. Public Document Pack .

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY 18TH NOVEMBER 2026
AT 6.00 P.M.

PARKSIDE SUITE - PARKSIDE

MEMBERS: Councillors K.J. May (Leader), S. J. Baxter (Deputy Leader), S. T. Nock, 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 16th September 2026** (Pages 7 - 18)

4. **Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 15th September 2026** (Pages 19 - 36)

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

5. **Bromsgrove Car Park Strategy** (Pages 37 - 64)

6. **Quarter 2 2026/27 Performance Report** (Pages 65 - 80)

7. **Temporary Accommodation Policy** (Pages 81 - 138)

8. **Homelessness Grant Award 27/28 and Performance** (Pages 139 - 152)

9. **Treasury Management Half Yearly Report 2026/27** (Pages 153 - 168)

10. **Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring Report 2026/27** (to Follow)

11. **Medium Term Financial Plan Stage 1 2027/28 (Including Fees and Charges) - Prior to Consultation** (to Follow)

    This report will be published in a Supplementary Papers pack.

    An appendix to this report may contain exempt information.

12. **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:-

Item No.	Paragraph(s)
13	3
14	3

13. **Update on Actions taken to meet the Planning Advisory Service Recommendations** (Pages 169 - 180)

    The Appendices to this report will be published in a Supplementary Papers pack to this agenda.

    Appendix 3 to this report may contain exempt information which may need to be considered in private session.

14. **Bromsgrove District Housing Trust Strategic Asset Disposal** (to Follow)

The appendices to this report may contain exempt information that may need to be considered in private session.

The appendices will be published in a Supplementary Papers pack to this agenda.

15. **To consider any urgent business, details of which have been notified to the Director of Governance and Assurance 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**

J. Leach
Chief Executive

Parkside
Market Street
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B61 8DA

10th November 2026

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

GUIDANCE ON FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS

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

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.

Bromsgrove District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

Access to Information

The Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 widened the rights of press and public to attend Local Authority meetings and to see certain documents. Recently the Freedom of Information Act 2000 has further broadened these rights, and limited exemptions under the 1985 Act.

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

You can access the following documents:

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

at www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

B R O M S G R O V E D I S T R I C T C O U N C I L

MEETING OF THE CABINET

16TH SEPTEMBER 2026, AT 6.00 P.M.

PARKSIDE SUITE - PARKSIDE

PRESENT: Councillors K.J. May (Leader), S. J. Baxter (Deputy Leader), S. T. Nock, K. Taylor and P. J. Whittaker (from Minute Item no. 28/26)

Observers: Councillor P. M. McDonald (Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board)

Officers: Mr J. Leach, Mr. J. Walton, Ms R. Egan, Ms J. Willis, Mrs. H. Mole, Mr D. Riley, Ms. K. Sharp-Fisher and Mrs. J. Bayley-Hill

26/26 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor S. Webb.

Members were advised that Councillor P. Whittaker would be arriving late at the meeting.

27/26 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

28/26 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 22ND JULY 2026**

The minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 22nd July 2026 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 22nd July 2026 be approved as a true and correct record.

29/26 **HOUSING ASSISTANCE POLICY 2026**

The Private Sector Housing Manager presented the Housing Assistance Policy for Members' consideration.

The Housing Assistance Policy detailed assistance that could be provided by the Council to fund adaptations to properties. The particular focus was on assisting residents with disabilities and there were statutory duties to be met in respect of use of Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) funding. In addition, the Council was in a position to distribute a number of discretionary grants to assist residents with their housing.

The policy had been developed jointly with colleagues at other Councils in Worcestershire. This would ensure a consistent approach was applied across the county. The application of the policy and use of grant funding would enable the Council to meet statutory duties in respect of keeping people in their homes and providing quality housing.

Once the report had been presented, Members discussed the following points in detail:

- The extent to which the recent pause on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) might impact on the policy. Officers confirmed that no impact was anticipated and that the co-ordinated approach across the county was simply designed to align processes.
- The approach to providing housing assistance that had been adopted in other parts of the country and whether any benchmarking had been undertaken to compare practices in Worcestershire to other areas. Cabinet was informed that benchmarking had not been undertaken, although it was suggested that this would be a useful exercise to undertake in the future.
- The adoption of an approach that aligned with national best practice and the fact that this was likely to compare favourably to some other counties.
- The level of flexibility available to Councils in respect of use of discretionary grant funding.
- The specific requirements that local authorities needed to meet when utilising DFGs to fund adaptations to properties.
- The sensitivities surrounding the use of DFG funding and the casework that this could generate for Councillors.

RESOLVED that

1) The Housing Assistance Policy be approved and adopted; and

2) Delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to agree any revisions to the Housing Assistance Policy and in line with any legislative or government guidance updates.

30/26 **PROMOTION OF BUSINESS SUPPORT**

The Assistant Director of Regeneration and Property Services presented a report on the subject of the promotion of business support.

Cabinet was advised that the report had been produced, following agreement of a Motion on Notice on this subject at a Council meeting held in February 2026. This Motion had requested that Cabinet consider producing a concise business prospectus.

Following that Council meeting, Officers had undertaken research on best practice in respect of provision of business support by local authorities and business growth hubs. During this work, Officers had found that it would be difficult to produce and keep up to date a paper copy of a business prospectus due to constant change occurring within this space. Consequently, Officers were not proposing a paper-based prospectus but instead that the information provided on the Council's website should be enhanced. It was further suggested that this should be extended in such a way that this could be expanded to neighbouring local authority areas if appropriate.

After the report had been presented, Members discussed a number of points in detail:

- The inclusion of economic development as one of the Council's priorities and the extent to which considerations about economic development were embedded in the work of services outside the Business Support team at the Council. Officers confirmed that there was more that could be done but cited existing work, including:
  - Links being developed with HOW College to offer work experience opportunities at the Council to students.
  - Exploration of social value and recruitment opportunities.
  - The impact of the Service Business Plans in place for each service and opportunities for services to work together to share ideas and deliver projects. There were Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in place to monitor performance in respect of these plans.
  - The progress that had been made in respect of holding appraisals at the Council, whereby close to 100 per cent of staff were receiving appraisals. As well as good practice supporting staff, this would enable key objectives and tasks to be filtered down to employees, including in respect of economic development, where appropriate.
- The links between the Planning and Economic Development departments at the Council and the potential for these links to be enhanced.
- The need for effective communications to be in place to raise awareness amongst businesses, particularly Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) about the support available both online and from the Worcestershire Growth Hub.
- The potential for Members to help raise awareness within their wards, using their networks, of the support available to businesses. Members requested that communications should be provided to enable Members to share information about business support using their local networks.
- The opportunity for a clear marketing and promotions strategy to be developed to support effective communications in respect of this matter.
- The role of the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) in providing support to businesses.

- The extent to which LEPs would continue to receive Government funding moving forward and whether LGR might impact on the position of the LEPs.
- The impact that the Government's recent decision to pause further action on LGR might have on Council services and the knock-on implications for the Council's priority of economic development. Clarification was provided that senior officers were in the process of reviewing the potential implications for Council services including Council budgets.
- The lead officer support for the Worcestershire LEP and the extent to which senior officers from Bromsgrove District Council were in a position to attend these meetings.

RESOLVED that

1) The Council continue to develop and enhance its digital-first model for promotion of business support programmes available to businesses in the District; and

2) The Council continue to utilise Worcestershire Growth Hub as a central access point for business advice, support and opportunities.

31/26 **QUARTER 1 2026/27 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Performance and Improvement Manager presented the performance monitoring report for the first quarter of 2026/27.

The report detailed the performance of Council services during the quarter. Strong results had been recorded for a range of services, including Planning, Environmental Services and in respect of workforce measures. Recycling performance had improved during the period and Building Control had recorded 100 per cent performance in respect of statutory requirements. The Bromsgrove Community Investment Fund had attracted a lot of applications. Staff turnover compared favourably with the national average.

There were also areas of performance that were being monitored. This included fly tipping rates and temporary accommodation.

In terms of community safety, performance in respect of crime statistics was broadly consistent. However, provision of data to the Council in respect of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) had been delayed.

Following the presentation of the report, Members discussed a number of points:

- The potential impact on fly tipping rates of Worcestershire County Council's decision to no longer accept fridges and freezers from bulky waste collections. It was noted that the Environmental Services team had already been asked to monitor the potential impact on fly tipping.

- The reasons why Worcestershire County Council had chosen to no longer accept fridges and freezers. Members noted that this approach was consistent with many County Councils across the country and a consequence of rising costs for the disposal of fridges and freezers.
- The extent to which performance in respect of planning enforcement data had been impacted by the new approach adopted by Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS).
- The impact that the Covid-19 pandemic might have had on fly tipping rates and the extent to which this was still have an impact six years after the pandemic first emerged.
- The inclusion of RAG ratings in the report. Members welcomed references to "red", "amber" and "green", as applicable, within the report as this helped to clarify the ratings in black and white paper copies of the agenda pack.
- The hard work of the Business Improvement Team, particularly the Performance and Improvement Lead, on the preparation of the report. Members thanked the team for their hard work.

During consideration of this item, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board addressed Cabinet on behalf of the Finance and Budget Working Group (FBWG). Members were informed that at a recent meeting of the group the performance monitoring report had been scrutinised. There had been general consensus amongst Members of the group that this was a good report and that Council services were performing well.

RESOLVED that the overview of Quarter 1 performance for the period April to June 2026 against the Council Plan priorities be noted.

32/26 **BDC EQUALITY STRATEGY 2026-2028 (INCLUDING ENGAGEMENT POLICY)**

The Improvement and Performance Manager presented the Equalities Strategy (including Engagement Policy) 2026/28 for Cabinet's consideration.

The Equality Strategy provided a framework at the Council for equalities and inclusion and brought together activities from across the authority. The content extended beyond the aspirations of the previous strategy and would influence a range of key projects and activities. Within the strategy, an Equality Action Plan had been developed containing key objectives. Progress in respect of this action plan would be monitored.

The Engagement Policy detailed the Council's approach to engaging with local residents and service users.

Members discussed the content of the strategy and policy. In doing so, it was noted that the previous strategy had applied for a four year period whilst it was proposed that the draft strategy should apply for two years, from 2026 to 2028. Questions were raised as to whether these

timeframes had been influenced by the original timetable for LGR. Officers confirmed that this had been taken into account when the timeframes were considered.

Consideration was subsequently given to the potential to extend the timeframes covered by the strategy up to 2030. Clarification was provided that whilst there was a pause on LGR, the Council was reviewing the implications of this for Council services and budgets. However, confirmation was provided that extending the timeframes of the strategy would not require significant extra work or expenditure. Furthermore, it was acknowledged that the timeframes could be revisited at a later date, depending on the Government's future announcement on LGR for Worcestershire.

In this context, Members proposed to amend the timeframes of the strategy to apply from 2026 to 2030. To ensure consistency, Cabinet further proposed that the timeframes for the Engagement Policy should also be extended to cover the period 2026 to 2030.

RECOMMENDED that the Equality Strategy 2026 – 2030 (including the Engagement Policy 2026 - 2030) be approved.

33/26 **DISCRETIONARY COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION POLICY 2026/27**

The Revenue Support Manager presented the Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policy 2026/27.

Cabinet was advised that the authority reviewed the content of the Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policy on an annual basis. The Council had discretionary powers to amend or reduce Council Tax, including through assessment on a case-by-case basis. Decisions on Council Tax reduction were subject to a review process and tax payers could appeal decisions if they disagreed with the decision made by the authority.

The Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policy needed to support speedy and transparent decision-making. In addition, Tribunals expected Councils to have a policy for discretionary Council Tax reductions.

Within the Council's existing Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policy there were four criteria:

- Reductions for care leavers aged 25 or under. Worcestershire County Council worked with the authority to help clarify eligible candidates.
- The flood recovery framework, which applied to householders that had been impacted by a flooding incident.
- Any other Government additional support.
- Other cases, which were assessed on a case-by-case basis under exceptional hardship arrangements.

In the updated policy, an additional category was proposed in respect of Council Tax reductions for households in which there was a resident who was terminally ill. This additional category had been proposed following receipt of communications from charities that supported people who were terminally ill and their carers. Previously, the position of residents who were terminally ill had been considered in relation to exceptional hardship arrangements.

In considering the proposed new category, Members were asked to note that this reduction would not apply to every household in which there was a resident who was terminally ill. Before a decision would be taken, the Council would consider the financial income for the household. There would be a need to achieve a balance in decision-making between providing appropriate levels of financial support and meeting the authority's duty of care.

Consideration had originally been given to amending the policy in this manner in January 2026. However, Officers had been asked to research practices in other parts of the country before taking this forward. Subsequently, Officers had established that none of the Councils in South Worcestershire had included this category in their Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policies and neither had Wyre Forest District Council. All of these authorities assessed Council Tax reductions in relation to hardship arrangements when supporting terminally ill residents. There were some larger local authorities, including Manchester City Council and Bristol City Council that had already introduced this category alongside Redditch Borough Council and different approaches had been adopted at these authorities.
During consideration of this item, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board advised that the report had been scrutinised at a meeting of the Finance and Budget Working Group. During this meeting, there had been two distinct views that had been raised by Members:

- Some Members had argued that if a resident was terminally ill the evidence of that illness should be sufficient for that resident to be eligible for discretionary Council Tax reduction without means testing.
- Other Members had commented that there should be targeted support for terminally ill residents. In this scenario, terminally ill residents in receipt of personal income above a certain threshold should not be eligible to receive Council Tax reduction.

No consensus had been reached at the meeting of the Finance and Budget Working Group on a preferred way forward and therefore no recommendations had been made to the Cabinet on this subject.

Members subsequently discussed the following matters in detail:

- The extent to which the Council's current policy provided sufficient flexibility to apply Council Tax reductions for terminally ill residents.

Clarification was provided that limited support could be provided under exceptional hardship arrangements.

- The approach that would be adopted under the proposed new policy and whether residents' income would be taken into account. Officers confirmed that residents' incomes would be taken into account when assessments were undertaken.
- The position of homeowners who lived alone who had been diagnosed with a terminal illness and how their eligibility would be assessed. Cabinet was advised that a compassionate approach would be adopted and, where appropriate, recovery of debts could be deferred until after the residents' death, to be obtained from their estate.
- The extent to which terminally ill residents and their carers were likely to be aware of or to think about applying for discretionary Council Tax reduction. Members commented on personal experiences in which many such considerations were unlikely to have been their focus at the time of a loved one's diagnosis. The suggestion was made that instead, information about the availability of support should be shared with palliative care teams and hospices, which could then assist residents and their carers.
- The decision-making process that would apply in determining eligibility. Confirmation was provided that Officers would gather evidence and would make the decisions in line with a framework. Cabinet was informed that the first stage of appeal would be referred to an officer. A second appeal stage would involve referral of the case to an evaluation tribunal.
- The extent to which residents would be liaising with Officers in person or by phone, rather than the Council using artificial intelligence. Officers confirmed that staff would liaise directly with residents.
- The extent to which there was a risk of legal action being taken by the Council to recover Council Tax debts whilst a resident was experiencing terminal illness. Members were assured that the Council would continue to adopt a compassionate approach to debt recovery and that the authority did not take court action against terminally ill residents.
- The fact that the proposed changes reflected best practice and the likelihood that other Councils would adopt similar arrangements in future.
- The annual reviews of the Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policy that would continue to take place and the potential for amendments to be made to the policy as further information emerged about best practice across the country.
- The extent to which it was likely that a future Unitary Authority would adopt a similar approach. Cabinet was informed that the Members of the future Unitary Authority would need to determine their own policies.
- The potential for the financial impact of this policy in relation to all precepting authorities to be explored at a meeting of Worcestershire Leaders' Board.

RECOMMENDED that the revised section 13A(1)(C) policy be approved and adopted.

34/26 **RECOMMENDATION FROM THE SHAREHOLDERS COMMITTEE - APPOINTMENT OF SHAREHOLDERS COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE**

Members considered a report detailing a referral that had been received from the Shareholders Committee proposing that the Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services should be appointed as the Shareholders Committee representative.

Cabinet was informed that there was a shareholders agreement between Spadesbourne Homes Limited and the Council. This agreement permitted the appointment of a Council officer as a lead liaison with Spadesbourne Homes Limited. The Shareholders Committee had considered a report on this subject at their latest meeting held in July 2026 and had agreed that the Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services would be suitable for this role. However, as a decision on this subject was outside the Committee's remit, a recommendation on this subject had been referred to Cabinet for consideration.

RESOLVED that Simon Parry, Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services be appointed as Shareholder Committee Representative.

35/26 **QUARTER 1 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT 2026/27**

The Chief Finance Officer presented the financial monitoring report for quarter 1 of the 2026/27 financial year.

Members were informed that by the end of quarter 1, the Council was projecting a small overspend. Variances per service area had been recorded in the report alongside comparable data for the 2025/26 outturn budget. Some overspends had been identified. There were also some areas, particularly corporate services such as Council Tax, where it was not possible at such an early stage to assess levels of variance. Where possible, variances were in the process of being reviewed in time to inform the quarter 2 financial monitoring report.

The capital programme had been reviewed as part of the monitoring process. As the Council was at an early stage in the financial year, the level of spend had been included but no breakdown had been provided. Further information would be made available in subsequent monitoring reports.

The Council had healthy balances. The income from VAT returns had been incorporated into the general balances.

Following the presentation of the report, Members discussed the potential for financial information for Planning and Leisure Services to be presented separately in future, in line with different portfolio responsibilities. Clarification was provided that work was being undertaken to enable Members to review financial data by service and portfolio. However, this presentation format would be available later in the year. Cabinet was also asked to note that some service directorates did not match Portfolio Holder remits.

During consideration of this report, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board advised that the report had been considered at the latest meeting of the Finance and Budget Working Group. At that meeting of the group, Members had welcomed the new format of the report which had been viewed as an improvement on previous iterations. There had been some areas which the group had noted in particular, and these were highlighted for Cabinet's consideration:

- The £90,000 overspend that had been recorded for homelessness. The group had questioned why this had arisen following an increase in funding for homelessness services earlier in the year and the Section 151 Officer had undertaken to investigate the matter further.
- The saving of £40,000 that had been recorded for Churchfields Car Park. Members had questioned why there was a saving associated with this car park, given it had been closed for a number of years. Officers had agreed to investigate this matter further.
- The decreasing number of temporary agency staff employed by the local authority, which had been welcomed by the group.
- The different approach that had been adopted in 2026/27 compared to 2025/26 in respect of the capitalisation of salary costs.

RESOLVED

1) To note that the full year forecast revenue position for 2026/27 was an overspend of £0.021 million which would be funded by the General Fund Balance at year end if the position remained as an overspend;

2) To note that the 2026/27 actual capital position at Quarter 1 was £1.953 million spend against a total approved programme of £13.692 million;

3) The Ward Budget allocation for 2026/27 of £155,000 had approved allocations at £20,318 as at 30th June 2026;

4) The General Fund Opening Balance of £11.676 million adjusted in year to £11.543 million as a result of the overspend and other adjustments;

5) The balance of Earmarked Reserves as at 30 June 2026 was £14.110 million; and

6) There was an updated procurement position, with any new items over £200k to be included on the forward plan.

36/26 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 21ST JULY 2026**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 21st July 2026 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 21st July 2026 be noted.

37/26 **TO CONSIDER ANY URGENT BUSINESS, DETAILS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED TO THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC AND PROCUREMENT SERVICES PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING AND WHICH THE CHAIRMAN, BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, CONSIDERS TO BE OF SO URGENT A NATURE THAT IT CANNOT WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING**

There was no urgent business for consideration on this occasion.

The meeting closed at 7.42 p.m.

Chairman

This page is intentionally left blank

B R O M S G R O V E D I S T R I C T C O U N C I L

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

15TH SEPTEMBER 2026, AT 6.00 P.M.

PARKSIDE SUITE - PARKSIDE

PRESENT: Councillors P. M. McDonald (Chairman), A. M. Dale (Vice-Chairman), S. Ammar, A. Bailes, J. Clarke, D. J. A. Forsythe (as substitute), C.A. Hotham, B. Kumar, S. A. Robinson, J. D. Stanley and H. D. N. Warren-Clarke

Observers:
Councillor K. J. May – Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling
Councillor S. J. Baxter – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Strategic Housing
Councillor S.T. Nock – Cabinet Member for Finance
Councillor K. Taylor - Cabinet Member for Local Government Reorganisation, WRS and Climate Change
Councillor P.J. Whittaker – Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Community Safety
Councillor J. Robinson

Officers: Mr J. Walton, Ms R. Egan, Mr R. Elmes, Mr S. Parry, Mr M. Austin, Ms R. Milward, Mr D. Riley, Ms M. Worsfold, Mr J. Carradine and Mrs S. Woodfield

Other parties: Ms R. Perrott and Ms C. Browne (Representatives of Warwickshire County Council)

20/26 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor R.E. Lambert with Councillor D.J.A. Forsythe in attendance as her named substitute.

Apologies were also received from Councillor S.A. Webb as portfolio holder for Health and Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture.

21/26 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

Councillor S. Robinson declared, for transparency, that the Worcestershire County Council (WCC) Cabinet Member for Environment and Communities, who was attending in connection with the Libraries Unlocked item, was her husband.

No other declarations of interest or whipping arrangements were declared.

22/26 **LIBRARIES "UNLOCKED" UPDATE**

Representatives of WCC presented an update on the implementation and impact of Libraries Unlocked across Worcestershire, with particular attention given to Bromsgrove and Rubery libraries.

The Board was advised that Libraries Unlocked was operating at 11 locations. A further implementation at Woodrush Library was being progressed, subject to lease negotiations with the Black Pear Trust. This was expected to be the final site in the current programme. Across the service, Libraries Unlocked had more than 21,000 registered members and more than 14,000 active users. Since the programme began in 2022, more than 8,700 hours of community led activity had taken place in participating libraries.

Across the 11 sites, total library opening hours had increased by 59 per cent, while staffed opening hours had reduced by 31 per cent. Libraries Unlocked had not been progressed at Alvechurch because of prohibitive Private Finance Initiative (PFI) related capital and revenue costs, or at Hagley because increased building costs had reduced the projected return on investment.

Bromsgrove and Rubery libraries had joined the scheme in early 2024. Both were reported to have healthy levels of visits, book issues, computer use and community led activity, although neither had extensive meeting room facilities.

The total capital investment across the 11 sites was reported as approximately £580,000, with staffing savings of just over £300,000. Approximately £33,500 had been deducted from gross savings to account for additional utility costs. At Rubery, this amounted to approximately £4,000. At Bromsgrove Library, utility costs had not been separately apportioned because the library formed part of the Parkside building and there was no mechanism for separately monitoring the library's consumption. Property Services would investigate whether utility expenditure at Parkside had noticeably increased following implementation in March and April 2024.

Customer feedback indicated that barriers to joining included insufficient information, the requirement to attend a face-to-face induction, access to toilets, safety concerns and a desire for Sunday opening. In response, information sessions had been introduced, toilets had been made available at some locations and library managers were sharing good practice on community engagement. Officers were considering a trial of online registration, while recognising the safeguarding and health and safety value of the existing face to face induction. A communications

campaign highlighting the safety of Libraries Unlocked was also planned.

A survey undertaken to inform the refreshed library strategy had ranked Libraries Unlocked as the third library service most useful to families, after books and the provision of welcoming community space.

Eligibility had been extended to people aged 15 and over so that pupils in Years 10 and 11 could access libraries during examination preparation. Local library teams were working with schools and attending community events, while central social media campaigns promoted libraries as quiet study spaces offering study and wellbeing support.

After the presentation, Members queries and officer feedback were discussed which included:

- How was an “active” user defined? - Officers explained that this was defined as a unique individual who had used Libraries Unlocked during the relevant reporting period. Entry was recorded when the person used their library card to access the building. Wider library use was also assessed through borrowing and computer use data, supplemented periodically by exit surveys to estimate activity that could not be captured electronically.
- A further question clarified that “issues” within the performance information meant book issues.
- Members expressed concern that the information did not provide a sufficiently clear comparison with library use before the introduction of Libraries Unlocked. Without baseline data, it was difficult to judge whether the programme had succeeded. - Officers accepted this point and agreed that comparative information could be provided. Experience elsewhere had shown that visits often declined following the introduction of an open library model before recovering over subsequent years. Across the seven phase two libraries, including Bromsgrove and Rubery, visits had initially been 8 per cent below the pre implementation level. The latest monitoring showed that the gap had reduced to approximately 4.4 per cent. Local library managers were preparing audience development plans using data to identify groups that were not using the service which included work with schools to increase participation by older teenagers. Officers offered to provide further information about the local audience development plans for Bromsgrove and Rubery.
- Members asked why Bromsgrove and Rubery showed different conversion rates between registered and active members. - Officers were unable to provide an immediate explanation and agreed to investigate.
- Members also asked about the difference between gross and net staffing savings at the two libraries. - Officers explained that Bromsgrove was a larger library with more staff covering its

opening hours. A reduction in staffed hours therefore produced greater staffing savings than at the smaller Rubery Library.

- Members expressed the view that a face-to-face induction could prevent working residents from registering. - Officers acknowledged that the Council might have been overly cautious and confirmed that they were open to trialling online registration. This could potentially use a QR code and an online safety video. The face-to-face process had originally been retained to address safeguarding and health and safety concerns. Officers considered that experience gained since 2022 meant the authority could now assess alternative arrangements more confidently.
- A Member emphasised that any online process must retain stringent identity verification. - Officers confirmed that an individual had to be a library member before becoming a Libraries Unlocked member and that ordinary library registration currently included identity checks. The WCC Cabinet Member added that Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) operated during unstaffed opening hours and staff at Rubery had reported no particular safety concerns.
- The Chairman questioned whether, after two years, use remained significantly below previous levels. - Officers clarified that use was approximately 4 per cent below the earlier figure and was moving in the right direction, suggesting that additional promotional work could assist.
- A Member expressed the view that there seemed to be national decline for in-person use of libraries. - Members noted that increased online activity and changed patterns of borrowing, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic, could also have influenced physical library visits. The WCC Cabinet Member encouraged Members and community organisations to promote their local libraries and make use of library space, helping to sustain the service.

RESOLVED that the libraries “Unlocked” Update was noted.

23/26 **LOCAL HERITAGE ACTION LIST - QUARTERLY UPDATE**

The Principal Conservation Officer updated the Board on the development of the Local Heritage List.

Lists had already been adopted for Alvechurch, Beoley, Belbroughton with Fairfield, and Dodford with Grafton. Draft lists had been prepared for Bromsgrove, Bournheath, Catshill and North Marlbrook, and Wythall. Work was continuing for Lickey and Blackwell and Bentley Pauncefoot and had commenced or was about to commence for Clent and Hagley.

The draft lists for Bromsgrove, Bournheath, Catshill and North Marlbrook, and Wythall were ready to proceed to formal consultation. Letters were expected to be issued to property owners, parish councils, ward councillors and other interested bodies. Consultation was expected

to begin on 28 September 2026 and continue until the end of the first week of November 2026.

Consultation events would enable residents to discuss the proposals with conservation officers. Further sites could be nominated during the consultation. Following consultation, officers would review the representations, amend the lists where appropriate and prepare a consultation summary. The amended lists would then be reported to Cabinet, with adoption anticipated in the new year.

Following the update, Members asked why nationally listed buildings did not appear on the Local Heritage List. The Principal Conservation Officer explained that the local and national lists were separate. National listing was determined by the Secretary of State on advice from Historic England. Whereas statutorily listed buildings could not be placed on the Local Heritage List because they already had a higher degree of protection. Locally listed buildings would not receive statutory listed building protection but would remain non designated heritage assets and would be a material consideration in the planning process. It was also confirmed that ordinary planning requirements would continue to apply.

Members asked when the work would be completed across the district. Members were advised that the project was detailed and resource intensive and was approaching the halfway point. No firm completion date could be given because progress depended upon workloads and the requirement to respond to planning applications within statutory deadlines.

Members noted that the four lists currently approaching consultation had taken more than a year to prepare and expressed concern that completion across the district could take too long. In response it was explained that staff changes and a period without a second conservation officer had affected continuity, however, members were advised that a consultant continued to provide support.

Members suggested that an alternative plan was needed, including an assessment of the hours and resources required to complete the project. Members emphasised that the local list should be progressed promptly because of the scale of anticipated development.

The Portfolio Holder agreed that the total work should be estimated and divided into manageable phases so that the case for additional resources could be considered, while acknowledging that the number of potential heritage assets in each area could not be known until detailed work began.

RESOLVED that the Local Heritage Action List – Quarterly Update be noted.

24/26 **FOOD WASTE IMPLEMENTATION**

The Environmental Services Manager presented an extensive update on the introduction of household food waste collections.

The Environment Act 2021 and the simpler recycling reforms required councils to standardise recycling arrangements, reduce landfill and lower waste related carbon emissions. Separate household food waste collections had become a statutory responsibility from 31 March 2026. Approximately one quarter of English authorities had not implemented a service by that date.

Although Government had provided capital funding for vehicles and food caddies, anticipated ongoing revenue funding had not materialised as a distinct additional allocation. The funding had instead been incorporated into the general settlement without an increase equivalent to the operating cost of the service. This had significantly affected planning.

Neither the Bromsgrove nor Redditch depot had sufficient capacity for the additional vehicles and staff. An initial joint outsourcing procurement with Redditch Borough Council and Wyre Forest District Council had not proceeded after Wyre Forest withdrew following the Government's revenue funding decision. The scale of this change meant the original contract could not be awarded under procurement rules.

The service was therefore being developed in-house using leased operational land. Vehicles had been ordered, recruitment had commenced, caddies were expected during October 2026 and vehicles were expected in December 2026. A phased collection rollout was planned from late January or early February 2027.

It was explained that each household would receive a small kitchen caddy, liners and a lockable 27 litre kerbside caddy. Waste composition analysis undertaken in 2022 suggested that food represented approximately 35 per cent by weight of the average residual waste bin in Bromsgrove.

Collected material would be taken to an anaerobic digestion facility near Kinver and Stourton. The process would produce biogas for energy and digestate for use as a low grade agricultural fertiliser. Because no suitable bulking point was available within Worcestershire, collection vehicles would need to travel to the facility to unload.

Existing funding was sufficient to provide the service to approximately 55 to 60 per cent of Bromsgrove households. Subject to an additional budget allocation of approximately £190,000, remaining households would be added through a second phased rollout. Full statutory compliance was anticipated by October 2027.

Member queries and Officer responses were advised as:

- Members asked how collection rounds would be stress-tested. – The Environmental Services Manager explained that route optimisation software would model collection and journey times using existing data.
- To explain how routine collections would be carried out. – In response it was explained that food waste collection days would mirror residents' existing collection days where possible. The phased rollout would allow issues to be addressed before each subsequent round began.
- To advise on training methods for new recruits. - New employees would receive route and local area training, spend time on existing collection services and help deliver the caddies so that they became familiar with the collection areas.
- Members stressed that effective behaviour change was essential. – It was explained that each caddy would be accompanied by an information pack explaining how to use the service and what happened to the collected material. Initial areas would be selected partly on the basis of existing participation in recycling and garden waste services.
- How was the Council engaging with residents? - Communications would include social media, messages on refuse vehicles, pre and post launch resident research and potentially case studies following households during the rollout. A vacant post was also being repurposed as a Waste Education and Engagement Officer.
- Members also queried how the scheme was being funded. – It was explained that government funding had been received for the initial communications programme. Additional funding from extended producer responsibility arrangements had been allocated for wider recycling messages for the following two years. The Waste Education and Engagement Officer post was being created by repurposing an existing vacancy.
- Members suggested that engagement should be provided at schools as children had the potential to influence household participation.
- Members raised concerns of caddy visibility. – It was confirmed that residents would be advised to place caddies out early. Where a container was not presented when the crew attended, opportunities to return would be limited by the route and the requirement to travel to the disposal facility. The kerbside caddies would be a lighter grey to improve visibility. Crews were expected to use larger "slave bins" while walking along streets, which should help them identify caddies at individual properties. Missed collections would be monitored to identify patterns. Replacement caddies would initially be provided without charge.
- If it would be a universal or opt in service? – It was clarified that the service would not be opt in. Legislation required the Council to provide the service to every household. Caddies would therefore be delivered universally and collection vehicles would cover every residential road on a weekly basis.

- Would the Council provide individual identification for caddies? – Officers informed members that residents could add their own address labels to caddies. The Council would not apply individual numbering. However, instructions on what waste should go into the caddy were provided.
- The Leader queried whether WCC would contribute to the transport cost of taking material outside the Worcestershire area. - Officers advised that no contribution had yet been agreed, but discussions about a possible haulage payment were continuing.
- Queries were raised on the leasing of collection sites. – It was explained that the collection sites were being leased under a five year arrangement with a three year break clause. However, purchase had not been pursued because of implementation timescales and uncertainty created by LGR.
- Members questioned whether service resources were based on optimistic participation assumptions. - Officers explained that route mileage and the need to pass every household were the principal resource drivers. The journey time would not reduce significantly if fewer residents participated. Actual operating experience could nevertheless identify efficiencies that might support future savings or wider waste services.
- Members queried the carbon assessment and saving benefits. – It was explained that the carbon assessment represented the net benefit of diverting food waste from the existing energy from waste process to anaerobic digestion and included the effects of vehicles and fuel. The saving was comparatively modest because residual waste was already used to generate energy rather than being sent to landfill.
- Would there be any financial value to the Council from energy produced by the anaerobic digestion methodology? – In response the Board were advised that once waste was collected, responsibility transferred to WCC as disposal authority. Any financial value from energy or digestate would therefore sit within WCC disposal arrangements and was expected principally to reduce disposal costs.
- If caddy liners were supplied to residents? – In response the Board were advised that an initial supply of liners would be issued to households. Residents requiring replacements would tie a liner around the caddy handle, signalling to the crew that a new roll should be left. This would avoid separate delivery journeys and ensure replacement liners were focused on participating households.
- Containment of food within the caddies was also raised and also concerns of harmful contaminants to the environment. – Members were advised that the kerbside caddies would have lockable handles to reduce access by animals. At the digestion facility, material would be shredded and screened to remove contaminants. The facility already processed significant commercial food waste and had several tanks, providing operational resilience. An alternative facility in Gloucestershire could potentially be used if required, although haulage and

contingency arrangements needed further development with WCC.

- Why plastic liners had been chosen and not biodegradable? - Plastic liners had been selected because biodegradable liners could begin to break down on contact with moisture and interfere with processing. The anaerobic digestion operator preferred plastic liners because its shredding and separation system could remove them to a high standard. Officers agreed to seek further information about the residual risk from microplastics.
- Had Officers considered utilising experience from other Local Authorities' successful roll outs? - Officers had considered experience from Stratford-on-Avon, Slough, Cambridgeshire, Newcastle, Malvern Hills and other councils, together with guidance from the Waste and Resources Action Programme. Members suggested that experience in Sussex should also be examined.
- If Central Government set the annual revenue costs and was there a risk to the Council if the funding was not utilised? – In response Officers confirmed that the government did not set the revenue costs, however, capital costs were set by Central Government.

RESOLVED that the Food Waste Implementation update be noted.

25/26 **COUNCIL TAX PAYMENTS**

The Revenue Services Manager presented the findings of an investigation into direct debits due on 15th August 2026 being collected on 14th August rather than 17th August.

The Council offered payment dates on the 1st, 15th, 21st and 28th of each month. When the due date fell on a non-processing day, staff had to amend the processing date manually. The officer processing the file had applied the rule used for outgoing payments, which were brought forward, rather than the rule for collections, which should be moved to the next processing day.

Contributing factors included insufficiently clear procedural guidance, failure of the post submission review, unused system validation controls and temporary staffing pressure caused by annual leave and long-term absence within a small team.

Approximately 5,500 customers were affected. Fewer than five complaints had been received and one reimbursement of less than £2 had been made. Although the actual impact was limited, officers recognised the potential seriousness.

Immediate action included briefing staff, reinforcing the checking process and clarifying guidance for non-processing days. Longer term work would strengthen procedure guides and investigate integration or

automation between Civica and AccessPay, reducing manual intervention.

After the presentation Members queries and officer responses were as follows:

- What was the root cause of the problem? - Officers confirmed that the incident involved human error, but that weaknesses in procedures and controls contributed. Three principal direct debit risks were identified which included collecting too early, failing to collect and transmitting a file twice.
- What future preventative controls had been put in place? - Control totals and post submission checks were intended to prevent these errors but the post submission check had failed partly because previous reliability had created complacency. A senior officer would oversee checks during the following months.
- Could Application Interface (AI) or automation be used? – Officers advised that AccessPay offered interfaces capable of extracting files directly from the core system. Feasibility, costs and any necessary business case would be assessed.
- Would regular future reconciliations/audit trails be carried out? – The Director of Finance confirmed that future assurance reporting could include this issue and that a report could be brought to the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee.
- Members welcomed the transparent “learning from errors and failure” simplistic approach and asked how widely it was used. - Officers explained that it was a Revenues Service framework rather than a corporate framework. It was designed to identify underlying causes instead of attributing every error solely to an individual.
- Had other manual interventions across the wider service had been reviewed? – In response the Board were informed that no additional service wide review had yet been undertaken, although annual audits examined specific processes and controls.

RESOLVED that

1) The findings of the investigation into the early collection of direct debit payments; and
2) The actions to be taken to improve the collection process, as outlined in the investigation findings are noted.

26/26 **DRAFT BROMSGROVE CAR PARKS STRATEGY**

Officers presented the draft Bromsgrove Car Parking Strategy for early scrutiny before Cabinet consideration.

Evidence suggested that the town centre had sufficient overall parking capacity, including after the future loss of the Stourbridge Road car park. Demand was, however, concentrated in central car parks. Parkside was

used predominantly by season ticket holders rather than Council employees.

The proposed objectives included supporting regeneration and economic growth, improving customer experience, optimising use of the parking estate, supporting sustainable and low emission travel, improving management and enforcement and ensuring the network's long term financial sustainability.

Potential actions included clearer signage, redistribution of season ticket holders, regular utilisation monitoring, reviews of parking in local centres, a visible enforcement improvement plan, assessment of slower electric vehicle charging and possible use of the National Parking Platform.

Comments and officer responses are provided below:

- Members suggested signage on the approaches to the town centre identifying the most suitable car park for particular destinations. - Officers agreed to consider this to encourage the use of car parks less utilised.
- A typographical error was outlined within the report. - Officers confirmed that this would be reviewed and amended as necessary.
- Questions were raised about discrepancies in capacity figures and whether the evidence distinguished between peak occupancy in individual car parks and peak occupancy across the whole network. - Officers agreed that the figures and explanation required checking and clarification.
- Members supported moving season ticket holders towards less heavily used outer car parks and also queried whether North Bromsgrove and School Drive could be connected or expanded using adjoining land. – In response it was confirmed that this was being reviewed as a possibility, although full costs were not yet available.
- Accessibility issues were raised, including the use of disabled spaces and payment machines. - Officers advised that all Council car parks retained cash payment facilities and agreed to examine accessibility in greater depth.
- Members expressed concern that the surveys represented only point in time manual counts rather than comprehensive beat surveys. – The Board were advised that no registration based, half hourly surveys had been undertaken and that more detailed work would require additional resources or commissioning.
- Members argued that forecasting needed to reflect housing growth and the Nailers Yard development, town centre residential development, free parking arrangements and other future demand before any irreversible decision was made about Churchfields. - Officers advised that Recreation Road South had been observed at below 50 per cent occupancy and that up to approximately 70 cars might be associated with the Nailers Yard commercial building, in addition to visitors.

- Members stressed that parking pressures in local centres, including Aston Fields, Hagley, Barnt Green and Alvechurch, could be more severe than in Bromsgrove town centre. - Officers advised that strategic responsibility for parking had transferred to the Towns and Local Centres Strategic Lead, who would examine these issues.
- An update was requested on the extra resource suggested by the Board for enforcement officers. – In response Members were advised that the Council had funded 1.5 additional full-time equivalent civil enforcement posts. One full-time officer had been recruited however the half-time post had proved difficult to fill. Further recruitment and use of overtime were being pursued. Members suggested considering whether available underspends could fund a full post.

During consideration of this matter the Chairman concluded discussions and confirmed the Board's feedback to Cabinet should include the need for the following:

- Stronger and clearer evidence.
- Robust forecasting of future demand.
- Improved signage.
- Consideration of accessibility.
- Examination of parking pressures outside the town centre.
- Improved enforcement capacity.
- Caution before making decisions affecting Churchfields car park.

Also during consideration of this item the following recommendation was also proposed by Councillor B. Kumar and seconded by Councillor S.A. Robinson:

"Whether a task group should be established to examine district-wide parking requirements".

On being put to the vote the recommendation was carried.

RECOMMENDED that:

Following consideration of the draft Bromsgrove Car Parking Strategy 2026-2029 the Board's feedback to help shape the final version prior to Cabinet consideration would include the need for the following:

- Stronger and clearer evidence.
- Robust forecasting of future demand.
- Improved signage.
- Consideration of accessibility.
- Examination of parking pressures outside the town centre.
- Improved enforcement capacity.

- Caution before making decisions affecting Churchfields car park; and

RESOLVED that a scrutiny task group be established to investigate parking requirements district-wide.

27/26 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANISATION (LGR) UPDATE**

The Acting Assistant Director of Corporate Services and Transformation presented the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) update to the Board.

Earlier in the month, Government announced a pause to the LGR process, including in Worcestershire, whilst it reviewed July 2026 decisions on future unitary authority structures. The July decision has not been withdrawn, but implementation activity has been paused pending the outcome of that review.

Worcestershire remained within scope of the review and LGR and devolution continue to be part of Government policy. However, there was limited clarity on the review's full scope, timetable or eventual outcome. As a result, Worcestershire councils have moved into a preparation and readiness phase. Work linked to any specific future model had been halted.

There was currently no Structural Changes Order in place and no legislation to implement any new council structure. So, it remained unclear what any future proposal would involve.

In light of Government guidance, Bromsgrove had adopted a cautious approach to financial expenditure. Most implementation activity had been paused, including planned spend in some core areas.

Some limited expenditure would continue to maintain critical programme capability, including shared programme management arrangements via the Programme Director but only where it provided value irrespective of the eventual LGR outcome and represented an appropriate use of public funds.

Whilst most implementation activity had paused, disaggregation data and analysis activities would continue within the County Council and readiness work would continue within all councils where each council determined it was beneficial and represented value for money.

Decisions on any shared activity funded through the LGR Implementation Reserve fund would continue to be taken through the agreed countywide governance arrangements.

The current expectation was that any May 2027 local elections would proceed on existing council boundaries, however, longer-term

governance arrangements would remain subject to future Government decisions and any associated legislation.

The approach being taken by the LGR Implementation Board was that the Board would be asked to adopt the following principle at their next meeting "Would any work still be useful under any future LGR outcome, or if LGR did not proceed?" If yes, it should continue; if aligned to a specific LGR model, it is paused.

Examples of work that could continue during the pause, if approved were as follows:

- Workforce data, structures, contracts and HR records.
- Asset information, registers, compliance and property records.
- Contract inventories, financial analysis and readiness planning.
- Data quality, systems mapping, governance and technology risk.
- Service improvement, productivity, resilience and organisational effectiveness.

The Board was advised that further updates would be provided as the position developed.

The Leader asked whether the Council could access the £900,000 reportedly allocated per unitary authority to recoup transitional expenditure already incurred. Officers were unable to provide an immediate answer and undertook to investigate further.

Members emphasised that continuing uncertainty created further costs and that the Council should seek to recover expenditure wherever possible.

The Portfolio Holder also wished to place on record his thanks to the officer previously leading the work and wished her well during maternity leave.

RESOLVED that the Local Government Reform (LGR) update be noted.

28/26 **WORCESTERSHIRE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - UPDATE**

The HOSC representative Councillor B. Kumar updated the Board following the latest meeting which was held on 21st July 2026 covering adult mental health rehabilitation and end of life care.

The redesign of adult mental health rehabilitation aimed to shift some care from inpatient settings to outpatient, home and community provision.

Members expressed concern about the reduction in inpatient bed numbers and the proposed closure of Cromwell House and Oak House.

It was recognised that some people experiencing acute psychiatric episodes would continue to require inpatient care.

On end-of-life care, the Board noted the projected growth in Worcestershire's older population and the need to coordinate emergency, hospital, rehabilitation, neighbourhood health, palliative and home based services.

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

29/26 **FINANCE AND BUDGET WORKING GROUP - REVIEW TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP**

Members received a report reviewing the Terms of Reference for the Finance and Budget Working Group for the 2026/27 municipal year.

It was agreed that the Working Group would appoint its own Chair.

It was also agreed that the Chair of the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee should not serve on the Working Group because of the potential conflict between scrutiny and audit responsibilities.

RESOLVED that the revised Terms of Reference for the Finance and Budget Working Group be approved.

30/26 **POLICE AND CRIME PANEL BRIEFING PAPER**

Councillor B. Kumar provided a summary of the latest Police and Crime Panel meeting held on 10th July 206.

Long term road safety performance had improved, with collisions down by nearly 40 per cent since 2016, although fatal and serious injuries remained a concern. Public consultation indicated opposition to police force mergers, particularly because of concerns about local visibility, priorities and community knowledge.

Crime was described as broadly stable or reducing in several categories, although domestic abuse, rape and robbery had increased. Detection rates were stronger for robbery, violence and rape but weaker for burglary, vehicle crime and domestic abuse. Emergency response and 101 performance remained below target, while 999 call handling was strong.

Members welcomed the detailed report but questioned whether collision data understated the true number of incidents because many slight or serious collisions were not reported. The Council's representative agreed to raise concerns about the completeness of collision data with West Mercia Police.

RESOLVED that the Police and Crime Panel Briefing Paper was noted.

31/26 **CABINET WORK PROGRAMME**

The Cabinet Work Programme was presented for Members' consideration.

No additional substantive matters were suggested.

RESOLVED that the content of the Cabinet Work Programme be noted.

32/26 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME**

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

The following discussions were raised during this item:

- That an agenda containing too many substantive items could weaken effective scrutiny. The Chairman and Vice Chairman agreed to review future agendas and arrange additional meetings where necessary.
- It was noted that the timing of further consideration of the Car Parking Strategy would need to be reviewed following the decision to establish a task group.
- Members discussed whether the Local Heritage List update needed to return at the next meeting, given the previous agreement for quarterly reporting. However, it was advised that this was in line with quarterly reporting.
- The heatwave and cooling hubs item had been deferred to November because relevant officers were unavailable due to training commitments. Members considered that the matter should remain on the programme.
- Fly tipping including discarded nitrous oxide canisters should be added to the work programme for future consideration.

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

33/26 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ACTION SHEET**

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

The Chairman requested an update on progress with live streaming of meetings, noting that bids had been expected by 26th August 2026. Officers agreed to seek a progress report from the relevant service area and report back to the Board.

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

34/26 **TO CONSIDER ANY URGENT BUSINESS, DETAILS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED TO THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR LEGAL DEMOCRATIC AND PROCUREMENT SERVICES PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING AND WHICH THE CHAIRMAN, BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, CONSIDERS TO BE OF SO URGENT A NATURE THAT IT CANNOT WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING.**

There was no urgent business for consideration.

35/26 **TO CONSIDER, AND IF CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE, TO PASS THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING DURING THE CONSIDERATION OF ITEM(S) OF BUSINESS CONTAINING EXEMPT INFORMATION:-**

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

Item No	Paragraph
36	3

36/26 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 21ST JULY 2026 (INCLUDES EXEMPT MINUTES)**

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 21st July 2026 were considered.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 21st July 2026 be agreed as a true and correct record.

The meeting closed at 9.01 p.m.

Chairman

This page is intentionally left blank

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet

Wednesday 18 November 2026

Bromsgrove Car Park Strategy

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor K. J. May
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Assistant Director Regeneration and Property Services
Report Author: Lyndsey Berry	Job Title: Economic Growth Manager – Towns and Centres email: lyndsey.berry@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Tel: (01527) 881221	
Wards Affected		(All Wards);
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A
Council Priority		Economic Development;
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 RESOLVE that:-

1) the Bromsgrove Car Parking Strategy 2026-2030 be approved.

The Cabinet is asked to NOTE that

2) the Strategy was updated following consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Board and subsequent Member engagement; and

3) future decisions relating to Churchfields Car Park will be informed by the content of the Strategy, updated parking data, financial implications and regeneration benefits. The outcomes of this work will be reported back to Cabinet in due course.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 This report details the background in respect of the proposed content of the Bromsgrove Car Parking Strategy 2026 to 2030.

2.2 The report also provides further information for noting, regarding the outcomes of Member engagement, including with the Overview and Scrutiny board. Further information relating to Churchfields Car Park is also included.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

3.1 Car parking is a significant issue for Bromsgrove. It supports access to the town centre, local businesses, leisure facilities, employment, community services and regeneration. Members have raised long-standing concerns about parking capacity, the distribution of demand across the Council's car parks, permit arrangements, enforcement activity and the future of Churchfields Car Park.

3.2 The Council commissioned a Strategic Parking Review in 2024 and this has been supplemented by parking occupancy surveys undertaken during 2025 and 2026. The evidence shows that Bromsgrove's principal town centre parking challenge is not an overall shortage of spaces, but the concentration of demand in some centrally located car parks while spare capacity remains available elsewhere in the network.

3.3 The draft Bromsgrove Car Parking Strategy 2026-2029 has therefore been prepared to provide a clear strategic framework for managing the Council's parking estate, improving the use of existing capacity, reviewing permit and pricing arrangements, strengthening enforcement priorities and supporting the Council's wider town centre regeneration ambitions.

3.4 The draft Strategy was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 15 September 2026. Members provided feedback on several aspects of the document including future monitoring arrangements, accessibility considerations, the role of parking in supporting town centre vitality, the management of permits and the importance of ensuring decisions are informed by robust evidence. They also raised concerns regarding the impact of parking issues outside Bromsgrove Town Centre and decided to set up a Task and Finish Group to further explore these issues.

3.5 Following the meeting, the Strategy has been reviewed and amended where appropriate to reflect Member comments and observations. The revised Strategy attached at Appendix 1 incorporates these changes and provides a clearer framework for the future management of the Council's parking estate.

3.6 To further strengthen the evidence base, and take into account the closure of Stourbridge Road car park, additional parking occupancy surveys have been undertaken across the Council's Town Centre car park network. This provides up to date information on parking demand and utilisation and will ensure any future strategic decisions are informed by the most recent evidence available.

3.7 The revised strategy maintains the central conclusion that Bromsgrove's primary parking challenge relates to the distribution of demand rather than an overall shortage of parking provision. The strategy therefore prioritises measures to improve utilisation of existing capacity through enhanced management, monitoring, signage, wayfinding, permit arrangements and customer information.

3.8 The strategy also establishes a framework for the ongoing review of parking demand across the Council's car park estate. Additional parking occupancy surveys are currently underway and will supplement the Strategic Parking Review and previous occupancy data to ensure the evidence base remains current and reflective of changing demand patterns.

3.9 Churchfields Car Park remains an important strategic asset for Bromsgrove Town Centre. The approved strategy will provide the context within which future options for the site can be assessed. Any future recommendations regarding Churchfields Car Park will be informed by up to date parking evidence, a financial appraisal, consideration of regeneration opportunities and wider placemaking objectives.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The strategy itself does not commit the Council to specific capital expenditure, asset disposal or redevelopment decisions. However, it identifies a number of areas to explore which may have future financial implications, including parking tariffs, season ticket and permit arrangements, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, parking technology, enforcement activity and the ongoing maintenance of the parking estate.

4.2 The future of Churchfields Car Park will require a detailed financial appraisal of the options before any decision is taken. This will include an assessment of the revenue and capital implications of the available options, including continued retention, reopening, demolition and retention as surface parking, redevelopment or other alternative uses. The appraisal will consider ongoing costs, potential income, capital investment requirements, liabilities and wider regeneration benefits.

4.3 Any subsequent decision on Churchfields Car Park will be brought forward with a clear financial assessment so that Members can consider the costs, risks and opportunities of each option alongside parking need and the strategic direction for Bromsgrove town centre.

4.4 The additional occupancy surveys have been undertaken within existing approved budgets and will provide enhanced evidence to support future decision making.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The strategy provides a framework for future decision making and does not, of itself, approve capital expenditure, asset disposal, redevelopment or changes to the Council's Off-Street Parking Places Order. Any future changes to tariffs, permits, charging arrangements, classes of user, designated bays or operational arrangements will be subject to the appropriate legal processes and approvals at the relevant time.

5.2 Any future decision relating to Churchfields Car Park may require further legal advice, including in relation to planning, land ownership, covenants, procurement, redevelopment, disposal or other asset management considerations. These matters will be assessed as part of the options appraisal before a decision is presented to Members.

6. OTHER – IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

6.1 Local Government Reorganisation may create opportunities to review and align parking tariffs, permits, enforcement practices and wider parking policies across a future North Worcestershire authority area. The strategy has been prepared to address Bromsgrove's current needs while recognising that future harmonisation may be required.

Relevant Council Priority

6.2 The strategy supports the Council Plan priorities by helping to create a thriving and resilient town centre, supporting economic growth and investment, making effective use of Council assets and ensuring that infrastructure planning supports the sustainable future development of Bromsgrove District. The strategy also supports the delivery of the Bromsgrove Town Centre Strategic Framework and wider regeneration objectives.

Climate Change Implications

6.3 The strategy supports climate change objectives by encouraging better use of existing parking capacity, considering opportunities for electric vehicle charging infrastructure, improving customer information and

supporting more sustainable travel choices where practical. Future investment decisions will take account of sustainability and climate resilience considerations.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.4 The strategy seeks to ensure that parking remains accessible and inclusive for residents, businesses and visitors. It supports continued provision of Blue Badge parking, accessible parking facilities and improvements to wayfinding, lighting, pedestrian routes and perceptions of personal safety. Any future changes to tariffs, permits or parking arrangements will be subject to appropriate equality assessment.

Community Impact Implications

6.5 The car parking arrangements are expected to have a generally positive impact on health and wellbeing by improving access to town centre services, healthcare facilities, employment and community amenities, particularly for older people, disabled users and those with limited mobility. Well-maintained, safe and accessible parking can support social inclusion, community participation and economic vitality. However, increased vehicle use may contribute to traffic, noise and air quality impacts and may discourage active travel for shorter journeys. These effects can be mitigated through measures such as good pedestrian connections, accessible parking provision, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and appropriate safety and maintenance standards.

6.6 The Parking Strategy aims to support the needs of residents, businesses and visitors while ensuring parking provision remains safe and fit for purpose. Community safety is an important consideration in assessing future parking options.

6.7 Churchfields Car Park was previously closed due to anti-social behaviour and associated safety concerns. Any future decisions regarding the site will need to consider how these issues can be effectively addressed, and the car park should not be reopened unless appropriate measures are in place to mitigate the risk of recurrence and provide a safe environment for users.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 Failure to adopt a clear parking strategy could result in future decisions being taken without an agreed strategic framework or consistent approach to parking management across the district.

7.2 There is a risk that parking demand patterns may change over time due to regeneration activity, economic conditions or changing travel behaviour. This risk is mitigated through the strategy's commitment to ongoing monitoring and the completion of additional occupancy surveys.

7.3 There is also a risk that decisions regarding Churchfields Car Park may not command public confidence if not supported by robust evidence. The Council is mitigating this risk through continued data collection, financial appraisal and alignment with wider town centre regeneration planning.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft Bromsgrove Car Park Strategy

Background Papers

Overview and Scrutiny Board minutes – 15th September 2026

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet **Wednesday 18 November 2026**

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Sue Baxter on behalf of Cllr Karen May	29/10/26
Lead Director / Head of Service	Rachel Egan Assistant Director Regeneration & Property Services	28/10/26
Financial Services	James Walton Chief Finance Officer	29/10/26
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings – Principal Solicitor – Governance	26/10/2026
Policy Team	Emily Payne Engagement & Equalities Officer	23/10/26
Climate Change Team	Matthew Eccles Climate Change Manager	23/10/26
Community Safety Team (community impact implications)	Bev Houghton Community Safety Manager	28/10/26

This page is intentionally left blank

Bromsgrove Car Parking Strategy 2026 - 2030

Contents **Page**

1. **Vision** 1
2. **Policy Alignment** 1
3. **Strategic Context** 2
4. **Strategic Objectives** 3
5. **Bromsgrove Car Park Estate** 4
6. **Current Town Centre Demand** 5
7. **Future Growth and Capacity Assessment** 7
8. **Parking Management Framework** 8
9. **Parking Assets and Regeneration** 11
10. **Parking Enforcement** 12
11. **Technology and Innovation** 13
12. **Monitoring and Delivery** 14

1. Vision

1.1 To provide a well-managed, accessible and sustainable parking network that supports Bromsgrove's economy and regeneration ambitions. The strategy will help ensure that residents, businesses and visitors have access to appropriate parking in locations that meet their needs. It will also support future growth, maintain accessibility and encourage more sustainable travel choices where practical.

2. Policy Alignment

2.1 This Parking Strategy has been prepared in the context of wider local policy, including the Bromsgrove Council Plan, Bromsgrove District Plan, Bromsgrove 2040 Vision, Bromsgrove Town Centre Strategic Framework and Worcestershire Local Transport Plan. It takes account of the priorities set out in these documents, particularly in relation to economic growth, regeneration, accessibility, sustainability and effective use of public assets.

The strategy recognises that parking plays an important role in supporting:

- Economic growth and investment.
- Town centre vitality and resilience.
- Housing and employment growth.
- Regeneration and placemaking.
- Accessibility and inclusion.
- Climate resilience and sustainable transport.
- Efficient use of public assets.

2.2 The strategy also supports wider transport objectives by encouraging better use of existing parking capacity, improving information and wayfinding, supporting active travel and public transport where practical, expanding electric vehicle infrastructure where appropriate and using pricing and permit arrangements to manage demand effectively.

2.3 The key test for future parking decisions will be whether they help create a vibrant and accessible town centre, support planned growth and regeneration, improve customer experience and maintain a financially sustainable parking service.

3. Strategic Context

3.1 Parking plays an important role in supporting Bromsgrove's economy, regeneration priorities and wider transport network. Historically, Bromsgrove has benefited from a substantial supply of conveniently located parking, which has helped support retail, leisure, employment and community activity while maintaining competitiveness with neighbouring centres and out-of-town destinations.

3.2 As town centre living, regeneration priorities and financial pressures continue to evolve, the strategic management of parking becomes increasingly important. This strategy therefore considers parking not simply as an operational service, but as part of the wider infrastructure that supports access, local activity, regeneration and community life.

3.3 The strategy builds upon the findings of the 2024 Waterman Strategic Parking Review and parking surveys undertaken by Wychavon Parking Services during 2025 and 2026.

3.4 The evidence shows that Bromsgrove's primary parking challenge is not an overall shortage of spaces. Instead, demand is concentrated within a small number of centrally located car parks, while spare capacity exists elsewhere within the Council's town centre parking estate.

3.5 Whilst the Waterman Strategic Parking Review concluded that sufficient parking capacity existed to meet future demand, subsequent counts identified higher demand within several centrally located car parks than previously recorded. This underlines the need for regular monitoring to ensure that future parking decisions reflect changing demand patterns across the town centre.

3.6 The evidence indicates that future parking management should focus on improving utilisation across the existing town centre parking network through measures such as wayfinding, permit management, pricing and customer information before any consideration is given to additional parking provision.

3.7 Clear and proportionate signage is important to support effective use of the parking network. The Council will therefore review directional, entrance and on-site signage to ensure users can easily identify where to park, understand the different roles of car parks and make informed choices. This will be proportionate to Bromsgrove's scale and character, while learning from examples of good practice elsewhere.

3.8 The strategy also recognises the role parking will play in supporting major projects and planned growth, the Town Centre Strategic Framework, Nailers Yard and future housing and employment development.

3.9 Whilst this strategy focuses on Bromsgrove Town Centre, the Council also manages car parks in district centres and villages such as Barnt Green, Alvechurch and Aston Fields. As parking needs vary across the district, the

Council will undertake local parking reviews, subject to available resources, to help inform future management and investment decisions.

4. Strategic Objectives

4.1 Objective 1: Support Economic Growth and Town Centre Vitality

Ensure parking continues to support retail activity, leisure destinations, employment, community facilities and town centre living.

4.2 Objective 2: Optimise the Use of Existing Parking Capacity

The Council will maximise the efficiency and utilisation of existing parking assets, ensuring available capacity is used effectively across the network before considering any additional parking provision. This will be supported by improved signage, wayfinding and customer information so that users are directed to appropriate and available car parks, including those with spare capacity.

4.3 Objective 3: Support Regeneration and Growth

The parking estate should help deliver the Council's regeneration ambitions by balancing operational parking requirements with future development opportunities.

4.4 Objective 4: Improve Customer Experience, Accessibility and Inclusion

The Council will provide a modern, accessible and easy-to-use parking service that is safe, convenient and meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors. This will include clear information and signage to help users understand where parking is available, how car parks connect to key destinations and which facilities best meet their needs, including disabled users and those with mobility requirements.

4.5 Objective 5: Support the Transition to Sustainable and Low-Emission Travel

The Council will manage its parking assets to support wider environmental and transport objectives, including the expansion of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, while encouraging sustainable travel choices and maintaining access for those who rely on private vehicles.

4.6 Objective 6: Deliver Effective Parking Management and Enforcement

Enforcement activity will focus on improving compliance, supporting accessibility, maintaining parking turnover and addressing issues that affect road safety and traffic movement.

4.7 Objective 7: Ensure the Long-Term Sustainability of the Parking Network

The Council will manage its parking assets and services in a financially responsible manner, ensuring they remain well maintained, fit for purpose and capable of supporting residents, businesses and visitors over the long term.

5. Bromsgrove Car Park Estate

5.1 The Council currently manages a portfolio of car parks in the town centre, providing 942 spaces in total, of which 904 are available for public use following the closure of Stourbridge Road car park. The Parkside offices car park is only available to staff working at those offices and is therefore discounted from the usage analysis in section 6. All of these car parks other than St John Street are owned on a freehold basis, St John Street car park is leased until 2032.

Car Park	Spaces
Recreation Road South	292
North Bromsgrove	185
School Drive	128
Parkside	94
St John Street	82
Windsor Street	65
New Road	58
Parkside offices	38

5.2 Other car parks in the town centre not owned or managed by the Council include Aldi (88 spaces) and Bromsgrove Retail Park (over 200 spaces).

5.3 The Council also owns and manages car parks outside the town centre:

Car Park	Spaces
Sanders Park (following expansion)	122
Alvechurch	45
Aston Fields	40
Catshill	15
All Saints Church Hall	33

5.4 These facilities provide important parking provision for local communities and support local centres.

6. Current Town Centre Demand

6.1 Parking surveys undertaken during 2025 and 2026 provide a clear picture of how the Council's town centre parking estate is being used. The main conclusion is straightforward: Bromsgrove does not have an overall shortage of town centre parking spaces, but demand is unevenly distributed. Some central car parks are very busy, while others have significant spare capacity for much of the week. The tables below outline overall occupancy across the town centre parking estate (Table 1) and occupancy by car park (Table 2). These counts were undertaken between 17th October 2026 and 23rd October 2026 to demonstrate the distribution of parking behaviour following the closure of Stourbridge Road car park at the end of September 2026.

6.2 *Table 1 – Overall Town Centre Car Park Occupancy*

Day / date	AM filled	PM filled	AM occupancy	PM occupancy
Sat 17/10/2026	707	619	78.2%	68.5%
Sun 18/10/2026	382	238	42.3%	26.3%
Mon 19/10/2026	441	575	48.8%	63.6%
Tues 20/10/2026	577	430	63.8%	47.6%
Weds 21/10/2026	724	464	80.1%	51.3%
Thurs 22/10/2026	659	487	72.9%	53.9%
Fri 23/10/2026	546	511	60.4%	56.5%

6.2 *Table 2 - Occupancy by Car Park*

Car park	Capacity	Avg filled	Avg occupancy	Peak filled	Peak occupancy	Low filled	Low occupancy
Parkside	94	83	88.4%	94	100.0%	24	25.5%
New Road	58	52	89.2%	58	100.0%	36	62.1%
North Bromsgrove	185	48	26.0%	145	78.4%	19	10.3%
Rec Rd South	292	156	53.3%	280	95.9%	80	27.4%
School Drive	128	76	59.7%	123	96.1%	4	3.1%
St John St	82	63	77.3%	82	100.0%	14	17.1%
Windsor St	65	48	73.1%	65	100.0%	20	30.8%

6.3 Across the survey period, overall occupancy ranged from 26.3% on Sunday afternoon to 80.1% on Wednesday morning. Even at the point of highest recorded demand, 180 spaces remained available across the operational town centre parking estate. This indicates that the network has sufficient overall capacity to meet current demand, although availability varies by location and time of day.

6.4 The highest network-wide utilisation was generally recorded on weekday mornings and on Saturday, reflecting a combination of commuter, business, service and visitor activity. Lower occupancy at other times, particularly on Sunday and during several weekday afternoons, demonstrates that demand fluctuates considerably and that spare capacity is available across much of the week.

6.5 Demand is not evenly distributed between individual car parks. Parkside and New Road recorded average occupancy of 88.4% and 89.2% respectively and both reached full capacity during the survey. St John Street and Windsor Street also experienced high average occupancy and reached full capacity at peak times. These locations are among the most convenient for key town centre destinations and are therefore likely to remain particularly attractive to visitors and regular users.

6.6 Other car parks retain greater capacity. North Bromsgrove averaged 26.0% occupancy, while Recreation Road South averaged 53.3%, notwithstanding periods of higher demand. School Drive also showed substantial variation, ranging from 3.1% to 96.1% occupancy. Taken together, the survey evidence shows that Bromsgrove's current parking challenge is the concentration of demand in preferred locations rather than an overall shortage of spaces.

7. Future Growth and Capacity Assessment

7.1 Bromsgrove District is expected to continue growing over the period covered by this strategy. Population and housing growth, increased town centre living, commercial investment and regeneration projects, including Nailers Yard, may all influence the level, location and duration of future parking demand.

7.2 The Council's approach is to plan for this growth by making effective use of the existing parking estate, monitoring changes in demand and retaining flexibility to respond where evidence identifies a need. Additional parking provision will not be pursued solely in anticipation of growth where capacity can be managed within the current network.

7.3 The 2024 Strategic Parking Review concluded that Bromsgrove Town Centre had sufficient capacity to accommodate anticipated future demand without bringing Churchfields Multi-Storey Car Park back into operational use. The more recent occupancy surveys recorded higher utilisation in some central car parks than the review identified, but they also confirmed spare capacity elsewhere in the network.

7.4 Future capacity requirements have therefore been assessed using both sources of evidence. Together, they indicate that the operational estate can accommodate current demand and a reasonable level of growth, provided that the Council improves the distribution of users between heavily used central car parks and locations with available capacity.

7.5 The disposal of Stourbridge Road Car Park has removed 71 spaces from the Council's operational town centre estate and reduced the margin between supply and demand. However, the post-closure survey shows that 180 spaces remained available at the network peak. The loss of the site has therefore not created an immediate shortage, although its effect should continue to be monitored as demand changes.

7.6 On current evidence, there is no immediate operational requirement to bring Churchfields Multi-Storey Car Park back into use. The Council's priority will be to optimise the existing estate through improved signage and wayfinding, better customer information, and reviews of parking fees and permit arrangements that encourage longer-stay users towards car parks with spare capacity and protect convenient central spaces for visitors.

7.7 Future parking requirements will be reviewed as the effects of Nailers Yard, wider town centre regeneration, new housing and commercial growth become clearer. Regular occupancy monitoring will be used to test whether management measures are improving the distribution of demand and whether the available capacity remains sufficient.

7.8 Although this assessment focuses on Bromsgrove Town Centre, parking conditions in district centres and villages may differ. The Council will consider place-based reviews where local evidence indicates a need and will use the findings to inform future parking management, investment and capacity planning decisions.

8. Parking Management Framework

Car Park Roles and Functions

8.1 To support more effective parking management, the Council will adopt a framework that assigns a clear role to individual car parks based on their location, demand profile and strategic function

8.2 Core Visitor Parking

- St John Street
- Parkside
- Windsor Street
- New Road

8.3 These car parks are located closest to the town centre and should prioritise short-stay visitor parking, retail trips and leisure activity. The Council will seek to maximise turnover within these locations to support town centre businesses and visitor access.

8.4 Mixed-Use Parking

- Recreation Road South

8.5 This car park will accommodate a mix of users, including visitors, leisure users, permit holders and longer-stay parkers. Its location and capacity provide flexibility within the overall parking network and make it an important location for balancing demand across the town centre.

8.6 Long-Stay, Permit and Leisure Parking

- North Bromsgrove
- School Drive

8.7 These car parks are well suited to longer-stay parking and permit holders due to their significant spare capacity and proximity to key destinations. North Bromsgrove will continue to play an important role in supporting leisure centre users, while both locations will be used to accommodate permit parking and longer-stay demand. Over time, season ticket provision may be focused increasingly within these car parks and Recreation Road South, subject to demand and operational requirements.

Permit and Pricing Strategy

8.8 Parking fees in Bromsgrove car parks were last reviewed in 2024, ending a 13-year period during which tariffs had remained unchanged since 2011. The review increased standard parking charges to £1.00 per hour and introduced free disabled parking and free parking for stays of up to 30 minutes, providing a balance between supporting town centre visits and generating income to maintain the parking estate.

8.9 There are currently approximately 210 season ticket holders using Bromsgrove town centre car parks providing an income of £67,200 per annum. Evidence from occupancy surveys indicates that a significant proportion of permit holders are concentrated within the most conveniently located car parks, particularly Parkside and New Road. This contributes to reduced availability for short-stay visitors and customers in locations that also experience the greatest demand throughout the day. At peak periods, the continued allocation of season ticket holders to these central car parks can limit turnover and reduce opportunities for visitor parking, despite substantial spare capacity existing elsewhere within the Council's parking estate.

8.10 Survey evidence shows that North Bromsgrove and School Drive consistently retain significant spare capacity. These locations are therefore well suited to accommodating a proportion of longer-stay parking demand, including town centre employees, Council staff, permit holders and other regular users. North Bromsgrove also performs an important role in serving Bromsgrove Sport and Leisure Centre and will continue to provide convenient parking for leisure centre users. Directing a greater proportion of long-stay parking demand towards these locations would help release capacity within the core visitor car parks while making more effective use of existing parking assets.

8.11 The Council will therefore review its season ticket arrangements and pricing structure during the lifetime of this strategy. Consideration will be given to differential permit pricing, with lower-cost permits offered in peripheral car parks such as North Bromsgrove, School Drive and, where appropriate, Recreation Road South, whilst premium pricing is retained for the most convenient centrally located facilities. The review will also consider whether specific permit arrangements, discounted parking products or other incentives should be introduced for Bromsgrove Sport and Leisure Centre users and members to support continued access to leisure facilities whilst ensuring parking capacity is managed effectively. This approach would provide a financial incentive for long-stay users to choose less heavily utilised car parks while protecting visitor access in key town centre locations.

8.12 The current permit structure means that a season ticket holder only needs to use a car park for approximately one day per week to achieve a financial saving compared with paying the standard daily parking charge. This represents a significantly greater discount than is typically seen in parking permit schemes, where the break-even point is often closer to four days per week. The Council will review permit pricing and eligibility to ensure that permits support the strategic management of parking demand, encourage use of appropriate long-stay locations and provide a fair balance between affordability and efficient use of parking assets.

8.13 The Council's permit strategy will therefore seek to:

- Prioritise visitor parking within core town centre car parks.
- Increase parking turnover in the most popular locations.
- Relocate long-stay parking demand to car parks with available capacity.
- Encourage more efficient use of the overall parking network.
- Support town centre businesses by improving visitor access.
- Ensure permit pricing remains fair, proportionate and aligned with demand.
- Future permit allocation will primarily focus on car parks with available long-stay capacity, including North Bromsgrove, School Drive and, where appropriate, Recreation Road South.
- Maintain appropriate parking provision for Bromsgrove Sport and Leisure Centre users, including consideration of targeted permit, validation or discount schemes where these support wider parking management objectives.

8.14 Annual reviews of permit allocations, permit pricing and parking tariffs will be undertaken to ensure that parking management arrangements continue to support town centre vitality whilst making the best use of the Council's available parking capacity.

<u>Sustainability and Accessibility</u>

8.15 The Council recognises that many residents, businesses and visitors will continue to rely on private vehicles for the foreseeable future. However, the parking service also has an important role in supporting wider environmental, accessibility and public realm objectives.

8.16 During the lifetime of this strategy, the Council will seek to improve the sustainability, accessibility and user experience of its parking estate through ongoing investment and maintenance programmes. This will include

maintaining appropriate Blue Badge provision, improving pedestrian routes and wayfinding, enhancing lighting and perceptions of personal safety, and supporting better connections between parking facilities and other modes of transport.

8.17 The Council will undertake an accessibility review of its car parks during the lifetime of this strategy. The review will be undertaken with reference to recognised accessibility standards and, where appropriate, informed by engagement with accessibility representatives and users. This will consider the location, number and condition of disabled parking bays, pedestrian routes, dropped kerbs, surface condition, lighting, signage and access to nearby destinations. The review will identify practical improvements that can be incorporated into maintenance, investment and future parking management decisions.

8.18 The Council will also continue to review opportunities to expand electric vehicle charging infrastructure where there is demonstrated demand. Whilst rapid charging facilities are available within Bromsgrove, there is currently limited provision of destination charging infrastructure suitable for longer-stay parking. Future investment will therefore consider the appropriate balance between rapid charging and lower-powered charging facilities that support longer visits to the town centre, workplaces and leisure destinations.

8.19 Sustainability, accessibility and climate resilience considerations will be incorporated into future parking infrastructure, maintenance and investment decisions wherever practicable.

9. Parking Assets and Regeneration

9.1 The Council's parking estate provides essential parking capacity for residents, visitors and businesses while also representing a significant strategic asset. Future decisions regarding parking provision will therefore take account of operational requirements alongside regeneration, placemaking and wider Council priorities.

9.2 The current assessment indicates that the town centre car park estate continues to provide sufficient capacity to meet existing and forecast demand. As a result, there is no immediate requirement to make significant changes to parking provision or to determine the long-term future of individual car park assets. However, recognising the importance of these assets to the wider regeneration and growth of the town centre, the Council will continue to review the performance, utilisation and strategic role of the estate as part of its ongoing planning for the town centre.

9.3 In particular, the future role of Churchfields Car Park should be considered as part of a comprehensive review of the town centre car park estate rather than in isolation. While current parking capacity means there is no immediate need for a decision regarding the site, the Council will proactively explore and evaluate a range of potential future options for Churchfields and other town centre parking assets. This work will be undertaken alongside wider regeneration, transport and development initiatives to ensure that future decisions are informed by robust evidence, an understanding of long-term parking demand, and the Council's wider place-making and regeneration objectives.

10. Parking Enforcement

10.1 Effective parking enforcement helps keep roads safe, prevents inconsiderate parking and makes sure parking spaces are available for residents, visitors and businesses. Enforcement is not about generating income. Its purpose is to ensure parking rules are followed and to support the safe and efficient movement of traffic.

10.2 The Council delivers Civil Parking Enforcement through its partnership with Wychavon District Council. This service includes the provision of on-street parking enforcement on behalf of Worcestershire County Council, together with off-street parking enforcement, permit administration, Blue Badge enforcement, school patrols, parking dispensations, appeals administration and the recovery of unpaid Penalty Charge Notices.

10.3 Over the lifetime of this strategy, the Council will adopt a more intelligence-led approach to enforcement activity, using parking data, customer feedback, member enquiries and local intelligence to target locations where non-compliance has the greatest impact. Priority will be given to locations where parking behaviour affects safety, accessibility, traffic movement, town and local centre vitality and public confidence in the parking service.

10.4 Priority Enforcement Areas

- Rural and district centre enforcement locations - a minimum level of enforcement resource will continue to be directed toward locations outside Bromsgrove town centre. The current arrangement is for 25% of Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO) time to be spent outside Bromsgrove town centre. This will continue to be reviewed throughout the duration of the strategy period.
- Town centre parking turnover and misuse of short-stay parking.
- Blue Badge misuse.

- School safety and school entrance obstruction.
- Parking on tactile crossings and dropped kerbs (subject to relevant powers).
- Obstruction of pedestrian routes and accessibility features.
- Environmental offences associated with vehicles, including littering from vehicles where enforcement powers permit.

11. Technology and Innovation

11.1 Technology has an important role in helping the Council manage the parking estate more effectively and improve the customer experience.

The Council will continue to invest in:

- Cashless payment options
- Digital permits
- Improved reporting systems
- Data-led decision making

11.2 The Council will also monitor opportunities presented through the National Parking Platform and other emerging technologies that improve customer choice and operational efficiency. The National Parking Platform aims to enable motorists to pay for parking using their preferred parking app across participating local authority car parks, reducing the need to download multiple applications and creating a more consistent parking experience for customers.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR)

11.3 The Council has considered the potential use of ANPR technology within its car parks. However, current legislative limitations mean ANPR cannot be used by local authorities to independently enforce off-street parking contraventions, and Civil Enforcement Officer patrols would still be required to monitor compliance, including disabled bays, electric vehicle charging bays and other parking restrictions. As a result, the anticipated benefit of releasing Civil Enforcement Officer capacity would not be realised. Given the significant capital and ongoing revenue costs associated with ANPR systems, the technology is not currently considered to offer sufficient operational or financial benefit. The Council will keep this position under review throughout the lifetime of the strategy to reflect any changes in legislation, technology, operational requirements or business need.

12. Monitoring and Delivery

12.1 The success of this strategy will depend on regular monitoring and evidence-led decision making. Whilst continuous occupancy monitoring across every car park is not considered proportionate or necessary, the Council will maintain a programme of periodic surveys and utilisation reviews. This approach provides a robust evidence base for parking decisions whilst ensuring resources are used efficiently

12.2 To support value for money and transparent decision making, the Council will improve the way parking income and expenditure is monitored. Each car park should be allocated an appropriate finance budget code, enabling income, maintenance costs, enforcement-related costs and investment requirements to be tracked more clearly at car park level. This will strengthen the evidence base for future tariff reviews, investment decisions and assessments of the financial sustainability of the parking estate.

Action Plan

Action	**Outcome**	**Target Date**
Review season ticket and permit allocations, including options to prioritise long-stay parking at North Bromsgrove and School Drive	Increase availability within centrally located visitor car parks	Q3 2026/27
Review parking tariffs and season ticket pricing structure to encourage use of underutilised car parks	Better distribution of demand across the network	Q3 2026/27
Consider the findings of the Alvechurch Parking Review and consider other areas that may benefit from similar reviews, incorporating agreed actions into future parking service planning and investment programmes as appropriate	Ensure local parking issues are addressed through an evidence-led approach	Q3 2026/27
Establish a quarterly parking occupancy monitoring programme across the Council's parking estate	Improved evidence base for future decision making and capacity planning	Q4 2026/27
Undertake annual review of town centre parking demand and utilisation	Monitor effectiveness of parking management measures	Annually from Q3 2027/28

Action	Outcome	Target Date
Develop and implement an enforcement improvement plan with Wychavon Parking Services	Improved compliance and turnover in key town centre locations	Q4 2026/27
Develop and assess future options for Churchfields Car Park and the wider town centre car park estate, taking account of the impact of this Strategy on parking demand, utilisation and customer behaviour, together with regeneration opportunities and wider place-making objectives.	A robust evidence base and range of deliverable options to support future decisions on the long-term role of Churchfields Car Park and the wider town centre car park estate.	Q1 2027/28
Review opportunities to improve car park signage, wayfinding and customer information directing users to available capacity	Increased awareness and use of alternative parking locations	Q2 2027/28
Undertake an accessibility review of Council car parks, including disabled bay provision, pedestrian routes, signage, lighting and access to nearby destinations	Clear evidence of accessibility issues and practical improvement opportunities	Q2 2027/28
Work with Finance to allocate budget codes to each car park and establish regular income and expenditure reporting at car park level	Improved value for money evidence, financial transparency and asset-level monitoring	Q2 2027/28
Review EV charging provision across the parking estate, to consider a mix of rapid and longer-stay charging opportunities	Support transition to lower emission vehicles	Q2 2027/28
Review opportunities to introduce additional digital parking services and occupancy monitoring technology	Improved customer experience and operational intelligence	Q3 2027/28
Prepare for implementation of the National Parking Platform, subject to national rollout arrangements	Greater payment flexibility and improved customer choice	By 2029

Longer-Term Strategic Considerations

12.3 The following matters will be kept under review throughout the life of this strategy:

- The need for additional town centre parking capacity.
- Recommendations arising from the Alvechurch Parking Review
- The outcome of any future reviews of local parking issues outside the town centre
- Regeneration opportunities involving parking assets.
- Expansion of EV charging infrastructure.
- Emerging parking technologies.
- Parking implications of future Local Plan growth.

Monitoring and Review

12.4 Implementation of the strategy will be monitored throughout its lifetime through:

- Quarterly occupancy surveys.
- Annual reviews of parking tariffs and permit arrangements.
- Monitoring of parking income and usage trends.
- Monitoring of enforcement activity and compliance levels.
- Monitoring of EV charging infrastructure usage and demand.
- Annual review of progress against the Strategy Action Plan.

12.5 Key measures will include:

- Occupancy levels within core visitor car parks.
- Utilisation of North Bromsgrove, School Drive and other long-stay parking locations.
- Permit allocation by car park.
- Parking income and season ticket usage.
- Customer complaints and satisfaction levels.
- Enforcement outcomes and compliance rates.
- Demand for and utilisation of EV charging infrastructure.

This page is intentionally left blank

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet

Wednesday 18 November 2026

Quarter 2 26/27 Performance Report

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Karen May, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Rob Elmes, Assistant Director for Corporate Services and Transformation
Report Author:	Helen Mole Job Title: Performance and Improvement Manager Contact email: h.mole@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Council Priorities	All
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE that:

The overview of Quarter 2 performance for the period July to September 2026 against the Council Plan priorities be noted.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 There are a set of corporate measures which are organised by the priorities set out in the Bromsgrove District Council Plan 2024–2027. The summary table for quarterly performance can be found in Appendix 1 which includes the current and previous quarter's data.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

3.1 The corporate measures are structured under the Council Plan priorities:

- Economic Development
- Environment
- Housing
- Community Safety

- Organisational Priorities

Delivery of Council Plan (Measures)

3.2 An assessment of the Council's performance measures over the last quarter offers insight into progress, stability and challenges across each priority area, informing assurance on delivery against the Council Plan.

3.3 As part of the annual review of the Corporate Performance Framework, several performance measures have been added and removed for 2026/27. Members should note these changes when comparing performance trends with previous years.

3.4 This ensures that the framework remains relevant, reflects current service priorities, and focuses on the indicators that best demonstrate the Council's performance and the outcomes being achieved for residents.

Economic Development:

3.5 ***ED-01/02*** The business grant funding performance measures track grants funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund from 1 April 2025 to 30 September 2026, with figures reported cumulatively. Businesses apply for funding and, if successful, receive an award confirmed through a funding agreement. "Business Grant funding awarded (£)" measures the total value of these confirmed awards. Businesses then deliver their approved projects and submit claims to receive the grant. "Business Grant funding – % spent" measures the proportion of the total grant funding available that businesses have claimed and received. There is a natural delay between funding being awarded and paid, which largely depends on how quickly each business completes its funded project and submits its claim. Reporting against these measures will end after Quarter 2 2026/27, when the UK Shared Prosperity Fund closes.

3.5.1 ***ED-01/02*** One Innovation Lighthouse grant was paid during the quarter. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund closed on 30/9/26 with no further expenditure permitted beyond this date. The unspent funds allocated to business grants have been reallocated to eligible projects to ensure maximum use of the UKSPF grant.

3.5.2 ***ED-03/04/05*** Round 1 of the Community Investment Fund resulted in the approval of 47 applications with a total value of £774,062.76. The fund has a remaining £339,145.24 which will be made available in future funding rounds to support further eligible projects. Officers are in

the process of issuing funding agreements to the individual project deliverers and undertaking benchmark visits to provide guidance on compliant delivery of the projects. It is expected that the first payments of grants will be made in Quarter 3.

3.5.3 The fund is delivering investment into both long-term community assets and smaller local projects. For example, £30,000 has been awarded to Hagley Community Association to install solar panels, while £50,000 has been allocated towards a Multi-Use Games Area in Romsley, helping to improve community facilities, sustainability and recreational opportunities. At the same time, smaller awards such as £2,000 for the Alvechurch Communities Together Scarecrow Trail and £725 for Community Yoga activities are supporting community participation, wellbeing and local events. These examples illustrate how the funding is being used to benefit residents through a diverse range of projects across the District.

Environment:

3.6 ***EN-01*** Overall waste volumes across all types have increased, most likely due to increased housing across the District. Overall performance is boosted by garden waste, whilst dry recycling remains consistent with previous years. Introduction of food waste in 2027/28 is expected to help reduce residual waste tonnages and increase recycling performance further, as well as support greater engagement regarding wider recycling habits.

3.6.1 ***EN-02*** There were 671 recorded fly-tipping incidents during Quarter 2 2026, compared with 668 during Quarter 2 2025, representing a marginal increase of 3 incidents (0.4%). Overall performance remains broadly in line with the previous year. Year-to-date (April to September), Bromsgrove recorded 1,315 incidents, compared with 1,330 during the same period in 2025, a reduction of 15 incidents (-1.1%). Therefore, despite the slight increase seen in Quarter 2, the service remains marginally ahead of last year's performance overall.

3.6.2 ***EN-05*** Four Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) were issued for littering and two for fly-tipping. Those for fly-tipping related to a resident's inappropriate disposal of waste and a householder breaching their duty of care to dispose of their waste effectively. It is important to note FPNs should only be served where appropriate rather than have any target set.

3.6.3 ***EN-06*** Performance for households supported by the energy advice service remained broadly stable during Quarter 2 2026/27, with 67 households receiving support compared with 66 in the previous

quarter. Whilst activity remains below the significantly higher levels recorded in earlier reporting periods, performance is consistent with the equivalent quarter last year. This indicates that demand for energy advice services has stabilised following the exceptional levels experienced during periods of elevated energy costs and wider cost-of-living pressures. Officers will continue to work with Act on Energy to promote the service, maximise resident awareness and monitor demand trends throughout the year.

Housing:

3.7 ***HS-01*** This is a measure of the 'speed' of decision making for those planning applications defined as ‘Major’. Government require 60% of these decisions to be made within their statutory time period of 13 weeks, or within an agreed Extension of Time (EoT) and Officers work positively and practically with applicants to secure such time extensions where possible, as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and as set out on the Council’s website. Current performance remains well above the Government target of 60% with the figure for this quarter being 100%. Three applications were decided, all with agreed EoT.

3.7.1 ***HS-02*** This is a measure of the 'speed' of decision making for those planning applications defined as ‘Minor’. Government require 70% of these decisions to be made within their statutory time period of 8 weeks, or within an agreed Extension of Time (EoT) and Officers work positively and practically with applicants to secure such time extensions where possible, as required by the NPPF and as set out on the Council’s website. Current performance remains well above the Government target of 70% with the figure for this quarter being 84.5%. This is an improvement in relation to the previous quarter.

3.7.2 ***HS-03*** Since June 2024, most planning enforcement functions have been delivered by Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), working with Development Management officers. Cases are prioritised according to the Council’s Enforcement Plan, with performance focused on effective case management and securing appropriate planning outcomes rather than fixed completion times. A figure of 20 opened cases is a reduction in comparison with last quarter, when 35 cases were opened. No specific cause has been identified for the reduction, although it may reflect normal variation in demand for the service.

3.7.3 ***HS-04*** Information same as above, however this measure records the number of enforcement cases (38) closed during the period, including those resolved through informal action, formal enforcement,

prosecution, immunity, and closures under untidy land and anti-social behaviour powers.

3.7.4 ***HS-05*** Performance for building control applications was down from Quarter 1, due to the dual effects of increased application numbers coupled with resourcing issues. Measures have recently been put into place to address this situation. Statutory reports were also submitted to the Building Safety Regulator as required, ensuring continued compliance with regulatory obligations.

3.7.5 ***HS-06/07*** Homelessness prevention activity increased during the quarter, helping more residents avoid becoming homeless through access to supported housing. At the same time, the number of households in temporary accommodation reduced compared with the previous quarter, supported by the availability of new affordable housing developments.

3.7.6 ***HS-08*** Costs associated with Bed and Breakfast placements have increased as expenditure is apportioned across reporting periods for households that remain in accommodation beyond a single quarter. During Quarter 2, 12 new placements were made. However, the number of households in Bed and Breakfast accommodation at the end of each month continued to decrease throughout the quarter.

Community Safety:

3.8 ***CS-01/02*** Crime data is sourced from Police.uk, sits outside the Council's control, and is subject to reporting delays. Figures are presented separately for recorded crime (excluding ASB) and ASB, with trends potentially influenced by reporting practices and police activity. Commentary from the Community Safety Team and relevant Community Safety Partnership (CSP) insights provide context on local trends and preventative work, members to note that some CSP information cannot be shared in full.

3.8.1 Crime levels reported to North Worcestershire CSP (NWCSP) show reductions in crime across the majority of wards in Bromsgrove, with a few exceptions as detailed below. Crime data is based on reported crime and there are a number of reasons why crime levels might show as reducing. Prolific offenders may be in custody, may have moved away or may not be offending at this time for other reasons. There are also seasonal or situational considerations for reductions in certain crimes. The quarterly crime and ASB data report to NWCSP does not mention any definitive reasons for the current reductions in crime reporting.

3.8.2 Slideslow Ward recorded an increase in overall offending (15 offences). Violence with injury increased by three offences with two records relating to a single incident on Bromsgrove Highway, involving two victims who sustained serious injury as a result of careless or inconsiderate driving.

3.8.3 Cofton Ward recorded an increase in overall offending (21 offences), including seven criminal damage offences. Three incidents occurred at the same location on separate dates during the same week and involved electric bikes causing damage, however no suspects were identified.

3.8.4 The same location has 40 offences recorded over the past three years, including 36 incidents of criminal damage, indicating a longer-term issue. Most incidents involved electric bikes or scooters causing damage. Two incidents involved racial slogans being sprayed or scratched into assets, which may indicate local community tensions. This information will be discussed at the next Safer Bromsgrove CSP meeting in November.

3.8.5 Belbroughton and Romsley Ward recorded an increase of 17 neighbourhood crime offences compared to one report in the comparison period. This was driven by 14 residential burglaries within the ward.

3.8.6 Further analysis identified three streets with two repeat burglary offences recorded in each. One address was targeted in both July and September. However, no wider pattern, repeat dates or suspects were identified, and the reason for the increase remains unclear. This concern will also be discussed at Safer Bromsgrove in November.

3.8.7 **CS-*02*** Police.UK data for April and May is currently incomplete due to a technical issue which has been raised directly with West Mercia Police. The missing data is due to be restored; however, until this has been resolved, the overall ASB position should be treated with caution as it is not yet possible to confirm the full extent of any reduction or trend.

3.8.8 Within the NWCSP report, no significant ASB trends or drivers were identified in Bromsgrove during the quarter with ASB reports in Bromsgrove decreasing (- 4%) in Quarter 2 when compared with the same period in 2025/26.

Organisational Priorities:

3.9 ***OR-01*** Council Tax collection at Quarter 2 stands at 56.16%, compared to a target of 56.63% and a previous-year average of 56.54%. Whilst performance is marginally below target, the variance of 0.47% is relatively small and collection performance remains broadly consistent with historical trends. Collection rates continue to be supported by high levels of Direct Debit take-up. Performance will continue to be monitored throughout the year, with recovery interventions focused on maintaining collection levels whilst supporting residents experiencing financial difficulties.

3.9.1 **OR*-02*** Business Rates collection at Quarter 2 is 54.66%, marginally below the profiled target of 55.32%. The variance reflects normal fluctuations associated with relief processing, account amendments and payment timing. Recovery action is progressing in accordance with established procedures, and the position remains recoverable during the remainder of the financial year. Performance will continue to be monitored alongside wider economic conditions and the impact of relief and valuation changes on the rating list.

3.9.2 ***OR-03/04/05*** Local authority error rates remain low, reflecting the robust quality assurance processes in place to ensure that Housing Benefit entitlement is assessed accurately and that residents receive the correct level of support. During Quarter 2, new Housing Benefit claims were processed within an average of 23 days, while changes in circumstances were processed within an average of 11 days. Performance across both measures remains stable and is in line with national expectations, with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) expressing satisfaction with the service's performance and the authority continuing to perform within the national average.

3.9.3 ***OR-10*** Q2 sickness absence was 3.55 days per FTE, compared with 2.99 days in Q1 and 3.19 days in Q2 2025/26. The increase is largely attributable to short-term absence. Analysis is being undertaken to identify the main reasons for absence, service-level trends and any areas requiring targeted management action. Alongside this, work is underway to strengthen sickness absence reporting, including clearer identification of short and long-term cases, management trigger points and Return to Work compliance. Performance will continue to be closely monitored during Q3.

3.9.4 For some measures, there are known timing constraints on data availability. Community Safety figures are sourced from verified external data and are subject to a time lag, meaning that the latest quarter may not be available at the time of reporting. These are reflected in Appendix 1.

3.9.5 The quarterly performance reports provide an opportunity to recognise both areas for improvement and areas of strong performance. Members are asked to note that the information from these reports will be used to develop an annual report which will provide a public-facing performance overview, highlighting key achievements and outcomes against the Council Plan.

3.9.6 The Council Plan confirms that progress will be monitored quarterly (where data is available) and reported through the Cabinet and scrutiny arrangements. This report supports that approach, with Appendix 1 providing the summary view of quarterly corporate performance.

3.9.7 This section provides an update on motions considered during the quarter and the actions taken to progress them.

Motion	**Lead**	**Due Date/Status**
Cross-party working group - Electoral Matters	Melissa Bassett	14/10/2026
Response		
The Working Group completed its initial work and reported its findings to the Electoral Matters Committee on 24 September 2026. The Committee's recommendation will be considered by Council on 14 October 2026.		

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Finance and performance reporting will continue to be aligned, with this report sitting alongside the quarterly financial reports.

4.2 Where performance pressures are identified in demand led services, these are monitored alongside budget forecasts to ensure emerging financial impacts are understood early and reflected in financial planning.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 No direct legal implications are considered to arise from this report. Any legal implications associated with individual projects, decisions or actions referred to within the report will be considered through the relevant decision-making processes as required.

6. OTHER – IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

6.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report in relation to Local Government Reorganisation or Devolution. The performance reporting arrangements outlined in this report support the Council's ongoing governance and assurance frameworks and provide continuity in monitoring delivery against current Council Plan priorities.

Climate Change Implications

6.2 There are no direct climate change implications arising from this report. However, several measures within the Environment and Infrastructure priorities contribute to the Council's understanding of progress against its environmental and sustainability objectives, including carbon reduction, waste and recycling and environmental enforcement.

6.2.1 Performance reporting therefore plays an important role in tracking progress and supporting continuous improvement against the Council's environmental and climate-related ambitions set out in the Council Plan.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.3 There are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report.

Community Impact Implications

6.4 Other than the community safety performance data reported earlier in this report, there are no specific community safety or health and wellbeing implications.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 Monitoring performance regularly will assist the Council in effective identification and management of risks. It will also support the management of risks identified around robust decision making and the accuracy/effectiveness of performance data.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1: Quarter 2 Performance Table 2026/27

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

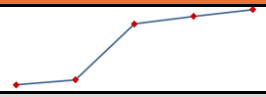
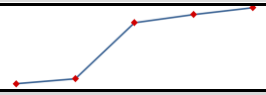
BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet

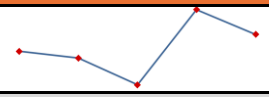
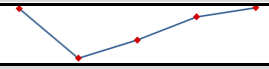
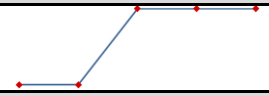
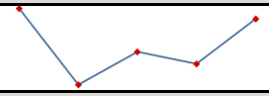
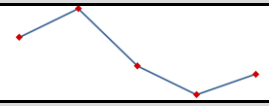
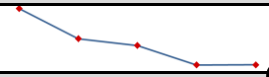
Wednesday 18 November 2026

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Karen May, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling	2nd November 26
Assistant Director	Rob Elmes, Assistant Director for Corporate Services and Transformation	28th October 26
Financial Services	James Walton Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer	28th October 26
Legal and Democratic Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor (Governance) Jess Bayley Hill, Principal Democratic Services Officer	28th October 26
Performance and Improvement Team (if equalities implications apply)	Helen Mole, Performance & Improvement Manager	Author
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Judith Willis, Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services	Oct 26

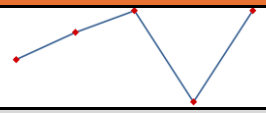
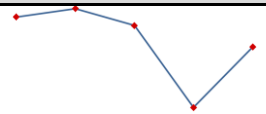
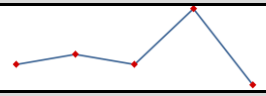
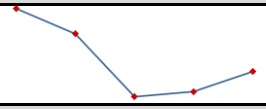
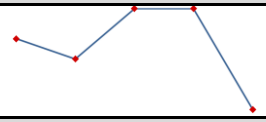
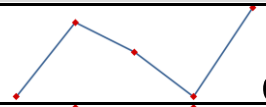
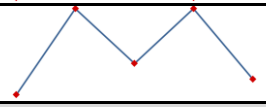
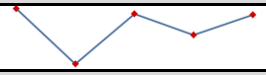
Economic Development

Measure ID	Measure name	Type	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Q4 25/26	Q1 26/27	Q2 26/27	Target	Average	Aim	Trend
ED-01	**Business grant funding - £s paid**	£	£2,599.39	£8,804.00	£79,349.00	£88,849.00	**£97,523.00**				
The business grant funding performance measures track grants funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund from 1 April 2025 to 30 September 2026, with figures reported cumulatively. One grant funding was award in Q2 through the innovation lighthouse programme to a manufacturing business.											
ED-02	**Business grant funding- % spent**	%	2.2%	7.4%	66.0%	74.5%	**81.7%**				
The business grant funding performance measures track grants funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) from 1 April 2025 to 30 September 2026, with figures reported cumulatively. One grant was paid in Q2. The UKSPF closed on 30/9/26 with no further expenditure permitted. The unspent funds allocated to business grants have been reallocated to eligible projects to ensure maximum use of the UKSPF grant.											
ED-03	**Community Investment Fund - Money Spent**	£	N/A	N/A	N/A	£0.00	£0.00				
The CIF resulted in the approval of 47 applications with a total value of £774,062.76. Officers are issuing funding agreements to the project deliverers with the first payments expected to take place in Q3.											
ED-04	**Community Investment Fund - % Spent**	%	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%				
£774,062.76 of CIF funded has been allocated to organisations. Payments will be made in Q3 once project start to be delivered. Capital £683,177.76 (with a further £30,000 capital pending confirmation), Revenue £90,885.00											
ED-05	**Community Investment Fund - Committed**	£	N/A	N/A	N/A	£0.00	£774,063.00				
A total of £774,062.76 has been allocated to support 47 projects.											

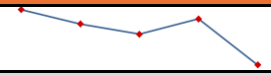
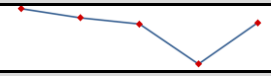
Environment

Measure ID	Measure name	Type	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Q4 25/26	Q1 26/27	Q2 26/27	Target	Average	Aim	Trend
EN-01	**% household waste recycled or composted**	%	44.8%	43.6%	39.0%	52.0%	**47.7%**		44%	↑	
Collected nearly 500 tonnes more waste across all our collection types in comparison with 25/26 YTD. +283 ton Garden Waste, +18 ton Dry Recycling. +196 Ton Residual. Believed to be primarily driven by increases in population and housing across the district. Dry recycling performance not grown proportionally with overall increases, but garden waste increases offset this on performance metrics.											
EN-02	**No. of fly tips**	#	668	524	577	644	**671**		600	↓	
Overall performance remains broadly in line with the previous year. Year-to-date (April to September). 1,315 incidents, compared with 1,330 during the same period in 2025, a reduction of 15 incidents (-1.1%)											
EN-03	**Average time taken to remove fly-tipping reported**	# days	3	3	4	4	**4**	5		↓	
An increase in Fly-Tipping numbers mean that clearance levels remain steady as WRS have to be able to investigate the sites											
EN-04	**No. of active environmental enforcement cases**	#	124	80	99	92	**118**		107		
The figure of active investigations of Fly-Tipping, littering and dog fouling this quarter is up which reflects the amount of case work the 1.5 FTE Officers are dealing with. We helped set up a multiagency operation this quarter aimed at tackling waste crime which led directly to 13 issues being identified following 13 vehicles stopped and searched where potential waste offences were identified											
EN-05	**No. of environmental enforcement fixed penalty notices**	#	15	22	8	1	**6**		12		
Four of the Fixed Penalty Notices were issued for littering. The average is given for comparative purposes only and is not a target figure as FPNs should only be served where appropriate.											
EN-06	**No. of households supported by energy advice service (AoE)**	#	382	213	175	66	**67**		287		
Performance remains broadly stable. Whilst demand remains significantly below the exceptionally high levels recorded in earlier reporting periods, activity is consistent with the equivalent quarter last year. This suggests that demand for energy advice services has stabilised following the elevated levels experienced during the cost-of-living and energy price crisis.											

Housing

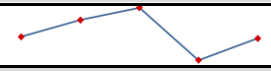
Measure ID	Measure name	Type	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Q4 25/26	Q1 26/27	Q2 26/27	Target	Average	Aim	Trend
HS-01	**% of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks** (or agreed extension)	%	86.6%	94.0%	100.0%	75.0%	**100.0%**	60%		↑	
This is a measure of the 'speed' of decision making, where for Major applications, government require 60% or above. Current performance exceeds government requirements at 100%.											
HS-02	**% of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks** (or agreed extension)	%	88.0%	89.0%	87.0%	77.4%	**84.5%**	70%		↑	
This is a measure of the 'speed' of decision making, where for Minor applications, government require 70% or above. Current performance exceeds government requirements at 84.5%.											
HS-03	**No. of planning enforcement actions taken- cases opened**	#	24	26	24	35	**20**		29		
This measure records the number of planning enforcement cases opened during the reporting period. Cases may arise from alleged breaches of planning control, untidy land complaints, or related enforcement matters. The figure is reported for monitoring purposes and is not a performance target. A figure of 20 is a reduction in comparison with last quarter.											
HS-04	**No. of planning enforcement actions taken- cases closed**	#	63	53	28	30	**38**		48		
This measure records the number of enforcement cases closed during the period, including those resolved through informal action, formal enforcement, prosecution, immunity, and closures under untidy land and anti-social behaviour powers.											
HS-05	**% of Building Control applications determined within 5 weeks** (or 8 weeks on agreement)	%	97.0%	95.0%	100.0%	100.0%	**90.0%**	85%		↑	
90% of building regulation applications decided in Q2 have been done so within statutory timescales. Statutory reports to the Building Safety Regulator provided.											
HS-06	**No. of households threatened with homelessness - preventions**	#	7	12	10	7	**13**		10	↑	
HS-07	**No. of households in temporary accommodation - snapshot**	#	26	37	30	37	**28**		32	↓	
The numbers in TA have decreased from last quarter due to a number of new build affordable homes coming through.											
HS-08	**Cost of B & B placements**	£	£46,503.28	£21,307.00	£44,073.00	£34,511.98	**£43,635.00**			↓	
Costs have increased as expenditure is apportioned across reporting periods for households that remain in accommodation beyond a single quarter. However, the number of households in accommodation at the end of each month have continued to decrease throughout the quarter.											

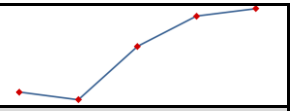
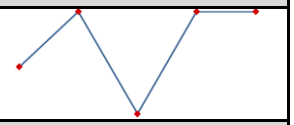
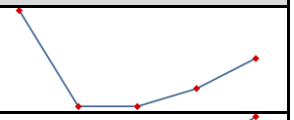
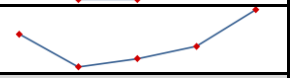
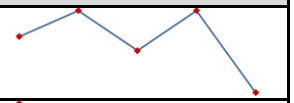
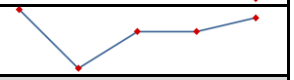
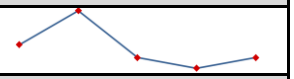
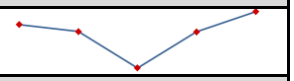
Community Safety

Measure ID	Measure name	Type	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Q4 25/26	Q1 26/27	Q2 26/27	Target	Average	Aim	Trend
CS-01	**No. of crimes recorded** (excluding ASB)	#	1418	1304	1222	1344	**978**		1335	↓	
Crime levels reported to NWCSP show reductions in crime across the majority of wards in Bromsgrove, with a few exceptions as detailed in report.											
CS-02	**ASB reports**	#	267	236	215	81	**219**		255	↓	
Within the NWCSP report, no significant ASB trends or drivers were identified in Bromsgrove during the quarter with ASB reports in Bromsgrove decreasing (- 4%) in Quarter 2 when compared with the same period in 2025/26. Also see text in report for further informaiton.											

there is a lag with this data as it is obtained using verified figures from Police.uk

Organisational Priorities

Measure ID	Measure name	Type	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Q4 25/26	Q1 26/27	Q2 26/27	Target	Average	Aim	Trend
OR-01	**Council Tax Collection Rate**	%	56.58%	85.00%	98.00%	28.55%	**56.16%**	56.63%		↑	
Council Tax collection is broadly in line with both target and historic performance. Collection at Quarter 2 is 56.16%, representing a variance of 0.47% below target and 0.38% below previous year averages.											
OR-02	**Business Rates Collection Rate**	%	56.82%	80.00%	97.00%	24.51%	**54.66%**	55.32%		↑	
Quarter 2 Business Rates collection is marginally below target, with collection of 54.66% against a target of 55.32%. Current performance remains within expected tolerances for this stage of the financial year.											

OR-03	**Housing Benefit: Speed of processing new claims**	# days	12	11	18	22	**23**	20			
New claim processing has increased slightly in quarter 2, July has caused this slight increase due to delays in receiving information for a couple of claims.											
OR-04	**Housing Benefit: Speed of processing change of circumstances**	# days	8	11	6	11	**11**	8			
Change of circumstance processing times remain stable at 11 days for quarter 2.											
OR-05	**Housing Benefit: Local Authority error rate**	%	0.16%	0.00%	0.00%	0.03%	**0.08%**	0.48%			
OR-06	**No. of complaints received**	#	33	25	27	30	**39**		24		
The number of complaints has increased, howver there is no specific service issue, event or underlying trend that has been identified as contributing to the increase.											
OR-07	**Average working days to respond to complaints**	# days	5	6	4	6	**2**	10			
OR-08	**% complaints answered within 10 days**	%	96.8%	84.0%	92.0%	92.0%	**95.0%**	95.0%			
All services compliant except for Bereavement/Crem (1 complaint) and Development Management (1 complaint)											
OR-09	**Staff turnover rates**	%	9.2%	12.4%	8.0%	7.0%	**8.0%**		14.5%		
The staff turnover figure for the 12-month to the end of Q2 has risen by 1% compared with Q1. This still remains below the national average staff turnover rate which is currently 13.4%. There are no clear indications that turnover is spiking in particular service areas or due to specific causes.											
OR-10	**Sickness absence - short & long term**	# days per FTE	3.2	3.0	2.0	3.0	**3.6**		9.4		
Q2 has seen an increase in sickness absence compared to Q1. This is largely attributed to higher short term sickness absence. Analysis is being undertaken to identify the main reasons for absence, service-level trends and any areas requiring targeted management action. Alongside this, work is underway to strengthen sickness absence reporting, including clearer identification of short and long-term cases, management trigger points and Return to Work compliance											

This page is intentionally left blank

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet

Wednesday 18 November 2026

Temporary Accommodation Policy

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Sue Baxter
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Judith Willis Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services
Report Author Maria Bailey	Job Title: Senior Housing Strategy Officer Contact email: maria.bailey@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 07768 307628	
Wards Affected		No specific ward relevance
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		Not Applicable
Relevant Council Priority		Housing
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 RESOLVE that: -

1) **The Bromsgrove District Council Temporary Accommodation Policy be adopted;**

2) **authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Community and Housing Services, following consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder, to update the policy in line with any legislative or good practice changes.**

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) has a legal duty to assess people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Where eligible, the Council must work with households to help prevent or relieve homelessness and, where required by law to provide suitable temporary accommodation.

2.2 The purpose of the temporary accommodation policy is to set out how Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (bdht), the organisation that delivers the Council's statutory homeless duties, will work towards ensuring that all temporary accommodation secured by or on behalf of the Council is appropriate to the needs and circumstances of each household, taking account of household composition, affordability, health and disability needs, location, safety, property condition, safeguarding risks, religious and cultural needs and the welfare of any children.

2.3 The Homelessness Code of Guidance states that any temporary accommodation secured under homelessness duties must be suitable for the applicant and everyone in their household, taking account of factors such as space, physical condition, affordability, location, medical needs, and risks such as violence or harassment. The policy provides guidance to officers on determining the suitability of temporary accommodation.

2.4 Government's National Plan to End Homelessness (2025) sets out national policy to improve the quality and suitability of temporary accommodation and to end the unlawful use of bed and breakfast for families except for very short emergency use.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

3.1 The Bromsgrove temporary accommodation policy will be implemented by bdht, delivering the Council's statutory homelessness duties alongside the Council's Strategic Housing Team and the Private Sector Housing Team.

3.2 The plan sets out specific actions regarding temporary accommodation and bed and breakfast:

- Setting a new target to eliminate the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for families, other than very short-term use in emergencies, by the end of the parliament (2029)
- Increasing the supply of good-quality temporary accommodation
- Improving experiences for people living in temporary accommodation, including action on standards, schooling, healthcare and out-of-area placements.

3.3 Bromsgrove District Council is committed to ensuring temporary accommodation used to relieve or prevent homelessness is suitable, safe and decent. Due to the increasing pressures of homelessness and demand for temporary accommodation, it has not always been possible to place households in self-contained, suitable temporary accommodation.

3.4 The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003 states: Use of bed and breakfast accommodation can only be provided to applicants with family commitments if no other accommodation is available and only for up to six weeks. Details of the Council's action plan to eliminate the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for families are detailed in Appendix 1 to the policy.

3.5 Bdht will work in partnership with the Council's Private Sector Housing Team to carry out quality and safety checks of temporary accommodation, using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System to identify any hazards.

3.6 The Housing Act 1996, was amended by the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, to require local housing authorities to take reasonable steps to notify relevant services when a child under 18 is placed in temporary accommodation following a homelessness application made on or after the 1st September 2026.

Where consent is given by the applicant, the following agencies will be notified:

- Registered GP practice,
- Health visiting service body for the child's local authority area,
- Appropriate authority of the child's school/college.

3.7 Bdht, on behalf of the Council, will seek to provide temporary accommodation within the local area wherever reasonably practicable, enabling households to remain close to schools, employment, caring responsibilities, medical services and support networks. Where this is not possible, decisions will be made carefully, transparently and with regard to the individual circumstances of the household. Appendix 2 of the policy provides guidance to officers to ensure any out of area placements are appropriate.

3.8 The purpose of the out of area guidance is to ensure that any out of area temporary accommodation placement made by bdht on behalf of the Council is lawful, suitable for the household, properly risk assessed, clearly recorded, communicated to the receiving authority, monitored and reviewed and is used only where accommodation within the District is not reasonably practicable.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Some of the cost of the provision of temporary accommodation to meet the Council's statutory homelessness duties is met through the Council's general fund, supported by the Government Revenue Support Grant.

4.2 Over the last four years, there has been an increasing demand to meet statutory homelessness duties for families due to significant demand for existing housing in Bromsgrove generally and an insufficient supply of new build accommodation and fewer lettings within social housing stock. This has led to increasing temporary accommodation placements.

4.3 Expensive Bed and Breakfast accommodation use for families has increased. However, concerted action to reduce duration of stay in Bed and Breakfast accommodation for all household types has led to a reduction in costs in the period 2025/26, compared to the previous year. In total, 80% of Bed and Breakfast costs are borne by the local authority. A key aim of the policy is to reduce the use of Bed and Breakfast temporary accommodation which will lead to reduced costs to the Council.

Use of B&B and Other Nightly Paid Temporary Accommodation for Families				
Year	**22/23**	**23/24**	**24/25**	**25/26**
All temporary accommodation placements	26	49	39	53
B&B / Other Nightly Paid Temporary Accommodation placements	4	12	15	24
Percentage	**15.4%**	**24.5%**	**38.5%**	**45%**

Cost of B&B and Other Nightly Paid Temporary Accommodation for all Household Types				
Year	**22/23**	**23/24**	**24/25**	**25/26**
Costs	£59,105.36	£86,042.36	145,676.46	£105,783.05

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This policy supports compliance with part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, as amended, and the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003. It also supports good practice in line with the Homelessness Code of Guidance and the implementation of national policy.

5.2 The Housing Act 1996 sets out the local authority's statutory duty to provide emergency accommodation where there is reason to believe that the person is considered to be eligible, homeless and in priority need.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

6.1 The policy meets the Government's requirement that local authorities continue to deliver high quality and sustainable services for residents during local government reorganisation.

Relevant Council Priority

6.2 The temporary accommodation policy positively impacts:

- Housing

Climate Change Implications

6.3 Whilst the Temporary Accommodation Policy is primarily designed to fulfil the Council's statutory homelessness duties, there are some indirect positive climate change implications. The policy supports the use of accommodation within the local area wherever reasonably practicable, helping to minimise travel requirements for households accessing employment, education, healthcare and support services.

6.4 The policy's focus on securing suitable, safe and decent accommodation may also contribute to wider objectives relating to energy efficiency, affordable warmth and reducing fuel poverty. Overall, the policy is considered to have a minor positive contribution towards the Council's wider climate change objectives, although no significant direct climate impacts are anticipated.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.5 To better understand the implications of the adoption of this policy for people and groups with protected characteristics, an Equality Impact Needs Assessment (EINA) has been completed and is attached to this report at Appendix 2

6.6 In summary, homelessness applicant data, when compared to the demographics of people living in the Bromsgrove District Council area, shows some groups with protected characteristics are overrepresented.

6.7 For example, in terms of age, young people between the ages of 16 and 24 made up 8.5% of the Bromsgrove District Council population (2021). However they represented 24% of all homeless applicants in 2025/26. Children may also be overrepresented in homelessness statistics. In total, 28.7% of the population of the Bromsgrove District Council area are households with dependent children, however 37% of homelessness applicants are households with dependent children.

6.8 The inclusion of the EINA demonstrates consideration of the needs of residents disproportionately affected by homelessness. The EINA identifies a number of groups that may experience greater

disadvantage and sets out measures to promote fair access to suitable temporary accommodation.

6.9 From an equality perspective, the policy is expected to have a positive impact by supporting equitable access to services and considering individual needs when determining accommodation. No significant adverse equality impacts have been identified. Ongoing monitoring and review of the actions identified within the EINA will help ensure the policy continues to meet the needs of all residents.

Community Impact Implications

6.10 The aim of the temporary accommodation policy is to provide a consistent service to people with the most difficult housing circumstances. Where a duty to relieve or prevent homelessness exists, this policy sets out a commitment that temporary accommodation will be suitable, safe and decent.

6.11 Following the completion of an EINA some groups with protected characteristics were identified as being overrepresented within homelessness. Monitoring of people's experience of temporary accommodation and learning from the feedback has been incorporated in the policy.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 As well as driving the provision of good quality, suitable temporary accommodation for eligible homeless applicants, the policy also serves to protect Council budgets from potentially increasing costs of providing

temporary accommodation by reducing the use of expensive Bed and Breakfast accommodation.

7.2 The policy provides guidance in line with the law and good practice, mitigating reputational and financial risk of legal action.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Bromsgrove District Council Temporary Accommodation Policy

Appendix 2 – Temporary Accommodation Policy Equality Impact Needs Assessment

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Sue Baxter Portfolio Holder for Housing	22/10/2026
Assistant Director	Judith Willis Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services	13/10/2026
Financial Services	James Walton, S. 151 Officer	20/10/2026
Legal and Democratic Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor Governance and Jess Bayley-Hill, Principal Democratic Services Officer	28/10/2026
Climate Change Officer (if climate change implications apply)	Matt Bough, Strategic Housing and Business Support Manager	22/10/2026

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet **Wednesday 18 November 2026**

Temporary Accommodation Policy

Bromsgrove District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

Contents Page

1.0	Introduction and Purpose	2
2.0	Legal Framework	2
3.0	National Policy	3
4.0	Scope of the Policy	4
5.0	Types of Temporary Accommodation	4
6.0	Access to Temporary Accommodation	5
7.0	Support in Temporary Accommodation	5
8.0	Temporary Property Condition	5
9.0	Suitability Assessment	7
10.0	B&B and Emergency Accommodation	9
11.0	Notification Process	10
12.0	Out of Area Placements	11
13.0	Outside Local Authority Placements	12
14.0	Applicant Responsibilities	13
15.0	Offer of Temporary Accommodation	14
16.0	Refusal or Failure to Occupy Accommodation	14
17.0	Affordability	15
18.0	Occupancy Terms and Applicant Responsibilities	16
19.0	Storage	17
20.0	Monitoring, Governance and Policy Review	17
Appendix 1 - Bed and Breakfast Elimination Plan		15
Appendix 2 - Out of Area Placement Assessment		22

Review and Revision History

Version	Date	Summary of Changes	Effective Date	Next Review Date	Reviewed By	Approved By
1.0						

1.0 Introduction and Purpose

Temporary accommodation is an essential safeguard for households who would otherwise be homeless. The use of temporary accommodation should be a short-term remedy, ensuring people are safe and can continue essential life activities, preferably within a locality they know and where they are supported.

Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) is committed to ensuring temporary accommodation used to relieve or prevent homelessness is suitable, safe and decent. Due to the increasing pressures of homelessness and demand for temporary accommodation, it has not always been possible to place households in self-contained temporary accommodation.

The purpose of this policy is to set out how bdht, the organisation that delivers the Council's statutory homeless duties, will work towards ensuring that all temporary accommodation secured by or on behalf of the Council is appropriate to the needs and circumstances of each household, taking account of household composition, affordability, health and disability needs, location, safety, property condition, safeguarding risks, religious and cultural needs and the welfare of any children.

Bdht, on behalf of the Council, will seek to provide accommodation within the local area wherever reasonably practicable, enabling households to remain close to schools, employment, caring responsibilities, medical services and support networks. Where this is not possible, decisions will be made carefully, transparently and with regard to the individual circumstances of the household.

2.0 Legal Framework

Bromsgrove District Council has a legal duty to assess people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Where eligible, the Council must work with households to help prevent or relieve homelessness and, where required by law to provide suitable temporary accommodation. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 strengthened these duties by requiring councils to offer support to all eligible households at an earlier stage, helping to prevent homelessness wherever possible

The Homelessness Code of Guidance states that any temporary accommodation secured under homelessness duties must be suitable for the applicant and everyone

in their household, taking account of factors such as space, physical condition, affordability, location, medical needs, and risks such as violence or harassment.

It also states that, wherever reasonably practicable, accommodation should be secured within the authority's own district, and authorities should consider the impact of location on employment, education, caring responsibilities, and access to support networks and essential services

The Code makes clear that bed and breakfast accommodation should be used only as a last resort, for the shortest possible time, and that it is generally not suitable for families with children or pregnant women except in an emergency and then for no more than six weeks.

3.0 National Policy

The National Plan to End Homelessness (2025) sets out national policy to improve the quality and suitability of temporary accommodation, to end the unlawful use of bed and breakfast for families except for very short emergency use and ensure that emergency provision does not become a long-term substitute for settled housing. This policy sets out how the Council will continue to work to deliver national policy objectives with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The Plan sets out specific actions regarding temporary accommodation and bed and breakfast:

- Setting a new target to eliminate the use of bed and breakfast for families, other than very short-term use in emergencies, by the end of the parliament (2029)

- Increasing the supply of good-quality temporary accommodation

- Improving experience for people living in temporary accommodation, including action on standards, schooling, healthcare and out-of-area placements

A key principle underpinning the Plan is the shift from crisis management to prevention-led services, including support services that address the wider causes of

homelessness such as poverty, domestic abuse and poor mental health. The approach also prioritises partnership working between housing, health, social care, and voluntary sector organisations to deliver more integrated and person-centred support

4.0 Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all temporary accommodation secured by bdht, on behalf of the Council, for households who are homeless or otherwise require accommodation under the Council's homelessness duties or discretionary powers. It also applies to a range of accommodation types, including Council-owned or managed property, leased accommodation, property provided by a registered provider, nightly paid accommodation, supported accommodation, hostels, hotels and bed and breakfast accommodation.

The policy covers how temporary accommodation will be allocated, assessed for suitability, managed, reviewed and brought to an end. It applies to all applicants and household members placed in temporary accommodation and to bdht and Council officers, accommodation providers and partner agencies involved in delivering or supporting temporary accommodation services.

5.0 Types of Temporary Accommodation

BDC contracts with Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (bdht) to deliver homelessness statutory services. As part of the agreement, bdht make available dispersed properties from their own stock for temporary accommodation. In addition, BDC pay for a number of static temporary properties, including two safe properties, in line with the definition in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. In addition, the Council leases a crash pad emergency accommodation with a specialist supported housing provider for 16 and 17 year olds.

At times when demand outstrips supply, emergency bed and breakfast and other nighty paid type accommodation with shared facilities is utilised to ensure households do not experience rooflessness. However, all other options are considered before using this type of expensive and inappropriate accommodation.

Demand for adapted and accessible temporary accommodation properties is increasing. Currently, these types of properties are unlikely to be available at the point of demand. Bdht currently has one fully adapted property and is looking to increase the number of properties suitable for households with physical and sensory disabilities and work closely with social care to support people to access specialised equipment.

6.0 Access to Temporary Accommodation

Temporary accommodation will be provided to households who are homeless, fleeing violence or domestic abuse, or otherwise require accommodation while bdht makes homelessness enquiries or carries out its duties. This may include emergency or interim accommodation, accommodation during the relief duty where appropriate or accommodation pending review or appeal where the Council has discretion to provide it. Officers will assess the household's circumstances, including household composition, vulnerability, medical needs, disability, pregnancy, children, safeguarding concerns, affordability and any risks associated with location.

7.0 Support in Temporary Accommodation

The 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act introduced a duty to assess the support needs of all homelessness applicants. BDC will review all existing partnerships with the voluntary and community and statutory sector partners with the aim of ensuring appropriate support is available when needed for people in temporary accommodation. People will be supported to sustain their accommodation and to move-on in a planned and sustainable manner.

BDC will continue to review the current provision of tailored support for particularly vulnerable groups, such as people who have been sleeping rough for a long time and find sustaining a home challenging.

8.0 Temporary Property Condition

Bdht will provide suitable temporary accommodation, on behalf of BDC, to meet statutory housing duties. Temporary accommodation used, including bed and

breakfast accommodation will be safe and decent. BDC plans to ensure the amount and type of temporary accommodation available, adequately meets all needs, meaning the use of unsuitable bed and breakfast accommodation will be eliminated in all but emergency situations and for short periods of time. Details of the action plan to eliminate the use of bed and breakfast are detailed in **appendix 1.** Until the plan is fully realised, action will focus on ensuring any bed and breakfast or other nightly paid temporary accommodation used is safe and decent.

The Council will seek to ensure that temporary accommodation, including bed and breakfast accommodation, is safe and suitable for the household placed there, having regard to the statutory requirements relating to the suitability of temporary accommodation. Where temporary accommodation has been secured on an emergency basis and it has not been practicable to inspect the accommodation prior to placement, the Private Sector Housing Team may undertake an inspection following placement where this is considered necessary. The properties will be inspected using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to assess housing conditions and identify hazards.

Where an inspection identifies a Category 1 hazard, the Private Sector Housing Team will notify the Housing Options Team and take appropriate action in accordance with the Housing Act 2004 and the Council's enforcement policy. The Private Sector Housing team in conjunction with Housing Options will consider whether the accommodation remains suitable for the household and whether alternative accommodation is required. Where conditions present an immediate risk to the health or safety of the household, urgent action will be taken, and the household will not be expected to remain in accommodation which is unsafe.

Where temporary accommodation is located outside the Council's administrative area, Housing Options will remain responsible for considering the suitability of the accommodation for the household placed there. Housing Options will liaise with the local authority for the area in which the accommodation is situated and, where appropriate, request that the relevant housing enforcement team undertake an inspection or provide information regarding the condition of the accommodation. Any

necessary enforcement action under the Housing Act 2004 will be a matter for the relevant local housing authority. Information obtained will be taken into account by Housing Options when determining whether the accommodation remains suitable and whether its continued use for temporary accommodation is appropriate.

The Housing Options Team will check the relevant Council's public HMO register to establish whether the temporary accommodation is appropriately licensed. Where there is uncertainty regarding whether a property is a HMO, whether it requires a licence, or whether it complies with the applicable housing standards, the Housing Options team will liaise with the relevant Private Sector Housing Team. Temporary accommodation in which a Category 1 hazard has been identified will not be used for further placements until appropriate action has been taken to remove or reduce the hazard and the Private Sector Housing Team is satisfied that the accommodation is suitable for further use.

For temporary accommodation located within the Council's administrative area, the Private Sector Housing Team will undertake a programme of inspections at intervals determined according to risk. Inspections may also be undertaken in response to complaints, information received concerning property conditions, significant changes in the use or condition of the accommodation, or other concerns which indicate that an inspection is required.

Temporary accommodation allocations will be assessed against specific suitability criteria, in the form of a checklist. The housing options team will match the needs of a homeless household with temporary accommodation options. Unsafe and non-decent temporary accommodation will not be used to house people temporarily, even on an emergency basis.

9.0 Suitability Assessment

Temporary accommodation will be allocated based on a suitability assessment. Homelessness case management will include an accommodation suitability check before a temporary accommodation offer is made. Offers of suitable temporary

accommodation can only be made with a full understanding of the applicant and their household's circumstances and needs.

Bdht housing options team will have regard to the following aspects of temporary accommodation before making an offer:

- **Suitable for the applicant** and **anyone who might reasonably be expected to live with them,** including medical, disability and vulnerability need, children, pregnancy, cultural and religious needs and safeguarding
- Can the household live **safely and with dignity** within the space and the layout
- **Location of the accommodation**, suitability includes the distance from the authority's district, disruption to employment, education and caring responsibilities, access to medical treatment, support networks, local services, amenities and transport
- **Statutory overcrowding** space and room layout
- **National minimum room sizes in HMO or shared accommodation**
- **Bathroom and toilet facilities**, are they adequate for the whole household including children, disabled applicants or people with health conditions
- **Kitchen and cooking facilities**, does the household have access to proper cooking, food storage and washing facilities, and whether shared arrangements are realistic and safe for the household.
- **Physical condition and repair**, including damp, mould, leaks, structural problems, infestation, broken windows/locks, heating issues, and general disrepair.
- **Health and safety risks**, does the property present hazards to occupiers. In practice this includes fire risks, unsafe electrics, gas safety issues and carbon monoxide risks.
- **Fire safety and means of escape,** especially in shared accommodation, hostels and HMOs
- Whether the property is **properly licensed if it is an HMO**
- **Physical access** to and around the home, including steps, lifts, corridor widths, access to upper floors, and whether the household can actually enter, move around and use the property safely.

- **Adaptations and specialist features**, including level-access showers, grab rails, wheelchair circulation space, visual or hearing adaptations, and any other modifications needed because of disability, sensory impairment or mobility difficulties.
- **Outdoor space / garden access**, where relevant to the household's needs. The Code says access to a garden may need to be considered for some households, particularly where disability, children's needs or health issues make this important
- **Security of the property**, including secure doors/windows, communal access arrangements, and whether the accommodation protects the household from known risks. This is particularly important where there are safeguarding concerns or domestic abuse issues.
- **How long the household is likely to remain there**, because a property that is tolerable for a night or two may become unsuitable if the placement continues.

Bdht housing options team will be sensitive to the importance of pets and will aim to keep people and their pets together in temporary accommodation, wherever possible. Pets will be considered as part of the suitability of temporary accommodation assessment. The housing options team will avoid creating barriers to homelessness assistance and will consider whether separation from pets will adversely affect people's wellbeing and mental health. Bdht, on behalf of BDC, is unable to take responsibility for housing pets, where allocated temporary accommodation cannot safely accommodate them. Bdht housing options team will provide advice and support to help people make alternative arrangements for their pets

10.0 B&B and Emergency Accommodation

The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003 says that B&B accommodation is generally not suitable for applicants with family commitments, except where no other accommodation is available and then only for a period (or total periods) not exceeding 6 weeks. The order defines B&B

accommodation as accommodation that is not self-contained and where a toilet, washing or cooking facilities are shared by more than one household.

The Council aims to eliminate the use of this type of temporary accommodation for households with children and pregnant women. If this type of accommodation is used in an emergency, stays will be for no longer than 6 weeks.

11.0 Notification Process

Where bdht secures accommodation for occupation by a child in response to a homelessness application the following process will be followed. The housing options team will ask the parent (or, for a 16- or 17-year-old living independently who is themselves the applicant, the young person) whether they consent to the authority notifying the relevant bodies. If the person, or the young person agrees, the housing options team must ask for the information needed to identify the bodies.

If consent is given, the housing options team will take reasonable steps to notify each relevant body immediately, with a time limit of up to 14 days. The “relevant bodies” are the child’s:

- Registered GP practice,
- Health visiting service body for the child’s local authority area,
- Appropriate authority of the child’s school/college.

Notification is designed to support earlier, more joined-up intervention to avoid negative outcomes for children. Notifications should be made on the same day, or as soon as possible to enable prompt support for children.

Notification will be an integral task within the homelessness case management process. Records will be maintained to enable management oversight and scrutiny. Time taken to notify will be monitored and reported quarterly, as part of the bdht service level agreement. A target will be set, above which bdht will provide an action plan to bring performance within acceptable levels.

Monitoring will include:

- number of applicable cases,

- proportion where agreement was sought,
- proportion where agreement was obtained,
- proportion notified within 14 days,
- average time to school notification, and
- proportion of out-of-area placements where section 208 notice was also sent

12.0 Out of Area Placements

The Council will, wherever possible, seek to place homeless households within the Bromsgrove District area, except where there are clear benefits for the person seeking assistance (for example, in cases of domestic abuse). When making a placement out of area, the housing options team will seek to minimise disruption to health services, education and vital support networks.

Out of area placements will not be used as a default response to homelessness pressures. Bdht will seek to secure accommodation within the Bromsgrove District wherever reasonably practicable, in line with section 208 of the Housing Act 1996.

Out of area placements will only be considered where:

- there is n**o suitable accommodation available locally -** where there is no available temporary accommodation, supported housing, refuge, adapted accommodation, or affordable private rented accommodation in Bromsgrove District Council area.
- **the household requires specialist provision unavailable locally -** this may include refuge accommodation, mental health supported housing, young person provision, substance misuse support, or accommodation for people with complex needs
- **there are safety reasons for placing outside the district -** for example, domestic abuse, exploitation, harassment, gang-related risk, safeguarding concerns, or risk from a perpetrator
- **the household requests or agrees to an out of area placement - t**he household's preference should be recorded but consent alone does not remove the Council's duty to assess suitability
- **the placement is temporary and there is a clear plan to move the household back or on to settled accommodation -** accommodation that

may be suitable for a short interim period may not necessarily be suitable for a longer placement

Bdht housing options team will complete a written suitability assessment before making an out of area placement and will complete the Out of Area Placements Assessment, (**appendix 2**). The Council will ensure risks to people, moving from their settled location are minimised and people are supported to manage any remaining risks. The assessment will be signed by the housing options team and supported by a housing options senior officer before the placement is made.

Bdht housing options team will maintain good communication throughout the placement and keep suitability under review. The Out of Area Placement Assessment will be updated where a household's circumstances change, and the assessment will be checked by a housing options team manager. Immediate action will be taken to find alternative accommodation where risks to the household are unmanaged.

Where placements are made outside the area, bdht housing options team will ensure they comply with Section 208 of the Housing Act 1996 to provide notification to a receiving authority. This task will be completed as soon as possible and within 14 days. Bdht housing options team will engage with the receiving authority, where necessary, to minimise disruption and promote the welfare of any children.

13.0 Outside Local Authority Placements

When bdht receives a section 208 notification that another local authority has placed a homeless family in the Bromsgrove District Council area, bdht will record the placement, screen for immediate housing condition and any safeguarding risks and coordinate relevant local services. Bdht will maintain clear homelessness duty boundaries with the placing authority.

Bdht will check that the notification contains the statutory information required by section 208 of the Housing Act 1996, including:

- Names and dates of birth of children

- Household contact details, where consent permits
- Landlord or accommodation-provider details
- Rent charged
- Any financial incentive paid to the landlord
- Whether the accommodation is temporary accommodation
- Whether any children require school places
- Whether any children have education, health and care plans
- Whether the household has registered with a GP
- Expected duration of the placement, if known
- Placing-authority housing options team and emergency contact details

If any information is missing, bdht will follow up with the placing authority. The duty to ensure the placement is suitable remains with the placing authority. If bdht is aware of any hazards relating to the property, the placing authority will be informed, and the BDC Private Sector Housing Team will be asked to inspect. Bdht will communicate the outcome of the inspection to the placing authority.

Bdht will provide the household with an information pack, including:

- How to report a housing-condition concern
- Children’s services and safeguarding contacts
- School admissions
- GP and health-service registration
- Local welfare assistance and housing advice
- Domestic abuse support
- Emergency and out-of-hours contacts
- Confirmation that placement and accommodation queries should be directed to the placing authority

14.0 Applicant Responsibilities

Applicants must provide accurate information, tell the Council about any changes in circumstances, engage with the homelessness process, comply with licence or occupancy conditions, and pay any required accommodation charges.

15.0 Offer of Temporary Accommodation

An offer of temporary accommodation will be made clearly and in writing. The applicant will be given a written offer explaining:

- the accommodation address and type
- why the Council considers it suitable
- the date and time they are expected to occupy
- rent, service charges and Housing Benefit/Universal Credit implications
- who to contact with questions
- the consequences of refusing or failing to occupy
- any right to request a review of suitability, where applicable

16.0 Refusal or Failure to Occupy Accommodation

Where an applicant refuses an offer of temporary accommodation, fails to occupy accommodation made available to them or leaves temporary accommodation without agreement, bdht will make reasonable enquiries to establish the reasons before deciding what action to take. Bdht will consider whether the accommodation was suitable for the applicant and all members of their household, whether the applicant understood the offer and the consequences of refusal, and whether any vulnerability, disability, medical need, safeguarding concern, domestic abuse risk, language barrier or other relevant circumstance affected the applicant’s decision or ability to occupy.

The applicant will be given 5 working days in which to respond to a request to explain why the accommodation was refused or the applicant and their household did not move in. Bdht housing options team will ensure they make all reasonable adjustments for vulnerable applicants, to ensure the applicant understands the offer and the consequences of refusal or failure to occupy. This may mean involving a third party advocate or support. Where bdht, on behalf of the Council, accepts the

reasons raised by the applicant, alternative temporary accommodation will be identified.

If an applicant wishes to request a review of interim accommodation, provided while the housing options team makes enquiries regarding the homelessness application, they will need to seek a judicial review in the High Court. Applicants can request a statutory review of the suitability of temporary accommodation, where a main housing duty is owed. A housing options senior officer will review issues raised by the applicant in the first instance.

Where bdht is satisfied that the accommodation offered was suitable and that the applicant has refused the offer without good reason, bdht housing options team will confirm that the temporary accommodation duty has ended. The applicant will be notified of this decision in writing.

A decision to treat an offer as refused and the homeless duty as discharged will be confirmed in writing. The letter will include:

- what was offered;
- why it was considered suitable;
- what the applicant said or failed to do;
- what enquiries the Council made;
- what vulnerability, equality, safeguarding or children's welfare issues were considered;
- the legal consequence of the refusal or failure to occupy;
- review rights, where applicable;
- advice and assistance available.

17.0 Affordability

Applicants placed in temporary accommodation will be responsible for paying any rent, service charge or personal contribution not met by Housing Benefit or Universal

Credit. Bdht, on behalf of the Council, will provide clear information about charges, payment methods, benefit claims and the consequences of rent arrears. Where an applicant falls into arrears, the bdht housing options team will seek to engage with them at an early stage to understand the reasons for non-payment and provide appropriate advice or support. Regard will be given to households with children, pregnant applicants, vulnerable adults, care leavers, people experiencing domestic abuse and applicants with additional support needs.

Bdht, on behalf of the Council will ensure that temporary accommodation provided or secured under its homelessness duties is affordable for the applicant and their household. In assessing affordability, the bdht housing options team will consider the total housing costs associated with the accommodation, including rent, service charges, utility costs where applicable, and any shortfall between eligible housing costs and the amount met through Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. Accommodation will not be considered suitable if the household cannot reasonably afford to occupy it, taking account of their income, benefits, essential expenditure, debts, household composition and any additional costs arising from disability, health needs, caring responsibilities or other relevant circumstances.

18.0 Occupancy Terms and Applicant Responsibilities

The occupancy agreement will be written in plain English and be clear the accommodation is provided on a temporary basis for the purpose of meeting the Council's statutory homelessness duties. It will include the start date, property address, rent and service charges and how to report repairs. Where there are barriers to understanding the terms of the agreement, for example a language barrier, the bdht housing options team will make arrangements to arrange translation.

The agreement will explain what happens if the applicant abandons or refuses to occupy the property and how the agreement can be brought to an end. It will also include how applicants can raise complaints or request advice.

The applicant will be responsible for occupying the accommodation as their only or principal home and paying rent, service charges and any other payments related to

the accommodation. Applicants must report repairs as soon as they become aware of them and follow rules relating to the accommodation, for example behaviour, visitors or paying for damage caused.

Interim accommodation provided while the housing options team complete their enquiries is excluded from the Protection from Eviction Act 1977. Where no further housing duty is owed applicants will be provided with reasonable notice to leave. Applicants in temporary accommodation, where a main housing duty is owed, are protected by tenancy law.

19.0 Storage

A local housing authority must take reasonable steps to protect a homeless applicant's personal property where the authority has reason to believe there is a danger of loss of, or damage to, the applicant's personal property and the danger arises because the applicant is unable to protect or deal with the property themselves or where no other suitable arrangements have been, or are being, made and the authority has become subject to one of the relevant homelessness duties under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. This can apply when someone is placed in temporary accommodation. The duty covers the applicant's personal property, and also the personal property of anyone who might reasonably be expected to live with them, such as household members included in the homelessness application.

20.0 Monitoring, Governance and Policy Review

The BDC Strategic Housing Services Manager and the Cabinet Member for Planning and Strategic Housing are responsible for oversight of this policy and the Head of Sustainable Homes at bdht is responsible for day to day operational leadership. Leaders will provide assurance, through regular monitoring and reporting of adherence to the Homelessness Code of Guidance in the provision, allocation and management of temporary accommodation.

Data relating to temporary accommodation use and experience will be collected and analysed in relation to people with protected characteristics. Data will be made available to decision makers for consideration and action.

Document Control

Policy Title	BDC Temporary Accommodation Policy
Policy Owner	Matthew Bough - BDC Strategic Housing Services Manager
Responsible Officer	Maria Bailey - Senior Housing Strategy Officer
Approval	Cabinet
Date Approved	
Next Review	
Review Frequency	
Equality Impact Assessment	

Appendix 1

Bed and Breakfast Elimination Plan

Introduction

Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) is committed to ensuring temporary accommodation used to relieve or prevent homelessness is suitable, safe and decent. Due to the increasing pressures of homelessness and demand for temporary accommodation, it has not always been possible to place households in self-contained, suitable temporary accommodation.

Legal Framework, Suitable Accommodation

Legislation is clear that the use of bed and breakfast type accommodation for families over 6 weeks is not suitable. BDC acknowledges the need to move to a position, in a timely manner, where families will only be temporarily housed in this type of accommodation for a short period of time and only in an emergency.

Legislation states that accommodation provided to meet the Council's statutory duty to provide interim or temporary accommodation must be suitable. The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003: Use of B&B, states, bed and breakfast accommodation can only be provided to applicants with family commitments if no other accommodation is available and only for up to six weeks.

In addition, the Housing Act 1996, s.208, requires that 'so far as reasonably practicable, a local housing authority shall in discharging their housing functions.… secure that accommodation is available … in their district'

What is Bed and Breakfast Type Accommodation

The statutory definition of bed and breakfast is laid out in the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003. Bed and breakfast accommodation is accommodation that is not self-contained and where either,

cooking facilities are not provided, or a toilet, washing facilities, or cooking facilities are shared between more than one household. It excludes accommodation owned or managed by a local authority, a registered provider, or certain voluntary organisations. In addition to B&B accommodation this plan also covers, the use of nightly paid accommodation with shared facilities, procured on a nightly-rate basis from a private provider.

Trends in the Use of Bed and Breakfast Type Accommodation

Over the last four years, the use of this type of temporary accommodation has increased for BDC. This is due to the increasing demand to meet statutory homelessness duties for families, significant demand for existing housing in Bromsgrove generally and an insufficient supply of new build accommodation and fewer lettings within social housing stock.

However, following recent action to increase access to self-contained temporary accommodation and the completion of new housing developments increasing permanent housing for homelessness applicants and providing more churn through existing stock, there has been success in shortening the duration of stay and consequently reducing the annual costs of B&B.

This plan builds on those successes.

Use of B&B and Other Nightly Paid Temporary Accommodation for Families				
Year	**22/23**	**23/24**	**24/25**	**25/26**
All temporary accommodation placements	26	49	39	53
B&B / Other Nightly Paid Temporary Accommodation placements	4	12	15	24
Percentage	**15.4%**	**24.5%**	**38.5%**	**45%**

Duration of Stay in B&B and Other Nightly Paid Temporary Accommodation for Families				
Year	**22/23**	**23/24**	**24/25**	**25/26**
B&B and Other Nightly Paid Temporary Accommodation up to 42 days (6 weeks)	4	12	15	24
Duration 43-84 days	1	6	2	6
Duration 85 days+	1	0	5	3
Percentage, 43 Days or Over (Over 6 weeks)	**50**	**50**	**46.6**	**37.5**

Cost of B&B and Other Nightly Paid Temporary Accommodation for all Household Types				
Year	**22/23**	**23/24**	**24/25**	**25/26**
Costs	£59,105.36	£86,042.36	145,676.46	£105,783.05

Social Housing Lettings (LAHS)				
Year	**22/23**	**23/24**	**24/25**	**25/26**
Costs	330	321	281	333

Action Plan to Eliminate the Use of B&B Type Temporary Accommodation

Given the continued national policy context, BDC will eliminate the use of B&B accommodation for homeless families over 6 weeks by 2029. The action plan will continue to build on successes already achieved, working closely with our partner, bdht; a registered provider of housing with contractual responsibilities for BDC homelessness and housing solutions statutory services.

Objectives

1. Increase the supply of temporary housing for families
2. Continue to review the quality of temporary accommodation
3. Review homelessness workflow processes to avoid B&B placements for families over 6 weeks

Objective 1 – Increase the Supply of Temporary Accommodation for Families				
	Action	**Year**	**Milestone**	**Measure of Success**
1	Use receipts from the sale of properties to increase the supply of temporary accommodation for families	1	Develop management agreement with registered provider partner	• Officers have the processes, systems and resources in place to utilise accommodation for temporary accommodation as soon as it is purchased in years 2 and 3.
		2	Use low cost housing receipts to purchase 4 existing properties on the open market or s. 106 properties	• 4 additional properties are available for use as temporary accommodation for homeless families. • Homelessness data shows B&B use for families over 6 weeks is reducing year on year. • B&B costs for families reduce year on year. • Additional low cost housing receipts are available to purchase a further property in year 3
		3	Use low cost housing receipts to purchase 1 existing property on the open market or s. 106 property.	• 1 additional property is available for use as temporary accommodation for homeless families. • Homelessness data shows B&B use for families is reduced to short-term, emergency use only • B&B costs for families reduce year on year.

Objective 2 – Continue to Review the Quality of Temporary Accommodation				
	Action	**Year**	**Milestone**	**Measure of Success**
1	Review, and improve where necessary, the quality of temporary accommodation	1	Establish processes for assessing the quality of temporary accommodation using a range of measures.	A system for gathering and analysing feedback from families using temporary accommodation is in place. An agreed bdht void and letting standard for temporary accommodation is in place. A register is developed to record inspections of all B&B and other nightly paid accommodation before use for emergency homelessness relief and at least once per year.
		2 & 3	Analyse feedback and develop an action plan, where necessary, for improvements.	Feedback is gathered and analysed quarterly, with recommendations where necessary and reported to the BDC Strategic Housing Services Manager. Actions are allocated to key officers, and implementation is overseen by the BDC Strategic Housing Services Manager

Objective 3 – Homelessness Workflow Processes Designed to Avoid B&B Placements for Families over 6 Weeks				
	Action	**Year**	**Milestone**	**Measure of Success**
1	Review and implement changes to the homelessness workflow to avoid B&B placements over 6 weeks for families	1	Develop management oversight processes for B&B use for families	Processes for oversight have been reviewed and updated, where necessary, to enable effective and efficient management of placements out of emergency use B&B. A dashboard is developed to track each placement in B&B and allow timely action to be taken to manage placements out of B&B. Key staff understand new systems and have the resources to provide intensive management of placements out of B&B
		2 & 3	Implement new processes and continue to review effectiveness.	Homelessness data shows a reduction in the duration of stay for families in B&B Homelessness data shows people fleeing domestic abuse are not placed in B&B A senior officer signs off all B&B placements for families Our portfolio of bdht temporary accommodation will be prioritised for those in B&B when it becomes available.

Risks to Successful Delivery of the Action Plan

Challenges	Mitigation
Homeless family demand continues to rise.	Focus on homelessness prevention, for example debt advice and support for mortgagees and private tenants
Temporary housing does not meet the size needs of homeless families, for example larger families and those with requirements for additional bedrooms.	Assess needs and project the type and size of temporary housing required by homeless families to support the purchase of appropriate properties.
Permanent and temporary housing does not meet standards for those with a physical / sensory disability.	We will aim to ensure that some TA units meet the needs of those with mobility issues. Triage people, living as part of a family unit, who are unable to return home from hospital as early as possible to enable the identification of suitable temporary accommodation
Resource capacity to enable oversight and action to deliver the plan is not available	Consider additional resources to fund additional temporary accommodation staff, including visiting officers

Appendix 2

Out of Area Placement Assessment

1. Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to ensure that any out of area placement made by bdht on behalf of Bromsgrove District Council is lawful, suitable for the household, properly risk assessed, clearly recorded, communicated to the receiving authority, monitored and reviewed and is used only where accommodation within the district is not reasonably practicable.

This guide applies to placements made outside of Bromsgrove District where the Council is securing accommodation under homelessness duties for temporary accommodation.

Suitability Assessment Before Placement *Before any out of area placement is made, officers should complete a written suitability assessment. The assessment should consider the applicant and **all household members**. Assessments must be recorded.*		
	Household Composition	
	Household size	
	Number and ages of children	
	Pregnancy	
	Caring responsibilities	
	Disabilities	
	Health conditions	
	Need for adapted property	
	Pets	
	Location	
	Distance from Bromsgrove	
	Access to employment	
	Access to schools and childcare	
	Access to medical treatment	
	Access to social care	
	Access to support networks	
	Transport links and affordability	
	Impact on children's education	
	Impact on existing support plans	
	Health and Disability	
	Mobility needs	
	Physical access	
	Kitchen and bathroom access	
	Sensory impairment	
	Mental health	
	Continuity of treatment	
	Distance from GP, hospital, community mental health team, medication, or therapy	

	Safety and Safeguarding	
	Domestic abuse risk	
	Child safeguarding concerns	
	Adult safeguarding risks	
	Risk of exploitation	
	Hate crime or harassment	
	Risk from known individuals in the receiving area	
	Should the location remain confidential	
	Affordability	
	Rent and service charge	
	Benefit entitlement	
	Shortfall risk	
	Travel costs	
	Food and utility costs	
	Cost of maintaining employment and education	
	Property Condition	
	Gas, electrical and fire safety	
	Licensing requirements, where applicable	
	Overcrowding	
	Furniture and facilities	
	Access arrangements	
	Suitability for children or vulnerable adults	

Out of Area Suitability Assessment Outcome	
	Yes or No
Is an out of area placement suitable for the household	
Is the proposed property suitable for the household	
Provide explanation for your response below:	

Officer's Name		Officer's Signature		Date
Manager's Name		Manager's Signature		Date

Equality Assessment

Bromsgrove District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

Equality Impact Assessment

Please ensure the following:

- That the document is understandable to a reader who has not read any other documents, and explains (on its own) how the Public Sector Equality Duty is met. This does not need to be lengthy, but must be complete.
- That available support information and data is identified and where it can be found. Also be clear about highlighting gaps in existing data or evidence that you hold, and how you have sought to address these knowledge gaps.
- That the equality impacts are capable of aggregation with those of other EIAs to identify the cumulative impact of all service changes made by the council on different groups of people.

Title of Service, Policy, Procedure, Spending Review being Proposed	**Temporary Accommodation Policy**
Name of Service Area	**Housing Options & Homelessness**
Name of Officer completing this assessment	**Maria Bailey**
Date Assessment Started	**10.09.26**
Name of Decision Maker (in relation to the change)	**Maria Bailey**
Date Decision Made	**10.09.26**

Overview

Provide a clear overview of the aims of the service/policy/procedure and the proposed changes being made. Will the current service users' needs continue to be met? Why is the change being proposed? What needs or duties is it designed to meet?

Temporary accommodation is an essential safeguard for households who would otherwise be homeless. The use of temporary accommodation should be a short-term remedy, ensuring people are safe and can continue essential life activities within a locality they know and where they are supported. Due to the increasing pressures of homelessness and demand for temporary accommodation, it has not always been possible to place households in ideal temporary accommodation.

The aim of this policy is to ensure temporary accommodation used to relieve or prevent homelessness is suitable, safe and decent. The purpose of this policy is to set out how the Council will work towards ensuring that all temporary accommodation secured by or on behalf of the Council is appropriate to the needs and circumstances of each household, taking account of household composition, affordability, health and disability needs, location, safety, property condition, safeguarding risks and the welfare of any children.

The policy sets out how the Council will secure, allocate, assess, manage and review temporary accommodation for households who are homeless, threatened with homelessness, or otherwise require accommodation under homelessness duties or discretionary powers.

Who is the proposal likely to affect?	Yes	No
All residents	☒	☐
Specific group(s)	☒	☐
All Council employees	☐	☒
Specific group(s) of employees	☐	☒
Other – Provide more details below	☐	☒

Details

Outline who could be affected and how they could be affected by the proposal/service change. Include current service users and those who could benefit from but do not currently access the service.

The policy is aimed at homeless single people, couples and families with children. The group will potentially include people of all ages, disabilities, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage or in a civil partnership status, pregnant and/or on maternity leave.

Homelessness data (HCLIC) provides information about homeless applicants in Bromsgrove District Council area, for example, age, sex, race and work status. There is less information collected about the wider households' personal details. The data below shows how different groups are represented in the homelessness data.

Groups Overrepresented in Homelessness

Homelessness Applicant Data (HCLIC 25/26)	Bromsgrove District Council Population (Census 2021)
60% female	51.1% female
2% Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	0.8% Black / African / Caribbean / Black British
37% households with dependent children	28.7% households with dependent children
28% mental health condition 24% physical health condition	16% long term physical or mental health condition
24% people between 16 and 24 years	8.5% people between 16 and 24 years

Homelessness Applicant Data (HCLIC 25/26)	Prevalence for England and Wales (25/26) (Crime Survey for England and Wales)
36% homeless due to domestic abuse	7.8% Domestic Abuse

The data indicates that some groups are disproportionately represented among people applying to Bromsgrove District Council for homelessness support. The clearest inequalities relate to younger people, Black residents, women, households with dependent children, applicants with health-related needs and those experiencing domestic abuse. Young people show the highest overrepresentation in homelessness data, Some young people may have additional support needs and vulnerabilities which may make them eligible for relief under the homelessness duties of the Housing Act 1996, however for those without a priority need, they may have to rely on less affordable private sector or short-term supported housing.

Women and households with dependent children experience overrepresentation in homelessness data. Where a household's homelessness status, eligibility, unintentionally homeless and local connection are established, these households are likely to be assessed as being in priority need and in need of a relief housing duty in the form of temporary accommodation. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 requires all households applying for homelessness support are supported and advice & assistance provided to secure housing, available for at least 6 months. The provision of emergency or interim accommodation depends on the council having reason to believe that the applicant may be homeless, eligible and in priority.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 ensures that all eligible applicants who are homeless or threatened with homelessness receive an assessment of their housing and support needs, a personalised housing plan and reasonable assistance to prevent or relieve homelessness. The prevention and relief duties apply irrespective of priority need or intentional homelessness. This provides an important framework for identifying and responding to the specific needs of groups disproportionately represented among homelessness applicants

Evidence and data used to inform your equality impact assessment

What data, research, or trend analysis have you used? Describe how you have got your information and what it tells you.

The section below covers the existing data on service users and potential users who share a protected characteristic. It also considers gaps or limitations in the information currently held and additional analyses to support the impact assessment.

No robust district-level prevalence figure is currently available for 2025/26. Applying the latest England and Wales prevalence rate of 7.8% to Bromsgrove's adult population suggests that approximately 6,300 residents aged 16 and over may experience domestic abuse in a year. This is a modelled local estimate and should not be interpreted as a count of reported or identified victims.

Physical and Mental Health Conditions

The health data indicates a substantial prevalence of mental and physical health needs among applicants, although differences in definitions mean that these figures cannot be directly compared with the Census disability measure.
The findings support the need for:

- targeted homelessness prevention;
- accessible and trauma-informed services;
- culturally competent advice and communication;
- effective health and social care pathways;
- family-appropriate temporary and settled accommodation;
- and continued monitoring of outcomes by protected characteristic.

Sex

Women account for 60% of homelessness applicants, compared with 51.1% of Bromsgrove District's population. This is an overrepresentation of 8.9 percentage points, with the female share of applicants approximately 17% higher than the female share of the district population.

This may indicate that women face particular routes into homelessness or are more likely to seek assistance from the council. Potential contributing factors may include:

- domestic abuse and relationship breakdown;
- responsibility for dependent children;
- financial dependence or loss of household income;
- pregnancy or maternity-related housing pressures;
- and women being more likely to be recorded as the main applicant in some family households.

The data does not show why women are overrepresented, so causal conclusions should not be drawn without examining prevention reasons, household composition, domestic abuse, support needs and homelessness outcomes by sex.

The implications for the delivery of a homelessness service are:

- domestic abuse enquiry and safe referral arrangements are embedded within assessment processes;
- applicants can request a female officer or interpreter where practicable;
- private interview arrangements are available so applicants can disclose abuse safely;
- temporary accommodation is safe, appropriately located and suitable for women and children;

- pregnancy and maternity needs are identified during assessment and accommodation placement;
- and outcomes are monitored separately for women and men, including prevention, relief, temporary accommodation and repeat homelessness.

Race and Ethnicity

Black, African, Caribbean or Black British people account for 2% of homelessness applicants, compared with 0.8% of Bromsgrove District's population. Although the absolute percentage is small, this group is represented among applicants at 2.5 times its share of the wider population.

This is a notable potential inequality. However, the actual applicant count should be reviewed because a small number of cases may produce a relatively large percentage change. Data should ideally be considered over at least three years to determine whether this is a sustained pattern.

Considerations for the delivery of a homelessness service are:

- unequal access to secure, affordable housing;
- lower household income or insecure employment;
- discrimination in the private rented sector;
- awareness of housing rights;
- and differences in access to early homelessness prevention services.

The council should consider:

- monitoring whether Black applicants receive comparable prevention and relief outcomes;
- examining access to private rented accommodation, deposit assistance and social housing;
- reviewing whether applicants report discrimination by landlords or letting agents;
- providing accessible information through community organisations and trusted local partners;
- ensuring staff receive training in cultural awareness and anti-discriminatory practice;

Age

People aged 16 to 24 account for 24% of homelessness applicants, compared with 8.5% of the district population. This is an overrepresentation of 15.5 percentage points and means that young people are represented among applicants at approximately 2.8 times their population share.

This is the most substantial disparity in the data. It suggests that younger residents may encounter particular barriers to sustaining accommodation or establishing an independent home.

Possible factors for further investigation include:

- family or relationship breakdown;
- leaving care or other supported settings;
- insufficient income to meet local housing costs;
- benefit restrictions affecting younger people;
- low or insecure earnings;
- lack of a tenancy history or guarantor;
- limited knowledge of housing rights and available assistance;
- and difficulties accessing suitable shared or self-contained accommodation.

Households with dependent children

Although having dependent children is not itself a protected characteristic, it may intersect with sex, pregnancy and maternity, disability, race and age. It is also relevant to the council's safeguarding responsibilities and its consideration of children's welfare**.**

Households with dependent children make up 37% of homelessness applicants, compared with 28.7% of Bromsgrove households. This is an overrepresentation of 8.3 percentage points, with these households appearing among applicants at approximately 1.29 times their share of all households.
This indicates that families with children may experience greater housing insecurity or may be more vulnerable to the consequences of homelessness. Housing loss can affect children's:

- education and school attendance;
- physical and emotional wellbeing;
- access to health and support services;
- family and social networks;
- and ability to study, play and maintain stable routines.

The council should ensure that:

- the needs and best interests of children are considered throughout assessment and placement;
- homelessness is prevented wherever possible to minimise disruption;
- temporary accommodation is suitable for the household's size and children's ages;
- travel to school, childcare, healthcare and family support is considered when locating accommodation;
- families are not placed for prolonged periods in accommodation lacking adequate cooking, washing or space facilities;
- safeguarding concerns are identified and referred appropriately;

- and links between homelessness, domestic abuse and lone parenthood are monitored.

Disability, mental health and physical health

Among homelessness applicants:

- 28% were recorded as having a mental health condition;
- 24% were recorded as having a physical health condition; and
- 16% of the wider population reported a long-term physical or mental health condition.

These figures indicate significant health-related needs among homelessness applicants, but they are not directly comparable.

Homelessness and unsuitable housing can exacerbate existing conditions through stress, disrupted treatment and poor accessibility.

The council should consider:

- applicants are asked sensitively about physical, mental health, sensory, learning and neurodivergent needs;
- reasonable adjustments are identified, recorded and implemented;
- communication is offered in accessible formats;
- applicants are given additional time or advocacy support where needed;
- accommodation suitability assessments address mobility, accessibility, medication, equipment and care arrangements;
- referrals to health, social care and support services are made with consent;
- staff recognise that some disabilities are non-visible or fluctuate;
- and vulnerability is assessed individually rather than relying solely on the presence or absence of a diagnosis.

The council should also monitor whether disabled applicants experience longer stays in temporary accommodation due to a lack of accessible housing.

Limitations of the Data

1. Different reference periods: H-CLIC covers 2025/26, while the population comparator comes from the 2021 Census.
2. HCLIC data captures the characteristics of the main applicant only
3. Different definitions: The H-CLIC health measures are not equivalent to the Census disability measure.
4. Small numbers: The 2% figure for Black applicants may represent a small number of cases and could fluctuate significantly between years.
5. Repeat applications can be included in the HCLIC data
6. Unknown information: Missing, refused or “not known” responses may affect the percentages, particularly for disability, ethnicity and support needs.

7. No outcome data: Applicant representation alone does not show whether different groups receive equitable decisions, accommodation offers or sustainable outcomes.
8. No causal evidence: Disproportionate representation identifies a potential inequality but does not explain its causes or prove discriminatory treatment.

HCLIC data (25/26) is the most comprehensive, reliable and up to date source of homeless applicant information available for the Bromsgrove District Council area. The last census, 2021 is the most reliable source of data relating to the general population of the Bromsgrove District Council area.

Additional Research Data

Health and Homelessness - Unhealthy State of Homelessness 2025 – Homeless Link

Recent evidence confirms that homelessness is both a cause and a consequence of poor health. People may become homeless after physical illness, mental ill-health, disability or substance dependency affects their income, relationships or ability to sustain accommodation. Once homeless, exposure to unsafe environments, unsuitable temporary accommodation, disrupted treatment and barriers to healthcare can cause existing conditions to deteriorate and new conditions to develop

Sex Inequalities & Homelessness – Single Homeless Project

Hidden Homelessness Research, Accessed September 2026

Women's homelessness is hidden because the system isn't built for them. To survive, women sleeping rough often avoid being seen. They stay on buses, in A&E, in all-night cafés – anywhere they might feel less exposed. But staying out of sight to stay safe comes at a cost: it keeps them invisible to the very services that should be there to help.

Recommendations made by the Single Homeless Project are:
Women's strategy is a necessity, not an afterthought. An effective response to women's homelessness centres on ensuring recognition and understanding of women's needs, and in being prepared to create strategies and adapt systems to support these needs (organisational, local authority and national level).

- The intersection of domestic abuse and homelessness needs to be fully recognised

- Homelessness service models, like Housing First, will require some modification if they are to properly recognise, respect and respond to women's needs. The evidence points to services designed, built, and run by women as likely being the most effective.
- Coordination between domestic abuse and homelessness services at all levels must be highly developed if an effective strategy for women's homelessness is to be built.

Race and Ethnicity

The most recent major evidence is the July 2026 report by Parliament's Women and Equalities Committee, supported by the 2025 I-SPHERE study on race, ethnicity and homelessness. Both conclude that Black people face disproportionate risks of homelessness and poorer outcomes after entering the homelessness system.

Research indicates that Black people are almost four times more likely to experience homelessness than White people. Black-led households are also more likely to experience less visible forms of housing insecurity, being six times more likely to be overcrowded and more than three times more likely to include people who are sofa surfing.

The evidence also suggests that Black households are more likely to enter temporary accommodation and remain there longer. The parliamentary inquiry identified structural factors including lower home ownership, inequalities in income and employment, housing and welfare policy, limited access to affordable housing, and racial discrimination within housing and other services.

Young people under 25 and Homelessness

The latest available research shows that young people aged 16 to 24 are disproportionately affected by homelessness and face barriers that differ from those experienced by older adults. Centrepoint's Youth Homelessness Databank 2024/25, published in 2026, estimates that 123,934 young people across the UK were homeless or at risk of homelessness between April 2024 and March 2025, a 6% increase from the previous year. This equates to approximately one in every 60 young people, or one young person facing homelessness every four minutes. In England, the estimated number was 107,585.

The research identifies a significant concern about access to statutory help. Centrepoint estimates that only 65% of young people in England who approached a local authority in 2024/25 received a housing assessment, leaving around 35% without this essential stage of the statutory homelessness process. Because the Databank only captures young people who approached councils, it is also likely to underestimate hidden homelessness, particularly sofa surfing and informal or unsafe arrangements

Family breakdown remains the leading reported cause. In England, family or friends being no longer willing or able to provide accommodation accounted for 51% of recorded cases, followed by domestic abuse at 11%. Other important causes included

eviction from supported housing, the end of a private tenancy and having to leave Home Office asylum accommodation. These causes can overlap, even though official data generally record a single main reason.
Young people face particular structural disadvantages in obtaining or sustaining accommodation, including lower earnings, insecure employment, reduced benefit entitlements, limited access to guarantors and deposits, and a shortage of affordable housing. Care-experienced young people, young refugees and migrants, disabled young people and those with mental health or other support needs face increased and overlapping risks.

Engagement and Consultation

What engagement and consultation have you undertaken about the proposal with current service users, potential users and other stakeholders? What is important to them regarding the current service? How does (or could) the service meet their needs? How will they be affected by the proposal? What potential impacts did they identify because of their protected characteristic(s)? Did they identify any potential barriers they may face in accessing services/other opportunities that meet their needs?

Consultation with victim / survivors of domestic abuse, people staying in temporary accommodation and young people have been canvassed over the last 3 years and findings have been considered by decision makers. Further consultation with people with lived experience is planned over the next 3 years and will consider the findings of this equality impact assessment to investigate both barriers and solutions to preventing homelessness and reducing the time people are living in temporary accommodation. The reviewed temporary accommodation policy will provide a structured approach to gathering information about individuals and households to support suitable accommodation, good communication with wider statutory support networks and reducing any potential harm or disadvantage to people with protected characteristics.

Young people told us that early intervention is crucial to reducing homelessness as when relationships with family have broken down, there is little hope of reconciliation. Consideration is now underway for supporting Upstream work in Bromsgrove in schools. People using homelessness services identified a need for better training for homelessness officers dealing with applicants experiencing domestic abuse. This was followed up by additional training across the County. Overall, people in temporary accommodation reported satisfaction with their short term accommodation. However, consideration is now underway of an improved survey to gain a greater understanding of different household's experience, based on different protected characteristics.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Due regard must be given to the three aims of the Equality Duty. This means that you must consciously think about the three aims as part of the process of decision-making. Consider the current service and any proposed changes, thinking about what issues may arise.

Equality Duty Aims	Evidence
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation How does the proposal/service ensure that there is no barrier or disproportionate impact for anyone with a particular protected characteristic	Bdht deliver the statutory homelessness service on behalf of Bromsgrove District Council. Their staff are guided by a regularly reviewed policy;the Equality Diversity and Inclusion policy was rewritten in February 2025. Staff receive significant training to covers equalities, tThis is an example of training completed by the bdht staff, **Creating Conscious Inclusion.pdf.** **I**n addition all new starters undertake Ihasco online training and this is the link to the course content. **https://www.ihasco.co.uk/courses/detail/equality-and-diversity#contents**
Advance equality of opportunity between different groups How does the proposal/service ensure that its intended outcomes promote equality of opportunity for users? Identify inequalities faced by those with specific protected characteristic(s).	Overall, data indicates that some groups with protected characteristics are overrepresented in homelessness data. However, national research indicates that this phenomenon is a national trend and not specifically related to Bromsgrove District Council area. Many of the economic and social driving factors are national, for example, low incomes presenting barriers to accessing accommodation for young people. However, using the analysis above and further engagement with service users will allow investigation of ways in which inequalities for these groups can be mitigated and prevented will be considered, for example earlier intervention for young people at risk of homelessness to avoid damaging experience. Improved accessibility of temporary accommodation for people with disabilities is underway and a commitment to the reduction of the use of unsuitable B&B for families with children is also a key action point for Bromsgrove District Council.

Foster good relations between different groups Does the service contribute to good relations or to broader community cohesion objectives? How does it achieve this aim?	The homelessness service is delivered by bdht, a registered social landlord bound by the Regulator for Social Housing regulations. The Neighbourhood and Community Standard require bdht to cooperate with relevant partners to promote the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of areas where they provide social housing; Regulations also require bdht to manage anti-social behaviour and hate incidents. Providers must work with local authority departments, the police and other relevant organisations to deter and address anti-social behaviour and hate incidents. They must: • have an anti-social behaviour policy; • clearly explain their approach to hate incidents; • make reporting easy; • keep tenants informed about the progress of their case; • respond promptly and appropriately; • consider the full range of available legal powers and interventions; and • support affected tenants, including signposting them to appropriate agencies. These duties are central to cohesion because unresolved anti-social behaviour, neighbourhood disputes, harassment and hate incidents can undermine people's safety, trust and sense of belonging. Specifically, bdht has achieved a bronze award from the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) for its services for people experiencing domestic abuse and homelessness.

Is there evidence of actual or potential unfairness for the following equality groups?

- Does the proposal target or exclude a specific equality group or community?

This policy has been developed to gain a greater understanding, through person centred assessment of people's needs, and potentially any disadvantage or barriers some groups face to ensure the temporary accommodation response, helps to mitigate and prevent further disadvantage and ensure equality of outcomes for all homeless applicants.

The temporary accommodation policy sits within a wider local homelessness strategy, with a key objective of preventing homelessness and supporting people to maintain their homes, therefore avoiding the need to access temporary accommodation.

- Does it affect some equality groups or communities differently and can this be justified?

The aim of the policy, including the commitment to eliminate B&B use for families, is to develop a temporary accommodation that meets the needs of people using the service and the people who would be expected to live with them.

- Is the proposal likely to be equally accessed by all equality groups and communities? If not, can this be justified?

(It may be useful to consider other groups, not included in the Equality Act, especially if the proposal is specifically for them e.g. lone parents, refugees, unemployed people, carers)

All groups in society are at risk of homelessness and consequently the potential need to access temporary accommodation. The aim of the policy is to ensure that a consistent, person-centred approach, sensitive to the barriers faced by some groups with protected characteristics is provided. The service is delivered in such a way that any applicant approaching bdht for support with a homelessness crisis will have the opportunity to discuss and consider any barriers or specific concerns in regard to their circumstances and will be treated in a way that will avoid discrimination, prejudice and disadvantage and seek to empower people to be fully involved in the homelessness process.

Staff are well trained. Specialist staff work with young people, older people, people with experience of domestic abuse to ensure specialisms and links with the wider community are maintained and optimised on behalf of applicants.

Impact of proposal

Describe the likely impact of the proposal on people because of their protected characteristic and how they may be affected. How likely is it that people with this protected characteristic will be negatively affected? What are the barriers that might make access difficult or stop different groups or communities accessing the proposal? How great will that impact be on their well-being? Could the proposal promote equality and good relations between different groups? How?

If you have identified any area of actual or potential unfairness that cannot be justified, can you eliminate or minimise this?

What mitigating actions can be taken to reduce or remove this impact? (Include these in the action plan at the end of the assessment) Equal treatment does not always produce equal outcomes; sometimes you will have to take specific steps for particular groups to address an existing disadvantage or to meet differing needs.

Protected Group	Impact of proposal	Justification for any actual or potential unfairness identified	If you have identified any area of actual or potential unfairness that cannot be justified, can you eliminate or minimise this?
Age	No negative impact		
Disability	No negative impact		
Transgender	No negative impact		
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No negative impact		
Pregnancy and Maternity	No negative impact		
Race	No negative impact		
Religion or Belief	No negative impact		
Sex (Male/ Female)	No negative impact		
Sexual Orientation	No negative impact		

How will you monitor any changes identified?
The temporary accommodation policy includes a section on monitoring. Data relating to temporary accommodation use and experience will be collected and analysed in relation to people with protected characteristics. Data will regularly be made available to decision makers for consideration and action.

The actions required to address these findings are set out below.

Action Required	By Whom	By When	Completion Date

Monitor use and experience of temporary accommodation. This will include use by people with protected characteristics by types of temporary accommodation. Further analyses will be investigated to monitor that homeless applicants with protected characteristics are able to access suitable temporary accommodation without barriers. The temporary accommodation policy has been updated to include equalities monitoring and reporting.	Strategic Housing	Quarterly	On-going process

Sign off on completion	Name	Signature	Date
Lead Officer completing assessment			
Equalities Officer			

When you have completed this assessment, retain a copy and send an electronic copy to the Policy Team (Equalities) attaching any supporting evidence used to carry out the assessment.

Glossary

Direct discrimination

Treating someone less favourably than someone else in the same circumstances e.g.

- In employment, racist or sexist banter, derogatory comments and innuendo
- Failure to treat grievances seriously or to investigate effectively
- Unfairly denying access to employment, training or facilities and services

Indirect discrimination

Where a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to all but has the effect excluding or reducing the access for a particular group and is not a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. Even if this effect is unintentional, it can still be unlawful e.g.

- Unnecessary height restrictions for access to employment opportunities
- Refusing training for promotion to people who work part-time
- Requiring fluency in a language where this is not necessary
- Relying on word of mouth to recruit to employment or training opportunities
- Qualification requirements that are not justified for the level of the job.

Policy, Practices and Services

Refers to any activity the council does, be that a service we provide, an initiative we run, a policy we write or a procedure we observe**.**

- It may refer to the way we do things which are customary
- It may refer to activities we undertake such as meetings, focus groups or publications we produce.

Protected Characteristics

Age

Consider all age groups although legal protection only applies to people aged 18 or over

Disability

Consider all types of impairment, physical and mental, sensory, visible and hidden

- Learning disability
- Families and carers of disabled children
- Mobility impairments
- Wheelchair users
- Mental health needs/ disorders and psychological conditions
- HIV/ Aids
- Sensory impairments such as sight and hearing
- Cancer and long term progressive conditions such as MS

Gender

Refers to the physiological fact of being male or female. consider whether something has a different impact on men or women - particularly if it's more of an impact on women, consider the impact if they have caring responsibilities whether its childcare or other types of care

Gender re-assignment

Transgender (Gender Dysphoria) or the preferred term, Gender Confirmation**.** Consider all stages of re-assignment**,** before, during and after re-assignment treatment or gender confirmation surgery

Marriage and Civil Partnerships

It *only* covers those who are married or in a civil partnership (NB single status is not protected in the Equality Act)

Pregnancy and maternity

This includes physical state of pregnancy, on maternity leave or planning maternity leave or returned from maternity leave and includes breast feeding

Race

This includes race, colour, nationality, national or ethnic origin and caste (caste through case law, not explicitly referenced)

- Race is a generic overall term
- Colour refers to the colour of a person's skin
- Nationality applies to internationally recognised nationalities
- National Origin applies where you have changed your nationality in your life time or there is something about you that indicates that your parents or grandparents' origins were in another part of the world – e.g. name, religion
- Ethnic Origin applies where identifiable groups have established a unique and different ethnicity to the rest of the population – this currently applies to Jews, Gypsies, Sikhs Irish and Scottish Travellers
- Caste is the traditional organisation of South Asian, particularly Hindu, society into a hierarchy of hereditary groups.

Religion or Belief

All established religions and beliefs (and non-belief) including but not limited to the following:

- Christianity
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Judaism
- Sikhism
- Baha'i
- Buddhism
- Jainism
- Paganism
- Parsi or Zoroastrianism
- Rastafarianism
- Atheism
- Agnosticism
- Humanism

Sexual orientation

- Gay – usually refers to men with sexual orientation towards other men although sometime refers to women with sexual orientation towards other women
- Lesbian – refers to women with sexual orientation towards other women
- Bisexual – refers to men and women with sexual orientation to either or both their own gender or the opposite gender
- Heterosexual refers to men and women with sexual orientation towards the opposite gender

This page is intentionally left blank

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET 18th November 2026

Homelessness Prevention, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Sue Baxter, Cabinet Member for Planning and Strategic Housing
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Head of Service		Judith Willis Assistant Director Community and Housing Services
Report Author Maria Bailey	Job Title: Senior Housing Strategy Officer Contact email: maria.bailey@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 07768 307628	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		Not Applicable
Relevant Strategic Priorities(s)		Housing
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 RESOLVE that:-

1) the following initiatives be approved. Proposed awards are based on an uplift of up to 3% on the grant already awarded on 19th November 2025;

BDC Homeless Prevention Grant, Rough Sleeping, Homelessness Prevention Fund and Domestic Abuse Grant	
Recipient	**Total**
Static Temporary Accommodation - additional 4 units of accommodation	£23,349.00
Worcestershire Strategic Partnership Coordinator - contribution towards county-wide development and delivery of housing initiatives in partnership with other agencies	£11,000.00
Severe Weather Emergency Provision	£10,000.00
St. Basils Foyer - provides stable accommodation / support for young people - 14 units	£15,000.00

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET 18th November 2026

St. Basils Crash Pad - provides emergency temporary accommodation for 16 and 17 years olds	£20,302.00
Bromsgrove Home Choice Plus and Homelessness Module	£14,600.00
St. Basils Young Person Pathway Worker - support to prevent homelessness for under 25's and the Crash Pad to provide emergency accommodation for young people	£42,349.00
NewStarts - provide furniture and volunteering opportunities for ex-offenders - supports tenancy sustainment and provides future employment opportunities / reduces risk of offending	£15,450.00
Green Square Accord Housing Related Support - helping ex-offenders remain housed / seek employment	£32,107.16
Maggs Rough Sleeper outreach and prevention service targeting people rough sleeping and those at risk of sleeping rough	£36,675.21
BDHT - Sunrise Project intensive support	£48,292.06
Mental Health Link Worker (part funded)	£22,262.00
CAB - debt advice for home owners and private renters	£28,439.00
CAB - affordability assessment	£6,201.00
CAB - Tenancy sustainment rent arrears	£5,000.00
Housing Led Intensive Support service	£39,292.06
Part-time Empty Homes Officer	£7,680.00
Spend to Save Top Up	£5,683.00
County Rough Sleeping Coordinator	£11,800.00
Domestic Abuse Research and Intelligence Officer	£11,039.00
Domestic Abuse Housing Officer	£45,954.00
St. Basils - accommodation support	£51,709.00
Housing Strategy Officer	£18,833.51

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET 18th November 2026

National Residential Landlords Association Membership	£250.00
Total Committed Expenditure	**£523,267**

2) the following new initiatives for Homelessness Prevention Grant be approved:

Recipient	**Total**
BDHT Housing Agency Agreement - top up staffing costs	£102,475.00
Severe Weather Emergency Protocol Coordinator	£11,800.00
Homelessness Strategy Coordinator	£10,000.00
North Worcestershire Basement Project - Support for young people at risk of homelessness	£45,000.00
Council owned Temporary Accommodation	£11,000.00
Total Committed Expenditure	**£ 180,275.00**

3) Delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing, to use any unallocated Grant during the year or make further adjustments and uplifts as necessary to ensure full utilisation of the Grants for 2027/28 in support of existing or new schemes.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The purpose of this report is to outline proposed homelessness grant funding allocations for the 2027/28 financial year.

3.0 OPERATIONAL ISSUES

3.1 In 2026/27, the Government consolidated several grants into a single Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant. This grant funds homelessness prevention and relief activities. Government granted a three-year award: 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29.

3.2 In line with the three-year Government award, three-year grants were approved on the 19th November 2025. Grant Recipients were offered an uplift of 3% for 2027/28. Grant funding will continue to be subject to satisfactory performance of the service with targets set for continual improvement.

3.3 This report seeks Members' approval to award the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG's) Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant to additional schemes recommended by the Officers. Additionally, it seeks to delegate authority to the Assistant Director Community and Housing Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing, to allocate any underspend of grant during 2027/28 on schemes to prevent homelessness and assist those who become homeless.

3.4 The purpose of the ringfenced Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant fund is to give local authorities control and flexibility in managing homelessness pressures and supporting those who are at risk of homelessness. The Government expects local authorities to use it to deliver the following priorities:

- To fully enforce the Homelessness Reduction Act and contribute to ending rough sleeping by increasing activity to prevent single homelessness.

- Reduce family temporary accommodation numbers through maximising family homelessness prevention.

- Eliminate the use of unsuitable bed and breakfast accommodation for families for longer than the statutory six-week limit.

3.5 Domestic Abuse Grant funding has been allocated to ensure that councils can comply with the requirements to provide safe and supported accommodation for those fleeing domestic abuse and provide monitoring of services to central government via Worcestershire County Council who are responsible for the overall duties set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

3.6 The management and administration of these grants forms part of the Strategic Housing team's day to day operations.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET 18th November 2026

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant are ring fenced by MHCLG for activities that prevent and deal with homelessness.

4.2 The Council has a budget of £112,000 for the 2027/28 Homelessness Fund allocation in addition to the MHCLG grant award.

4.3 The Council therefore has the following for Homelessness Prevention and Domestic Abuse Services and Housing Options in 2027/28 as follows:

Grant	2027/28
Homelessness Prevention Fund	£112,000.00
Homelessness & Rough Sleeping	£514,099.00
Domestic Abuse Grant	£37,110.00
DAG - Anticipated Grant from Worcestershire CC	£40,333.00
Total Grant Available	**£703,542.00**

4.4 The proposed allocation of this grant funding for the 2027/28 financial year is detailed in the recommendations above. This includes funding for new grant initiatives.

4.5 Additional grant awards are recommended as:

- An additional £50k has been allocated to support the BDHT contract due to an increase in costs in respect of the Housing Agency contract that were not adjusted for in the Council's revenue budget. A total of £102,475 homelessness prevention grant now contributes to the cost of this service.

- The Basement Project have also submitted a new proposal as they have reduced their drop-in hours due to a reduction in demand and are, instead, delivering Centrepoint's Upstream programme. This is an early intervention school-based initiative, designed to prevent youth homelessness, by identifying vulnerable secondary school pupils aged 11-16 before crisis occurs. A new Shared Homelessness Strategy Co-ordinator post has been created to support the delivery of the actions contained within the Shared Homelessness Strategy. A Shared Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) Coordinator role has been created to co-ordinate Severe Weather Emergency provision and ensure rough sleepers are supported to access services so that their rough sleeping experience is rare, brief and non-recurring.

- An additional £23,349 is allocated to purchase 4 additional units of static temporary accommodation from receipts from low cost housing sales. The temporary properties will support the Council's commitment to eliminate the use of B&B type accommodation for homeless families by 2029 and to ensure temporary accommodation used to relieve or prevent homelessness is suitable. Due to the increasing pressures of homelessness and demand for temporary accommodation, it has not always been possible to place households in self-contained, suitable temporary accommodation.
  The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003: Use of B&B, states, bed and breakfast accommodation can only be provided to applicants with family commitments if no other accommodation is available and only for up to six weeks.
  In addition, the National Plan to End Homelessness (2025) sets out national policy to improve the quality and suitability of temporary accommodation, to end the unlawful use of bed and breakfast for families except for very short emergency use and ensure that emergency provision does not become a long-term substitute for settled housing

4.7 With the exception of BDHT, the majority of the above are voluntary sector organisations and without this funding the support provided

would cease which is likely to lead to an increase in homelessness pressures and have a negative impact on the council's finances and reputation.

4.8 Members are asked to note that the performance of all of the Voluntary and Community Sector Groups for which additional funding has been requested have been monitored in respect of their use of previous grant funding. The performance monitoring information for these services is available in Appendix 1

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Council has a statutory duty under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) to assist those who are threatened with homelessness or experiencing actual homelessness and has placed additional duties on the Council regarding preventing and relieving homelessness.

5.2 The Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant has been ring fenced to homelessness prevention and tackling homelessness by the MHCLG.

5.3 The Domestic Abuse Grant has been provided to ensure that councils comply with the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

6.1 The new unitary authority/authorities will be required as a local housing authority to address duties under Homelessness legislation.

Relevant Council Priority

6.2 Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse grant supports the Council's priority of Housing. It allows the Council to support a range of holistic services to help prevent or tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in the District.

6.3 The combination of practical support such as furniture, compliments those services that provide outreach support to help clients access

accommodation, sustain tenancies, manage budgets, engage in positive activities and access employment.

Climate Change Implications

6.4 The recycling of furniture supports the Council's green thread as it minimises waste and enables reuse and recycling of household items wherever possible.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.5 The Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant and the Homelessness Prevention Fund will benefit customers by offering households more options to prevent their homelessness, support them to remain in their own homes or help the Council to manage and support households in Temporary Accommodation.

6.6 The grant will also benefit the larger community as opportunities to prevent homelessness will be maximised.

6.7 The Domestic Abuse Grant will ensure that there are resources to support the provision of a range of services available to meet the needs of those victims/survivors of domestic abuse who become homeless and need support to set up a new home and recover from their experience, many of whom are women.

Community Impact Implications

6.8 The prevention role of these groups is crucial in helping people to remain in their existing accommodation wherever possible. There has been less churn in social housing and housing development, so fewer properties are becoming available and social housing options are very limited in Bromsgrove District. This is even more relevant due to affordability issues in all sectors.

6.9 The grant awards provide support to a people with a range of needs, including people fleeing domestic violence and those with mental health conditions. The support ensures people transition through services successfully and young people are supported to navigate unfamiliar systems. Some groups work closely with people with an

offending background, to support them to reduce offending and anti-social behaviour.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 If the recommended schemes are not approved there is a risk that more households who are threatened with homelessness, or who are in housing need, will have limited alternative options. There is also therefore the risk that they may have to make a homeless approach, and this could consequently lead to the following negative outcomes:

- Increased B&B costs with 80% having to be picked up by the local authority.
- Increased rough sleeping in the District.
- Impacts on physical and mental health, educational achievement, ability to work and similar through increased homelessness.

7.2 All recipients of this Grant funding will enter into a grant agreement with the Council and will be subject to regular monitoring with officers on the delivery of the service.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 - grant funded voluntary and community sector organisations' performance

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Sue Baxter Portfolio Holder for Planning and Strategic Housing	13/10/26
Lead Director / Head of Service	Judith Willis Assistant Director Community and Housing Services	16/10/26
Financial Services	James Walton, Section	12/10/26

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET 18th November 2026

	151 Officer	
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor - Governance	16/10/26
Climate Change Officer (if climate change implications apply)	Matt Bough, Strategic Housing and Business Support Manager	12/10/26

Appendix 1
Grant Funded Bromsgrove Voluntary and Community Sector
Homelessness Prevention Performance (2026/27, Quarter 1)

Appendix 1
Grant Funded Bromsgrove Voluntary and Community Sector
Homelessness Prevention Performance (26/27, Quarter 1)

1.0 Support Provided in Quarter 1

CATEGORY		CABR	Maggs	GSA	Basement Project	YPPW	Foyer	St Pauls	Total
Number of People Supported									
Clients	No. People Supported	3	6	15	23	8	8	6	**69**
Support Provided									
Support to Access	Benefits	1	1	15	4	5	0	4	**30**
	ID/Bank A/C	0	0	11	22	7	0	4	**44**
Engaging With	Mental health services	0	0	5	12	0	0	1	**18**
	Substance Misuse services	0	1	4	0	0	0	3	**8**
	GP services	0	2	13	23	0	0	5	**43**
	Voluntary Services	0	0	6	3	0	0	0	**9**
	Other	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	4

2.0 Outcomes

2.1 Mental Health Support Engagement

Mental health engagement outcomes were positive overall. 68% of individuals were either newly engaging with support services or maintaining existing engagement.

2.2 Substance Use Engagement

Substance use engagement outcomes were mixed during the reporting period. 41% of individuals achieved a positive outcome through either newly engaging with support services (11%) or maintaining existing engagement (30%). An equal proportion (41%) disengaged from support.

2.3 GP Engagement

GP engagement outcomes were exceptionally positive during the reporting period. A total of 92% of individuals either established or maintained engagement with their GP, with the majority (78%) successfully sustaining existing relationships with primary care services. A further 14% moved from being unengaged to being actively engaged.

2.4 Meaningful Activity Engagement

Meaningful activity engagement outcomes were mixed during the reporting period. Nearly half of individuals (47%) either established or maintained engagement in meaningful activities.

2.5 Offending

Outcomes relating to offending behaviour were positive during the reporting period. Almost half of all individuals (47%) demonstrated a positive behavioural change and ceased offending, while a further 47% maintained their non-offending status throughout the period.

2.6 Case Studies

Support Provider	Circumstances	Support Provided	Housing Outcome
Citizens Advice Bromsgrove and Redditch (CABR)	Working age parents, both with deteriorating health Health difficulties led to an inability to work The eldest son has a neurodiverse condition, and the other son does not work Situation led to mortgage arrears and risk to their home	Benefit advice and benefit appeal resulted in access to a higher level of personal independence payment and the health element of universal credit Debt advice to consider all options for clearing mortgage arrears	Time to consider options available to stabilise their housing situation and avoid the threat of losing their home, for example downsizing
Green Square Accord (GSA)	Evicted from a general needs tenancy due to a high level of rent arrears	Supported accommodation in a shared house	Settled into supported accommodation and avoided

	Significant physical and sexual abuse at a young age Moved in with grandparents when they were young. When they passed away was left without any family support? Physical health issues Very few independent living skills at 30 years old	Support to liaise with health services locally and specialist services Building a trusting relationship with support workers led to the first disclosure of abuse Developing independent living skills with support, for example, how to manage a tenancy, paying off arrears, cooking and cleaning Support to maintain a relationship with his uncle	homelessness and rough sleeping Developing the independent living skills he had missed as a young person making the prospect for future housing more sustainable Time to plan and move on in a planned way
Bdht Domestic Abuse Housing Officer	Family living in refuge accommodation as fleeing high risk domestic abuse Experienced strangulation and psychological domestic abuse Two children were displaced from their home and familiar surroundings	Multi-agency coordination of support from Women's Aid, the Police and from mental health services Well trained, trauma informed support for the whole family with a focus on moving the family into settled accommodation as quickly as possible	Moved to settled accommodation from the refuge, limiting the harm of living in temporary accommodation for the children and allowing the family to begin to build their life again

This page is intentionally left blank

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet **18th November 2026**

Treasury Management Half Yearly Report 2026/27

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Nock – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Debra Goodall
Report Authors	Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services Debra.Goodall@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	All
Non - Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to set out a 6 month update on the Council's Capital and Treasury Management Strategies, including all prudential indicators.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet are asked to:

- **Note the Council's Treasury performance for Q2 of the financial year 26/27.**
- **Note the position in relation to the Council's Prudential indicators.**

3. BACKGROUND

Introduction

3.1 The Authority has adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice* (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve, as a minimum, treasury management semi-annual and annual outturn reports.

3.2 This quarterly report provides an additional update and includes the requirement in the 2021 Code of quarterly reporting of the treasury management prudential indicators. The non-treasury prudential indicators are incorporated in the Authority's normal quarterly revenue report.

External Context

3.3 **Economic background:** The key story remained the conflict in the Middle East and its impact on global energy prices and inflation, while on the UK politics side, Andy Burham became the new Prime Minister. Although energy prices had shown signs of moderating towards the end of (calendar) Q2, the continuing conflict pushed oil and gas up sharply once again in Q3. Around mid-September, Brent oil and UK gas prices were over 30% and 70% higher respectively compared to the period preceding the Bank of England's (BoE) July Monetary Policy Report (MPR).

3.4 Given the inflationary impact of the previous energy shock from the Russia/Ukraine war, central bank policymakers remained alert to higher energy prices feeding into wider price and wage-setting behaviour ('second-round effects'). In the UK, higher fuel and energy prices were evident in headline inflation, but there was limited evidence of material second-round effects. At the same time, underlying wage pressures continued to moderate, and the labour market remained relatively loose.

3.5 The BoE's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) maintained Bank Rate at 3.75% throughout the period. In April the MPC voted by 8-1 to leave rates unchanged, with one member wanting a 0.25% increase. The voting subsequently became more hawkish, moving to 7-2 in June and 6-3 in both July and September, with all dissenters preferring to increase Bank Rate to 4.00%. The change in voting patterns reflected increasing policymaker concern over the persistence of the energy shock and the risk that higher headline inflation could become embedded in domestic prices and wages.

3.6 At the September MPC meeting, the Committee judged the inflation risks were further to the upside compared to its July MPR. Energy prices had risen again and borrowing costs were materially higher than before the US/Iran conflict. Despite expecting inflation would rise further in the near-term, most members believed that a soft labour market, spare capacity and restrictive monetary conditions would reduce inflation over time. Moreover, the data showed there was still little evidence of material second-round effects, although the MPC emphasised that the risk of these effects would increase the longer elevated and volatile energy prices persisted.

3.7 UK headline consumer price inflation (CPI) initially declined, suggesting the initial energy shock was not spreading into a wider range of goods and services. However, later in the period inflation picked up again, with CPI rising from 2.6% in June to 3.1% in August due largely to higher transport costs. Core CPI was 2.6% in July and August, suggesting the divergence between that and headline inflation was due to energy rather than a broad increase in underlying inflation.

3.8 UK economic activity was somewhat stronger than initially anticipated over the period. GDP expanded by 0.6% in the first quarter of the calendar year and 0.5% in the second

quarter, slightly stronger than the initial estimate of 0.4%. Monthly activity was more volatile, with a contraction of -0.1% in April, followed by gains of 0%, 0.3% and 0.4% in May, June and July respectively.

3.9 Labour market data continued to show softening employment conditions. The unemployment rate fell to 4.9% in April and remained at that level to July, against expectations it would tick up. Job vacancies also continued to decline, to 702,000 in the three months to July. Earnings growth moderated, with regular earnings at 3.5% in the three months to July and total earnings at 3.9%, suggesting weaker labour demand was continuing to restrain domestic wage pressures.

3.10 Arlingclose, the authority's treasury adviser, expects Bank Rate will stay at 3.75%. Higher energy prices due to the ongoing conflict(s) and uncertainty around the government's upcoming Budget have, however, increased the near-term upside risks. Moreover, stronger inflation projections, which accompanied the September MPC decision, shifted market expectations for Bank Rate higher. In addition, despite little evidence of second-round effects to date, the changing tone of the MPC minutes suggests it may not need something seismic to tip the Committee to increase Bank Rate.

3.11 The US Federal Reserve held the Fed Funds target range at 3.50%-3.75% through to July. Inflation pressures rose during the summer, however, pushing headline CPI to 3.4% in August, with higher petrol prices accounting for much of the increase. This led the Fed to raise its target range to 3.75%-4.00% in September. The move reflected increased concern over inflation at a time when US economic activity and labour-market conditions were relatively resilient.

3.12 Following a 0.25% increase in June, the European Central Bank raised its three key policy rates by a further 0.25% in September, taking the deposit facility rate to 2.50%. Inflation increased from 2.9% in July to 3.2% in August, and an initial estimate suggested a further rise to 3.8% in September, with energy prices the principal driver. The ECB emphasised the uncertainty around the duration of the energy shock and the risk prolonged higher inflation could feed into wider price-setting.

3.13 **Financial markets:** After the sharp deterioration early in the period, financial market sentiment improved somewhat as there were ongoing hopes that the US/Iran war would be resolved. However, towards the end of the period, signs of any potential resolution appeared premature and oil prices rose alongside inflation and bond yields while equity market volatility increased as investors weighed conflict-related as well as AI-related concerns.

3.14 Bond yields in both the US and UK increased markedly over the period, with the gap between gilts and US Treasuries tightening towards the end of the period. While term

premia are still embedded in gilt yields given the relatively uncertain fiscal outlook, a more hawkish Fed alongside persistent US inflation and fiscal concerns have pushed the yields on US Treasuries to their highest levels in years.

3.15 Some relatively market-friendly announcements were made by Andy Burham in his speech at the Labour Party conference, but it will be the Budget at the end of October that will hopefully provide some clarity on what the UK's fiscal position might look like going forward.

3.16 Over the period, the 10-year UK benchmark gilt yield started at 4.86% and ended at a high of 5.43%. The 20-year gilt yield starting at 5.45% and finished at 5.93%, another high for the period. The Sterling Overnight Rate (SONIA) averaged 3.73% over the period to 30th September.

3.17 **Credit review:** Arlingclose maintained its advised recommended maximum unsecured duration limit on the majority of the banks on its counterparty list at 6 months. The other banks remain on 100 days.

3.18 During the period, Fitch upgraded numerous banks due to a rating methodology change, as well as the reference obligations used for Issuer Default Ratings and introduced more differentiated notching between deposits, senior preferred, senior unsecured and senior non-preferred debt ratings.

3.19 Later in the period, Moody's changed the outlook on HSBC to Positive from Stable, while also affirming its long-term deposit rating. This follows a similar action from S&P on HSBC's outlook a few months prior to this.

3.20 After spiking in April following escalation in the Iran war, credit default swap prices on UK banks declined during most of the period but started to pick up again in September. They ended the period well below levels that may give cause for concern but remain under constant monitoring.

3.21 European banks' CDS prices followed a similar pattern to the UK, while Canadian bank CDS prices rose early in the period and then remained at similar levels, while Australian and Singaporean banks tended to trend downwards.

3.22 Overall, at the end of the period CDS prices for all banks on Arlingclose's counterparty list remained within limits deemed satisfactory for maintaining credit advice at current durations.

3.23 Financial market volatility is expected to remain a feature, at least in the near term and, credit default swap levels will continue to be monitored for signs of ongoing credit stress.

As ever, the institutions and durations on the Authority's counterparty list recommended by Arlingclose remain under constant review.

Local Context

3.24 On 30th September 2026, the Authority had £4.93m net borrowing arising from its revenue and capital income and expenditure. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while balance sheet resources are the underlying resources available for investment. These factors are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Balance Sheet Summary

	31.3.26 Actual £m	**31.3.27 Forecast £m**
General Fund CFR	32.21	33.40
Total CFR	**32.21**	**33.40**
Less: External borrowing**	-10.00	-10.00
Internal borrowing	22.21	23.40
Less: Usable reserves	-14.18	-10.84
Less: Working capital	-3.10	-3.10
Net borrowing	**4.93**	**9.46**

* finance leases, PFI liabilities and transferred debt that form part of the Authority's total debt
** shows only loans to which the Authority is committed and excludes optional refinancing

3.25 The treasury management position at 30th September and the change over the quarter is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Treasury Management Summary

	31.3.26 Balance £m	Movement £m	30.9.26 Balance £m	30.9.26 Rate %
Long-term borrowing Short-term borrowing	15.0	-5.0	10.0	
Total borrowing	**15.0**	**-5.0**	**10.0**	
Short-term investments Cash and cash equivalents	0.0	9.2	9.2	3.24
Total investments	**0.0**	**9.2**	**9.2**	
Net borrowing	**15.0**	**14.2**	**0.8**	

Borrowing Strategy and Activity

3.26 As outlined in the treasury strategy, the Authority's chief objective when borrowing has been to strike an appropriate risk balance between securing lower interest costs and achieving cost certainty over the period for which funds are required, with flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Authority's long-term plans change being a secondary objective. The Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio.

3.27 Gilt yields have been volatile, reflecting expectations of tighter monetary policy compared to previous expectations due to the war. Long-term gilt yields are very high, with investors lacking confidence in UK fiscal plans.

3.28 The PWLB certainty rate for 10-year maturity loans was 5.62% at the beginning of the period and 6.17% at the end. Rates for 20-year maturity loans moved from 6.13% to 6.61% during the period, and 50-year maturity loans from 6.01% to 6.37%. The cost of short-term borrowing from other local authorities has been above Bank Rate during the period at 3.8% to 5.5%: costs have risen throughout the period. This is primarily due to many local authorities avoiding more expensive long term rates and relying more heavily on the short term market. Low cash levels and the non-receipt of SEND grants are also likely to have contributed to a high borrowing demand.

3.29 CIPFA's 2021 Prudential Code is clear that local authorities must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return and that it is not prudent for local authorities to make any investment or spending decision that will increase the capital financing requirement and so may lead to new borrowing, unless directly and primarily related to the functions of the Authority. PWLB loans are no longer available to local authorities planning to buy investment assets primarily for yield unless these loans are for refinancing purposes. The Authority has no new plans to borrow to invest primarily for financial return.

3.30 **Loans Portfolio:** At 30th September the Authority held £10m in loans, with a repayment movement of £5m from 31st March 2026 as per table 3 below, as part of its strategy for funding previous and current years' capital programmes.

Table 3: Borrowing Position

	31.3.26 Balance £m	Net Movement £m	30.9.26 Balance £m
Public Works Loan Board	10.0	0	10.0
Banks (LOBO)			
Banks (fixed-term)			
Local authorities (long-term)			
Local authorities (short-term)	5.0	-5.0	0
Total borrowing	**15.0**	**-5.0**	**10.0**

Treasury Investment Activity

3.31 The CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes (revised in 2021) defines treasury management investments as investments that arise from the organisation's cash flows or treasury risk management activity that ultimately represents balances that need to be invested until the cash is required for use in the course of business.

3.32 The Authority does not hold any invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. During the period, the Authority's investment balances ranged between £1.0 and £16.7 million due to timing differences between income and expenditure. The investment position is shown in table 4 below.

Table 4: Treasury Investment Position

	31.3.26 Balance £m	Net Movement £m	30.9.26 Balance £m	30.9.26 Income Return %	30.9.26 Weighted Average Maturity days
Banks & building societies (unsecured) Banks & building societies (secured deposits) Covered bonds (secured) Government Local authorities and other govt entities Corporate bonds and loans Money Market Funds	0.0 0.0	0.0 9.2	0.0 9.2	0.0 3.24%	0.0 19
Total investments	**0.0**	**9.2**	**9.2**		

3.33 Both the CIPFA Code and government guidance require the Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its treasury investments before seeking the optimum rate of return, or yield. The Authority's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.

3.34 As demonstrated by the liability benchmark in this report, the Authority expects to be a long-term investor and treasury investments therefore include both short-term low risk instruments to manage day-to-day cash flows and longer-term instruments where limited additional risk is accepted in return for higher investment income to support local public services.

3.35 Bank Rate remained at 3.75% throughout the period with short term interest rates largely being around this level. The rates on DMADF deposits have been constant at 3.24%.

Non-Treasury Investments

3.36 The definition of investments in the Treasury Management Code now covers all the financial assets of the Authority as well as other non-financial assets which the Authority holds primarily for financial return. Investments that do not meet the definition of treasury management investments (i.e. management of surplus cash) are categorised as either for service purposes (made explicitly to further service objectives) and or for commercial purposes (made primarily for financial return).

3.37 Investment Guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Welsh Government also includes within the definition of investments all such assets held partially or wholly for financial return.

Treasury Performance

3.38 The Authority measures the financial performance of its treasury management activities both in terms of its impact on the revenue budget and its relationship to benchmark interest rates, as shown in table 5 below.

Table 5: Performance

	Actual £m	Budget £m	Over/ under	Actual %	Benchmark %	Over/ under
Total borrowing	**10.0**	**0.0**	**10.0**			
PFI and Finance leases	0.0	0.0	0.0			
Total debt	10.0	0.0	10.0			
Total treasury investments	**9.2**	**0.0**	**9.2**			
				n/a	n/a	n/a

MRP Regulations

3.39 On 10th April 2024 amended legislation and revised statutory guidance were published on Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). The majority of the changes take effect from the 2025/26 financial year, although there is a requirement that for capital loans given on or after 7th May 2024 sufficient MRP must be charged so that the outstanding Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) in respect of the loan is no higher than the principal outstanding less the Expected Credit Loss (ECL) charge for that loan.

3.40 The regulations also require that local authorities cannot exclude any amount of their CFR from their MRP calculation unless by an exception set out in law. Capital receipts cannot be used to directly replace, in whole or part, the prudent charge to revenue for MRP (there are specific exceptions for capital loans and leased assets).

Compliance

3.41 The Director of Resources and Section 151 officer reports that all treasury management activities undertaken during the quarter complied fully with the principles in the Treasury Management Code and the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy. Compliance with specific investment limits is demonstrated in table 6 below.

Table 6: Investment Limits

	2026/27 Maximum	**30.9.26 Actual**	**2026/27 Limit**	**Complied?** Yes/No
Any single organisation, except the UK Government	**£4m each**			
UK Central Government	**Unlimited**			
Unsecured investments with banks and building societies	**£2.5m in total**			
Loans to unrated corporates	**£1m in total**			
Money Market Funds	**£20m in total**	**9.2m**		**Yes**
Foreign countries	**£5m per country**			
Real Estate Investment Trusts	**£2.5m in total**			

3.42 Compliance with the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for external debt is demonstrated in table 7 below.

Table 7: Debt and the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary

	Q2 2026/27 Maximum	**30.6.26 Actual**	**2026/27 Operational Boundary**	**2026/27 Authorised Limit**	**Complied?** Yes/No
Borrowing	10m	0m	55m	60m	Yes
PFI and Finance Leases	Nil	Nil	1m	1m	Yes
Total debt	**10m**	**0m**	**56m**	**61m**	

3.43 Since the operational boundary is a management tool for in-year monitoring it is not significant if the operational boundary is breached on occasions due to variations in cash flow, and this is not counted as a compliance failure

Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

3.44 As required by the 2021 CIPFA Treasury Management Code, the Authority monitors and measures the following treasury management prudential indicators.

Liability Benchmark

3.45 This indicator compares the Authority's actual existing borrowing against a liability benchmark that has been calculated to show the lowest risk level of borrowing. The liability benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Council is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future and so shape its strategic focus and decision making. It represents an estimate of the cumulative amount of external borrowing the Council must hold to fund its current capital and revenue plans while keeping treasury investments at the minimum level of £2m required to manage day-to-day cash flow

	31.3.26 Actual	**31.3.27 Forecast**	**31.3.28 Forecast**	**31.3.29 Forecast**
Loans CFR	32.21	33.40	35.26	37.12
Less: Usable Reserves	-14.18	-10.84	-10.42	-9.86
Less: Working Capital	-3.10	-3.10	-3.10	-3.10
Net loans requirement	14.93	19.46	21.74	24.16
Plus: Liquidity allowance	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20
Liability benchmark	**15.13**	**19.66**	**21.94**	**24.36**
Existing borrowing	**10.00**	**5.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**

3.46 Following on from the medium-term forecast above, the long-term liability benchmark assumes capital expenditure funded by borrowing of £10m, minimum revenue provision on new capital expenditure based on a 40 year asset life and income, expenditure and reserves all increasing by inflation of 2.0% p.a. Presently borrowing has been delivered through the use of internal resources and the Council has no long term borrowing.

Maturity Structure of Borrowing

3.47 This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of all borrowing were:

	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	30.9.26 Actual	Complied?
Under 12 months	50%	0%	0%	Yes
12 months and within 24 months	50%	0%	0%	Yes
24 months and within 5 years	50%	0%	0%	Yes
5 years and within 10 years	50%	0%	0%	Yes
10 years and above	100%	0%	0%	Yes

3.48 Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

Long-term Treasury Management Investments

3.49 The purpose of this indicator is to control the Authority's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The prudential limits on the long-term treasury management limits are:

	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	No fixed date
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£1.0m	Nil	Nil	Nil
Actual principal invested beyond year end	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Complied?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

3.50 Long-term investments with no fixed maturity date include strategic pooled funds, real estate investment trusts and directly held equity but exclude money market funds and bank accounts with no fixed maturity date as these are considered short-term.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet **18th November 2026**

Additional indicators

Security**:**

3.51 The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

	2026/27 Target	30.9.26 Actual	Complied?
Portfolio average credit rating	A	UK Govt	Yes

Liquidity**:**

3.52 The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount of cash available to meet unexpected payments within a rolling three-month period, without additional borrowing.

	30.9.26 Actual	2026/27 Target	Complied?
Total cash available within 3 months	Nil	Nil	Yes
Total sum borrowed in past 3 months without prior notice	Nil	Nil	Yes

Interest Rate Exposures:

3.53 This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk.

Interest rate risk indicator	2026/27 Target	30.9.26 Actual	Complied?
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise in interest rates	500,000	0	Yes
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% fall in interest rates	500,000	0	Yes

3.54 For context, the changes in interest rates during the quarter were:

	01/04/26	30/09/26
Bank Rate	3.75%	3.75%
1-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.94%	5.29%
5-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	5.18%	5.80%
10-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	5.64%	6.17%
20-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	6.15%	6.61%
50-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	6.01%	6.37%

3.55 The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investment will be replaced at new market rates.

4. IMPLICATIONS

Legal Implications

4.1 A number of statutes governing the provision of services covered by this report contain express powers or duties to charge for services. Where an express power to charge does not exist the Council has the power under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 to charge where the activity is incidental or conducive to or calculated to facilitate the Councils statutory function.

Service / Operational Implications

4.2 Monitoring is undertaken to ensure that income targets are achieved, with Treasury Management activities taking place on a daily basis.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

4.3 The only impact of treasury transactions is in respect of ethical investment linked to the Councils investment counterparties. Presently the Council has a limited counterparty list based on financial risk to the Authority.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 There is always significant risk in relation to treasury transactions, this is why Councils appoint Treasury advisors, which in the case of Bromsgrove is Arlingclose. In addition, there is the requirement in this area to provide an Annual Strategy report containing indicators/limits that must be met. Many of the Council's Corporate Risks have an indirect link to the council's financial position. The mitigations to these risks are set out in the Risk

Report, of which the Quarter 2 Report was reported to Audit, Standards and Governance Committee on 15 October 2026: COR026 - Risk of Cash Flow Strain

6. APPENDICES

None

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

MTFP 2026/27 – February 2026 which contains this years Capital Strategy, Treasury Management Strategy and MRP Policy.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Debra Goodall – Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services (Deputy S151)

E Mail: Debra.Goodall@bromsgroveandredditchbc.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet 18th November 2026

Update on Actions taken to meet the Planning Advisory Service (PAS Recommendations)

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Sue Baxter
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Guy Revans, Executive Director – Environment and Communities
Report Author	Name: Guy Revans, Job Title: Executive Director – Environment and Communities Contact email: guy.revans@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A
Relevant Council Priority		All four Council Corporate Priorities
Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		
This report contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE that

1) The contents of the updated Action Plan in response to the Planning Advisory Service's Recommendations are agreed.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 In light of the significant reforms introduced through the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023, the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025, and updates to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Bromsgrove District Council's Chief Executive, in agreement with the Council Leader, commissioned an independent review of the Council's planning service to ensure it is well placed to meet the challenges ahead.

2.2 The outcomes of that review were presented to the Cabinet on the 25th March 2026 where the following was resolved

- The findings of the Planning Advisory Service ("PAS") Report dated January 2026 be noted.
- The comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Board regarding consideration of the PAS Report be noted.

- The recommendations made by the PAS be accepted and implemented.
- The progress already made be noted and the Planning Advisory Service Recommendations Action Plan be adopted

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

3.1 As can be seen in Appendix 1, a progress update has been prepared showing progress against the PAS review recommendations covering both: Development Management (RDM1-RDM8) and Local Plan Review (RLP1-RLP7).

3.2 Overall, substantial progress has been made on governance including the introduction of the national scheme of delegations for planning functions, establishment of the Local Plan Cross-Party Working Group (LPCPWG), and improved collaboration with Worcestershire County Council (WCC). The remaining challenge is achieving political consensus on the future Local Plan strategy. Notwithstanding this, the role of the LPCPWG is supporting a collaborative approach to plan making in the District which is delivering agreed outcomes from each meeting enabling the Council to remain on track against the timeline for a new Local Plan covering the District. Below is a summary of progress against all recommendations.

3.3 **RDM1 - an urgent need for a reset in the relationships and interaction between councillors and officers.**

- Extensive engagement between officers and members, resulted in full Council approving the National Scheme of Delegations for Planning functions on 14 October 2026.
- Additional workshops and briefing material have been provided.

3.4 **RDM2 - Strengthen and formalise councillor planning training**

- Grey Belt Training (29 April 2026)
- NPPF Training (29 September 2026)
- National Scheme of Delegation for Planning Functions Training
- Planning Refresher Training
- PAS Training Session (8 September 2026) and two others to follow.

3.5 **RDM3 - To continue exploring ways of working more effectively with Worcestershire County Council (especially highways).**

- WCC has agreed to upload consultation responses directly through Public Access.
- Discussions are underway with Idox (website publishing platform) regarding implementation.

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been agreed (see Appendix 3).

3.6 **RDM4 – to undertake a review of the processes and performance monitoring associated with planning enforcement**

- There is a dedicated planning resource now supporting enforcement.
- Improvements are being made to reporting systems and performance monitoring.
- The focus is moving towards priority-based case management rather than enforcement notice statistics.

3.7 **RDM5 -To undertake a review of officer presentations to the Planning Committee.**

- Presentations have already been shortened.
- Key discussion topics have been highlighted during the Committee debate.

3.8 **RDM6 - Review the quality of streaming of Planning Committee meetings and the timescale for retention of recordings.**

- Subject to the spending review, a budget was approved for a new Audio Visual and live-streaming system in February 2026.
- A procurement exercise is ongoing with bids received.
- A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) is required.
- Current retention remains in accordance with records management requirements, which is that live streams are deleted after the minutes of the meeting have been approved.
- Under data protection rules, there needs to be a specific purpose for retaining live streams.
- Members have previously suggested retaining live streams of meetings for training purposes. However, this is not the original purpose for which meetings are live streamed so would be inappropriate from a data protection perspective.

3.9 **RDM7 - To provide greater encouragement for councillors to contribute to pre-application work and to explore how interaction between councillors and officers outside of the planning committee more generally can be improved.**

- Review of the Pre-Application protocol is being prepared.
- Member training has been provided that included engagement in pre-application processes.
- Further PAS training is planned about member involvement in pre application discussions.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet 18th November 2026

3.10 **RDM8 - To undertake a review of the planning committee site visit process to encourage better attendance.**

- The Constitution Review Working Group was updated in September 2026.
- Average attendance is approximately three members per monthly site visit.
- Attendance records are maintained by the Development Management Manager.

3.11 **RLP1 - Build political consensus**

- Independent support from DAC Planning was commissioned and delivered through facilitated workshops and training.
- Members have developed a stronger understanding of Local Plan requirements, and progress has been made in building consensus, including unanimous support for Gateway 1 and agreement that the Green/Grey Belt Assessment is complete.
- There is consensus on the need to progress the Local Plan. Further work through the LPCPWG will focus on building consensus as detailed spatial and site choices are considered.

3.12 **RLP2 Review the operation and terms of reference for the strategic planning steering group (SPSG)**

- The LPCPWG is established and operating in accordance with its agreed Terms of Reference.
- The LPCPWG is now the primary forum for member consideration of Local Plan matters and includes a non-voting Chair.
  The Group provides an established framework for maintaining progress and supporting developing cross-party consensus as the Local Plan develops.

3.13 **RLP3 Develop the strategic spatial vision and complete evidence base.**

- Completion of a Green Belt Assessment.
- Member workshops on spatial vision and development strategy.
- Commissioning of the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA).
- Other evidence base elements are being commissioned.

3.14 **RLP4 Secure infrastructure delivery commitments as a priority.**

- Positive engagement has occurred with WCC.

- An MoU has been agreed - please refer to Appendix 3
- Ongoing NHS engagement is taking place on health infrastructure planning.
- Procurement of viability and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) assessment work is ongoing.

3.15 **RLP5 Strengthen Programme Management and Resources.**

- The Local Plan timetable was approved by full Council in May 20.26, and a detailed project management framework has been established.
- The Local Plan programme is now a standing item at meetings of the LPCPWG, with regular monitoring of progress and risks.

3.16 **RLP6 Continue active senior leadership support**

- The Local Plan has been included on the Corporate Risk Register.
- Regular reporting occurs to senior leadership.
- There is Senior Leadership Team (SLT) attendance at LPCPWG meetings.

3.17 **RLP7 Introduce a training and support programme for councillors.**

- All members were invited to take part in local plan training over the summer of 2026.

3.18 Additional Actions Following the PAS Review:

Officers have further built on the recommendations following the PAS review and developed several additional actions.

1) Providing more regular updates in the members' bulletin to keep all members informed of local plan progress.
2) Regular meetings with the chair of planning committee to review the functioning of planning committee meetings
3) Regular portfolio holder meetings to address matters across all planning functions
4) Regular review of resources to ensure teams can continue to deliver and respond to demands placed on the service
5) Informing members of national changes as they occur with an invitation to contact officers with any queries
6) Maximising staff training and development opportunities

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications related to agreeing the updated action plan as further training can be accommodated from existing budgets and income. Spend to date has been managed via some direct support from PAS and planning budgets.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Planning Committee members have consistently been provided with bespoke planning training over many years. Providing the additional planning training identified in the PAS review and clarifying roles will strengthen compliance with the statutory framework for planning and enforcement decisions as well as embed new arrangements following the introduction of a new national scheme of delegations for planning functions.

5.2 Similarly, Members' Code of Conduct and standards training has been consistently provided to Members on an annual basis. Further training in future also is intended to reinforce the legal framework governing councillor behaviour, including the Code of Conduct.

5.3 Other actions will clarify expectations between parties and strengthen compliance with administrative law.

5.4 The plan-making process is governed by the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, although changes are being made via the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA). Preparing a development plan is a statutory requirement for Local Planning Authorities.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

6.1 Strategic Planning and Development Management functions remain statutory functions and must continue to be implemented irrespective of the progress on Local Government Reorganisation.

Relevant Council Priority

6.2 The information provided in this report has implications for the following Council priorities:

Economic Development;
Housing; and
Environment and Infrastructure.

Climate Change Implications

6.3 Planning plays a central role in delivering the Council's Net Zero and climate resilience objectives. Both the Local Plan and day-to-day development management decisions shape future carbon emissions, transport patterns, energy use and the District's ability to adapt to climate impacts.

6.4 Continuing to implement the PAS recommendations will help ensure climate considerations are embedded more consistently and defensibly in planning decisions by strengthening governance, evidence, and Member training.

6.5 To support sustainable growth and align with national policy requirements, future planning work should:

- Promote low-carbon, energy-efficient development, using design codes and updated policy to require higher energy standards and low-carbon heating.
- Enable renewable and low-carbon energy infrastructure, including solar, wind, and heat networks, where appropriate.
- Prioritise sustainable transport, integrating active travel, public transport and electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure to reduce car dependency.
- Strengthen climate adaptation, particularly regarding flood risk, surface water management, overheating and water efficiency.
- Protect and enhance green and blue infrastructure, supporting biodiversity, carbon sequestration and climate resilience.
- Ensure development delivers Biodiversity Net Gain and other statutory environmental outcomes.

6.6 The emerging Local Plan will be the primary mechanism through which these climate objectives are delivered. Early decisions on spatial strategy, infrastructure, and green belt considerations will have long-term implications for carbon reduction and environmental resilience. Embedding robust climate evidence and maintaining strong Member–Officer collaboration will be essential in achieving a sustainable and future-proofed development strategy for the District.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.7 Implementing these recommendations supports equality and diversity by strengthening fairness, transparency and consistency in decision making. It also improves the accessibility of the planning process and helps councillors better understand their duties under the Equality Act 2010. To implement them lawfully, the council must ensure that all training and processes are accessible to every councillor and that no new procedures inadvertently disadvantage people with protected

characteristics. It is also important that equality considerations are embedded in revised approaches, MOUs or enforcement frameworks.

Community Impact Implications

6.8 The new local plan and sound development management decisions will contribute to community safety, health and well-being objectives. In this context implementing the PAS recommendations is positive.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 The risks associated with the progression of the Bromsgrove District Plan are being monitored by the Council's corporate risk register COR0017 and as a standing item for discussion at LPCPWG meetings. Currently the Council remains on track to deliver the local plan in line with the adopted timetable.

7.2 From a Development Management perspective, risk centres around the speed and quality of decision making and government sanctions are in place if either fall below relevant thresholds. Implementing the action plan to address the issues identified by the PAS report, reduces the risks especially around the quality assessment and would ensure that good decisions are being made. Departmental risk monitoring and mitigation remains in place and is regularly discussed with the Service's Assistant Director.

7.3 Lack of five-year housing land supply is an issue. This exposes the council to the tilted balance, increasing the likelihood of additional development pressure.

7.4 There is a risk of government intervention in plan-making if progress is not made.

7.5 Fragmented political control increases the risk of inconsistent decision making and difficulty achieving cross-party consensus on strategic planning matters.

7.6 Councillors face ongoing tension between green belt protections and government housing delivery expectations, increasing decision risks.

.

7.7 Delays and unresolved issues can lead to appeals for non-determination, removing control from the Council.

7.8 Focus on minor details at Planning Committee risks missing strategic planning considerations and weakens the planning balance.

7.9 Limited early engagement in terms of councillor involvement at pre-application and pre-committee stages leads to unresolved concerns surfacing late
in the process.

7.10 With approximately 89% of the District designated green belt, options for growth are severely constrained. This is added to by the complexity of “grey belt” policy.

7.11 In terms of planning enforcement, Competing workloads can delay enforcement investigations and undermine confidence in the system. An overreliance on notice numbers rather than resolution outcomes risks a misleading performance assessment.

7.12 Strain between officers and councillors risks deterioration in working relationships and organisational culture. This could result in staff departures and recruitment difficulties, reducing capacity and institutional knowledge, which would add to pressures on staff.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 - Planning Advisory Service Recommendations updated Action Plan

Appendix 2 – Local Plan Cross Party Working Group Terms of Reference

Appendix 3 – Memorandum of Understanding between Bromsgrove District Council and Worcestershire County Council (this appendix may contain exempt information).

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet **18th November 2026**

---

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Sue Baxter	30/10/26
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Guy Revans Executive Director Ruth Bamford Assistant Director	
Financial Services		
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor – Governance Jess Bayley-Hill, Principal Democratic Services Officer	28/10/26
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)		
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Matt Eccles Climate Change Lead	

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet **18th November 2026**

This page is intentionally left blank