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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY 18TH JUNE 2025

AT 1.00 P.M.

COMMITTEE ROOM 2 - PARKSIDE

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

AGENDA

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

To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests.
3. **To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 26th March 2025 (Pages 7 - 20)**
4. **Contaminated Land Strategy (Pages 21 - 66)**
5. **Warm Homes Local Grants Funding and Resources (Pages 67 - 74)**
6. **Cabinet Appointments to Outside Bodies (Pages 75 - 80)**

7. **Appointments to the Shareholders' Committee** (Pages 81 - 88)
8. **Recommendation from Audit, Standards and Governance Committee** (Pages 89 - 94)

This recommendation was made by the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee at its meeting held on 20th March 2025.

9. **Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 25th March and 15th April 2025** (Pages 95 - 108)

- (a) To receive and note the minutes

There are no recommendations for the consideration of Cabinet contained within the Overview and Scrutiny Board meetings minutes included in this agenda.

10. **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**

11. **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>
12	3 & 4

12. **Promoting Independent Living Service Contract Proposals** (Pages 109 - 152)

J. Leach
Chief Executive

Parkside
Market Street
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B61 8DA

10th June 2025

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

**Parkside, Market Street, Bromsgrove, B61 8DA
Tel: (01527) 64252 Ext: 3031
Email: joanne.gresham@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk**

**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.**



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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY 26TH MARCH 2025, AT 6.00 P.M.

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

Observers: Councillor S.T. Nock

Officers: Mr P. Carpenter, Mrs. H. Mole, Mrs. R. Green, Ms. G. Harris and Mrs J. Gresham

80/24 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence from Members on this occasion.

81/24 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor K. May declared an Other Disclosable Interest in respect of Minute Item 84 – UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) 2025 – 2026, on the basis that, as Leader of the Council, she would be required to sign off the final allocations of the UK Shared Prosperity Funding. Councillor May remained present for the consideration of the report and took part in the vote thereon.

There were no other Declarations of Interest.

82/24 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 19TH FEBRUARY 2025**

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 19th February 2025 were submitted for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 19th February 2025 be approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

83/24 **DATA STRATEGY (INCL DATA STANDARDS POLICY)**

The Business Improvement Manager – Business Transformation, presented the Data Strategy (including Data Standards Policy) report for Members' consideration.

During the presentation of the report, it was highlighted that this Policy provided the foundation and guidance for effective data governance to help safeguard the Council's data assets. It would ensure that data was high quality, accurate and consistent across the organisation. It also provided guidance in respect of legal and regulatory requirements to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation such as UK General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR). The following areas were also included in the policy to help provide a robust framework in the future:

1. Data Security
2. Efficiency
3. Interoperability
4. Trust and Transparency

The Governance structure of this Policy consisted of the System and Data (SAD) Governance Group, which met on a regular basis. This Group reported back to the SAD Governance Board, led by the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer, who met on a quarterly basis. There were also regular updates provided to the Senior Leadership and Corporate Leadership Teams.

An assessment had been carried out using the Local Government Association (LGA) assessment tool in respect of Data Maturity. This was undertaken by a group of fourth tier managers across the organisation. The results of this assessment indicated a Data Maturity score of 2.7, which meant that the Council was currently working at Level Three and were 'developing their capacity and capabilities in terms of their data'. Ideally, the Council would be at least at Level Four. This Policy would provide the framework in order to attain this level.

There were three projects currently underway that would increase the Data Maturity level the Council was working at. These were as follows:

1. **Data Standards** – there were five systems across the Organisation that held ninety percent of the Council's data. These systems needed to be reviewed, and organisational rules implemented on how to input consistent and accurate data. A Data Dictionary would also be developed as part of this project. In order for this project to progress successfully, there would need to be £50,000 allocated to look at the systems more closely by system providers. This allocation equated to £10,000 per system.
2. **Data Stewards** – Data Stewards would have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of data collected and contained

within the systems. They would be responsible for the quality of the data and undertake regular audits in order to ensure that the data contained within the systems remained accurate and of a high quality.

3. **Systems Procurement** – This project would ensure regulation around the procurement of new systems and due diligence in respect of the numbers of system procured.

These were long term projects and would be carried out over two years.

Following the presentation of the Data Strategy (including Data Standards Policy), the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer explained that this Policy provided useful preparatory work prior to the Local Government Reorganisation, currently taking place. It would result in standardisation of the data contained within the Council's data systems and, just as importantly, 'kept clean' going forward. Members welcomed this Policy, as it had been reported that some Local Authorities who had undergone recent reorganisation had not undertaken this type of process. This had resulted in significant issues in respect of the non-alignment of data.

Members queried whether the financial allocation of £50,000 requested within the report had been included in the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2025/2026 to 2027/2028 (following consultation). Members were advised that it had not been included as this part of the approval process needed to be undertaken first. The allocation would be monitored in the Outturn reports going forward.

It was also queried whether there were any shared systems across both Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils. It was confirmed that this was the case. It had been agreed at the Executive Committee meeting that took place at Redditch Borough Council on 11th March 2025 that the funding allocation of £60,000 be approved in order to look at the systems. It was explained that the extra £10,000 allocated in Redditch was as a result of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) system which was not used at Bromsgrove.

In addition to this, Cabinet was advised that Worcestershire County Council (WCC) were also due to implement the TechOne finance system in December 2025. This was the same finance system used by Bromsgrove District Council.

Members queried the control of information and what this meant in terms of cyber security in the future. It was noted that a report would be

considered early in the next municipal year regarding the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) across the Council.

Following consideration of this report, Members extended their best wishes and thanks to the Assistant Director Business Transformation, Organisational Development and Digital Services who was due to retire at the end of March 2025.

RESOLVED that the proposed Data Standards Policy be agreed and implement guidance policy for all employees and Members.

84/24

UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND 2025 - 2026

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund Manager presented the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) 2025 – 2026 report for the consideration of Cabinet.

In doing so, the background to the UKSPF was explained to Members and that previously the funding had been for three years from 2022 to 2025. The scheme had been extended for one year (2025 to 2026) and the funding allocated to the Council for this period was £917,878.

The UKSPF would continue to focus on three investment priorities of Communities and Place, Supporting Local Businesses and People and Skills. Previously there had been more than fifty interventions which described the intention of the investment priorities. These interventions had been replaced with five themes and twelve sub-themes. Any scheme that had previously been eligible for funding would remain so under the new guidelines.

Potential areas of investment had been discussed by Members at the Cabinet Advisory Group (CAG) meeting held in December 2024. The Investment Plan was then developed with these discussions in mind. It was also reported that the Investment Plan aligned with the Council's priorities as detailed within the Bromsgrove District Council Plan approved in July 2024. The results of the recent Community Survey had also been considered when shaping the Investment Plan.

The areas included within the Investment Plan included infrastructure, buildings, open spaces, cost of living (including fuel poverty) and local centres. There was also support for local businesses and for the upskilling of young people and provision of support in order for them to enter the workforce.

The Bromsgrove Partnership, in its role as Local Partnership Group, for the UKSPF had been consulted on the strategic fit and deliverability of the Investment Plan. For the most part, the Partnership was supportive of the Plan, however there had been some recommendations made following discussions at a meeting held on 12th March 2025.

The Partnership expressed some concern in respect of the allocation of funding for the subtheme 'bringing communities together'. They recommended that the funding should be a forty to fifty per cent revenue allocation rather than a capital allocation. However, it was noted by Officers that there was some flexibility for revenue funding to be used as capital funding under the grant conditions, however capital must be spent on capital expenditure. This meant that the funding as detailed within the Investment Plan for this sub theme could be varied depending on demand and who was likely to need it.

A further recommendation was suggested by the Partnership that capital funding for high streets and town centre improvements should not include Bromsgrove Town Centre as there was already funding available for this location. Officers were not supportive of this recommendation.

The third recommendation was in respect of the funding of County wide projects to avoid a 'postcode lottery' of support. It was confirmed that this was already the approach taken as part of the Investment Plan. However, Members were assured that in taking this approach value for money for Bromsgrove residents had been considered and that all funding allocations benefitted Bromsgrove residents only.

The final recommendation from the Partnership had been in relation to organisations that delivered support across a common theme, such as skills, be encouraged to work in a joined-up way in order to avoid duplication of services. This was already the approach taken when the Investment Plan was developed to ensure cohesion.

Finally, the UK Prosperity Fund Manager advised Members that the second Officer recommendation contained within the report was in order to ensure greater flexibility to re-allocate any outstanding funding that had not been spent towards the end of the scheme.

Members considered the recommendations made by the Bromsgrove Partnership and felt that with the potential exception of the recommendation made in respect of the public realm funding, the Investment Plan as presented captured priority areas of investment effectively and appropriately.

There were some discussions in respect of Economic Development following the Local Government Reorganisation. At this stage there was a significant number of unknowns in this area and that it would need to be considered when decisions were made as part of the Local Government Reorganisation process going forward.

Members queried access to the support for local businesses. It was felt that the Worcestershire Growth Hub website was difficult to navigate and that businesses might not be able to ascertain where to find information on support that was available. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund Manager explained that this had been raised previously. There was an advisor, with specific local knowledge, available who could consult with businesses to provide advice on this matter. Businesses could either contact the advisor directly or contact the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Manager for further information.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The Investment Plan be approved.
- 2) Authority to vary the Investment Plan, in order to maximise the use of the grant, be delegated to the Assistant Director Regeneration & Property following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Regeneration.

85/24

FINANCE RECOVERY PROGRAMME REPORT

The Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer presented the Finance Recovery report for the consideration of Members.

It was explained that this report was presented to Members on a regular basis, following the issuing of the Section 24 Notice in November 2023. A version of this report was also considered at the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee meetings throughout the municipal year.

The report included any Key Deliverables, Treasury Indicators and updates on the VAT returns.

Members were informed that the Statement of Accounts for the financial years 2020 – 2021, 2021 – 2022, 2022 – 2023 had been completed and Disclaimer Opinions received and approved. The draft accounts for financial year 2023 – 2024 were out for consultation with some public consultation comments being received, which was positive. It was

reported that there were potential difficulties likely to arise in terms of the Disclaimer Options that had been issued to Councils nationally and the effect these would have on external audits in the future. It was felt that there was a disconnect between the understanding of Disclaimer Opinions between Central Government and auditors and whether time should be spent on 'old' accounts. It was suggested that as long as the opening balances, amount of reserves and grant funding were known this was hopefully sufficient to provide accurate accounts in future years. Furthermore, there was a level of assurance around these balances in that returns were checked and submitted on a yearly basis.

Ernst & Young had been confirmed as the Council's External Auditors. The Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer thanked Members for their speedy return of the disclosure information that had been provided to the auditors. This was usually a process that might take six to eight months. However, the Council had completed their disclosure information within four months. Due diligence was currently being undertaken by Ernst & Young including looking at Council press releases. It was thought that this process would be completed within four weeks from the time of the meeting. Members were interested to learn that this was part of the due diligence process, and it highlighted the necessity and importance to continue to make decisions in a robust manner following complete analysis.

The Key Deliverables included within the report were as follows:

1. The Accounting Policies report was now considered at each Audit, Standards and Governance Committee.
2. The TechOne system had been upgraded to version 24B in February 2025
3. The approval of the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2025 – 2026 to 2027 – 2028 on 19th February 2025
4. The consultation on the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2025 – 2026 to 2027 – 2028
5. Changes implemented to the Procurement processes
6. Updated Prudential Indicators had been completed.

It was reported that Central Government had announced that capital receipts could be used to fund redundancies as part of the Local Government Reorganisation. Information in respect of this would be circulated to Members following the meeting.

Members queried what the allocation would be from Central Government in order to carry out the Local Government Reorganisation. It was

reported that information had been received that £6.7million had been allocated across Worcestershire for this purpose. At the time of the meeting, it was unknown as to how these funds would be distributed and whether this would be equally or be dependent on the size and complexity of the Council.

Although the Local Government Reorganisation was inevitably at the forefront of Members' and Officers' minds it was imperative that 'business as usual' continued within the Council and that services still needed to be delivered. As highlighted earlier in the meeting there were processes underway in terms of data and other areas in order to leverage improvements during and following the Local Government Reorganisation. Several models of Local Government could be considered as part of the reorganisation. There had been recent examples of Local Government Reorganisation such as at Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council. The Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer undertook to provide Members with the public documentation available in respect of this matter following the meeting.

It was noted that there would be pressures in terms of pensions, and this would need to be considered in detail as part of the reorganisation process.

Although the Local Government Reorganisation was due to be implemented by April 2028, it was thought that the process would take significantly longer to embed and consolidate following vesting day.

Following consideration of the report, Members thanked and stated that the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer had breathed 'fresh air' into the Finance Recovery reports. It was noted that they would be included in a Forward Plan currently being developed in the future to ensure transparency.

RESOLVED that the following be **NOTED**

- 1) Progress made on the financial recovery including:
 - a) Delivery of the Statutory Accounts
 - b) Delivery of Statutory Financial Returns
 - c) Improvements in the Control Environment

- 2) The work still under way to move back to a best practice operation and the associated timetable for completion of this work, as contained in this report.

86/24

QUARTER 3 REVENUE AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING 24-25

The Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer presented the Quarter Three Revenue and Performance Monitoring 24-25 for Members' consideration.

It was noted that this report along with the Finance Recovery report, also considered at this Cabinet meeting, had been pre-scrutinised by the Finance and Budget Working Group (FBWG) at its meeting that took place on 21st March 2025.

During consideration of this report, Members were informed of the following:

- Currently the Council was forecasting an underspend of £53,000 at Quarter Three which was an improvement of £397,000 reported at Quarter Two. Details of variations of any underspend and overspends were provided and the reasons for these variations were highlighted for Members.
- As of 31st December 2024, the Council had no long-term borrowing and £6million worth of investments.
- The spend on the Capital Programme was currently £2.284million versus a budget of £7million. There was no debt as a result of the Capital Programme as it was funded solely by the Council.
- The Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) funding could not be accessed until the 2026 – 2027 financial year. These funds would be utilised for the Market Hall project.
- There had been an increase in costs at the Windsor Street site due to further remediation works being identified. This increase had been covered within the contingency budget. It was noted that this site would be ready for development very soon.
- There were £12.8million in General Fund Reserves and £9.534million in earmarked Reserves (this included the £40,000 which had previously been allocated to the Poverty Truth Commission).
- Members Wards Budget allocations continued to be monitored and currently there had been £46,700 spent of this budget which meant that £15,300 was still to be allocated prior to the end of the financial year.

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- The impact of the Local Government Reorganisation and the impact this increase of workload would have on the workload of Senior Officers within the Council.
- The Procurement Pipeline which included details of contracts expected to be reprocured and procured in the future. It was noted that there were currently seventeen contracts between the old key decision threshold of £50,000 and the new key threshold of £200,000, ten contracts over the key decision threshold of £200,000 and four contracts procured by Redditch Borough Council on behalf of Bromsgrove. Any contracts over the new key decision threshold would be included in the Forward Plan.

The Policy Manager presented the performance monitoring information contained within the Quarter Three Revenue and Performance Monitoring 2024 – 2025. It was reported that the suite of measures were aligned with the Council Plan. The information looked different to previous reports as there had been a change to the format following requests received from Members. There were some measures still to be included such as Freedom of Information and Subject Access Request data. This was a result of projects currently being carried out in these areas. They would however appear in future versions of these reports.

Members access to these measures would increase over the coming months due to the introduction of the Power BI system, which would provide up to date and more dynamic data. This software also allowed greater interrogation of the data included in the system and a summary sheet would also be available in order to see where there were any trends in particular areas. This would ensure that any areas of positive or negative change could be identified more easily and quickly.

The performance measures not only aligned with the Council Plan they were linked to the Service Business Planning process which had recently been undertaken by Officers. It was hoped that this approach would provide greater clarity on how the Council was performing versus the Council Plan.

The Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer explained that at the meeting of the FBWG on 21st March 2025, Members had some queries and areas to look at further in future reports. These included:

- Information on the direction of travel from Quarter to Quarter in order to better understand what the issues were prior to them becoming more serious.

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- The timeline of the inclusion of all measures in future reports. This was identified as being in September 2025.
- Workforce Strategy was identified as an area of significant concern particularly the high 10 days of lost time per Full Time Equivalent (FTE)
- More information to be provided on Enforcement including action taken by Environmental Services and Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS).
- A full reconciliation of the Market Hall project.

Members expressed that this was a really good report, and the data was presented was much improved and more transparent way.

Concerns were raised regarding the increased number of new houses that needed to be built within the District per annum in line with the new National Planning Policy Framework.

Members requested that further information be provided in future reports such as:

1. Disability Facilities Grants – the average length of the process from the first enquiry to the delivery of the project.
2. Enforcement – how long enforcement cases had taken and the outcomes of any enforcement, whether there had been no further action or if the enforcement had resulted in a prosecution.
3. Number of lost telephone calls to the Council because of long waiting times.

Members were interested in the process regarding the GBSLEP monies and whether Birmingham City Council had the authority to withhold monies in this way until the 2026 – 2027 financial year. It was stated that there had been a bid submitted to access these funds, and the outcome of the submission would be known over the coming months.

Following the presentation of the report Members thanked the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer for all his hard work over his time with the Council and wished him every success in the future.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The current Revenue underspend position of £53k and actions the Council were taking to mitigate this position be noted.

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- 2) The current Capital spending of £2.284m against a budget of £7.070m be noted.
- 3) The Ward Budget allocation position to date is 23 approved allocations at £33,137.
- 4) The updated procurements position, with any new items over £200,000 to be included on the forward plan.
- 5) The Quarter Three Performance data for the period October to December 2024 be noted. This is in the new format.
- 6) The Council submit a bid for £2.425m to Birmingham City Council for funding allocated to Bromsgrove by the former Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) to support the completion of the Market Hall regeneration initiative.

RECOMMENDED that

- 7) That the Balance Sheet Monitoring Position for Quarter Three be noted – which is the Treasury Monitoring Report and required to be reported to Council.
- 8) In the event that the bid be successful, the budget be amended to reflect that the GBSLEP funding was being applied to the Market Hall development.

87/24

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 11TH FEBRUARY 2025 AND 17TH FEBRUARY 2025

The minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 11th February 2025 and 17th February 2025 were submitted for the Cabinet's consideration. It was noted that there were no outstanding recommendations contained within these minutes.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 11th February 2025 and 17th February 2025 be noted.

88/24

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

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SO URGENT A NATURE THAT IT CANNOT WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING

There was no Urgent Business on this occasion.

The meeting closed at 7.39 p.m.

Chairman

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Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Kit Taylor
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Simon Wilkes
Report Author	Stephen Williams Specialist Lead Officer (Contaminated Land) Stephen.Williams@worcsregservices.gov.uk 01562 738090
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No
Relevant Council Priority	Enhancing the quality of life for current and future generations
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Cabinet RECOMMEND that:-

1) The Council adopts the revised strategy (as attached at Appendix 1) which should be published on the Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) website.

2. **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The attached report in Appendix 1 is a revision of the Bromsgrove District Council Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy which was first published in May 2001. This document can be made available on request.
- 2.2 The new inspection strategy aims to replace the previous version and meet the current requirements of the statutory guidance which was issued in 2012. It outlines the process for review of potential contaminated land sites within the district and the prioritisation methodology to be used. It also aims to provide an overview of the framework that exists in respect of contaminated land and other methods under which sites can be addressed, with action under Part 2A to be taken only as a last resort.
- 2.3 The strategy does not place any additional obligations on the local authority or change any existing statutory responsibilities. It sets out the process that has been developed for prioritisation and review of

sites that is ongoing and aims to ensure that current guidance is being complied with.

- 2.4 Sites where contamination may be present have the potential to pose a risk to human health and the environment. Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 places a duty on local authorities to review and assess these risks through the contaminated land regime. The presence of a harmful substance alone does not mean that land will meet the definition of “contaminated land”. The source of contamination must present a significant possibility of significant harm to relevant receptors through a viable pathway of exposure. The strategy presents the methodology for how assessment of all sites of potential contamination concern will be conducted via strategic inspection, prioritisation, and detailed review of highest risk sites.
- 2.5 The statutory guidance states that action under contaminated land legislation should only be used when there is no other appropriate alternative with other mechanisms used in preference if possible. These include the planning and development control processes as well as voluntary action taken by landowners to minimise the unnecessary burdens placed on taxpayers, businesses, and individuals.
- 2.6 The original strategy document requires amendment to reflect the changes that have occurred since publication including the gradual reduction and withdrawal of the funding system from central Government for local authority contaminated land work. As a result, the Council will focus on addressing sites where contamination may exist predominantly through the planning and development control process.
- 2.7 To date no sites have been declared as ‘Contaminated Land’ by Bromsgrove District Council since the first Contaminated Land Strategy was produced in 2001. However, a number of sites of concern have been subject to detailed inspection in this time. A current total of approximately 2020 sites have been identified as potential sites of contaminated land concern within the district largely relating to the historic land use. There are a total of approximately 9300 potential sites of concern identified across Worcestershire as a whole. The prioritisation process will continue as outlined in the strategy.
- 2.8 Planning policies encourage the reuse of previously developed land (brownfield) subject to appropriate site investigation, risk assessment and remediation. Voluntary action is strongly encouraged to deal with potentially contaminated land, either on individual site basis or as part of wider regeneration work. Regulatory action under Part 2A will only be used where no appropriate alternative regulatory solution exists.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 There are no operational issues associated with the revision of the strategy as the process will continue as it has previously.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no anticipated changes to financial implications with regards to revision of the strategy.

- 4.2 The Statutory Guidance states that Local Authorities should seek to minimise unnecessary burdens on the taxpayer and in the absence of any funding mechanisms and the financial risk this creates. The council will not proactively undertake this kind of work except where clear evidence of a problem exists. However potential funding streams will be assessed and pursued where appropriate and where remediation is required, the council will seek to identify persons responsible and liable for the costs of remediation.

- 4.3 The costs associated with remediating contaminated land are likely to rise due to climate change impacts, including expenses from extreme weather events. Liability considerations must also encompass climate-related risks, as responsible parties may incur additional costs if contamination worsens.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no changes to legal implications in relation to the revised strategy. The current strategy is out of date and therefore requires revision to comply with Contaminated Land Statutory Guidance 2012.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.1 The strategy is considered to link to the three Council priorities as outlined within Bromsgrove District Council's 'Council Plan 2024-2027'
[Bromsgrove District Council Plan 2024 - 2027 WEB](#)

- Economic Development
- Housing

- Environment

Climate Change Implications

- 6.2 The green thread runs through the Council plan.

The identification of contaminated land must now consider the impacts of climate change, as shifting weather patterns can alter the distribution and severity of contamination. Areas previously unaffected may become contaminated due to changes in runoff, flooding, or other climate-related factors. Consequently, inspection strategies should be adapted to account for these changes. Remediation efforts must also address the effects of climate change, such as increased flooding, which can spread contaminants or hinder remediation, and changing soil conditions that affect the effectiveness of remediation techniques. Additionally, warmer temperatures can enhance microbial activity, influencing the degradation of contaminants. Adaptive measures should be integrated into remediation strategies to tackle these challenges effectively.

- 6.3 There are co-benefits and opportunities in integrating climate change considerations into contaminated land strategies. These include improved air and water quality, enhanced biodiversity, recreational opportunities, and health benefits, leading to more sustainable and resilient outcomes.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 The strategy aims to ensure housing, including social and affordable housing, is of an appropriate standard in respect of contaminated land issues. This is particularly important in former industrial areas where there may be a higher risk from historic sources of contamination.
- 6.5 The strategy sets out how sites of concern will be reviewed and assessed. Contaminated land risks are a consideration for areas of new development.
- 6.6 The revised strategy document is not considered to have a negative equalities impact.

7. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

Cabinet 2025

18th June

- 7.1 As the existing strategy is out of date this revision brings the Strategy into line with the Statutory Guidance and ensures compliance with current requirements.
- 7.2 The report has been updated to reflect changes to the Statutory Guidance in the time since the original was issued.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Bromsgrove District Council Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy.

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Kit Taylor	
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Simon Wilkes – Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services	11th March 2025
Financial Services	Debra Goodall	17 th March 2025
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor - Governance	23rd May 2025
Policy Team	Rebecca Green	14th April 2025
Climate Change Team	Matthew Eccles	12 th March 2025

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District Council
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Regulatory Services
Supporting and protecting you



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy

June 2025

Executive Summary

The industrial history and development of the country has left a legacy of land where there is the potential for contamination to be present. Contamination may pose a risk to human health and the environment. Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 places a duty on local authorities to address these risks through the contaminated land regime. The presence of a harmful substance in, on or below a piece of land does not necessarily mean that land is “contaminated land”. The source of contamination must present a significant possibility of significant harm to relevant receptors, for example a person, ecosystem, or controlled waters, through a viable pathway of exposure.

Enforcement action under this legislation should only be used when there is no other appropriate alternative with other mechanisms used in preference if possible. These mechanisms include the planning and development control process and voluntary action taken by landowners to minimise the unnecessary burdens placed on taxpayers, businesses, and individuals.

This strategy is a requirement under the contaminated land regime, as set out in the Contaminated Land Statutory Guidance 2012, for local authorities who are the primary regulator. Strategies should be reviewed every 5 years. Due to the withdrawal of the funding system from central Government for contaminated land work, the Council will focus on addressing sites where contamination may exist predominantly through the planning and development control process. This document details further how this is already achieved and how we continue to work to drive standards and improve consistency in regulation across the region and further afield.

To date, no sites have been declared as ‘*Contaminated Land*’ by Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) since the first Contaminated Land Strategy was produced in 2001. Currently, there are approximately 2020 sites identified as potential sites of contaminated land concern within the district, largely relating to the historic land use.

BDC planning policies encourage the reuse of previously developed land subject to appropriate site investigation, risk assessment and remediation. Voluntary action is strongly encouraged to deal with potentially contaminated land, either on an individual site basis or as part of wider regeneration work. Regulatory action under Part 2A will only be used where no appropriate alternative regulatory solution exists.

Agenda Item 4

Bromsgrove District Council – Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy 2025

Information	Worcestershire Regulatory Services Details
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Date	June 2025

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1. Introduction

Bromsgrove District Council, as with most local authorities, has a legacy of land contamination that has resulted from over 200 years of industrial development. In addition to historically contaminated sites, pollution incidents, such as spillages and accidents, can give rise to contamination of the land. In the minority of cases the contamination may be serious enough to present a hazard to human health or the environment.

In April 2000, the UK Government introduced a duty on each local authority to inspect the land within its area and identify any areas that could be defined as "contaminated land". Where a local authority finds such land, it must ensure it is remediated to reduce or remove risks to people and the environment. The government set out its requirements for dealing with contaminated land within Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 ("the Act") and associated 'Statutory Guidance' documents.

Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) first published its Contaminated Land Strategy in May 2001. This document represents a revised strategy which updates and replaces the previous version. The document considers changes in the Contaminated Land Statutory Guidance 2012, national policy, council policy and sets out the Council's strategic approach to contaminated land.

2. Legislative Context, National, and Local Policy

Section 57 of the Environment Act 1995 inserted Part 2A into the Act which establishes a legal framework for dealing with contaminated land. This came into force on 1st April 2000.

Part 2A provides a means of dealing with unacceptable risks posed by land contamination to human health and the environment.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) states the following in its guidance document [Environmental Protection Act 1990: Part 2A - Contaminated Land Statutory Guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/531222/Environmental_Protection_Act_1990_Part_2A_-_Contaminated_Land_Statutory_Guidance.pdf) (2012)

1.4 The overarching objectives of the Government’s policy on contaminated land and the Part 2A regime are:

- (a) To identify and remove unacceptable risks to human health and the environment.*
- (b) To seek to ensure that contaminated land is made suitable for its current use.*
- (c) To ensure that the burdens faced by individuals, companies and society are proportionate, manageable and compatible with the principles of sustainable development.*

Contaminated land is defined in Section 78A(2) of Part 2A of the Act as “any land, which appears to the local authority in whose area it is situated to be in such condition, by reason of substances in, on or under the land that:

(a) significant harm is being caused or there is a significant possibility of such harm being caused.

or

(b) significant pollution of controlled waters is being caused or there is a significant possibility of such pollution being caused”.

78A(4) Environmental Protection Act 1990 defines harm as:

“Harm to the health of living organisms or other interference with the ecological systems of which they form a part, and in the case of man includes harm to his property.”

The presence of a harmful substance in, on or below a piece of land does not necessarily mean that land is “contaminated land”. The source of harm may be present but unless a possible route exists through which it is likely to cause harm to health, eco-systems or property, or to cause pollution of controlled waters, the land is not contaminated within the meaning of the Act.

Only land where unacceptable risk has been clearly identified after risk assessment should be considered as meeting the Part 2A definition of contaminated land. Land

should be considered ‘uncontaminated land’ as defined by Part 2A unless there is reason to consider otherwise.

Within this document “contaminated land” is used to mean land which meets the legal definition under Part 2A. Other terms, such as “land affected by contamination” or “land contamination” are used to describe land where contaminants are present but not at sufficient level of risk to be classified as contaminated land.

A site cannot be identified as contaminated land purely due to contaminative substances being present. There must be a relevant sensitive receptor, such as a human being, ecosystem, controlled waters, or property, at risk of significant harm from the source of contamination. There must also be a viable pathway of exposure linking them together. A pathway may be exposure from handling of soils, breathing in dust or vapours, consumption of produce grown in impacted soils, or other means by which a contaminant may reach the receptor. A complete source-pathway-receptor model of contamination is referred to as ‘contamination linkage or pollutant linkage’.



The term ‘*significant contaminant linkage*’ is used in the Statutory Guidance to mean a contaminant linkage which gives rise to a level of risk sufficient to justify a piece of land being determined as contaminated land.

2.1 Radioactive Contaminated Land

A legal framework for dealing with radioactive contaminated land in England under the Part 2A regime has been established by Radioactive Contaminated Land (Enabling Powers) (England) Regulations 2005 and the Radioactive Contaminated Land (Modification of Enactments) (England) Regulations 2006.

The radioactive contaminated land regime addresses harm attributable to radioactivity under Part 2A, where radioactivity is present because of a past activity or as a result of the after-effects of an emergency. The regulations do not apply to current practices or natural background radiation and are only concerned with potential effects on human health, excluding environmental receptors. The Radioactive Contaminated Land Statutory Guidance (June 2018) is legally binding on local authorities including Bromsgrove District Council.

[Radioactive contaminated land: statutory guidance - June 2018 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk)

2.2 Duties of Local Authority

Under section 78B(1) of Part 2A of the Act the council has an inspection duty, which is set out below.

Every local authority shall cause its areas to be inspected from time to time for the purpose –

- (a) of identifying contaminated land; and*
- (b) of enabling the authority to decide whether any such land is land which is required to be designated as a special site*

The Statutory Guidance states there are two broad types of inspection likely to be carried out by local authorities. Firstly, strategic inspection, which comprises the collection of information to make a broad assessment of land within the area and then prioritisation of sites for further consideration. Secondly, detailed inspection of that particular land to obtain information on ground conditions and, where necessary, carrying out risk assessments in order to make decisions relevant to that land under the Part 2A regime. The Guidance refers to these as ‘strategic inspection’ and ‘detailed inspection’. Further information is provided in Section 5 below.

2.3 Special sites

Land required to be designated as a ‘special site’ is defined within regulation 2 of the Contaminated Land (England) Regulations 2006. Where a local authority inspects land considered to meet one of the definitions, and determines it may constitute ‘contaminated land’, consultation with the Environment Agency would be undertaken. Subject to the Agency’s advice and agreement, a joint approach to inspection of the land would be adopted. For special sites, regulation is transferred to the Environment Agency, however, the local authority retains the duty to formally determine land as contaminated land under Part 2A.

2.4 Contaminated Land Statutory Guidance

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) published revised Contaminated Land Statutory Guidance in April 2012 (Statutory Guidance). The Statutory Guidance requires the Local Authority to take a strategic approach to carrying out its inspection duty, set out in a written strategy which is periodically reviewed.

The strategy should include the following:

- (a) *Its aims, objectives and priorities, taking into account the characteristics of its area.*
- (b) *A description of relevant aspects of its area.*
- (c) *Its approach to strategic inspection of its area or parts of it.*
- (d) *Its approach to the prioritisation of detailed inspection and remediation activity.*
- (e) *How its approach under Part 2A fits with its broader approach to dealing with land contamination.*
- (f) *Broadly, how the authority will seek to minimise unnecessary burdens on the taxpayer, businesses and individuals.*

[Environmental Protection Act 1990: Part 2A - Contaminated Land Statutory Guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/100000/environmental-protection-act-1990-part-2a-contaminated-land-statutory-guidance)

2.5 Bromsgrove District Council Policy

Bromsgrove District Council's 'Council Plan 2024-2027' sets out the Council's strategic priorities. The core values relevant to this strategy are:

- Economic Development
- Housing
- Environment

The Council Plan sets out the Council's ambitions for the area that they aim to deliver within the stated time period.

[Bromsgrove District Council Council Plan 2024 - 2027 WEB](#)

Adopted Bromsgrove District Plan 2011-2030

On 25th January 2017, Bromsgrove District Council met to adopt the Bromsgrove District Plan 2011-2030. The adopted Bromsgrove District Plan (BDP) forms part of the statutory development plan for the district, sets out the Council's vision and strategy for the area until 2030 and provides the basis for decisions on planning applications.

The plan makes a number of references relevant to contaminated land including within section 8.20 'Air noise pollution and land contamination', which goes on to state "*there are many sites which have had one or more industrial or commercial uses which may have resulted in soil and water contamination that may need to be addressed*".

Section BDP19 'High Quality Design', also includes the following statement: "Ensuring development is made suitable for the proposed final use, for instance, in

terms of land contamination and, where relevant, does not create an unacceptable risk to controlled waters (where relevant). The Council will determine whether reports detailing for example, site history; a preliminary risk assessment and where appropriate; a site investigation and remediation scheme along with long term monitoring and maintenance proposals, will need to be submitted in support of any planning application. Such reports will be prepared in accordance with best practice guidance”.

It is understood that the Council is currently considering recently announced planning reforms and will be publishing a new timetable for the Bromsgrove District Plan in due course.

A copy of the local plan is available via [Adopted BDP January 2017](#) . Further information relating to planning policy can be accessed at [Planning Policies and Other Information](#).

2.6 Brownfield Land Register

The Government introduced a requirement for all Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to publish a Brownfield Land Register (BLR) by 31st December 2017. The BLR is a comprehensive list of brownfield sites in a local authority area that are suitable for housing. The register aims to help house builders identify suitable sites quickly, speeding up the construction of new homes.

The Council will have the final say on which sites are on the register and which sites will have permission in principle. The BLR is compiled in two parts:-

Part 1 will include sites categorised as previously developed land which are suitable, available and achievable for residential development.

Part 2 will allow LPAs to select sites from Part 1 and grant permission in principle (PiP) for housing led development. There are currently no sites that have been put forward for Part 2.

All sites submitted must be Brownfield land, suitable to be developed for housing and meet the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) definition of previously developed land.

Further information relating to the BLR within Bromsgrove is available via the following link.

[Brownfield Land Register](#)

3. Aims and Objectives

The aim of this document is to outline how the Council will implement the contaminated land regime within the district, in a proportionate and cost-effective manner. It is not intended to reiterate the specifics as defined by legislation or in statutory guidance or other best practice documents which cover the numerous and detailed aspects involved when assessing land for contamination. A brief outline of the regime is provided here [Land affected by contamination - GOV.UK](#) and on the WRS website [Contaminated Land | Worcestershire Regulatory Services \(worscsregservices.gov.uk\)](#) .

Aims

The council's aims in dealing with contaminated land are to:

- Protect human health;**
- Prevent damage to property, livestock, and crops;**
- Protect designated ecosystems;**
- Prevent any further contamination of land;**
- Encourage voluntary remediation; and**
- Encourage re-use of brownfield land.**

Objectives

The principal objectives of this strategy are to:

• Identify sites where historic or current use may have led to land contamination.

Identify and remove unacceptable risks to human health and the environment resulting from contaminated land.

• Ensure sites are suitable for use utilising the planning system and voluntary remediation wherever possible.

Encourage development and use of previously developed (brownfield) land.

• Ensure that the burdens faced by individuals, companies and society as a whole are proportionate, manageable and compatible with the principles of sustainable development.

Ensure the strategy meets obligations under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and fulfils statutory responsibility.

The objectives outline the ‘suitable for use approach’ with respect to the remediation of contaminated land and achieving sustainable development. This means that the risk is assessed in the context of a specific use with the aim of maintaining an acceptable level of risk at minimum cost, thereby, “not disturbing social, economic and environmental priorities.”

Priorities

The council, through WRS, undertakes to:

•Maintain accurate information and records of potentially contaminative land uses.

Undertake risk assessment and prioritisation of potentially contaminated land sites.

•Where land is considered to be contaminated, ensure appropriate remediation is undertaken, using Part 2A powers only when no alternative solution exists.

•Act as consultee through the planning process, ensuring appropriate investigation and remediation, protecting new developments from historic land contamination.

•Consulting with stakeholders, as necessary.

•Provide information and advice to developers.

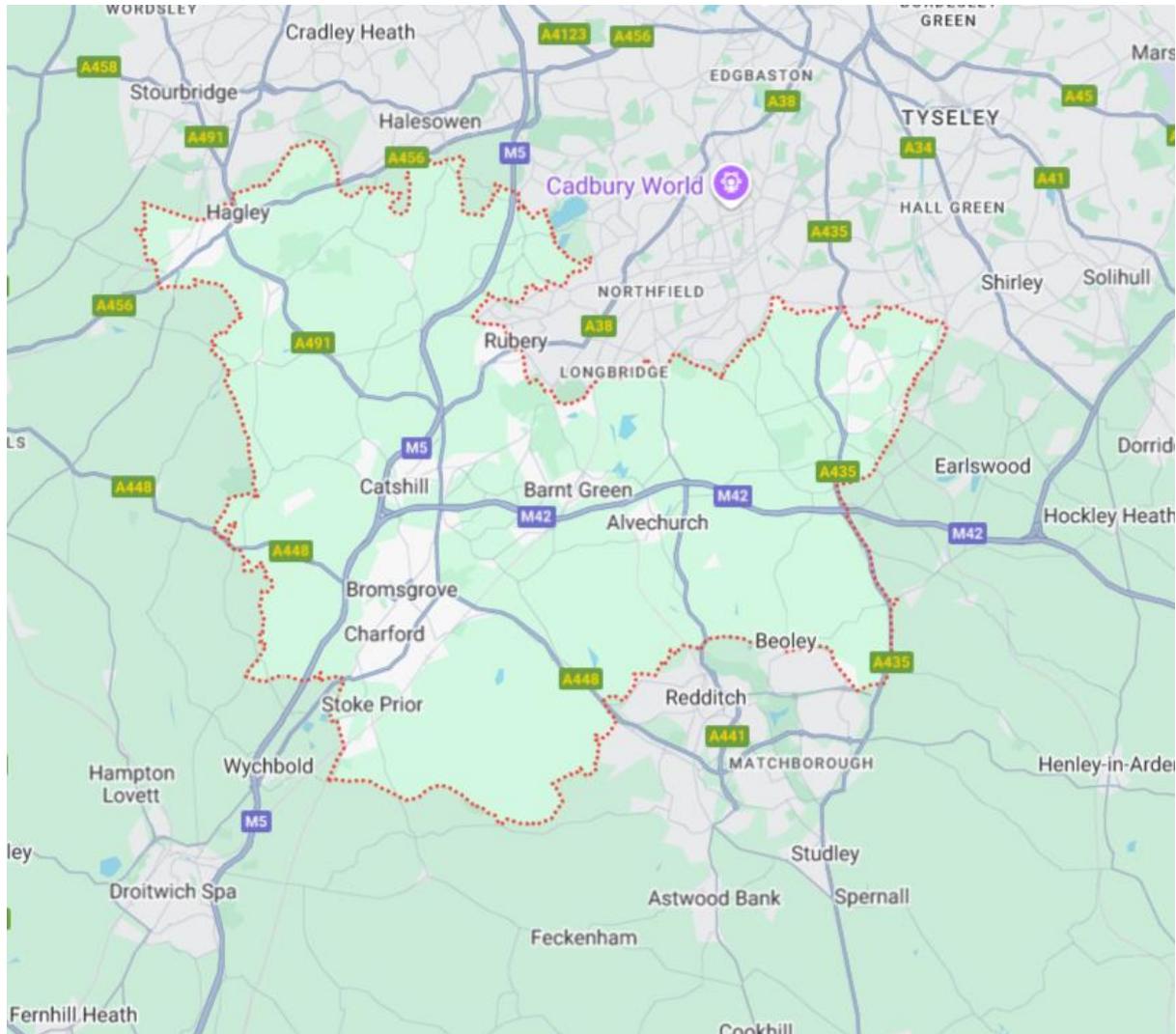
Provide information and advice in response to enquiries regarding property transactions.

•Adopt and publish a revised Contaminated Land Strategy (this document) which is rational, ordered, efficient and reflects local circumstances, in accordance with Statutory Guidance.

Periodically review the Contaminated Land Strategy, at least every 5 years.

•Maintain a public register of contaminated land as required by Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

4. Characteristics of Bromsgrove District



Bromsgrove District is located in north Worcestershire and is predominantly rural. The north of the district is part of the major urban conurbation linked to south Birmingham. The main centre of population is in Bromsgrove Town, with other large centres in Alvechurch, Aston Fields, Barnt Green, Catshill, Hagley, Rubery and Wythall.

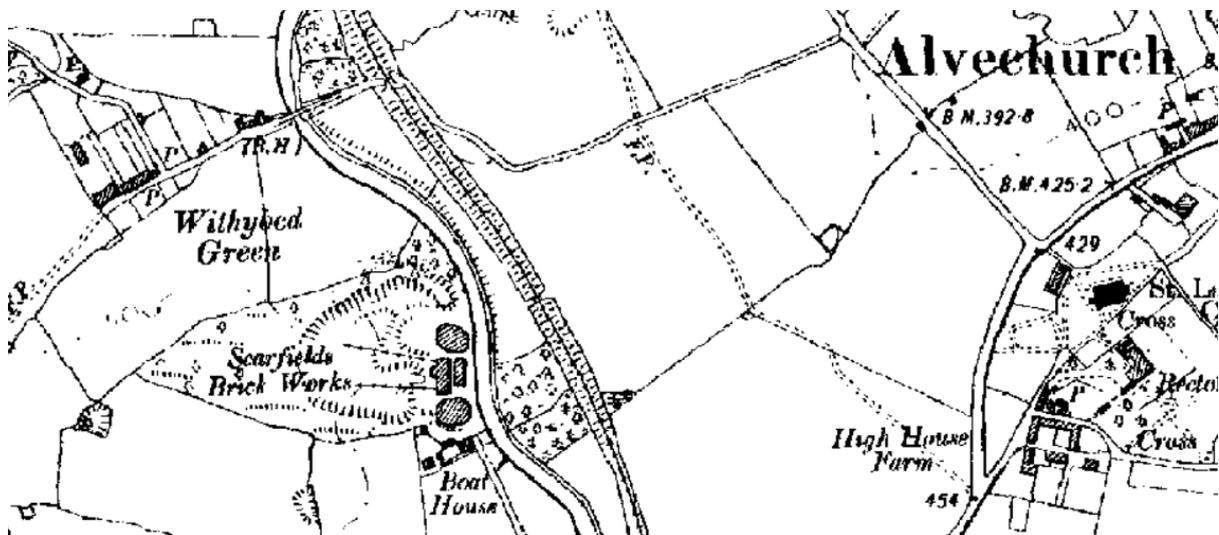
Bromsgrove

Bromsgrove is first documented in 9th Century Anglo-Saxon Britain as ‘Bremesgraf’. By the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086 it was described as comprising 18 hamlets with the manor belonging to the King. In 1199 a charter was granted by King John to hold a market and Bromsgrove emerged as the principal market town of north Worcestershire with a prosperous wool trade. The church of ‘St John the

Baptist' dates from around this time (although predominantly constructed in the 14th and 15th centuries) built upon a hill overlooking the town.

Early industries and trades included tanners, maltsters, clothiers and linen manufacturers. The district's most renowned trade, nail-making, was first recorded in the 16th century and by the time of the industrial revolution in the 18th Century, Bromsgrove was recognised as a major centre for nail manufacture. By the 19th century exploitative conditions within the nail industry had attracted national attention and strikes ensued. As nail making declined, Bromsgrove became closely linked with areas of Birmingham and the Black Country and the associated heavy industry and manufacturer of vehicle components. The district was a source of many skills, labour and production for these industries. Bromsgrove's strategic position on the road, canal, and railway networks helped shape the town's development. The Bromsgrove railway works was established in the town in 1841. The main function of the site was for maintenance and repair however new steam locomotives were also built there. Following reorganisation, the site was closed in 1964 and demolished.

Other industrial centres within the district include Alvechurch where a brick factory was in operation on the edge of the village at Withybed from the 19th century until the middle of the 20th century known as Scarfields Brick Works. The site was well placed to utilise the nearby canal and railway. Industries, in and around Alvechurch, also included nail production and needle manufacture. Dellow cars were manufactured in the village between 1949 and 1956.



Historical Mapping Image c. 1891-1912

Nail production was also carried out at a number of other smaller villages across the district including Catshill, Bournheath and Lickey End. The village of Belbroughton was at the centre of the scythe making industry for around 400 years until the works finally closed in 1968. Originally the mills in the town were powered by water running off the nearby Clent Hills feeding the Belne Brook but later replaced with electricity as the power source.

The salt works at Stoke Prior became one of the largest salt producers in Europe under the ownership of John Corbett who bought faltering businesses there in 1852.

Corbett introduced improved salt refining techniques as well as utilising the established canal boat infrastructure and developing railway technology to great success. The salt works was in operation at this site until the 1970s. In the 1960s the large Austin Rover car manufacturing plant at Longbridge, Birmingham extended its site into the village of Cofton Hackett within the district. Manufacturing ceased here in the early 2000s and the site has been redeveloped largely for residential housing as has been the case across other former industrial sites.

Despite the areas of industry much of the district remains mostly rural with substantial areas of high-quality farmland that continues to be used for a variety of crops and livestock production.

The area has been extensively quarried as shown by early historical maps (c. 19th century onwards). These operations involved the extraction of large quantities of sands, clays and gravels. The district also has a long history of extraction of high-quality building stone. As a result of such workings a significant number of large quarries and smaller disused pits and marl holes were left vacant. Many of these voids were later infilled with industrial, commercial, and domestic waste, from both within and beyond the district's borders.

There are a variety of specially designated areas highlighting the strategic importance of the Bromsgrove District in terms of its natural assets.

The following sites have been identified:-

- Fourteen Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's)
- Twelve conservation areas
- Fourteen Scheduled Monuments
- Around 100 key wildlife sites are understood to be located within the district out of 553 recorded across Worcestershire as a whole. These are referred to as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS – formally known as Special Wildlife Sites (SWS)).
- Waseley Hills Country Park is also designated as a Local Nature Reserve.

Further details pertaining to the above can be found in Appendix B.

4.1 The Geological Setting

To the north of the district, the areas of Romsley and Dayhouse Bank largely consist of Alveley and Enville Members of the Salop Formation comprising mudstones and red brown sandstones, with subordinate lenticular conglomerates and beds of limestone.

The area of Romsley Hill marks an outcrop of Clent Formation of the Permian period (formed between 298.9 and 272.3 million years ago (Ma)) comprising breccia with a mudstone matrix, and thin red / purple sands. Outcrop frequency of the Chester Formation (formerly Kidderminster Formation) increases gradually towards the south

of this area, overlain locally with deposits of sandy glacial till of the Quaternary period (2 Ma).

The geology of West Hagley and Holy Cross are dominated by Helsby Sandstone Formation with areas of Wildmoor Sandstone Formation formed within the Triassic period (approx. 250 Ma). The sandstone is overlain with breccia in localised areas of superficial Glaciofluvial Fan Deposits comprising Devensian Sands from the Quaternary period.

At Lower Clent there are identical Quaternary deposits overlying an outcrop of Wildmoor Sandstone Member comprising pebble beds of sandstone conglomerates which are also identified in the locality of Walton Pool.

To the east of Lower Clent, the larger outcrop of the Clent Hills are formed principally of the Enville Member and Clent Formation, that contain breccia consisting of red mudstone and red-brown, fine- to coarse-grained sandstone, locally pebbly, and lenticular beds of conglomerate. The sandstone is of sublitharenite; conglomerate clasts mostly Carboniferous limestone and chert.

Areas of the Waseley Hills overlie the Lower Permian Clent Formation, consisting of red, brown, and purple breccia, and clasts of sandstone, shale, and igneous material.

The Lickey Hills are formed of metamorphic quartzite materials of the Lickey Quartzite Formation that are connected with igneous material from extrusive volcanic activity during the Ordovician period (485.4 and 443.8 Ma). Areas of the volcanic material outcrop to the south at Barnt Green, known as the Barnt Green Volcanic Formation, comprising igneous bedrock formed in the same period. Rubery includes small pockets of Lickey Quartzite Formation as well Rubery Sandstone Member formed between 443.8 and 433.4 Ma during the Silurian period.

Areas around Cofton Hackett, extending westwards to Wythall and south towards Tutnall, Beoley, and Bentley Pauncefoot are situated above major outcrops of the Mercia Mudstone Group, from the Middle and Upper Triassic. The Group consists of red, brown mudstone with subordinate skerries of sandstone or siltstone. Weatheroak sandstones are also evident in this group. Quantities of localised Quaternary glacial sands and gravel deposits are also identified in these areas.

Large parts of the southwest and central areas of the district including Dodford, Bourneheath, and Dordale are mainly situated upon Sidmouth Mudstone from the Triassic, these comprise red clay banded marls with sand skerries containing pockets of gravel material. Part of Stoke Heath also sits upon Branscombe Mudstone Formation with areas of Stoke Prior also including Droitwich Halite Members (a known historic brine stream) extending southwest to Droitwich. Belbroughton overlies the Helsby Sandstone Formation, which is red brown sandstone having bands of breccia, and containing small pockets of 3rd terrace glacial deposits.

The central and eastern area of Bromsgrove including Aston Fields, Stoney Hill, Finstall and areas of Catshill are situated on extensive strata outcrops of the

Sherwood Sandstone Group. These are structured as three distinct formats comprising Helsby Sandstone Formation comprising red, brown and buff sandstones and siltstones with red mudstone bands, Wildmoor Sandstone comprising red fine-grained sandstones, and Chester Formation comprising red-brown, coarse grained, massive, feldspathic sandstone. These strata overlie basal conglomerates and breccia and are highly prominent in the Marlbrook area.

Bromsgrove centre and west including Charford, Sidemoor, Worms Ash, and Fairfield largely overlie the Helsby Sandstone Formation. Areas of Upper Catshill, Staple Hill, and Lickey End areas are situated above the Wildmoor Sandstone, overlain in parts with an alluvial fan and periglacial flood gravel. Local to Chadwick Manor, Madeley and Chapmans Hill areas there is an outcrop of the Chester Formation. Areas of the formation are overlain in places by alluvial fan materials consisting of large quantities of glacially reworked deposits.

4.2 Hydrogeology and Hydrology

Hydrogeology

To help protect groundwater, the Environment Agency (EA) in England and Wales has identified different types of aquifer, which is the name for underground layers of water-bearing, permeable rock from which groundwater can be extracted. The groundwater within the district largely comprises areas of Principal aquifer within the central and northwestern portions with Secondary A aquifer covering the remainder of the northern areas. The western, southern and eastern areas of the district are largely Secondary B aquifer with small areas of Secondary (undifferentiated) contained within (MAGIC website, 2025). Further information can be accessed via the following website [Protect groundwater and prevent groundwater pollution - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/topics/groundwater) .

The Private Water Supplies (England) Regulations 2016 and The Private Water Supplies (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 set out standards for the quality of the water and place a duty on the Council to sample and risk assess these private supplies. According to the available records there are approximately 169 private water supplies identified within the district. These generally comprise of wells, spring water, or borehole abstractions from the underlying aquifer.

WRS, on behalf of Bromsgrove District Council, undertakes inspection and risk assessment of private drinking water supplies in the area. Further information in relation to private water supplies can be found on the WRS website via the following [Private Water Supplies | Worcestershire Regulatory Services \(worcsregservices.gov.uk\)](https://www.worcsregservices.gov.uk/) .

Hydrology

The main river near Bromsgrove is the River Salwarpe which is formed by the confluence of the Battlefield, Spadesbourne, and Sugar Brooks. The Salwarpe flows through the town and eventually joins the River Severn near Hawford, north of Worcester. Smaller tributaries of the river include the Hen, Hadley, Elmbridge, and Martin Brook.

Part of the River Cole flows through the district to the east of Wythall prior to passing beneath an aqueduct of the Stratford-upon-Avon Canal. A small section of this canal cuts through the northeastern most tip of the district in the village of Majors Green. A large section of the Worcester & Birmingham Canal also runs through the district generally in a south-westerly direction, from the vicinity of Hopwood, east of Bromsgrove, and exiting the district south of Stoke Prior.

The River Arrow flows from the Lickey Hills in the north of Worcestershire, following a largely southeastern path to become a major tributary of the River Avon. The river flows through Cofton Hackett, feeding Lower Bittell Reservoir and through Alvechurch before entering the Redditch district. Other large lakes in the district include Tardebigge Lake and Cofton Reservoir.

Notable streams and brooks elsewhere are Gallows Brook in Hagley, and Hoo Brook at Belbroughton in the northwest of the district, Dagnell Brook at Rowney Green in the east, Hen Brook in the southwest at Stoke Prior, Swans and Spring Brook in the south, and Hockley Brook to the west.

5. Strategic Inspection & Prioritisation

Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) is the shared Environmental Health and Licensing functions of Bromsgrove District Council and the five other Worcestershire districts. In line with the service level agreement, the potential contaminated land sites of each district are maintained in a combined working dataset to provide a countywide prioritisation to tackle those sites in the county in order of priority.

Using a combination of historical maps supplemented with Council records and other relevant information sources, a dataset of sites is maintained, where past uses may have led to the presence of contamination. These sites are termed 'Sites of Potential Contaminated Land Concern' ("PCL").

At the time of writing this report, there are approximately 9500 site records held relating to potential sites of contaminated land concern within the dataset. It should be noted that some of these may relate to multiple records for a site due to changes in land use or the time period over which uses have occurred. Approximately 2020 PCL sites are recorded within the Bromsgrove District Council area. New sites are being added to the records as and when they are identified, or further clarity of information is attained. These sites range from large industrial sites, such as former power stations, landfill sites, and gas works, to very small sites such as infilled

ponds, electricity substations, and everything in between, such as petrol filling stations, warehouses, factories, and depots.

A manual method of prioritisation of these sites is being undertaken to rank the sites in order of priority for detailed inspection. Sites that have a greater risk will be classed as a higher priority, those with a lower risk will be allocated a lower priority. Where sites have been remediated as part of the planning process or through voluntary remediation this will be reflected within the prioritisation. The list will continue to be revised as further sites are redeveloped through the planning regime.

Most of these sites will not have been investigated, with only limited information available, and therefore have only been identified with a potential for contamination to be present due to the historical land use rather than a known history of contamination. The sites will be ranked by order of priority for possible detailed inspection in the future.

It is important to note that requirements under Part 2A of the Act address the risk based on the existing land use only and not future possible uses. Whilst sites may have been noted as remediated, or not requiring inspection, this does not preclude further work being required in the future should a more sensitive land use be proposed which may create a higher level of risk.

Part 2A adopts a precautionary approach in terms of the risks posed by contamination. The Statutory Guidance provides more detail on the specifics of risk assessment and the procedures for deciding whether land meets the legal definition of contaminated land resulting in determination. Any inspection carried out by the Council would follow the requirements set out in the legislation and Statutory Guidance at that time.

6. *Detailed Inspection*

Sites of Potential Concern will be prioritised for further detailed inspection with the highest-ranking sites inspected first. These sites would be those with the highest associated risk. The risk is considered based on the likelihood of contamination being present (by former activity), the sensitivity of the current land use, and likelihood of harm being caused.

Detailed inspection should follow a phased approach, which is standard practice for investigating the presence of contamination. This may include intrusive investigation involving the collection of soil and water samples along with gas and groundwater monitoring, dependent on the nature and likelihood of contamination suspected. All inspections will follow the Statutory Guidance and Land Contamination Risk Management Guidance (Environment Agency, 2024) and other relevant best practice and guidance.

To date, Bromsgrove District Council have undertaken a number of inspections under Part 2A of the Act. However, no sites have been determined as 'contaminated land' as a result at this time.

The detailed inspection of potentially contaminated land sites under the Part 2A regime is very resource intensive for the local authority, in terms of both time and money. Defra previously provided a grant system to local authorities via a bidding system, to finance the investigations. The grant system could also be used by local authorities to remediate sites, where no other responsible party could be identified. This scheme was withdrawn in 2013 and no replacement funding mechanism has been provided to enable local authorities to undertake this work since.

Intrusive investigation can be an expensive process usually requiring the services of specialist environmental consultants, often needing further rounds of investigation after initial results are received. Where remediation is required, the Council will seek to identify those persons responsible for the contamination and therefore liable for the costs of remediation.

Remediation costs can reach hundreds of thousands of pounds and where no other person is found to be liable for the costs, it would fall to Bromsgrove District Council to fund and ultimately the taxpayer.

The Statutory Guidance states that local authorities must seek to minimise unnecessary burdens on the taxpayer. As such, in the absence of any external funding mechanisms and the financial risk that this creates, Bromsgrove District Council at this time, will not proactively undertake Part 2A detailed inspections of Sites of Potential Concern (except where there is clear evidence that a problem exists).

The Council will continue to use the favoured mechanisms detailed in the Statutory Guidance, such as the planning process and voluntary remediation, to ensure that historical contamination is appropriately and proactively dealt with. These alternative arrangements are described in more detail below.

The Council will, however, use its powers under Part 2A of the Act to reactively deal with contaminated land where there is clear evidence that a problem exists or is likely to exist and there is no other regulatory approach available. Any potential funding streams will be assessed and pursued where appropriate should they become available.

7. Broader Approach

Contaminated land is considered within the Development Control and Building Control regimes to ensure sites are suitable for their current and intended use. Each system has its own requirements.

Development Control

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2023) sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Paragraphs 196 onwards detail the requirements for addressing potential contamination in the development control process to ensure the site is suitable for its proposed use and, after remediation (where required), ensure that the land is not capable of being determined as contaminated land.

NPPF Paragraph 196

Planning policies and decisions should ensure that:

- a) a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination. This includes risks arising from natural hazards or former activities such as mining, and any proposals for mitigation including land remediation (as well as potential impacts on the natural environment arising from that remediation);*
- b) after remediation, as a minimum, land should not be capable of being determined as contaminated land under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990; and*
- c) adequate site investigation information, prepared by a competent person, is available to inform these assessments.*

NPPF Para 197

Where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rest with the developer and/or landowner.

WRS act as a consultee within the planning process and work closely with Planning Officers to ensure issues of potential contamination are investigated and dealt with as required. This is generally achieved by way of various conditions being applied to planning consent notices, as appropriate, to ensure the relevant issues are adequately addressed.

Involvement continues throughout a development up to the point it is demonstrated that no remedial measures are required on a site, or a final verification report is submitted and agreed to demonstrate remediation work has been successful. It is the responsibility of the developer and/or landowner to ensure the site is safe. The Council welcomes early communication on these matters so advice can be provided as to the requirements of addressing land contamination under the planning regime.

Addressing potential contamination through the development control regime is the best approach for addressing potentially contaminated sites. The high number of planning applications received per year in the district allows a much greater number of sites to be investigated than could be progressed under the Part 2A regime. The use of other mechanisms to address potential contamination is supported by the Statutory Guidance.

Building Control

Regulation 6 of the Building Regulations 2010 identifies resistance to contaminants as being a requirement to certain material changes of use.

WRS Officers would work with the Building Control Officers with regards to the requirements under the legislation and the subsequent remediation measures agreed for a site with the developer or landowner.

Building Regulations require measures to protect new buildings and the future occupants. Ground covered by any buildings and associated ground is required to be reasonably free of materials that might damage it or affect its stability. Reasonable precautions are required to avoid health and safety risks resulting from contamination.

Guidance has been issued in Approved Document C, *'Site preparation and Resistance to Contaminants and Moisture'*, (HM Government, 2013). A consolidated version of the individual Approved Documents has been published by the government, entitled *"The Building Regulations 2010 - The Merged Approved Documents - October 2024 compilation of individual approved documents"*

Environmental Permitting Regime

The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 and subsequent amendments provides a regime for the regulation of prescribed industrial and waste management activities.

Where significant harm or pollution of controlled waters comes from a process regulated under the above regimes, a remediation notice under Part 2A of the Act cannot be served if the powers are available under the relevant Environmental Permitting regime to address the harm or pollution of controlled waters.

Environmental Damage Regulations

The Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) (England) Regulations 2015 impose obligations and liabilities on certain commercial operations to prevent and remediate environmental damage caused by their activities based on the polluter pays principal.

The term “Environmental Damage” has a specific meaning under the regulations and is damage that adversely affects land, surface or groundwater, marine waters, protected species or natural habitats or a site of special scientific interest (SSSI). The Local Authority has enforcement responsibilities in relation to damage to land where this results in a “significant risk of adverse effects on human health”. In relation to damage to water and natural habitats/protected species, the Environment Agency and Natural England are the enforcement authorities respectively.

There can be some overlap of Environmental Damage and Part 2A and sites may be investigated under both regimes. In general Part 2A covers historic contamination whereas the Environmental Damage Regulations are to provide a quicker response in relation to pollution incidents.

Voluntary Remediation

Discussions with landowners or occupiers who wish to address potential contamination on their land on a voluntary basis are welcomed. This sometimes occurs where a landowner wishes to sell land, use it as equity, reduce the risk of damage to the environment, or limit any future liability.

Regional Collaboration

WRS is a member of a number of regional contaminated land groups consisting of representatives from other Local Authorities and relevant bodies. These include the West Midlands Contaminated Land Group, Gloucestershire Contaminated Land Group, and Staffordshire Contaminated Land Group. These groups are voluntarily run organisations working to provide support to local authority officers, encouraging dialogue with the wider industry and helping deliver consistency in the regulation of environmental pollution matters. WRS are also a member of the National Contaminated Land Officer Group (NCLOG) which offers a coordinated approach across the country to topical matters as they evolve. NCLOG is now being hosted and supported by the Institution for Environmental Sciences (IES). NCLOG was established in 2019 to enable the contaminated land officer voice to be heard nationally at government and industry level, and to promote consistency across the sector. NCLOG has over 200 members across the UK and maintains close links with existing regional officer groups and those working in the devolved administrations. It is a voluntary organisation and is governed by an elected Committee.

WRS have produced the Technical Guidance Note for Planning (April, 2025) which sets out the requirements for how land affected by contamination should be dealt

with as part of the planning process. The document also provides a specification as to the technical standards expected for contaminated land reports submitted in support of planning applications and discharge of condition requests. Environmental consultants and developers are directed to this document. It is hoped that this helps to improve the quality of information submitted and to raise awareness of the requirements particularly within the planning process. The document has been made available to other local authorities for information.

[wrs-technical-guidance-document-for-planning-v-5-8.pdf](#)

The Office for Environmental Protection

The Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) was legally created in November 2021, under the Environment Act 2021. Their remit is to protect and improve the environment by holding government and other public authorities to account. The OEP have powers to enforce against failures to comply with environmental law.

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Appendix A – Prioritisation Methodology

Preliminary prioritisation will continue in order to assess sites for future inspection. The sites will be scored utilising a risk ranking scoring system within the contaminated land database. The aim is to score all potential sites of concern to establish a hierarchy system with the higher risk sites at the top of the list. The site categorisation methodology is based upon the Source-Pathway- Receptor linkage, taking into account;

- Likely presence of Contaminant and severity of harm
- Likelihood of a Pathway for contaminant cause harm
- Receptor Sensitivity

The first step is to identify former potentially contaminative land uses or activities, such as “Gas Works”, and apply the corresponding score. If a site has had multiple different land uses it will be assigned the relevant scores for each of the major land uses. The risk assessment tool allows for up to six separate land use scores to be assigned. If a case arises where there are more than six relevant land uses for the site, the highest category scores will be included. A generic score according to the risk class is appointed depending on the use from the following rankings; Very High, High, Medium, Low, or Very Low.

The next stage is to assign a further score based on the pathway efficiency taking account of geology, soil classification, services pathways, and whether any remediation or barriers have been put in place. If no data is held a conservative approach is adopted by applying the same score as for high risk. The other values are medium or low.

A third score is applied in relation to the receptor sensitivity with the highest sensitive uses accruing a higher score. The most sensitive end uses are classed as residential with gardens, schools, and children’s nurseries. The receptor sensitivity takes account of exposure pathways that are likely to be present and the vulnerability of those receptors. A residential property with garden is likely to have more exposure pathways because of the potential for residents to interact with bare soils. Home grown produce may take up contaminants whilst growing that can then be ingested when consumed. Soils may also be ingested by young children during play, inhaled as dust, and tracked into residential properties. Children are at a higher risk from contaminants due to a number of factors including their smaller size (and therefore exposure to proportionally larger doses of toxins), closer proximity to the ground, dirt and indoor dust. When compared to an adult, children also breathe more and consume more food and water in terms of per kg of bodyweight (Hauptman, M, / Woolf, A, 2020).

A further score can be applied for other considerations where relevant. These include controlled waters sensitivity and whether there are other ecological

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receptors, or protected property or buildings. These may include national nature reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest, ancient monuments, crops, owned or domesticated animals, and wild animals subject to shooting or fishing rights.

The scoring matrices that are to be utilised within the prioritisation process are set out below.

SCORING MATRIXES

SOURCE		CODE	RISK	SCORE
Asbestos manufacture, abrasives, and related products		ML	Very High	50
Chemical works (organic and inorganic)	Manufacture of cosmetics, bleaches, manure, fertilisers and pesticides, detergents, oil organic based pharmaceuticals, other chemical products, including glues, gelatines, recording tapes, photographic film	CH		
	Sheep dips	SD		
	Dyes, pigments	DY		
	Paint, varnishes, printing inks, mastics, sealants, and creosote	PA		
Radioactive materials processing and disposal		NA		
Gas works, coke works, coal carbonisation and similar sites. Production of gas from coal, lignite, oil, or other carbonaceous material other than waste		GA		
Refuse and waste disposal sites, including hazardous wastes, incinerators, sanitary depots, drum and tank cleaning, solvent recovery		RF		
Oil refining and bulk storage of oil and petrol & Gasometers which are not gas works		LL		
LANDFILL SITE - KNOWN TO BE ACTIVELY PRODUCING GAS		LA		
Abattoirs and animal slaughtering:		AB	High	40
Animal products processing into animal by-products e.g. soap, candles, and bone works.		AN		
Tannery, leather goods and skinnery		TY		
Engineering (heavy and general)	Manufacturing of distribution, telecoms, medical, navigation, metering, and lighting.	HE		
	Manufacture and repair including ships, aerospace, rail engines and rolling stock	HT		
	Heavy products manufacture - rolling and drawing of iron, steel, and ferroalloys - includes tube works	HM		
	Manufacturing of electrical and electronic domestic appliances.	HS		
	Manufacture of cars, lorries, buses, motorcycles, bicycles	LT		
Manufacturing of engines, buildings and general industrial machinery, including nuts and bolts, gas fitting as, wire rope/cable		MA		

	and ordnance accessories. Including metal workshops and canneries			
Metal smelting and refining	Includes furnaces and forges, electroplating, galvanising, and anodising	FY		
	Ferro and aluminium alloys-manganese works, slag works	PL		
Civilian manufacture and storage of weapons, ammunition, explosives, and rockets including ordnance.		MG		
All military establishments including firing ranges (if not specified as civilian).		MD		
Recycling of metal waste including scrapyards and car breakers		SP		
Natural and synthetic rubber products including tyres and rubber products. Tar bitumen, linoleum, vinyl, and asphalt works		RB		
Paper, card etc products (packaging).		PD		
Pulp, paper, and cardboard manufacture		PR		
UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANKS ON SITE and above ground fuel storage tanks (except domestic)		US		
LANDFILL SITE - STRONGLY SUSPECTED TO BE PRODUCING GAS, based on available information on age and content of fill		LB		
Manufacture of clay bricks and tiles, including associated activities eg brick fields, also solitary kilns (other than lime kilns)		BK		
Extraction of alluvial sediments (sand, stone, clay, peat, marl and gravel)		PT		
Quarrying of all stone (including limestone, gypsum, chalk and slate) and ores, includes all opencast mining and slant workings - also slate/slab works, flint works, stone yards		QU		
Airports and similar (air and space transport)		AP	Medium	30
Concrete, ceramics, cement and plaster works.	Concrete, cement, lime and plaster products, also including solitary lime kilns.	CE		
	Tableware and other ceramics.	CR		
Dry-cleaning and laundries (larger scale, not usually "High Street")		LY		

Flat glass products manufacture		GL		
Photographic processing		PP		
Coal storage/depot.	Coal mining (and the manufacturing of coke and charcoal) - areas include associated surface activities in area and coal mine shafts.	CC		
		CY		
	Areas of mining and single or groups of shafts other than coal, or not specified - including levels, adits, etc also areas associated with mineral railways.	MN		
Electricity generation and distribution, including large transfer stations, power stations (excluding nuclear power stations).		PW		
Batteries, accumulators, primary cells, electrical motors, generators, and transformers		BT		
Printing of newspaper		NW		
Printing works other than newsprint and bookbinding (usually excludes "High Street" printers)		PN		
Railway land, including yards and tracks.		RW		
(Railway tracks - up to 4 tracks wide or 30 m)		RL		
Sale of automotive fuel. Road vehicle fuelling, transport depots, road haulage and commercial vehicle fuelling, local authority yards and depots.		FU		
Repair and sale of cars and bikes, parts and motorway services.		GG		
Transport depots - road haulage corporation yards		DP		
Sewage treatment works. Sewerage, septic tanks, effluent - including all filter beds.		SW		
Textiles manufacturing - natural and manmade textile manufacture and products including hemp rope and linoleum.		TX		
Timber treatment works and manufacturing. Sawmills, planing and impregnation (ie treatment of timber), wood products, telegraph works, timber yard, eg veneer		WD		
Computers, office machinery, business/industrial electrical goods.		LE		
Insulated wire and cable for electrical/tel/purposes.		WR		
LANDFILL SITE - GAS PRODUCTION IS POSSIBLE, based on historical map evidence of infilled quarry, water body or other void		LC		
Plastic products manufacture, moulding and extrusion; building materials; fibre glass, fibre glass resins and products. Manufacturing of Tar, Bitumen and Asphalt.		PS	Low	20

Dockyards and wharves. Boatbuilding, wharf and quays, cargo/transport handling facilities - marine or inland	DK		
Brewing and malting	BW		
spirit distilling and compounding.	DL		
Major food processing includes large dairies. Exceptionally large-scale corn/flour milling	FD		
Constructional steelwork, metal structures and products and building materials (Including Building Yards and smithy's)	MP		
Cemetery, modern burial ground, and graveyard	GV		
All hospitals including sanatoriums but not lunatic asylums (also includes laboratories)	HL		
LANDFILL SITE - GAS PRODUCTION UNLIKELY, based on available information on age and content of fill	LD		
Light Industry	LI	Very Low	10
Pollution incident (historic)	PI		
Area prone to repeated flooding	FL		
Radioactive Substances Act Registrations	RS		
Allotments and agricultural areas subject to repeated sewage spreading or excessive treatment	AL		

<u>PATHWAYS</u>		<u>SCORE</u>
Geological risk pathway	No data held or High Risk	5
	Medium Risk	3
	Low Risk	1
Soil Classification risk pathway	No data held or High Risk (No info or soils of high leaching potential)	5
	Medium Risk (Soils of intermediate leaching potential)	3
	Low Risk (Soils of low leaching potential)	1
Services pathway risk	No data or Drainage services (including culverted rivers) or wells known	5
	Possible drainage services	3
	No drainage services on site	1
Remediation pathway risk	No knowledge	5
	Likely that some remedial scheme would have been employed	4
	Partial remedial scheme believed to be in place	3
	Remedial scheme believed to be in place and effective	1

	Full appropriate remedial scheme in place and full details held	0
Barrier pathway risk	Uncertain/No knowledge of any barrier	1
	Physical or effective management barrier in place	0

<u>RECEPTORS</u>	<u>SCORE</u>
Residential with Gardens	20
Schools and Children's Nurseries	20
Private Water Supply abstraction for domestic consumption	18
Residential without Gardens	16
Playing fields and Public Open Space	9
Allotments and Cemeteries	8
Leisure/Hospitals/Commercial	7
Industrial	6
Agricultural	5
Other	1
No Risk Recorded	0

<u>OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</u>	<u>SCORE</u>	
Controlled Waters	Abstraction Point for Domestic Consumption	10
	River Water Classification A, B or C	
	Source Protection Zone 1	
	Major Aquifer (vulnerability risk = High)	8
	Source Protection Zone 2	
	Major Aquifer (vulnerability risk = Medium)	
	Minor Aquifer (vulnerability risk = High)	6
	Source Protection Zone 3	
	Major Aquifer (vulnerability risk = Low)	
	Minor Aquifer (vulnerability risk = Medium)	
River Water Classification D, E or F	5	

	Pond, Lake or other unclassified water feature	
	Minor Aquifer (vulnerability risk - Low)	4
	Abstraction Point for Commercial or Industrial use	3
	Non-Aquifer	2
Ecological Receptor, Property or Buildings	Owned or Domesticated animals	5
	Crops	
	Wild Animals subject to shooting or fishing rights	4
	National Nature Reserves & Sites of Special Scientific Interest	3
	Ancient Monuments	2
	Other Property	1

Appendix B – Ecological and Sensitive Sites

There are a variety of specially designated areas highlighting the strategic importance of the Bromsgrove District in terms of its natural assets.

The following sites have been identified:-

- Fourteen Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's)
- Twelve conservation areas
- Fourteen Scheduled Monuments
- Around 100 key wildlife sites are understood to be located within the district out of 553 recorded across Worcestershire as a whole. These are referred to as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS – formally known as Special Wildlife Sites (SWS)).
- Waseley Hills Country Park is also designated as a Local Nature Reserve.

<p>According to available information sources there are 14 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) within the Bromsgrove District area (Search for planning data / Magic Map Application / Site Search)</p>	
Hewell Park Lake 1000092	Hopwood Dingle 1000127
Madeley Heath Pit 1000195	Bittell Reservoirs 1000192
Feckenham Forest 1001994	Sling Gravel Pits 1002956
Burcot Lane Cutting 1004380	Romsley Manor Farm 1006623
Hurst Farm Pasture 1007259	Little Royal Farm Pastures 1007260
Oakland Pasture 1007261	Penorchard & Spring Farm Pastures 1007262
Romsley Hill 1007263	Berry Mound Pastures 1007264

There are 12 Conservation Areas within Bromsgrove District		
Hagley	Alvechurch	Dodford
Clent	Worcester and Birmingham Canal	Holy Cross
Beoley	Belbroughton	Barnt Green
Hewell Grange	St John's	Bromsgrove Town Centre

There are 14 Scheduled Monuments (England) recorded within the Bromsgrove District area.		
Small multivallate hillfort called Wychbury Ring 450m south east of Pedmore Hall 1003280	Berry Mound Camp, Solihull 1005294	The Mount 1005389
Small multivallate hillfort called Wychbury Ring 450m south east of Pedmore Hall 1005900	Standing cross in St Leonards churchyard 1017255	Moated site at Fairfield Court 1017526
Moated site 130m north east of Moorgreen Farm 1017527	Moated site at Blackgreves Farm 1017824	The Banqueting Orchard moated site, 650m north west of Bentley village hall 1017805
Moated site at Tardebigge Farm 1017808	Moated site of Frankley Hall 1017811	Dodford Priory moated site 1018278
Moated site and fishponds at the Bishop's Palace 1018334	Churchyard cross in St Leonard's churchyard 1021172	

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Bromsgrove District Council – Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy 2025

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Cabinet

18/06/2025

Warm Homes Local Grant Funding and Resourcing

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Bernard McEldowney
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Judith Wills
Report Author	Job Title: Climate Change Manager Contact email: matthew.eccles@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 07816112073
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	Environment and Infrastructure
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) Authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer to reflect in the Capital Programme the grant funding in 2025/26 and to include the 2026/27 and 2027/28 funding into the Medium-Term Financial Plan for the Warm Homes Local Grant (WHLG) (as shown below).

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
£31,423.08	£129,000	£124,700

The Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that

- 2) Authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change to administer the funding received in the WHLG in line with the grant conditions and any alterations to the delivery programme.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Warm Homes: Local Grant scheme, was launched in April 2025, aims to provide energy performance upgrades and low carbon heating to low-income households in England. The scheme targets homes with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating between D and G that

are privately owned. Social housing is not eligible, however, separate funding from the Government is being made available for this tenure. Local authorities will deliver measures such as insulation, solar panels, and air source heat pumps, tailored to individual homes. Occupants on a low income will not contribute to the cost of these upgrades

- 2.2 The Warm Homes Local Grant (WHLG) provides an opportunity for Bromsgrove District Council to directly address fuel poverty and improve the energy efficiency of homes within the district. By retrofitting homes with energy-saving measures, Bromsgrove District Council can work towards achieving the authority's climate goals, enhance the well-being of residents, and create employment in the green sector.
- 2.3 Additionally, the WHLG aligns with the UK government's objectives to improve the energy performance of homes and reduce fuel poverty nationwide. This program is a key component of the broader strategy to achieve Net Zero emissions by 2050 and ensure that all homes meet minimum energy efficiency standards by 2030.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The project delivery will focus upon an agreed list of homes identified by Act on Energy that are most likely to meet the eligibility criteria and be homes in a position to most likely go through the entire retrofit process in full.
- 3.2 The eligibility for the scheme is below
- IMD:ID Eligible Postcodes: Households located in postcodes that fall within the most deprived 25% according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) are eligible. These households are classified as auto eligible; or
 - Households with a gross income below £36,000 per year or a net income of £20,000 or less after housing costs or Households must be classified as low-income, which can be demonstrated by receiving specific means-tested benefits and;
 - Properties must have an EPC rating between D and G.
- 3.3 Act on Energy have been selected by the Midlands Net Zero Hub (MNZH) to provide the customer engagement in our area and Officers will work in partnership with them to leverage their expertise in engaging residents and encourage applications for the program through the owner-occupier part of the programme. to ensure residents are Engagement

- 3.4 Officers will undertake a joint procurement exercise with Housing Servies to employ a qualified and experienced Retrofit Assessor and Coordinator. The Council will also go out to procure a qualified and experienced PAS 2035 retrofit installer/contractor to undertake the retrofit works. This will include a clear specification for the retrofit measures to be delivered, emphasising quality and value for money, as well as experience of working across multiple grant schemes.
- 3.5 Officers will be required to supply monthly progress and financial reports to MNZH the consortium lead, on the progress, to ensure transparency and alignment with the overall programme goals.
- 3.6 Based on an average cost per home of £15,000, the WHLG funding can be utilised to retrofit approximately 19 homes (£285,123.08 / £15,000 per home)

The potential number of homes that can be retrofitted in each year based on the funding allocation for each year is:

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
2	9	8

4. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 MNZH have advised the funding allocation is £285,123.08 (including £28,512.31 for administrative and ancillary costs) over 3 years
- 4.2 The funding is split into the following amounts per year

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
£31,423.08	£129,000	£124,700

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Council will need to agree and sign the grant agreement form to receive the funding
- 5.2 The Council will need to enter into contracts with qualified retrofit installers and service providers to ensure compliance with PAS 2035 standards. This will need to be delivered in line with the Council's procurement process.

6. **OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**

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Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 There are no expected implications for local government reorganisation.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 There are no expected implications for local government reorganisation.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The Warm Homes Local Grant (WHLG) project directly aligns with Bromsgrove District Council's strategic priority of Environment and Infrastructure. By improving the energy efficiency of homes and reducing carbon emissions, the project contributes to creating a clean and green environment. Additionally, addressing fuel poverty and enhancing resident well-being supports sustainable development and improves the overall quality of life for the community. This initiative also fosters economic growth through job creation in the green sector and promotes the council's commitment to achieving Net Zero carbon emissions by 2040.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 Residential energy consumption is a significant contributor to carbon emissions. Improving home energy efficiency is crucial to achieving net-zero goals.
- 6.4 Enhanced home energy efficiency can lead to improved health outcomes for residents by reducing exposure to cold and damp conditions.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.5 The WHLG program targets households most affected by high energy costs, helping to alleviate fuel poverty and its associated health and social inequalities.
- 6.6 The program will ensure that all eligible residents, regardless of background, have access to the benefits of the retrofit measures.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 Identified Risks and Mitigation Strategies:**1. Lack of Resident Participation:**

- Risk: Insufficient resident engagement may lead to low participation in the WHLG program.
- Mitigation: Develop and implement a comprehensive engagement strategy, including outreach and education efforts, to encourage resident participation. Utilise partnerships with community groups and Act on Energy to increase awareness and involvement.

2. Challenges in Finding Qualified Contractors:

- Risk: Difficulty in securing suitably qualified and experienced contractors to undertake retrofit works.
- Mitigation: Conduct a robust procurement process to secure experienced PAS 2035 retrofit installers/contractors. Establish a reserve list of qualified professionals to ensure project continuity.

3. Supply Chain Issues for Retrofit Materials:

- Risk: Disruptions in the supply chain may lead to delays in obtaining necessary materials for retrofit works.
- Mitigation: Monitor supply chain trends and establish contingency plans for securing retrofit materials. Engage with multiple suppliers to diversify sources and minimize risk.

4. Overspending or Financial Mismanagement:

- Risk: The project may exceed its budget or face financial mismanagement.
- Mitigation: Implement strict financial monitoring and reporting processes. Submit regular financial reports to MNZH to ensure adherence to the budget and transparency.

5. Delays in Project Delivery:

- Risk: The project may face delays in implementation, affecting timelines and outcomes.
- Mitigation: Develop a detailed project timeline with built-in contingencies to address potential delays. Maintain regular communication with contractors and stakeholders to ensure timely progress.

6. Negative Publicity or Community Dissatisfaction:

- Risk: Issues during the project may lead to negative publicity or community dissatisfaction.
- Mitigation: Maintain transparent communication with the community throughout the project. Address any concerns or feedback promptly and effectively to build trust and support.

7. Poor Quality Work Being Delivered:

- Risk: The quality of retrofit works may not meet required standards, leading to dissatisfaction and potential rework.
- Mitigation: Conduct regular quality checks and inspections throughout the retrofit process. Ensure contractors adhere to PAS 2035 standards and address any issues promptly.

8. Complexity of Working Across Two Grant Funding Streams:

- Risk: Managing both the WHLG and WSHF funding streams may lead to administrative complexities and potential overlaps.
- Mitigation: Establish clear guidelines and protocols for managing both funding streams. Ensure coordination and communication between teams to streamline processes.

9. Misunderstanding of Eligibility Requirements by Residents:

- Risk: Residents may misunderstand the eligibility requirements for the WHLG program.
- Mitigation: Provide clear and accessible information to residents about eligibility requirements. Offer assistance through community engagement events and support from Act on Energy.

8. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Bernard McEldowney	
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Judith Wills	19/05/2025
Financial Services	Bob Watson	19/05/2025
Legal Services	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services	19/05/2025
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Matthew Eccles, Climate Change Manager	19/05/2025

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**Cabinet
2025**

18th June

Outside Body Appointments 2025/26

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor K. J. May
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton
Report Author Claire Felton	Job Title: Assistant Director, Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services Contact email: c.felton@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881429
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

It is recommended that Cabinet considers nominating to the bodies listed at Appendix 1 as appropriate.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Cabinet makes appointments and nominations to a number of Outside Bodies each year; some of these are for executive functions and these are made by the Cabinet. This report sets out the details of the relevant appointments.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 No specific legislation governs the appointment or nomination of members to outside bodies by the Council. Depending on the nature of the relationship the Council has with the organisation, the legal status of the organisation, its corporate, charity or other status and its

constitution, there are differing legal implications for the members sitting on these bodies.

- 4.2 The Local Authorities (Indemnities for Members and Officers) Order 2004 governs the Council's ability to indemnify members sitting on outside bodies.

5. COUNCIL PRIORITY - IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Strategic Priority

- 5.1 The action proposed in this report supports the Council priority of sustainability.
- 5.2 Cabinet reviews a number of outside body appointments on an annual basis to ensure that those bodies to which the Cabinet puts forward nominations continue to address the needs and aspirations of the District.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.3 There are no specific climate change implications.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation Implications

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

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.2 There are no specific equalities and diversity implications.

Operational Implications

- 6.3 A number of bodies ask the Council to make appointments to them for terms of office which vary from one year upwards.

- 6.4 The Council has previously agreed that a number of such appointments, usually to national or regional bodies, should be made by office. Where there are specific requirements for appointments these are shown against the organisations in the appendix.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There would be risks arising if the Council failed to make appointments to the Outside Bodies listed in this report; the nature of the risk would vary depending on the type of body in question. The Council needs to participate in certain Outside Bodies to ensure that existing governance arrangements can be complied with. On other bodies the risk would be less severe but non-participation would detract from the Council's ability to shape and influence policies and activities which affect the residents of Bromsgrove.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices

Appendix 1 - list of appointments to outside bodies

Background Papers:

Terms of reference and governing documents of organisations are held by Democratic Services.

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Appendix 1: Outside Bodies By Office (Cabinet appointments)

Organisation	Number of representatives and length of term	Representatives Appointed 2024/25	Nominations to be Appointed 2025/2026
Bromsgrove Partnership (Local Strategic Partnership)	Leader Substitute – Deputy Leader	Cllr Karen May Sub: Cllr Sue Baxter	Cllr Karen May Sub: Cllr Sue Baxter
District Councils Network	Leader Substitute – Deputy Leader	Cllr Karen May Sub: Cllr Sue Baxter	Cllr Karen May Sub: Cllr Sue Baxter
Local Government Association General Assembly	Leader Substitute – Deputy Leader	Cllr Karen May Sub: Cllr Sue Baxter	Cllr Karen May Sub: Cllr Sue Baxter
North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership	Cabinet member	Cllr Peter Whittaker	Cllr Peter Whittaker
PATROL (Parking And Traffic Regulations Outside London) Adjudication Joint Committee	Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services Substitute:	Cllr Sue Baxter Sub: Cllr Peter Whittaker	Cllr Sue Baxter Sub: Cllr Peter Whittaker
West Midlands Employers	Portfolio Holder for Human Resources	Cllr Karen May	Cllr Karen May
West Midlands Employers Shareholder Board (established in 2024)	Leader, hold a cabinet role, or have a specific interest or expertise in the services of WME (2024-2028)	Cllr Karen May	Cllr Karen May

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Organisation	Number of representatives and length of term	Representatives Appointed 2024/25	Nominations to be Appointed 2025/2026
Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board	1 Rep for each council	Cllr Shirley Webb Sub: Cllr Sue Baxter	Cllr Shirley Webb Sub: Cllr Sue Baxter
Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)	One representative on behalf of the 3 North Worcestershire Councils – required by LEP constitution	Cllr Karen May Sub: Cllr Joe Baker (Redditch Borough Council)	Cllr Sharon Harvey (Redditch Borough Council) Sub: Cllr Karen May
<p>Worcestershire Local Access Forum (Worcestershire County Council)</p> <p>BDC included on this forum from May 2025</p>	<p>1 representative from north Worcestershire District Councils.</p> <p>Term: 1 year</p> <p>(Note: Would be beneficial if the representative had a keen interest in countryside access and recreation issues.)</p> <p>No liability issues identified.</p>	<p>Councillor Drew (Wyre Forest DC)</p>	<p>Councillor Robin Drew (Wyre Forest DC)</p>

Appointments to the Shareholders Committee

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor K. J. May	
Portfolio Holder Consulted			
Relevant Assistant Director		Assistant Director Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services	
Report Author: Jess Bayley-Hill	Job Title: Principal Democratic Services Officer	Contact email: jess.bayley-hill@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk	Tel: 01527 64252
Wards Affected		No specific ward relevance	
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 Cabinet is asked to **RECOMMEND** that:-

- 1) The updated Terms of Reference for the Shareholders Committee (Appendix 1) be approved;

The Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that:-

- 2) To nominate and agree four Members of the Cabinet to appoint to sit on the Shareholders Committee during the 2025/26 municipal year;
- 3) To nominate and agree one of these four Members of the Cabinet to be the Chairman of the Shareholders Committee in the 2025/26 municipal year; and
- 4) To nominate and agree one of these four Members of the Cabinet to be the Vice Chairman of the Shareholders Committee in the 2025/26 municipal year.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The report invites the Cabinet to appoint Members to serve on the Shareholders Committee, including Members to serve as Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee, in the 2025/26 municipal year. In addition, the report also requests approval of the updated Terms of

Reference following the reduction in the number of Members appointed to the Cabinet at the Annual Council meeting held on 14th May 2025.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The Shareholders Committee is a key part of the governance structure for the Council company, Spadesbourne Homes Limited.
- 3.2 In line with national best practice, the Shareholders Committee has been established as a sub-committee of the Cabinet.
- 3.3 As a sub-Committee of the Cabinet, it is a responsibility of the Cabinet, rather than Council, to appoint Members to serve on the Shareholders Committee.
- 3.4 Members appointed to the Shareholders Committee are required to attend training in respect of their roles and responsibilities on this Committee if they have not previously attended training on this subject. Returning members of the committee are strongly encouraged to attend refresher training.
- 3.5 It is important to note that the Councillor appointed as the Chairman of the Shareholders Committee will be required to present an annual report to Council relating to the activities of Spadesbourne Homes Limited at the end of the municipal year. The Annual Report for 2025/26 will be the first such report to Council. No annual report will be produced for the 2024/25 municipal year because the company has only been operating since December 2024 and there has only been one meeting of the Committee to date.
- 3.6 At the Annual Council meeting held on 14th May 2025, the Leader appointed six members to the Cabinet for the 2025/26 municipal year. This was a reduced number compared to the previous municipal year, when seven members were appointed. Therefore, to reflect the smaller Cabinet, it is necessary to reduce the number of Members appointed to the Shareholders Committee for the municipal year 2025/26. The updated terms of reference have been attached at Appendix 1 to this report and reflect the changes to the number of Members. No further changes are proposed to the terms of reference.
- 3.6 Whilst only Cabinet members may be appointed to serve on the Shareholders Committee, the leader of all the political groups represented on the Council will also be invited to attend meetings of the Committee to participate in the debate, in line with requirements detailed in the Committee's terms of reference.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications arising in respect of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council is the only Shareholder in Spadesbourne Homes Limited.
- 5.2 The powers of the Council as Shareholder are vested in the Cabinet assisted by the Shareholders Committee.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

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

Relevant Strategic Purpose

- 6.2 This report supports the Council's priority of sustainability.
- 6.3 The appointment of Members to the Shareholders Committee will help to ensure that meetings of the Committee can take place consistently during the year and address any matters reserved to the authority as shareholder.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.2 There are no climate change implications.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.3 There are no equalities and diversity implications.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The risk arising from not appointing Members to the Shareholders Committee is that the authority will not be able to fulfil its obligations as shareholder in Spadesbourne Homes Limited. There is a risk that matters reserved to the shareholder could not then be addressed and this could undermine the sustainability of Spadesbourne Homes Limited.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

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Background Papers

Committee Terms of Reference in the Council's Constitution.

COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE - EXTRACT

PART 5

APPENDIX 1 - SHAREHOLDERS COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

Number of members	4 5 (must all be members of the Cabinet)
Politically Balanced Y/N	N
Quorum	3
Procedure Rules applicable	Cabinet Procedure Rules
Terms of Reference	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To approve Spadesbourne Homes Limited’s business plan, including any material amendments to the business plan. This should be determined in the financial year prior to the application of the plan. 2) To approve any new development not contemplated in the agreed Spadesbourne Homes Limited business plan. 3) To approve the appointment and dismissal of all directors, including Alternate Directors and senior employees, at Spadesbourne Homes Limited. 4) To approve the terms and conditions of employment and severance package for any Executive Directors and senior employees of the Spadesbourne Homes Limited. 5) To approve the pay framework and job evaluation scheme for Spadesbourne Homes Limited. 6) To adopt the Governance Agreement between the Council and Spadesbourne Homes Limited and to approve any material changes to that agreement. 7) To monitor the performance of Spadesbourne Homes Limited. Quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports should be presented for Members’ consideration at every meeting of the Committee.

COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE - EXTRACT

PART 5

	<p>8) To monitor Spadesbourne Homes Limited’s budget position. Quarterly Budget Monitoring Reports should be presented for Members’ consideration at every meeting of the Committee.</p> <p>9) To consider the risks and opportunities faced by Spadesbourne Homes Limited and impact on the Council.</p> <p>10) Reporting and making recommendations to Cabinet on areas outside of the Shareholder Committee’s delegated authority.</p> <p>11) Reporting to Full Council annually on the performance of the trading activities of Spadesbourne Homes Limited.</p> <p>12) To undertake all other functions divested in the Committee as shareholder of Spadesbourne Homes Limited, including reserved matters, on behalf of the Council.</p> <p>13) Reviewing the Terms of reference annually and making any necessary recommendations to Cabinet.</p> <p>14) The Shareholder Committee will not have operational control over Spadesbourne Homes Limited. All decisions regarding the day-to-day operation and management of Spadesbourne Homes Limited rests with the Spadesbourne Homes Board of Directors, which must ensure that Spadesbourne Homes Limited’s business is conducted in accordance with the Shareholders’ Agreement entered into between the Council and Spadesbourne Homes Limited and in accordance with the Spadesbourne Homes Limited Articles of Association.</p>
Special provisions as to the Chairman	The Chair must be a member of the Cabinet.

COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE - EXTRACT

PART 5

<p>Special provisions as to membership</p>	<p>Members of the Committee must all be members of the Cabinet. Only members of the Cabinet can sit as substitutes.</p> <p>The Leaders of each opposition group or their nominated substitute will be invited to attend meetings and be given full rights to participate in meetings although they will not be entitled to vote.</p> <p>Members, including substitute Members, should receive suitable training in respect of their roles on the Committee prior to participate in meetings.</p>
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**Recommendation from Audit, Standards and Governance Committee on
Thursday 20th March 2025**

RECOMMENDED that cyber security KnowBe4 training be made mandatory for all Members.

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Agenda Item 8

Audit, Standards and Governance Committee
20th March 2025

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE AUDIT, STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 20TH MARCH 2025, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors H. D. N. Rone-Clarke (Chairman), S. T. Nock (Vice-Chairman), R. Bailes, D. J. A. Forsythe, D. Hopkins, D. J. Nicholl, J. Robinson, J. D. Stanley and Worrall (Parish Councils' Representative)

Observers: Councillor S. R. Colella

Officers: Mr P. Carpenter, D Goodall, Ms. N Cummings, Green and Mrs. P. Ross

61/24

RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT / CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

The Deputy Chief Executive / S151 Officer presented the Quarterly Risk Update Quarter 3, 2024/25.

Members' attention was drawn to page 52 of the main agenda pack, which detailed the ninth cycle of reviewing Corporate and Departmental Risks since the original baselining of Risks in April 2022. Over this period, we had seen:-

- Departmental ownership of risks and reviews at Management Teams on a monthly basis.
- Active review, mitigation, and reduction of risks – ensuring they became managed as part of business as usual.
- Updating of the 4Risk System – as the Authorities repository of this information.
- That the Officer Risk Group had actively reduced risk numbers through their work and that a common approach to risk was now being embedded within the organisation.
- That the Risk Level had moved to a **Moderate Assurance** level in May 2023.

Corporate Risks were summarised in the table on page 53 of the main agenda pack. There had been two additions in relation to the upcoming Devolution/Local Government Reorganisation and also the embedding of a new Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive, both of whom

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were due to commence on 31st March 2025. In addition to this, there had been a number of changes with Financial Pressures (COR10), Resolution of the Approved Budget Position (COR17), Financial Position Rectification (COR20), Delivery of Levelling Up and Towns Fund Initiatives (COR22) reducing in RAG rating. There were five of these Corporate Risks classed as RED.

Members' attention was further drawn to the section on 'Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation', as the new risk was significant and would impact on all facets of Council operations. Within this parliament, all Councils within Worcestershire would be disbanded and replaced by Unitary Authorities. Councils within Worcestershire had been invited to give high level "agreed" solutions/options by the 21st March 2025, with detailed solutions by November 2025. The Council would need to deliver business as usual until vesting day and there were significant risks linked to operations, relationships with other Councils within the County, finances and potential loss of staff that needed to be managed.

It was also important that the current Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive passed on their knowledge to the new Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive.

The table at Appendix A to the report, set out the detail of these departmental Risks and linked them where relevant to Corporate Risks. The table also set out the RAG rating for each of these risks for Quarters 4 2023/24 and Quarters 1-3 2024/25. Those risks that had been mitigated had a "black" colour in the quarter showing it was no longer a Departmental Risk. There were now no Red Risks.

It was important when fighting claims that we maintained the correct records and the new CIVICA Housing system was helping with this.

Our insurers had highlighted 2 major risks for the sector:

- Under-Insurance of Council assets due to incomplete assets. Insurers were now starting to intimate that they would only insure to a certain level and not the full value, if the data were not fully updated.
- The use of Artificial Intelligence – as it was not clear on what decisions were being made with this data and what the risks implications were because of this.

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The Deputy Chief Executive / S151 Officer referred to security in meetings / Teams meetings and the potential use of AI generated avatars.

Following on from the presentation Members discussed cyber security in some detail and the following areas of concern were included in the discussions:-

- The number of Members who had undertaken cyber security KnowBe4 training
- Cyber security training KnowBe4 was this mandatory for all Members
- 'People' in Teams meetings potentially using AI avatars
- How safe were we on Teams meetings
- How Members could protect themselves from a cyber-attack
- The use of ChatGPT, was a good tool to use, but where was information stored
- Exempt sessions during meetings / Teams meetings, meetings being Live Streamed, how secure were exempt sessions. Where were 'people' located whilst participating in exempt sessions during Teams meetings, be aware of your surroundings/environment

Members further requested a simple guide on what to look for in order to protect themselves from a potential cyber-attack.

In response the Deputy Chief Executive / S151 Officer stated that everyone needed to be vigilant. Officers could not mandate Members to attend the cyber security KnowBe4 training. However, liaison with the Council's ICT Transformation Manager with regard to producing a simple guide for Members would be carried out (as referred to in the preamble above); and a useful link on 'AI Unpacked' from the Local Government Association (LGA) would be forwarded to all Committee Members.

The Deputy Chief Executive / S151 Officer reassured Members that he would raise their concerns on exempt sessions with the relevant senior officers.

It was agreed by Members that cyber security KnowBe4 training should be made mandatory for all Members.

Members then focused on Devolution and the restructuring that would be required, with the following questions / concerns being raised:-

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- The use of consultancy experts and cost implications
- The tight timescale in which to achieve certain milestones, other authorities that had undergone devolution were given a longer period
- Be clear on what officers were expected to do, separate the functions from the devolution restructuring
- Have a clear forward plan, which sets out our key deliverables and measure delivery against it

However, the Deputy Chief Executive / S151 Officer stated that it was certainly seen as a positive that the new Chief Executive had been through devolution and would certainly bring his knowledge and some ideas.

RESOLVED that the present list of Corporate and Departmental risks be noted.

RECOMMENDATION that cyber security KnowBe4 training be made mandatory for all Members.

The meeting closed at 7.45 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

25TH MARCH 2025, AT 6.00 P.M.

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

Observers: Councillor B. M. McEldowney

Other Attendees: Mr N. Moon and Mr R. Church (Applied Resilience)

Officers: Mr. G. Revans, Ms. M. Worsfold and Mrs S. Woodfield

103/23

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor S.A. Robinson with Councillor J.W. Robinson in attendance as named substitute.

104/23

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS

Councillor J. Robinson declared a pecuniary interest in relation to Minute Item No. 110/24 – Cabinet Work Programme – due to his appointment as County Councillor at Worcestershire County Council (WCC).

105/23

UPDATE ON HEATWAVES PREPAREDNESS (IMPACT OF HEATWAVES TASK GROUP RECOMMENDATION)

Mr N. Moon, Chief Executive and Mr R. Church, Incident Management & Resilience Specialist of Applied Resilience (AR) presented an update on Heatwaves Preparedness to the Board.

The topics discussed included updates on Heatwaves at the Local Resilience Forum Level, Cools Hubs, Plans, Warning and Informing, Priority Services Register, Business Continuity Plans and Training.

Following the presentation, the Chairman of the Impact of Heatwaves Task Group, Councillor M. Marshall welcomed AR to the meeting and commenced proceedings. Along with Members of the Board; the following considerations were raised:

- **Updates at the Local Resilience Forum Level** - During discussions in the Impact of Heatwaves Task Group sessions the establishment of Worcestershire Prepared (WP) had been discussed to review risks, however this was not mentioned in the presentation. Was the work still ongoing? – Members were informed that the scheme was still being established, with the Terms of Reference still to be agreed. A mascot was being designed to encourage the scheme as a whole for community resilience, not just specifically for the Impacts of Heatwaves. It was also explained that AR were not leading on the scheme and the intention was for the group to carry out co-ordinated engagement for Heatwaves Preparedness.
- Was the operation of groups and agencies independent of LGR or would this also be reviewed? – The Board were informed that the partnership was formed by forty partners and would have significant implications. The West Mercia Local Resilience Forum (LRF) had not discussed the implications of LGR specifically and were focusing mostly on the statutory responsibilities. However, LRF would be keeping pace with developments and would be considering the necessary service provisions. Members were also advised that LGR had been added as a specific risk to the LRF register.
- **Cool Hubs** - Why were Cool Hub provisions for designated facilities specifically chosen for Churches of England, could other places of worship be explored? – It was explained that the Diocese had been considered as there had been good engagement, however, part of Worcestershire Prepared was to engage with all areas.
- How would the provision of Cool Hub facilities work for residents if availability was only for available during routine opening times? It was felt by Members that reliability of everyday Cool Hub venues was a necessity. – The Board were informed that opening times of venues were reliant and dependant on the severity of the civil emergency.
- A specific list of the facilities participating in the Cool Hub provision were requested for Members' consideration to also include venues which had air conditioning units present and those which did not. – It was agreed that this would be provided.
- Members requested Cool Hub provisions for the wider District should be explored to ensure adequate accessibility to all residents. - Members were informed that sourcing other venues was ongoing, including contacts with local parishes as a possible option. Engagement would be encouraged with WP, including the relevant partners and with voluntary sectors and agencies. Members were also advised that the provision for transporting vulnerable individuals to Cool Hub locations was also being considered.
- How would the provision of Cool Hubs be communicated to the public? – Engagement with the public and the use of facilities

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would be dependent on the scale of the overall adverse level response. If there was an impending severe Heatwave Impact, the LGR would provide activate communications.

- Had equipment been procured for extra Cool Hub provision? – The Board were advised that the intension was only to provide facilities that were available within budget, however, if air conditioning units could be procured, other venues would be sourced. Members were advised that libraries did include air conditioning units and churches did not, however the thickness of the buildings' construction deemed them as an effective Cool Hub provision.
- It was suggested by a Member that sport centres and gym facilities could be explored as an option as the venues were equipped with air conditioning. – In response Members were advised that up front costings were difficult to request, as opposed to rest centres. In response Members expressed the view that the suggested venues should be explored in further detail as a necessity for the local area. In response Members were advised that if there was an adverse weather risk, that the venues were more likely to support the scheme, however, there had been challenges in the past, with some similar venues refusing to assist.
- Was there information available to manage reducing risk during heatwaves, for example, lighting fire for BBQs and if there was information available to encourage sensible behaviour for dog owners during the summer months. – Members were advised that fires were part of the national monitoring. The Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service would also adapt their messaging of risk, depending on intelligence. The scheme was also reliant on partnerships to push out messages. The suggestion of sensible behaviour for dog owners would be fed back for the Worcestershire Prepared comms programme.
- **Business Continuity Plans** - Could the Board be provided with progress on the Business Continuity Plans. - AR were in the process of meeting with all Assistant Directors and their teams to discuss business continuity plans. Members were also advised that keeping pace with the learning of cyber-attacks was an integral part of the plans.
- **Priority Services Register** - Was there progress to ensure the most vulnerable in the District were being included on the Priority Services Register and if figures could be provided? – The Board were advised that AR were not routinely provided with specific figures from utility services advising who had been put onto the register, however, AR were keen to promote the service and would review the suggestion further.
- Could WP consider managing their own Priority Services Register rather than relying on utility companies? – Members were informed that civil contingency plans could be reviewed if co-ordinated effectively, as an additional responsibility to be included in the BDC Adverse Weather Plan.

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- Could the promotion and provision of the Priority Services Register (along with the relevant contact details) be included with the Council Tax bill distribution as a consideration? – It was agreed that this would be reviewed further and added to the list of requirements for the BDC Adverse Weather Plan.
- **Plans** - Could the Board be updated with progress of the BDC adverse weather plan. – The Board were informed that the plan was due for sign off and should be available by April, however, there was a need to review further Cool Hub provisions. Members were also advised that the LRF Adverse Weather Plan would be ready by next year.
- Did WP provide support for all weather conditions and not just extreme weather? – The Board were advised that WP were set up to advise on all weather conditions. There were also robust practices and training in place to assist Officers and Members for emergency planning.
- How would Members be informed of a severe weather warning, to ensure preparedness for residents. – Members were informed that included in the Council's Adverse Weather Plan would be actions required to notify residents that the local area were moving to an adverse weather warning. In response, Members expressed concerns that there seemed to be insufficient time to warn residents and requested a more robust approach. In response it was explained that there were emergency operational steps outlined in the BDC Business Continuity Plan and that any warnings were dependant on the Meteorological Office triggering a response.
- **Training** - Training was requested for Members to ensure that robust provisions were in place to provide the necessary advice to residents in preparedness for a Heatwave.
- **Warning and Informing** - If a comprehensive list of campaigns could be circulated who warn and inform residents of adverse weather conditions. – It was agreed that clearer guidance could be collated and provided in a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet, ahead of the BDC Adverse Weather Plan completion. Members were also advised that an integral part of WP responsibilities was to co-ordinate residents to the relevant available necessary documentation.
- Did NHS Surgeries provide sufficient information to residents to promote extreme weather preparedness advice? – The Board were informed that NHS Surgeries had their own formal protocols for extreme weather condition provisions, with clear robust guidance provided and were also part of WP.

RESOLVED that the Update on Heatwaves Preparedness be noted.

106/23

LOCAL HERITAGE ACTION LIST (QUARTERLY UPDATE)

The Principal Conservation Officer presented the Local Heritage Action List Quarterly Update for Member's consideration.

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The Board were informed of progress on preparing the lists and are still inviting nominations for all areas.

Work on drafting the lists for Lickey and Blackwell, Bromsgrove, Wythall and Bournheath continued but had been reduced due to staff sickness and a rise of Development Management work in January and February. It was hoped that the delay would allow the Bromsgrove Society to contribute to the Bromsgrove list also.

Following consideration of the presentation, Members provided the following comments:

- A Member queried how the selection process for listings was co-ordinated and requested if Lickey End and Norton could be a future consideration of review, advising that some listed buildings were situated in the area. – In response the Board were informed that parishes were generally considered instead of by ward area (apart from the Bromsgrove and Rubery areas) and the Conservation Team had decided that Parishes/areas were selected in alphabetical order for fairness. It was advised that the Conservation Team were happy to receive any nominations which would be banked, however, may not be reviewed until the parish/area in which they are located is being reviewed. However, a visit could be arranged to provide a local listing information evening to provide a talk on the allocation process.
- A Member requested progress on the drafting of lists for Lickey and Blackwell. – In response the Board were informed that lists were being actively worked on and there had been discussions with the Parish Council, albeit some time ago. They had also submitted nominations.
- A Member suggested if Aston Field could be considered. – Advice of how to locate the nomination forms on the BDC Website was provided to Members.
- When reviewing Bromsgrove, was it solely the Town Centre for consideration? – In response the group were advised that it was not solely the Town Centre and that a list of the wards included in the Bromsgrove area would be provided for Members' consideration.
- Were further delays envisaged due to the rise in the Development Management work? – In response Members were informed that the work for the local plan was unpredictable, however, it was hoped progress on the lists would improve with the impending return of a staff member who had been on sick leave.
- Would Rubery be a future consideration? – The Principal Conservation Officer advised that Rubery could be a consideration. It was highlighted that the Cardinal Newman's House had been flagged for consideration which was within the District's jurisdiction, at a recent talk given by the Principal Conservation Officer.

- A Member raised concerns regarding Bilberry Hill Tearooms based in the Cofton Parish, which had been gifted to Birmingham City Council but had seemed reluctant to assist with the building's restoration. The building had dilapidated and was in serious need of repair. It was requested if the building could be reviewed by the Conservation Team. – The Board were advised that if the building was in private ownership and not listed, it would be difficult to assist. However, the Conservation Team were aware that West Midlands Building Preservation Trust had shown interest in the building, and if they were prepared to take it on as a project, they would have access to various grant monies to repair it. It was agreed that contact details would be provided to Councillor A. Dale.

RESOLVED that the Local Heritage Action List (Quarterly Update) by noted.

107/23

WORCESTERSHIRE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - UPDATES

The Council's Representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), Councillor B. Kumar, updated the Board on the matters discussed at its recent meetings held on 8th January and 20th February 2025.

Updates on the dental service, Care Quality Commission inspection of Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust (Well Led Inspection), mitigating winter pressures and urgent and emergency care and overview from West Midlands Ambulance Service were discussed.

Following the presentation Members discussed several points which included:

- Members raised concerns of the current state of the NHS Dental Service being seemed to be regarded as a residual service. It was queried if the National Dental Recovery Plan was having a positive impact and if there were necessary steps in place to ensure the dental service was adequately provided? – It was advised that the recovery plan was incomplete and still in progress. As the Board minutes were in the public domain, requests for data were not generally provided and was therefore difficult to analyse progress without the necessary data available.
- Concerns of the Integrated Care Board (ICB) cuts were raised by the Board and it was queried if the cuts would have an adverse effect on the Dental Service. – In response Members were advised that funding had been discussed during previous Board meetings and cuts to middle management had been suggested, however the considerations had not been welcomed. Specific questions would be progressed at a future HOSC meetings to provide further data.

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- Members raised concerns and requested further details regarding issues with a closed culture and racism in some areas of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust with risk management process in need of review. – Members were advised that the issue was raised with the Board but were reluctant to comment and were advised that the Board would be reviewing the situation further.
- Identified deaths of patients whilst waiting for an ambulance was raised with concern by Members and it was requested if specific numbers were provided by the Board? – It was advised that there had been three cases and that the Ambulance Service were very open and honest with their response. It was acknowledged that there had been one preventable death and two cases where the service could have provided more adequate care.

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

108/23

FINANCE AND BUDGET WORKING GROUP - UPDATE

The Chairman of the Finance and Budget Working Group, Councillor P. McDonald updated the Board of the recent meeting which took place on Friday 21st March 2025.

A new software system was being utilised within the Council to analyse data, which would flag important information. Officers presenting the new software at the meeting were very enthusiastic. Members felt encouraged that the tool was a vast improvement on past software and would be a great asset for future data analysis.

Members were also encouraged by the recovery plan which was in a good position for the impending LGR.

The Board were also advised that the group had paid a fond farewell to Peter Carpenter, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer who was due to leave the Council. The group ensured that thanks were recorded for the work carried out by him and that the respect and support from the Council had been overwhelming.

RESOLVED that the Finance and Budget Working Group update be noted.

109/23

TASK GROUP - UPDATES

The Democratic Services Officer, who administered the Housing Task Group, provided an update on behalf of the Chairman of the Housing Task Group to the Board.

Members were informed that the group were on track and had covered each of the terms of reference items for investigation in various meetings with Officers. The next scheduled meeting would be held in person on 3rd April 2025 to draft the report and recommendations.

RESOLVED that the Housing Task Group update be noted.

110/23

CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The Cabinet Work Programme was considered by the Board.

It was requested and the Board agreed that the Contaminated Land Strategy which was to be considered at Cabinet on 18th June 2025 should be scrutinised by the Board and be added to the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for its meeting to be held on 17th June 2025.

LGR was raised by Members with the following points for consideration:

- Redundancies
- TUPE
- Vacancies
- Workforce

Members expressed the view that the Board should be considered to assist Cabinet with LGR and that the impending report should be scrutinised by the Board. – In response the Executive Director informed the Board that most staff would be TUPED over. The Minister had put out a statement that all Local Authorities who were required to, had submitted their interim plan. £7.6 m funding would be made available to twenty-one areas involved in LGR. Once a Unitary or North/South divide had been established with senior roles considered to be at most risk.

The Executive Director felt that the Board did have a role to play to review how services would be run with the impact of vacancies and redundancies. The Chief Executive would also be reviewing how to report to Cabinet and to the Overview and Scrutiny Board on a regular basis.

A report would be commissioned with other Local Authorities in the Worcestershire area to review LGR in more detail, with a transparent and balanced view considered integral as part of the review. Joint Chief Executives were meeting to discuss next steps and would look to commission a report.

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

111/23

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMMES

The Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme was considered by Members with the following points discussed:

- The Chairman raised and it was agreed by the Board that the Local Heritage Action List Quarterly Update would be moved from the June to the July meeting to free up some space on the work programme.
- A Member requested an update of progress for the Refuge Fleece Replacement. It was agreed this would be provided to the Board.
- It was raised by a Member and agreed by the Board that the Bromsgrove District Plan item should be removed from the June meeting and an extraordinary meeting be set up to scrutinise in further detail. Members did also discuss the need to ensure the meeting scheduled should be considered in line with the Strategic Planning Steering Group meetings also being held for Members.

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- It was considered by a Member and agreed by the Board that shops closing on Bromsgrove High Street should be scrutinised as an item by the Board. – In response the Chairman advised that a seminar had been set up with a Representative from the Bromsgrove Traders who had provided a talk to Members. After consideration of the seminar, Members had provided suggestions. The Chairman suggested that a report should be provided to the Board to update Members on progress of the suggestions made.

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme be noted.

112/23

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ACTION SHEET

The Overview and Scrutiny Action Sheet was considered by Members.

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

113/23

TO CONSIDER ANY URGENT BUSINESS, DETAILS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED TO THE HEAD OF LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC AND PROPERTY SERVICES PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING AND WHICH THE CHAIRMAN, BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, CONSIDERS TO BE OF SO URGENT A NATURE THAT IT CANNOT WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING.

There was no urgent business for consideration.

114/23

TO CONSIDER, AND IF CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE, TO PASS THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING DURING THE CONSIDERATION OF ITEM(S) OF BUSINESS CONTAINING EXEMPT INFORMATION:

RESOLVED: that under Section 100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of 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</u>
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13	3
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115/23

TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 11TH AND 17TH FEBRUARY 2025

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 11th and 17th February 2025 were considered.

A Member highlighted that there was a typographical error on page 43 which read as follows:

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25th March 2025

*“If ANPR could be considered to pay on **exist** to encourage residents to stay in local areas for a longer period as opposed to the inconvenience of paying on entry”.*

It was noted that it should read as follows:

*“If ANPR could be considered to pay on **exit** to encourage residents to stay in local areas for a longer period as opposed to the inconvenience of paying on entry”.*

A further typographical error was highlighted on page 44 which read as follows:

*“If the consultants Waterman had engaged with **Warwickshire** County Council (WCC), as this was critical”?*

It was noted that it should read as follows:

*“If the consultants Waterman had engaged with **Worcestershire** County Council (WCC), as this was critical”?*

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 11th and 17th February 2025 be agreed as a true and correct record.

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

The meeting closed at 8.00 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

15TH APRIL 2025, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors P. M. McDonald (Chairman), S. T. Nock (Vice-Chairman), A. Bailes, R. Bailes, A. M. Dale, D. J. A. Forsythe, D. Hopkins, R. J. Hunter, D. J. Nicholl, S. A. Robinson and J. D. Stanley

Officers: Mr. G. Revans and Mrs S. Woodfield

116/24 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor B. Kumar with Councillor D.J.A. Forsythe in attendance as named substitute and Councillor E.M.S. Gray with Councillor D. Hopkins in attendance as named substitute.

117/24 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

There were no declarations of interest nor of whipping arrangements.

118/24 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 25TH MARCH 2025**

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 25th March 2025 were considered.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 25th March 2025 be agreed as a true and correct record.

119/24 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25**

The Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2024/25 was considered by the Board.

Members commented that the Annual Report was a well written, detailed reminder of the wide variety of items covered over the municipal year.

During discussions, Councillor Hunter expressed the view that whilst Recommendations provided by the Board to Cabinet had been included in the report, it would be helpful if a dedicated section were included in the report which “showcased” all the proposed Recommendations. It was agreed by the Democratic Services Officer that the suggestion would be implemented in the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for the following municipal year.

Also during discussions of the annual report, an update was provided to Members regarding the Woodland Creation Application initiative bid.

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2024/25 be noted.

120/24

WORCESTERSHIRE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - UPDATE

This item was deferred to the next Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting which would take place on 17th June 2025.

121/24

FINANCE AND BUDGET WORKING GROUP - UPDATE

There was no Finance and Budget Working Group update for the Board’s consideration.

122/24

TASK GROUP - UPDATE

There was no Task Group update for the Board’s consideration.

123/24

CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The Cabinet Work Programme was considered by the Board.

Members requested a brief summary for two items added to the Cabinet Work Programme regarding Warm Homes Local Grants funding and Resources and Revocation of the Bromsgrove Road and Lickey End Air Quality Management Area. It was agreed by the Democratic Services Officer that the information would be sought from relevant Officers and circulated to the Board.

A Member requested further details concerning the Medium-Term Financial Plan Scene Setting Report 2026/27. In response it was advised that the report would be pre-scrutinised at the Finance and Budget Working Group meeting held on 5th September 2025.

Further clarity was also requested on the item provided in the Cabinet Work Programme for Council Tax – Empty Homes Discounts and Premiums 2026/24. In response it was advised that the report would be pre-scrutinised at the Finance and Budget Working Group meeting which would be held on 5th January 2026.

Members also noted that the Local Government Re-organisation (LGR) report had not been scheduled in the Cabinet Work Programme and stressed the importance that adequate time was required to evaluate and scrutinise the report, prior to the final deadline proposal set for 28th November 2025. In response the Executive Director informed the Board that a meeting was being scheduled for all joint Worcestershire Chief Executives to discuss sourcing the relevant consultant to carry out a feasibility study for structural change in the Worcestershire area, focusing on investigating the costs and benefits for one unitary authority and two unitary authorities. An update report would be presented to the June meeting of the O&S Board.

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

124/24

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ACTION SHEET

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

During consideration of the item the Chairman raised noted that there had not been any progress on the actions requested for the update on Heatwaves Preparedness. It was explained that action responses were in progress for Members' consideration. The Democratic Service Officer agreed to request a detailed update from Applied Resilience and would update the Board accordingly.

Training to enable Members to prepare residents in extreme weather conditions for Heatwaves Preparedness was also raised, querying if training would include both extremities of hot and cold. In response, it was confirmed by the Assistant Director that training would be provided for both.

Further clarity was also sought for Heatwaves Preparedness regarding the Council reviewing plans to expand vulnerable residents onto the Priority Services Register. The Executive Director advised the Board that Applied Resilience provided the priority services register in two parts. Vulnerable residents were sourced from utility providers and an additional Council held Priority Services Register was also held which contained a list of vulnerable residents requiring additional needs. In response Members queried if the Council could confirm how many residents were held on the Council's Priority Services Register. In response Members were advised that the information would be incorporated into Applied Resilience's action plan to retrieve the necessary information.

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Councillor Dale requested an update for an outstanding action regarding the Bilberry Hill Tearooms, advising that numerous emails had been received concerning the site and was keen to obtain further assistance from the Conservation Team to address the site's disrepair. In response the Democratic Services Officer informed Members that the Principal Conservation Officer was in the process of contacting Councillor Dale, however, progress would be sought for the outstanding action.

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

125/24

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

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

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme be noted.

126/24

TO CONSIDER ANY URGENT BUSINESS, DETAILS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED TO THE HEAD OF LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC AND PROPERTY SERVICES PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING AND WHICH THE CHAIRMAN, BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, CONSIDERS TO BE OF SO URGENT A NATURE THAT IT CANNOT WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING.

There was no urgent business for consideration.

The meeting closed at 6.22 p.m.

Chairman

**Cabinet
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18 June

Promoting Independent Living Service Contract Proposals

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Shirley Webb
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Judith Willis, Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services
Report Author - Matthew Bough	Job Title: Strategic Housing Services & Business Support Manager Contact email: matthew.bough@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 64252 ext: 3120
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	Community & Housing
Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	
This appendix to this report contains exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet Committee RESOLVE that:-

Officers to work towards ensuring the continuation of the Promoting Independent Living Service.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Home Improvement Agency, known as Promoting Independent Living (PIL) service works closely with the other five Local Housing Authorities and Worcestershire County Council to provide a range of services including Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) and discretionary grants for Home Repairs Assistance, Dementia Dwelling Grants, Minor Adaptations and Hospital Discharge Grants.
- 2.2 Since April 2020 the PIL service has been delivered by a private company Millbrook Healthcare.
- 2.3 The Council has a mandatory duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grants to eligible residents and may provide other discretionary assistance through its Housing Assistance Policy. Adaptations to Council housing

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properties are delivered through the Housing Service not the PIL service.

- 2.4 Funding is received from the Government via the Better Care Fund (BCF), which is passported through to the Local Housing Authorities (LHA) from Worcestershire County Council annually.
- 2.5 In 2024 the six LHAs and Worcestershire County Council went out to procurement (as the current contract expired in March 2025) with a broadly similar specification, but reducing some of the wider asks of the contractor to make the service more cost effective. At the end of this process, a further year's contract extension was agreed with the existing provider.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 Officers have considered options for the service following the end of the current contract in March 2026.
- 3.2 It is important to ensure that a PIL service continues to be made available to vulnerable residents.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 In 2025/26 the Council received £1,285,847 of BCF funding for the service, and it is expected to be at least this amount for 26/27.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 Any new authority or authorities will have a statutory duty to provide disabled facilities grants.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The PIL service supports the Council priority of Community & Housing to enable people to live safely and comfortably in a home that meets

their needs, through adaptations that help them to remain independent, healthy and well.

Climate Change Implications

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

Equalities and Diversity Implications

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

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 It will be critical to deliver this service whilst maintaining a high level of customer satisfaction. This risk will be managed through the specification and contract.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 Appendix 1 contains confidential information.

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Shirley Webb, Portfolio Holder for Housing	
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Judith Willis, Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services	26/5/2025
Financial Services	Bob Watson, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer	22/05/2025
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor – Governance	20/05/2025

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

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