and the character of the low-lying landscape. This could include bungalows or 1.5 storey development. Anything above 1.5 storeys should be appropriately screened with planting to mitigate its scale against the backdrop of the surrounding landscape.</p>
Protecting Cherished Views
<p><b>K1 - Obstructing cherished views:</b> The position of new development should be carefully considered in relation to cherished views of St Mary's Church Spire identified in Section 2 of the design codes document. Any attempt to disrupt or inhibit existing views should be resisted.</p>
<p><b>K2 - Minimising detractors and light spill in new development:</b> The use of skylights, large glass panes, reflective materials or expansive flat roofs for new developments should be carefully considered if the building will be prominent in important views. This is to minimise detractors in views and light spill. New developments should seek to reduce light spill by minimising glass panes/windows/doors/ skylights and using downward directional lights/ bollards where lighting is necessary for safety.</p>
<p><b>K3 - Locally appropriate planting schemes:</b> Appropriate planting to integrate buildings into the landscape is encouraged however this should be used to enhance and retain character rather than to alter it. Planting should reflect native species mix and be used chiefly to soften building lines or unavoidable visual detractors.</p>
<p><b>K4 - Avoiding camouflage of poor design:</b> The use of planting as 'screening' to avoid following the design principles set out in this document is unacceptable. Likewise, camouflaging roofs through material/ colour/green roof, but failing to consider the height of elevations is unacceptable. Good design is about integration, not camouflage.</p>
<p><b>K5 - Prominent landmark views:</b> Views to the key landmark of St Mary's Church Spire should be retained through careful siting of new development. The setting of this key landmark should be a consideration in all new development. Where new development is sited within the setting of sites with cherished views referred to on pages 19-21 of the DGDC, provision must be made for the enhancement of its setting (such as increasing the amount of open space around it or increasing its distance from buildings) and provision of information panels/ signs.</p>
<p><b>K6 - Protecting and creating views for wayfinding:</b> Buildings should be oriented to maintain existing key views or to create new views/vistas which can contribute to local way-finding. Views of both landmark buildings (i.e. church spires) and landscape features (i.e. hills) should be utilised to promote legibility within the area</p>
Protecting and Enhancing Green Verges
<p><b>L1 - Avoiding the loss of green verges</b> - Incorporating existing grass verges within plots (i.e. for front gardens or extensions), particularly at corners/junctions, must be avoided. Grass verges are important assets that should be maintained as character features of the Neighbourhood Area's streetscapes.</p>
<p><b>L2 - Creating open streetscapes</b> - all proposals including new streets should incorporate green verges within the streetscape design. This is to enhance the openness and green character of streets which has successfully been achieved in areas such as the Bovis Estate (See Character Area 4: Bovis Estate in Section 3 of the DGDC).</p>
<p><b>L3 - Avoiding verge parking</b> - To mitigate the likelihood of illegal or improper street parking, the use of bollards, planters and trees should be utilised to prevent car users from being able to mount and park on grass verges. This is particularly important at corners/junctions where visibility must be maintained.</p>
<p><b>L4 - Enhancing visibility at corners/ junctions</b> - New proposals must include grass verges at corners/ junctions to increase splays and the subsequent visibility for both pedestrians and car users.</p>
<p><b>L5 - Planting within corner/junction verges</b> - Planting within corner/ junctions verges should be low-medium in height to maintain visibility. High-level planting such as trees should therefore be avoided.</p>

**L6 - Planting within linear verges** - Linear verges along streets should include planting such as street trees to enhance the green character of streetscapes, as well as providing natural barriers to on-street parking.

**L7 - Placement of planting within verges** - planting such as street trees should be positioned near enough to the road so to mitigate the likelihood of car users mounting the verges for parking.

**L8 - Placement of verges** - Green verges should be incorporated within all Neighbourhood roads and Residential roads (See Vehicular Networks plan on pages 32-33 of the DGDC) to foster open, green and attractive streetscapes.

**L9 - Width of green verges** - The width and/or the splay of verges should generally be larger on Neighbourhood roads than on Residential roads, due to the contrast in car speeds and street widths. Buildings should be setback further along busier roads (i.e. Neighbourhood roads) as is currently practiced along a majority of the Neighbourhood Area's existing neighbourhood road network.

## Development Form and Density

138. As noted in the Design Codes report, development within the Parish gives rise to different densities and how this relates to the look and feel of each area. It has further importance in relation to how new development adjacent to existing development should be designed and at what density.
139. To help understand current densities, for each character area (excluding 6 – Chapel Lane and 7 Rural Hamlets) identified in the Design Guidance and Codes Report, housing densities have been calculated based on the following approach:
  - Where appropriate, areas were adjusted to remove the largest open areas from Character Areas. This would have the effect of increasing densities within what remains, and so can be regarded as conservative in approach (i.e. it indicates higher densities).
  - Address base information is used to identify separate dwellings (separate residential postal addresses are shown as red dots and commercial postal addresses are shown as blue dots). This is recent information.
  - Separate residential addresses have been counted within each character area. Each residential address base is regarded as a separate dwelling. In reality, this might not be the case e.g. some might not be C3 housing but may be C2 care home uses, but is likely to be the correct assumption for the most part. This should lead to a small over-counting of dwellings and so would also indicate a higher residential density than might exist.
  - The area covered by commercial addresses within character areas have been ignored and so are included. There are not many properties, but this will reduce over-counting in some areas (i.e. it will reduce housing density).
140. Figure 10 indicates the character area boundaries as amended in two areas and shows postal address basepoints. Table 6 shows the number of homes and the area for each character area, and the resultant density of dwellings per hectare.
141. The highest density character area is Walkers Heath with approximately 28 dwellings per hectare in an area of 11 ha comprising 309 dwellings. The lowest density character area is Wythall Village with 16 dwellings per hectare. Walkers Heath is in a different position to the rest of the Parish as it is effectively part of the Birmingham conurbation. The rest of the Parish does not muster housing densities across large areas more than 20 dwellings per hectare. The average across the five character areas assessed in Table 6 is 19 dwellings per hectare.

# Agenda Item 10

Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

Figure 10 – Local Character Areas within Wythall

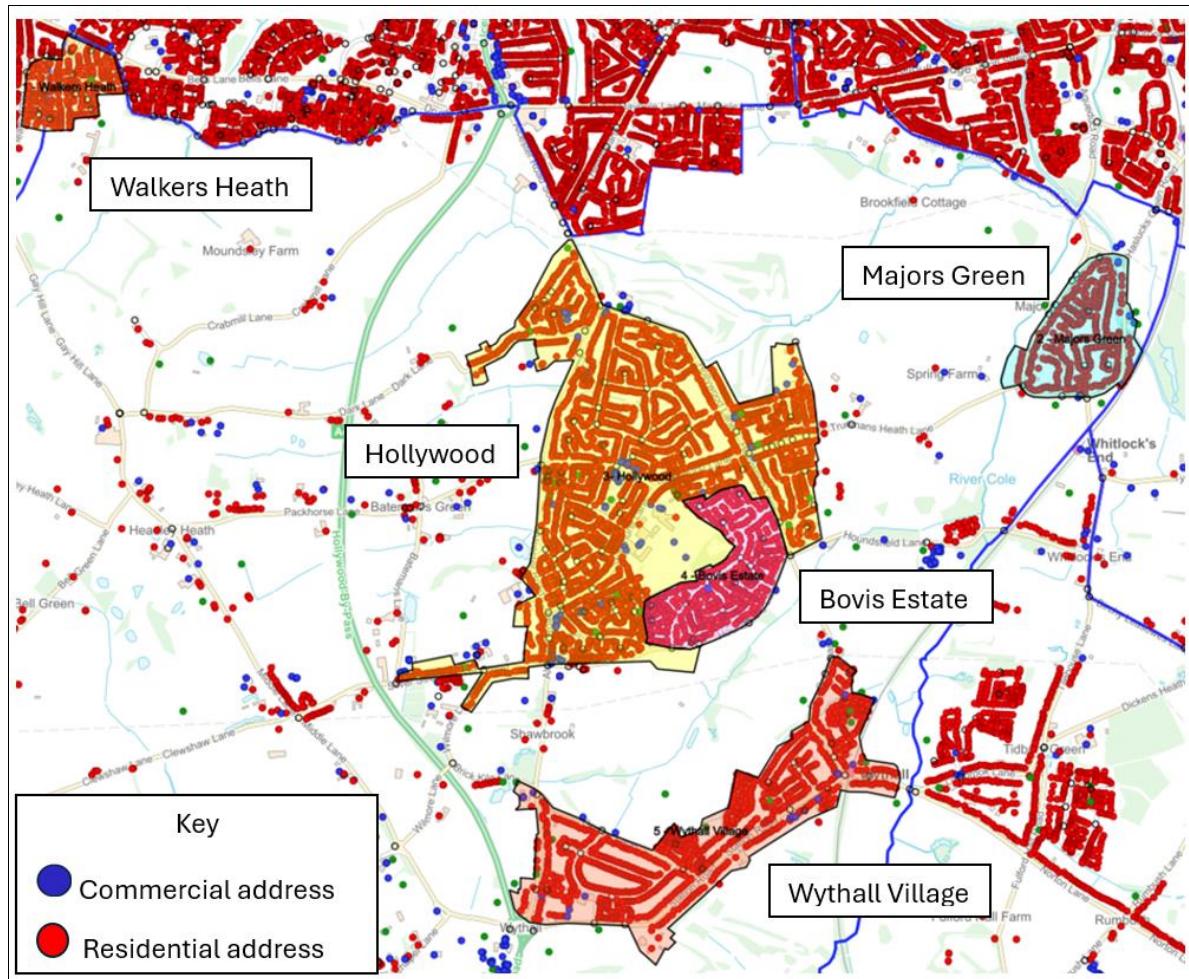


Table 6 – Approximate Housing Densities within Wythall Parish Character Areas

Character Area	Area (ha)	Number of homes	Density per hectare
1. Walkers Heath	11	309	28
2. Major's Green	22	379	17
3. Hollywood	135	2532	19
4. Bovis Estate	22	447	20
5. Wythall Village	61	995	16
6. Chapel Lane (Wythall)	N/A	N/A	N/A
7. Rural hamlets & open countryside	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Overall average</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>4662</b>	<b>19</b>

142. Locally, residents have views about the types of housing development design they prefer. Selected housing developments in the area, from different periods, were examined to establish the positive features supported by residents and to calculate the approximate densities of these

schemes. These are shown in Table 7 with fuller details provided in a supporting document on ‘Housing Densities of existing developments in Wythall Parish’. The main findings from this work is that developments which support reasonable densities can be achieved using design and development forms which are recognisable from existing developments and so can be secured with public greenery, private front gardens, off-street parking and room for storing bins out of sight.

**Table 7 – Densities achieved within selected housing developments in Wythall Parish**

Development	Number of Homes	Area	Density including public green space provision where applicable	Density excluding public green space provision
Fieldways Close	15	0.53 ha	28	no green space
Paddocks Road Area	265	9.87 ha	27	28
Richmond Close	26	1.16 ha	23	no green space
Lint Meadow	16	0.40 ha	40	no green space
Mayhurst/Wythwood	94	3.47 ha	27	29
Bovis	419	20.22 ha	21	no green space
Holly Drive	11	0.56 ha	20	no green space
Bleakhouse Farm	178	6.30 ha	28	32
Selsdon Close	76	3.10 ha	25	30
Coppice Gardens	14	0.43 ha	33	no green space

Source: Wythall Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

143. It is appreciated that the planning system requires the efficient use of land. The work shows that housing developments can be designed so that local people respond positively to them from an aesthetic point of view, and yet achieve appropriate densities.

### Policy Considerations

144. NPPF paragraph 29 provides clear support for neighbourhood plans to establish design principles for their areas and, through paragraph 129, to set out policies with aim of maintaining an area’s character and setting and securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places. NPPF paragraphs 130-135 provides a clear role for area-based character assessments and design codes to inform local planning policies.

145. There are two key considerations for the Neighbourhood Plan arising from its work to address design and development form. The first is that new development within the existing settlements in the Parish should be complementary to existing development and should ensure that key positive features and attributes are maintained or enhanced where appropriate. Care is needed to respect neighbouring development and to adopt sensitive approaches in terms of design details, materials, plot layout and external space.

146. The second key concern is to ensure that, if new development is planned in future on areas which are at present Green Belt countryside, then development in areas adjacent to existing settlement edges should respect the density and form of existing development, should seek to not overwhelm existing development and should safeguard, as far as may be possible, existing local characteristics. A response to this will include moderating density and scale of development close to existing character areas and incorporating development design and landscaping approaches which provide appropriate buffers between existing and new development.

## **WYTHALL 4 – Good Design and Development Form in Wythall Parish**

Planning applications in Wythall Parish should, where relevant, demonstrate how development will be undertaken in accordance with the Design Principles set out in Table 4 and Design Codes set out in Table 5, and with reference to the supporting Design Guidelines and Design Codes Report (October 2023). It is important to maintain and enhance positive design characteristics within the Parish and applications should demonstrate clearly how they will do this.

Applications for new residential development should have regard to the density of surrounding development in the character area. They should set out specific design measures to avoid overbearing development on neighbouring development and plans which demonstrate a graduated approach to density, appropriate development buffers from existing development and landscape screening, also having regard to Design Principles set out in Table 4 and Design Codes set out in Table 5.

All proposals for new development should include measures to create and/or enhance habitats in accordance with Design Codes D1 to D7. Measures to meet Biodiversity Net Gain requirements should be provided on site wherever possible.

## **Sustainable Buildings**

147. The climate emergency creates an imperative for local communities to take action to combat climate change and to mitigate its effects through design of new development. Wythall Parish is no different and wants to support the development of new sustainable buildings and to support existing development to become more sustainable through measures to increase energy efficiency and incorporate low carbon and renewable energy technologies. It is important that new buildings in the Parish are built ready for renewable or low carbon heat technologies, and should incorporate renewable energy generation to reduce fossil fuel energy demands and improve energy efficiency.
148. The government is regulating on home insulation and heating and is also providing incentives for homeowners to improve energy efficiency and reduce domestic emissions of greenhouse gases. Higher levels of energy efficiency and lower carbon emissions will be required in new buildings when Parts F and L Building Regulations requirements are applied from 2026 to meet the Future Homes Standard. There is no reason why new development design cannot incorporate these features now or at least ensure that new development is ready to meet new requirements.
149. The occupants of new housing are often left with significant costs and difficulties in adapting newly-built homes to meet future requirements or take advantage of government initiatives to support change. New homes could be routinely built with roof top solar panels on them now. New homes will need space to be provided for heat pumps and this needs to be designed in – many new homes have little space to the front and at the back and it is not currently clear they could incorporate heat pumps.
150. Many smaller homes are designed with final entry doors to the front and rear which open directly into living spaces, which undermines the way heat pumps work to gradually heat spaces. New homes are often provided with plumbing and wiring which is not capable of accommodating new heating technologies which require greater water flow to heated water storage tanks. They don't have the space for the large water tanks. Radiators are too small and underfloor heating is not provided. Electrical wiring does not support renewable technology installation.
151. The energy efficiency of UK homes is poor overall. Significant reliance is placed on building regulations to secure improved energy efficient and lower embodied carbon emissions in new

building construction in accordance with regulatory requirements emerging through the Future Homes Standard.

152. All this can render sustainable technologies unworkable or can be disruptive and costly to address. This could be avoided if required features and infrastructure are designed into new developments now, and they are built to good standards. Efforts to reflect these needs in planning policies are often objected to by developers who think that requirements should be laid out clearly in Building Regulations, and this might work if Building Regulations practices were better.
153. What can the Neighbourhood Plan do to encourage better development design, built with good quality materials to good standards of construction? Wythall Parish supports local efforts to reduce the area's carbon footprint. Neighbourhood plan policies can support homeowners and developers to install renewable and other low carbon technologies within existing and on new developments. It can do this by encouraging high environmental performance in the development of new buildings and alterations/extensions to existing buildings.

## **WYTHALL 5 – Environmental Performance of Buildings**

New Buildings and alterations/extensions to existing buildings are expected to achieve high standards of environmental performance. This includes where possible in relation to listed buildings where positive support will be given to proposals within the existing framework of protection of heritage assets.

New development design in Wythall Parish should be future-proofed to support the achievement of the Future Homes Standard, including lower carbon emissions, improved energy efficiency, better heat management and lower operating costs with new heating and energy generation technologies.

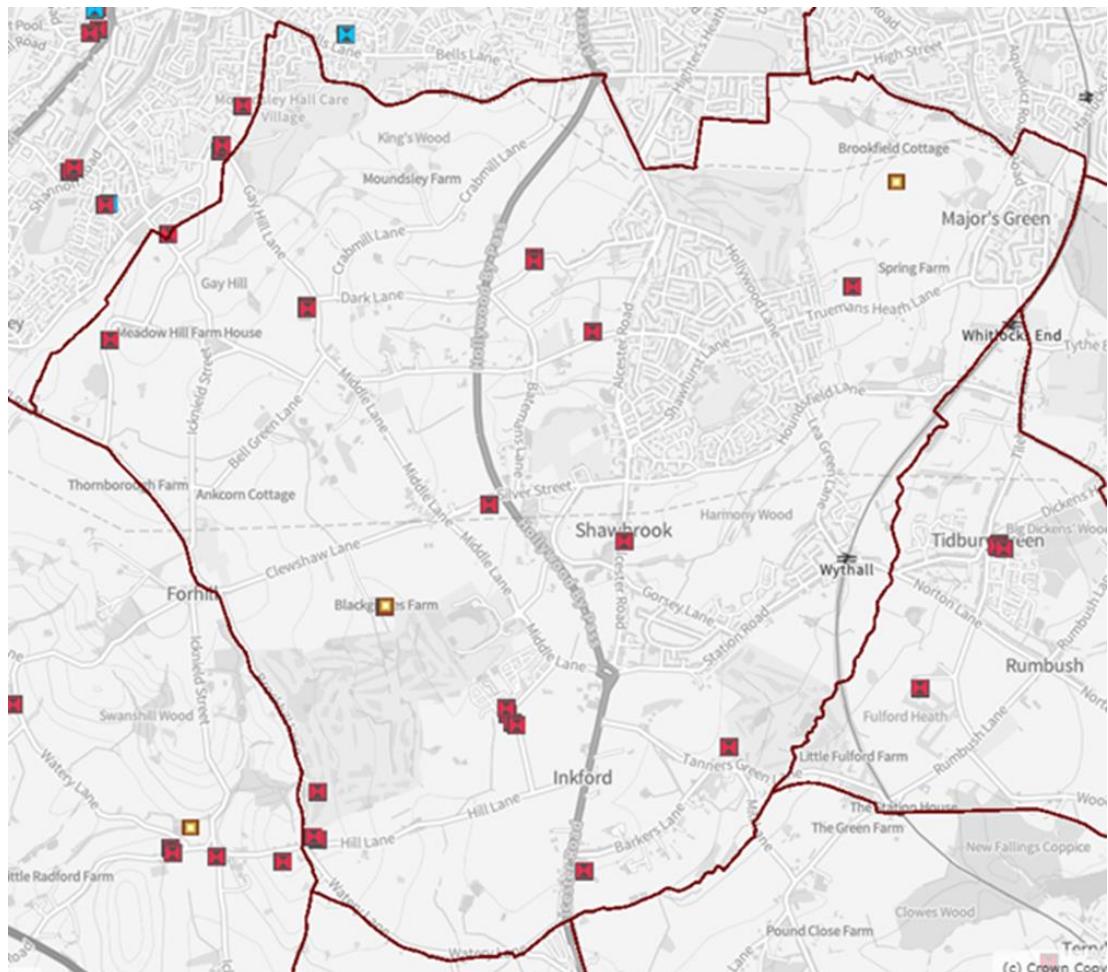
Proposals for development which include measures to reduce carbon emissions from building operations, such as those listed below, will be supported:

- a) Provide space within plots for heat pumps which should be positioned to ensure the amenity of occupants and neighbours is maintained.
- b) Incorporate design features to maintain heat balance within buildings, avoiding external doors opening directly into living spaces. Ensure good insulation.
- c) Provide internal electrical and plumbing to specifications required for use with sustainable heating and energy generation technologies.
- d) Incorporate roof top solar on new buildings.
- e) Community energy schemes to provide heat and power to new developments.
- f) Provide Electric Vehicle Chargepoints to serve the occupants of every new home and to serve the users of all non-domestic buildings in accordance with the Worcestershire County Council Streetscapes Design Guide.
- g) Water-saving measures such as grey-water systems and water butts.

## 7. Local Heritage

154. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has used local knowledge and historic environment records to identify assets in the Parish that are of sufficient local heritage interest to merit consideration in planning decisions, but which are not formally designated heritage assets.
155. The Neighbourhood Area also possesses rich archaeological heritage, being host to two Scheduled Monuments (SM). These include the first recorded settlement in Wythall, Berry Mound Camp, to the northwest of Major's Green. This was an Iron Age hill fort dating to the 1st or 2nd century BC (see Figure 11 and Table 8).
156. The second is the Moated Site at Blackgreves Farm which encompasses the moat and land surrounding the Grade II Listed Blackgreves Farmhouse to the south of Clewshaw Lane. The monument includes the buried and earthwork remains of a moated site with records referring to Richard I (1157-1199) granting the tenement to Reginald De Barres, and in 1252 Henry III granting the same lands to William de Belne.
157. No Registered Battlefields, Registered Parks and Gardens or World Heritage Sites are recorded in the Parish.

**Figure 11 – Nationally Designated Heritage Assets in Wythall Parish – Mapped Locations**



Key: ■ Scheduled Monuments ■ Grade 2 listed buildings

Source: Defra MAGIC maps

**Table 8 – Nationally Designated Heritage Assets in Wythall Parish – Grading and Locations**

Description	Heritage Category	Grid Reference
Berrymound Camp, Majors Green	Scheduling	SP0952 7789
Hollytree Farmhouse, Dark Lane, Hollywood	Grade 2 listing	SP0744 7747
Barn and cart shed approx. 15 metres south of Hollytree Farmhouse, Dark Lane, Hollywood	Grade 2 listing	SP0744 7745
Truemans Heath Farmhouse, Truemans Heath Lane	Grade 2 listing	SP0927 7730
Gay Hill Farmhouse, Gay Hill Lane	Grade 2 listing	SP0613 7719
Barn approx. 10 metres south of Gay Hill Farmhouse, Gay Hill Lane	Grade 2 listing	SP0613 7718
Kingswood Meeting House and Sunday School, Packhorse Lane	Grade 2 listing	SP0777 7705
Goodrest Farmhouse, Goodrest Lane	Grade 2 listing	SP0500 7700
Holly Farmhouse, Silver Street	Grade 2 listing	SP0718 7605
349,351 Alcester Road	Grade 2 listing	SP0796 7584
Moated site at Blackgreves Farm	Scheduling	SP0658 7547
Blackgreves Farmhouse, Clewshaw Lane	Grade 2 listing	SP0658 7546
Church of St Mary, Chapel Lane	Grade 2 listing	SP0728 7488
Parish Hall, Chapel Lane (The Old School House)	Grade 2 listing	SP0729 7485
Chapelgreen Farmhouse, Chapel Lane	Grade 2 listing	SP0731 7480
Cart shed approx. 15 metres south east of Chapelgreen Farmhouse, Chapel Lane	Grade 2 listing	SP0734 7478
Lonnin End, Tanners Green	Grade 2 listing	SP0856 7466
Weatheroak Hall, Kings Norton Golf Club, Brock Lane	Grade 2 listing	SP0619 7413
Hall Farmhouse, Hill Lane	Grade 2 listing	SP0619 7413
Barn, cow house and stables approx. 10 metres west of Hall Farmhouse, Hill Lane	Grade 2 listing	SP0617 7414
Inkford Farm, Barkers Lane	Grade 2 listing	SP0773 7395

Source: Historic England

### National Planning Policy

158. A heritage asset is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework as “a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest”.
159. National Planning Practice Guidance defines non-designated heritage assets as buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.
160. Paragraph 216 of the Framework states that non-designated heritage assets can merit consideration in planning matters, stating that ‘In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
161. Section 16 of the NPPF covers all aspects of the historic environment. Paragraph 203 states that “Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment”.

### Adopted Local Plan Policies

162. The Adopted Local Plan addresses the role of heritage assets which are recognised for their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest (BDP20.1). It supports development proposals that will sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets including their

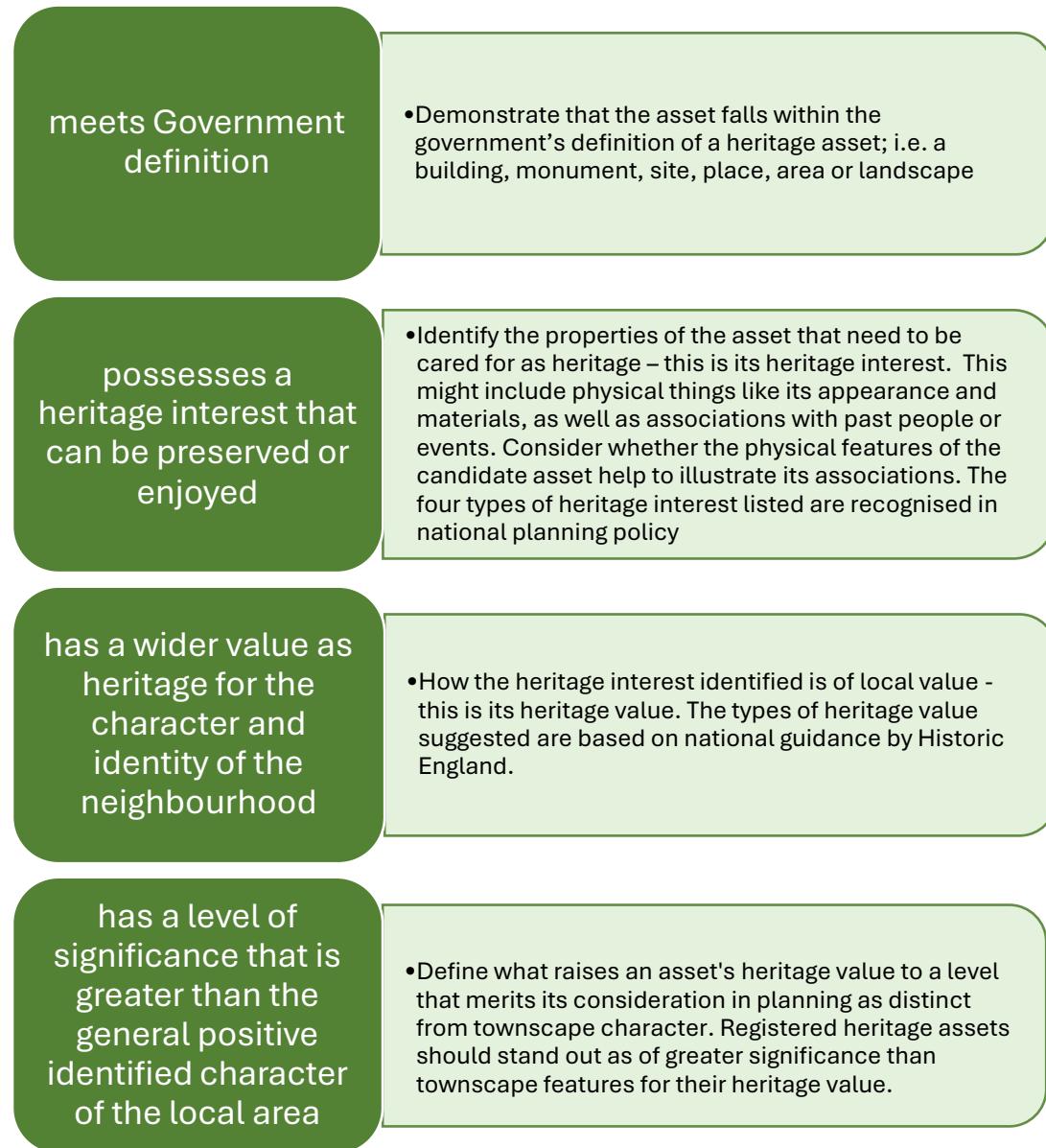
setting, including Non-designated Heritage Assets including (but not limited to) those identified on the Local List and assets recorded in the Historic Environment Record (BDP20.2 (b)).

163. BDP20.12 refers to a commitment by Bromsgrove District Council to update the draft local heritage list and formally adopt it, to include all Heritage Assets recognised as being of local importance, including those which are locally distinctive. At the time of writing, this has not been done for Wythall Parish and there are no published timescales for this work.
164. BDP20.13 says that the District Council will support development that retains Heritage Assets on the Local List; involves sympathetic alterations and extensions to Heritage Assets on the Local List; and, does not have a detrimental impact on the setting or context of Heritage Assets on the Local List.

### **Local Heritage Assets**

165. The Neighbourhood Plan used published good practice guidance from Historic England and information from the Historic Environment Record for the area to identify a schedule of assets that are considered to have local heritage interest. The criteria set out in Figure 12 were used to test the strength of the asset for inclusion in the neighbourhood plan. The Plan designates sites as 'Wythall Parish Local Heritage Assets'.
166. Additionally, an advantage of the work completed is that two local trees have been identified, a walnut tree and a pear tree (claimed to be the oldest pear tree in Worcestershire) for which Tree Preservation Orders are being pursued due to rarity or age and status.
167. **Appendix A** sets out information on each site considered. Each Site identified has been set out on a separate sheet with map showing boundary, location and photographs. The asset features have been described and then the value of the asset has been assessed using a site assessment checklist based on the criteria.

**Figure 12 – Criteria for Non-Designated Heritage Assets**



168. A key objective for identified non-designated heritage assets is to safeguard them against loss or harm, where development benefits would not clearly outweigh identified impacts. A complementary objective would be to support improvement to such assets where this is appropriate and to provide interpretive information about them where this would improve understanding of local cultural heritage.

## **WYTHALL 6 - Wythall Parish Local Heritage Assets**

The following sites, which are described in Appendix A and shown on the Policies Map, are identified as Non-Designated Heritage Assets. Special consideration should be given to the local

# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

heritage value of these sites in the formulation of development proposals and in decisions on planning applications.

- 1 – The Packhorse
- 2 – Wythall House (façade, staircase and stained-glass window)
- 3 – Well located at Wythall House
- 4 – Wythall Train Station Former Ticket Office
- 5 – St Mary's Churchyard
- 6 – Kingswood Meeting House Graveyard
- 7 – War Memorial, Paddocks Road
- 8 – Memorial at Crash Site of Vickers Wellington
- 9 – Shirley Drawbridge
- 10 – Milestone, Alcester Road, Hollywood
- 11 – Milestone, A435, South of Wythall Island
- 12 – Telephone Kiosk, Barkers Lane
- 13 – Telephone Kiosk, Lea Green Lane
- 14 – Blue Plaque at Wythall Cemetery
- 15 – GR Pillar Box, Alcester Road
- 16 – GR Pillar Box, Lea Green Lane
- 17 – GR Pillar Box, Hollywood Lane
- 18 – ERII Type K Pillar Box, Shawhurst Lane
- 19 – ERII Pillar Box, Peterbrook Road
- 20 – Victorian Post Box, Houndsfield Lane

## 8. Green Infrastructure

169. Green infrastructure within Wythall Parish carries out an important function in defining the character of the area. The area's green infrastructure in aggregate also fulfils an important existing strategic function in presenting greener local neighbourhoods in relation to surrounding countryside.
170. It is important that new development maintains and enhances this relationship and function. It can do this by incorporating sufficient green infrastructure of the right type within developments to maintain local character within settlements and setting in relation to the countryside.
171. In relation to the Vision and Objectives set for the Neighbourhood Plan, creating new and better green infrastructure also provides a significant opportunity to improve the look and feel of the neighbourhood, to align this with improvements to walking and cycling routes, to create connected networks for habitats and to promote opportunities for healthier lifestyles.
172. Green infrastructure is made up of a number of components which together have the potential to make up an important network of open spaces, green corridors and habitats. Much of what follows is covered by general policy protections in the adopted Bromsgrove District Plan.
  - Formal Open Spaces are an important aspect of green infrastructure, providing important spaces for sports, recreation, walking, running, and open-air enjoyment away from the built environment.
  - Incidental green spaces provide important local functions in relation to housing developments for informal play and local recreation and greenery.
  - Garden space to housing, businesses and in other more institutional settings, like health facilities and schools.
  - Formal play areas are not strictly green, but provide an important function for the local community
  - Green corridors often are formed by natural or constructed linear features, such as rivers and streams, footpaths, railway lines, property boundaries etc.
  - Local Wildlife Sites
  - Sites of Special Scientific Interest and other statutorily protected wildlife sites.
  - Allotments provide a means for the community grow healthy food, to enjoy healthy activities and to socially interact.
  - Undesignated open land within the urban area is often incidental and forgotten. Over time it can become valuable for biodiversity and as a green resource for local people.
  - Agricultural land is an important setting for nearby settlement and has features of value such as footpaths and hedgerows.
173. Given the strategic contribution that green infrastructure makes as a whole and in view of the objective to connect green infrastructure, the Neighbourhood Plan is focused on ensuring that green infrastructure connections and functions of value to local people, and its strategic role, are maintained.

174. The Neighbourhood Plan brings together how all these open space elements work together to form the Neighbourhood Plan Area's network of green infrastructure and sets objectives for protecting, maintaining, improving and creating new green infrastructure to strengthen the network.
175. Local volunteers have prepared a review of green infrastructure sites which contribute to the above objectives and functions within the Neighbourhood Area.
176. New development can contribute to improvements to green and blue infrastructure and should also ensure that the resilience of the Parish to flood risk from rivers and surface water is maintained and where possible, improved. In developing their proposals, developers are encouraged to consult with North Worcestershire Water Management to ensure that they take account of local records of flooding incidents and identified improvement measures where appropriate.

## Local Green Space Sites

177. The National Planning Policy Framework includes provisions for the designation of Local Green Space, as set out in Figure 13.

### Figure 13 – NPPF policy on Local Green Space Designation

<b>Para 106</b>	<b>What is Local Green Space?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.</li></ul>	
<b>Para 107</b>	<b>When should Local Green Space designation be used?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;</li><li>• b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and,</li><li>• c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.</li></ul>	
<b>Para 108</b>	<b>What is the effect of Local Green Space Designation?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.</li></ul>	

178. Using the criteria set out in the NPPF, the Neighbourhood Plan has identified and assessed candidate sites for Local Green Space designation. Each site considered is set out on a separate sheet which provides details of site location, the boundary of the area proposed for designation and the assessment with recommendation. These are included in **Appendix B**.
179. Owners of Land proposed for Local Green Space designation were consulted informally to make them aware of the proposal and to provide an opportunity to comment.

180. The Neighbourhood Plan has considered objectives related to the future maintenance and enhancement of Local Green Space within the Parish. The Parish Council has an ongoing Grow Wild Wythall Biodiversity Project with funds to maintain work done including on specific LGS and to progress other biodiversity enhancements based on an action plan to be developed following the 2024 annual Parish council meeting and appointment of a working group.

## **WYTHALL 7 - Local Green Space Sites**

The following sites, described in Appendix B and shown on the policies map, are designated Local Green Space sites, and other than in very special circumstances, no inappropriate development will be permitted within them that would harm their green character and reason for designation.

- A - Balancing Pond, Selsdon Close - 0.37ha
- B - Batemans Lane Pond – 1.22ha
- C - Beaudesert Nature Park – 0.5ha
- D - Burnham Road Greenspace – 0.64ha
- E - Chesterwood-Falstaff Open Space – 0.31ha
- F - Dark Lane Meadow – 0.64ha
- G - Gorse Lotts – 0.21ha
- H - Harmony Wood – 2.3ha
- I - Johnson's Pool – 2.06ha
- J - Mayhurst-Wythwood Greenspace – 0.17ha
- K - Mynors Crescent Greenspace – 0.16ha
- L - Silvermead Conservation Area – 0.14ha
- M - Woodrush Drive and The Innage – 0.07ha
- N - Wythall Meadow – 1.48ha

## **Biodiversity Gains from New Development**

181. Under national regulations, new developments are required to demonstrate a net improvement in biodiversity of at least 10% above baseline site biodiversity. . Where biodiversity net gain is provided and how it is provided are important considerations, with potential for improvements to be targeted on areas prioritised within emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Worcestershire, or with improvements secured on other sites (which could be anywhere) which provide biodiversity net gain credits.

182. National guidance sets a hierarchy of approaches in which opportunities to secure improvements are taken on development sites first, with biodiversity improvements on adjacent or other nearby sites second. Only then should other options be considered.

183. An important principle is that if Wythall Parish experiences new development then it should benefit from improvements in biodiversity before other options are taken to improve it elsewhere.

184. A supporting document (Wythall Parish - Habitats, Nature Networks and Agricultural Land) was prepared for the Neighbourhood Plan to map environmental designations, constraints and potential using published sources including DEFRA Magic Maps, Natural England and the

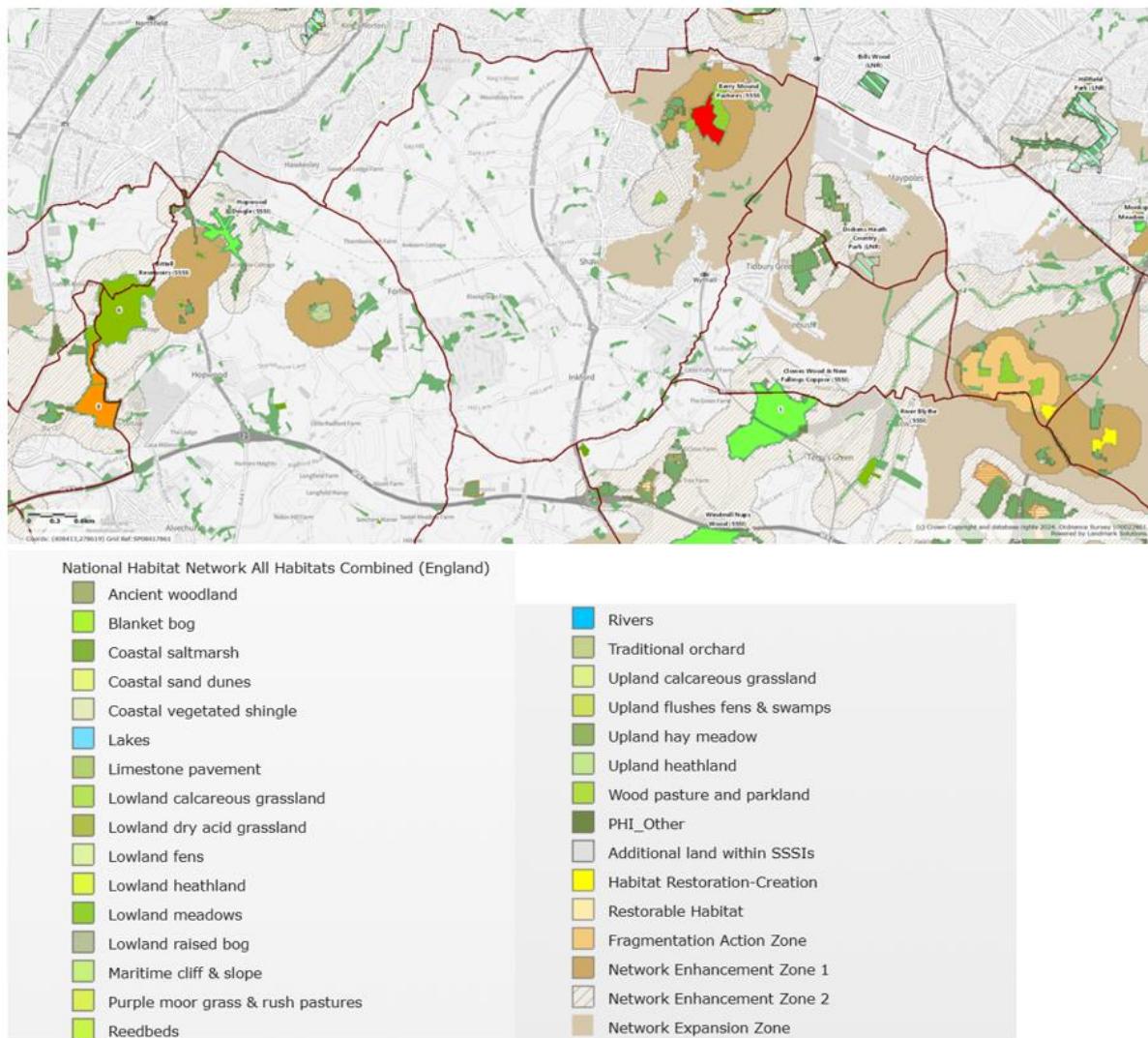
# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

Environment Agency. The maps produced informed an overall observation that Wythall Parish contains relatively few national natural environment designations of value. Agricultural Land is a mixture of Grade 3 (Good to Moderate) and Grade 4 (Poor Quality).

185. There is one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located within Wythall Parish, at Berry Hill Mound Pastures. The SSSI condition has been assessed as declining over the last ten years or so, requiring more grazing with appropriate species to meet objectives.
186. There are no statutory Local Nature Reserves and there is no Ancient or Semi-Ancient Woodland located within the Parish. Small patches of deciduous woodland are found throughout the Parish. There are no nature designations located on the boundaries of the Parish in adjoining areas.
187. Priority Habitats are lacking within the Parish except for two small areas of priority habitat in the form of lowland meadow, one of which is adjacent to the Berry Mound SSSI and a smaller area at the margins of Woodrush High School fields in Hollywood (Wythall Meadow).
188. Most of the Parish is not identified as having potential for habitat enhancement and expansion.
189. The main habitat resources and habitat improvement opportunities appear to be located in the east and northeast of the Parish (see Figure 14) connecting to nature networks to the north (in Birmingham) and to the east (in Dickens Heath and further afield). These are indicated as having potential for habitat restoration, habitat network enhancement (including within built up areas) and habitat network expansion. This would link and expand habitat networks to a similarly enhanced and expanded area centred on Dickens Heath Country Park in the adjacent Parish to the east. Areas immediately adjacent to this and also adjacent to Ancient Woodland within and beyond the Neighbourhood Area are viewed as potential areas for habitat network enhancement.

**Figure 14 – Opportunities for habitat network enhancement, expansion and connection**



Source: Defra Magic Maps

190. Also, the northern edge of Wythall Parish adjoins the Birmingham and Black Country Nature Improvement Area. This was a government-funded partnership programme until 2015. The partnership lives on and promotes programmes and projects to improve nature within the area. Ecological linking areas are shown extending south from Moseley Bog, across the Parish boundary in the northeast corner. This map, when considered with the maps above, indicates more sensitivity in the northeast of the Parish and a potential focus on habitat restoration and enhancement in this area.

### **WYTHALL 8 – Biodiversity Gains from new development in Wythall Parish**

In the first instance, new developments which are required to secure biodiversity net gain of at least 10% should meet this requirement on the application site. Where this cannot be achieved, proposals should aim to meet biodiversity net gain requirements in accordance with local nature recovery priorities more broadly within Wythall Parish.

New developments which contribute to local habitat network enhancement, expansion and connection in the north and east of Wythall Parish will be supported.

## 9. Sustainable Travel

191. Travel within Wythall Parish is influenced by the location of the main settlements of Wythall, Hollywood and Majors Green in the centre and east of the Parish close to the border with Solihull and Birmingham. The settlements are separated by Green Belt countryside. The Parish is located in the northeastern corner of Worcestershire, outside the metropolitan area of the west midlands. This creates difficulties but also opportunities to address strategic and local transport requirements relating to rail and bus travel, and for active travel within the Parish.
192. Local daily services within Wythall are provided on a largely decentralised basis, with a degree of self-sufficiency for each settlement. Nevertheless, within the settlements of the Parish, walking distances to access local services, and particularly where these are in one of the other settlements of the Parish, can be too far for regular daily journeys, particularly for younger and older sections of the population.
193. Those with access to bicycles can easily reach all parts of the Parish based on the distances between settlements but no encouragement towards their use is currently offered. There are no dedicated cycle paths or cycle lanes, no cycle crossings or filter lanes at junctions and, no provision for secure cycle parking with the exceptions of Woodrush Hub and Hollywood Medical Centre. The same exclusions apply to cycling as for walking outlined above - the old and infirm and the very young, when unaccompanied..
194. Strategic public transport infrastructure is provided through Wythall railway station and there are needs and opportunities for improvements to enable greater use of the station by local residents. There is a need to connect the Parish to nearby areas outside Worcestershire through bus routes and more frequent bus services.
195. Whitlocks End railway station is situated just to the South of Major's Green, over the border in Solihull. Although its location means that it does serve Major's Green residents particularly as well as others within the Parish by virtue of its car park, the plan has not focussed on any improvements at this railway station because it is outside of the Parish.
196. Wythall Parish is also connected to the M42 motorway to the south via the A435 dual carriageway. This provides a route directly from Junction 3 of the M42 into the heart of the Parish and on into Birmingham. Strategic development is taking place in adjacent Solihull Metropolitan Borough Wards to the east of Wythall, and this is providing a potential strategic-level rat-run for traffic on the M42 during times of severe congestion on the motorway (the rat-run connects the A435 via lanes to new roads built through development to eventually rejoin the M42 east of Birmingham, so cutting out the southeast corner). Managing the impacts of traffic through the Parish is linked to providing attractive walking and cycling routes and ensuring bus services are reliable.

### Public Transport Service in Wythall Parish

197. Wythall Parish is located at the furthest extent of the bus service network within North East Worcestershire and lies outside the metropolitan bus network of Birmingham. Bus service co-ordination between metropolitan areas and their adjacent counties often leaves places like Wythall with bus services that don't meet local needs. In this case, there is a local need for frequent bus services into the adjacent metropolitan area.

# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

198. In August 2024 Worcestershire County Council introduced ‘Worcestershire on Demand’ to Wythall. This is a Demand Responsive Transport service across North East Worcestershire, which allows passengers to book a return journey on an app or by telephone to anywhere within the zone. The initiative has already expanded to further areas and, as its usage builds, it is hoped that it will expand further to provide services into Redditch and beyond
199. Frequent bus services that run late into the evening into the centre of Birmingham and other destinations operate from the Maypole shopping centre, located just outside the northern boundary of the Parish. However, four bus services operate within Wythall Parish to connect to the Maypole shopping centre.
200. For those relying on bus services to get to work in Birmingham, a new Diamond Service 50A was recently introduced as a new AM and PM peak direct service to Birmingham (see Figure 15). The route operates services on weekday mornings and in the evening in order to provide a direct service. The route is also provided on a reduced service on Saturdays and Sundays.

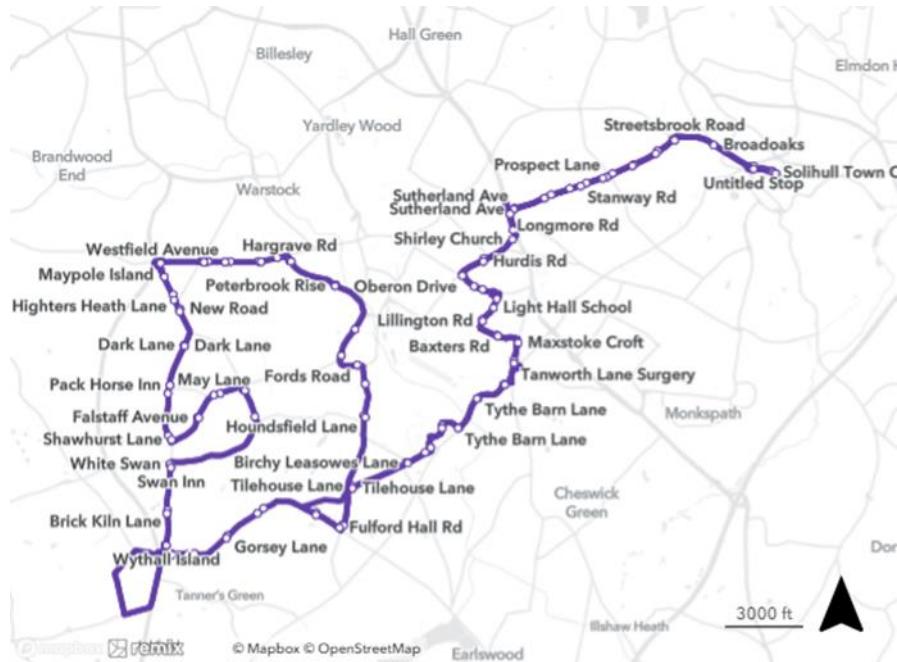
**Figure 15 – Bus Service 50A from Redditch to Birmingham through Wythall Parish**



Source: Moovit

201. The Landflight Services 664 and 665 which have recently replaced the A4, run loop services to and from Solihull, through Wythall Parish via Maypole (see Figure 16). A regular service runs to Solihull on weekdays, with the last bus leaving Solihull early evening. The route to Solihull is circuitous and takes between around 45 minutes or more to reach Solihull Town Centre. There is a slight difference in routes between the 664 and 665 where the services operate in opposite directions when approaching Wythall. This benefits local people when accessing local facilities with the convenience of using the 664 service one way and the 665 the other, allowing shorter journeys to and from home.

**Figure 16 – Bus Services 664 and 665 Around Wythall Parish**



Source: Landflight Travel Services

202. The Diamond Service 150 connects Kings Heath and Redditch and runs through Wythall Parish (see Figure 17). The service runs every 2/3 hours until late afternoon/early evening , Monday to Friday.

**Figure 17 – Bus Service 150 Route through Wythall Parish**



Source: Geopunk

203. There are no bus services in Wythall Parish that allow for return journeys from evening activities that end after 7pm . In terms of accessing local shops at the Maypole, bus services 664 and 665 currently provide a 6-7 minute journey from Hollywood, approximately hourly through the day. The 150 service offers a journey of similar duration but far less frequently.

### **The need for public transport access to local services within Wythall Parish**

204. The main settlements of Wythall, Hollywood and Walkers Heath are each served by local shops which can be reached on foot within reasonable distances, with some exceptions where

residential areas are beyond 800m or 15 minutes' walk to the shops. Majors Green has no shops. The distance between some residential areas and local facilities can be too far for an increasingly elderly population to travel on foot.

205. The introduction of the Worcestershire on Demand service has provided an opportunity to help local people in Wythall stay connected to local shops and services, as well as to other destinations within Northeast Worcestershire.
206. Overall, the lack of services to important destinations outside of the Worcestershire on Demand zone, other than Solihull, makes it difficult for local people to use bus services and many either drive or must rely on taxis.

## **WYTHALL 9 – Support for Bus Services**

Major development should contribute towards measures to introduce and sustain improved public transport services in one or more of the following ways:

- a) Financial support to retain the existing frequency of service to Solihull and Maypole.
- b) Financial support to retain the services to Birmingham, Kings Heath and Redditch and to increase the frequency of these services if there is sufficient local demand.
- c) Financial support to increase the Worcestershire on Demand service particularly in terms of extending the operating zone and the number of vehicles available.

## **Rail Services from Wythall Station**

207. Wythall station is located on the Stratford upon Avon to Birmingham double-track rail line facilitating through journeys without changing trains as far as Kidderminster. The service is currently operated by West Midlands Trains and consists of a minimal hourly stopping service in both directions. A more frequent service (in the Birmingham direction only) is provided from Whitlocks End Station, just outside the Parish.
208. The potential to increase services levels to a 30-minute service through Wythall to Stratford-Upon-Avon is currently being explored with the operators of the service – the 'Shakespeare Line Rail User Group' (SLRUG) have long campaigned for a commitment from the West Midlands Rail Executive to double the rail service frequency to two trains per hour in each direction at all stations on the line between Stratford upon Avon and Whitlocks End, including Wythall Station. Rail patronage would increase from all stations on the line (still currently depressed below pre-Covid levels).
209. Looking much further into the future, the North Warwickshire line, to give the Stratford to Tyseley Junction railway its internal name, may be electrified. This will allow the travel times to be significantly reduced.
210. There is a need to improve pedestrian access and relieve road congestion at Whitlocks End Station which is well-used by people living in Wythall Parish. The station is located just outside the Parish boundary and so is beyond the remit of the Neighbourhood Plan. Wythall Parish Council will work with partners to raise issues surrounding the operation of the station.

## **Wythall Station Improvements Needed**

211. Wythall Station was built in the early 20th Century with minimal station infrastructure – the platforms are long but each has only a concrete 'shelter' for waiting passengers. The two

platforms are accessed by ramps from the same road overbridge, allowing passengers to cross over. The original station, constructed without dedicated car parking, remains largely unchanged from its original design.

212. As a consequence, it is unlikely that the straightness and gradient of platform access ramps would meet modern 'disabled access' criteria. The lack of off-street parking to serve the railway station is problematic for the amenity of surrounding roads. There is lighting and remotely-monitored CCTV for passenger safety.
213. The station does benefit from its recent 'adoption' by a group from the local school, Woodrush Academy' under the auspices of 'Friends of the Shakespeare Line' (FoSL). The long-abandoned ticket office is being developed as a 'Community Amenity' and the group attend to decorative planters and regularly tidy the environs and surrounding undergrowth, as the practical element of the schools' City & Guilds in Horticulture course.
214. Wythall Station would require improvements to support more frequent rail services and a greater number of passengers that would be generated from new services and from (depending on what the emerging local plan proposes) new housing development. Coupled with the other 'Active Travel' measures referenced elsewhere in this Neighbourhood Plan, there will come the need for better facilities which are set out in policy WYTHALL 10.

## **WYTHALL 10 – Support for Rail Services and Station improvements**

Major development proposals which contain measures to support a 30-minute railway service from Wythall Station or infrastructure improvements at Wythall Stations transport services in one or more of the following ways will be supported:

- a) A station car park with EV charging facilities provided in a convenient location which reduces disruption to surrounding areas, preferable to the north-east or south-east of the station. A potential location is shown on Figure 20 as 'Potential Parking Area 1'.
- b) A dedicated transport hub and waiting area for connecting road/rail services and demand responsive transport.
- c) Redesigned access to platforms, including from car parking areas, to ensure that modern access standards are met.
- d) Improved platform shelters.
- e) Live information screens which show connecting bus services.
- f) Modern ticket machines.
- g) Secure cycle parking facilities.
- h) Bike hire facilities for use throughout the Parish.

## **Access to local services on foot**

215. The key requirement for the delivery of a walkable Wythall Parish is that key local facilities should be located and retained within an acceptable walking distance of where people live. In terms of walkable neighbourhoods, the distance normally applied is 800 metres or ten minutes' walk. Walking routes must be legible, safe and attractive.
216. Wythall is comprised of tightly formed settlements surrounded by open countryside. The major settlements of Wythall, Hollywood and Major's Green are separated by countryside but

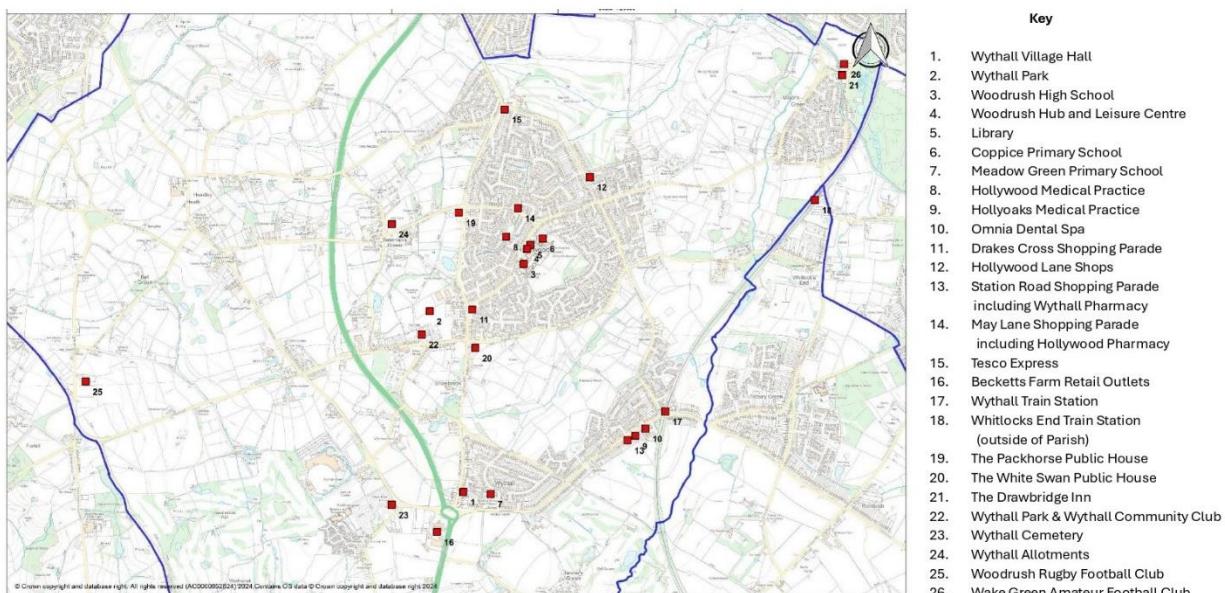
# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

connected by short road routes. Each settlement is self-contained to an extent, but some services located within one settlement serve the Parish as a whole. This necessitates travel between settlements for essential services.

217. Figure 18 indicates the location of key facilities providing local services to residents of the Parish. The map shows some community facilities located in Wythall Village with the majority of facilities located in Hollywood, and relatively few present in Major's Green.
218. Figure 19 shows walking access times to different types of local community facilities – shops, medical centres, primary schools, the secondary school and railway stations. A catchment of 800m or 10-minutes walking time has been applied to show areas of the Parish which have good walking access to local facilities (but not taking into account topography or obstacles). These maps show that access on foot to facilities within each settlement in the Parish is generally good where it is present in that settlement (for example the medical centres in Wythall Village and Hollywood). Centrally-located facilities (in one settlement only) are generally not easily accessible on foot from the other settlements (for example the secondary school in Hollywood). With the exception of walking access to Whitlock's End Railway Station (outside the Parish), Major's Green lacks easy walking access to most community facilities in the Parish.
219. Key destinations which hundreds of pupils and parents walk to each day are the local schools. Two of which are located on Shawhurst Lane in Hollywood and one on Meadow Road in Wythall. In general, many footpaths are often too narrow for buggies, or for parents to walk alongside their children, or to pass pedestrians walking in the opposite direction. They often flood, have poor lighting or lack crossing provision such as dropped kerbs, tactile paving or pedestrian refuges.
220. In some cases, there could be scope to provide more direct walking and cycling routes to connect residential areas to key facilities. These are discussed below. In other circumstances, there may be a need to provide local bus services to meet access requirements. A third possibility is that new local facilities are provided where appropriate to improve local access. This could be through new development if and when this is clarified in the emerging local plan.

**Figure 18 – Key Parish Facilities**



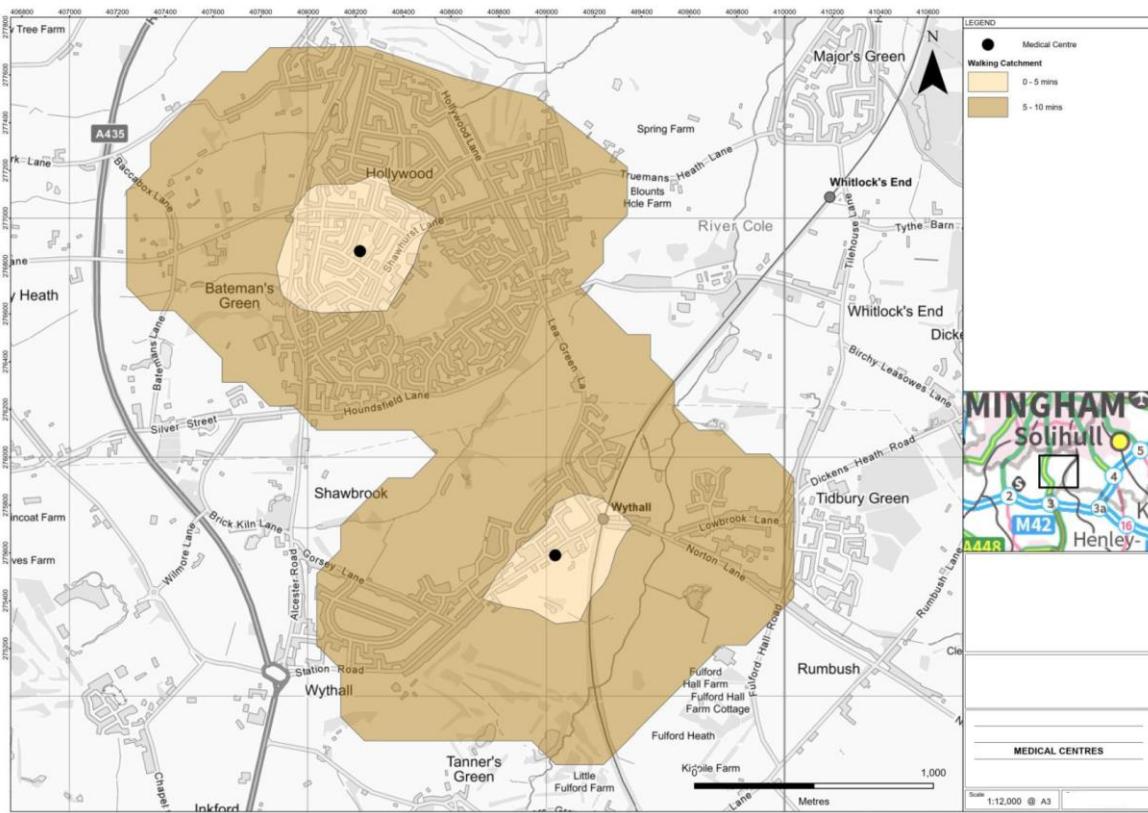
# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

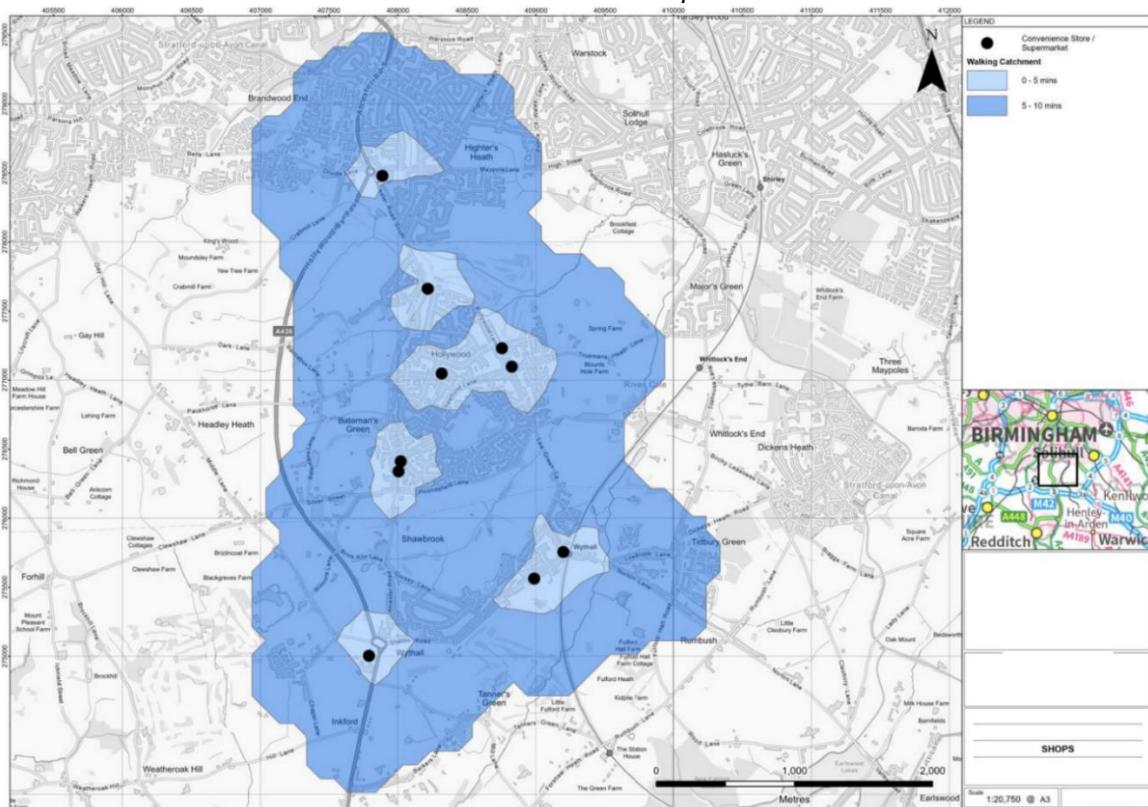
Source: Wythall Parish Council, April 2024

**Figure 19 – Walking access times to community facilities**

### Medical Centres



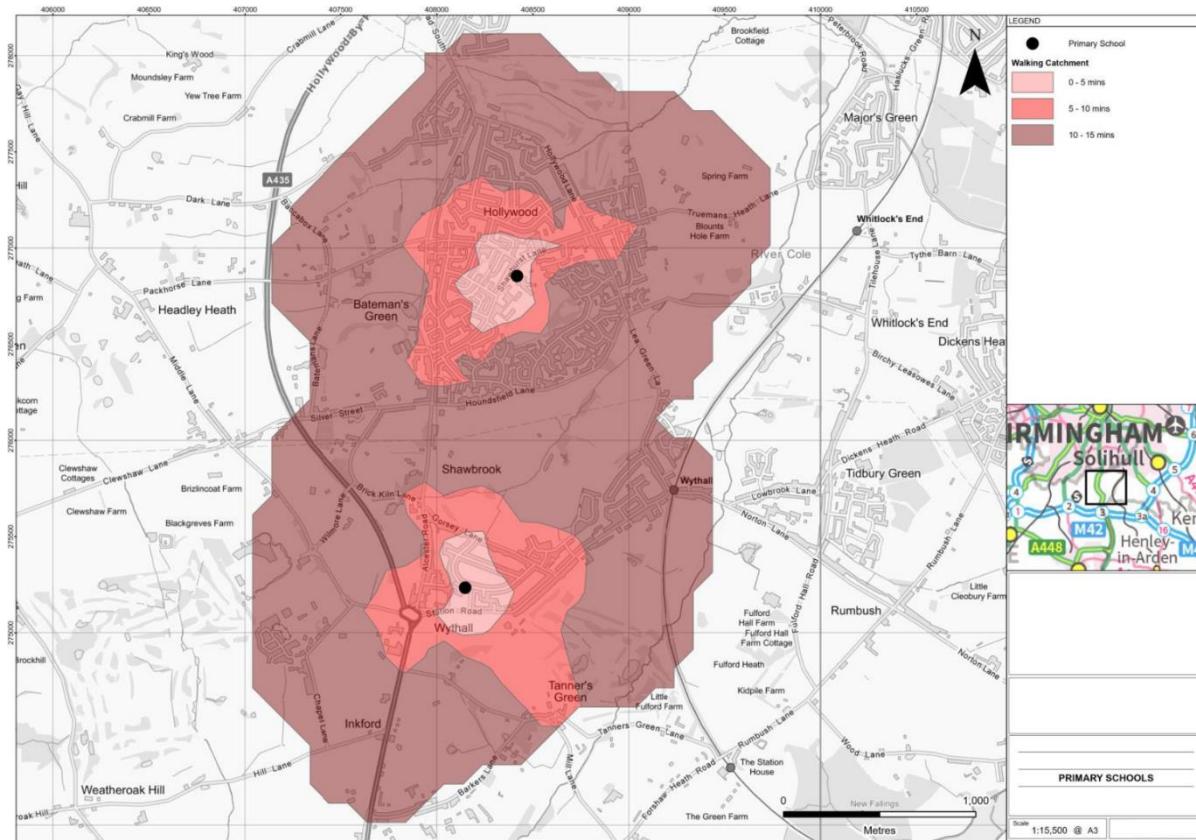
### Convenience Stores/Supermarket



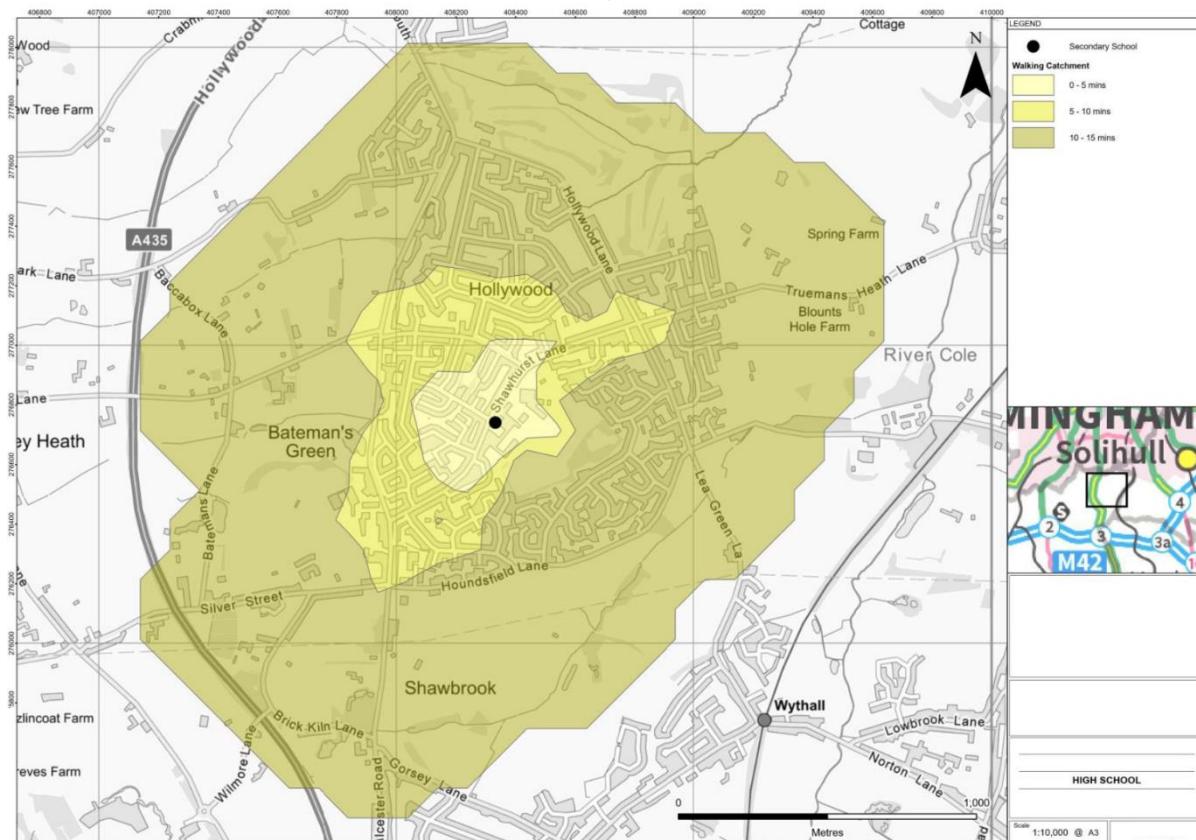
# Agenda Item 10

Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

## Primary Schools

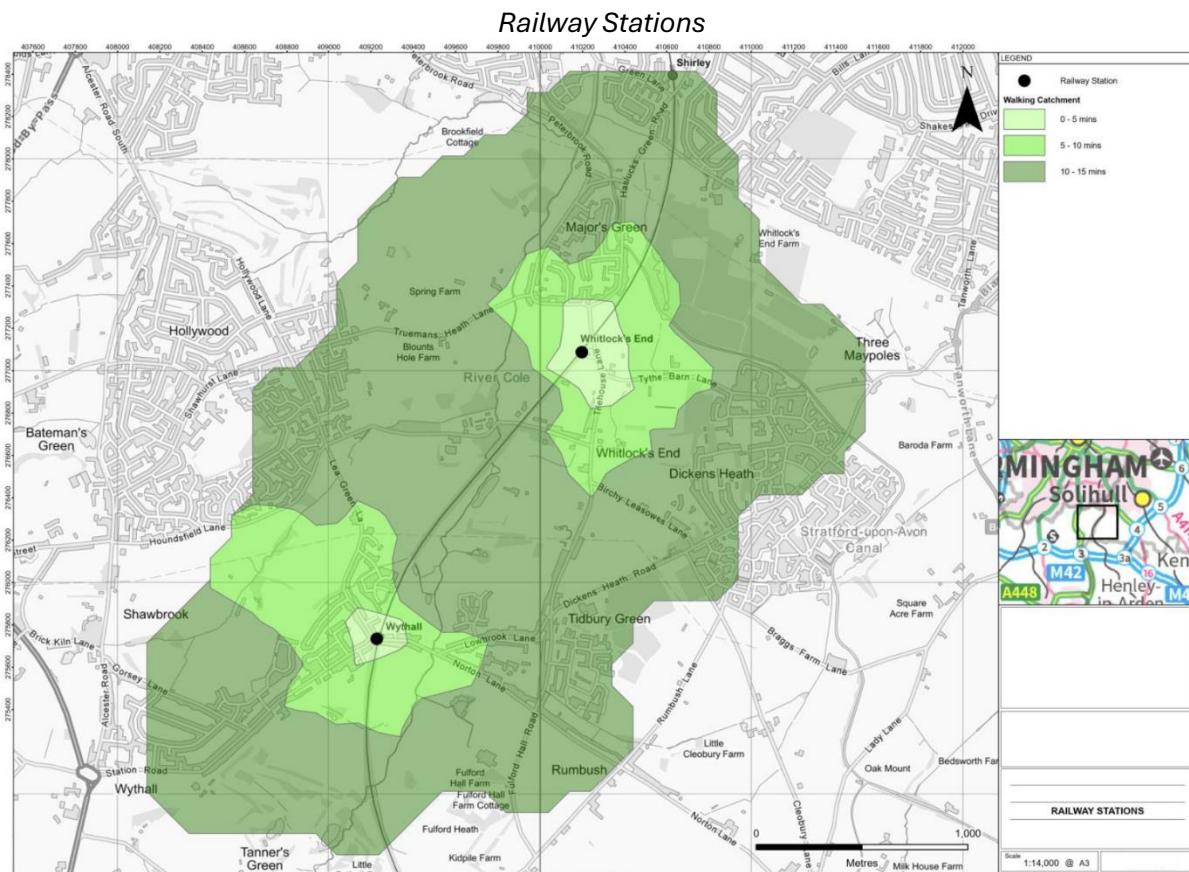


## Secondary Schools



# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025



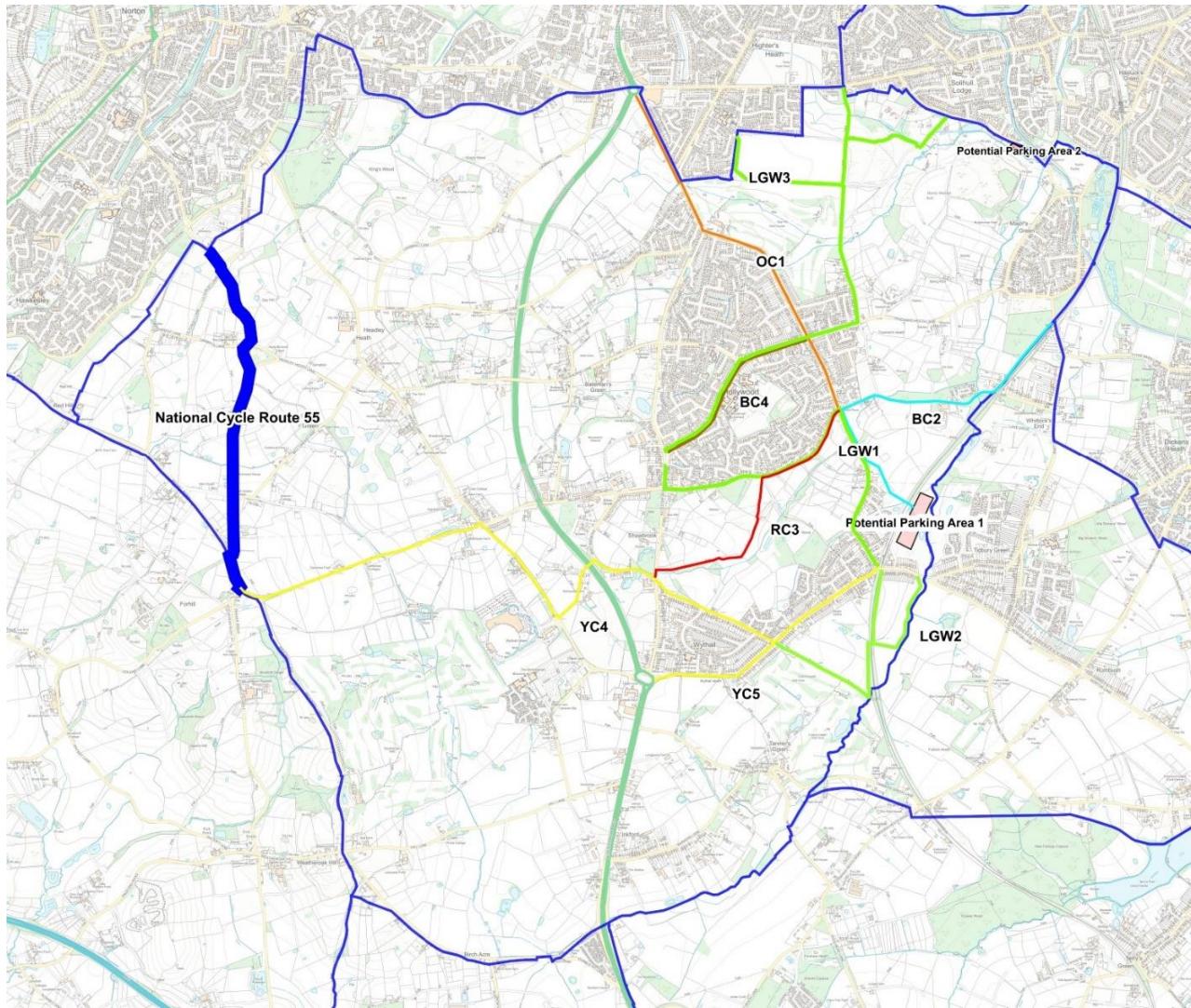
### Priority walking and cycling routes

221. Active travel objectives set by Government support walking and cycling. Cycling can be particularly effective in supporting non-car or public transport access to local shops and services, or to access longer distance transport services. The neighbourhood plan supports cycling as a means of improving accessibility for local people. This means providing safe and convenient routes, and sufficient cycle parking infrastructure.
222. The working group has examined the quality of walking and cycling routes connecting to key destinations in the Parish. Key walking and cycling routes within the Parish are identified in Figure 20 in terms of their importance for accessing key services including the train station. There will be overlap with a leisure walking and cycling network but here the focus is on accessible walking and cycling routes for daily needs which are important if a reduction in the need to travel by car is to be achieved.

# Agenda Item 10

Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

**Figure 20 - Priority walking and cycling routes in Wythall Parish**



Source: Wythall Parish Council

**Figure 21 – Close up of location of Potential Parking Area 2**



Source: Wythall Parish Council

- 223. The LGW2 route set out on Figure 20 could incorporate a “Riverside Way” route branching left prior to the railway embankment would be possible, running at a distance away from the River Cole (to allow it to be at a well- drained surface level thus avoiding any flooding issues). The path would terminate at Norton Lane a short distance downhill from the station.
- 224. This route would have many advantages for the health and wellbeing of residents, not only would it offer an alternative route to and from the station, cut down on road usage and help reduce traffic air pollution, it would be safer for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 225. There would also be an opportunity to improve green infrastructure and wildlife habitats near the river corridor with tree planting, which would improve air quality and help drain out excessive ground water.
- 226. Figure 20 also shows a potential location for a parking area at Wythall Rail Station (labelled as ‘Potential Parking Area 1’). Another tourist/local visitor parking area is identified at Peterbrook Road (labelled as ‘Potential Parking Area 2’ and shown more fully in figure 21). This would be located at the start of the “North Worcestershire Way” which is a long-distance walking route across Worcestershire County. A small parking area could be accommodated at the starting point of the walk, which together with an information board, would encourage people to try this walk and benefit from it.
- 227. Proposals made by the National Trust in its 8 Hills Regional Park Spatial Framework report include a heritage route from Shirley Station to Berry Mound Fort Camp, a visitor facility at Berry Mound Fort Camp and a potential Discovery Gateway at Shirley Station. Berry Mound Fort Camp is located extremely close to the start of the North Worcestershire Way and these proposals would link in well with our proposed car park.
- 228. The Government publishes guidance and standards for cycle infrastructure design, set out in LTN1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design. This provides a framework for the local assessment of existing cycle infrastructure and the identification of priorities for future provision to address deficiencies and enhance infrastructure networks.

# Agenda Item 10

## Wythall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 – February 2025

229. Local Authorities are required to publish a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). These are prepared with engagement and input from local communities to identify aspirations and priorities in a plan for local walking and cycling infrastructure.
230. For a council area the size of Worcestershire, separate LCWIPs are being put in place for different parts of the County. So far, Wythall has not been covered and so the neighbourhood plan can make its own assessment of infrastructure quality and requirements.
231. In making a local attempt to establish credible assessment of quality of cycling infrastructure, reference should be made to the Core Principles of design set out in LTN1/20. LTN1/20 principles guide the suitability of different types of cycle infrastructure according to road speeds and traffic volumes.
232. Table 9 demonstrates how the core design principles of LTN1/20 were applied to the routes identified in Figure 20 and priorities for further cycling infrastructure to improve the coherence, directness, safety, comfort and attractiveness of the network were considered. Where local knowledge and available data permitted, the need was recognised to protect cyclists from motor traffic on highways using the guidance set out in figure 4.1 of LTN1/20.
233. The priorities identified will be actioned through a variety of mechanisms. This will include direct contributions from new development, securing commitments from Worcestershire County Council and other means as may be identified.
234. Whilst written for cycling infrastructure, an assessment of local walking routes and infrastructure was undertaken using the same guidance and principles. This is also set out in the table.

### **WYTHALL 11 – Support for improvements to priority walking and cycling routes**

Major development proposals are encouraged to support improvements to and well-marked signage for the following priority walking and cycling routes as set out on the Policies Map and in Table 9:

- a) Extent of National Cycle Route 55 (NCR55) within Wythall Parish boundary.
- b) Yellow Cycling Route (YC4) joins NCR55 at Forhill to Wythall rail station via Wythall Green.
- c) Yellow Cycling Route (YC5).
- d) Blue Cycling Route (BC2).
- e) Red Cycling Route (RC3).
- f) Orange Cycling Route (OC1).
- g) Brown Cycling Route (BC4).
- h) Light Green Walking Route 1 (LGW1).
- i) Light Green Walking Route 2 (LGW2).
- j) Light Green Walking Route 3 (LGW3).
- k) Bike hire facilities for use throughout the Parish.
- l) Cycle storage and cycle parking stands at key shopping and other Parish facilities.

**Table 9 - Assessment of priority walking and cycling routes – quality and investment priorities**

Cycle or Walking Route	Description of route and infrastructure	Assessment in accordance with LTN1/20	What are priorities for route improvement?
Extent of established NCR55 within Wythall Parish boundary	Crosses into the Parish along Primrose Hill and continues along Icknield St.	<b>Coherent?</b> Yes <b>Direct?</b> Yes <b>Safe?</b> Yes <b>Comfortable?</b> Yes <b>Attractive?</b> Yes <b>Suitable protection from traffic?</b> Yes, but ACL road markings must be applied throughout.	Advisory Cycle Lane markings where feasible.  Signage where appropriate.
Yellow Cycling Route (YC4) joins NCR55 at Forhill and runs to Wythall rail station via Wythall Green (a major employment zone).	Uses Wilmore Lane, Brick Kiln Lane and Gorsey Lane to reach Station Rd, then runs parallel with Station Rd (SW to NE) to Wythall Station.	<b>Coherent?</b> Yes <b>Direct?</b> Yes <b>Safe?</b> Yes <b>Comfortable?</b> Yes <b>Attractive?</b> Yes <b>Suitable protection from traffic?</b> Yes, with ACL and 20mph measures applied to the western end of the route.	Provide route to Station Rd with Advisory Cycle Lanes (ACL's), roads to be widened where possible and subjected to blanket 20mph limit.  A prerequisite is a 3m wide fully segregated (walking/cycling) bi-directional tarmac route on Station Rd running either in the west verge or east verge (or behind properties on east side of Station Road if home security fears of residents can be allayed).
Yellow Cycling Route (YC5)	Connects to YC4 along Station Rd at southern end of Gorsey Lane	<b>Coherent?</b> Yes <b>Direct?</b> Yes <b>Safe?</b> Yes <b>Comfortable?</b> Yes <b>Attractive?</b> Yes	This route extends from a junction with YC4 at Gorsey Lane in a south-westerly direction a short distance along Station Rd towards Beckett's Island, serving the site of Meadow Green primary school and linking up with a segregated cycle path, already in place, running south alongside the A435 Alcester Rd.  A prerequisite is a 3m wide fully segregated (walking/cycling) bi-directional tarmac route on Station Rd running either in the west verge or east verge (or

Cycle or Walking Route	Description of route and infrastructure	Assessment in accordance with LTN1/20	What are priorities for route improvement?
		<b>Suitable protection from traffic?</b> Yes	behind properties on east side of Station Road if home security fears of residents can be allayed).
Blue Cycling Route (BC2)	Links Whitlocks End and Wythall stations.	<b>Coherent?</b> Yes <b>Direct?</b> Yes, could follow rail line throughout, but 'kink' to pass Houndsfield Lane crossroads improves connectivity. <b>Safe?</b> Yes <b>Comfortable?</b> Yes, with design attention to minimise gradient up Barns Hill <b>Attractive?</b> Not really. <b>Suitable protection from traffic?</b> No	3m wide fully segregated (walking/cycling) bi-directional tarmac route running south from Whitlocks End station to be created from existing footpath. At its junction with Houndsfield Lane ACL and 20mph measures must be applied along its whole westward length towards Lea Green Lane crossroad. Houndsfield Lane is a known 'rat-run' so Tythe Barn Lane-style chicanes may be an option. Continuing west, near Hollybrook farm, it will turn south on to a 3m wide fully segregated (walking/cycling) bi-directional tarmac route, ascending to Barn Hill before 'ducking under' the rail alignment, via a culvert opening that will need to be enlarged by NR, to reach Wythall station environs. ACL and 20mph measures must be applied to Houndsfield Lane and chicanes introduced on what can be a 'rat run'.
Red Cycling Route (RC3)	Links to Blue and Orange routes at the Houndsfield Lane/Lea Green Lane crossroads and to Yellow route at Brick Kiln Lane / Alcester Road.	<b>Coherent?</b> Yes <b>Direct?</b> Yes <b>Safe?</b> Yes <b>Comfortable?</b> Yes <b>Attractive?</b> Yes <b>Suitable protection from traffic?</b> No	The route requires a 3m wide fully-segregated (walking/cycling) bi-directional tarmac path to be laid initially parallel with Houndsfield Lane running SSW for about 600m, then veering SW to follow the line of the existing footpath to Alcester Road. Although no longer a trunk road, a light-controlled crossing (Toucan or similar) on the Alcester Rd near Brick Kiln Lane would help ensure the safety of both foot and cycle traffic moving to or from the YC4. Safety Measures at Houndsfield Lane/Lea Green Lane cross roads
Orange Cycling Route (OC1)	Links Hollywood Lane with The Maypole and provides opportunity for red and blue route users to reach this important	<b>Coherent?</b> Yes <b>Direct?</b> Yes <b>Safe?</b> Yes	The route requires a 3m wide fully-segregated (walking/cycling) bi-directional tarmac path to be laid on the wide verge on the east side of Hollywood lane from Houndsfield Lane x-roads to the Alcester Road at Tesco. This could extend on the west side of Alcester Rd northwards towards the Maypole.

Cycle or Walking Route	Description of route and infrastructure	Assessment in accordance with LTN1/20	What are priorities for route improvement?
	public transport 'node' which also hosts major retailers and a gym.	<b>Comfortable?</b> Yes <b>Attractive?</b> Yes <b>Suitable protection from traffic?</b> Yes, but a light-controlled crossing (Toucan or similar) is needed for crossing Alcester Rd E-W and W-E if the segregated route is on the west side of this road.	As a less-costly alternative a 3m wide fully-segregated path could be laid across the SW corner of Hollywood Golf Course, saving the cost of at least 1 'Toucan'.
Brown Cycling Route 4 (BC4)	Links Orange Cycling Route 1 past the two schools located in Hollywood and to Drakes Cross Shopping Parade (the largest local shopping area). 20MPH zone outside schools. This route is used by children cycling to and from school.	<b>Coherent?</b> Yes <b>Direct?</b> Yes <b>Safe?</b> No <b>Comfortable?</b> No <b>Attractive?</b> Yes <b>Suitable protection from traffic?</b> No	Enforce the parking and speeding restrictions along Shawhurst Lane.  Consider extending the existing 20MPH restriction along the whole length of Shawhurst Lane.
Light Green Walking Route 1 (LGW1)	From Wythall Station, Along Lea Green Lane, to Houndsfield Lane turning west along Houndsfield Lane to Alcester Road and then north along Alcester Road to Drakes Cross Shopping Parade.	<b>Coherent?</b> Yes <b>Direct?</b> Yes <b>Safe?</b> No <b>Comfortable?</b> No <b>Attractive?</b> Yes <b>Suitable protection from traffic?</b> No	Enforce the speed limits along Lea Green Lane and Houndsfield Lane.  Sections of Lea Green Lane footpath are narrow and require siding out and widening.  Sections of Houndsfield Lane footpath are narrow and require siding out and widening.  Safety Measures at Houndsfield Lane/Lea Green Lane crossroads are required to allow safe crossing for pedestrians.
Light Green Walking Route 2 (LGW2) (including two branching aspirational	Links to Wythall station and other neighbouring leisure walks. From Station Road the route	<b>Coherent?</b> Yes <b>Direct?</b> Yes	A small 'pocket' of land on Norton Lane opposite the end of the riverside walk option could be acquired and made into a small car park for 'leisure' walkers.

Cycle or Walking Route	Description of route and infrastructure	Assessment in accordance with LTN1/20	What are priorities for route improvement?
routes from 583B to Norton Lane)	follows public rights of way 582B and 583B. The remainder of the walk is on private land, controlled by the developer of site WY03 proposed in the Bromsgrove District Local Plan, where the footpath passes under the railway embankment using the arch for the River Cole. The walk then branches into two, with one heading north, following the railway line to Norton Lane and Wythall station and the other heading east to the River Cole, then north following the River Cole to Norton Lane.	<b>Safe?</b> Yes <b>Comfortable?</b> Yes <b>Attractive?</b> Yes, especially the branch along the riverside* <b>Suitable protection from traffic?</b> Yes, with a crossing facility for pedestrians to access Wythall Station	<p>Negotiation with Network Rail (NR) and the landowner would be required to allow a footpath to be built alongside the railway, fenced to prevent trespass.</p> <p>*A new walking route to be created (well-drained surface at a height above the River Cole mean water level to prevent it flooding in all but the most extreme weather conditions.</p> <p>** Three-way traffic lights with a pedestrian phase at the junction between Station Rd, Lea Green Lane and Norton Lane would create safety for all road users and pedestrians or pelican or zebra crossing as appropriate (?)</p>
Light Green Walking Route 3 (LGW3) (including an aspirational extension from PROW 506C to Pickenham Road)	Utilising existing footpaths alongside Shawhurst Lane and Truemans Heath Lane, then turning onto Public Right of Way 505B along The Fordrough, linking to 506C and 507C, but branching off these for a short section to utilise	<b>Coherent?</b> Yes <b>Direct?</b> Yes <b>Safe?</b> No, due to the traffic speed on Truemans Heath Lane where 40MPH zone reduced to a 30MPH zone and, on Shawhurst Lane where vehicles park on footpaths and there is a high volume of traffic at school pick up and drop off times	<p>Enforce the speed limits and parking restrictions along Truemans Heath Lane and Shawhurst Lane.</p> <p>Widen the northern footpath from Hollywood Lane to Shawhurst Gardens, whilst retaining some verge.</p> <p>Improve the May Lane/Shawhurst Lane junction to reduce the radii by allowing a narrower entrance to/from May Lane and less distance for pedestrians to cross, or, add a roundabout at this junction with splitter islands to help pedestrians to cross.</p>

Cycle or Walking Route	Description of route and infrastructure	Assessment in accordance with LTN1/20	What are priorities for route improvement?
	<p>current permissible paths across private land to link with Pickenham Road. This route links up two local schools, Drakes Cross Shopping Parade (the largest local shopping area) and the neighbouring 'Maypole' area of Birmingham which has the best local travel links. NB. Shawhurst Lane is a busy pedestrian area for children and their carers walking to and from the schools.</p>	<p>as well as speeding at other times which all causes it to feel less safe.</p> <p><b>Comfortable?</b> Yes</p> <p><b>Attractive?</b> Yes</p> <p><b>Suitable Protection from Traffic?</b> No, in respect of the junction at the Fordrough and Truemans Heath Lane where there is no footpath.</p>	<p>Note a small part of the route utilises a permissible path on private land where landowner agreement would be required. The path is currently maintained and kept clear for public use.</p>

Source: Wythall Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

## 10. Monitoring, Delivery and Review

235. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to achieve a number of outcomes which will require further actions, active monitoring and periodic review to determine whether objectives and policies are being achieved and observed. Key requirements are identified in Table 10.

**Table 10 - Monitoring for Neighbourhood Plan delivery**

Policy	Action Required to Deliver and Monitor policy implementation
WYTHALL 1 – Local Community Facilities	Monitor policy use in planning applications. Develop specific actions to secure required investments where appropriate.
WYTHALL 2 - Affordable Housing Tenure	Monitor policy use in planning applications
WYTHALL 3 - Housing Types and Sizes in Wythall	Monitor policy use in planning applications
WYTHALL 4 – Good Design and Development Form in Wythall Parish	Monitor policy use in planning applications
WYTHALL 5 – Environmental Performance of Buildings	Monitor policy use in planning applications
WYTHALL 6 - Wythall Parish Local Heritage Assets	Monitor policy use in planning applications
WYTHALL 7 - Local Green Space Sites	Monitor policy use in planning applications Develop specific management proposals for Local Green Space
WYTHALL 8 – Biodiversity Gains from new development in Wythall Parish	Monitor policy use in planning applications
WYTHALL 9 – Support for Bus Services	Monitor policy use in planning applications Develop specific actions to secure required investments where appropriate.
WYTHALL 10 – Support for Rail Services and Station improvements	Monitor policy use in planning applications Develop specific actions to secure required investments where appropriate.
WYTHALL 11 – Support for improvements to priority walking and cycling routes	Monitor policy use in planning applications Develop specific actions to secure required investments where appropriate.

## APPENDIX A Wythall Parish Local Heritage Sites

See separate document

## APPENDIX B Local Green Space Sites Assessment

See separate document

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Wythall Parish Council  
C/O Anne-Louise Henderson – Deputy Clerk  
37 Silver Street  
Wythall  
Worcestershire  
B47 6ND

**Strategic Planning and Conservation**

Bromsgrove District Council

Parkside, Market Street, Bromsgrove,  
Worcestershire, B61 8DA

**Main switchboard:** (01527) 881288

**Email:** [strategicplanning@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:strategicplanning@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

**SENT BY EMAIL**

**DATE TBC [following Council]**

Dear Anne-Louise,

### **The Neighbourhood Plan for Wythall Parish – Regulation 15 Submission**

I write further to your revised submission of the Neighbourhood Plan for Wythall Parish ('Wythall Neighbourhood Plan') on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

The District Council has reviewed the submitted documents and is satisfied that all of the requirements under Regulation 15(1) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) have been met. This letter represents the formal view of the Council in advance of its duties under Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

As you will be aware, District Council officers have worked with members of the neighbourhood plan steering group during preparation of the neighbourhood plan and have provided previous comments on draft versions of the neighbourhood plan leading up to the Parish Council's pre-submission (Regulation 14) consultation and following the original (Regulation 15) submission of the neighbourhood plan.

Please see the following points as brief feedback on the revised plan as submitted:

- The neighbourhood plan's acknowledgement that Bromsgrove District Council is in the process of preparing a new local plan up to 2043 and the role of the local plan in containing strategic policies is noted and welcomed.
- It is recognised that the neighbourhood plan has been prepared through various forms of public consultation which has shaped all aspects, including identifying the main issues and challenges facing the Parish which has informed the vision and objectives of the plan. The vision and objectives are welcomed.

# Agenda Item 10

- It is noted that the neighbourhood plan includes a range of community aspirations and priorities under Section 4. Some of these fall outside the scope of the neighbourhood plan but it is acknowledged that they are valuable aspirations for the local community to be led by the Parish Council and other organisations.
- It is considered at this stage that the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan policies offer clear policy guidance for prospective development proposals in Wythall Parish. The breadth of topics covered by the policies are considered to be suitable for the local issues identified based on supporting evidence, including evidence from consultation with a range of stakeholders. It is evident that the policies have been prepared with achieving the three overarching sustainable development objectives in mind over the plan period.

A report was considered at a Council meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026. This report sought approval from Council that the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan proceed to a statutory representation period for six weeks in line with Regulation 16 of the neighbourhood planning regulations.

Delegated authority is given from Council to the District Council's Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services to appoint an independent examiner to conduct an examination of the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan, its supporting documents, and relevant representations made on the Plan following the Regulation 16 representation period. The examiner will recommend whether the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan is considered to meet the 'basic conditions' as set out in the regulations.

Finally, should the examiner's report recommend the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan be deemed to meet the basic conditions, delegated authority is also given that the Plan proceeds to a public referendum. The referendum will ask eligible voters whether they want Bromsgrove District Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Wythall Parish to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me or my colleague Euan Hardy.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Dunphy  
Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager

cc: Wythall Parish Council Clerk

# Agenda Item 10

cc: Ward Councillors: Cllr Baxter (Drakes Cross), Cllr Forsythe (Hollywood), Cllr Stanley (Wythall East) and Cllr Peters (Wythall West)

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### Portfolio Holder Report

#### Portfolio Holder Report - Health and Wellbeing

##### **Introduction and Overview:**

At Bromsgrove District Council Portfolio Holders provide an annual update to Council on services within their portfolio remit. These services are delivered in accordance with the Council's Priorities, as detailed in the Bromsgrove District Council Plan 2024 - 2027.

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

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

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

The report will be structured as follows:

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

The Council has the following Priorities:

<b>Council Priorities</b>	<b>Organisational priorities</b>
Economic Development	Financial stability
Housing	Sustainability
Environment	Partnerships
Infrastructure	Organisational Culture – the 4Ps
	Budget & Resources

#### 1. Update on Council Priorities

##### **Relevant Council Priority Title 1: Housing**

###### NEW Lifeline

NEW Lifeline supports Bromsgrove District Council's Plan "*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*". The priority to support vulnerable residents to live in safe, quality homes is assisted by NEW Lifeline, providing a service to enable residents to remain living independently at home as their health and care needs change.

##### **Relevant Council Priority Title 2: Living independent, active and healthy lives**

###### Community Transport – BURT Bus

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

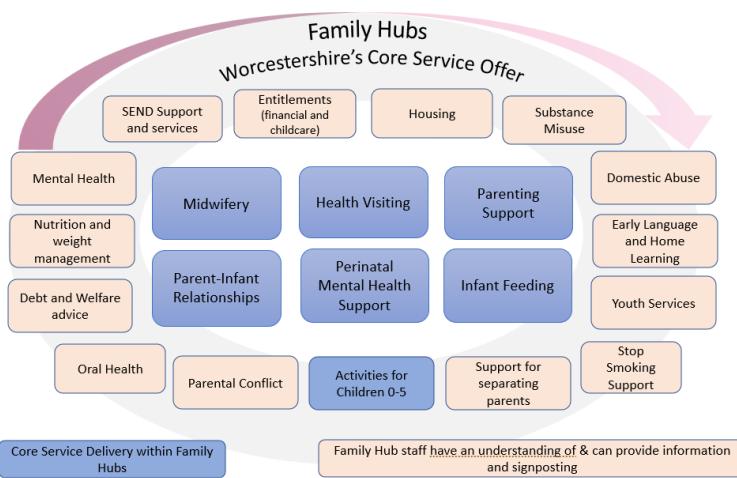
###### Worcestershire Family Hubs

Worcestershire Family Hubs focuses on improving health outcomes and reducing inequalities at the individual, family, and community levels across Worcestershire, with a particular focus on the first 1001 critical days- (Best Start in Life) with work programmes focussed on preventative action and early intervention but also continues to support families via the "whole family approach". The family hub enables access to support for families with children of all ages 0 to 19 (25 with SEND), including the ante-natal period and vulnerable children and young people. The Family Hub model plays a

### Portfolio Holder Report

key role in supporting the delivery of, and access to, a community early help offer. Redditch Borough Council (operating as a shared service with Bromsgrove District Council) is commissioned by Public Health to deliver services across Bromsgrove and Redditch for families with children 0-19. There is a Family Hub in Bromsgrove (Pear Tree Family Hub, Broad Street, Sidemoor) which hosts a variety of core services, several maternity and community health services, parenting groups and a range of community led, professionally supported groups. These groups facilitate the development of life skills, volunteering and employment opportunities, information and advice, support, and networking.

Family Hub provides families and professionals with a single point of access to provide information, and signposting to a range of services within the Family Hub offer framework. These services may be provided within Family Hub buildings or within the wider network. Community engagement continues to be a priority in the delivery of Family Hub activities across the wider reach area to ensure that families can access services in their local community where possible. Outreach services and activities are delivered in the communities according to need. The family hub offer is not just what is provided from the building, but also through outreach and via a virtual offer to families and professionals. [Virtual Family Hub | Worcestershire County Council](#)



The Team is able to support parents to navigate services and referral pathways.

Services within the family hub are accessible in several ways, for example virtually, physically, via outreach services and community venues.

#### **Level 1&2 families 0-5's (including antenatal period)**

1:1 brief intervention - providing an evidence-based intervention that involves working with the parent to develop and individualised plan to address their needs. Typically, 1-3 sessions provided in the home or community space. This may involve signposting, support to participate in local activities, and offering tools to support parents to improve their wellbeing and family life.

#### **Universal**

Our service focuses on what matters for each Family, anyone living in Worcestershire can access the family hubs.

### Portfolio Holder Report

**Navigation** – there is a daily “Here to Help” service available for people that come to the Hubs or phone up, providing up to date information and support to navigate system referral pathways. Ensuring information is provided in a variety of ways such as virtually, face to face, telephone or via printed information, enabling families to access the right support in a seamless manner. This support is offered with in the Hub, at events, and available for Professionals to seeking local knowledge.

Access to Healthy Start vitamins either at a low cost or free with a Healthy Start card.

### **Community Capacity Building**

Volunteering opportunities – offering opportunities to strengthen communities by upskilling local people to support their community. We work closely with parents to develop parent led peer support groups, offer a training package and continued support along their volunteer journey with us and into employment.

### **Parenting Support**

We recognise that one size does not fit all and the need to offer Parenting support in a variety of ways:

- Parenting support 1:1 via the 1:1 brief intervention offers.
- Group delivery – we provide a menu of groups to support families along their parenting journey from pregnancy to 19yrs (25yrs with SEND). These are evidenced based programmes following the Solihull approach and offered face to face at the Hub or within the community.
- 2-hour workshops – these can be delivered face to face or virtually dependant on need. Focussing on common parenting themes such as Fussy eating, sleep, general behaviour and the challenges that parents face when they reach the teenage years.
- Online self-learning – We recognise that groups are not for everyone, and some parents may prefer to work through an online course at their own pace. There are a variety of modules they can choose from. Parents are provided with a code which enables them to access this support for Free.

### Home - Togetherness

- Information on where to access information can also be provided through the navigation offer - we have a wealth of information on our website and can recommend other links to support.

Referral pathways: Professional and Self referrals are accepted.

Virtual referral – with consent you can refer a family via the Virtual Family Hub website

### Family Hub request

Professionals and families can walk into a Hub and speak to a member of the team or call.

Bromsgrove 01527 835775.

### Social Prescribing

Social prescribing is part of a commitment to personalised care.

Personalised care means all people have choice and control over the way their care is planned and delivered, based on ‘what matters to me’ and individual strengths and diverse needs. This happens within a system that makes the most of the expertise, ~~capacity and~~ potential of people, families,

### Portfolio Holder Report

and communities in creating better health access, outcomes, and experiences. Personalised care takes a whole-system approach, integrating services around the person. It is an all-age model, from maternity and childhood through to end of life, encompassing both mental and physical health support. It can contribute to advancing equality and reducing inequalities in access and outcomes for all.

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

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

The service is commissioned by Bromsgrove Primary Care Network which is made up of nine GP surgeries across the Bromsgrove District. The contract between the PCN and Bromsgrove District Council commenced in November 2020 and three social prescribing link workers are employed to support the nine surgeries. (currently one Social Prescriber is on maternity leave)

Social prescribing link workers:

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

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

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

##### NEW Lifeline

NEW Lifeline has been working hard to support Lifeline Service users and wider community with the changes to the telephony network, from analogue to digital. We welcomed the National telecare campaign and the increased awareness it brought. We continue to seek opportunities to speak to partner and community groups to increase awareness around TEC and the digital switchover. These interactions allow us to highlight the diverse nature of Technology Enabled Care (TEC) and discuss the implications of the digital switch for both TEC and all UK telephony users, providing opportunities for questions, dispelling any concerns over the switch and encouraging vulnerable people to make contact with their landline provider to ensure service continuity.

We have been exploring products from a range of Technology Enabled Care manufacturers, adding new types of equipment to our portfolio of solutions, trialling complex solutions for people with a variety of needs. We are specifically increasing our service offer for people living with memory issues and dementia.

During 2025 we have installed 225 equipment packages in within Bromsgrove.

Every Bromsgrove resident that uses NEW Lifeline service has received a home visit during the past 12 months, ensuring their needs are still being met by the service or the equipment is adjusted accordingly, their personal details are correct and that their Lifeline equipment is fully functional and well maintained. There are currently 1050 service users.

Lifeline operators have received a total of 42,660 alarm calls into the Monitoring Centre during 2025, from residents living in Bromsgrove. Within the year:

- 886 people had fallen
- 505 had a medical emergency
- 11 required the Police to attend
- 993 smoke/fire alarms were activated
- 1469 No response calls were investigated.
- 6649 calls were non urgent in nature, but help was arranged and/or reassurance given.
- 13265 test calls were made
- 8243 calls were made in error.
- 1945 in home sensors were activated detecting unusual movement, doors opening at inappropriate times, people at risk of wandering etc.

### Portfolio Holder Report

#### Community Transport – BURT Bus

The contract between BARN and BDC remains in place until May 2026 with the option to extend for 2 years. The main reasons customers use BURT are to attend day centres; to go shopping; and to attend social events. They also do trips for small groups to local garden centres. Trips have steadily increased over the last few years and remain at healthy levels. BURT work in partnership with several organisations and they currently have approximately **567 registered users** and did approximately **4425 journeys in 2024-25** and had completed approximately **2726 journeys** by end of **Q2 in 2025-26**

#### Worcestershire Family Hubs – Bromsgrove

We have increased our outreach offer by providing regular drop ins in community spaces in priority areas of focus areas such as Charford, Catshill, and Baby banks pop ups. We have continued to work closely with local partners such as Bromsgrove Sports and Leisure Centre, Bromsgrove Library, Health, Bdht, Newstarts and Citizens advice Bromsgrove and Redditch to support families with events, school readiness, and have recently piloted a project called Family bites- healthy eating sessions aimed at parents that would not normally access services.

There are 18 active volunteers recruited and working within the service. The volunteers are building relationships within the Family Hub team and supporting the service in a variety of ways including breastfeeding peer support, parenting group peer support and within the family hubs. We have developed a Parent representative role – to support gaining parents voice, to help support shaping our service. We have a male parent rep – who is supporting our engagement with fathers and developing peer led support such as mens walks from Sanders Park, and engagement events such as Challenge dad. This is feeding into the Worcestershire Dads Task and Finish group and influencing the way other areas are engaging with men. For example, we have created a just for dads flyer of county wide support available to men, and produced magnets for dads – with QR code that takes them to the dads page on the Best start for Life web page. We continue to support and host a peer led support group for parents of children with additional needs.

**Bromsgrove** data for April 24 – December 25 as follows:

- **1430** referrals received.
- **79** families have received 1:1 Navigation support (Since July 25 as this is a new element of the service.)
- **36** parents have received 1:1 support (since April 2025 as this is a new element of the service)
- **341** parents have received support through a group
- **1,196** hrs of volunteering support.
- **797** Healthy Start Children's Vitamins drops and women's vitamins tablets.

#### **Social Prescribing**

Key activities for the Social Prescribing service have included continuing to promote the service and achieve positive outcomes with patients through their “What Matters to Me” plans. Data for August 24 – November 25 as follows:

- **956** referrals received.
- Involved in the Warmth on Prescription scheme and supported **194** Bromsgrove residents to achieve support through this scheme including families and individuals
- Developed outreach drop in spaces for patients to access our service at Catshill foodbank and bdht 360 drop in.
- On behalf of the PCN facilitated a monthly Menopause Café drop-in session, supported Smear Saturday and Prostate talks.
- Supported **41** patients through funded counselling services.

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

##### New Lifeline

NEW Lifeline will continue its digital journey and look to purchase “Software as a Service”, ensuring further resilience for the service and an additional safeguard within the Business Continuity plan. Further transmission pathways are to be adopted enabling the use of customer broadband in areas where mobile phone signals are weak or unreliable.

Research and trialling new equipment and suppliers will continue to be at the forefront of our activities.

Activities of Daily Living is not yet monitored by our Monitoring Centre Team and this would be a great step forwards, so we shall be working on the skills and integration required.

We would like to redevelop our web pages, create new content and work on our marketing strategy. The Corporate Comms team will support us through their program of work next year.

A service review looking at skills, responsibilities, allocation of tasks, line management responsibility, resilience, risk mitigation and job evaluation is scheduled for 25/26, and will see some tweaks to our staffing structure.

##### Community Transport (BURT Bus)

The contract will continue with BARN providing community transport within the district. They will continue to be part of the Worcestershire Community Transport Consortium. They have recently bid and been awarded WCC S106 funding through a new consortium, NEWT, (North East Worcestershire Transport) in partnership with BluWave CIC and Redditch DAR. This will provide Community Transport serving the following residential development sites in Bromsgrove district: land at the Bluebird Confectionary site, Bluebird Park, Bromsgrove Road, Romsley, land at Hopwood Court, Birmingham Road, Hopwood, land at Paul Matty Sportscars, 12 Birmingham Road, Lickey End.

#### Worcestershire Family Hubs

Worcestershire Family Hubs are funded by WCC Public Health – this links in with the Worcestershire Joint Local Health and Well-Being Strategy and providing children with the “best start in life” and with the Government’s vision for the 1001 critical days – “Start for Life” and “Family Hubs” programme. This is a period of development for the service, where we are working on establishing the Hub and Spoke model in priority areas of development (PADS). There will be further funding and KPIs focussing on supporting good levels of development and home learning environments to develop our offer to families around school readiness focussing on 3- to 4-year-olds. We will be recruiting 2 additional staff to increase our parenting offer, developing new groups aimed at the antenatal period and 3-4 yr olds, linking closer with schools and nurseries to identify families in need of the additional support. This will commence April 26.

We will be continuing to provide evidence based parenting programmes and evidencing the impact of these on children, young people and families; a focus on the 1001 critical days and best start in life so the navigation team will focus predominately on families with under 5’s - The Family Hub Navigator role will focus on developing and maintaining ongoing knowledge and relationships with the wider early help offer in the local community. They will serve as champions of the Family Hub with those services and agencies who identify and navigate families to access the offer, as well as helping families accessing the Family Hub, other local community-based help and support that families need to thrive. They will ensure that the locally based information and resources are communicated through the virtual offer and will be updated regularly, this also includes supporting the upkeep of the Councils Knowledge Bank.

Volunteering will continue to be a key part of the family hub offer, we want to support the set-up of more parent peer support led groups in the community and increase uptake of the parent representative role. We aim to have volunteers supporting all aspects of the service.

#### Social Prescribing

The Social Prescribing objectives going forward:

1. Measuring impact as follows:

- Impact on the person – six-month distance travelled and review of assessment and plan and case studies – this includes a longitudinal study of approximately 10 patients where we aim to undertake a further follow up to evidence longer term impact.
- Impact on the community groups – understanding any gaps in provision or over capacity of VCSE sector sessions/services – there is a need for home visiting befriending services.

### Portfolio Holder Report

- Impact on the health care system – information from GPs and other local health organisations.
- Increase activity in Bromsgrove patients by continuing to refer into the Physical activity voucher scheme
- Continue to gain feedback regarding the service via the end questionnaire and use this to further develop the service.

2. Ongoing relationship building with the GP surgeries, community groups, and promotion of the service – this includes continuing to attend partnership network meetings.
3. To promote and raise awareness of the Social Prescribing service by creating a partnership event to celebrate national social prescribing day in March 2026.
4. Social Prescribing Link Workers to be apart of the PCN MDT meetings for each surgery to support the most vulnerable due to health, and support these patients as part of a multi discipline approach.

## **2. Partnership Working:**

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

### **Partnership working examples:**

#### NEW Lifeline

NEW Lifeline enjoys working in Partnerships across Bromsgrove, contributing to a number of partnership meetings, workshops and projects to ensure that Technology Enabled Care (TEC) is widely understood by health and care practitioners across the area and accessible to those in need. We work with many public sector and voluntary organisations, sharing information, making referrals to them, and receiving referrals from them to ensure residents have a joined-up service delivery from all organisations.

NEW Lifeline, in partnership with PPP Taking Care have been commissioned, by Adult Social Care, to deliver a TEC Service across Worcestershire. Providing vulnerable Care Service users with equipment installation and 24/7 monitoring through our monitoring centre. Our subcontracting arrangements bring additional resilience to the County ensuring service continuity within installation staff, equipment provision and shared delivery responsibility. Specifically, within Bromsgrove, NEW Lifeline are delivering continuity of service where a person becomes Care Act eligible and/or their support/care needs become more. We have supported 89 residents of Bromsgrove through this Social Care funded partnership.

#### Worcestershire Family Hubs

### Portfolio Holder Report

Family Hubs works in partnership with others to lead and develop pathways across the whole system particularly in support of the Priority areas of development (PADS) with the aim of promoting a holistic approach to prevention. Including

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



Family Bites Healthy eating pilot – Partners involved NewStarts, bdht, Citizen's advice Bromsgrove and Redditch.

### Portfolio Holder Report



Christmas event - To Provide a party for Families of the preschool who are in receipt of free school meals, offering a free festive family time and food hampers.

The HUB Bromsgrove provided the HAF Funding to provide the Hampers

- BDHT- Provided Resources and Snacks
- The Family Hub provided the activities
- Newstarts donated selection boxes
- Bromsgrove library provided a venue and song, story, rhyme session.

## **CHALLENGE DAD!**

**Saturday 17th May,  
10am - 12pm at  
Bromsgrove Library**

**The ultimate Kids vs Dads competition! Who will win?**

Just for dads & their children aged up to 11 years old, but siblings are welcome.

Come along & take part in:

- Physical challenges
- Exercise challenges
- Taste challenges
- Feely box



**FREE**  
Bromsgrove  
Sport & Leisure  
Centre Gym  
Day Pass for  
every dad!

Bromsgrove Library, Parkside, Market St, B61 8DA



BEST START  
WORCESTERSHIRE



WORCESTERSHIRE  
FAMILY HUBS



worcestershire  
county council



everyone  
ACTIVE

Partners involved – Bromsgrove Health visiting service, Bromsgrove Library, Bromsgrove sports and leisure

### Social Prescribing

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

Warmth on Prescription – worked with Act on Energy, bdht, Worcestershire Family Hubs, Health visitors, midwives, parent led groups and other partners to highlight eligible patients to access support with their energy costs.



bdht events – Social Prescribers attended.

### Portfolio Holder Report

**SOCIAL PRESCRIBING**

Come & meet your Bromsgrove Social Prescribing team. Find out more about local activities & get to know new people.

Everyone welcome

**Wednesday 19th March**

**Walk & Talk, 10am:**  
Meet at Sanders Park Bandstand  
Kidderminster Rd, Bromsgrove, B61 7JP

**Cuppa & Chat, 11.30am:**  
Mad Hatters Tea Room  
40 High St, Bromsgrove, B61 8HQ

Mad Hatters Tea Room  
Enjoy a chat & free cuppa!

Lots of things in life can make you feel unwell or overwhelmed.

We offer support to adults aged 18+. You can talk to our friendly team in confidence.

Bromsgrove District Council



Local businesses supported with freebies to add to the wellbeing packs we gave out on the day and free drinks and venue.

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**Key activities since last report:**

**New Lifeline**

The Council supports a six week free service, enabling residents of Bromsgrove to try the Lifeline service. This service is available where the referral is made by a Health or Care professional, a Councillor or Council employee or a Partner organisation. Over the last 12 months we have had approximately 70 people using the free service at any one time.

Between April 2024 and the end of March 2025 there were 356 six-week free installations completed. This is an increase of (95) 35.5% on the previous year. Over the same period 232 service users retained the service beyond the initial free period. A conversion rate of 65%, a 6% increase on last year.

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**Worcestershire Family Hubs**

Family Hubs continue to work in attend or lead local events aimed at families and are positive examples of partnership working not only with other professionals and community groups but with families – using an asset-based approach and co-production to understand the types of support and activities children, young people and families are asking for and what they are able to do themselves. For example, challenge dad was coproduced with father's voice and involvement. The events have enabled us to reach new people, gain voice and highlight volunteers.

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**Social Prescribing**

### Portfolio Holder Report

The partnership between the PCN and BDC continues to grow and develop with internal referral systems to ensure seamless services for patients.

Clinical Supervision is provided by the PCN Clinical Leads to the Social Prescribers, and they continue to forge good relationships and understanding the needs of patients.

Attendance at a variety of partnership events including the BDHT events, BARN network meetings, Smear Saturdays, Prostate talks , older peoples forum, MP jobs fayre are some examples.

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

#### NEW Lifeline

Currently in it's infancy we are working on 2 linked pilot projects that supports Bromsgrove residents when leaving hospital. Occupational Therapists are now able to send patients home with easy self-install Lifeline equipment to aid timely and safe discharge from hospital. The equipment is pre-programmed to link the individual to NEW Lifeline as soon as they return home. This system will only be used where appropriate to do so, i.e. there is sufficient carer/family support to plug in the unit. Where the patient's discharge needs are more complex the OT's can refer the patient to the Reablement Team where a telecare assessment can be commissioned and more complex solutions installed by the NEW Lifeline Team. Working with the hospital staff, strengthening our referral pathways is a key element to ensuring the Bromsgrove residents are receiving a joined up service from multiple partners.

NEW Lifeline team will continue to attend Partnership meetings and events to promote and publicise the service to key agencies supporting vulnerable people within Bromsgrove.

#### Worcestershire Family Hubs

The Family Hub objectives going forward:

- To continue the development of the family hub and family hub network approach including delivery of parenting programmes in partner venues and within easy reach of local parents.
- Family Hub Navigators to develop and maintain ongoing knowledge and relationships with the wider early help offer in the local community and to be champions of the Family Hub with those services and agencies who identify and navigate families to access the offer.
- To asset map the Priority areas of development to ensure we have a good understanding of services to prevent duplication, pool resource and highlight any gaps within the opportunities.

#### Social Prescribing

The Social Prescribing partnership objectives going forward:

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

### 3. Good News Stories and Awards (if applicable)

#### **Title of news story / award: NEW Lifeline Accreditation**

NEW Lifeline has been accredited to the Technology Enabled Care industry best practice Quality Standards Framework. Achieved through rigorous external audit there were no areas of improvement identified.

#### **Title of news story / award: NEW Lifeline digital upgrades completed**

Service users of NEW Lifeline have had their equipment upgraded from analogue to digital well before the January 2027 deadline. Ensuring reliability, safety and peace of mind during the telephony network upgrades.

#### **Title of news story / award: Community Health Connectors Case Study**

#### **Community Health Connectors Case Study** **1:1 Access to Community Support**

A parent walked in to the Hub needing support and this is an example of how we supported.

<b>Waiting List Number:</b>	A
<b>Initials:</b>	
<b>Gender:</b>	Female
<b>Age</b>	8 weeks
<b>of Children Involved:</b>	

# Agenda Item 11

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL



### Portfolio Holder Report

<b>Background Information</b> <i>Any additional information about who else is involved e.g. family members and/or other services</i>	A came into the centre having been told about us from her H/V. She came in with her 8 week old baby needing some support. Sue from the office asked me to have a chat with her about how we could help.
<b>Referral Source</b> <i>How was the family first engaged with?</i>	<b>Walk in Pear Tree Family Hub recommended by Health</b>
<b>Reason for Referral</b>  <i>What were the key issues/problems?</i>  <i>What were they looking for help with?</i>	A was struggling financially as her job did not cover any maternity pay and she had 3 other children. She was waiting for her UC to be sorted but in the meantime having had a chat we worked out how we could help. She was struggling for food, baby milk and nappies so we filled in a food parcel form for New Starts who contacted her within an hour of us putting it through. I also placed one for Catshill Food Bank for the following week as well as got in touch with Act on Energy to see if he could help with energy bills and water. A is currently in a privately rented house and I suggested she go the BDHT 360 drop in on a Wednesday to start the process of going onto the social housing list. I also encouraged her to get the older children into some HAF funding places as the summer might be a bit of a strain.
<b>What might have happened without the intervention?</b>	If A hadn't called in that day, there was a good chance she would have gone without food and would have ended up in more debt as a consequence.

### Actions:

<b>What support did the family receive?</b>	<b>A referral went into New Starts, Catshill Foodbank and Act on Energy, BDHT 360 Drop-in and HAF.</b>
<i>What did the CHC do?</i>	

### Impact and Outcomes:

<b>How has the situation improved?</b>  <i>What positive steps are the family now taking?</i>  <i>What has been the impact on the child/young person?</i>  <i>Impact on the wider community and others?</i>	I emailed A a week or so later and asked how she was doing. She confirmed New Starts had helped with food, nappies and milk for the little one, Catshill had agreed to a rolling food parcel weekly until she was sorted with her UC. She had also just received £500 worth of help towards her energy and help with her water from Severn Trent. A was really appreciative of the help and support we had guided her to and said she was hopeful of coming to the Bumps, Baby and You group on a Thursday.
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### Portfolio Holder Report

<i>Include any measurable outcomes e.g., % of increased school attendance.</i>  <i>Include Friends &amp; Family Test Narrative</i>	<b>She seemed to have come a long way in short space of time and was really appreciative of everything we had done.</b>
<b>What really worked to make the difference?</b>  <i>Include quotes if possible.</i>	<b>Having the relationship with the foodbanks, knowing that they would help at short notice and having the links with Act on Energy who are brilliant at accessing pots of money quickly.</b>
<b>Who did we support the family to access?</b>  <i>(inhouse or external)</i>	<b>New Starts, Catshill Foodbank, Act on Energy, Bumps, Baby and You, BDHT 360 drop-in and HAF.</b>
<b>Staff reflection and lessons learnt; how can we improve next time?</b>	<b>Having the knowledge to know what support was available and being able to refer with confidence knowing the other services would help.</b>

We have received the following compliments letter from a local Mom in Bromsgrove who had accessed a number of services both antenatal and postnatally through her parenthood journey and how the support she had received through accessing groups and community services has supported her as a new parent:

Subject: Local Family Resources in Hagley and Bromsgrove

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I am writing to commend staff at your Bromsgrove and Hagley libraries and to also highlight two services Worcestershire County Council and Bromsgrove District Council offer that I feel are an invaluable resource for families, especially new parents.

By way of background, I am a first time mother in my early thirties and have used your community, healthcare and family hub services frequently over the past year and a half. Most notably, I have found the Birth and Beyond antenatal 4 week course and the free Bounce and Rhyme library sessions (for under 2 year olds) to be invaluable. Both services have significantly supported my experience as a new parent in the local community and I have heard similar feedback from other parents.

The **Bounce and Rhyme sessions** at your local libraries are, in my opinion, an **invaluable resource** for new families. The fact that this is a **free, easily**

### Portfolio Holder Report

**accessible service** is crucial, as it removes the barrier of cost and travel often associated with private classes. The staff who lead these sessions, especially **xx at Hagley** and the Bromsgrove library team, are outstanding. They are friendly, engaging, and ensure every session is fun for both babies and parents. These classes have been instrumental in allowing me and other parents the opportunity to **get out of the house**, provide sensory and play experiences for our babies, and, most crucially, to **connect with one another**. Our babies also benefit immensely by interacting with other children, building their social and motor skills.

Equally essential are the **Birth and Beyond antenatal classes** facilitated by Bromsgrove District Council (my particular session was led by xx who was very friendly and helpful). These courses have been invaluable in equipping me and other parents with **key skills and mindsets for parenthood**. Furthermore, and more importantly, they have enabled us to establish lasting support networks; I am still closely in touch with mothers from my course, providing a crucial WhatsApp chat group for guidance, reassurance, and arranging meet-ups, especially during those challenging early days.

I felt compelled to write this letter because while these resources and classes are **hugely popular and consistently receive glowing feedback** from users, it is unlikely that this positive appreciation reaches your office directly. At a time when council and service funding must be under constant review, I urge you to recognise how **vital and cost-effective** these accessible resources are to families and the wider local community. Against a backdrop of rising mental health, post-partum depression and social care issues, I truly believe that free services such as these have the potential to have a wide ranging and long term impact across local communities, and in consequence help reduce some of these societal issues, even if just partly.

Thank you for your time and for supporting these essential local services. I would also appreciate if you could pass on my thanks to the local teams mentioned, if at all possible.

Yours faithfully,

XXX

The following extract is a from a brief intervention case study of a new Mom with her new born baby and the difficulties she was having, feeding, crying, isolated and lacking confidence. A Family Hub Practitioner was able to offer a tailored package of support through home visits and community meet ups to support Mum to feel more confident and increase her support network in the community.

### Portfolio Holder Report

 <p><b>Brief 1:1 intervention Case Study</b></p>	
<b>Initials, gender and age of child/ren involved.</b>	Baby M Female 6 weeks
<b>Background information</b> <i>Any additional information about who else is involved e.g. family members and/or other services</i>	Mum and Dad live together with their first baby M. Dad works full time. Mum was working as a nursery nurse and is now on maternity leave, unsure if she will go back.
<b>Referral source</b>	Health visitor
<b>Reason for referral</b> <i>What were the key issues/problems?</i>  <i>What were they looking for help with?</i>	Mum is currently feeling tearful due to a difficult first 6 weeks following the birth of her 1st baby. M has struggled with crying periods and unsettledness due to reflux and mum has found this difficult to manage. Mum does not feel confident to access groups as she is nervous about meeting new people and worries M will cry and she will be unable to settle her. Mum would really like some support from your 1:1 <u>workers</u> at home to begin with, hopefully with the aim of increasing her confidence to attend your groups and widen her support network.
<b>What support did the family receive?</b>  <i>How many 1:1 sessions completed</i> <i>Engagement</i> <i>Where did these sessions take place? Hub, home</i> <i>Co work with Navigator/ Peer supporter</i>	Two one to one sessions were completed in the home to support with reassurance, guidance and containment for mum, alongside gaining knowledge about improving M's sleep and preparing for Intro to solids.  One, one to one session completed in the community. Mum and M were invited to the understanding Your Baby group starting in Oct 2025. They attended 2/6 sessions.
<b>Impact and Outcomes:</b>	
<b>How has the situation improved for the family?</b>  <i>What positive steps are the family now taking?</i>  <i>What has been the impact on the child/ young person?</i>  <i>Impact on the wider community or others?</i>  <i>Include any measurable outcomes e.g., % of increased attendance of group</i>	Mum is now accessing support/friendship from a friend she had previously but had not felt able to engage with, and from new mums she has met in groups at the Family Hubs. She feels more confident to go to community venues now she has confidence that M will not cry and if she does, mum now feels more able to meet her needs.  Mum is aware of more groups free and paid for that she can go to with M.  Mum has received information via one-to-one support and feels better informed about Introducing solids when the time comes and for tips on improving M's daytime naps.

### Portfolio Holder Report

<p><b>What really worked to make the difference?</b></p> <p><i>Include quotes if possible.</i></p>	<p>Mum said in terms of her parenting and being a parent, she feels much more confident and happier; she said she is enjoying it more now. M is more settled; she has been supported by her GP with the feeding issues she has had since birth and now the tongue tie has been addressed, and the colic has passed M is feeding better and has less pain.</p>
	<p>Mum is accessing groups in the community with a friend; she is getting out of the house with M more often. Mum said she really enjoyed the sessions of Understanding Your Baby she completed. She has started a swimming group with other parents in the group and is in touch with other mums from the group via WhatsApp and telephone</p>



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# Agenda Item 12

## Recommendations from the Cabinet meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2026

### Particulate Monitoring

#### RECOMMENDED that

- 1) additional monitoring of Particulate Matter (air pollution) be delivered as set out in Option E; and
- 2) subject to funding being identified and allocated accordingly a further report be brought back to Cabinet once final costs had been identified.

### Pay Policy Statement 2026/27

#### RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the Pay Policy 2026/27 be approved.

### Business Rates - Discretionary Rates Relief Policy 2026/27

#### RECOMMENDED that

- 1) A non-domestic rates discretionary relief policy be approved and adopted from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026
- 2) Subject to the removal of Burcot as a settlement from the Lickey and Blackwell Parish, the rural settlement list included in the policy be approved and adopted for use from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.

### Council Tax - Empty Homes Discounts and Premiums 2026/27

#### RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the determinations as set out in Appendix A be adopted with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.
- 2) The Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services be authorised to consider, on a case-by-case basis, a reduction to the long-term empty premium under Section 13A(1)(C) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- 3) the Council retained the existing discounts for unoccupied and furnished homes, as set out in Appendix A (below) and did not implement additional council tax premiums for unoccupied and substantially furnished homes.

## Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27

### RECOMMENDED that

- 1) The Council Tax Reduction Scheme be retained for 2026-27 tax year, subject to uprating of income bands by 3.8% in-line with increases to national benefits.

## Medium Term Financial Plan 2026-27 to 2028-29 Fees and Charges and Consultation Outcomes including Worcestershire Regulatory Services Budget Recommendations

### RECOMMENDED that

- 1) Members take account of any feedback from the Consultation on the Budget 2026/27.
- 2) Members endorse the further work / proposals being undertaken on the Medium-Term Financial Plan to produce a balanced position for 2026/27 – 2028/29 including the initial set of savings proposals and pressures including fees and charges increases.
- 3) The recommended increases relating to Worcestershire Regulatory Services of £25,000 for 2027/28 and £59,000 for 2028/29 be approved.
- 4) The updated three-year capital programme 2026/27 – 2028/29 along with available funding for further capital projects to be undertaken going forward and the proposed projects for funding along with revenue implications.

### Cabinet 2026

7<sup>th</sup> January

#### Particulate Monitoring

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Kit Taylor
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Simon Wilkes, Director - Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Report Author	Chris Poole Job Title: Specialist Lead Officer (Air Quality), WRS Contact email: chris.poole@worcsregservices.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01562 738069
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No
Relevant Council Priority	Infrastructure & 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 Cabinet RECOMMEND that:-**

- 1) additional monitoring of Particulate Matter (air pollution) be delivered as set out in Option E; and**
- 2) subject to funding being identified and allocated accordingly a further report be brought back to Cabinet once final costs had been identified.**

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) have been asked by Council to prepare an options paper for additional Particulate Matter Monitoring within Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) area.
- 2.2 **Particulate Matter (PM)**
- 2.3 Poor air quality is the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK. The mortality burden of air pollution in England is estimated to be between 26,000 and 38,000 a year, but in addition many people suffer avoidable chronic ill health as a result of it.
- 2.4 Particulate Matter (PM) is considered to be the most important air pollutant in terms of health impacts. Long-term exposure to PM

### Cabinet 2026

7<sup>th</sup> January

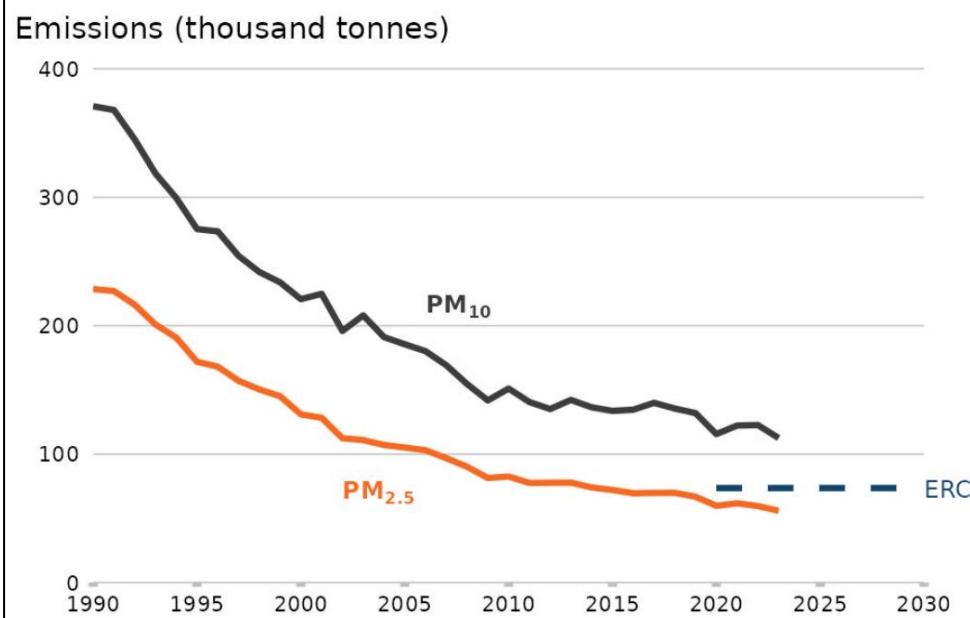
increases mortality and morbidity from cardiovascular and respiratory diseases and can cause cancer. Effects are amplified in vulnerable groups including young children, the elderly, and those suffering from breathing problems like asthma. It is also causally linked to dementia and decline in cognitive function. There is growing evidence for associations with adverse birth outcomes and diabetes.

- 2.5 PM is not a single air pollutant; the composition of particles is in practice very complex, comprising variable amounts of organic and inorganic chemicals derived from direct emissions or from atmospheric processing.
- 2.6 PM is classified according to aerodynamic size in microns (one-thousandth of a millimetre):
  - coarse particles, PM<sub>10</sub> (particles that are between 10 and 2.5 microns ( $\mu\text{m}$ ) in diameter)
  - fine particles, PM<sub>2.5</sub> (particles that are less than 2.5  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter)
- 2.7 Both PM and the gases that can form it are capable of being transported over large distances, so impacts may occur far from the original source.
- 2.8 Around **15% of UK PM** comes from naturally occurring sources, up to a **third** from other European countries and around **half from UK human-made sources** (Clean Air Strategy, 2019)
- 2.9 Appendix 1 demonstrates the various primary sources of PM in the UK (NAEI, 2025). NB this does not include secondary sources as a result of chemical mixing in the atmosphere.

### Cabinet 2026

7<sup>th</sup> January

**Figure 3: Annual emissions of PM10 and PM2.5 in the UK: 1990 – 2023**



[Emissions of air pollutants in the UK – Particulate matter \(PM10 and PM2.5\) - GOV.UK](#)

- 2.10 Reduction in burning of coal and improved emission standards for transport and industrial processes were major drivers for significant decreases of PM in the UK between 1990 and the early 2000's. Since the late 2000s annual emissions of PM have continued to fall at a reduced rate.
- 2.11 Considerable decreases in emissions from some sources (e.g. road transport and energy industries) have been partly offset by increases in emissions from other activities, such as wood burning in domestic settings and the burning of biomass-based fuels in industry.
- 2.12 Emissions from road transport are expected to continue to decline with electrification of the vehicle fleet eliminating exhaust emissions which contribute 4% PM<sub>2.5</sub> and 2% PM<sub>10</sub> of primary emissions (NAEI, 2025).
- 2.13 PM impacts from road sources are dominated by Non-Exhaust Emissions (Brake, Tyre and Road wear) 17% PM<sub>2.5</sub> and 16% PM<sub>10</sub>. Brake wear (40%PM<sub>2.5</sub>) is the largest source of NEE with 40% becoming airborne, tyre wear (70%PM<sub>2.5</sub>) is second largest but only 1-5% becomes airborne.

### **Cabinet 2026**

**7<sup>th</sup> January**

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2.14 Electrification will see brake emissions fall, albeit to a lesser degree than exhaust emissions, while tyre emission are expected to rise.

2.15 The upcoming Euro 7 regulations, starting in late 2026, will introduce limits on brake wear emissions, with tyre wear limits following in 2028.

2.16 **Local PM Monitoring and Data**

2.17 Following a successful bid to Defra's Air Quality Grant Scheme 2022-23, 26 low-cost Air Quality sensors were installed across Worcestershire for a period of 3 years between January and May 2024.

2.18 The sensors measure a range of pollutants including PM in real time and monitoring data is accessible via a public portal on [WRS website](#).

2.19 Sensor locations have been chosen to maximise data capture within locations proximal to vulnerable communities, opportunities to encourage behavioural change and/or from a range of sources of air pollution including transport, solid fuel burning, industry and agriculture.

2.20 Three of the twenty-six sensors were installed in the Bromsgrove District, located at:

- Hanover Street, Bromsgrove
- Gunner Lane, Rubery
- Station Road, Hagley

2.21 Appendix 2 provides a graphical representation of PM data recorded by a selection of the sensors in 2024. The sensor data demonstrate similar peak profiles recorded across the County at all locations irrespective of proximity to strategic road or other local sources. This indicates that regional sources of PM from beyond the county borders are significant.

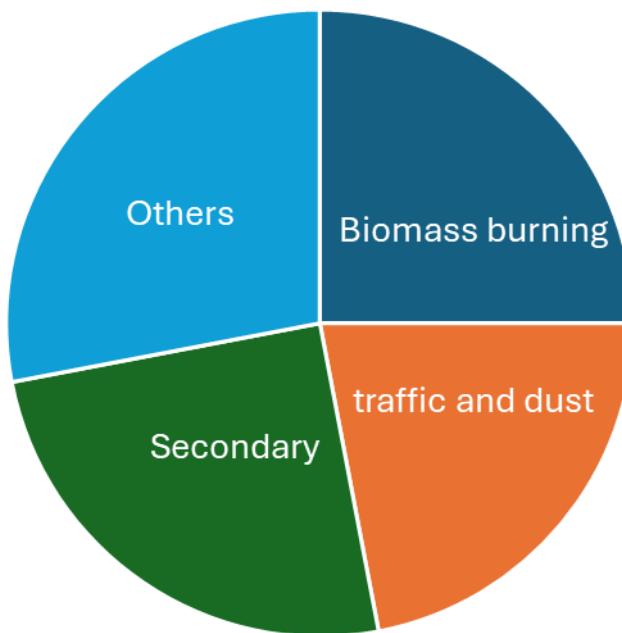
2.22 Appendix 3 provides a summary of averages of the data measured in Bromsgrove and across the county in the context of national air quality objectives and WHO guidelines. Summary:

- UK Annual Mean PM<sub>10</sub> objective: 40µg/m<sup>3</sup>
- Bromsgrove average: 10.86µg/m<sup>3</sup>
- WHO Air Quality Guidelines PM<sub>10</sub> Annual Mean is 15 µg/m<sup>3</sup>
  
- UK Annual Mean PM<sub>2.5</sub> 2040 target: 10µg/m<sup>3</sup>
- UK Annual Mean PM<sub>2.5</sub> 2028 target: 12µg/m<sup>3</sup>
- Bromsgrove average: 6.99µg/m<sup>3</sup>
- WHO Air Quality Guidelines PM<sub>2.5</sub> Annual Mean is 5 µg/m<sup>3</sup>

**Cabinet**  
**2026**

**7<sup>th</sup> January**

- 2.23 No specific sources of PM or exceedances of national objectives have been identified in Worcestershire from 2024 sensor data requiring detailed assessment for Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) purposes at this time.
- 2.24 It should be noted that low-cost sensors, as well as other standard continuous monitors used in LAQM work, only measure total PM (mass) concentration and do not provide any chemical characterisation which is required to determine sources of PM.
- 2.25 **Source Apportionment of PM<sub>2.5</sub> opportunity**
- 2.26 A summary of a source apportionment of a PM<sub>2.5</sub> study undertaken by University of Birmingham (UoB) is provided in Appendix 4. This chemical characterisation includes primary and secondary sources of PM<sub>2.5</sub> pollution.



*Contribution of different air pollution sources to PM<sub>2.5</sub> in Birmingham. Produced from data by Srivastava et al., 2015. This figure shows that biomass burning contributed to a quarter of the PM<sub>2.5</sub> mass, becoming the most important primary emitted PM<sub>2.5</sub>.*

- 2.27 The study utilised the [Birmingham Air Quality Supersite \(BAQS\)](#), monitoring equipment at another site in Birmingham and sophisticated lab analysis and expertise at the University to undertake the study.
- 2.28 The study has highlighted the increase of domestic wood burning and biomass burning as sources of PM over the last few decades.

### Cabinet 2026

7<sup>th</sup> January

2.29 UoB have recently embarked upon monitoring in Worcestershire to ascertain air quality upwind of Birmingham. A fixed supersite replicating the BAQS facility located at a Malvern Hills location for a period of 12 to 24 months from November 2025. This will be supported by a mobile supersite, mounted either within a van or temporary fixed sites each season over one year. This will provide invaluable insight into PM air pollution in Worcestershire culminating in a published paper in 2 - 3 years' time.

2.30 WRS have approached UoB to assist in the design and implementation of a local source apportionment study of PM in Worcestershire. The study will provide a characterisation of the sources of PM, similar to the UoB study outlined above, utilising the specialist monitoring equipment and expertise available from UoB at this time.

2.31 This is an exciting and unique opportunity unavailable to any other local authorities outside of Worcestershire now or at any other time.

2.32 We may anticipate higher levels of biomass and domestic wood burning, secondary aerosols driven by proximal agricultural sources and biogenic aerosols due to the more rural nature of Worcestershire, and regions upwind of the county, and a lower proportion of traffic related emissions than observed in the Birmingham study.

### 3. Additional Monitoring Options

3.1 **Low-cost sensors – increased units [Option A].** This option would include purchase and installation of between 1 and 5 additional low-cost sensors in locations to be determined by BDC.

- Costs: c.£11k (1 unit) to £44.5k (5 units)
- Timeline for delivery: 9 – 12 months following Council approval
- Data: PM<sub>1</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, NO, NO<sub>2</sub> Monitoring Total only

3.2 **Low-cost sensors – extension [Option B].** Current contract for 3 sensors expires in December 2026. This option would extend life of existing sensors for a further defined period, e.g. 1 – 3 years.

- Costs: c.£ 16.5k (3 units for 3 years, service and subscription) + 10% contingency for 2026 increase
- Timeline for delivery: January 2027 to provide continuous monitoring
- Data: PM<sub>1</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, NO, NO<sub>2</sub> Monitoring Total only.

### Cabinet 2026

7<sup>th</sup> January

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3.3 **Low-cost sensors – extension and relocation [Option C].** As option B. but with additional costs and implementation time for relocation of units to new locations.

- Costs: c.£ 16.5k (3 units for 3 years, service and subscription) + £3k - £4k (relocate 1 – 3 units) + 10% contingency for 2026 increase
- Timeline for delivery: 6 – 9 months following expiry of existing contract or Council approval,
- Data: PM<sub>1</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, NO, NO<sub>2</sub> Monitoring Total only.

3.4 **Source apportionment study with UoB – mobile supersite [Option D].** This option would utilise state of the art air quality monitoring equipment at a fixed location for one month in summer and one in winter providing a comprehensive set of PM observations. Data analysis and written report provided by experienced academic researcher.

- Costs (rough): c.£ 115,000 + 10% contingency
- Timeline for delivery: approximately 18 months
- Data: Chemical analyses and source apportionment of PM

3.5 **Combination [Option E].** Option B (or C) and D combined.

- Costs: depending on final solutions
- Timeline for delivery: 6 – 9 months following expiry of existing contract or Council approval for option b (or c) aspect, timeline for option d approximately 18 months.
- Data: Continued automatic monitoring of a range of pollutants for a further period of 3 years and chemical analyses providing source apportionment assessment of PM

3.6 NB all timelines are indicative with consideration for required BDC procurement requirements: source suppliers and quotes, bid process, awarding contracts, and obtaining permissions from Worcestershire County Council for streetlight mounting, structural assessments of streetlights, civil engineering works and licenses as required, installation and power connections, availability of academic researcher and equipment, plus WRS officer time for project.

3.7 **Discussion of options**

3.8 Option A) provides least benefit in respect of PM data obtained of all the options and is the most expensive of the low-cost sensor options. From the data gathered in 2024, as seen in Appendix 2, and noted in section 2.22 above, similar profiles in PM data are recorded at all

### **Cabinet 2026**

**7<sup>th</sup> January**

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locations across the County indicating regional sources of PM from beyond the county borders are significant. At this time, it is anticipated additional monitors will follow the same profile as recorded PM at existing locations and therefore provide minimal value in additional measured data. NB both options A and B will require implementation to increase the current network beyond 2026.

- 3.9 Option B) is the most beneficial of the low-cost sensor options from perspective of PM data obtained and the least expensive. This option provides data collection at existing locations for a longer period of time enabling continued assessment of concentrations in fixed locations and tracking of reductions or increases in ambient PM over time. Additionally, two of the current sensors are located near schools enabling opportunities to undertake behavioural change activities and the third is located in the one remaining Air Quality Management Area within the Bromsgrove district. Discounted service costs are anticipated through renewal and extension of the existing contract. Please note costings above could increase in 2026.
- 3.10 Option C) is considered to be the next best cost-effective sensor solution as it utilises existing units and it is anticipated will also benefit from discounted service costs through renewal of the contract. However, some additional costs would occur to relocate any of the units and there could be a period of no data collection between ending of current contract and actual installation at new location. Secondly, relocation of any units would end continued assessment capabilities as described in Option B) above. The benefits are the opportunity to obtain data at a new location, identified source and/or sensitive receptor.
- 3.11 Option D) provides a unique opportunity not available to any other local authority at any other time to gain insight into sources of PM in Worcestershire. This has greatest benefits in enhancing understanding of pollutant sources and utilising the data gathered and academic expertise available to inform future local, and potentially regional or national, strategies to address PM and other pollution. The mobile air quality supersite will be located at a single urban background location (such as a school) during two seasons (this could be extended to four seasons but doubles researcher staff costs). A constant power supply is required for the supersite and site needs to be secure. Locating at a school also provides an educational opportunity. Considering the EV range of the mobile supersite which is based at UoB campus, Bromsgrove district is an ideal location in the county for such a study.
- 3.12 Option E) provides ultimate benefit of combination of option B, maintaining current sensors and extending monitoring life for a further

### **Cabinet 2026**

**7<sup>th</sup> January**

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period of time, and option D) providing unique insight into PM profile in Worcestershire utilising state of the art air quality monitoring equipment and supported by academic expertise.

- 3.13 **WRS recommendation is Option E comprising a combination of Option B and D.**
- 3.14 **Low-cost sensors – extension [Option B].** This option would extend life of existing sensors for a further defined period, e.g. 1 – 3 years beyond expiration of current service and maintenance contract due December 2026.
  - Costs: c.£ 16.5k (3 units for 3 years, service and subscription) + 10% contingency for 2026 price increases
  - Timeline for delivery: January 2027 to provide continuous monitoring
  - Data: PM<sub>1</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, NO, NO<sub>2</sub> Monitoring Total only.
- 3.15 **Source apportionment study with UoB – mobile supersite [Option D].** This option would utilise state of the art air quality monitoring equipment at a fixed location for one month in summer and one in winter providing a comprehensive set of PM observations. Data analysis and written report provided by experienced academic researcher.
  - Costs (rough): c.£ 115,000 + 10% contingency
  - Timeline for delivery: approximately 18 months
  - Data: Chemical analyses and source apportionment of PM

#### **4. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

- 4.1 Please outline the reasons for the recommendations or resolutions listed in your report. Outlined above
- 4.2 Please discuss any operational implications with your Assistant Director. No further operational issues identified
- 4.3 Please refer to any system upgrades in this section, including for new IT software. No IT systems implications anticipated, will be provided by 3<sup>rd</sup> parties and incorporated into existing MyAir software (low cost sensors portal) depending on preferred option.

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

### Cabinet 2026

7<sup>th</sup> January

5.1 The table below shows the estimated costs by each of the options outlined within this report:

	One-off
Option A	£11 – 44.4k
Option B	£16.5 - 18.1k
Option C	£16.5 - 23k
Option D	£115 - 126.5k
Option E	£131.5 – 149.5k

5.2 With any option, it is proposed that expenditure would in year 2026/27.

5.3 There is currently no assigned budget available for this project. Any agreement to the proposal would need to be considered alongside other competing bids for funding from reserves.

### **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Part IV of the Environment Act 1995, the Local Air Quality Management process (LAQM) and subsequent Policy Guidance (LAQM.PG22) and Technical Guidance (LAQM.TG22) documents set out the duty of local authorities to review and assess local air quality within their areas against a set of health-based objectives and work to improving poor air quality identified. Local Authorities in England are expected to report on nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), PM<sub>10</sub> and sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) as standard within their Annual Status Reports. Under the Environment Act 2021, the UK government have set 2 legally-binding long-term targets to reduce concentrations of fine particulate matter, PM<sub>2.5</sub>. Whilst the responsibility for meeting the PM<sub>2.5</sub> targets sits with national government; local authorities have a role to play in delivering reductions in PM<sub>2.5</sub> and are also required to report on actions taken within their ASR. The proposal supports the council's obligations to assess local air quality within its boundaries in accordance with LAQM regulations.

6.2 Poor air quality in general can affect peoples' health, playing a role in many chronic conditions such as cancer, asthma, heart disease and neurological changes linked to dementia. Air pollution is estimated to contribute to between 26,000 to 38,000 deaths per year in England (Chief Medical Officer's Report, 2022). Particulate Matter is considered to be the most important air pollutant in terms of health impacts. PM can have short-term health impacts over a single day when concentrations are elevated. Long-term exposure to PM increases mortality and morbidity from cardiovascular and respiratory diseases and can cause cancer. Effects are amplified in vulnerable groups including young children, the elderly, and those suffering from

### **Cabinet 2026**

**7<sup>th</sup> January**

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breathing problems like asthma. It is also causally linked to dementia and decline in cognitive function. There is growing evidence for associations with adverse birth outcomes and diabetes. The World Health Organization (WHO) advises there is no safe exposure level to PM.

#### **7. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**

##### **7.1 Local Government Reorganisation**

7.2 No impacts on LGR because it is anticipated the proposed schemes will be implemented before 1<sup>st</sup> May 2028.

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

7.4 No impacts on climate change.

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

7.6 No equality and diversification implications.

#### **8. RISK MANAGEMENT**

8.1 Risk from not taking proposed action is limiting understanding of PM<sub>2.5</sub> within the district's boundaries. Risks from implementing proposed action is that additional monitoring may identify an exceedance of an objective that is a national issue and the local authority is limited in powers to resolve.

#### **9. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix 1. PM sources (National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory)

Appendix 2. Low-cost sensor PM graphs 2024

Appendix 3. Low-cost sensor PM averages & National AQ Objectives

Appendix 4. WM-Air PM2.5 sources briefing note

**Cabinet**  
**2026**

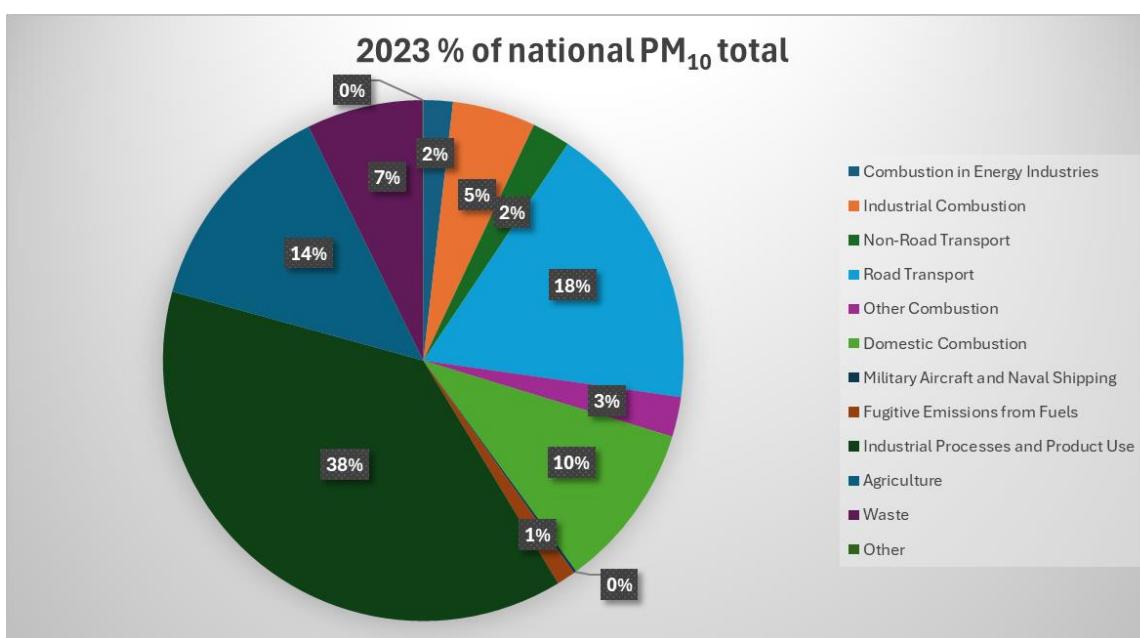
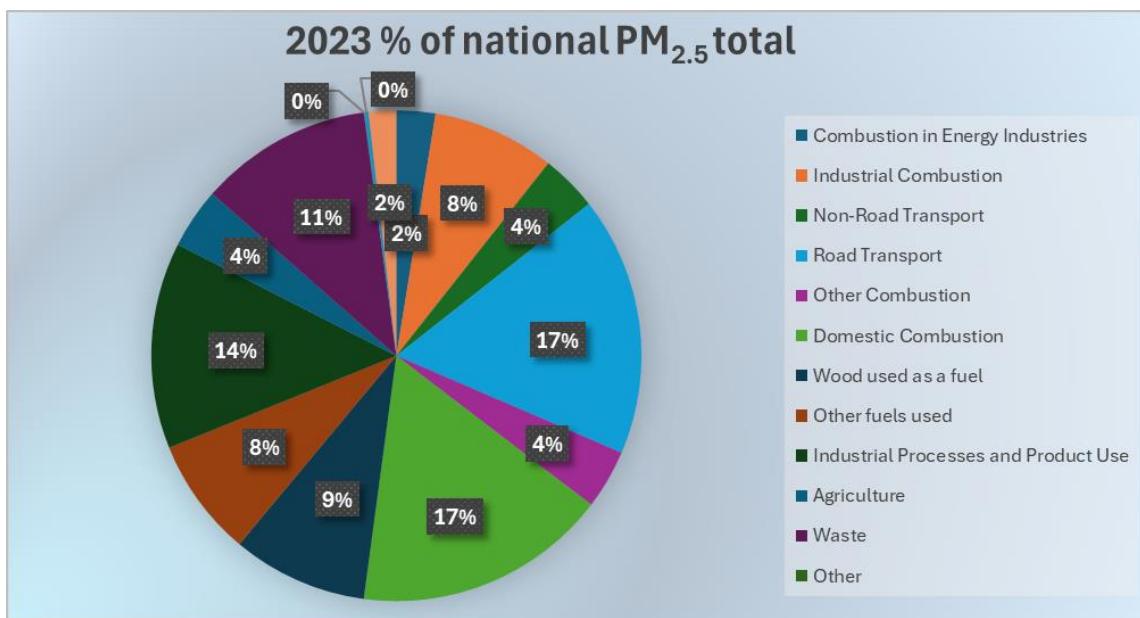
**7<sup>th</sup> January**

**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Name and Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Kit Taylor.	Advised by email 09.12.2025
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Simon Wilkes	10.12.2025
Financial Services	Debra Goodall	09.12.2025
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings	11.12.2025
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	N/A	N/A
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	N/A	N/A

# Agenda Item 13a

## Appendix 1: National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory – Primary UK Sources of PM, 2023

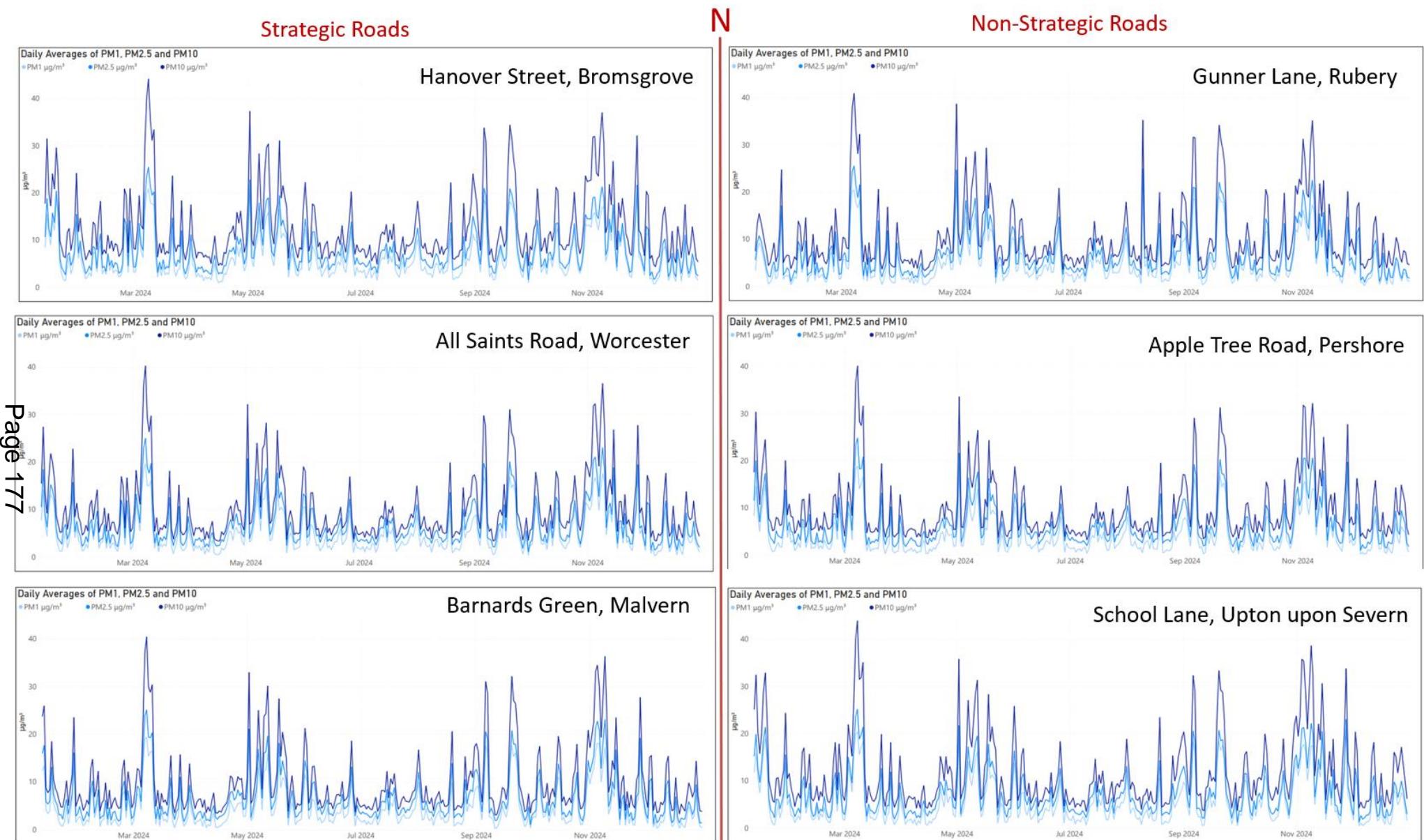


No single activity dominating:

- Domestic combustion = 20 % PM<sub>2.5</sub> & 10 % PM<sub>10</sub>
- Non-exhaust emissions (NEE) from road transport (road wear, brake wear, tyre wear) = 17% PM<sub>2.5</sub> & 16% PM<sub>10</sub>
- Exhaust emissions = 4% PM<sub>2.5</sub> & 2% PM<sub>10</sub>
- Industrial processes = 16% PM<sub>2.5</sub> & 38% PM<sub>10</sub>
- Industrial combustion (manufacturing and construction sites) = 10% PM<sub>2.5</sub> & 5 % PM<sub>10</sub>
- Emissions from construction activity (mostly roads and non-residential buildings) = 22% PM<sub>10</sub> & 4% PM<sub>2.5</sub>
- Quarrying activity = 7% PM<sub>10</sub> and 1 % PM<sub>2.5</sub>

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## Appendix 2: Low-Cost Sensor PM Graphical Data, Worcestershire 2024



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## Appendix 3: PM Data, 2024 and National Air Quality Objectives

Low-cost sensors PM <sub>10</sub> µg/m <sup>3</sup> 2024	
Worcestershire High	12.69
Worcestershire Low	8.53
Worcestershire Average	10.47
Bromsgrove High (Hanover Street)	12.69
Bromsgrove Low (Hagley)	9.41
Bromsgrove Average	10.86
Defra Background Maps (BDC) Average	12.31
Low-cost sensors PM <sub>2.5</sub> µg/m <sup>3</sup> 2024	
Worcestershire High	7.96
Worcestershire Low	5.42
Worcestershire Average	6.90
Bromsgrove High (Hanover Street)	7.96
Bromsgrove Low (Hagley)	6.23
Bromsgrove Average	6.99
Defra Background Maps (BDC) Average	6.57

Also Worcester Road, Wychbold PM<sub>10</sub> analyser 15.2 µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2024

### 6.1 Local Air Quality Management Framework

The [Air Quality \(England\) Regulations 2000 \(2002 as amended\)](#)

These pollutant limits apply locally under the Air Quality Management framework.

Pollutant	Objective	Averaging Period
<b>Fine and coarse particulate matter - PM10</b>	50 µg/m <sup>3</sup> not to be exceeded more than 35 times/ year	24-hour mean
<b>Fine and coarse particulate matter - PM10</b>	40 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Annual mean

WHO Air Quality Guidelines PM<sub>10</sub> Annual Mean is 15 µg/m<sup>3</sup>

### 6.2 Environment Act PM2.5

[The Environmental Targets \(Fine Particulate Matter\) \(England\) Regulations 2023](#)

Pollutant and metric	Target	Target year
<b>PM2.5 annual mean concentration</b>	Interim target: 12 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	2028
<b>PM2.5 annual mean concentration</b>	Legally binding target: 10 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	2040
<b>PM2.5 population exposure</b>	Interim target: 22% reduction in exposure compared to 2018	2028
<b>PM2.5 population exposure</b>	Legally binding target: 35% reduction in exposure compared to 2018	2040

WHO Air Quality guidelines PM<sub>2.5</sub> Annual Mean is 5 µg/m<sup>3</sup>

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# Sources of fine particles (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) in the West Midlands

## A report from the WM-Air project team

Contact: <https://wm-air.org.uk>; @WMAir\_UoB; [wmair@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:wmair@contacts.bham.ac.uk)

Microscopic airborne particles (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) are the air pollutants with the greatest impact upon health in the West Midlands, responsible for up to 2070 early deaths each year. PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations are 2-3 times higher than World Health Organisation guideline levels. Identifying the sources of PM<sub>2.5</sub> is key to designing effective policies for cleaner air. Through the application of state-of-the-science methods, the major sources of PM<sub>2.5</sub> in the West Midlands have been identified as: biomass burning (25%), secondary inorganic aerosol (25%), primary traffic related emissions (22%), secondary biogenic aerosol (10%), industrial activity (9%) and sea salt (9%). Reducing emissions from biomass (wood) burning and road traffic exhaust, should be policy priorities for local, regional and national government to reduce the health impacts of air pollution.

### Air quality in the West Midlands

Air quality is the largest environmental threat to human health in the UK<sup>1</sup> with the burden of long-term exposure to air pollution equivalent to 29,000 – 43,000 early deaths a year<sup>2</sup>. In the West Midlands the ambient pollutants of greatest concern are nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) and fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>; particles with a diameter of 2.5 µm or below). Of these pollutants, PM<sub>2.5</sub> has the greatest impact on health with up to 2,070 early deaths attributable to long term PM<sub>2.5</sub> exposure<sup>3</sup> each year in the region.

Following the Environment Act, 2021, an annual average PM<sub>2.5</sub> target level for England of 10 µg m<sup>-3</sup> was set, to be achieved by 2040, with an interim target of 12 µg m<sup>-3</sup> to be achieved by January 2028. The World Health Organisation issues non-binding guideline levels of air pollutants for the protection of human health with a guideline level for PM<sub>2.5</sub> of 5 µg m<sup>-3</sup>.

Unlike NO<sub>x</sub> which is primarily emitted by road traffic, PM<sub>2.5</sub> has a broad range of both primary (particles emitted directly into the atmosphere) and secondary

(particles formed in the atmosphere) sources of natural and human origin. PM<sub>2.5</sub> also has a long atmospheric lifetime, meaning that local concentrations are impacted both by local emission sources and a regional background. The impact of this background on PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations is dependent on the prevailing weather conditions and pollution sources in the surrounding region. Understanding the contribution of both primary and secondary sources to total PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations is necessary when designing policy interventions to control concentrations of PM<sub>2.5</sub>.

### Sources of PM<sub>2.5</sub> in the West Midlands

In order to identify the factors contributing to PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations in the West Midlands region, filter samples were collected from January 2021 to February 2022 at two urban background sites: Birmingham Air Quality Supersite (BAQS) and the AURN sampling site at Birmingham Ladywood (LW)<sup>4</sup>.

Filters were analysed for Organic Carbon (OC), Elemental Carbon (EC), Ions, Metals and Organic compounds. These species were then used to

<sup>1</sup> Public Health England: Health matters: air pollution. Guidance. London: PHE, 2018.

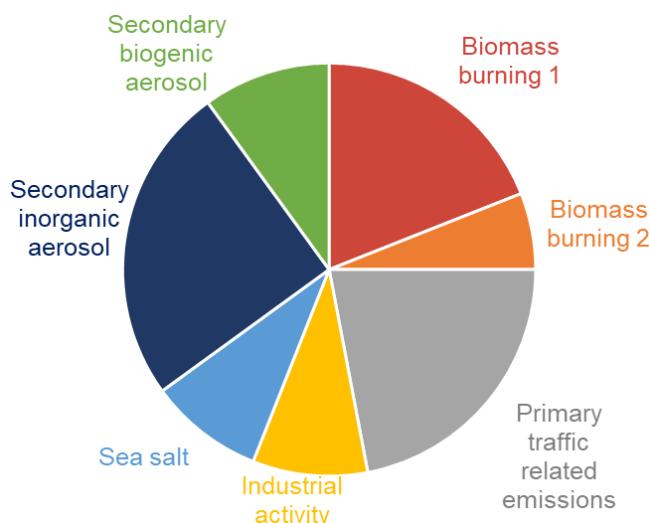
<sup>2</sup> Mitsakou C., et al.: Updated mortality burden estimates attributable to air pollution. Chemical Hazards and Poisons Report, 28, 2022

<sup>3</sup> Hall J., et al.: Regional impact assessment of air quality improvement: The air quality lifecourse assessment tool (AQ-LAT) for the West Midlands combined authority (WMCA) area. Environ Pollut., 356, 2024

<sup>4</sup> Srivastava D., et al.: Comparative receptor modelling for the sources of fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) at urban sites in the UK. Atmos. Environ., 343, 2025

identify the factors contributing to total PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations using positive matrix factorisation, an extensively used receptor modelling approach. For a full method description see Srivastava et al., 2025<sup>4</sup>.

Seven factors were identified: two Biomass burning factors, primary traffic related emissions, industrial activity, sea salt, secondary inorganic aerosol and secondary biogenic aerosol.



## Biomass burning

The first biomass burning factor, Biomass burning 1, accounted for 19% of PM<sub>2.5</sub>. This factor followed the profile expected of wood burning for heating with concentrations higher in the winter than in the summer. The contribution of this source to total PM<sub>2.5</sub> mass was higher at BAQS than at LW which is consistent with the older houses present in Selly Oak and Edgbaston being more likely to have chimneys and fireplaces than the more modern estates around the Ladywood site.

A second biomass burning factor, Biomass burning 2, did not show a seasonal pattern and the contribution of this factor to total PM<sub>2.5</sub> mass was similar at both sites. This suggests that this source could be linked to other activities such as garden waste burning, barbecues or commercial biomass combustion. This factor accounted for 6% of annual average PM<sub>2.5</sub> mass across the two sites.

## Primary traffic related emissions

Primary traffic related emissions are made up of tyre and brake abrasion as well as resuspension of road dust and particles emitted from the exhaust (many of the gases emitted from vehicle exhausts react in the atmosphere to form secondary inorganic aerosol). This factor made up 22% of PM<sub>2.5</sub> mass annually.

## Industrial activity

Industrial activity, characterised by sulfate (SO<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup>) and metal ions made up 9% of total PM<sub>2.5</sub> annual average mass concentration.

## Sea salt

Sea salt is emitted from the sea as salt spray and from road de-icing salt and is observed throughout the UK. This factor accounted for 9% of total PM<sub>2.5</sub> mass which is consistent with other sites in the central UK.

## Secondary inorganic aerosol

Secondary inorganic aerosol is dominated by nitrate (NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>), sulphate (SO<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup>) and ammonium (NH<sub>4</sub><sup>+</sup>) ions. These species are formed in the atmosphere from the emission of gaseous pollutants from traffic, industrial and agricultural sources. This factor accounted for 25% of PM<sub>2.5</sub> mass across the 2 sites.

## Secondary biogenic aerosol

Biogenic volatile organic compounds are emitted from plants; many of these are familiar, for example, pine scent and the smell of cut grass. In polluted environments these compounds can be oxidised to form particulates. This factor contributed to 10% of PM<sub>2.5</sub> mass concentration at both sites.

Table 1. Sources of PM<sub>2.5</sub> averaged across the Birmingham Air Quality Supersite (BAQS) and the Ladywood AURN sampling (LW) in 2021/2022.

Identified Sources	Contribution to PM mass (%)	Concentration (µg m <sup>-3</sup> )
Biomass burning 1	19	1.5
Biomass burning 2	6	0.5
Primary traffic related emissions	22	1.7
Industrial activity	9	0.7
Sea salt	9	0.7
Secondary inorganic aerosol	25	1.9
Secondary biogenic aerosol	10	0.7

#### PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2026/27

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor May
Portfolio Holder Consulted	
Relevant Assistant Director	Hannah Corredor, Assistant Director of Transformation and Corporate Services
Report Author Becky Talbot	Job Title: Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager Contact email: <a href="mailto:becky.talbot@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk">becky.talbot@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk</a> Contact Tel: 01527 64252 ext:3385
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	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 Committee is asked to RECOMMEND to Council that

- 1) the Pay Policy 2026/27 be approved.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires English local authorities to produce a Pay Policy Statement ('the statement'). The Act requires the statement to be approved by Full Council and to be adopted by 31<sup>st</sup> March each year for the subsequent financial year.

The proposed Pay Policy Statement 2026/27 for the Council is included at Appendix 1.

The Statement must set out policies relating to-

- (a) The remuneration of its chief officers,
- (b) The remuneration of its lowest-paid employees, and
- (c) The relationship between-
  - (i) The remuneration of its chief officers, and
  - (ii) The remuneration of its employees who are not chief officers.

### Cabinet

7th January 2026

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The provisions within the Localism Act 2011 bring together the strands of increasing accountability, transparency and fairness in the setting of local pay.

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

3.1 The Pay Policy Statement is in place to ensure that employees receive the appropriate remuneration during the financial year.

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

4.1 All financial implications will be addressed as part of the budget setting process and posts are fully budgeted for.

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

5.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires English local authorities to produce a Pay Policy Statement. The Act requires the statement to be approved by Full Council and to be adopted by 31<sup>st</sup> March each year for the subsequent financial year.

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

##### **6.1 Local Government Reorganisation**

There are no specific implications for local government reorganisation.

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

There are no specific climate change implications.

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

There are no implications in relation to this report.

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

7.1 There is a risk that if Members do not approve the Pay Policy Statement, then the Council will not be compliant with legal requirements.

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

8.1 Appendix A – Pay Policy 2026/27

## APPENDIX 1

### **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL PAY POLICY STATEMENT**

#### **Introduction and Purpose**

1. Under section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the “power to appoint officers on such reasonable terms and conditions as authority thinks fit”. This pay policy statement sets out the Council’s approach to pay policy in accordance with the requirements of Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011. It shall apply for the financial year 2026/27 and each subsequent financial year, until amended.
2. The purpose of the statement is to provide transparency with regard to the Council’s approach to setting the pay of its employees by identifying;
  - a. the methods by which salaries of all employees are determined;
  - b. the detail and level of remuneration of its most senior staff i.e. chief officers’, as defined by the relevant legislation;
  - c. the Committee(s) responsible for ensuring the provisions set out in this statement are applied consistently throughout the Council and for recommending any amendments to the full Council.
3. Once approved by the full Council, this policy statement will come into immediate effect and will be subject to review on a minimum of an annual basis, in accordance with the relevant legislation prevailing at that time.

#### **Legislative Framework**

4. In determining the pay and remuneration of all of its employees, the Council will comply with all relevant employment legislation. This includes the Equality Act 2010, Part Time Employment (Prevention of Less Favorable Treatment) Regulations 2000, The Agency Workers Regulations 2010 and where relevant, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Earnings) Regulations. With regard to the equal pay requirements contained within the Equality Act, the Council ensures there is no pay discrimination within its pay structures and that all pay differentials can be objectively justified through the use of equality proofed Job Evaluation mechanisms. These directly relate salaries to the requirements, demands and responsibilities of the role.

#### **Pay Structure**

5. The Council’s pay and grading structure comprises grades 1 – 11. These are followed by grades for Managers, Assistant Director 1, Assistant Director 2, Director WRS, Executive Director, Deputy Chief Executive and then Chief Executive; all of which arose following the introduction of shared services with Redditch Borough Council (RBC).

# Agenda Item 13b

6. Within each grade there are a number of salary / pay points. Up to and including grade 11 scale, at spinal column point 43, the Council uses the nationally negotiated pay spine. Salary points above this are locally determined. The Council's Pay structure is set out below.

Grade	Spinal Column Points		Nationally determined rates	
	Minimum £	Maximum £		
1	2	2	24,413	24,413
2	2	5	24,796	25,583
3	5	9	25,583	27,254
4	9	14	27,254	29,540
5	14	19	29,540	32,061
6	19	24	32,061	35,412
7	25	30	36,363	40,777
8	30	34	40,777	45,091
9	34	37	45,091	48,226
10	37	40	48,226	51,356
11	40	43	51,356	54,495
Manager Hay	Hay Evaluated	38%	57,180	59,490
Manager Hay Grade 1	Hay evaluated	43%	66,163	68,772
Manager Hay Grade 2	Hay evaluated	45%	68,772	71,510
Assistant Director 1	Hay evaluated	51%	78,510	81,203
Assistant Director 2	Hay evaluated	61%	92,956	96,665
Director of WRS	Hay evaluated	68%	103,842	107,566
Executive Director	Hay evaluated	74%	114,282	118,694
Director of Finance S151	Hay evaluated	74%	114,282	118,694
Chief Executive	Hay evaluated	100%	150,472	154,572

7. All Council posts are allocated to a grade within this pay structure, based on the application of a Job Evaluation process. Posts at Managers and above are evaluated by an external assessor using the Hay Job Evaluation scheme. Where posts are introduced as part of a shared service, and where these posts are identified as being potentially too 'large' and 'complex' for this majority scheme, they will be double tested under the Hay scheme, and where appropriate, will be taken into the Hay scheme to identify levels of pay. This scheme identifies the salary for these posts based on a percentage of Chief Executive Salary (for ease of presentation these are shown to the nearest whole % in the table above). Posts below this level (which are the majority of employees) are evaluated under the "Gauge" Job Evaluation process.
8. In common with the majority of authorities the Council is committed to the Local Government Employers national pay bargaining framework in respect of the national pay spine and annual cost of living increases negotiated with the trade unions.
9. All other pay related allowances are the subject of either nationally or locally negotiated rates, having been determined from time to time in accordance with collective bargaining machinery and/or as determined by Council policy. In determining its grading structure and setting remuneration levels for all posts, the Council takes account of the need to ensure value for money in respect of the use of public expenditure, balanced against the need to recruit and retain employees who are able to meet the requirements of providing high quality services to the community; delivered effectively and efficiently and at all times those services are required.
10. New appointments will normally be made at the minimum of the relevant grade, although this can be varied where necessary to secure the best candidate. From time to time it may be necessary to take account of the external pay market in order to attract and retain employees with particular experience, skills and capacity. Where necessary, the Council will ensure the requirement for such is objectively justified by reference to clear and transparent evidence of relevant market comparators, using appropriate data sources available from within and outside the local government sector.
11. For staff not on the highest point within the salary scale there is a system of annual progression to the next point on the band.

## **Senior Management Remuneration**

12. For the purposes of this statement, senior management means 'chief officers' as defined within S43 of the Localism Act. The posts falling within the statutory definition are set out below, with details of their basic salary as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 (assuming no inflationary increase for these posts).
13. Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) is managed by a senior management team who manage shared services across both BDC and RBC.

# Agenda Item 13b

Councils. All of the posts listed below have been job evaluated on this basis, with the salary costs for these posts split equally between both Councils.

a) Chief Executive

Employed by RBC and shared with BDC.

John Leach is in post with a current salary of £154,572.

b) Deputy Chief Executive

Employed by BDC and shared with RBC.

This post is currently vacant.

c) Executive Director

Employed by RBC and shared with BDC.

d) WRS Director

Employed by BDC. This is a shared post across 6 District authorities.

e) Assistant Directors

Employed by RBC and shared with BDC

4 x Assistant Director 2

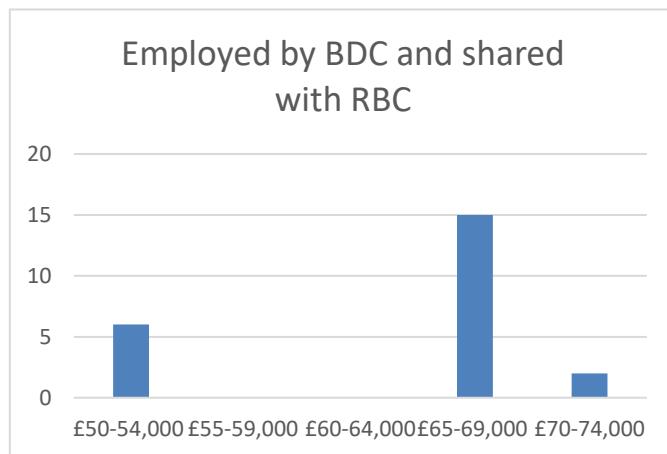
Employed by BDC and shared with RBC

3 x Assistant Director 2

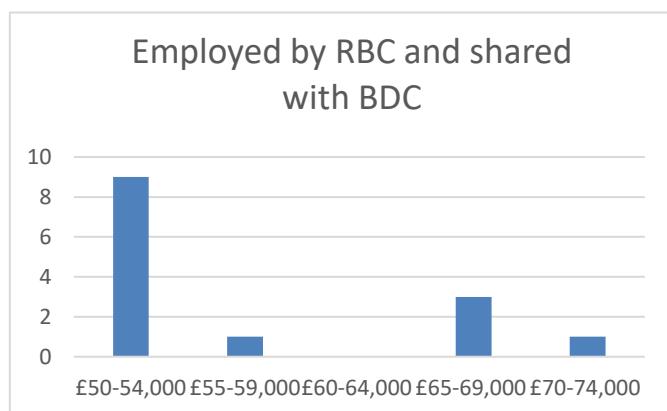
# Agenda Item 13b

Employees below Assistant Directors with a salary above £50,000 based on FTE

Employed by BDC and shared with RBC



Employed by RBC and shared with BDC



# Agenda Item 13b

Title	% of Chief executive salary	Pay range (minimum) £	Pay range (maximum) £	Incremen-tal points	Cost to Bromsgrove District Council £
Chief Executive	100%	150,472	154,572	3	50%
Deputy Chief Executive & S151	80%	121,059	125,712	3	50%
Executive Director Environment and Communities	74%	114,282	118,694	3	35%
Director Worcestershire Regulatory Services	68%	103,842	107,566	3	This is a shared post across 6 district Authorities. Bromsgrove equates to 14.45%
Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services	61%	92,956	96,665	3	50%
Assistant Director Planning and Leisure Services	61%	92,956	96,665	3	50%
Assistant Director Transformation and Corporate Services	61%	92,956	96,665	3	50%
Assistant Director Legal, Democratic & Election Services	61%	92,956	96,665	3	50%
Assistant Director Environmental and Housing Property Services	61%	92,956	96,665	3	35%
Assistant Director Community and Housing Services	61%	92,956	96,665	3	35%
Assistant Director Regeneration & Property Services	61%	92,956	96,665	3	50%

## Recruitment of Chief Officers

14. The Council's policy and procedures with regard to recruitment of chief officers is set out within the Officer Employment Procedure Rules as set out in the Council's Constitution. When recruiting to all posts the Council will take full and proper account of its own equal opportunities, recruitment and redeployment Policies. The determination of the remuneration to be offered to any newly appointed chief officer will be in accordance with the pay structure and relevant policies in place at the time of recruitment. Where the Council is unable to recruit to a post at the designated grade, it will consider the use of temporary market forces supplements in accordance with its relevant policies.
15. Where the Council remains unable to recruit chief officers under a contract of service, or there is a need for interim support to provide cover for a vacant substantive chief officer post, the Council will, where necessary, consider and utilise engaging individuals under 'contracts for service'. These will be sourced through a relevant procurement process ensuring the council is able to demonstrate the maximum value for money benefits from competition in securing the relevant service. The Council does not currently have any Chief Officers under such arrangements.

## Performance-Related Pay and Bonuses – Chief Officers

16. The Council does not apply any bonuses or performance-related pay to its chief officers. Any progression through the incremental scale of the relevant grade is subject to satisfactory performance which is assessed on an annual basis.

## Additions to Salary of Chief Officers (applicable to all staff)

17. In addition to the basic salary for the post, all staff may be eligible for other payments under the Council's existing policies. Some of these payments are chargeable to UK Income Tax and do not solely constitute reimbursement of expenses incurred in the fulfilment of duties. The list below shows some of the kinds of payments made.
  - a. reimbursement of mileage. At the time of preparation of this statement, the Council pays an allowance of 45p per mile for all staff, with additional or alternative payments for carrying passengers or using a bicycle.
  - b. professional fees. The Council pays for or reimburses the cost of one practicing certificate fee or membership of a professional organisation provided it is relevant to the post that an employee occupies within the Council.
  - c. long service awards. The Council pays staff an additional amount if they have completed 25 years of service and having completed 40 years' service.
  - d. honoraria, in accordance with the Council's policy on salary and grading. Generally, these may be paid only where a member of staff has performed a role at a higher grade;
  - e. fees for returning officer and other electoral duties, such as acting as a presiding officer of a polling station. These are fees which are identified and paid separately for local government elections, elections to the UK Parliament and EU Parliament and other electoral processes such as referenda;

# Agenda Item 13b

- f. pay protection – where a member of staff is placed in a new post and the grade is below that of their previous post, for example as a result of a restructuring, pay protection at the level of their previous post is paid for the first 12 months. In exceptional circumstance pay protection can be applied for greater than 12 months with the prior approval of the Chief Executive.
- g. market forces supplements in addition to basic salary where identified and paid separately;
- h. salary supplements or additional payments for undertaking additional responsibilities such as shared service provision with another local authority or in respect of joint bodies, where identified and paid separately;
- i. attendance allowances.

## **Payments on Termination**

- 18. The Council's approach to discretionary payments on termination of employment of chief officers prior to reaching normal retirement age is set out within its policy statement in accordance with Regulations 5 and 6 of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) Regulations 2006 and Regulations 12 and 13 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contribution) Regulations 2007.
- 19. Any other payments falling outside the provisions or the relevant periods of contractual notice shall be subject to a formal decision made by the full Council or relevant elected members, committee or panel of elected members with delegated authority to approve such payments.
- 20. Redundancy payments are based upon an employee's actual weekly salary and, in accordance with the Employee Relations Act 1996, will be up to 30 weeks, depending upon length of service and age.

## **Publication**

- 21. Upon approval by the full Council, this statement will be published on the Council's website. In addition, for posts where the full time equivalent salary is at least £50,000, the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts will include a note on Officers Remuneration setting out the total amount of:
  - a. Salary, fees or allowances paid to or receivable by the person in the current and previous year;
  - b. Any bonuses so paid or receivable by the person in the current and previous year;
  - c. Any sums payable by way of expenses allowance that are chargeable to UK income tax;
  - d. Any compensation for loss of employment and any other payments connected with termination;
  - e. Any benefits received that do not fall within the above.

## **Lowest Paid Employees**

- 22. The Council's definition of lowest paid employees is persons employed under a contract of employment with the Council on full time (37 hours) equivalent salaries in accordance with the minimum spinal column point currently in use within the Council's grading structure. As at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 this is £24,413 per annum.

# Agenda Item 13b

23. The Council also employs apprentices (or other such categories of workers) who are not included within the definition of 'lowest paid employees' (as they are employed under a special form of employment contract; which is a contract for training rather than actual employment).
24. The relationship between the rate of pay for the lowest paid and chief officers is determined by the processes used for determining pay and grading structures as set out earlier in this policy statement.
25. The statutory guidance under the Localism Act recommends the use of pay multiples as a means of measuring the relationship between pay rates across the workforce and that of senior managers, as included within the Hutton 'Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector' (2010). The Hutton report was asked by Government to explore the case for a fixed limit on dispersion of pay through a requirement that no public sector manager can earn more than 20 times the lowest paid person in the organisation. The report concluded that "it would not be fair or wise for the Government to impose a single maximum pay multiple across the public sector". The Council accepts the view that the relationship to median earnings is a more relevant measure and the Government's Code of Recommended Practice on Data Transparency recommends the publication of the ratio between highest paid salary and the median average salary of the whole of the authority's workforce.
26. As part of its overall and ongoing monitoring of alignment with external pay markets, both within and outside the sector, the Council will use available benchmark information as appropriate.

## **Accountability and Decision Making**

28. In accordance with the Constitution of the Council, the Council is responsible for setting the policy relating to the recruitment, pay, terms and conditions and severance arrangements for employees of the Council. Decisions about individual employees are delegated to the Chief Executive.
29. The Appointments Committee is responsible for recommending to Council matters relating to the appointment of the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive), Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer and Chief Officers as defined in the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) Regulations 2001 (as amended);
30. For the Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance Officer, the Statutory Officers Disciplinary Action Panel considers and decides on matters relating to disciplinary action.

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### Cabinet 2026

7<sup>th</sup> January

#### **Business Rates - Discretionary Rates Relief Policy 2026/27**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor S Nock
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes / No
Relevant Assistant Director	Debra Goodall Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services
Report Author	Revenue Services Manager david.riley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk 01527 548 418
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No
Relevant Council Priority	
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) A non-domestic rates discretionary relief policy be approved and adopted from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026
- 2) Subject to the removal of Burcot as a settlement from the Lickey and Blackwell Parish, the rural settlement list included in the policy be approved and adopted for use from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Section 47 of The Local Government Finance Act 1988 [the act] provides billing authorities with the power to award discretionary rate relief to ratepayers.
- 2.2 Discretionary rate relief was - in the past - restricted to charities, not for profit organisations, and the occupiers of small premises within rural settlements. The period for which relief could be awarded was also restricted to the current rate year, or to the current and previous rate year if the determination to award relief was made before 30<sup>th</sup> September.
- 2.3 The Localism Act 2011 and the Non-Domestic Rating Act 2023 removed some of the restrictions on the award of relief and, except in the case of charities and non-profit organisations, the council can only

### **Cabinet 2026**

**7<sup>th</sup> January**

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award relief to any ratepayer where it would be reasonable to do so having regard to the interest of the council's council taxpayers. Relief can be backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, though the draft policy includes a local restriction allowing for backdating to be limited to the start of the previous rate year.

- 2.5 The condition requiring the award of relief to be in the interest of local taxpayers does not apply in the cases of charities and some not-for-profit organisations. In these cases, charities in receipt of 80% mandatory charitable relief can receive a further 20% discretionary relief, and not-for-profit organisations can receive relief of up to 100%. The policy sets out how we will determine application from charities and not-for-profit organisations.
- 2.6 Certain types of property situated within a rural settlement and with a rateable value below specific thresholds are entitled to rural rate relief, the properties eligible for rural rate relief are:
  - The only post office within a rural settlement
  - The only general store within a rural settlement
  - The only public house within a rural settlement
  - The only petrol filling station within a rural settlement
  - A rural food shop
- 2.7 Rural rate relief was limited to 50%, an additional discretionary 50% relief could then be awarded. The Non-Domestic Rating Act 2023 increased the mandatory relief to 100%.
- 2.8 The 'rural rate condition' allowed billing authorities a further discretion to grant relief to any business within a rural settlement provided that the rateable value of the property occupied was less than £16,500, that the use of the property was of a benefit to the local community, and it was in the interest of taxpayers for relief to be provided.
- 2.9 The rural rate condition was removed by the Localism Act 2011; the act gave the council greater powers to award discretionary rate relief and the council's policy retains the discretion to award relief to businesses within rural settlements, in line with the original rural condition.
- 2.10 To enable rural rate relief to be determined the council is required to compile and maintain a rural settlement list. The list identifies rural settlements that are situated within designated rural areas and have a population of less than 3,000. The rural settlement list is included at appendix a of the proposed policy.

### **Cabinet 2026**

**7<sup>th</sup> January**

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- 2.11 When awarding discretionary rate relief, the council must follow guidance set by Government. Government has used this requirement to make temporary government funded schemes of discretionary relief. The policy sets out that where such schemes are made the council will implement them in accordance with the published guidance.
- 2.12 The revised policy aims to modernise the framework for awarding relief, improve flexibility and ensure alignment with current legislation and the council's priorities. The key changes are:

#### **Principles based approach**

The revised policy moves away from the rigid criteria and fixed percentages to a flexible approach guided by the principles.

- Community benefit,
- Strategic alignment
- Financial need
- Sustainability.

#### **Clear alignment to council priorities**

Organisations must demonstrate how their activities support council priorities and deliver measurable local benefits.

Applicants are encouraged to develop and show plans for financial independence and outline how they can operate without ongoing rate relief.

#### **Compliance with current legislation**

References within the policy have been updated to incorporate the UK Subsidy Control Act.

#### **Hardship and Rural Relief**

Clarification added that hardship is not limited to financial hardship.

Requirements for applicants to evidence viability and community benefits when seeking relief.

### **3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

- 3.1 The council awards discretionary relief for each rate year separately and notifies ratepayers of the awards of relief. Existing awards will end

### **Cabinet 2026**

**7<sup>th</sup> January**

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on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026, and, on approval of the policy, ratepayers will be contacted to advice that their relief will end and the requirement for a new application to be made.

- 3.2 All new applications will be determined in accordance with the approved policy.
- 3.3 There are forty-seven properties receiving a 20% top-up discretionary relief, and ten not-for-profit organisations receiving a discretionary relief of between 1% and 100%. These organisations will be required to make a fresh application for relief from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.

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

- 4.1 The costs of discretionary rate relief are usually shared between central government and major precepting authorities. 50% of the costs of relief are met by central government, 40% by the district council, 9% by county council and 1% by fire and rescue authority.
- 4.2 The costs of Government funded discretionary relief are met in full through section 31 funding.
- 4.3 The changes to the policy retain general limits on backdating of relief for reliefs where the costs are in part met locally and allow full backdating of relief where funding will be provided by central government. The changes to the policy will have limited financial impact.

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

- 5.1 The power to grant discretionary relief is contained within section 47 of The Local Government Finance Act 1988.
- 5.2 The council should not adopt a blanket policy that allows discretionary relief to be refused without full consideration and the proposed policy allows each application to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

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

##### **Local Government Reorganisation**

- 6.1 The discretionary relief policy will be reviewed every year to ensure that it remains fair and effective. While the current proposal does not take account of local government reorganisation, future reviews should aim to align discretionary relief polices across any reorganised billing authorities. These reviews should also include transitional

### **Cabinet 2026**

**7<sup>th</sup> January**

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arrangements for organisations that might lose some or all the relief they currently receive so that changes are introduced gradually and fairly.

#### **Relevant Council Priority**

- 6.2 The strategic purposes are included in the council's corporate plan and this guides the council's approach to budget making, ensuring we focus on the issues that are most important to the borough and our communities.
- 6.3 Awards of discretionary relief will be reflect the council's priorities at the time of award or review.

#### **Climate Change Implications**

- 6.3 Climate change implications will be considered when applications for relief are determined.

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

- 6.4 None

### **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 No Specific risk identified.

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

Appendix A – Discretionary Rate Relief Policy.

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## Bromsgrove District Council Discretionary Rate Relief Policy and Guidance

### 1. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out Bromsgrove District Council's approach to awarding Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR). It applies to all non-domestic ratepayers who may be eligible for discretionary relief and outlines the criteria, process and governance for awarding such relief.

The council aims to:

- Support organisations that contribute to the social, economic, and environmental wellbeing of Bromsgrove.
- Promote fairness, transparency, and consistency in decision making.
- Align relief awards with the strategic priorities of the council and available budgets.

### 2. Legislative Framework

The award of Discretionary Rate Relief governed by a range of statutory provisions that define both mandatory and discretionary powers. The following legislative references form the basis of this policy and guide the Council's approach to assessing and granting relief:

**Schedule 4ZA of the Local Government Finance Act 1988:** This schedule outlines the conditions under which mandatory relief is granted for occupied hereditaments. It sets out that premises used wholly or mainly for charitable purposes, or by community amateur sports clubs will be entitled to relief of 80%.

**Schedule 4ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1988:** This schedule sets out the mandatory relief for unoccupied hereditaments and allows for full relief for property that was last used for charitable purposes or by a CASC.

**Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988:** This section provides the discretionary power for billing authorities to award rate relief to a charity or CASC that already receives mandatory rate relief or to award relief to certain not for profit organisations. The Localism Act 2011 expanded this power to allow relief to any ratepayer provided it is reasonable and in the interests of local council taxpayers.

**Section 44A of the Local Government Finance Act 1988:** Section 44A allows for relief on partly occupied premises. If part of a property is temporarily unoccupied the council may request the Valuation Office Agency to apportion the rateable value between the occupied and unoccupied areas, enabling relief on the unoccupied portion.

**Section 49 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988:** Section 49 enables councils to award relief where a ratepayer is experiencing hardship providing it is in the interests of local council taxpayers for relief to be given.

**Subsidy Control Act 2022:** The Subsidy Control Act 2022 replaced EU State Aid rules and requires public authorities to ensure that any financial assistance (including rate relief) complies with UK subsidy control principles.

### 3. Principles for Awarding Discretionary Relief

When awarding discretionary rate relief, the council will apply general principles and consider relief where:

- The organisation delivers a clear local community benefit.
- The award of relief supports the council's priorities.
- The financial impact is proportionate and justified.
- The organisation demonstrates financial need and transparency.
- The business provides a clear plan and evidence as to how it will become self-reliant.
- The award complies with subsidy control rules.

### 4. Explanation of Key Principles

The principles are intended to ensure that relief is awarded fairly and responsibly:

**Clear local community benefit:** Services, activities or support directly improves the wellbeing or provision of services to residents of Bromsgrove. Examples include:

- Supporting vulnerable residents
- Promoting health, education or inclusion
- Enhancing local culture or recreation.

The benefit should be clear and definite; it should be inclusive; and locally focussed.

**Supporting council priorities:** The award of relief should align with the council's strategic goals.

**Financial impact is proportionate and justified:** Relief should match the organisation's need and the scale of benefit. A charity with limited income and high community impact may justify a 100% relief, whereas a charity with significant reserves, or with a low impact may only justify a partial award.

**Financial need and transparency:** Applicants must show limited income or reserves and a requirement on relief to develop or maintain services. There must be clear and open financial reporting to help to ensure that relief is awarded to organisations that genuinely need support.

**Plan for self-reliance:** Organisations should not rely indefinitely on relief and should outline steps to reduce dependency on relief e.g. through providing a business or sustainability plan; outlining income generation strategies; or setting out an

explanation of the steps toward financial independence. This encourages long-term sustainability and responsible use of relief.

**Compliance with subsidy control:** Relief should meet requirements of Subsidy Control Act including MFA thresholds and reporting requirements.

## 5. Discretionary Relief Exclusions

Relief will not generally be provided where:

**The ratepayer is a national organisation or regional organisation:** Large international, national or regional organisations will not automatically receive discretionary relief unless exceptional local benefit is demonstrated. The policy prioritises local organisations that directly provide services to Bromsgrove residents.

**Relevant unrestricted reserves or income:** If an organisation has adequate financial resources, especially unrestricted reserves, it is expected to pay its business rates without assistance. Bromsgrove's awards of discretionary relief are intended for organisations that genuinely need financial assistance to continue delivering local services.

**Relief will distort competition or provide an advantage:** Relief will not usually be awarded where the application of relief will distort competition or provide an advantage to charitable or non-profit organisations over ordinary ratepayers. While charitable and non-profit organisations often provide valuable community services some may also engage in commercial activities such as operating cafes, gyms or the provision of event spaces that compete directly with local businesses.

**Duplication of services:** Where the ratepayer would duplicate existing services and no additional local need has been identified relief may be withheld.

## 6. Hardship Relief

In cases of hardship and where it would be reasonable to do so having regard to the interest of the council taxpayers the council may grant either partial or full hardship relief under section 49 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

Hardship relief will be the exception rather than the rule. The council will consider hardship relief where:

- The business is facing exceptional short-term hardship that threatens its ability to continue trading.
- The business provides a significant benefit to the local community through the provision of essential services, local employment or social value.
- The award of relief represents a fair and proportionate use of funds.
- There is evidence of the future viability of the business and a clear plan for business recovery.

Hardship is not strictly limited to financial hardship and that of itself will not be a deciding factor. Where the business has the ability to pay their liability at the time, or

in future through deferment of payment then hardship relief will not usually be considered.

## 7. Discretionary Relief for Rural Settlements

Under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, Bromsgrove District Council has the power to grant discretionary rate relief to premises within rural settlements. Although the statutory "rural condition" was removed in 2012 councils retain full discretion to support rural businesses where it is reasonable and in the interests of local council taxpayers.

### Eligibility Criteria

We will continue to consider discretionary rate relief for rural businesses where:

- The property is situated within a designated rural settlement as defined by the council's rural settlement list
- The business demonstrates a clear community benefit such as:
  - Providing essential goods or services
  - Supporting local employment
- The rateable value of the property is £16,500 or less (local policy threshold)
- The applicant demonstrates financial need and transparency
- The financial impact is proportionate and justified
- The award complies with subsidy control requirements

The discretionary relief aims to retain the discretionary rural relief provisions that existed prior to the 2012 changes and to support businesses that sustain vital services in rural communities.

## 8. Localism Act Relief

Under Section 47 LGFA 1988 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011), the Council may grant discretionary relief to any ratepayer where it is reasonable and in the interests of council taxpayers. This power allows flexibility to support local economic development, regeneration, and community benefit beyond traditional charitable and non-profit categories. Applications will be considered where:

- The business contributes to local employment or regeneration.
- The award supports strategic objectives.
- The financial impact is proportionate and justified.

Relief under this section will normally be time-limited and subject to annual review.

## 9. Government Funded Discretionary Relief

From time to time, the Government introduces temporary relief schemes (e.g. Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief, Supporting Small Business Relief, and Discretionary Transitional Relief). These schemes are delivered using the expanded section 47 powers inserted by the Localism Act.

The Government publishes full guidance on the administration of temporary relief schemes and the council has a general requirement to consider Government guidance before awarding any discretionary relief. To enable delivery of the relief in-line with national policy objectives the council will administer Government funded schemes in accordance with the published guidance.

## **10. Relief for Part-Occupied Properties**

If part of a property is empty for a short time, the council can ask the Valuation Office Agency to split the rateable value between the occupied and unoccupied parts. This means the business only pays rates on the part it is using.

We will consider relief where:

- The empty part will be used again soon.
- The occupation pattern is temporary and unavoidable, for example phased occupation of premises, or damage to property from fire or flood.
- The part occupation is not the result of normal maintenance, refurbishment, seasonal shutdowns or reduction in capacity due to normal business risks.

## **11. Applications and Appeals**

Applications for relief must be made in writing and be signed by the ratepayer, or an appropriately authorised representative of the applicant. Applications may be made electronically, or a form supplied by the council. The council will set out the evidence required to support an application and this may include:

- Audited accounts and certified financial statements
- Evidence of community benefit
- Supporting documents required for specific relief types, e.g. business plan demonstrating future income streams for the organisation.

Incomplete applications, or applications that do not provide sufficient supporting information will not be considered.

Applications will be assessed against this policy and decisions will be notified in writing stating the amount of relief, duration and any conditions relating to the award of relief.

Applicants may request a review within 28 days of the decision and reviews will be completed by an officer not involved in the original decision.

If the original decision is upheld, then the applicant will be informed in writing and advised of the final internal appeal to the Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services, who will consider the appeal in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder.

There will be no further internal appeal process, however, ultimately the ratepayer may appeal through Judicial Review.

Ratepayers must inform the council immediately of any change in circumstances that may affect their eligibility for relief, examples include:

- Changes in the use of the property.
- Significant increases in income or reserves.
- Closure or relocation of the business.

## 12. Backdating Relief

Application for discretionary relief will normally be backdated to the start of the current rate year or the date the ratepayer became liable, whichever is later.

Backdating to earlier years may be allowed if:

- The application is made and decided within six months of the end of the relevant rate year; or
- The property is added to the rating list for the first time and the application is made within three months of that date.

Government funded relief can also be backdated provided funding is still available under the relevant government scheme.

## 13. Delegation

The council's scheme of delegation allows for the Revenue Services Manager, and Assistant Financial Support Manager to determine awards of:

- Mandatory relief
- Discretionary rate relief for charities, community amateur sports clubs, and charity shops.
- Discretionary rate relief for non-profit making organisations
- Discretionary rural rate relief
- Relief for part-occupied premises
- Hardship relief
- Government funded discretionary rate relief

Individual awards of discretionary rate relief made using the expanded powers under the Localism Act 2011 are delegated to the Head of Finance and Customer Services in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder and Leader of the Council.

## 14. Subsidy Control

Any discretionary relief awarded under this policy constitutes a subsidy within the meaning of the UK Subsidy Control Act 2022. The council must ensure that all awards comply with the statutory principles and obligations.

A subsidy exists where all four conditions apply:

1. **Public resources** – assistance is provided from public funds by a public authority.

# Agenda Item 13c

2. **Economic advantage** – the assistance confers an economic advantage on one or more enterprise.
3. **Specificity** – The assistance is selective and not generally available to all enterprises.
4. **Effect on competition or investment** – The assistance can affect competition or investment.

Discretionary rate relief will normally fall under the Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) threshold which allows an economic actor to receive up to £315,000 over a rolling three-year period.

Applicants must declare any subsidies received from other public authorities to ensure compliance.

Relief will not be granted where it would cause the recipient to exceed the MFA threshold or breach other subsidy control requirements.

Subsidies exceeding £100,000 must be uploaded to the UK subsidy database.

## Appendix A – Rural Settlement List

The areas below have been designated as rural settlement

Parish	Settlement
Clent	Adams Hill
Belbroughton and Fairfield	Belbroughton
Beoley	Beoley
Lickey & Blackwell	Blackwell
Bournheath	Bournheath
Unparished	Burcot
Clent	Clent
Cofton Hackett	Cofton Hackett
Dodford with Grafton	Dodford
Belbroughton	Fairfield
Alvechurch	Hopwood
Clent	Holy Cross
Clent	Lower Clent
Wythall	Major's Green
Hunnington	Romsley
Alvechurch	Rowney Green
Stoke Prior	Stoke Prior

### **Cabinet 2026**

**7<sup>th</sup> January**

#### **Council Tax - Empty Homes Discounts and Premiums 2026/27**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor S Nock
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Debra Goodall Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services
Report Author	Revenue Services Manager <a href="mailto:david.riley{@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk}">david.riley{@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk}</a> 01527 548 418
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No
Relevant Council Priority	
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:-**

- i) the determinations set out in Appendix A be adopted with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.
- ii) The Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services be authorised to consider, on a case-by-case basis, a reduction to the long-term empty premium under Section 13A(1)(C) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- iii) the council retains the existing discounts for unoccupied and furnished homes, as set out in Appendix A and does not implement additional council tax premiums for unoccupied and substantially furnished homes.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 From the introduction of council tax in 1993 until March 2004 unoccupied homes in England were eligible for a council tax discount of 50%. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004 the Local Government Act 2003 gave councils in England the power to decide locally the level of discount for unoccupied homes.
- 2.2 These powers were expanded by later legislation including the Local Government Finance Act 2012, The Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 and The Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023. The expanded powers provided greater discretion to councils and allowed additional council

### Cabinet 2026

7<sup>th</sup> January

tax, in the form of premiums, to be added to long-term empty and unoccupied furnished homes.

- 2.3 The powers are discretionary, and billing authorities decide whether to remove the standard 50% discount, and whether to apply premiums.
- 2.4 Bromsgrove District Council has used the discretionary powers, and the current levels of discount are:

**Second Homes:** There is statutory definition for second homes, in simple terms they are furnished dwellings which are not occupied as a person's main residence. The council can remove the discount and charge 100% of the council tax. There are two classes of second home, those with a planning restriction that prevents occupancy for part of the year, and those without a planning restriction. This distinction allows different levels of discount to be applied to holiday homes and normal homes. The council has removed the discount for both types of dwelling and charges the full 100% council tax.

**Empty Homes:** Empty homes are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished dwellings. When removing setting the level of discount for empty homes we can apply the same level of discount to all empty homes, or we can set different levels of discount based on a description of the dwelling. The council applies a graduated discount for empty homes. Homes that are empty for 30 days or less received a 100% discount, homes empty for more than 30 days are charged the full council tax.

The council also applies a 100% discount to empty local authority housing which will be used for housing purposes.

**Long-Term Empty Homes:** When a home has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 12 months or more the council may apply additional council tax, referred to as a premium. The level of premium can increase the longer the home is empty. We apply the maximum level of long-term empty premium.

**Second Home Premium:** From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 councils have been able to apply additional council tax for dwellings that are substantially furnished and are no one's sole or main residence. The council does not currently apply premiums to second homes.

- 2.5 Some types of homes are excepted from changes to discount or the application of premiums, and these homes include caravan pitches and boat moorings; homes that would be the main residence of a member

### **Cabinet 2026**

**7<sup>th</sup> January**

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of the armed forces; and homes that are on the market for sale or let. Full details of the excepted classes are included in Appendix B.

- 2.6 The council reviews discounts and premiums annually. When considering whether to apply premiums we are required to consider guidance issued by Government. The guidance sets out that Government expects councils to use the premiums to encourage owners to bring empty homes back into use, and not to penalise owners who are genuinely trying to sell or let their property. Guidance asks councils to carefully consider whether to charge a premium and to assess possible impacts. Examples of factors to consider are:
  - The numbers and proportion of long-term empty dwellings and/or second homes in the local area
  - Circumstances which may affect whether the dwelling can be used as a main residence.
  - Impact on local economies and the tourism industry.
  - The impact of large numbers of empty homes, or a non-permanent second home owning cohort, on the provision and availability of local services.
  - Other measures that the council could take to bring homes back into use.
- 2.7 The Government guidance expresses the view that a council's determination can include local exceptions to the premium. Local exceptions could be used to extend the national so that at a local level additional time is given for a house to be sold before premiums apply or to create local exceptions to exclude dwellings which due to restrictions on use, or specific locality factors may be difficult to sell or bring back into use e.g. retirement homes which have a restriction on who may be resident in the property. The council has not created any local exceptions to premium; but consideration could be given to introducing exceptions in future years.
- 2.8 Long-term empty home premiums were introduced within the Bromsgrove District from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and reviewed effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. The guidance in place at the time of both decisions was considered by Cabinet and Council and determinations were made to apply premiums.
- 2.9 There have been no significant changes to the factors considered when determinations were first made, or to those which the Government's revised 2024 guidance directs the council to consider. The premium continues to operate as an effective incentive for homeowners to bring

### **Cabinet 2026**

**7<sup>th</sup> January**

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long-term empty homes back into use, and there are no specific local housing market issues that prevent sales of long-term empty homes.

- 2.10 The use of section 13A(1)(C) powers to reduce council tax, including council tax premium, on a case-by-case basis provides protection to taxpayers in cases where the imposition of a premium would cause hardship, and the new national exceptions to premium applicable from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 provide appropriate protection from premium for houses for sale or let, and in other specific cases. There is sufficient protection for taxpayers provided by the 13A(1)(C) power and the national exceptions.
- 2.11 The impacts of premium will continue to be monitored and where specific local issues are identified then consideration will be given to the introduction of local premiums for future years.
- 2.12 The decision to apply premiums cannot be amended during the financial year; and any changes to exception can only be introduced from the beginning of a financial year. The second home premium requires one year's notice before it can be applied, and the decision to apply a premium would take effect from the start of a financial year. The earliest date that the council could introduce a second home premium is 1<sup>st</sup> April 2027.

### **3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

- 3.1 Long-term empty home premiums were introduced in Bromsgrove from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022. The administration of the levy has been successful and no requirements for local exceptions have been identified. If a broad class of dwelling – for example retirement complexes –become eligible for premium because of specific restrictions on sale then we could consider a local exception; significant numbers of such dwellings are not being identified, and any individual issues can be considered under section 13A(1)(C) discretionary reductions.
- 3.2 The introduction of national exceptions to premium from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 has provided protection for taxpayers whose homes are on the market for sale, or where the dwelling is part of the estate of person who has died. The national exception classes delay the implementation of premium and have reduced the need to consider any local exceptions.
- 3.3 The council has the option to implement premiums for unoccupied and substantially furnished dwellings (second homes). Government guidance set out that premiums should be considered where there is evidence that the number of second homes is detrimental to the local area. There is no evidence that second homes are impacting the

### **Cabinet 2026**

**7<sup>th</sup> January**

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provision of local services within the district and there is no operational objective to recommending the introduction of second home premium.

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

- 4.1 Additional council tax income from premiums is shared between the precepting authorities and Bromsgrove retains approximately 12% of the additional council tax.
- 4.2 For the 2025/26 tax year the additional council tax levied on long-term empty homes is estimated to be £476,000, with Bromsgrove retaining £57,000.
- 4.3 There are approximately 124 unoccupied and furnished homes within the Bromsgrove district. The imposition of a second home premium, applied to these homes, would lead to an additional council tax premium of £300,000 and Bromsgrove Council would retain £36,000 in additional council tax from second home premium. The actual level of premium would likely be reduced due to the application of exceptions to premium and changes in behaviour, for example the intermittent removal of furniture and refurbishing of homes can change the classification of the dwelling and prevent consistent application of premiums.

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

- 5.1 The legislative framework for amendment to discounts and imposition of empty home premiums is set out in Sections 11A to 11D of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, and The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) Regulations 2003.
- 5.2 The council is required by sections 11B(1D) and 11C(4) of the LGFA '92 to have regard to any guidance issued by the secretary of state before deciding to apply a premium.
- 5.3 Guidance was considered when premiums were adopted from April 2022 and reviewed effective from April 2024. Consideration of the guidance has been included within sections 2.6 to 2.12 of this report

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

##### **Local Government Reorganisation**

- 6.1 Second home premiums require one year's notice before coming into effect and the earliest date from which they council apply would be 1<sup>st</sup>

### **Cabinet 2026**

**7<sup>th</sup> January**

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April 2027. Local Government reorganisation could lead to the abolition of Bromsgrove Council and replacement with a new unitary authority on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2028.

6.2 Reorganisation may mean that Bromsgrove Council would levy the second home premium for a period of one tax year, which reduces any benefits available to the council from the introduction of premium.

#### **Relevant Council Priority**

6.2 The council's financial stability priority is supported by the appropriate use of the council's discretionary powers to amend discounts and apply premiums.

#### **Climate Change Implications**

6.3 None

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

6.4 None

### **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

7.1 The table below identifies specific risks and mitigations in relation to the administration of tax liability for unoccupied homes. The table is not exhaustive and provides information on the main identified risks.

Risks	Mitigation
Taxpayers subject to premiums may be dissatisfied with the decision of the authority.	Clear communications to be issued with Council Tax demand notices setting out the reasons for the changes. Establish links with internal Housing Strategy team to help to publicise methods by which empty homes can be brought back into use
Manipulation of council tax system to avoid empty home premium	Homeowners may provide false information to evade the application of the empty home premium. Briefings to teams will include information on steps that should be taken to validate changes to liability on long-term empty homes.

**Cabinet**  
**2026**

**7<sup>th</sup> January**

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

Appendix A – Council Tax Discounts, and Premiums Determination

Appendix B – Classes Excepted from premiums

Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government (2024)

Guidance on the implementation of the council tax premiums on long-term empty and second homes.

Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/long-term-empty-homes-and-second-homes-council-tax-premiums-and-exceptions/guidance-on-the-implementation-of-the-council-tax-premiums-on-long-term-empty-homes-and-second-homes>

### **Cabinet 2026**

**7<sup>th</sup> January**

#### **Appendix A – Council Tax Determinations**

##### **1. Discounts under section 11A(4) and 11(A)(4A) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992**

Effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 the level of Council Tax discount for each class of dwellings (as defined by *The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings (England) Regulations 2003* as amended), or where applicable description of dwellings within that class shall be:

<b>Class</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Discount</b>
A	Furnished homes which are no one's sole or main residence and where a planning restriction prevents occupancy.	0%
B	Furnished homes which are no one's sole or main residence and where occupancy is not restricted by a planning condition	0%
C	Dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a continuous period of less than 31 days.	100%
C	Dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a continuous period of 31 days or more	0%
C	Dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished and i) The owner is a local housing authority; and ii) When next in use the dwelling will be occupied under the Housing Act 1985	100%
D	Dwellings requiring or undergoing major repair works to render them habitable as defined within the prescribed classes of dwellings regulations	100%

*Owner is defined by Section 6(5) and 6(6) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.*

*Any period of occupation not exceeding 6 weeks shall be disregarded when considering Class C and D.*

**Cabinet**  
**2026**

**7<sup>th</sup> January**

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### **2. Long-Term Empty Dwelling Premiums Under Section 11B(1)**

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 for all dwellings except those excepted from premium by the Prescribed Classes of Dwellings regulations, the discount under section 11(2)(a) shall not apply and the following premiums will be charged:

Period Unoccupied and Unfurnished	Premium Applied
Less than 5 years	100% premium (total charge 200%)
5 years or more, but less than 10 years	200% premium (total charge 300%)
10 years or more	300% premium (total charge 400%)

### Cabinet 2026

7<sup>th</sup> January

#### Appendix B – Discount and Premium Exception Classes

<b>Class</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Exception</b>
E	Dwelling which is or would be someone's sole or main residence if they were not residing in job-related armed forces accommodation.	Long-term empty and second home premiums.
F	Annexes forming part of or being treated as part of the main dwelling.	Long-term empty and second home premiums.
G	Dwellings which are being actively marked for sale – time limited to 12 months.	Long-term empty and second home premiums.
H	Dwellings which are being actively marketed for let – time limited to 12 months.	Long-term empty and second home premiums.
I	Unoccupied dwellings which fell within the exempt class F (left empty by a deceased person) and where probate has been granted. Time limited to 12 months from probate.	Long-term empty and second home premiums.
J	Dwellings where the liable person is resident in a job-related dwelling provided by their employer, or for the liable person is a job-related dwelling.	Second home premiums and adjustment to discount for unoccupied furnished homes
K	Caravan pitches occupied by a caravan, or boat moorings occupied by a boat.	Second home premiums and adjustment to discount for unoccupied furnished homes
L	Seasonal homes where year-round occupation is prohibited.	Second home premiums.
M	Vacant homes which require or are undergoing major repair works to render them habitable, or vacant homes undergoing a structural alteration.	Long-term empty homes premium.

### Cabinet

7<sup>th</sup> January 2026

#### Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor S Nock
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Debra Goodall Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services
Report Author	Revenue Services Manager david.riley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk 01527 548 418
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No
Relevant Council Priority	
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:-

- i) The council tax reduction scheme is retained for 2026-27 tax year, subject to uprating of income bands by 3.8% in-line with increases to national benefits as set out in the table at appendix a.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The council is required under section 13A(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (LGFA '92) to make a council tax reduction (CTR) scheme. The scheme must specify the reductions in council tax available to individuals in financial need, or to defined classes of people considered to be in financial need.
- 2.2 Each tax year, the council must review its CTR scheme and decide whether to revise or replace it. If revisions or replacement are proposed, the council is required to carry out formal consultation before adopting a new scheme.
- 2.3 On 1st April 2021 the council introduced an income-banded scheme for working age applicants. The rationale was to future proof the scheme, reduce administrative burdens and align more closely with universal credit.
- 2.4 Since 2022 the council has amended the scheme to:

### Cabinet

7<sup>th</sup> January 2026

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- adjust support levels in line with available funding
- revise income bands and tapers to reflect inflation; and
- to simplify elements of the scheme to aid administration.

2.5 The current scheme includes a provision to uprate income bands by an inflation factor determined by the council, typically aligned with increases in national welfare benefits.

2.6 Benefit rates for 2027 are set to increase by 3.8% It is recommended that the income bands be raised by the same percentage. Any uprated amount that is not a whole pound will be rounded up to the next whole pound.

### **3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

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

### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Adjusting income bands will affect the level of Council Tax Reduction (CTR) provided to claimants and may increase the overall cost of the scheme.

4.2 Uprating income bands is intended to protect claimants from inflation and ensure that increases in Universal Credit or wages for not remove eligibility for CTR. This adjustment is essential to maintain support for residents in financial need.

### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Under paragraph 5 of Schedule 1A to the LGFA '92, the council must consider annually whether to revise or replace its CTR scheme. Any revision or replacement requires formal consultation, which must include:

- Consultation with major precepting authorities
- Publication of a draft scheme; and
- Consultation with persons likely to have an interest in the scheme.

5.2 If a revised scheme reduces or removes a reduction, it must include appropriate transitional provisions. The current scheme allows for uprating of income bands by inflation without consultation. However, any changes that reduce income bands or discount percentages would

### Cabinet

7<sup>th</sup> January 2026

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constitute a revision and require full consultation and approval by full council.

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

##### **Local Government Reorganisation**

6.1 No immediate implications. However, the new authority will need to adopt its own CTR scheme and consider transitional arrangements for current claimants.

##### **Relevant Council Priority**

6.2 The administration of the CTR scheme support the council's Economic Development and Housing priorities by assisting vulnerable residents.

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

6.3 None.

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

6.4 A full equalities impact assessment was completed when the income-banded scheme was introduced. Uprating income bands has no further equalities implications.

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

7.1 No new identified risks.

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

Appendix A – Income Band Table

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Cabinet**

**7<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

**Appendix A – Income Bands 2026/27**

Discount Band	Discount	Single Person	Single Person with One Child	Single Person with two or more children	Couple	Couple with one child	Couple with two or more children
Income Band 1	100.00%	£0 to £130	£0 to £203	£0 to £277	£0 to £186	£0 to £260	£0 to £333
Income Band 2	80.00%	£130.01 to £159	£203.01 to £243	£277.01 to £316	£186.01 to £214	£260.01 to £299	£333.01 to £372
Income Band 3	55.00%	£159.01 to £186	£243.01 to £283	£316.01 to £355	£214.01 to £243	£299.01 to £338	£372.01 to £413
Income Band 4	30.00%	£186.01 to £214	£283.01 to £321	£355.01 to £395	£243.01 to £270	£338.01 to £378	£413.01 to £451
Nil Award	0.00%	Over £214	Over £321	Over £395	Over £270	Over £378	Over £451

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### CABINET 7 January 2026

#### Medium Term Financial Plan 2026-27 to 2028-29 Fees and Charges and Consultation Outcomes including Worcestershire Regulatory Services Budget Recommendations

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Simon Nock Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Debra Goodall
Report Author	Debra Goodall – Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services <a href="mailto:debra.goodall@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk">debra.goodall@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk</a> Contact telephone:
Wards Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	All
Non-Key Decision	
	An appendix to this report contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended
	If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.

#### **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report updates Members on the 2026/27 budget process and the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to 2028/29, incorporating consultation feedback and fees and charges proposals. Final approval will follow the Local Government Settlement in February 2026.
- 1.2 The Council will set its budget in two stages this year. The initial stage was published in the Autumn. This second report is considered in January 2026 following the Chancellors Autumn Statement and once the Provisional Settlement is known. Final budget approval will be sought at the end of February 2026 following the Final Budget Settlement.
- 1.3 This report also sets out the outcome of the Consultation being carried out on the Budget 2026/27.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Cabinet is asked to Resolve that:**

- The updated budget position for the Council is noted in respect of the 2026/27 annual budget and for the Medium-Term Financial Plan up to 2028/29.

# Agenda Item 13f

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

- The current projected gap to be closed in terms of the Medium-Term Financial Plan.
- A further report in February 2026 will include additional information from the Local Government Settlement to give a final financial position for the Council.

### **Cabinet is asked to Recommend to Council that:**

- Members take account of any feedback from the Consultation on the Budget 2026/27.
- Members endorse the further work / proposals being undertaken on the Medium-Term Financial Plan to produce a balanced position for 2026/27 – 2028/29 including the initial set of savings proposals and pressures including fees and charges increases.
- The recommended increases relating to Worcestershire Regulatory Services of £25k for 2027/28 and £59k for 2028/29 are approved as outlined in paragraph 3.23 of the report.
- The updated three-year capital programme 2026/27 – 2028/29 along with available funding for further capital projects to be undertaken going forward and the proposed projects for funding along with revenue implications.

### **3. KEY ISSUES**

#### **Introduction**

3.1 The Council sets a 3-year Medium Term Financial Plan every year, with the final Council Tax Resolution being approved by Council in February.

On 19 November 2025, a report was presented to Cabinet for consultation. That budget proposed a number of base assumptions around inflation and grants.

The Chancellors Autumn Budget on 26 November 2025 confirmed a number of key points as set out later in this report.

The report that was presented to Council on 3 December 2025, confirmed the following;

- The starting point from the 2026/27 MTFP is deficit positions of £1.03m and £399k respectively as the starting points for 2026/27 and 2027/28.
- The cost-of-living crisis continues.
- Inflation still not reducing towards the Government target of 2%. The latest level is 3.8% as at October 2025.
- Due to the business rates reset, no growth is assumed in the base funding for business rates.

# Agenda Item 13f

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

As such, it is prudent to split the budget process into two stages.

- Having an initial stage which seeks to close as much of the deficit as possible using information known at the end of December 2025.
- Having a second stage after the Christmas break, for which approval will be sought in February 2026, which takes account of the Local Government Settlement whose final detail will not be known until early January 2026.

3.2 This report will set out:

- The starting position for the 2026/27 MTFP
- The national picture including expected settlement dates
- Council Priorities
- Strategic Approach
- The Council's Base Assumptions including Inflation and Grants
- Fees and Charges update
- Impact on Reserves and Balances
- Capital Programme update.

### The Starting Position for the 2026/27 MTFP

3.3 The Council set a three-year MTFP 2025/26 to 2027/28 in February 2025. The position reflected a balanced budget for 2025/26 with a deficit position of £1.03m in 2026/27 and deficit of £399k in 2027/28.

### **The national picture including Settlement Dates**

3.4 The Chancellors Statement was announced on 26 November 2025 which was later than in previous years. This is a multi-year settlement covering 2026/27 to 2028/29.

The settlement is underpinned by the outcomes of the **Fair Funding Review**, which aims to redistribute resources more equitably based on assessed local need. Key elements of the new funding framework include:

- **Revised Needs-Based Formula:** Incorporating updated demographic and service demand data across areas such as adult social care, children's services, housing, and other local services.
- **Resource Adjustment Mechanism:** Reflecting councils' ability to raise income locally, particularly through council tax and retained business rates.
- **Area Cost Adjustments:** Accounting for regional variations in service delivery costs.
- **Grant Consolidation:** Multiple small grants will be merged into larger ring-fenced grants to reduce complexity.
  - New Homes Bonus will be scrapped and returned to the core settlement.

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

- Homelessness Prevention Grants, Rough Sleeping Initiatives and Temporary Accommodation Support will be merged into a single housing related grant.
- Discretionary Housing Payments and Household Support Fund – proposed for consolidation.

3.5 Changes will be phased in over three years to avoid sudden financial shocks. Some councils may see reductions in Core Spending Power where historic allocations exceed assessed need, but transitional funding will help manage the impact.

In addition to the changes relating to the Fairer Funding Review and Grant Consolidation above, the following should be noted:

- High-value Property Surcharge from April 2028. Properties worth £2m+ will pay an annual surcharge but revenue will be directed to central government.
- Council Tax Flexibility District Councils retain ability to increase council tax within referendum limits, but no new blanket powers announced.
- No new additional core funding uplift beyond inflation for district councils.
- £18m for the upgrade and refurbishment of 200 children's play areas across England was announced, with priority given to the most deprived communities. This investment is part of the Government's "Pride in Place" programme.
- Rent Convergence will be reintroduced for social housing rent from 2026. This will allow councils and housing associations to increase rents for properties below 'formula rent' by an additional weekly amount, on top of the standard CPI + 1% annual increase.

3.6 In parallel, the **English Devolution White Paper**, published in late 2024, sets out a roadmap for local government reorganisation. This includes the creation of **Strategic Authorities** and a move towards **universal coverage** of devolved governance structures across England. Councils in two-tier areas and smaller unitaries are expected to engage in reorganisation discussions, with elections for new governance models anticipated in May 2027.

3.7 The provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was announced on 17 December 2025. This set out the detail of funding allocations for individual councils including details of the new funding distribution model (Fairer Funding Review 2.0).

3.8 Overall, District Councils Core Spending Power (CSP) within the Provisional Settlement was lower than other Councils, coming out at an estimated 3.4% increase in CSP over the next three years. Bromsgrove District Council was impacted significantly and is one of several Councils that falls into protection of 95% of income rather than 100% of income in 2026/27.

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

3.9 Overall, compared to 2025/26, the Council had a net reduction in CSP of £0.1m in 2026/27, £0.5m in 2027/28 and £0.9m in 2028/29. However, the 2028/29 position was offset by £0.5m additional funding floor transitional funding, resulting in a net reduction of £0.4m. Any transitional safeguards are temporary and Bromsgrove may face further reductions as protections taper.

3.10 The remaining timetable for the 2026/27 process is as follows:

- 5 January 2026 – Stage 1 MTFP Budget and Fees and Charges to Finance and Budget Working Group
- 6 January 2026 – Stage 1 MTFP Budget and Fees and Charges to Overview and Scrutiny
- **7 January 2026 – Stage 1 MTFP Budget and Fees and Charges to Cabinet**
- **7 January 2026 – Consultation outcome to Cabinet**
- 28 January 2026 – Stage 2 MTFP approved by Cabinet Working Group
- w/c 2 Feb or 9 Feb 2026 – Local Government Finance Settlement
- 6 Feb 2026 – Updated Stage 2 MTFP to Finance and Budget Working Group
- **11 Feb 2026 – Updated Stage 2 MTFP approved by Cabinet.**
- **Final Budget and Council Tax Resolution approved by Council - TBC**

### **Council Strategic Priorities**

3.11 The Council Plan provides an overarching vision for the District with the four priorities as follows:

- Economic Development
- Housing
- Environment
- Infrastructure

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



3.12 The council's vision, priorities and themes are connected using a 'green' thread:

## **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

“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.”

### 3.13 Opportunities and Challenges highlighted in the plan include:

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.

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.

### 3.14 The council cannot deliver all priorities on its own. In some cases, it can support, influence, or work collaboratively with other partner agencies to persuade them to take a particular course of action/undertake a particular project. Considerable support and input from partner organisations will be needed for priorities to be successfully achieved.

## **Strategic Approach**

### 3.15 The Council has come into the 2026/27 budget process with a number of issues it needs to manage. These include:

- A deficit balance of £1.03m in 2026/27 budget as a start-point position.
- An expected reduction in funding from the Fairer Funding Review of around £2m phased in over three years.
- The requirement to fund the 2025/26 pay award even though it was over the 3% assumed in the Council's budget at a cost of £28k.
- Increases in Council Tax are limited at 2.99% or £5, which is lower than the present rates of inflation.

### 3.16 The Council is facing a number of significant pressures. However, the issues the Council is facing are not unique, all Councils are facing them. Stage 2 of the budget will adjust for any funding that the Government will provide and also look at other options to close any deficit should the Government

## **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

settlement not bridge any resultant gap. Initiatives that will be assessed in Stage 2 (as more time is required to analyse these individual options) include:

- Ensuring Grants are maximised.
- Ensuring Agency work reflects the income provided for its delivery.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the Council's largest Contracts.
- Reviewing recharging mechanisms between the Councils for appropriateness.
- Reviewing services for any potential savings opportunities without impacting on service delivery.
- Review of vacant posts.
- Maximising service income opportunities.
- Further capitalisation of salaries.
- Review of specific reserves to see whether these are still required.
- Rationalisation of support services as we embrace technology.
- Positioning our services ready for Local Government Reorganisation

### **The Council's Base Assumptions including Inflation and Grants**

3.17 It is important to set out the base assumptions under which the budget is constructed. These assumptions can then be stress tested for various scenarios to test the robustness of the overall budget.

3.18 Tax Base and Corporate Financing underlying assumptions are as follows:

- Council Tax – Figures assume the full 2.99% allowable increase in year one (increase of c£300k) and 1.99% over the following years (c£200k) of the 3-year MTFP and an increase of 35 properties at £13k.
- Business Rates Increases – business rates have previously assumed growth in the base based on the combined Herefordshire pooling figures. Due to the Fairer Funding review no increase / growth has been built in as no pooling will take place and no growth is expected above the 10% levy applying to all councils for 100% of baseline need growth. MHCLG have confirmed that any business rates growth realised after the reset will be retained for the duration of the future reset period and will not be considered in calculating transitional protections. Work is ongoing to assess the impact of this, and conversations will be ongoing with MHCLG.
- Government Grants and New Homes Bonus – Government Grants and New Homes Bonus will be merged into larger ring-fenced grants to reduce complexity.
- The Council has received the following revenue grant funding which is not part of the above ring-fenced grants:
  - Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging of £1,766,905.34. EPR has to be spent on waste related services in line with the PACKUK guidance. The Council is currently reviewing how it can maximise use of the grant to relieve pressure on core budgets.

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

3.19 The Council has £14.5m of Levelling Up Funding to be spent which is match funded by £1.6m of Council funding. There is also a contribution of £2.425m which has been requested from monies held in trust by Birmingham City Council on behalf of the former Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP). The Council has £0.9m of UK Shared Prosperity Fund to spend by April 2026. This is both revenue and capital in nature.

3.20 There are significant pressures mounting on the Council. At Quarter 2 the overall revenue financial position is a £336k overspend position with savings of £1.213m of which £319k is yet to be delivered.

3.21 The total savings target for the year is £1.213m. This is made up of £250k of Departmental Efficiencies from the 2025/26 MTFP, £511k staff turnover rate (based on 5% of staffing budgets) and an ongoing savings budget pressure of £400k.

3.22 There has been an announcement that Councillors will be able to rejoin the Local Government Pension Scheme at some point in the future. It has not been made clear when this will come into effect, but it has been confirmed that this will be an additional pressure on Councils going forward and no additional funding will be provided. Councils are currently lobbying the Government on this. It has currently been assumed that this will impact from 1 April 2026.

3.23 Corporate changes included in Stage 1 2026/27 are outlined below.

- The additional 0.2% Pay Award increase from 2025/26 which was above the assumed increase in the budget of 3%, amounting to £28k going forward.
- The Pay Award is assumed at 2% at a cost of £389k.
- A further 1% Cost of Living of £195k.
- Cost of Councillors rejoining the LGPS at a cost of £54k.
- No blanket allowance has been made for inflation on contracts. This is being reviewed individually under Directorate pressures.
- The Capital Programme at the moment is unchanged. Work is ongoing to prioritise the Departmental and Member bids received earlier in the year.
- The report presented to Cabinet on 19 November 2025, estimated a reduction in support grant and retained business rates from the Fairer Funding Review of £620k with assumed dampening over three years. The outcome from the Provisional Local Government Settlement was a reduction is £2m phased in over the three years as follows; 2026/27 £500k; 2027/28 £900k; 2028/29 £2m.
- A contingency of £250k has been built into the MTFP for the next two years to support preparatory work in relation to Local Government Re-organisation.

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

- There are also additional costs for proposed increases for Members allowances of £12k and increases for Members National Insurance of £12k.
- Additional costs relating to Worcestershire Regulatory Services are £25k for 2027/28 and £59k for 2028/29. These pressures are the salary related increases and inflation increases from partner authorities applied to Worcestershire Regulatory Services budget. WRS are unable to cover these increases by generating more income. Due to the reduction in the forward pension rate for WRS Service a pressure for 2026/27 is not required. These pressures were approved at WRS Board on 20 November 2025. A further paper on the Food Standards Agency will be presented to the February 2026 Cabinet meeting.
- Extended Producer Responsibility Grant of £1.733m has been received by the Council in 2026/27. It is assumed the grant continues on an ongoing basis.
- This has been offset by savings of £230k from an ongoing utilities inflation budget no longer required and £250k of Corporate Budget savings.
- Further savings have been generated from a change in forward funding rates for pensions of £358k in 2026/27 rising to £380k in 2028/29.
- Grant funding of £441k in 2026/27, £508k in 2027/28 and £571k in 2028/29 has been received for Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse.
- Work is ongoing to review the Service pressures and savings that have been submitted.

### **Fees and Charges update**

3.24 Fees and Charges were originally assumed at an increase of 2% reflecting an increase of £100k. A more robust forecast has been reflected in the figures now that fees and charges have been provided by each Service and this will result in further income of £152k in 2026/27, with £153k from 2027/28 onwards.

### **Impact on Reserves**

3.25 The Council currently holds General Fund Balances of £13.38m and Earmarked Reserves of £11.27m. The forecast position for reserves is attached as per **Appendix B**.

3.26 The level of reserves and balances presently held suggest that although significantly more is held than the suggested 5% recommended level for the General Fund, that any calls on this amount for a significant emergency situation could substantially reduce levels.

3.27 The strategic priority must be to safeguard financial sustainability in the medium and long term by continuing to set balanced budgets. Achieving this

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

may require targeted investment, efficiency measures, and funding for redundancy costs, whilst protecting reserves. These actions will support the Council in adapting its operating model to remain viable and resilient, particularly in the context of a potential future North Worcestershire Unitary arrangement.

3.28 A full review of reserves is currently being undertaken.

### **Capital Programme**

3.29 The Council over the past number of years has not spent its capital programme allocations in year. As in previous years, a review has been carried out of

- All schemes that have not started
- Schemes that have started
- To assess deliverability and links to strategic priorities.

3.30 Carry forward positions as set out in the Q2 Monitoring Report are £14.891m for the Council. Significant amounts of this relate to Grant Funded schemes.

3.31 **Appendix A** sets out the current capital programme for 2026/27 – 2029/30.

3.32 Work is currently being undertaken to assess the capital submissions for 2026/27 and 2027/28 against prioritisation criteria, including strategic fit, deliverability, and impact on statutory and other services against available funding.

### **Financial Overview**

3.33 We are currently budgeting in a time of extreme uncertainty and challenge. Key risks include delivery of savings, workforce capacity, and governance compliance. Mitigation will involve savings tracking, governance checkpoints, and contingency planning for workforce changes. Key issues include:

- Resolution of the approved budget position.
- Financial stabilisation position
- Decisions made to address financial pressures and implementing new projects that are not informed by robust data and evidence.
- Adequate workforce planning.

3.34 The core risks of implementation

- Any savings proposal must pass the S151 Officers tests for robustness and delivery. If items are not deliverable or amounts not obtainable, they cannot be included.
- Implementation of savings to time and budget – there must be full implementation processes documented to ensure implementation within timescales.

# Agenda Item 13f

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

- Non delivery is a high risk - Savings tracking and ensuring implementation happens based on the plans and the assumptions will become part of the Council's core processes.
- Loss of key personnel will be crucial in a number of proposals and mitigation plans will need to be drawn up.
- Capacity to deliver plans.
- Change of corporate direction/priorities
- As per the explanatory note issued by Government on 24 July 2025, Government intends to issue planned directions under section 24 of the 2007 Act. These are anticipated to require written consent from successor councils for land disposals worth more than £100,000, entering of contracts of more than £1,000,000 for capital and entering of contracts of more than £100,000 for non-capital (whole life costs). While these directions have not yet been issued, Government have been clear that they expect councillors and statutory officers to be mindful of their responsibilities.

- 3.35 Work will continue in validating all assumptions, robustly challenging estimates and ensuring the delivery of existing saving plans. Updates continue to be provided as additional information is received and also included in Stage 2 of the MTFS and balanced budget setting process.
- 3.36 The budget consultation exercise began on 20 November, closing at 9am 2 January 2026. The results will be fed into the January 2026 Cabinet meeting to aid decision making on the budget setting process.

### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 These are included in Section 3 of the report.

### **5. Legal Implications**

- 5.1 A number of statutes governing the provision of services covered by this report contain express powers or duties to charge for services. Where an express power to charge does not exist, the Council has the power under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 to charge where the activity is incidental or conducive to or calculated to facilitate the Council's statutory function.

### **6. Strategic Purpose Implications**

#### **Relevant Strategic Purpose**

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

#### **Climate Change Implications**

# Agenda Item 13f

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

### 7. **Other Implications**

#### **Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

7.1 The implementation of the revised fees and charges will be notified in advance to the customer to ensure that all users are aware of the new charges and any concessions available to them.

7.2 Initial Equalities Impact Assessments will be taken where required.

7.3 In order to ensure that the survey is as accessible as possible, the survey will be delivered both using the SmartSurvey online platform and through a paper version. The Policy Team will respond to any requests for support. We will also promote the survey through our community partners to ensure the greatest reach and directly contact Sixth Forms and youth groups to encourage young people to engage with the survey.

#### **Operational Implications**

7.4 Monitoring will be undertaken to ensure that income targets are achieved.

### 8. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

8.1 There is a risk that if fees and charges are increased that income levels will not be achieved, and the cost of services will increase. This is mitigated by managers reviewing their fees and charges annually. The Council must deliver a balanced budget and items impacting on distinct groups require and equalities review to be undertaken.

### 9. **APPENDICES**

Appendix A – Initial Capital Programme – 2026/27 – 2030/31

Appendix B – Reserves 2024/25 – 2028/29

Appendix C – Fees and Charges (non-commercial)

Appendix D – Fees and Charges (commercial) - **Exempt**

Appendix E – Consultation responses

## **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

<http://svmodgov2019/documents/g4569/Printed%20minutes%2020th-Nov-2025%202016.30%20Worcestershire%20Regulatory%20Services%20Board.pdf?T=1>

### **AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

**Appendix A – Capital Programme**

Cap Proj	Description	Department	Funding detail	Carried Fwd to 24/5	2024/25 Budget £	2024/25 Total £	Spend 24/5	2025/26				2026/27				2027/28				2028/29				2029/30				Council				3rd Party			
								Total £	2026/27 Total £	2027/28 Total £	2028/29 Total £	2029/30 Total £	24/25 £	25/26 £	26/27 £	27/28 £	28/29 £	29/30 £	24/25 £	25/26 £	26/27 £	27/28 £	28/29 £	29/30 £	24/25 £	25/26 £	26/27 £	27/28 £	28/29 £	29/30 £					
	Large Schemes Levelling Up Fund Fund							0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	- Government Funded	Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	Grant Funding					0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
200072	Market Hall (LUF)	Planning, Regeneration & Leisure	Levelling Up Fund	12,337,104		6,109,104	1,921,799	9,228,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
200073	Ef - Fire Station	Planning, Regeneration & Leisure	Levelling Up Fund	1,209,674		1,209,674	77,300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	- Council Funded		Borrowing					0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	UK Shared Prosperity Fund							0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	- Capital Element	Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	Grant Funding					0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	- Revenue Element	Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	Grant Funding					0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	- Remainder (to be allocated)	Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	Grant Funding	627,001	1,784,215	2,411,216		918,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	Schemes Agreed to Continue							0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
200006	Burcot Lane	Financial & Customer Services	Public works loan board and grant homes england	0	0	0	-915,914	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
200007	CCTV	Community & Housing	Capital Receipts/Borrowi	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
200008	Funding for DFGs	Community & Housing	Grant income WDC	13,432	1,130,316	1,143,748	567,033	1,285,847	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
200009	Home Repairs Assistance	Community & Housing	Long Term Debtors	115,602	50,000	165,602		50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000		
200010	Energy Efficiency Installation	Community & Housing	Capital Receipts/Borrowi	102,190	110,000	212,190		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
200016	New Finance Enterprise system	Financial & Customer Services	Capital Receipts	20,000	20,000			20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000		
200019	Fleet Replacemnet new line			0	2,180,000	2,180,000	13,860	1,265,000	820,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
200022	Replacement Parking machines and Upkeep of Sites	Environmental Services	Capital Receipts/Borrowi	12,745	125,000	137,745	85,003	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000			
200030	Wheelie Bin Purchase	Environmental Services	Capital Receipts/Borrowi	0	60,000	60,000	88,272	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000			

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

Cap Proj	Description	Department	Funding detail	Cared Fwd to 24/5	2024/25 Budget £	2024/25 Total £	Spend 24/5	2025/26 Total £	2026/27 Total £	2027/28 Total £	2028/29 Total £	2029/30 Total £	Council 24/25 £	Council 25/26 £	Council 26/27 £	Council 27/28 £	Council 28/29 £	Council 29/30 £	3rd Party 24/25 £	3rd Party 25/26 £	3rd Party 26/27 £	3rd Party 27/28 £	3rd Party 28/29 £	3rd Party 29/30 £
New 200045	Buildings Greener Homes	Legal and Property Community & Housing GF Services	Borrowing Grants & Contributions	100,000 0	100,000 0	200,000 0	780 6,125	100,000 0	100,000 0	100,000 0	100,000 0	100,000 0	100,000 0	100,000 0	100,000 0	100,000 0	100,000 0	100,000 0	100,000 0	100,000 0	100,000 0	100,000 0	100,000 0	100,000 0
200026	Rubery Redevelopment works					0	821	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
200082	New Digital Service	Community & Housing GF Services	Borrowing	33,668	0	33,668		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
200033	Bus Shelters	Environmental Services	Borrowing	18,000	18,000	36,000	19,180	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	
200069	Cisco Network Update	Business transformation & Organisational Development	Borrowing	0	0	0		34,877	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	
200070	Server Replacement Est (Exact known Q2 2022)	Business transformation & Organisational Development	Borrowing	-7,951	177,500	169,549		18,500	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	
200071	Laptop Refresh	Business transformation & Organisational Development	Borrowing	13,458	150,000	163,458	18,152	5,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	
200075	Sanders Park	Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	S106	0	0	0	8,550	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Fleet Replacement Costs			9,400	0	9,400		15,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Wheely Bin Increases			85,000	0	85,000		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Wild Flower Machinery			62,000	0	62,000		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2000105	Initial Play Audit Requirements			87,000	364,000	451,000		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Updated Play Audit Requirements (Dec 24)							166,242	159,841	226,459	67,531	155,749												
	Movement of ICT Cyber Capital Works Forward			50,000	-50,000	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	New ongoing Cyber security budget					25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
	Play Area, POS and Sport improvements at Lickey End Recreation Ground in accordance with the S106 Agreement	Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	S106 190137FUL	22,626	37,956	60,582	30,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

Cap Proj	Description	Department	Funding detail	Carried Fwd to 24/5	2024/25 Budget £	2024/25 Total £	Spend 24/5	2025/26 Total £	2026/27 Total £	2027/28 Total £	2028/29 Total £	2029/30 Total £	Council 24/25 £	Council 25/26 £	Council 26/27 £	Council 27/28 £	Council 28/29 £	Council 29/30 £	3rd Party 24/25 £	3rd Party 25/26 £	3rd Party 26/27 £	3rd Party 27/28 £	3rd Party 28/29 £	3rd Party 29/30 £	
								2025/26 Total £	2026/27 Total £	2027/28 Total £	2028/29 Total £	2029/30 Total £	Council 24/25 £	Council 25/26 £	Council 26/27 £	Council 27/28 £	Council 28/29 £	Council 29/30 £	3rd Party 24/25 £	3rd Party 25/26 £	3rd Party 26/27 £	3rd Party 27/28 £	3rd Party 28/29 £	3rd Party 29/30 £	
	Food Waste Collection - fund for Vechgicles and containers							902,511	0	0	0	0	0												
	Replacement Wheeled Bins							2,200,000	0	0	0	0	0											902,511	
	Parksde - Requirement for a firewall							9,750	0	0	0	0	0												
	Laptops for new Starters							25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	0													
	Salary Capitalisation							750,000	750,000	750,000	750,000	750,000													
	ANPR Machines in 3 Car							100,000						750,000	750,000	750,000	750,000	750,000	750,000						
	Artrix - Landlord Obligations				20,000	20,000	17,587		20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000			
	<b>Total</b>				14,890,949	6,376,987	15,039,936	1,993,474	17,451,727	3,222,841	2,469,459	2,310,531	2,373,749	3,424,500	8,117,369	2,422,841	1,669,459	1,510,531	1,573,749	10,271,265	9,334,358	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

**Appendix B – Reserves Position**

	Balance at 31/3/24	2024/25	2024/25	Balance at 31/3/25	2025/26	2025/26	Balance at 31/3/26	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	Balance at 31/3/27	2027/28	2027/28	Balance at 31/3/28	2028/29	2028/29	Balance at 31/3/29	
<b>General Fund Reserve</b>	<b>13,521</b>			<b>139</b>	<b>13,660</b>		<b>13,660</b>		<b>1,350</b>		<b>15,010</b>			<b>15,010</b>			<b>15,010</b>	
<b>General Fund Earmarked Reserves:</b>																		
Building Control Other	7				7			7			7			7			7	
Building Control Partnerships	82				82			82			82			82			82	
Community Services	196				196			196			196			196			196	
Economic Regeneration	1,398				1,398			1,398	(600)		798			798			798	
Election Services	85				85			85			85			85			85	
Environmental Services	27				27			27			27			27			27	
Financial Services	4,635	103			4,738	(334)		4,404	(750)	(181)	3,473	(200)		3,273			3,273	
Housing Schemes	864				864			864			864			864			864	
ICT/Systems	197				197			197			197			197			197	
Leisure/Community Safety	115				115			115			115			115			115	
Local Neighbourhood Partnerships	16				16			16			16			16			16	
Other	67				67			67			67			67			67	
Planning & Regeneration	463	137			600			600		(100)	500	(100)		400			400	
Regulatory Services (Partner Share)	85				85			85			85			85			85	
Shared Services (Severance Costs)	311				311			311			311			311			311	
V Ward Budget Initiative	0				0	234	(78)	156		(78)	78			78			78	
Council Tax Hardship Fund	79				79			79			79			79			79	
Matrix Holding Trust	17	12			29			29			29			29			29	
Property Services Review					0	100	(100)	0			0			0			0	
EPR Funding Allocation					0	1,004		1,004			1,004			1,004			1,004	
Covid-19 (General Covid Grant)					766			766			766			766			766	
Financial Resilience Reserve - LGR									1,370			1,370			1,370			1,370
Covid-19 (Collection Fund)	1,604				1,604	(234)		1,370	(1,370)	0	(359)	10,149	0	(300)	9,849	0	0	9,849
<b>Total General Fund</b>	<b>11,014</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11,266</b>	<b>1,104</b>	<b>(512)</b>	<b>11,858</b>	<b>(1,350)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(359)</b>	<b>10,149</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(300)</b>	<b>9,849</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9,849</b>	

# BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet 7 January 2026

## Appendix C – Fees and Charges (non-commercial)

<u>Chief Executive</u>					
Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.					
Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26 £	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27 £
<u>Venue hire additional services</u>					
Feature on official social media & website	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
Place your promotional material in reception	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
Print your materials	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
<u>Full design &amp; print services</u>					
Luxury roll-up banner - Flat rate	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
- any additional	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
Vinyl banner	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
- any additional	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
Posters (10)	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
- any additional	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
Leaflets (500)	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
- any additional	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
Printing up to A0 size, with a range of finishing options on papers and cards. Tiny labels to large banners, binding and laminating, booklets, copies, reports, posters, duplicate pads, brochures, leaflets, flyers, & more. Integrated in-house Design team services also available.	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
Your bespoke requirements	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

**Chief Executive**

Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.

Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26 £	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27 £
<p><b>PLUS</b></p> <p>Boost your event with our simple options:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promotional services -<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Reach the local community with our official social media</li><li>○ Show up on Google with our special website options</li><li>○ Promote your event in our busy public spaces</li></ul></li><li>• Design services -<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Stand out</li><li>○ Bespoke for you, from our professional design team</li></ul></li><li>• Printing services-<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ All your printing needs in one place</li><li>○ Signs, flyers, agendas, welcome banners, and more</li></ul></li></ul> <p>Packages available from as little as £30.</p> <p>To find out more contact 01527 881296 or <a href="mailto:venues@bromsgrove.gov.uk">venues@bromsgrove.gov.uk</a>. <a href="http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/venues">www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/venues</a></p> <p><b>Beautiful wedding stationery to suit your budget</b></p> <p>The personal touch for all your guests, with bespoke packages from £25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Choose beautiful invitations</li><li>• Add table plans, place settings, &amp; more</li><li>• Photo displays &amp; banners</li><li>• Signs</li><li>• Use your own designs, or our designers</li></ul> <p>To find out more just contact 01527 881296 or <a href="mailto:weddings@bromsgrove.gov.uk">weddings@bromsgrove.gov.uk</a>. <a href="http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/weddings">www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/weddings</a></p>					

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

<b>Bereavement Services</b>					
Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.					
Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26 £	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27 £
<b>CEMETERY</b> The following charges would be subject to 25% plus or minus in year adjustment facility delegated to Bereavement Services Manager or Head of Service to allow for supplier increases such as utilities or memorial suppliers etc					
<b>Interments in a grave</b>					
- children aged under 1 year	No Charge	N/A	No Charge	N/A	No Charge
- children aged under 1 year (non resident)	140.90	4%	146.50	2%	149.40
- children aged 1 year - 17 years	No Charge	N/A	No Charge	N/A	No Charge
- children aged 1 year - 17 years (non resident)	205.20	4%	817.40	2%	833.70
- persons aged 18 and over	786.00	4%	817.40	2%	833.70
<b>Interment in a bricked grave</b>					
<b>Interment of cremated remains</b>	260.80	4%	271.20	2%	276.60
Interment of Cremated Remains (under 17 years non residents only)	96.40	4%	100.30	2%	102.30
<b>Scattering cremated remains in grave</b>	110.00	4%	114.40	2%	116.70
<b>Exclusive rights of burial (75-year grants)</b>					
- adult grave space	1,981.10	4%	2,060.30	2%	2,101.50
- child grave space	360.90	4%	375.30	2%	382.80
- cremated remains plot	756.30	4%	786.60	2%	802.30
<b>Renewal of expired deed (single fee charged in all cases)</b>					
- Burial	564.80	4%	587.40	2%	599.10
- Cremated remains	221.20	4%	230.00	2%	234.60
- Ashes grave purchased in reserve	905.90	4%	942.10	2%	960.90
- Full grave purchased in reserve	2,433.40	4%	2,530.70	2%	2,581.30
- Disinterment of Remains - Cremated Remains	688.40	4%	715.90	2%	730.20
- Wooden cremated remains casket	119.90	4%	124.70	2%	127.20

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

<b><u>Bereavement Services</u></b>						
Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.						
Service Category		Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26 £	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27 £
<b>Motifs</b>		145.90	4%	151.70	2%	<b>154.70</b>
<b>Memorials</b>						
Bench with 10 year lease & top rail engraving (max 40 letters) - £800.00		1,398.30	4%	1,454.20	2%	<b>1,483.30</b>
Bench with 10 year lease & standard silver plaque (max 60 letters) - £760.00		1,330.00	4%	1,383.20	2%	<b>1,410.90</b>
Bench replacement plaque - £110.00		192.30	4%	200.00	2%	<b>204.00</b>
-Assignment / Transfer of Exclusive Right of Burial		128.50	4%	133.60	2%	<b>136.30</b>
Exhumation Ground works		260.80	4%	271.20	2%	<b>276.60</b>
New Container		147.10	4%	153.00	2%	<b>156.10</b>
Officer time		266.90	4%	277.60	2%	<b>283.20</b>
Cremator usage		40.80	4%	42.40	2%	<b>43.20</b>
<b>P</b> <b>Certified copy of entry</b>		28.40	4%	29.50	2%	<b>30.10</b>
<b>2</b> <b>Bird bath memorial</b>						
<b>3</b> <b>5 Year Lease</b>						
- size 1 (small)		262.00	4%	272.50	2%	<b>278.00</b>
- size 2		291.70	4%	303.40	2%	<b>309.50</b>
- size 3		321.30	4%	334.20	2%	<b>340.90</b>
- size 4		349.80	4%	363.80	2%	<b>371.10</b>
- size 5 (large)		379.50	4%	394.70	2%	<b>402.60</b>
<b>4</b> <b>10 Year Lease</b>						
- size 1 (small)		407.80	4%	424.10	2%	<b>432.60</b>
- size 2		437.50	4%	455.00	2%	<b>464.10</b>
- size 3		467.20	4%	485.90	2%	<b>495.60</b>
- size 4		495.60	4%	515.40	2%	<b>525.70</b>
- size 5 (large)		522.80	4%	543.70	2%	<b>554.60</b>
<b>5</b> <b>20 Year Lease</b>						
- size 1 (small)		553.70	4%	575.80	2%	<b>587.30</b>
- size 2		583.30	4%	606.60	2%	<b>618.70</b>
- size 3		613.00	4%	637.50	2%	<b>650.30</b>
- size 4		641.50	4%	667.20	2%	<b>680.50</b>
- size 5 (large)		671.10	4%	697.90	2%	<b>711.90</b>

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

<b><u>Bereavement Services</u></b>						
Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.						
	Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26 £	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27 £
<b>Motif</b>		145.90	4%	151.70	2%	154.70
<b>Memorial Vaults</b>						
Double unit - 20 year lease in first interment and casket		1,636.30	4%	1,701.80	2%	1,735.80
2nd interment of remains including casket		224.90	4%	233.90	2%	238.60
Inscribed tablet of upto 80 letters		182.90	4%	190.20	2%	194.00
Additional letters (per letter)		5.30	4%	5.50	2%	5.60
Standard Motif		131.00	4%	136.20	2%	138.90
Photo of 1 person		157.00	4%	163.30	2%	166.60
Photo of 2 people		248.50	4%	258.40	2%	263.60
Photo of 3 people		320.10	4%	332.90	2%	339.60
Other items are available but quoted individually		Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
<b>Memorial Posts</b>						
Memorial plaque - 3 year lease		313.9	4%	326.50	2%	333.00
Motif		59.30	4%	61.70	2%	62.90
Replacement Plaque		157.00	4%	163.30	2%	166.60
<b>Private Memorial Garden</b>						
Including memorial - 20 year lease		2,093.50	4%	2,177.20	2%	2,220.70
<b>Additional Inscription on Plaque</b>		181.70	4%	189.00	2%	192.80

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

<b><u>Environmental Services</u></b>						
Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest £1						
Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26 £	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27 £	
<b>REFUSE COLLECTION</b>						
<b>Bulky Household Waste</b>						
<b>Proposed Charges</b>						
The Bulky Service operates based on a standard unit price based on size and weight, with collection from the boundary of the property with the public highway. 1 Unit is equivalent to an under unit appliance, and this measure is multiplied up for multiple or larger items and items that cannot be lifted by two people will need to be quoted separately.						
Bulky collection - base price for a single unit*	Full Cost Recovery	12.00	12.00	8%	13.00	
*Depending on size, items maybe charged for as a multiple of units						
Items that are classed by WCC as non domestic waste	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	
Items not on the boundary of the property	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	
<b>Litter and Dog Bins (Yearly Charge)</b>						
High Usage Site First Bin	1000.5	4%	1,040.50	2%	1,061.00	
High Usage Site Additional Bins (each)	412.00	4%	428.50	2%	437.00	
Medium Usage Site First Bin	500.20	4%	520.20	2%	531.00	
Medium Usage Site Additional Bins (each)	206.00	4%	214.20	2%	219.00	
Low Usage Site First Bin	247.20	4%	257.10	2%	262.00	
Low Usage Site Additional Bins (each)	105.90	4%	110.10	2%	112.00	
<b>Parish Lengthsman Work</b>						
Hourly Rate	18.50	4%	19.20	4%	20.00	
<b>High Hedge Complaints</b>						
High Hedge Complaints	735.50	4%	764.90	2%	780.00	
High Hedge Complaints - reduced for people on benefits	293.70	4%	305.40	2%	312.00	
<b>Investigation of Abandoned Vehicles on Private Land</b>						
Per Vehicle	70.60	4%	73.40	2%	75.00	
Mechanically Sweep Private Road / Car Park - Sweeper per Hour + disposal costs	58.90	4%	61.30	2%	63.00	

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

<b><u>Environmental Services</u></b>					
Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest £1					
Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26 £	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27 £
<b>Garden Waste Collection Service</b> 2026/27  2027/28  Garden waste set up fee - NEW charge	54.10	4%	56.30	7%	60.00 60.00 22.00
<b>Road Closures</b> New Charge - £80 per Road closure plus VAT	85.60	4%	89.00		60.00

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

<b>Regeneration Services</b>						
Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27	
	£		£		£	
<b>CAR PARKS</b>						
<b>Churchfields Multi-storey</b>						
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.00	0%	0.00	0%	0.00	
Not exceeding one hour	0.80	0%	0.80	0%	0.80	
Not exceeding two hours	1.60	0%	1.60	0%	1.60	
Not exceeding three hours	2.40	0%	2.40	0%	2.40	
All day	3.00	0%	3.00	0%	3.00	
<b>New Road</b>						
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.00	0%	0.00	0%	0.00	
Not exceeding one hour	1.00	0%	1.00	0%	1.00	
Not exceeding two hours	1.90	0%	1.90	0%	1.90	
Not exceeding three hours	2.90	0%	2.90	0%	2.90	
All day	6.00	0%	6.00	0%	6.00	
<b>North Bromsgrove</b>						
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.00	0%	0.00	0%	0.00	
Not exceeding one hour	1.00	0%	1.00	0%	1.00	
Not exceeding two hours	1.90	0%	1.90	0%	1.90	
Not exceeding three hours	2.90	0%	2.90	0%	2.90	
All day	6.00	0%	6.00	0%	6.00	
<b>Parkside</b>						
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.00	0%	0.00	0%	0.00	
Not exceeding one hour	1.00	0%	1.00	0%	1.00	
Not exceeding two hours	1.90	0%	1.90	0%	1.90	
Not exceeding three hours	2.90	0%	2.90	0%	2.90	
All day	6.00	0%	6.00	0%	6.00	
<b>School Drive</b>						
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.00	0%	0.00	0%	0.00	
Not exceeding one hour	1.00	0%	1.00	0%	1.00	
Not exceeding two hours	1.90	0%	1.90	0%	1.90	
Not exceeding three hours	2.90	0%	2.90	0%	2.90	
All day	6.00	0%	6.00	0%	6.00	
<b>Stourbridge Road</b>						
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.00	0%	0.00	0%	0.00	
Not exceeding one hour	1.00	0%	1.00	0%	1.00	
Not exceeding two hours	1.90	0%	1.90	0%	1.90	
Not exceeding three hours	2.90	0%	2.90	0%	2.90	
All day	6.00	0%	6.00	0%	6.00	

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

<b>Regeneration Services</b>					
Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.					
Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26 £	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27 £
<b>Recreation Road South</b>					
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.00	0%	0.00	0%	0.00
Not exceeding one hour	1.00	0%	1.00	0%	1.00
Not exceeding two hours	2.00	0%	2.00	0%	2.00
Not exceeding three hours	3.00	0%	3.00	0%	3.00
Not exceeding four hours	4.00	0%	4.00	0%	4.00
Not exceeding five hours	5.00	0%	5.00	0%	5.00
Not exceeding Six hours	8.00	0%	8.00	0%	8.00
Not exceeding Severn hours all day	10.60	0%	10.60	0%	10.60
	11.00	0%	11.00	0%	11.00
<b>Windsor Street</b>					
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.00	0%	0.00	0%	0.00
Not exceeding one hour	1.30	0%	1.30	0%	1.30
Not exceeding two hours	2.50	0%	2.50	0%	2.50
Not exceeding three hours	3.80	0%	3.80	0%	3.80
<b>St John Street</b>					
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.00	0%	0.00	0%	0.00
Not exceeding one hour	1.00	0%	1.00	0%	1.00
Not exceeding two hours	2.50	0%	2.50	0%	2.50
Not exceeding three hours	3.80	0%	3.80	0%	3.80
<b>Season Tickets (valid at long stay car parks only)</b>					
Annual	320.00	0%	320.00	0%	320.00
Quarterly	80.00	0%	80.00	0%	80.00
<b>Season Tickets (valid at Churchfields Road car park only)</b>					
Annual	215.00	0%	215.00	0%	215.00
Quarterly	53.75	0%	53.75	0%	53.75
<b>Parking Fines PCN's On Street</b>					
Certain Contraventions	70.00	N/A	70.00	N/A	70.00
If paid within fourteen days	35.00	N/A	35.00	N/A	35.00
Other contraventions	50.00	N/A	50.00	N/A	50.00
If paid within fourteen days	25.00	N/A	25.00	N/A	25.00
<i>These charges will increase if the charge remains unpaid after the 28 days given on the NTO (Notice to Owner)</i>					
<b>Parking Fines PCN's Off Street</b>					
Certain Contraventions	70.00	N/A	70.00	N/A	70.00
If paid within fourteen days	35.00	N/A	35.00	N/A	35.00
Other contraventions	50.00	N/A	50.00	N/A	50.00
If paid within fourteen days	25.00	N/A	25.00	N/A	25.00
<i>These charges will increase if the charge remains unpaid after the 28 days given on the NTO (Notice to Owner)</i>					
<b>Car Park charges apply everyday</b>					

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

**Financial and Customer Service**

Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.

SERVICE CATEGORY	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26 £	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27 £
<b>LOCAL TAX COLLECTION</b>					
<u>Council Tax</u>					
Summons Costs (includes Magistrates Court fee of 50p)	79.40	4%	82.60	0.0%	55.80
Liability Order					30.00
<u>NNDR</u>					
Summons Costs (Includes Magistrates Court fee of 50p)	114.80	4%	119.40	0.0%	81.00 43.00

# BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet 7 January 2026

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL LICENSING FEES AND CHARGES

	Actual Charge 24/25	Actual Charge 25/26	Proposed Charge 26/27
<b>TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE</b>			
Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence	£278.60	£289.70	<b>£298.00</b>
Private Hire Vehicle Licence	£258.40	£268.70	<b>£277.00</b>
Temporary Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence	£209.00	£217.40	<b>£224.00</b>
Temporary Private Hire Vehicle Licence	£193.80	£201.60	<b>£208.00</b>
Private Hire Operator Licence (5 year)	£1,262.80	£1,313.30	<b>£1,353.00</b>
Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Driver Licence (3 year)	£261.80	£272.30	<b>£280.00</b>
Knowledge Test	£25.90	£26.90	<b>£28.00</b>
Replacement vehicle licence plate	£25.90	£26.90	<b>£28.00</b>
Replacement driver's licence	£23.60	£24.50	<b>£25.00</b>
Transfer of ownership of a licensed vehicle	£42.70	£44.40	<b>£46.00</b>
Criminal Record (DBS) Check	£62.90	£65.40	<b>£67.00</b>
<b>ANIMAL ACTIVITY LICENCES</b>			
<i>Hiring out horses, breeding of dogs, providing or arranging the provision of boarding for cats or dogs and selling animals as pets</i>			
Application fee	£355.00	£365.70	<b>£377.00</b>
Licence fee (1 year)	£199.00	£205.00	<b>£211.00</b>
Licence fee (2 years)	£393.00	£404.80	<b>£417.00</b>
Licence fee (3 years)	£590.00	£607.70	<b>£626.00</b>
Application to vary a licence	£259.00	£266.80	<b>£275.00</b>
Veterinary fees (if applicable)			<b>Recovered at cost</b>
Local authority inspection (on request of licence holder)	£177.00	£182.30	<b>£187.00</b>

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# BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet 7 January 2026

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL LICENSING FEES AND CHARGES

	Actual Charge 24/25	Actual Charge 25/26	Proposed Charge 26/27
<b>ANIMAL ACTIVITY FRANCHISE</b>			
Application fee			£377.00
Application to vary a licence			£275.00
Inspection Fee (per hour)			£187.00
<b>Keeping or training animals for exhibition (only)</b>			
Application fee	£237.00	£244.10	£251.00
Licence fee (3 years)	£324.00	£333.70	£344.00
Application to vary a licence	£170.00	£175.10	£180.00
Veterinary fees (if applicable)			Recovered at cost
Local authority inspection (on request of licence holder)	£177.00	£182.30	£187.00
<b>Keeping of Primates</b>			
Application for grant of a licence (3 years)			£366.00
Application for renewal of a licence			£300.00
Application for variation of a licence			£267.00
Inspection fees			£182.00
Vet inspection fees			Recovered at cost
<b>ACUPUNCTURE, COSMETIC PIERCING, SEMI-PERMANENT SKIN COLOURING, TATTOOING, ELECTROLYSIS</b>			
Fee to register a premises	£152.80	£158.90	£164.00
Fee to register a practitioner	£100.00	£104.00	£107.00
Application to vary a licence			£74.00
<b>GAMBLING ACT 2005 (inc. SMALL LOTTERIES)</b>			
<b>Small society lotteries</b>			
Fee to register a small society lottery	£40.00	£40.00	£40.00
Small society lottery annual maintenance fee	£20.00	£20.00	£20.00
<b>Application for the grant of a premises licence</b>			
Betting (excluding tracks)	£1,978.50	£2,057.60	£2,119.00
Betting Tracks	£1,650.50	£1,716.50	£1,768.00
Bingo	£2,371.80	£2,466.70	£2,541.00
Adult Gaming Centres	£1,354.90	£1,409.10	£1,451.00
Family Entertainment Centres	£1,354.90	£1,409.10	£1,451.00

# BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet 7 January 2026

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL LICENSING FEES AND CHARGES

	Actual Charge 24/25	Actual Charge 25/26	Proposed Charge 26/27
<b>Premises licence annual fees</b>			
Betting (excluding tracks)	£407.90	£424.20	<b>£437.00</b>
Betting Tracks	£678.60	£705.70	<b>£727.00</b>
Bingo	£678.60	£705.70	<b>£727.00</b>
Adult Gaming Centres	£678.60	£705.70	<b>£727.00</b>
Family Entertainment Centres	£510.10	£530.50	<b>£546.00</b>
<b>Application to vary a premises licence</b>			
Betting (excluding tracks)	£1,017.90	£1,058.60	<b>£1,090.00</b>
Betting Tracks	£847.10	£881.00	<b>£907.00</b>
Bingo	£1,189.80	£1,237.40	<b>£1,275.00</b>
Adult Gaming Centres	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	<b>£1,000.00</b>
Family Entertainment Centres	£786.50	£818.00	<b>£843.00</b>
<b>Application to transfer a premises licence</b>			
Betting (excluding tracks)	£811.20	£843.60	<b>£869.00</b>
Betting Tracks	£643.80	£669.60	<b>£690.00</b>
Bingo	£812.30	£844.80	<b>£870.00</b>
Adult Gaming Centres	£811.20	£843.60	<b>£869.00</b>
Family Entertainment Centres	£643.80	£669.60	<b>£690.00</b>
<b>Application for a provisional statement</b>			
Betting (excluding tracks)	£1,978.50	£2,057.60	<b>£2,119.00</b>
Betting Tracks	£1,650.50	£1,716.50	<b>£1,768.00</b>
Bingo	£2,371.80	£2,466.70	<b>£2,541.00</b>
Adult Gaming Centres	£1,354.90	£1,409.10	<b>£1,451.00</b>
Family Entertainment Centres	£1,354.90	£1,409.10	<b>£1,451.00</b>
<b>Application for the grant of a premises licence (provisional statement holders)</b>			
Betting (excluding tracks)	£833.60	£866.90	<b>£893.00</b>
Betting Tracks	£833.60	£866.90	<b>£893.00</b>
Bingo	£837.10	£870.60	<b>£897.00</b>
Adult Gaming Centres	£837.10	£870.60	<b>£897.00</b>
Family Entertainment Centres	£696.60	£724.50	<b>£746.00</b>

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

<b>BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b> <b>LICENSING FEES AND CHARGES</b>			
	<b>Actual Charge 24/25</b>	<b>Actual Charge 25/26</b>	<b>Proposed Charge 26/27</b>
<b>Application for reinstatement of a premises licence</b>			
Betting (excluding tracks)	£790.90	£822.50	<b>£847.00</b>
Betting Tracks	£631.40	£656.70	<b>£676.00</b>
Bingo	£790.90	£822.50	<b>£847.00</b>
Adult Gaming Centres	£790.90	£822.50	<b>£847.00</b>
Family Entertainment Centres	£631.40	£656.70	<b>£676.00</b>
<b>Premises licence fees (miscellaneous)</b>			
Copy of a premises licence (all types)	£25.00	£25.00	<b>£25.00</b>
Notification of a change in respect of a premises licence (all types)	£50.00	£50.00	<b>£50.00</b>
<b>Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permits</b>			
Application for grant of a permit	£150.00	£150.00	<b>£150.00</b>
Application for variation of a permit	£100.00	£100.00	<b>£100.00</b>
Application for the transfer of a permit	£25.00	£25.00	<b>£25.00</b>
Annual permit fee	£50.00	£50.00	<b>£50.00</b>
Change of name shown on a permit	£25.00	£25.00	<b>£25.00</b>
Request for a copy of a permit	£15.00	£15.00	<b>£15.00</b>
<b>Licensed Premises Gaming Machines (Automatic Entitlement)</b>			
Fee to serve notification	£50.00	£50.00	<b>£50.00</b>
<b>Club Gaming Permits</b>			
Application for grant of a permit	£200.00	£200.00	<b>£200.00</b>
Application for grant of a permit (Club premises certificate holders)	£100.00	£100.00	<b>£100.00</b>
Application for variation of a permit	£100.00	£100.00	<b>£100.00</b>
Application for renewal of a permit	£200.00	£200.00	<b>£200.00</b>
Application for renewal of a permit (club premises certificate holders)	£100.00	£100.00	<b>£100.00</b>
Annual permit fee	£50.00	£50.00	<b>£50.00</b>
Request for a copy of a permit	£15.00	£15.00	<b>£15.00</b>
<b>Club Machine Permits</b>			
Application for grant of a permit	£200.00	£200.00	<b>£200.00</b>
Application for grant of a permit (Club premises certificate holders)	£100.00	£100.00	<b>£100.00</b>
Application for variation of a permit	£100.00	£100.00	<b>£100.00</b>
Application for renewal of a permit	£200.00	£200.00	<b>£200.00</b>
Application for renewal of a permit (club premises certificate holders)	£100.00	£100.00	<b>£100.00</b>
Annual permit fee	£50.00	£50.00	<b>£50.00</b>
Request for a copy of a permit	£15.00	£15.00	<b>£15.00</b>

# BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet 7 January 2026

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL LICENSING FEES AND CHARGES

	Actual Charge 24/25	Actual Charge 25/26	Proposed Charge 26/27
<b>Family Entertainment Centre Gaming Machine Permit</b>			
Application for grant of a permit	£300.00	£300.00	<b>£300.00</b>
Application for renewal of a permit	£300.00	£300.00	<b>£300.00</b>
Change of name shown on a permit	£25.00	£25.00	<b>£25.00</b>
Request for a copy of a permit	£15.00	£15.00	<b>£15.00</b>
<b>Prize Gaming Permits</b>			
Application for grant of a permit	£300.00	£300.00	<b>£300.00</b>
Application for renewal of a permit	£300.00	£300.00	<b>£300.00</b>
Change of name shown on a permit	£25.00	£25.00	<b>£25.00</b>
Request for a copy of a permit	£15.00	£15.00	<b>£15.00</b>
<b>Temporary Use Notices</b>			
Fee to serve a Temporary Use Notice	£307.10	£319.40	<b>£329.00</b>
Request for a copy of a Temporary Use Notice	£25.00	£25.00	<b>£25.00</b>
<b>STREET TRADING</b>			
Annual street trading consent - food - initial	£1,625.80	£1,690.80	<b>£1,742.00</b>
Annual street trading consent - food - renewal	£1,490.90	£1,550.50	<b>£1,597.00</b>
Annual street trading consent - non-food - initial	£1,356.10	£1,410.30	<b>£1,453.00</b>
Annual street trading consent - non-food - renewal	£1,220.10	£1,268.90	<b>£1,307.00</b>
Day licence			<b>£80.00</b>
Consecutive day fee			<b>£25.00</b>
<b>SCRAP METAL DEALERS LICENCES</b>			
Application for a new site licence	£311.00	£320.30	<b>£330.00</b>
Fee per additional site	£160.00	£164.80	<b>£170.00</b>
Application for renewal of a site licence	£257.00	£264.70	<b>£273.00</b>
Fee per additional site	£170.00	£175.10	<b>£180.00</b>
Application for a new collectors licence	£155.00	£159.70	<b>£165.00</b>
Application for renewal of a collectors licence	£102.00	£105.10	<b>£108.00</b>
Variation of a licence	£70.00	£72.10	<b>£74.00</b>
Request for a copy of a licence (if lost or stolen)	£27.00	£27.80	<b>£29.00</b>

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**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**LICENSING FEES AND CHARGES**

	Actual Charge 24/25	Actual Charge 25/26	Proposed Charge 26/27
<b>ZOO LICENCES</b>			
Application for grant or renewal of a licence	£267.50	£278.20	<b>£287.00</b>
Secretary of state inspector and veterinary fees	Recovered at cost	Recovered at cost	<b>Recovered at cost</b>
<b>DANGEROUS WILD ANIMALS (DWA)</b>			
Application for grant or renewal of a licence	£251.50	£261.60	<b>£269.00</b>
Inspector and Vet's fees (for every inspection)	Recovered at cost	Recovered at cost	<b>Recovered at cost</b>
<b>SEX ESTABLISHMENTS</b>			
Application for grant or renewal of a licence	£1,091.40	£1,135.10	<b>£1,169.00</b>
Application for transfer of licence	£535.00	£556.40	<b>£573.00</b>
Application for variation of licence	£1,091.40	£1,135.10	<b>£1,169.00</b>
<b>PAVEMENT LICENCES</b>			
Application for a new pavement licence - 2 years		£500.00	<b>£500.00</b>
Application for a renewal pavement licence - 2 years		£350.00	<b>£350.00</b>
<b>HYPNOTISM</b>			
Application for authorisation	£53.50	£55.60	<b>£57.00</b>
<b>An admin charge will be payable on receipt of refund request for any type of licence</b>			
<b>£30.00</b>			

# Agenda Item 13f

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT

### COUNCIL

### Cabinet 7 January 2026

#### LICENSING ACT 2003 - FEES SET BY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT - SAME FOR ALL DISTRICT COUNCILS

##### Temporary Event Notices

Fee to serve a Temporary Event Notice (TEN)	£21.00
Copy of a TEN (if lost or stolen)	£10.50

##### Personal licences

Application for the grant of a personal licence	£37.00
Fee for a replacement personal licence (if lost or stolen)	£10.50
Fee to notify a change of name or address on a personal licence	£10.50

##### Applications for new premises licences or club premises certificates

Applications for the grant of a premises licence or club premises certificate	
Band A (NDRV 0 - 4300)	£100.00
Band B (NDRV 4301 - 33000)	£190.00
Band C (NDRV 33001 - 87000)	£315.00
Band D (NDRV 87001 - 125000)	£450.00
Band E (NDRV 125001 +)	£635.00

Applications for the grant of a premises licence or club premises certificate (where the premises is used exclusively or primarily for the supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises)

Band A (NDRV 0 - 4300)	£100.00
Band B (NDRV 4301 - 33000)	£190.00
Band C (NDRV 33001 - 87000)	£315.00
Band D (NDRV 87001 - 125000)	£900.00
Band E (NDRV 125001 +)	£1,905.00

Additional fees for grant of a premises licences (for large venues with capacities over 5000)

5000 - 9999	£1,000.00
10000 - 14999	£2,000.00
15000 - 19999	£4,000.00
20000 - 29999	£8,000.00
30000 - 39999	£16,000.00
40000 - 49999	£24,000.00
50000 - 59999	£32,000.00
60000 - 69999	£40,000.00
70000 - 79999	£48,000.00
80000 - 89999	£56,000.00

##### Applications to vary premises licences and club premises certificates

Applications to vary a premises licence or club premises certificate	
Band A (NDRV 0 - 4300)	£100.00
Band B (NDRV 4301 - 33000)	£190.00
Band C (NDRV 33001 - 87000)	£315.00
Band D (NDRV 87001 - 125000)	£450.00
Band E (NDRV 125001 +)	£635.00

Applications to vary a premises licence (where the premises is used exclusively or primarily for the supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises)

Band A (NDRV 0 - 4300)	£100.00
Band B (NDRV 4301 - 33000)	£190.00
Band C (NDRV 33001 - 87000)	£315.00
Band D (NDRV 87001 - 125000)	£900.00
Band E (NDRV 125001 +)	£1,905.00

Application for a minor variation of a premises licence or club premises certificate

	£89.00
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##### Annual maintenance fees

Annual premises licence or club premises certificate fee	
Band A (NDRV 0 - 4300)	£70.00
Band B (NDRV 4301 - 33000)	£180.00
Band C (NDRV 33001 - 87000)	£295.00
Band D (NDRV 87001 - 125000)	£320.00
Band E (NDRV 125001 +)	£350.00

Annual premises licence (where the premises is used exclusively or primarily for the supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises)

Band A (NDRV 0 - 4300)	£70.00
Band B (NDRV 4301 - 33000)	£180.00
Band C (NDRV 33001 - 87000)	£295.00
Band D (NDRV 87001 - 125000)	£640.00
Band E (NDRV 125001 +)	£1,050.00

Additional annual fees premises licences (for large venues with capacities over 5000)

5000 - 9999	£500.00
10000 - 14999	£1,000.00
15000 - 19999	£2,000.00
20000 - 29999	£4,000.00
30000 - 39999	£8,000.00
40000 - 49999	£12,000.00
50000 - 59999	£16,000.00
60000 - 69999	£20,000.00
70000 - 79999	£24,000.00
80000 - 89999	£28,000.00

##### Other applications and notifications

Application to transfer a premises licence	£23.00
Application to vary a premises licence to nominate a premises supervisor	£23.00
Fee to change name or address of the holder of a premises licence	£10.50
Fee to change the name or address of a designated premises supervisor on a premises licence	£10.50
Fee for a replacement premises licence or club premises certificate (if lost or stolen)	£10.50
Fee to notify licensing authority of a property interest in a premises	£21.00
Notification of change or club name or alteration to club rules	£10.50
Notification of change of registered address of club	£10.50
Interim authority notice following death, incapacity or insolvency of licence holder	£23.00
Application for grant of a provisional statement	£315.00

# BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Cabinet 7 January 2026

<b>Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services</b>					
Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.					
Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27
<b>Development Management</b>					
Pre Application Fee					
<b>Residential Development/ Development Site Area/Proposed Gross Floor Area</b>					
Householder Development	128.29	4%	133.40	2%	136.10
1* Dwelling	275.42	4%	286.40	2%	292.10
2-4 Dwellings	411.95	4%	428.40	2%	437.00
5-9 Dwellings	823.90	4%	856.90	2%	874.00
10 - 49 Dwellings	1,647.80	4%	1,713.70	2%	1,748.00
50 - 99 Dwellings	3,020.18	4%	3,141.00	2%	3,203.80
100 - 199 Dwellings	4,119.50	4%	4,284.30	2%	4,370.00
200+ Dwellings	5,490.71	4%	5,710.30	4%	5,938.70
* includes one-for-one replacements					
<b>Non-residential development (floor space)</b>					
Floor area is measured externally					
Less than 500sqm	381.35	4%	396.60	2%	404.50
500 - 999sqm	687.37	4%	714.90	2%	729.20
1000 - 1999sqm	1,373.56	4%	1,428.50	2%	1,457.10
2000 - 4999sqm	2,744.76	4%	2,854.60	2%	2,911.70
5000 - 9999sqm	3,432.13	4%	3,569.40	2%	3,640.80
10,000sqm or greater	4,119.50	4%	4,284.30	2%	4,370.00
<b>Non-residential development (site area) where no building operations are proposed</b>					
Less than 0.5ha	413.13	4%	429.70	2%	438.30
0.5 - 0.99ha	823.90	4%	856.90	2%	874.00
1 - 1.25ha	1,373.56	4%	1,428.50	2%	1,457.10
1.26 - 2ha	2,744.76	4%	2,854.60	2%	2,911.70
2ha or greater	4,119.50	4%	4,284.30	4%	4,455.70
Variation/removal of conditions and engineering operations (flat fee)	254.23	4%	264.40	2%	269.70
Recovering Costs for seeking specialist advice in connection with Planning proposals	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
<b>Monitoring Fees to be applied to Planning Obligations</b>					
<b>Obligations where the Council is the recipient</b>					
All contributions (financial or non-monetary) - PER OBLIGATION	368.40	4%	383.10	2%	390.80
Pre-commencement trigger - PER OBLIGATION	128.29	4%	133.40	2%	136.10
Other Triggers (Phased Payments/Provision of Infrastructure) - PER TRIGGER POINT	190.67	4%	198.30	2%	202.30
Other obligations (eg. Occupation restrictions or removal of Permitted Development rights) - PER CLAUSE	153.01	4%	159.10	2%	162.30
<b>Obligations for another signatory (eg. Worcestershire County Council)</b>					
All contributions (financial or non-monetary) - PER OBLIGATION	222.45	4%	231.40	2%	236.00
Pre-commencement trigger - PER OBLIGATION	77.68	4%	80.80	2%	82.40
Other Triggers (Phased Payments/Provision of Infrastructure) - PER TRIGGER POINT	114.17	4%	118.70	2%	121.10
Ongoing Monitoring of large sites	507.29	4%	527.60	2%	538.20

### Fee Concessions

Some pre-application advice will still be provided free of charge. For example where the development is for the direct benefit of a disabled person (and as such there would be no fee incurred to make the planning application) or where works relate to a listed building.

Some advice is provided at a reduced or concessionary rate. If the proposal is being submitted by or is for the benefit of a Parish Council or other Local Authority, then the appropriate fee is reduced by 50%. In addition if the scheme relates to a solely affordable housing scheme, the Applicant is a Registered Social Landlord or Housing Association the fee for pre application advice would also be reduced by 50%.

# BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Cabinet 7 January 2026

### Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services

Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.

Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27
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#### BUILDING CONTROL - VAT AT 20%

##### Explanatory notes

1 Before you build, extend or convert a building to which the building regulations apply, you or your agent must submit a Building regulations application.

The charge you have to pay depends on the type of work, the number of separate properties, or the total floor area.

You can use the following tables with the current charges regulations to work out the charges. If you have any difficulties, please do not hesitate to call us.

2 The charges are as follows.

Category A: New domestic homes, flats or conversions etc.

Category B: Extending or altering existing homes

Category C: Any other project including commercial or industrial projects etc.

Individually determined fees are available for most projects. We would be happy to discuss these with you if you require.

In certain cases, we may agree that you can pay charges in instalments. Please contact us for further discussions.

3 Exemptions and reductions in charges.

a If your plans have been approved or rejected, you won't have to pay again if you resubmit plans for the same work which has not started, provided you resubmit with 3 years of the original application date.

b You don't have to pay charges if the work will provide access to a building or is an extension to store medical equipment or provide medical treatment facilities for a disabled person. In order to claim exemption, an application must be supported by appropriate evidence as to the nature of the disabled persons disability. In these regulations, a 'disabled person' is a person who is described under section 29(1) of the National Assistance Act 1948 (as extended by section 8(2) Mental Health Act 1959).

4 You have to pay VAT for all local authority Building Regulation charges, except for the regularisation charge. VAT is included in the attached fees.

5. Regularisation applications are available for cases where unauthorised building work was undertaken without an application. Such work can only be regularised where the work was undertaken after October 1985 and not within the last 6 months. The Authority is not obliged to accept Regularisation applications. Regularisation application fees are individually determined. Please contact us to discuss regularisation application fees.

6. Reversion applications. Where the control of a building project passes from a third party to the Council a reversion application will be required. Reversion application fees are individually determined.

7. The additional charge refers to electrical works undertaken by a non qualified person who is unable to certify their work to appropriate electrical regulations.

##### Other information

1 These notes are for guidance only and do not replace Statutory Instrument 2010 number 0404 which contains the full statement of the law, and the Scheme of Recovery of Fees dated April 2014.

2 These guidance notes refer to the charges that you have to pay for building control services within North Worcestershire.

Telephone payments are accepted. Please contact the relevant payment centre with your address and card details:

Bromsgrove 01527 881402

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

**Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services**

Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.

Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27
<b>TABLE A: Standard Charges for the Creation or Conversion to New Housing</b>					
Application Charge	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
Regularisation Charge	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
Additional Charge	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
<b>TABLE B: Domestic Extensions and alterations to a Single Building (please contact us)</b>					
Application Charge - New	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
Regularisation Charge - New	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
Additional Charge - New	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
<b>Garage Conversion to habitable room</b>					
Application Charge	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
Regularisation Charge	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
Additional Charge	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
<b>Electrical works by non-qualified electrician</b>					
Application Charge	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
Regularisation Charge	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
<b>Renovation of thermal element</b>					
Application Charge	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
Regularisation Charge	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
<b>Installing steel beam(s) within an existing house</b>					
Application Charge	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
Regularisation Charge	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery

# BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Cabinet 7 January 2026

<b>Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services</b>						
Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.						
Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27	
<b>Window replacement</b>						
Application Charge	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	
Regularisation Charge	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	
<b>Installing a new boiler or wood burner etc.</b>						
Application Charge	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	
Regularisation Charge	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	
<b>TABLE C: All Other works - Alterations and new build</b>						
Application Charge	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	
Regularisation Charge	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	
<b>For Office or shop fit outs, installation of a mezzanine floor and all other work where the estimated cost exceeds £50,000, please contact the Building Control Office on 01527 881402 for a competitive quote</b>						
<b>These charges have been set on the following basis:</b>						
1. That the building work does not consist of, or include innovative or high risk construction techniques and / or duration of the building work from commencement to completion does not exceed 12 months						
2. That the design and building work is undertaken by a person or company that is competent to carry out the relevant design and building work. If they are not, the building control service may impose supplementary charges.						
<b>Building Control – Supplementary Charges</b>						
If you are selling a property that has been extended or altered, you need to provide evidence to prospective purchasers that any relevant building work has been inspected and approved by a Building Control Body. That evidence is in the form of a Building Regulations Completion / Final Certificate and / or an Approval or Initial Notice (called the 'authorised documents' in the Home Information Pack Regulations).						
Legal entitlement to a Completion Certificate is subject to conditions. In cases where the Council is not told that building work is completed, or the building is occupied without addressing outstanding Building Regulation matters, a certificate is not issued. Despite the best efforts of the Council's Building Control Surveyors, many home owners who undertake building works fail to obtain a Completion Certificate and their application is archived. A fee is payable to re-open archived building regulations applications for the purposes of issuing a completion certificate.						
Other charges are payable where we are asked to withdraw a Building Regulations application and refund fees, or asked to re-direct inspection fee invoices. Fees are payable in cleared funds before the release of any authorised documents or other actions listed below.						

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

<b>Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services</b>						
Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.						
Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27	
<b>ARCHIVED APPLICATIONS</b> Process request to re-open archived building control file, resolve case and issue completion certificate (Administration Fee) Each visit to site in connection with resolving archived building control cases (Per Site Visit)	Full Cost Recovery Full Cost Recovery	N/A N/A	Full Cost Recovery Full Cost Recovery	N/A N/A	Full Cost Recovery Full Cost Recovery	
<b>WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS</b> Process request <u>With additional fees of:</u> Withdraw Building Notice application where no inspections have taken place Withdraw Building Notice application where inspections have taken place Withdrawn Full Plans application without plans being checked or any site inspections being made Withdrawn Full Plans application after plan check but before any inspections on site	Full Cost Recovery Full Cost Recovery Full Cost Recovery Full Cost Recovery	N/A N/A N/A N/A	Full Cost Recovery Full Cost Recovery Full Cost Recovery Full Cost Recovery	N/A N/A N/A N/A	Full Cost Recovery Full Cost Recovery Full Cost Recovery Full Cost Recovery	

# BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Cabinet 7 January 2026

### Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services

Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.

Withdraw Full Plans application after plan check and after site inspections made

Full Cost Recovery

N/A

Full Cost Recovery

N/A

Full Cost Recovery

#### RE-DIRECT INSPECTION FEES / ISSUE COPY DOCUMENTS

Process request to re-invoice inspection fee to new addressee or issue copies of previously issued Completion Certificates, Plans Approval Notices or Building Notice acceptances.

Optional Consultancy Services

Full Cost Recovery  
Full Cost Recovery

N/A  
N/A

Full Cost Recovery  
Full Cost Recovery

N/A  
N/A

Full Cost Recovery  
Full Cost Recovery

#### \*Charges Note\*

Under the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010 local authority building control is not permitted to make a profit or loss. The service is to ensure full cost recovery and no more. Any surplus or loss made against expenditure budgets is to be offset against the following years fees and charges setting. In addition, the level of competition from the private sector needs to continually defended against therefore it is proposed to curtail both the extent of fee categories published and to make extensive use of the fact that legislation now allows local authorities to offer site specific quotations for building regulations applications. In addition expenditure of the service has reduced since the creation of a shared service resulting in a reduction in the hourly rate charged by the service. Inspection fees equate to 70% of the total fee payable for a project.

#### SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

Community exercise class  
Specialised health class

4.35	4%	4.50	2%	4.60
4.35	4%	4.50	2%	4.60

Primary Sports Project (Standard Curriculum)  
Primary Sports Project (Specialist Curriculum)

NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL

Inclusive activities (hourly rate)  
Inclusive activities (90 minute rate)  
Inclusive activities (2 hour rate)

4.12	4%	4.30	2%	4.40
4.71	4%	4.90	2%	5.00
NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL

Multi Skills clubs  
Community Gymnastics  
Couch 2 5k

4.94	4%	5.10	2%	5.20
1.18	4%	1.20	2%	1.20

PSI Falls Prevention

4.35	4%	4.50	2%	4.60
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**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

<u>Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services</u>					
Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.					
<b>SANDERS PARK</b>					
<b>Tennis Courts (per court per Hour)</b>					
- Adult	9.36	4%	9.70	2%	<b>9.90</b>
- Adult & Junior	8.18	4%	8.50	2%	<b>8.70</b>
- Junior/Senior Citizen	6.24	4%	6.50	2%	<b>6.60</b>
<b>Tennis Courts (per court per 1 and 1/2 Hour)</b>					
- Adult	13.54	4%	14.10	2%	<b>14.40</b>
- Adult & Junior	11.77	4%	12.20	2%	<b>12.40</b>
- Junior/Senior Citizen	10.36	4%	10.80	2%	<b>11.00</b>
<b>Bowls</b>					
- Adult (per hour)	9.89	4%	10.30	2%	<b>10.50</b>
- Junior (per hour)	5.18	4%	5.40	2%	<b>5.50</b>
- Senior Citizen (per hour)	6.83	4%	7.10	2%	<b>7.20</b>
- Adult (season ticket)	64.74	4%	67.30	2%	<b>68.60</b>
- Junior (season ticket)	35.31	4%	36.70	2%	<b>37.40</b>
- Senior Citizen (season ticket)	47.08	4%	49.00	2%	<b>50.00</b>
Hire of Bowls Green Pavillion - half day (4 hours) - new charge	70.62	4%	73.40	2%	<b>74.90</b>
Hire of Bowls Green Pavillion - full day - new charge	105.93	4%	110.20	2%	<b>112.40</b>
<b>OTHER RECREATION GROUNDS AND OPEN SPACES</b>					
<b>Football</b>					
<b>SENIOR 11 a side with changing</b>					
Match games	68.27	4%	71.00	2%	<b>72.40</b>
<b>SENIOR 11 a side without changing</b>					
Match games	50.02	4%	52.00	2%	<b>53.00</b>
<b>JUNIOR 9 or 11 a side with changing</b>					
Match games	37.66	4%	39.20	2%	<b>40.00</b>
per season ( x 12 games)	451.97	4%	470.00	2%	<b>479.40</b>
<b>JUNIOR 9 or 11 a side without changing</b>					
Match games	28.25	4%	29.40	2%	<b>30.00</b>
per season ( x 12 games)	338.98	4%	352.50	2%	<b>359.60</b>
<b>MINI FOOTBALL 5 or 7 a side</b>					
Match games	20.60	4%	21.40	2%	<b>21.80</b>
per season ( x 12 games)	247.17	4%	257.10	2%	<b>262.20</b>
<b>ALLOTMENTS</b>					
- Rent per acre equivalent to 0.404685 hectares	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
- Rent per 3/4 acre equivalent to 0.303514 hectares	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
- Rent per 1/2 acre equivalent to 0.202342 hectares	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
- Rent per 1/4 acre equivalent to 0.101171 hectares	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
- Rent per 1/16 acre equivalent to 0.25529 hectares	80.74	4%	84.00	2%	<b>85.70</b>
- Rent per 1/32 acre equivalent to 0.01264 hectares	53.91	4%	56.10	2%	<b>57.20</b>

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

<b>Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services</b>					
Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.					
<b>Events, Open Spaces and Civic Spaces Hire</b>					
<b>£250 - £1500 Bond Payable</b>					
<b>Events</b>					
<b>Commercial Rates</b>					
<b>Small Attendance = 0 to 99</b>					
Per half day	188.32	4%	195.90	2%	199.80
Per Day	341.33	4%	355.00	2%	362.10
<b>Medium Attendance = 100 to 499</b>					
Per half day	264.83	4%	275.40	2%	280.90
Per Day	453.15	4%	471.30	2%	480.70
<b>Large Attendance = 500 to 1999</b>					
Per half day	341.33	4%	355.00	2%	362.10
Per Day	570.85	4%	593.70	2%	605.60
<b>Community Rates</b>					
<b>Small Attendance = 0 to 99</b>					
Per half day	77.68	4%	80.80	2%	82.40
Per Day	126.53	4%	131.60	2%	134.20
<b>Medium Attendance = 100 to 499</b>					
Per half day	95.34	4%	99.20	2%	101.20
Per Day	160.07	4%	166.50	2%	169.80
<b>Large Attendance = 500 to 1999</b>					
Per half day	112.99	4%	117.50	2%	119.90
Per Day	196.56	4%	204.40	2%	208.50
<b>Charities / Not For Profit Organisations</b>					
<b>Small Attendance = 0 to 99</b>					
Per half day	52.97	4%	55.10	2%	56.20
Per Day	87.10	4%	90.60	2%	92.40
<b>Medium Attendance = 100 to 499</b>					
Per half day	63.56	4%	66.10	2%	67.40
Per Day	105.34	4%	109.60	2%	111.80
<b>Large Attendance = 500 to 1999</b>					
Per half day	76.51	4%	79.60	2%	81.20
Per Day	139.24	4%	144.80	2%	147.70
<b>Fairs &amp; Circuses Min of 3 day Hire</b>					
Small Attendance = 0 to 99 Per Day	529.65	4%	550.80	2%	561.80
Medium and large attendance more than 99 per day (new Charge)	564.96	4%	587.60	2%	599.40
<b>Boleyn Road, Frankley</b>					
- fairs (per day)	557.66	4%	580.00	2%	591.60
- deposit	2,550.21	4%	2,652.20	2%	2,705.20

# BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Cabinet 7 January 2026

<b>Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services</b>						
Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.						
Market Street Recreation Ground - fairs (per day) - deposit	561.84 2,574.98	4% 4%	584.30 2,678.00	2% 2%	<b>596.00</b> <b>2,731.60</b>	
<p>One free day is allowed for each of the above bookings by fairs/circuses. Other hiring's – charge to be decided at the time of application.</p> <p>Football pitches and parks are not available for any organised football activity during the period June 1st to July 15th. This is to allow the pitches a rest period and for maintenance work to take place.</p> <p>After this date any organised football training must be paid for at a cost of £10 per session for one team and a negotiated price for more than one team. Please contact the Parks Team to book this, pitches will be allocated at our discretion.</p>						
Ø Set up and Clearance charged @ 50% of applicable rate Ø Any event in excess of 1999 attendees is STN						
Event - Officer Support for event (per hour)	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	<b>Full Cost Recovery</b>	
Power and Water Supply Additional Charges	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	
<b>Additional Costs for Outdoor Fitness Space:</b>						
Ø Set up and Clearance charged @ 50% of applicable rate						
<b>Outdoor Fitness Session</b>						
<b>Commercial Rates (Per Day)</b>						
Summer Fee (Apr to Sept) One day maximum usage per week	488.46	4%	508.00	2%	<b>518.20</b>	
Summer Fee (Apr to Sept) Two days maximum usage per week	788.59	4%	820.10	2%	<b>836.50</b>	
Summer Fee (Apr to Sept) Three days maximum usage per week	853.33	4%	887.50	2%	<b>905.30</b>	
Winter Fee (Oct to Mar) One day maximum usage per week	243.64	4%	253.40	2%	<b>258.50</b>	
Winter Fee (Oct to Mar) Two days maximum usage per week	488.46	4%	508.00	2%	<b>518.20</b>	
Winter Fee (Oct to Mar) Three days maximum usage per week	729.74	4%	758.90	2%	<b>774.10</b>	
Annual Fee One day maximum usage per week	635.58	4%	661.00	2%	<b>674.20</b>	
Annual Fee Two days maximum usage per week	1,035.76	4%	1,077.20	2%	<b>1,098.70</b>	
Annual Fee Three days maximum usage per week	1,235.85	4%	1,285.30	2%	<b>1,311.00</b>	
<b>Community Rates (Per Day)</b>						
Summer Fee (Apr to Sept) One day maximum usage per week	241.29	4%	250.90	2%	<b>255.90</b>	
Summer Fee (Apr to Sept) Two days maximum usage per week	361.34	4%	375.80	2%	<b>383.30</b>	
Summer Fee (Apr to Sept) Three days maximum usage per week	423.72	4%	440.70	2%	<b>449.50</b>	
Winter Fee (Oct to Mar) One day maximum usage per week	96.51	4%	100.40	2%	<b>102.40</b>	
Winter Fee (Oct to Mar) Two days maximum usage per week	241.29	4%	250.90	2%	<b>255.90</b>	
Winter Fee (Oct to Mar) Three days maximum usage per week	361.34	4%	375.80	2%	<b>383.30</b>	
Annual Fee One day maximum usage per week	300.14	4%	312.10	2%	<b>318.30</b>	
Annual Fee Two days maximum usage per week	541.42	4%	563.10	2%	<b>574.40</b>	
Annual Fee Three days maximum usage per week	602.62	4%	626.70	2%	<b>639.20</b>	
Trial fee (1 day per week - MAX 4 week trial)	123.59	4%	128.50	2%	<b>131.10</b>	
The Bird Box - <b>NEW CHARGE</b>	2.00	4%	2.10	2%	<b>2.10</b>	
Use of Power connection						

# BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Cabinet 7 January 2026

<u>Legal, Democratic and Property Services</u>						
Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.						
Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26 £	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27 £	
<b>ELECTORAL REGISTRATION</b>						
<u>Register Sales*</u>						
<b>In data form</b>						
- basic fee	20.00	N/A	20.00	N/A	20.00	
- for each 1,000 names or part thereof	20.00	N/A	20.00	N/A	20.00	
<b>In printed form</b>						
- basic fee	10.00	N/A	10.00	N/A	10.00	
- for each 1,000 names or part thereof	5.00	N/A	5.00	N/A	5.00	
<u>Marked Election Register Sales*</u>						
<b>In data form</b>						
- basic fee	10.00	N/A	10.00	N/A	10.00	
- for each 1,000 names or part thereof	1.00	N/A	1.00	N/A	1.00	
<b>In printed form</b>						
- basic fee	10.00	N/A	10.00	N/A	10.00	
- for each 1,000 names or part thereof	2.00	N/A	2.00	N/A	2.00	
Copy of return of Election expenses plus 20p per sheet, per side.	5.00	N/A	5.00	N/A	5.00	
<u>Miscellaneous Charges</u>						
Address labels printed	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	
- for each 1,000 properties or part thereof	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	
- street list	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	
* - Data Property Addresses	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	
* - For each 1,000 properties or part thereof	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	
<b>LEGAL</b>						
- Legal work (per hour)	183.10	4%	190.40	2%	194.20	
- Legal Consent - Admin Fee	32.60	4%	33.90	2%	34.60	
- RTB	255.90	4%	266.10	2%	271.40	
- Consent for proposed works	201.10	4%	209.10	2%	213.30	
- Retrospective Consent	211.60	4%	220.10	2%	224.50	
Garden License	311.70	4%	324.20	2%	330.70	
Wayleave Agreement	467.50	4%	486.20	2%	495.90	
Deed of Grant or Easement	490.00	4%	509.60	2%	519.80	
License to Assign	490.00	4%	509.60	2%	519.80	
Rent Deposit Deed	490.00	4%	509.60	2%	519.80	
Authorised Guarantee Agreement	490.00	4%	509.60	2%	519.80	
License for Alterations	490.00	4%	509.60	2%	519.80	
License to Sublet	490.00	4%	509.60	2%	519.80	
Deed of Variation	490.00	4%	509.60	2%	519.80	
Grant of Lease	662.70	4%	689.20	2%	703.00	
Extended Lease	662.70	4%	689.20	2%	703.00	
Deed of Surrender	490.00	4%	509.60	2%	519.80	
Tenancy at Will	490.00	4%	509.60	2%	519.80	
Renewal of Lease	490.00	4%	509.60	2%	519.80	

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

<b>Legal, Democratic and Property Services</b>						
Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.						
Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26 %	Actual Charge 25/26 £	Charge Increase 26/27 %	Proposed Charge 26/27 £	
<b>Section 106:</b>						
- Private Owner	684.50	4%	711.90	2%	726.10	
- Each additional unit added (up to a maximum of £1,650)	91.70	4%	95.40	2%	97.30	
- Affordable housing schemes	1,285.20	4%	1,336.60	2%	1,363.30	
- Deed of Variation	488.50	4%	508.00	2%	518.20	
- Fee for agreeing a unilateral undertaking	488.50	4%	508.00	2%	518.20	
<b>Other Fees</b>						
- Fees for sale of property under Low Cost Housing Scheme	336.70	4%	350.20	2%	357.20	
- Fees for purchase of additional 30% Share	219.70	4%	228.50	2%	233.10	
- Fees for preparation of Deed of postponement	143.50	4%	149.20	2%	152.20	
- Administration fee for the grant of licences for more than 12 months	80.60	4%	83.80	2%	85.50	
- Issuing of consents (transfer of mortgage)	95.10	4%	98.90	2%	100.90	
Minor land sales up to £10,000	643.30	4%	669.00	2%	682.40	
Major Land sales £10,000+ 2.75% of purchase price with a minimum charge of £500	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	
Major Land sales £50,000+ 2.75% of purchase price with a minimum charge of £750	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	
Deed of Release of Covenant	490.00	4%	509.60	2%	519.80	
- Footpath Diversion Orders	2,706.00	4%	2,814.20	2%	2,870.50	
<b>LAND SEARCHES</b>						
<b>Single Con29 Question</b>						
Official Certificate of Search (LLC1) only						
CON29R Enquiries of Local Authority (2016)						
- Residential	131.40	4%	136.70	2%	139.40	
- Commercial	184.00	4%	191.40	2%	195.20	
Standard Search Fee: LLC1 and CON 29R combined						
- Residential		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
- Commercial		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
CON 29O Optional enquiries of Local Authority (2007)						
(Questions 5,6,8,9,11,15) per question	16.70	4%	17.40	2%	17.70	
(Questions 7,10,12,13,14,16-21) per question	8.40	4%	8.70	2%	8.90	
(Question 22)	35.30	4%	36.70	2%	37.40	
Extra written enquiries (Refer to Worcestershire County Council for Highways enquiries)	65.10	4%	67.70	2%	69.10	
Question 4	18.60	4%	19.30	2%	19.70	
Each additional parcel of land (LLC1 and CON29R)	41.70	4%	43.40	2%	44.30	
Expedited (within 48 hrs)						

# BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Cabinet 7 January 2026

<b>Legal, Democratic and Property Services</b>						
Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.						
Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26 £	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27 £	
<b>PARKSIDE SUITE</b>						
<b>Per Hour (Suggest min Hire of 2hrs)</b>						
<b>Main Room</b>						
Community Group	28.20	4%	29.30	2%	29.90	
Regular Hire	43.00	4%	44.70	2%	45.60	
Commercial Hire	56.50	4%	58.80	2%	60.00	
<b>Committee Room</b>						
Community Group	16.00	4%	16.60	2%	16.90	
Regular Hire	23.30	4%	24.20	2%	24.70	
Commercial Hire	31.30	4%	32.60	2%	33.30	
<b>Committee Room 2 – per hour (min 2Hours)</b>						
Community Group	20.00	4%	20.80	2%	21.20	
Regular Hire	25.90	4%	26.90	2%	27.40	
Commercial Hire	35.30	4%	36.70	2%	37.40	
<b>Combined</b>						
Community Group	38.30	4%	39.80	4%	41.40	
Regular Hire	60.00	4%	62.40	4%	64.90	
Commercial Hire	83.00	4%	86.30	4%	89.80	
<b>Half Day up to 5pm (max 4hrs)</b>						
<b>Main Room</b>						
Community Group	105.90	4%	110.10	2%	112.30	
Regular Hire	129.50	4%	134.70	2%	137.40	
Commercial Hire	211.90	4%	220.40	2%	224.80	
<b>Committee Room</b>						
Community Group	46.60	4%	48.50	2%	49.50	
Regular Hire	63.90	4%	66.50	2%	67.80	
Commercial Hire	80.00	4%	83.20	2%	84.90	
<b>Combined</b>						
Community Group	128.90	4%	134.10	2%	136.80	
Regular Hire	184.20	4%	191.60	2%	195.40	
Commercial Hire	263.60	4%	274.10	2%	279.60	
<b>Full Day Up to 5pm</b>						
<b>Main Room</b>						
Community Group	196.60	4%	204.50	4%	212.70	
Regular Hire	245.60	4%	255.40	4%	265.60	
Commercial Hire	343.70	4%	357.40	4%	371.70	
<b>Committee Room</b>						
Community Group	79.80	4%	83.00	2%	84.70	
Regular Hire	95.90	4%	99.70	2%	101.70	
Commercial Hire	117.70	4%	122.40	2%	124.80	
<b>Combined</b>						
Community Group	251.90	4%	262.00	2%	267.20	
Regular Hire	319.00	4%	331.80	2%	338.40	
Commercial Hire	423.70	4%	440.60	2%	449.40	
<b>Combined Evening Commercial Hire, Fridays and Saturday's, 5pm - Midnight</b>	423.70	4%	440.60	2%	449.40	
Only half day and full day rates allowed for weekends. No hourly rates.						
All day rate for weddings £720** (day and evening to include kitchen and set up) 9am – 12 midnight						
Sunday hire rates by negotiation.						
Room 54(Training Room) - Any internal county organisations whom wish to use this room will be charged £25.00 per hour.						

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

**Legal, Democratic and Property Services**

Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.

Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26 %	Actual Charge 25/26 £	Charge Increase 26/27 %	Proposed Charge 26/27 £
<b><u>Customer Services</u></b>					
<b>Interview rooms (based at the service centre)</b>					
- Per Full day (9am - 5pm)	54.50	4%	56.70	2%	57.80
- Per Half day (9am-1pm/1pm-5pm)	34.10	4%	35.50	2%	36.20
- Per hour (1Full hour only)	11.70	4%	12.20	2%	12.40
<b><u>Bromsgrove Markets</u></b>					
<b>3 x 3 Market Stall (per day)</b>					
Tuesday Regular Trader	32.10	4%	33.40	2%	34.10
Tuesday Casual Trader	34.60	4%	36.00	2%	36.70
Each additional stall requested	13.90	4%	14.50	2%	14.80
Friday Regular Trader	37.00	4%	38.50	2%	39.30
Friday Casual Trader	39.40	4%	41.00	2%	41.80
Each additional stall requested	13.90	4%	14.50	2%	14.80
Saturday Regular Trader	39.40	4%	41.00	2%	41.80
Saturday Casual Trader	41.80	4%	43.50	2%	44.40
Each additional stall requested	14.50	4%	15.10	2%	15.40
<b>Catering Van</b>					
Tuesday Regular Trader	30.90	4%	32.10	2%	32.70
Tuesday Casual Trader	36.40	4%	37.90	2%	38.70
Friday Regular Trader	35.80	4%	37.20	2%	37.90
Friday Casual Trader	41.20	4%	42.80	2%	43.70
Saturday Regular Trader	38.20	4%	39.70	2%	40.50
Saturday Casual Trader	43.70	4%	45.40	2%	46.30
All 3 days (Annual booking per week) - <b>Charge to be deleted</b>	0.00	4%	0.00	2%	0.00
All 3 days (Casual booking per week) - <b>Charge to be deleted</b>	0.00	4%	0.00	2%	0.00
<b>Table only booking for Craft Markets (only available in good weather)</b>					
First two 5ft tables	18.20	4%	18.90	2%	19.30
each additional table	6.10	4%	6.30	2%	6.40

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

<u>Legal, Democratic and Property Services</u>						
Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27	
	£		£	2%	£	
<b>Electric</b> Regular 3 day traders Casual/Single day traders per day	11.20 6.10	4% 4%	11.60 6.30	2% 2%	11.80 6.40	
<b>Trade Waste Collection</b> Regular 3 day traders Casual/Single day traders	3.20 6.10	4% 4%	3.30 6.30	2% 2%	3.40 6.40	
<b><u>Other Market Charges - New Charges</u></b>						
<b>Vintage, Craft and Food Markets</b>						
Single Stall Additional stalls	24.20 12.10	4% 4%	25.20 12.60	2% 2%	25.70 12.90	
Catering units/pitch	18.20	4%	18.90	2%	19.30	
<b>Sunday Food Festival Markets</b>						
Price by negotiation to include staff on cost and overtime	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	
<b>Seasonal Traders</b> Seasonal supplement per stall for seasonal adhoc traders in December	6.10	4%	6.30	2%	6.40	
<b>Market Hire</b> Hiring cost of providing a market to Parish Councils or other organisations	848.60	4%	882.50	2%	900.20	
<b>Trader Incentive Scheme</b>						
New traders attending the market on a Tuesday will be charged 50% rent fee for 4 weeks continuous weeks only (based on a 3m x 3m stall)	17.30	4%	18.00	2%	18.40	
New traders attending the market on a Friday will be charged 50% rent fee for 4 weeks continuous weeks only (based on a 3m x 3m stall)	18.50	4%	19.20	2%	19.60	
New traders attending the market on a Saturday will be charged 50% rent fee for 4 weeks continuous weeks only (based on a 3m x 3m stall)	21.00	4%	21.80	2%	22.20	
<b>Property Services - New Charges</b>						
Minor Land Sales Request for Information	84.70	4%	88.10	2%	89.90	
Minor Land Sales Full Application	579.10	4%	602.30	2%	614.30	
Advertising - Estimated Fee per Advert (new charge based on cost per advert)	423.70	4%	440.60	2%	449.40	
Surveyors Fees - Estimated Fee (new charge based on an hourly cost)	105.90	4%	110.10	2%	112.30	

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

**Business Transformation and Organisational Development**

Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.

Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26 £	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 226/27 £
<b><u>New &amp; Existing Properties</u></b>					
Naming a Street	684.80	4%	712.20	2%	726.40
Additional charge for each new premise on a street	160.70	4%	167.10	2%	170.40
Naming and numbering of an individual premise	338.60	4%	352.10	2%	359.10
Additional charge for each adjoining premise (eg Blocks of flats)	95.20	4%	99.00	2%	101.00
Confirmation of address to solicitor/conveyancer/ occupier or owner	66.30	4%	69.00	2%	70.40
Additional charge including naming of building	170.50	4%	177.30	2%	180.80

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

<b>Community &amp; Housing Services</b>						
Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.						
Service Category		Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26 £	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27 £
<b>STRATEGIC HOUSING</b>						
<b>Bed and breakfast</b>						
- Single room		18.90	4%	19.70	2%	20.10
- Two single rooms		38.30	4%	39.80	2%	40.60
- Double room		18.90	4%	19.70	2%	20.10
- More than one double room per room		24.70	4%	25.70	2%	26.20
<b>- Breakfast</b>						
- adult		3.10	4%	3.20	2%	3.30
- child		2.60	4%	2.70	2%	2.80
<b>- Storage of effects (per night)</b>		3.20	4%	3.30	2%	3.40
- Right to Buy (RTB) Plan Preparation for BDHT		147.90	4%	153.80	2%	156.90
- Late Consents to transfer (shared ownership and low cost properties)		309.00	4%	321.40	2%	327.80
<b>Private Sector Housing</b>						
Housing Fitness Inspections		176.60	4%	183.70	2%	187.40
First Homes Application		160.50	4%	166.90	2%	170.20
<b>Registration of housing in multiple occupation:</b>						
per occupant		150.80	4%	156.80	2%	159.90
Service and Administration of Improvement		42.00	4%	43.70	2%	44.60
Prohibition, Hazard Awareness or Emergency Measures Notices *						
under Housing Act 2004, per hour						
Enforcement of Statutory Notices, Supervision of Work in Default etc.		Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
Mobile Home Park Licensing - New Licence Application Fee		384.50	4%	399.90	2%	407.90
- Licence Amendment Application Fee		302.10	4%	314.20	2%	320.50
- Licence Transfer Application Fee		219.70	4%	228.50	2%	233.10
Mobile Home Park - Annual Site Inspection Charge -Band A (2-10 units)		302.10	4%	314.20	2%	320.50
-Band B (11-30 units )		322.70	4%	335.60	2%	342.30
- Band C ( 31-70 units)		453.10	4%	471.20	2%	480.60
- Band D ( 71 + units)		494.30	4%	514.10	2%	524.40
Mobile Home Park Statutory Registration or amendment of Park Home Rules		116.70	4%	121.40	2%	123.80
<b>- Valuation Fee (relating to properties of 30% ownership)</b>		Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
<b>*Based on salary of employee</b>						

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Cabinet 7 January 2026**

**Community & Housing Services**

Roundings are generally rounded to the nearest 10p.

Service Category	Actual Charge 24/25 £	Actual Increase 25/26	Actual Charge 25/26 £	Charge Increase 26/27	Proposed Charge 26/27 £
<b><u>LIFELINE</u></b>					
- Installation Fee	55.60	4%	57.80	2%	59.00
- Lifeline (per week)	0.00	4%	0.00	2%	0.00
- Replacement Pendant	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
- Key Safe	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery	N/A	Full Cost Recovery
- GSM Alarm Hire	5.50	4%	5.70	2%	5.80
- GPS Tracker Hire	5.50	4%	5.70	2%	5.80
- Daily Living Activity Equipment	7.90	4%	8.20	2%	8.40
<b><u>HIRE PRODUCTS</u></b>					
Hire of smoke alarm per week (hard wired, serviced smoke alarm)	1.55	4%	1.60	2%	1.60
CO2 Detector per week	1.55	4%	1.60	2%	1.60
Bogus Caller Panic Button	1.55	4%	1.60	2%	1.60
Flood Detector	1.55	4%	1.60	2%	1.60
Falls Detector	1.55	4%	1.60	2%	1.60
Additional pendant	1.55	4%	1.60	2%	1.60
Temperature extreme sensor	1.55	4%	1.60	2%	1.60

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## **Bromsgrove District Council - Budget Consultation for 2026/27**

This survey was launched to give residents/businesses of Bromsgrove District an opportunity to have their say on how the Council should spend the money it has available and where it should prioritise spending.

The survey ran from 20 November 2025 to 2 January 2026. An invite was sent directly to all members of the Community Panel and links were sent to partners to share with their contacts and the survey was publicised in local media and numerous times on social media.

A total of 138 valid surveys were returned from the panel, resulting in a response rate of 33%, which is a significant drop from the previous year, where there was a 48% response rate from the panel. A total of 85 surveys were received from the general public.

The final figure of **223 completed surveys** for analysis, which is lower than last year, where there were 278 valid responses. There was also at least one response from every area within the district.

### **Question 1: Are you a resident of Bromsgrove District and/or have a business based here?**

**99.1%** of respondents were a resident of the district.

**3.6%** of respondents had a business based in the district.

### **Question 2: Please tell us where you live or where your business is located. (Please note, if you live and have a business in the District, please only tell us where you live)**

There was at least one response from every area within the district, ranging from Rubery North (1) to Bromsgrove Central and Aston Fields (24 responses respectively).

### **Question 3: How important are the current Bromsgrove District Council priorities to you?**

- Economic Development: Extremely important = 36.2%
- Environment: Extremely important = 52.7%
- Housing: Extremely important = 23.2%
- Infrastructure: Extremely important = 55%

The comments for this question mostly fell into three main topics:

- Infrastructure
  - Insufficient infrastructure for new housing developments (GPs, school places), impact of traffic congestion and roadworks, maintenance of existing infrastructure (roads, paths, parks/open spaces, areas at risk of flooding), need for better public transport.

- Housing
  - Too many houses being built, need to build on brown field sites
- Environment
  - Environment being damaged by development, lack of prioritisation of the environment, concerns regarding climate change (both those supporting more work in this area and others feeling this should not be prioritised at all).

**Question 4: Which services do you think it is important for the Council to invest in?**

The top three areas for investment were:

1. Local economic development & employment = 44.8%
2. Maintenance of the landscape & environment = 44.3%
3. Community safety = 43%

The top three remains the same as the previous survey (although numbers 2 and 3 were reversed).

Of the small numbers of comments regarding this question, infrastructure was the main concern, in particular roads and public transport.

**Question 5: How important are the following council services to you when considering how Bromsgrove District Council manages its budget?**

The top three services when considering the budget were:

1. Environmental Services = 78.2%
2. Planning & Leisure Services = 68.6%
3. Regeneration & Property = 63.2%

Council Service	Extremely or very important
Business Transformation & Organisational Development	32%
Community & Housing Services	56.7%
Corporate Services	13.7%
Environmental Services	78.2%
Financial & Customer Services	50.2%
Legal, Democratic & Elections Services	32.7%
Planning & Leisure Services	68.6%
Regeneration & Property	63.2%
Regulatory Services	33%

**Question 6: Do you support fees and charges (such as hire costs) rising by 4% to keep them in line with inflation and rising staffing costs?**

- Agree = 46.8%
- Disagree = 26.6%

Strongly agree	9.5%
Agree	37.4%
Neither agree nor disagree	26.6%
Disagree	14.9%
Strongly disagree	11.7%

**Question 7: In order to maintain services, what level of increase to Bromsgrove District Council's proportion of Council Tax do you support?**

- Increase of 1.99%
  - Agree = 59.1%
  - Disagree = 21.2%
- Increase of 2.99%
  - Agree = 37.5%
  - Disagree = 47.1%

**Question 8: Please let us know your suggestions for investing in the District to increase prosperity and enhance appeal for residents and businesses alike**

Responses to this question provided many suggestions and comments regarding the district. The top three themes were the importance of infrastructure (roads, public transport, amenities, impact of development), Bromsgrove Town Centre, and supporting businesses. These topics were also the top three in the previous survey, suggesting consistency in both the publics priorities and areas of concern. These themes had many cross overs, from the impact of traffic (in particular the BREP), encouraging a diverse range of businesses into the town and reducing costs to businesses.

Suggestions included:

- Reducing business rates / relief
- Reducing parking costs (or make it free)
- Supporting independent retailers
- Bringing in key major retailers
- Understanding offer on High Street- too many charity shops, cafes, hair & vaping businesses
- Utilise empty shops
- Improve the market
- Make the town vibrant, attractive & distinctive- develop attractions, encourage visitors
- Improve the appearance & maintenance of the high street
- Improved public transport
- Ensure a district-wide view

**Question 9: Please let us know any other comments on the budget or ideas for reducing costs or increasing income to ensure Council services remain sustainable**

Of the responses to this question, as with the previous year, the largest category fell into the theme of efficiency and value for money. Other themes included infrastructure and suggestions for commercial activity.

Suggestions included:

- Stop expenses (in particular Councillors)
- Review staffing & wages (in particular management)
- Reduce waste
- Effective procurement
- Focus on essential services
- Effective maintenance
- Do more online
- Utilise technology, including AI
- Measure effectiveness and VfM
- Explore alternative methods of delivery e.g. partnerships, consolidation of services, VCS, franchises
- Reduce use of consultants
- Commercial opportunities e.g. better events
- Reduce events
- Promote events better to increase revenue
- Community use of buildings
- Increase enforcement e.g. fly tipping & littering
- Better coordination around highways and roadworks

**Question 10: What is your current housing status?**

- 89.1% of respondents either owned their homes outright or had a mortgage

**Question 11: Which of the following best describes our age?**

- 57.8% of respondents were 60 or over

16-19yrs	1.4%
20-29yrs	1.4%
30-39yrs	7.8%
40-49yrs	10.1%
50-59yrs	18.8%
60-69yrs	26.6%
70-79yrs	23.9%
80+ years	7.3%
Prefer not to say	2.8%

**Question 12: Do you have any long-standing health condition or disability?**

- Yes = 27.9%
- No = 66.7%

**Question 13: Which of the following best describes your gender?**

- Female = 42.5%
- Male = 52.1%

**Question 14: Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?**

- Yes = 94.9%
- No = 0%
- Prefer not to say = 5.1%

**Question 15: Which best describes your ethnicity?**

White English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	94.5%
Any other White background	0.5%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	0.5%
Asian or Asian British	0.0%
Black, African, Caribbean or Black British Arab	0.0%
Prefer not to say	3.7%
Other ethnic group (please specify):	0.9%

**Question 16: Which of the following best describes your religion or belief?**

Atheist	12.8%
Buddhist	0.0%
Christian	53.9%
Humanist	1.4%
Hindu	0.0%
Jewish	0.0%
Muslim	0.5%
Pagan	1.4%
Sikh	0.0%
No religion/belief	22.4%
Prefer not to say	4.6%
Other (please specify):	3.2%

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# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

## **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **MEETING OF THE CABINET**

**WEDNESDAY 7TH JANUARY 2026, AT 6.00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Councillors K.J. May (Leader), S. J. Baxter (Deputy Leader), S. T. Nock, K. Taylor and S. A. Webb

Observers: Councillor P. M. McDonald and Councillor H. D. N. Warren-Clarke

Officers: Mr J. Leach, Mrs. C. Felton, Mr. P. Earley, Mr M. Cox, Mr. M. Bough, Mr. D Riley, Mrs. R. Green, Mr. C. Poole, Ms. A. Delahunty, Mr P. Bailey, Mr. M Eccles, Mrs B. Talbot and Mrs J. Gresham.

56/25

### **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor P. Whittaker.

57/25

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

58/25

### **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 19TH NOVEMBER 2025**

Prior to consideration of the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025, the Leader announced that there was a typographical error contained within the minutes. The fourth recommendation in respect of the Medium-Term Financial Plan Budget Update and Consultation report had been omitted in the published minutes. However, it was confirmed that the vote was taken on all four of the recommendations included in the report as follows:

#### **RESOLVED** that

- 1) The updated budget position for the Council is noted in respect of the 2026/27 annual budget and for the Medium-Term Financial Plan up to 2028/29.
- 2) The key assumptions listed in this document are confirmed as accurate for the purpose of projecting an initial budget position.

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

- 3) A further report in February will include additional information from the Local Government Settlement to give a final financial position for the Council.

**RECOMMENDED** that

- 4) The Consultation on the Budget 2026/27 be noted.

The fourth recommendation as detailed above had been subsequently considered and agreed by Council at the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2025.

**RESOLVED** that subject to the amendment, as detailed in the preamble above, that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025 be approved.

59/25

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 18TH NOVEMBER 2025**

The Leader invited the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board to present the minutes from the Board meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2025. In doing so, Members were informed that there were no outstanding recommendations contained within the minutes.

It was explained that there had been a number of reports pre-scrutinised by the Board and the Finance and Budget Working Group prior to this Cabinet meeting, as detailed below:

1. Biodiversity First Duty Report
2. Particulate Monitoring Report
3. Homelessness Prevention, Rough Sleeper and Domestic Abuse Grants Funding 2027/28 and 2028/29 Report
4. Business Rates Discretionary Rates Relief Policy 2026-2027 Report
5. Council Tax Base Report 2026/27 Report
6. Council Tax Empty Homes Discounts and Premiums 2026-27 Report
7. Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27 Report

No further recommendations had been made as a result of this pre-scrutiny. The Chairman of the Board stated, however that the Board were very keen for Cabinet to agree all of the recommendations included within the reports that had been pre-scrutinised.

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2025 be noted.

60/25

## **APPOINTMENTS TO THE SHAREHOLDERS COMMITTEE**

The Leader presented the Appointments to the Shareholders Committee report for Members' consideration. The report proposed that Members be nominated to sit on the Shareholders Committee following a change to the Cabinet membership which had resulted in a vacant seat on this Committee.

Nominations were received for Councillors S. T. Nock and S. Webb.

On being put to the vote it was

**RESOLVED** that

Councillors S. T. Nock and S. Webb be appointed to the Shareholders Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

*[Prior to the end of the meeting, Cabinet revisited this report. It was noted by Officers that the number of Cabinet Members required on the Committee was only four. However, Members suggested that the number of Members for this Committee had been amended earlier in the municipal year to five and therefore the nominations remained as detailed above].*

61/25

## **HOUSING TASK GROUP FINAL REPORT**

The Leader welcomed Councillor H. Warren-Clarke in his capacity of Chairman of the Housing Task Group to present the Housing Task Group Final Report for the consideration of Cabinet.

Councillor Warren-Clarke stated that he was pleased to present this report and outlined the background to the report for Members and explained that the Task Group had been agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Board at the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2025.

During the meetings of the Task Group there were several areas discussed including freeholding and allocation of S106 monies.

There had been detailed discussions regarding these matters along with several other areas which had resulted in the recommendations contained within the report.

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

Following the presentation the Leader thanked the Task Group Members for the work undertaken on this matter and discussed the recommendations in detail.

- Recommendation 1 – This recommendation proposed that Officers explore the potential of establishing an initiative whereby a basic start up package be provided to residents who were currently on the housing waiting list. This package would consist of essential items for those who did not have them when moving into a new property.
- Recommendation 2 – This dealt with the mix of affordable housing provided within a new housing development. The recommendation proposed that the affordable housing allocation be made up of social rent and shared ownership properties only and exclude outright sales of affordable homes.
- Recommendation 3 – This recommendation proposed an increase in monitoring information for Members to understand the bad debt in terms of non-payment of Council Tax by residents.
- Recommendation 4 – This was concerned with monitoring the numbers of residents claiming Council Tax Support whilst living in housing Bands F, G and H. It was explained that these residents may be 'asset rich but potentially revenue poor' which might result in them claiming this benefit. This recommendation would help the Council to better understand the needs of these residents and any potential areas of support that the Council could provide.
- Recommendation 5 – this proposal would ensure greater engagement with Ward Members during the consideration of appropriate allocation of S106 monies for developments within the District. Members discussed this recommendation in detail and stated that this matter would be relevant at the pre-Planning application stage in a development. It was felt that should Ward Members be interested in the specific allocation of S106 monies then they should attend pre-application meetings. It was reported that there had been some instances when Members had not attended such meetings. Some Members explained that they were invited to comment on the application but not always invited to the pre-application meeting. The Cabinet Member for Planning, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) and Strategic Housing undertook to look into this matter further with the relevant Officers. It was suggested that one solution might be that a 'read receipt' be included in invitations to pre-application meetings to Members in order for Officers to retain an audit trail of invitations and emails sent on this matter in the future.

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

- Recommendation 6 – This recommendation dealt with the matter of fleeceholding. Members felt that increased lobbying of central Government was necessary in order to prevent escalating costs for management of developments in the future. Some Members stated that during recent meetings with developers at Parish Council level, that it had been reported that the Council needed to engage more with developers in respect of management of developments. It was reported that during meetings of the Task Group, Task Group Members had been reassured that this engagement was taking place. This was confirmed by Officers at the meeting, and it was reported that developers were sometimes reluctant to engage with the Council in these matters due to the potential costs involved. The Cabinet Member for Planning, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) and Strategic Housing undertook to look into this matter further with the relevant Officers. Included in this recommendation were details on a consultation proposal by Government to implement aspects of the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024. The consultation had closed on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2025. Members queried the outcomes of this consultation and whether any information was available. Noting the current timeline for Local Government Reorganisation, Members expressed that this matter would need to be carried forward by the new unitary authority. However, in the meantime, it was suggested that a joint letter be written by the Leader of the Council and Chairman of the Housing Task Group to lobby Government further in this matter.

On being put to the vote it was

**RESOLVED** that

- 1) Officers approach Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) and jointly explore a startup crisis package for residents living in social housing including the potential of an increase in housing benefit payment to cover the costs of the crisis package. The findings to be completed in three months and reported back to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.
- 2) Bromsgrove District Council's preference was for the mix of affordable housing contained within a new development be made up of social rent and shared ownership properties only and exclude outright sales of affordable homes.
- 3) Officers provide Members with costings of bad debt owed to the Council as a result of non – payment of Council tax by residents.

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

- 4) Officers monitor the number of residents claiming Council Tax Support in housing Bands F, G and H (with metrics built into the performance reporting framework).
- 5) Where a planning application had a material impact on the local community and there was a consideration for S106 contribution allocation, the Ward Member (and neighbouring Ward Member(s)) be informed and consulted with prior to consideration of the application. A follow up consultation with the Ward Member (and neighbouring Ward Member(s)) should also take place.
- 6) As part of the Local Government Reorganisation process, the Council:
  - a) Noted that the Government was currently analysing the feedback from the consultation which sought views on proposals to implement aspects of the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024 and further reform related to the charges leaseholders, and homeowners on freehold estates, pay and services they received, which had closed on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2025.
  - b) Suggests that a new unitary authority continued to lobby Government on the matter of fleeceholding within Bromsgrove District.

62/25

## **CYBER SECURITY UPDATE - INCLUDING WHATSAPP POLICY AND AI POLICY**

The ICT Technical Team Leader presented the Cyber Security Update - including WhatsApp Policy and AI Policy for Members' consideration. In doing so it was noted that the Policy provided a guide to Council Staff and had been developed to ensure the ethical, transparent, and responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies across Bromsgrove District Council. Included in the report were specific examples of appropriate use of WhatsApp. The AI Policy also addressed the use of third-party tools and the importance of training and education for staff in these areas. It was reported that a programme of communications would be rolled out to staff and Members as a result of the policy.

Members welcomed the implementation of both policies for staff. Officers stated that this policy was for staff and it was recognised that a similar policy would be required for Members and that such a policy would be produced in due course.

## **RESOLVED**

- 1) To adopt the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Acceptable Use Policy as a formal policy document.
- 2) To adopt the WhatsApp Policy as a formal policy document.

63/25

## **BIODIVERSITY FIRST DUTY**

The Climate Change Manager presented the Biodiversity First Duty report for Members' consideration. It was reported that the Environment Act 2021 had placed a legal duty on public authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity. As a result, Bromsgrove District Council must publish a Biodiversity Duty Report which covered the period up to 1st January 2026 and publish this by 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

The Council was taking steps enhance biodiversity across the District and several initiatives were already underway; such as leaving grass verges uncut throughout the growing season. There were areas for improvement that had also been identified through working with services areas across the Council. These included:

- Continued engagement with the Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- Monitoring and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) through Planning.
- Enhancing biodiversity on Council-owned land.
- Promoting citizen science and community engagement

Further information was highlighted to Members as follows:

- A new biodiversity report was required every five years.
- Capital investment might be required in the future to undertake future biodiversity projects such as grass verge management equipment.
- Other funding streams would be investigated such as Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) grants.
- Included in the biodiversity report were several mandatory elements as follows:
  - Policies, Objectives and Actions
  - How Other Strategies Were Considered
  - Future Actions
  - Biodiversity Net Gain Information

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

- Biodiversity actions contributed to climate resilience, carbon sequestration, and nature-based solutions and therefore were important to consider for the Climate Change Strategy which was currently being prepared.

Following the presentation, Members thanked Officers for the report and outlined that it was important to note that only some of the actions plans would be implemented by the Council prior to Local Government Reorganisation. Therefore, it was important for Officers to track the plans and outcomes and link in with other authorities once a decision had been made in terms of local government structure in the future.

Members were concerned that the planting of trees be carried out following the implementation of the Bromsgrove Route Enhancement Programme (BREP). As Members were aware, a large number of trees had been removed as part of this project, and it had previously been agreed that three thousand new trees would be planted to offset their removal. Members agreed that it was important to understand where these threes were to be planted and that continued maintenance would be carried out once planted. Councillor Taylor undertook to find the information regarding this.

The Leader invited the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board to comment on this report following its pre-scrutiny at the Board meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2026. It was reported that the Board had looked at the report in detail and had raised some of the same questions as the Cabinet.

**RESOLVED** that

- 1) the findings of the Biodiversity Duty First Consideration Report be noted; and
- 2) Members agreed to publish the full Biodiversity Duty First Consideration Report to the Council's website.

64/25

**PARTICULATE MONITORING**

The Technical Services Manager and Acting Principal Officer (Technical Pollution) from Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) presented the Particulate Monitoring for Cabinet's consideration.

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

The report had been prepared as a result of discussions at a Bromsgrove District Council meeting where it was agreed an options paper be presented to Members.

Particulate Monitoring (PM) was already carried out by WRS, and three sensors were already in place across the District at the following locations:

- Hanover Street, Bromsgrove
- Gunner Lane, Rubery
- Station Road, Hagley

The sensors measured a range of pollutants including PM in real time and monitoring data was accessible via a public portal on the WRS website. Members were encouraged to access this data if they wished to understand the data that was being collected and monitored.

It was noted that the University of Birmingham (UoB) was already monitoring PM in Worcestershire and this would provide an insight into the PM air pollution in Worcestershire. WRS had approached UoB to assist in the design and implementation of a local source apportionment study of PM in Worcestershire. The study would provide a characterisation of the sources of PM, similar to the UoB study outlined above, utilising the specialist monitoring equipment and expertise available from UoB at this time.

Officers explained that this was an exciting and unique opportunity unavailable to any other local authorities outside of Worcestershire now or at any other time.

Members were informed that there was currently no funding for this project and that agreement to the proposal would need to be considered alongside other competing bids for funding from reserves. It was noted that Worcestershire County Council (WCC) had been approached via email to ascertain if they were able to provide any funding for this monitoring in the future.

The Cabinet Member for Planning, WRS and Strategic Housing invited the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board to speak on this report as it had been robustly pre-scrutinised at the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2026. The outcome of both the pre-scrutiny and consideration of the report by Cabinet was that Members were keen to see this monitoring implemented in the future.

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

However, due to no allocated funding for the project there was a slight amendment to the second recommendation contained within the report which noted that the implementation of the project was subject to funding being available either through the budget bid process or any other sources of funding such as WCC.

Therefore, on being put to the vote it was

**RECOMMENDED** that

- 1) additional monitoring of Particulate Matter (air pollution) be delivered as set out in Option E; and
- 2) subject to funding being identified and allocated accordingly a further report be brought back to Cabinet once final costs had been identified.

65/25

**HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION, ROUGH SLEEPER AND DOMESTIC ABUSE GRANTS FUNDING 2027/28 AND 2028/29**

The Housing Development & Enabling Manager presented the Homelessness Prevention, Rough Sleeper and Domestic Abuse Grants Funding 2027/28 and 2028/29 for Members' consideration.

Members were reminded that a report had been approved at the Council meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025 where the temporary accommodation element of the Revenue Support Grant was ringfenced to homeless prevention activities for 2026/27, the report advised that this element of Revenue Support Grant was no longer required.

It was noted that from 2026/27, the Government had consolidated existing Rough Sleeper and Domestic Abuse grants into a single Homelessness Prevention Grant. This new grant encompassed funding for prevention and relief activities for three-years.

It was proposed that the funding allocation for the three-year period would be used for the schemes as detailed in the report considered previously. Members were informed that the funding received had been more generous than expected and that a future report would be presented to Cabinet with an update on the outcomes of the projects and any uplift and additional initiatives being implemented.

The report was pre-scrutinised at the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2026. At this meeting, Members expressed

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

that they were pleased with the report and the decrease in the numbers of those who were homeless and rough sleeping which had decreased within Bromsgrove, which was an excellent outcome for the District and testament to the hard work of the Officers at the Council.

**RESOLVED** that

- 1) The initiatives in the table below be approved to receive the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Grant and Domestic Abuse Grant allocations of funding for 2027/28 and 2028/29, subject to satisfactory performance; with any uplift and additional initiatives being implemented prior to that period to be the subject of a further report to the Cabinet;

<b>Homelessness Grant Allocation</b>	<b>2027/28 £ (up to £620,380)</b>	<b>2028/29 £ (up to £683,063)</b>
Housing Options Service Top Up Staffing Costs	52,475	52,475
Static Temporary Accommodation for an additional 4 units of accommodation	30,688	30,688
Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership Co-ordinator – contribution towards county-wide development and delivery of housing initiatives in partnership with other agencies	10,500	10,500
Severe Emergency Weather Provision	18,347	18,347
St Basils Foyer – provides stable accommodation/support for young people - 14 units – fully occupied during last financial year	50,203	50,203
St Basils Crash pad – provides emergency temporary accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds	19,711	19,711
Bromsgrove Home Choice CBL and Homelessness Module	14,600	14,600
St Basils Young Persons Pathway Worker – support to prevent homelessness for under 25's and Crash Pad to provide a unit of emergency accommodation for young people.	41,116	41,116
NewStarts - Provide Furniture and Volunteering Opportunities for Ex-Offenders – supports tenancy sustainment and provides future employment opportunities/reduces risk of reoffending	15,000	15,000

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

GreenSquare Accord Housing Related Support – helping ex-offenders remain housed/seek employment	31,172	31,172
Maggs Rough Sleeper outreach and prevention service targeting rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping.	35,607	35,607
North Worcestershire Basement Project - Support for young people at risk of homelessness	45,000	45,000
BDHT - Sunrise Project intensive support	46,886	46,886
Mental Health Link Worker (part funded)	21,554	21,554
CAB – Debt Advice for Home Owners and Private Renters	27,611	27,611
CAB – Affordability Assessments	6,021	6,021
Housing First/Housing Led Service	29,563	29,563
Part time Empty Homes Officer	7,680	7,680
Spend to Save Top Up	5,683	5,683
County Rough Sleeper Coordinator	5,500	5,500
Rough Sleeper Access to Accommodation Fund and NFNO/NSNO	1,000	1,000
County Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator	5,112	5,112
County Domestic Abuse Research and Intelligence Officer	4,573	4,573
Top up to DA Housing Options Officer	6,059	6,059
<b>Total committed expenditure</b>	<b>£531,66</b>	<b>£531,661</b>
<b>Underspend</b>	<b>£88,719</b>	<b>151,402</b>

- 2) Delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing, to use any unallocated grant from this source of grant funding during the year or make further adjustments and uplifts as necessary to ensure full utilisation of the grants, including any mid-year Homelessness Prevention Grant top up, for 2027/28 and 2028/29 in support of existing or new schemes.

66/25

## PAY POLICY 2026/27

The Human Resources & Development Manager presented the Pay Policy 2026/27 report for Members' consideration.

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

It was noted that this was the annual report provided to Members and outlined the pay structure for Council staff.

**RECOMMENDED** that

- 1) the Pay Policy 2026/27 be approved.

67/25

## **BUSINESS RATES DISCRETIONARY RATES RELIEF POLICY 2026-2027**

The Revenue Services Manager presented the Business Rates Discretionary Rates Relief Policy 2026-2027.

It was reported that historically, discretionary rates relief had been restricted to charities, not for profit organisations, and the occupiers of small premises within rural settlements. However, the Localism Act 2011 and the Non-Domestic Rating Act 2023 removed some of the restrictions on the award of relief and, except in the case of charities and non-profit organisations, the Council could only award relief to any ratepayer where it would be reasonable to do so and was in the interest of the Council's council taxpayers.

Certain types of property situated within a rural settlement and with a rateable value below specific thresholds were entitled to rural rate relief, the properties eligible for rural rate relief were as follows:

- The only post office within a rural settlement
- The only general store within a rural settlement
- The only public house within a rural settlement
- The only petrol filling station within a rural settlement
- A rural food shop

The 'rural rate condition' allowed billing authorities a further discretion to grant relief to any business within a rural settlement provided that the rateable value of the property occupied was less than £16,500, that the use of the property was of a benefit to the local community, and it was in the interest of taxpayers for relief to be provided.

The rural rate condition was removed by the Localism Act 2011 which gave the Council greater powers to award discretionary rate relief.

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

Members were informed that the revised policy aimed to modernise the framework for awarding relief in line with the Council's strategic Priorities and moved away from the rigid criteria guided by the following principles:

- Community benefit
- Strategic alignment
- Financial need
- Sustainability

The Finance and Budget Working Group had pre-scrutinised this report at its meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026. There were no further recommendations made as a result of this pre-scrutiny.

**RECOMMENDED** that

- 1) A non-domestic rates discretionary relief policy be approved and adopted from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026
- 2) Subject to the removal of Burcot as a settlement from the Lickey and Blackwell Parish, the rural settlement list included in the policy be approved and adopted for use from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.

68/25

**COUNCIL TAX BASE REPORT 2026/27**

The Revenue Services Manager presented the Council Tax Base Report 2026/27 for Members' consideration.

The Council Tax Base calculation for 2026-27 this was required as this was the first step in determining the Council Tax for the forthcoming year.

Members were informed that the Council Tax Base was calculated using data held by the Authority as of 30<sup>th</sup> November 2025. This data reflected the number of dwellings in each valuation band and accounts for exemptions, discount and reductions.

The Finance and Budget Working Group had pre-scrutinised this report at its meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026. There were no further recommendations made as a result of this pre-scrutiny.

**RESOLVED** that the amount calculated by Bromsgrove District Council as the Council Tax Base for the whole area for 2026/27 be approved at 38,409.8 as detailed below to include the individual parish elements.

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

	<b>Parish Name</b>	<b>Net</b>
	<b>Whole Area</b>	<b>38,409.8</b>
101/107	Unparished	14,285.3
111	Alvechurch	2,383.1
102	Barnt Green	1,044.8
116	Belbroughton and Fairfield	1,255.8
118	Bentley Pauncefoot	258.9
119	Beoley	474.0
103	Bournheath	222.3
104	Catshill and North Marlbrook	2,352.6
120	Clent	574.6
121	Cofton Hackett	1,280.1
122	Dodford with Grafton	411.6
105	Finstall	320.3
123	Frankley	50.4
124	Hagley	3,237.9
106	Lickey and Blackwell	2,141.1
125	Hunnington	271.8
126	Romsley	667.6
127/131	Parish of Stoke	1,941.3
129	Tutnall and Cobley	407.0
130	Wythall	4,829.3
		38,409.8
	Trent Flood Defence Area	7,102.2
	Severn Flood Defence Area	31,307.7

69/25

## COUNCIL TAX EMPTY HOMES DISCOUNTS AND PREMIUMS 2026-27

The Revenue Services Manager presented the Council Tax Empty Homes Discounts and Premiums 2026-27.

In doing so the current levels of discount to 'second' homes and empty homes were provided. It was noted that empty homes were unoccupied and substantially unfurnished dwellings. The Council applied a graduated discount for these homes. Members were informed that homes that were empty for thirty days or less received a 100 per cent discount, homes empty for more than thirty days were charged the full amount of Council Tax.

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

For long term empty homes, the Council could apply additional Council Tax, when a home had been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for twelve months or more. In terms of the 'second home' premium, Local Authorities had been able to apply additional Council Tax for substantially furnished dwellings and were no one's sole or main residence from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025. Members were informed that the Council did not currently apply premiums to second homes. It was suggested that due to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) it would be more appropriate for the new structure of local government to make decisions on whether to implement these premiums in the future.

Cabinet was informed that for the 2025/26 tax year the additional Council Tax levied on long-term empty homes was estimated to be £476,000, with Bromsgrove retaining £57,000 shared across precepting Authorities.

Currently there were one hundred and twenty-four 'second homes' within the District. It was noted that this was a snapshot in time as levels could change. The imposition of a 'second home' premium, applied to these homes. If applied, this would lead to an additional Council Tax premium of £300,000 with the Council retaining £36,000. Therefore, it was considered that the application of a 'second home' premium was not financially beneficial for this premium to be implemented currently.

The process of how empty homes were treated during probate or undergoing substantial repair projects was explained to Members. This was a complex process and took into consideration several factors.

Members were keen to understand what the Council did with the funding received from the revenue from long term empty homes and if it was ringfenced. Officers explained that this revenue was accounted for in the Council Tax receipts.

The Finance and Budget Working Group had pre-scrutinised this report at its meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026. There were no further recommendations made as a result of this pre-scrutiny.

**RECOMMENDED** that

- 1) the determinations as set out in Appendix A be adopted with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.
- 2) The Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services be authorised to consider, on a case-by-case basis, a

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

reduction to the long-term empty premium under Section 13A(1)(C) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

3) the Council retained the existing discounts for unoccupied and furnished homes, as set out in Appendix A (below) and did not implement additional council tax premiums for unoccupied and substantially furnished homes.

70/25

## COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2026/27

The Revenue Services Manager presented the Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27 for Cabinet's consideration.

In doing so it was explained that there was a requirement under section 13A(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (LGFA '92) to have a Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme. The scheme must specify the reductions in Council Tax available to individuals in financial need, or to defined classes of people considered to be in financial need.

On 1st April 2021, Bromsgrove District Council introduced an income-banded scheme for working age applicants. The rationale was to future proof the scheme, reduce administrative burdens and align more closely with universal credit. The current scheme included a provision to uprate income bands by an inflation factor determined by the Council, typically aligned with increases in national welfare benefits. The CTR Scheme must be reviewed each year.

It was proposed that for 2026-27 the uprating of income bands should be 3.8 per cent, which was in line with the increase in national benefits.

The Finance and Budget Working Group had pre-scrutinised this report at its meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026. There were no further recommendations made as a result of this pre-scrutiny.

### RECOMMENDED that

- 1) The Council Tax Reduction Scheme be retained for 2026-27 tax year, subject to uprating of income bands by 3.8% in-line with increases to national benefits.

71/25

## 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**

There was no Urgent Business on this occasion.

72/25

## **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27 TO 2028/29 INCLUDING FEES AND CHARGES, WRS BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS AND OUTCOME OF BUDGET CONSULTATION**

The Interim Finance Manager presented the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2026/27 to 2028/29 including Fees and Charges, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Budget recommendations and outcome of the Budget Consultation report. This included information on the Chancellor's Autumn Statement implications, fees and charges proposals, consultation outcomes, and key financial pressures.

This report enabled Officers to prepare for stage Two of the Council's Budget setting process, supported the approach to Fees and Charges and the WRS uplift. In addition to this it confirmed the timetable to February Cabinet and March Council Tax Resolution.

In terms of the national context Officers explained that Chancellor's Autumn Statement introduced major structural and funding changes for the future. This was underpinned by the outcomes of the Fair Funding Review. The review aimed to redistribute resources more equitably based on assessed local need. Key elements of the new funding framework included:

- Needs-Based Formula - This incorporated an updated demographic and service demand data.
- Resource Adjustment Mechanism - This reflected a Council's ability to raise local income.
- Area Cost Adjustments - This accounted for regional variations in service delivery costs.
- Grant Consolidation - This resulted in multiple small grants merged into larger ring-fenced grants e.g.
  - New Homes Bonus funding would no longer be available, and funding would be redirected to a core settlement.
  - Homelessness Prevention, Rough Sleeping, Temporary Accommodation to be combined.
  - Discretionary Housing Payments and Household Support Fund proposed for consolidation.

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

In addition to the changes relating to the Fairer Funding Review and Grant Consolidation as detailed above, other key measures should be noted:

- A high-value property surcharge from April 2028 - central Government would retain revenue in the future.
- Council Tax flexibility remained unchanged at 2.99 per cent or £5 cap.
- An £18m national investment for the upgrade of two hundred children's play areas under 'Pride in Place'.
- Rent Convergence would be reintroduced from 2026. This would be in addition to the standard CPI + 1 per cent plus weekly adjustment.

As a result of these changes there would be an impact on Bromsgrove as follows:

- The redistribution under Fair Funding would likely reduce Core Spending Power by 3.4 per cent over three years.
- The simplification of grant funding would reduce flexibility.
- The Council tax ceiling remained unchanged.
- There would be the opportunity to bid for 'Pride in Place' funding.

Members were reminded that Council set a three-year MTFP 2025/26 to 2027/28 in February 2025 in February 2025. The position reflected a balanced budget for 2025/26 with a deficit position of £1.03m in 2026/27 and deficit of £399k in 2027/28. It was noted that the Council was operating in a high-cost environment and an assumption had been made that there would be no growth in business rates given the reset and the end of pooling.

Some of the corporate assumptions were provided to Members as follows:

- Incorporation of a two per cent pay award of £389,000 and a further 1 per cent cost-of-living uplift of £195,000
- The cost of Councillors rejoining the Local Government Pension Scheme at a cost of £54,000.

It was noted that some of the extra costs were offset by the release of £230,000 from the utilities inflation budget and £250,000 corporate savings. Further savings had been generated from a change in forward funding rates for pensions of £358,000 in 2026-27 rising to £380,000 in 2028-29.

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

Fees and Charges were originally assumed at an increase of 2 per cent reflecting an increase of £100,000. Services have now provided more granular schedules resulting in a further income of £152,000 in 2026/27.

WRS required no uplift in 2026/27 due to pension rate changes, with pressures of £25,000 in 2027/28 and £59,000 in 2028/29 for salary and inflation. It was noted that WRS could not offset these through income generation.

It was reported that the funding gap had been narrowed as a result of the work undertaken as detailed above. However, further work was still being undertaken prior to the Final Settlement.

Following the presentation of the report members queried several areas including the following:

- The proposed two percent pay award and one percent cost of living increase – Members raised that there needed to be careful consideration of the level of pay increase particularly as the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) had recommended a higher level of increase to Members Allowances of 4.6 per cent for the next municipal year.
- WRS deficit – Members were surprised at the level of financial burden on the Council and concerned that all authorities included in the Service Level Agreement (SLA) for WRS were responsible for the appropriate amount of deficit. The Interim Section 151 Officer had previously been asked about this matter and at the time of writing a response was to be provided by a member of the Finance Team to the Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance and the Chief Executive. However, Members were reassured that the Interim Section 151 Officer did attend WRS Board meetings. The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board explained that this report had been pre-scrutinised at a meeting of the Finance and Budget Working Group on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026. At this meeting, value for money was discussed in respect of WRS particularly within the context of Planning Enforcement. Members were reminded that the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) review had just been undertaken and it would be prudent to wait until the outcomes of that review had been provided before making any assumptions. It was noted that the Council paid a large amount of funding to WRS which looked to increase to £500,000 by 2028-29 and value for money needed to be established. Officers reminded members that WRS provided bespoke services to the Council which would result in an increase of costs incurred. It was requested that further work be undertaken in looking at value for money in terms of Planning Enforcement and the other services

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

provided by WRS following the outcomes of the PAS review. It was suggested that the original business case for the establishment of Planning Enforcement by WRS be revisited as part of this work. It was further noted that Planning Enforcement took a considerable amount of time and that the numbers of cases would not decrease immediately due to the complex process.

The Policy Manager provided an update on the Budget Consultation which had closed on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2026. It was reported that there had been a disappointing response to the consultation. A total of two hundred and twenty-three valid surveys had been received (one hundred and thirty-eight from the Community Panel and eighty-five from the general public). Members queried whether this might be an opportunity to look at the membership of the Community Panel for future years and contact neighbouring authorities to understand the results their consultation had received. There had been no responses received from the local school who had been contacted. A longer lead in time for the consultation might have provided an increased response and this should be looked at for the future. Engagement sessions had been carried out in the usual way. In speaking to residents in the District there were new areas that had been highlighted in face-to-face discussions such as immigration, housing, funding and taxes. These areas had not been highlighted as strongly when the survey was carried out previously.

It was reported that there seemed to be disillusionment from the public in respect of local government. However there were some clear indications that residents were interested in what was taking place in the local area with traffic congestion, public transport, increased numbers of houses and environmental damage to the local areas being identified as areas of concern.

In terms of Council Priorities Infrastructure and Environment had been the top priorities identified at 55 and 52.7 per cent respectively. The top three most important Council services were as follows:

1. Environmental Services - 78.2%
2. Planning & Leisure Services - 68.6%
3. Regeneration & Property - 63.2%

Fees and charges were included in the consultation and 37.4 per cent of respondents felt that fees and charges (such as hire costs) should rise by four per cent to keep them in line with inflation and rising staffing costs.

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

The demographic of respondents was similar to previous years with the top three respondents ages as follows:

1. 60-69yrs - 26.6%
2. 70-79yrs - 23.9%
3. 80+ years - 7.3%

Suggestions for improvements to increase prosperity within the District were varied however the top three themes were the importance of infrastructure (roads, public transport, amenities, impact of development), Bromsgrove Town Centre, and supporting businesses. These topics had also been in the top three in the previous survey, suggesting consistency in both the publics priorities and areas of concern. These themes had many cross overs, from the impact of traffic (in particular the BREP), encouraging a diverse range of businesses into the town and reducing costs to businesses.

Further suggestions from respondents for increased prosperity within the District were as follows:

- Reducing business rates / relief
- Reducing parking costs (or make it free)
- Supporting independent retailers
- Bringing in key major retailers
- Larger variety of shops on offer on High Street
- Utilise empty shops
- Improve the market
- Make the town vibrant, attractive & distinctive - develop attractions, encourage visitors
- Improve the appearance & maintenance of the high street
- Improved public transport
- Ensure a district-wide view

Other comments were sought from residents on other budget ideas for reducing costs or increasing income to ensure Council services remained sustainable. These were suggested as detailed below:

- Stop expenses (in particular Councillors)
- Review staffing & wages (in particular management)
- Reduce waste
- Effective procurement
- Focus on essential services
- Effective maintenance

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

- Do more online.
- Utilise technology, including AI.
- Measure effectiveness and VfM.
- Explore alternative methods of delivery e.g. partnerships, consolidation of services, VCS, franchises.
- Reduce use of consultants.
- Commercial opportunities e.g. better events.
- Reduce events.
- Promote events better to increase revenue.
- Community use of buildings
- Increase enforcement e.g. fly tipping & littering.
- Better coordination around highways and roadworks.

Following the presentation of the consultation responses, the Policy Manager explained she would distribute the information to Members for their information.

Members were disappointed with the response rate and with such a small sample size it was difficult to ascertain what areas within the district were interested in which priorities and issues. This information could be circulated to Members following the meeting.

## RECOMMENDED that

- 1) Members take account of any feedback from the Consultation on the Budget 2026/27.
- 2) Members endorse the further work / proposals being undertaken on the Medium-Term Financial Plan to produce a balanced position for 2026/27 – 2028/29 including the initial set of savings proposals and pressures including fees and charges increases.
- 3) The recommended increases relating to Worcestershire Regulatory Services of £25,000 for 2027/28 and £59,000 for 2028/29 be approved.
- 4) The updated three-year capital programme 2026/27 – 2028/29 along with available funding for further capital projects to be undertaken going forward and the proposed projects for funding along with revenue implications.

The meeting closed at 8.12 p.m.

# Agenda Item 14

Cabinet  
7th January 2026

Chairman

# Agenda Item 19

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

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