

Public Document Pack



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY 18TH FEBRUARY 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 7th January 2026 (Pages 5 - 28)**

4. **Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 6th January 2026 (Pages 29 - 38)**

There are no outstanding recommendations contained in the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board included in this agenda pack.

5. **Particulate Monitoring (Pages 39 - 44)**

6. **Inclusive Play Policy (Pages 45 - 114)**

7. **Council Plan Update Report (Pages 115 - 136)**

8. **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**
9. **To consider, and if considered appropriate, to pass the following resolution to exclude the public from the meeting during the consideration of item(s) of business containing exempt information:-**

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

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Paragraph(s)</u>
10	3

10. **Medium Term Financial Plan Stage 2 Budget Report 2026/2027 to 2028/2029 (including Capital Strategy, Investment Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy) - Report to Follow**

The Medium-Term Financial Plan Stage 2 Budget Report 2026/2027 to 2028/2029 (including Capital Strategy, Investment Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy) will be published in a supplementary papers pack.

It is anticipated there will be exempt information contained in one of the appendices to this report which may need to be considered in exempt session.

J. Leach
Chief Executive

Parkside
Market Street
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B61 8DA

10th February 2026

If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact
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GUIDANCE ON FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS

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

Notes:

Although this is a public meeting, there are circumstances when Council might have to move into closed session to consider exempt or confidential information. For agenda items that are exempt, the public are excluded.



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- Meeting Minutes
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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY 7TH JANUARY 2026, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors K.J. May (Leader), S. J. Baxter (Deputy Leader), S. T. Nock, K. Taylor and S. A. Webb

Observers: Councillor P. M. McDonald and Councillor H. D. N. Warren-Clarke

Officers: Mr J. Leach, Mrs. C. Felton, Mr. P. Earley, Mr M. Cox, Mr. M. Bough, Mr. D Riley, Mrs. R. Green, Mr. C. Poole, Ms. A. Delahunty, Mr P. Bailey, Mr. M Eccles, Mrs B. Talbot and Mrs J. Gresham.

56/25

TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor P. Whittaker.

57/25

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

58/25

TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 19TH NOVEMBER 2025

Prior to consideration of the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 19th November 2025, the Leader announced that there was a typographical error contained within the minutes. The fourth recommendation in respect of the Medium-Term Financial Plan Budget Update and Consultation report had been omitted in the published minutes. However, it was confirmed that the vote was taken on all four of the recommendations included in the report as follows:

RESOLVED that

- 1) The updated budget position for the Council is noted in respect of the 2026/27 annual budget and for the Medium-Term Financial Plan up to 2028/29.
- 2) The key assumptions listed in this document are confirmed as accurate for the purpose of projecting an initial budget position.

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- 3) A further report in February will include additional information from the Local Government Settlement to give a final financial position for the Council.

RECOMMENDED that

- 4) The Consultation on the Budget 2026/27 be noted.

The fourth recommendation as detailed above had been subsequently considered and agreed by Council at the meeting held on 3rd December 2025.

RESOLVED that subject to the amendment, as detailed in the preamble above, that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 19th November 2025 be approved.

59/25

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 18TH NOVEMBER 2025

The Leader invited the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board to present the minutes from the Board meeting held on 18th November 2025. In doing so, Members were informed that there were no outstanding recommendations contained within the minutes.

It was explained that there had been a number of reports pre-scrutinised by the Board and the Finance and Budget Working Group prior to this Cabinet meeting, as detailed below:

1. Biodiversity First Duty Report
2. Particulate Monitoring Report
3. Homelessness Prevention, Rough Sleeper and Domestic Abuse Grants Funding 2027/28 and 2028/29 Report
4. Business Rates Discretionary Rates Relief Policy 2026-2027 Report
5. Council Tax Base Report 2026/27 Report
6. Council Tax Empty Homes Discounts and Premiums 2026-27 Report
7. Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27 Report

No further recommendations had been made as a result of this pre-scrutiny. The Chairman of the Board stated, however that the Board were very keen for Cabinet to agree all of the recommendations included within the reports that had been pre-scrutinised.

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RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 18th November 2025 be noted.

60/25

APPOINTMENTS TO THE SHAREHOLDERS COMMITTEE

The Leader presented the Appointments to the Shareholders Committee report for Members' consideration. The report proposed that Members be nominated to sit on the Shareholders Committee following a change to the Cabinet membership which had resulted in a vacant seat on this Committee.

Nominations were received for Councillors S. T. Nock and S. Webb.

On being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED that

Councillors S. T. Nock and S. Webb be appointed to the Shareholders Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

[Prior to the end of the meeting, Cabinet revisited this report. It was noted by Officers that the number of Cabinet Members required on the Committee was only four. However, Members suggested that the number of Members for this Committee had been amended earlier in the municipal year to five and therefore the nominations remained as detailed above].

61/25

HOUSING TASK GROUP FINAL REPORT

The Leader welcomed Councillor H. Warren-Clarke in his capacity of Chairman of the Housing Task Group to present the Housing Task Group Final Report for the consideration of Cabinet.

Councillor Warren-Clarke stated that he was pleased to present this report and outlined the background to the report for Members and explained that the Task Group had been agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Board at the meeting held on 23rd July 2025.

During the meetings of the Task Group there were several areas discussed including freeholding and allocation of S106 monies.

There had been detailed discussions regarding these matters along with several other areas which had resulted in the recommendations contained within the report.

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Following the presentation the Leader thanked the Task Group Members for the work undertaken on this matter and discussed the recommendations in detail.

- Recommendation 1 – This recommendation proposed that Officers explore the potential of establishing an initiative whereby a basic start up package be provided to residents who were currently on the housing waiting list. This package would consist of essential items for those who did not have them when moving into a new property.
- Recommendation 2 – This dealt with the mix of affordable housing provided within a new housing development. The recommendation proposed that the affordable housing allocation be made up of social rent and shared ownership properties only and exclude outright sales of affordable homes.
- Recommendation 3 – This recommendation proposed an increase in monitoring information for Members to understand the bad debt in terms of non-payment of Council Tax by residents.
- Recommendation 4 – This was concerned with monitoring the numbers of residents claiming Council Tax Support whilst living in housing Bands F, G and H. It was explained that these residents may be 'asset rich but potentially revenue poor' which might result in them claiming this benefit. This recommendation would help the Council to better understand the needs of these residents and any potential areas of support that the Council could provide.
- Recommendation 5 – this proposal would ensure greater engagement with Ward Members during the consideration of appropriate allocation of S106 monies for developments within the District. Members discussed this recommendation in detail and stated that this matter would be relevant at the pre-Planning application stage in a development. It was felt that should Ward Members be interested in the specific allocation of S106 monies then they should attend pre-application meetings. It was reported that there had been some instances when Members had not attended such meetings. Some Members explained that they were invited to comment on the application but not always invited to the pre-application meeting. The Cabinet Member for Planning, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) and Strategic Housing undertook to look into this matter further with the relevant Officers. It was suggested that one solution might be that a 'read receipt' be included in invitations to pre-application meetings to Members in order for Officers to retain an audit trail of invitations and emails sent on this matter in the future.

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- Recommendation 6 – This recommendation dealt with the matter of fleeceholding. Members felt that increased lobbying of central Government was necessary in order to prevent escalating costs for management of developments in the future. Some Members stated that during recent meetings with developers at Parish Council level, that it had been reported that the Council needed to engage more with developers in respect of management of developments. It was reported that during meetings of the Task Group, Task Group Members had been reassured that this engagement was taking place. This was confirmed by Officers at the meeting, and it was reported that developers were sometimes reluctant to engage with the Council in these matters due to the potential costs involved. The Cabinet Member for Planning, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) and Strategic Housing undertook to look into this matter further with the relevant Officers. Included in this recommendation were details on a consultation proposal by Government to implement aspects of the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024. The consultation had closed on 26th September 2025. Members queried the outcomes of this consultation and whether any information was available. Noting the current timeline for Local Government Reorganisation, Members expressed that this matter would need to be carried forward by the new unitary authority. However, in the meantime, it was suggested that a joint letter be written by the Leader of the Council and Chairman of the Housing Task Group to lobby Government further in this matter.

On being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED that

- 1) Officers approach Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) and jointly explore a startup crisis package for residents living in social housing including the potential of an increase in housing benefit payment to cover the costs of the crisis package. The findings to be completed in three months and reported back to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.
- 2) Bromsgrove District Council's preference was for the mix of affordable housing contained within a new development be made up of social rent and shared ownership properties only and exclude outright sales of affordable homes.
- 3) Officers provide Members with costings of bad debt owed to the Council as a result of non – payment of Council tax by residents.

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- 4) Officers monitor the number of residents claiming Council Tax Support in housing Bands F, G and H (with metrics built into the performance reporting framework).
- 5) Where a planning application had a material impact on the local community and there was a consideration for S106 contribution allocation, the Ward Member (and neighbouring Ward Member(s)) be informed and consulted with prior to consideration of the application. A follow up consultation with the Ward Member (and neighbouring Ward Member(s)) should also take place.
- 6) As part of the Local Government Reorganisation process, the Council:
 - a) Noted that the Government was currently analysing the feedback from the consultation which sought views on proposals to implement aspects of the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024 and further reform related to the charges leaseholders, and homeowners on freehold estates, pay and services they received, which had closed on 26th September 2025.
 - b) Suggests that a new unitary authority continued to lobby Government on the matter of fleeceholding within Bromsgrove District.

62/25

CYBER SECURITY UPDATE - INCLUDING WHATSAPP POLICY AND AI POLICY

The ICT Technical Team Leader presented the Cyber Security Update - including WhatsApp Policy and AI Policy for Members' consideration. In doing so it was noted that the Policy provided a guide to Council Staff and had been developed to ensure the ethical, transparent, and responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies across Bromsgrove District Council. Included in the report were specific examples of appropriate use of WhatsApp. The AI Policy also addressed the use of third-party tools and the importance of training and education for staff in these areas. It was reported that a programme of communications would be rolled out to staff and Members as a result of the policy.

Members welcomed the implementation of both policies for staff. Officers stated that this policy was for staff and it was recognised that a similar policy would be required for Members and that such a policy would be produced in due course.

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RESOLVED

- 1) To adopt the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Acceptable Use Policy as a formal policy document.
- 2) To adopt the WhatsApp Policy as a formal policy document.

63/25

BIODIVERSITY FIRST DUTY

The Climate Change Manager presented the Biodiversity First Duty report for Members' consideration. It was reported that the Environment Act 2021 had placed a legal duty on public authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity. As a result, Bromsgrove District Council must publish a Biodiversity Duty Report which covered the period up to 1st January 2026 and publish this by 26th March 2026.

The Council was taking steps enhance biodiversity across the District and several initiatives were already underway; such as leaving grass verges uncut throughout the growing season. There were areas for improvement that had also been identified through working with services areas across the Council. These included:

- Continued engagement with the Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- Monitoring and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) through Planning.
- Enhancing biodiversity on Council-owned land.
- Promoting citizen science and community engagement

Further information was highlighted to Members as follows:

- A new biodiversity report was required every five years.
- Capital investment might be required in the future to undertake future biodiversity projects such as grass verge management equipment.
- Other funding streams would be investigated such as Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) grants.
- Included in the biodiversity report were several mandatory elements as follows:
 - Policies, Objectives and Actions
 - How Other Strategies Were Considered
 - Future Actions
 - Biodiversity Net Gain Information

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- Biodiversity actions contributed to climate resilience, carbon sequestration, and nature-based solutions and therefore were important to consider for the Climate Change Strategy which was currently being prepared.

Following the presentation, Members thanked Officers for the report and outlined that it was important to note that only some of the actions plans would be implemented by the Council prior to Local Government Reorganisation. Therefore, it was important for Officers to track the plans and outcomes and link in with other authorities once a decision had been made in terms of local government structure in the future.

Members were concerned that the planting of trees be carried out following the implementation of the Bromsgrove Route Enhancement Programme (BREP). As Members were aware, a large number of trees had been removed as part of this project, and it had previously been agreed that three thousand new trees would be planted to offset their removal. Members agreed that it was important to understand where these threes were to be planted and that continued maintenance would be carried out once planted. Councillor Taylor undertook to find the information regarding this.

The Leader invited the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board to comment on this report following its pre-scrutiny at the Board meeting held on 18th January 2026. It was reported that the Board had looked at the report in detail and had raised some of the same questions as the Cabinet.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the findings of the Biodiversity Duty First Consideration Report be noted; and
- 2) Members agreed to publish the full Biodiversity Duty First Consideration Report to the Council's website.

64/25

PARTICULATE MONITORING

The Technical Services Manager and Acting Principal Officer (Technical Pollution) from Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) presented the Particulate Monitoring for Cabinet's consideration.

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The report had been prepared as a result of discussions at a Bromsgrove District Council meeting where it was agreed an options paper be presented to Members.

Particulate Monitoring (PM) was already carried out by WRS, and three sensors were already in place across the District at the following locations:

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

The sensors measured a range of pollutants including PM in real time and monitoring data was accessible via a public portal on the WRS website. Members were encouraged to access this data if they wished to understand the data that was being collected and monitored.

It was noted that the University of Birmingham (UoB) was already monitoring PM in Worcestershire and this would provide an insight into the PM air pollution in Worcestershire. WRS had approached UoB to assist in the design and implementation of a local source apportionment study of PM in Worcestershire. The study would provide a characterisation of the sources of PM, similar to the UoB study outlined above, utilising the specialist monitoring equipment and expertise available from UoB at this time.

Officers explained that this was an exciting and unique opportunity unavailable to any other local authorities outside of Worcestershire now or at any other time.

Members were informed that there was currently no funding for this project and that agreement to the proposal would need to be considered alongside other competing bids for funding from reserves. It was noted that Worcestershire County Council (WCC) had been approached via email to ascertain if they were able to provide any funding for this monitoring in the future.

The Cabinet Member for Planning, WRS and Strategic Housing invited the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board to speak on this report as it had been robustly pre-scrutinised at the meeting held on 6th January 2026. The outcome of both the pre-scrutiny and consideration of the report by Cabinet was that Members were keen to see this monitoring implemented in the future.

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However, due to no allocated funding for the project there was a slight amendment to the second recommendation contained within the report which noted that the implementation of the project was subject to funding being available either through the budget bid process or any other sources of funding such as WCC.

Therefore, on being put to the vote it was

RECOMMENDED that

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

65/25

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION, ROUGH SLEEPER AND DOMESTIC ABUSE GRANTS FUNDING 2027/28 AND 2028/29

The Housing Development & Enabling Manager presented the Homelessness Prevention, Rough Sleeper and Domestic Abuse Grants Funding 2027/28 and 2028/29 for Members' consideration.

Members were reminded that a report had been approved at the Council meeting held on 19th November 2025 where the temporary accommodation element of the Revenue Support Grant was ringfenced to homeless prevention activities for 2026/27, the report advised that this element of Revenue Support Grant was no longer required.

It was noted that from 2026/27, the Government had consolidated existing Rough Sleeper and Domestic Abuse grants into a single Homelessness Prevention Grant. This new grant encompassed funding for prevention and relief activities for three-years.

It was proposed that the funding allocation for the three-year period would be used for the schemes as detailed in the report considered previously. Members were informed that the funding received had been more generous than expected and that a future report would be presented to Cabinet with an update on the outcomes of the projects and any uplift and additional initiatives being implemented.

The report was pre-scrutinised at the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 6th January 2026. At this meeting, Members expressed

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that they were pleased with the report and the decrease in the numbers of those who were homeless and rough sleeping which had decreased within Bromsgrove, which was an excellent outcome for the District and testament to the hard work of the Officers at the Council.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The initiatives in the table below be approved to receive the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Grant and Domestic Abuse Grant allocations of funding for 2027/28 and 2028/29, subject to satisfactory performance; with any uplift and additional initiatives being implemented prior to that period to be the subject of a further report to the Cabinet;

Homelessness Grant Allocation	2027/28 £ (up to £620,380)	2028/29 £ (up to £683,063)
Housing Options Service Top Up Staffing Costs	52,475	52,475
Static Temporary Accommodation for an additional 4 units of accommodation	30,688	30,688
Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership Co-ordinator – contribution towards county-wide development and delivery of housing initiatives in partnership with other agencies	10,500	10,500
Severe Emergency Weather Provision	18,347	18,347
St Basils Foyer – provides stable accommodation/support for young people - 14 units – fully occupied during last financial year	50,203	50,203
St Basils Crash pad – provides emergency temporary accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds	19,711	19,711
Bromsgrove Home Choice CBL and Homelessness Module	14,600	14,600
St Basils Young Persons Pathway Worker – support to prevent homelessness for under 25's and Crash Pad to provide a unit of emergency accommodation for young people.	41,116	41,116
NewStarts - Provide Furniture and Volunteering Opportunities for Ex-Offenders – supports tenancy sustainment and provides future employment opportunities/reduces risk of reoffending	15,000	15,000

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GreenSquare Accord Housing Related Support – helping ex-offenders remain housed/seek employment	31,172	31,172
Maggs Rough Sleeper outreach and prevention service targeting rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping.	35,607	35,607
North Worcestershire Basement Project - Support for young people at risk of homelessness	45,000	45,000
BDHT - Sunrise Project intensive support	46,886	46,886
Mental Health Link Worker (part funded)	21,554	21,554
CAB – Debt Advice for Home Owners and Private Renters	27,611	27,611
CAB – Affordability Assessments	6,021	6,021
Housing First/Housing Led Service	29,563	29,563
Part time Empty Homes Officer	7,680	7,680
Spend to Save Top Up	5,683	5,683
County Rough Sleeper Coordinator	5,500	5,500
Rough Sleeper Access to Accommodation Fund and NFNO/NSNO	1,000	1,000
County Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator	5,112	5,112
County Domestic Abuse Research and Intelligence Officer	4,573	4,573
Top up to DA Housing Options Officer	6,059	6,059
Total committed expenditure	£531,66	£531,661
Underspend	£88,719	151,402

- 2) Delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing, to use any unallocated grant from this source of grant funding during the year or make further adjustments and uplifts as necessary to ensure full utilisation of the grants, including any mid-year Homelessness Prevention Grant top up, for 2027/28 and 2028/29 in support of existing or new schemes.

66/25

PAY POLICY 2026/27

The Human Resources & Development Manager presented the Pay Policy 2026/27 report for Members' consideration.

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It was noted that this was the annual report provided to Members and outlined the pay structure for Council staff.

RECOMMENDED that

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

67/25

BUSINESS RATES DISCRETIONARY RATES RELIEF POLICY 2026-2027

The Revenue Services Manager presented the Business Rates Discretionary Rates Relief Policy 2026-2027.

It was reported that historically, discretionary rates relief had been restricted to charities, not for profit organisations, and the occupiers of small premises within rural settlements. However, the Localism Act 2011 and the Non-Domestic Rating Act 2023 removed some of the restrictions on the award of relief and, except in the case of charities and non-profit organisations, the Council could only award relief to any ratepayer where it would be reasonable to do so and was in the interest of the Council's council taxpayers.

Certain types of property situated within a rural settlement and with a rateable value below specific thresholds were entitled to rural rate relief, the properties eligible for rural rate relief were as follows:

- The only post office within a rural settlement
- The only general store within a rural settlement
- The only public house within a rural settlement
- The only petrol filling station within a rural settlement
- A rural food shop

The 'rural rate condition' allowed billing authorities a further discretion to grant relief to any business within a rural settlement provided that the rateable value of the property occupied was less than £16,500, that the use of the property was of a benefit to the local community, and it was in the interest of taxpayers for relief to be provided.

The rural rate condition was removed by the Localism Act 2011 which gave the Council greater powers to award discretionary rate relief.

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Members were informed that the revised policy aimed to modernise the framework for awarding relief in line with the Council's strategic Priorities and moved away from the rigid criteria guided by the following principles:

- Community benefit
- Strategic alignment
- Financial need
- Sustainability

The Finance and Budget Working Group had pre-scrutinised this report at its meeting held on 5th January 2026. There were no further recommendations made as a result of this pre-scrutiny.

RECOMMENDED that

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

68/25

COUNCIL TAX BASE REPORT 2026/27

The Revenue Services Manager presented the Council Tax Base Report 2026/27 for Members' consideration.

The Council Tax Base calculation for 2026-27 this was required as this was the first step in determining the Council Tax for the forthcoming year.

Members were informed that the Council Tax Base was calculated using data held by the Authority as of 30th November 2025. This data reflected the number of dwellings in each valuation band and accounts for exemptions, discount and reductions.

The Finance and Budget Working Group had pre-scrutinised this report at its meeting held on 5th January 2026. There were no further recommendations made as a result of this pre-scrutiny.

RESOLVED that the amount calculated by Bromsgrove District Council as the Council Tax Base for the whole area for 2026/27 be approved at 38,409.8 as detailed below to include the individual parish elements.

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	Parish Name	Net
	Whole Area	38,409.8
101/107	Unparished	14,285.3
111	Alvechurch	2,383.1
102	Barnt Green	1,044.8
116	Belbroughton and Fairfield	1,255.8
118	Bentley Pauncefoot	258.9
119	Beoley	474.0
103	Bournheath	222.3
104	Catshill and North Marlbrook	2,352.6
120	Clent	574.6
121	Cofton Hackett	1,280.1
122	Dodford with Grafton	411.6
105	Finstall	320.3
123	Frankley	50.4
124	Hagley	3,237.9
106	Lickey and Blackwell	2,141.1
125	Hunnington	271.8
126	Romsley	667.6
127/131	Parish of Stoke	1,941.3
129	Tutnall and Cobley	407.0
130	Wythall	4,829.3
		38,409.8
	Trent Flood Defence Area	7,102.2
	Severn Flood Defence Area	31,307.7

69/25

COUNCIL TAX EMPTY HOMES DISCOUNTS AND PREMIUMS 2026-27

The Revenue Services Manager presented the Council Tax Empty Homes Discounts and Premiums 2026-27.

In doing so the current levels of discount to 'second' homes and empty homes were provided. It was noted that empty homes were unoccupied and substantially unfurnished dwellings. The Council applied a graduated discount for these homes. Members were informed that homes that were empty for thirty days or less received a 100 per cent discount, homes empty for more than thirty days were charged the full amount of Council Tax.

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For long term empty homes, the Council could apply additional Council Tax, when a home had been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for twelve months or more. In terms of the 'second home' premium, Local Authorities had been able to apply additional Council Tax for substantially furnished dwellings and were no one's sole or main residence from 1st April 2025. Members were informed that the Council did not currently apply premiums to second homes. It was suggested that due to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) it would be more appropriate for the new structure of local government to make decisions on whether to implement these premiums in the future.

Cabinet was informed that for the 2025/26 tax year the additional Council Tax levied on long-term empty homes was estimated to be £476,000, with Bromsgrove retaining £57,000 shared across precepting Authorities.

Currently there were one hundred and twenty-four 'second homes' within the District. It was noted that this was a snapshot in time as levels could change. The imposition of a 'second home' premium, applied to these homes. If applied, this would lead to an additional Council Tax premium of £300,000 with the Council retaining £36,000. Therefore, it was considered that the application of a 'second home' premium was not financially beneficial for this premium to be implemented currently.

The process of how empty homes were treated during probate or undergoing substantial repair projects was explained to Members. This was a complex process and took into consideration several factors.

Members were keen to understand what the Council did with the funding received from the revenue from long term empty homes and if it was ringfenced. Officers explained that this revenue was accounted for in the Council Tax receipts.

The Finance and Budget Working Group had pre-scrutinised this report at its meeting held on 5th January 2026. There were no further recommendations made as a result of this pre-scrutiny.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the determinations as set out in Appendix A be adopted with effect from 1st April 2026.
- 2) The Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services be authorised to consider, on a case-by-case basis, a

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reduction to the long-term empty premium under Section 13A(1)(C) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

3) the Council retained the existing discounts for unoccupied and furnished homes, as set out in Appendix A (below) and did not implement additional council tax premiums for unoccupied and substantially furnished homes.

70/25

COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2026/27

The Revenue Services Manager presented the Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27 for Cabinet's consideration.

In doing so it was explained that there was a requirement under section 13A(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (LGFA '92) to have a Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme. The scheme must specify the reductions in Council Tax available to individuals in financial need, or to defined classes of people considered to be in financial need.

On 1st April 2021, Bromsgrove District Council introduced an income-banded scheme for working age applicants. The rationale was to future proof the scheme, reduce administrative burdens and align more closely with universal credit. The current scheme included a provision to uprate income bands by an inflation factor determined by the Council, typically aligned with increases in national welfare benefits. The CTR Scheme must be reviewed each year.

It was proposed that for 2026-27 the uprating of income bands should be 3.8 per cent, which was in line with the increase in national benefits.

The Finance and Budget Working Group had pre-scrutinised this report at its meeting held on 5th January 2026. There were no further recommendations made as a result of this pre-scrutiny.

RECOMMENDED that

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

71/25

TO CONSIDER ANY URGENT BUSINESS, DETAILS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED TO THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC AND PROCUREMENT SERVICES PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING AND WHICH THE CHAIRMAN, BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, CONSIDERS TO BE OF

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

There was no Urgent Business on this occasion.

72/25

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27 TO 2028/29 INCLUDING FEES AND CHARGES, WRS BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS AND OUTCOME OF BUDGET CONSULTATION

The Interim Finance Manager presented the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2026/27 to 2028/29 including Fees and Charges, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Budget recommendations and outcome of the Budget Consultation report. This included information on the Chancellor's Autumn Statement implications, fees and charges proposals, consultation outcomes, and key financial pressures.

This report enabled Officers to prepare for stage Two of the Council's Budget setting process, supported the approach to Fees and Charges and the WRS uplift. In addition to this it confirmed the timetable to February Cabinet and March Council Tax Resolution.

In terms of the national context Officers explained that Chancellor's Autumn Statement introduced major structural and funding changes for the future. This was underpinned by the outcomes of the Fair Funding Review. The review aimed to redistribute resources more equitably based on assessed local need. Key elements of the new funding framework included:

- Needs-Based Formula - This incorporated an updated demographic and service demand data.
- Resource Adjustment Mechanism - This reflected a Council's ability to raise local income.
- Area Cost Adjustments - This accounted for regional variations in service delivery costs.
- Grant Consolidation - This resulted in multiple small grants merged into larger ring-fenced grants e.g.
 - New Homes Bonus funding would no longer be available, and funding would be redirected to a core settlement.
 - Homelessness Prevention, Rough Sleeping, Temporary Accommodation to be combined.
 - Discretionary Housing Payments and Household Support Fund proposed for consolidation.

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In addition to the changes relating to the Fairer Funding Review and Grant Consolidation as detailed above, other key measures should be noted:

- A high-value property surcharge from April 2028 - central Government would retain revenue in the future.
- Council Tax flexibility remained unchanged at 2.99 per cent or £5 cap.
- An £18m national investment for the upgrade of two hundred children's play areas under 'Pride in Place'.
- Rent Convergence would be reintroduced from 2026. This would be in addition to the standard CPI + 1 per cent plus weekly adjustment.

As a result of these changes there would be an impact on Bromsgrove as follows:

- The redistribution under Fair Funding would likely reduce Core Spending Power by 3.4 per cent over three years.
- The simplification of grant funding would reduce flexibility.
- The Council tax ceiling remained unchanged.
- There would be the opportunity to bid for 'Pride in Place' funding.

Members were reminded that Council set a three-year MTFP 2025/26 to 2027/28 in February 2025 in February 2025. The position reflected a balanced budget for 2025/26 with a deficit position of £1.03m in 2026/27 and deficit of £399k in 2027/28. It was noted that the Council was operating in a high-cost environment and an assumption had been made that there would be no growth in business rates given the reset and the end of pooling.

Some of the corporate assumptions were provided to Members as follows:

- Incorporation of a two per cent pay award of £389,000 and a further 1 per cent cost-of-living uplift of £195,000
- The cost of Councillors rejoining the Local Government Pension Scheme at a cost of £54,000.

It was noted that some of the extra costs were offset by the release of £230,000 from the utilities inflation budget and £250,000 corporate savings. Further savings had been generated from a change in forward funding rates for pensions of £358,000 in 2026-27 rising to £380,000 in 2028-29.

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Fees and Charges were originally assumed at an increase of 2 per cent reflecting an increase of £100,000. Services have now provided more granular schedules resulting in a further income of £152,000 in 2026/27.

WRS required no uplift in 2026/27 due to pension rate changes, with pressures of £25,000 in 2027/28 and £59,000 in 2028/29 for salary and inflation. It was noted that WRS could not offset these through income generation.

It was reported that the funding gap had been narrowed as a result of the work undertaken as detailed above. However, further work was still being undertaken prior to the Final Settlement.

Following the presentation of the report members queried several areas including the following:

- The proposed two percent pay award and one percent cost of living increase – Members raised that there needed to be careful consideration of the level of pay increase particularly as the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) had recommended a higher level of increase to Members Allowances of 4.6 per cent for the next municipal year.
- WRS deficit – Members were surprised at the level of financial burden on the Council and concerned that all authorities included in the Service Level Agreement (SLA) for WRS were responsible for the appropriate amount of deficit. The Interim Section 151 Officer had previously been asked about this matter and at the time of writing a response was to be provided by a member of the Finance Team to the Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance and the Chief Executive. However, Members were reassured that the Interim Section 151 Officer did attend WRS Board meetings. The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board explained that this report had been pre-scrutinised at a meeting of the Finance and Budget Working Group on 5th January 2026. At this meeting, value for money was discussed in respect of WRS particularly within the context of Planning Enforcement. Members were reminded that the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) review had just been undertaken and it would be prudent to wait until the outcomes of that review had been provided before making any assumptions. It was noted that the Council paid a large amount of funding to WRS which looked to increase to £500,000 by 2028-29 and value for money needed to be established. Officers reminded members that WRS provided bespoke services to the Council which would result in an increase of costs incurred. It was requested that further work be undertaken in looking at value for money in terms of Planning Enforcement and the other services

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provided by WRS following the outcomes of the PAS review. It was suggested that the original business case for the establishment of Planning Enforcement by WRS be revisited as part of this work. It was further noted that Planning Enforcement took a considerable amount of time and that the numbers of cases would not decrease immediately due to the complex process.

The Policy Manager provided an update on the Budget Consultation which had closed on 2nd January 2026. It was reported that there had been a disappointing response to the consultation. A total of two hundred and twenty-three valid surveys had been received (one hundred and thirty-eight from the Community Panel and eighty-five from the general public). Members queried whether this might be an opportunity to look at the membership of the Community Panel for future years and contact neighbouring authorities to understand the results their consultation had received. There had been no responses received from the local school who had been contacted. A longer lead in time for the consultation might have provided an increased response and this should be looked at for the future. Engagement sessions had been carried out in the usual way. In speaking to residents in the District there were new areas that had been highlighted in face-to-face discussions such as immigration, housing, funding and taxes. These areas had not been highlighted as strongly when the survey was carried out previously.

It was reported that there seemed to be disillusionment from the public in respect of local government. However there were some clear indications that residents were interested in what was taking place in the local area with traffic congestion, public transport, increased numbers of houses and environmental damage to the local areas being identified as areas of concern.

In terms of Council Priorities Infrastructure and Environment had been the top priorities identified at 55 and 52.7 per cent respectively. The top three most important Council services were as follows:

1. Environmental Services - 78.2%
2. Planning & Leisure Services - 68.6%
3. Regeneration & Property - 63.2%

Fees and charges were included in the consultation and 37.4 per cent of respondents felt that fees and charges (such as hire costs) should rise by four per cent to keep them in line with inflation and rising staffing costs.

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The demographic of respondents was similar to previous years with the top three respondents ages as follows:

1. 60-69yrs - 26.6%
2. 70-79yrs - 23.9%
3. 80+ years - 7.3%

Suggestions for improvements to increase prosperity within the District were varied however the top three themes were the importance of infrastructure (roads, public transport, amenities, impact of development), Bromsgrove Town Centre, and supporting businesses. These topics had also been in the top three in the previous survey, suggesting consistency in both the publics priorities and areas of concern. These themes had many cross overs, from the impact of traffic (in particular the BREP), encouraging a diverse range of businesses into the town and reducing costs to businesses.

Further suggestions from respondents for increased prosperity within the District were as follows:

- Reducing business rates / relief
- Reducing parking costs (or make it free)
- Supporting independent retailers
- Bringing in key major retailers
- Larger variety of shops on offer on High Street
- Utilise empty shops
- Improve the market
- Make the town vibrant, attractive & distinctive - develop attractions, encourage visitors
- Improve the appearance & maintenance of the high street
- Improved public transport
- Ensure a district-wide view

Other comments were sought from residents on other budget ideas for reducing costs or increasing income to ensure Council services remained sustainable. These were suggested as detailed below:

- Stop expenses (in particular Councillors)
- Review staffing & wages (in particular management)
- Reduce waste
- Effective procurement
- Focus on essential services
- Effective maintenance

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- Do more online.
- Utilise technology, including AI.
- Measure effectiveness and VfM.
- Explore alternative methods of delivery e.g. partnerships, consolidation of services, VCS, franchises.
- Reduce use of consultants.
- Commercial opportunities e.g. better events.
- Reduce events.
- Promote events better to increase revenue.
- Community use of buildings
- Increase enforcement e.g. fly tipping & littering.
- Better coordination around highways and roadworks.

Following the presentation of the consultation responses, the Policy Manager explained she would distribute the information to Members for their information.

Members were disappointed with the response rate and with such a small sample size it was difficult to ascertain what areas within the district were interested in which priorities and issues. This information could be circulated to Members following the meeting.

RECOMMENDED that

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

The meeting closed at 8.12 p.m.

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Chairman

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

6TH JANUARY 2026, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors P. M. McDonald (Chairman), S. Ammar, A. Bailes, R. Bailes, A. M. Dale, D. J. A. Forsythe (Substitute), D. J. Nicholl (Substitute), S. A. Robinson, J. D. Stanley and H. D. N. Warren-Clarke

Observers: Councillor K. May – Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling Councillor S.J. Baxter – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Reorganisation and Climate Change
Councillor S.T. Nock – Cabinet Member for Finance
Councillor K. Taylor – Cabinet Member for Planning, WRS and Strategic Housing
Councillor S.R. Colella

Officers: Mr G. Revans, Ms R. Egan, Ms J. Willis, Mr M. Cox, Mr M. Eccles, Ms A. Delahunty, Ms R. McElliott, Mr C. Poole, Ms M. Worsfold and Mrs S. Woodfield

72/23

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor B. Kumar, with confirmation provided that Councillor D.J.A. Forsythe was attending as his named substitute.

Apology for absence was also received on behalf of Councillor J. Clarke, with confirmation provided that Councillor D.J. Nicholl was attending as the named substitute.

Apologies were also received from Councillor R.E. Lambert.

73/23

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS

There were no declarations of interest nor of whipping arrangements.

74/23

APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Councillor A.M. Dale nominated herself for the position of Vice-Chairman which was seconded by Councillor S. Ammar. On being put to the vote it was

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RESOLVED that Councillor A.M. Dale be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Board for the ensuing municipal year.

75/23

TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 18TH NOVEMBER 2025

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 18th November 2025 were considered by the Board.

A Member requested that an update for Churchfields Car Park should be added to the work programme for the Board's consideration. However, Officers advised that the February report for Town Centre Parking would include the Churchfields Car Park, which was deemed as acceptable by the Board.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 18th November 2025 be approved as a correct record.

76/23

BIODIVERSITY DUTY REPORT - PRE-SCRUTINY

The Climate Change Manager outlined the statutory requirements under the Environment Act 2021 for all public authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Members noted that the Council was legally required to publish a Biodiversity Duty Report by March 2026.

The following key actions which had been completed included:

- Green Flag Awards for Sanders Park and Lickey End Recreation Ground.
- Grass verge biodiversity initiative.
- Tree planting programme (target of 100,000 trees over 15 years).
- Pesticide reduction and alternative weed control.
- Integration of biodiversity monitoring into the Climate Change Strategy.
- Compliance with Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) monitoring for planning applications.

Member comments and discussions were as follows:

- Concerns were raised that targets were vague and lacked measurable outcomes. In response Officers agreed that these would be included for future reporting.
- Meaningful tree planting targets should be included in reporting which was agreed would be reviewed.
- Concerns were raised regarding biodiversity net gain, given the scale of housing development for future local plan requirements by Central Government. Members were advised that finding the relevant expertise to carry out the monitoring was a challenge. The Portfolio Holder agreed that an action plan was in progress to

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review the Council's expectations on how the requirements would be implemented.

- The responsibility for monitoring biodiversity on Council owned land should include a timeline and SMART objectives.
- An explanation was provided to the Board on "Citizen Science" initiatives using the iNaturalist app.
- Consideration of risk management and resource implications was also requested for future reporting. In response Officers explained that as this was a new strategy, steps would be put in place for future reporting with considerations also to include the Local Government Reform (LGR) implications. The Executive Director reassured Members that work was being carried out to consider resource pressures for the Council.

RECOMMENDED that

The Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE that:-

- 1) The findings of the Biodiversity Duty First Consideration Report be noted; and
- 2) Members agree to publish the full Biodiversity Duty First Consideration Report to the Council's website.

77/23

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION, ROUGH SLEEPER AND DOMESTIC ABUSE GRANTS FUNDING 2027/28 AND 2028/29 - PRE-SCRUTINY

The Strategic Housing Officer reported on the three-year Government grant for homelessness prevention, rough sleeper outreach and domestic abuse services. The funding was more generous than anticipated, allowing for stability and potential expansion of services.

A summary of proposals was highlighted as follows:

- Confirmation of three-year funding for existing providers.
- Removal of temporary accommodation funding from this grant (covered by separate revenue funding).
- Government targets were to reduce rough sleeping by fifty percent and reduce families in bed and breakfast accommodation.

Member comments and discussions were as follows:

- Whether amalgamated funding made services flexible? In response Officers expressed the view that the amalgamated funding was less flexible for temporary accommodation, however, this had been offset by increased funding.
- Why there had been underspending on crucial services? It was explained that this was due to the unexpected uplift in funding from Government, therefore, reporting for existing services only form part of this report and that a further report in respect of the

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surplus funding for 2027/28 would be brought to Members in November 2026 and for 2028/29 surplus would be brought to Members in November 2027.

- Clarity for the process of monitoring and auditing grant funded services was sought by the Board. The Strategic Housing Officer explained that quarterly performance monitoring reports were a requirement, with confirmation of expenditure signed off in line with internal audit requirements.
- Clarity on the role of the part time Empty Homes Officer was explained to the Board as an initiative to work with owners of properties which had been empty for over a year. This was aimed to put properties back into use to assist with the lack of housing stock within the District and would be carried out by an existing part time officer, increasing their hours.
- Discussions were also raised regarding the increase in demand from out of area cases and pressures on temporary accommodation. Members were informed that the full rehousing duty only related to those with a priority need which included victims/survivors of domestic abuse and those with mental health issues. It was explained that demand for accommodation was a growing concern within the District but the Council's supply of accommodation becoming available had decreased.
- Further clarity on the BDHT Sunrise Project intensive support was also discussed with Members as requested. It was explained that this was a non-tenure specific, integrated support service for vulnerable residents.

RECOMMENDED that

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

- 1) The initiatives in 4.5 be approved to receive the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Grant and Domestic Abuse Grant allocations of funding for 2027/28 and 2028/29, subject to satisfactory performance; with any uplift and additional initiatives being implemented prior to that period to be the subject of a further report to the Cabinet; and
- 2) Delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing, to use any unallocated grant from this source of grant funding during the year or make further adjustments and uplifts as necessary to ensure full utilisation of the grants, including any mid year Homelessness Prevention Grant top up, for 2027/28 and 2028/29 in support of existing or new schemes.

78/23

PARTICULATE MONITORING - PRE-SCRUTINY

The Technical Services Manager presented options for additional particulate matter monitoring following a council motion. Current

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provision included three low-cost sensors in the Bromsgrove District. The proposed options ranged from extending existing sensors to commissioning a source apportionment study with the University of Birmingham.

The recommended option e included a combination of extended sensors and a mobile “super site” study with an estimated cost of £150,000.

After the presentation, Members raised the following comments and discussions:

- If there were grant funding opportunities from Central Government? Members were advised that there was no current government funding available which had been withdrawn in 2024.
- Further explanations were requested on the cost implications for the recommended option shown within the report. Officers provided clarity that the monies would be used for the purchasing of the necessary equipment, servicing and maintenance.
- Was there a potential liability/risk if the Council did not push forward with the proposals? Clarification was provided that the overall responsibility for particulate matter reduction lay with Central Government but was an opportunity for the Council to review in more detail at the levels within the District.
- If there were opportunities for Section 106 money contributions, taking legacy benefits into consideration? In response Officers explained that the suggestion would require a change in policy. The Leader of the Council added that it was important that there was no delay in progressing the works which had already been agreed at the Cabinet Working Group and was an essential requirement for residents within the District.
- Members noted public health implications and reputational benefits of proactive monitoring.
- The Chairman expressed the view that the wording in the report regarding the electrification of the vehicle fleet was misleading. Clarity was also provided on the electrification of vehicles which would see brake emissions fall, while tyre emissions were expected to rise.
- There was a recommendation suggested from a Member to seek monies from the Legacy Budget. However, the Leader explained that the monies allocated were required for other significant challenges faced by the Council.

RECOMMENDED that

The Cabinet RECOMMEND that:-

- 1) Additional monitoring of Particulate Matter (air pollution) be delivered as set out in Option E below (3.5); and
- 2) A further report be brought back to Cabinet once final costs have been identified.

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79/23

LEVELLING UP FUND PROGRAMME (QUARTERLY UPDATE)

The Regeneration Project Delivery Manager updated the Board on the levelling up fund Windsor Street and Nailer's Yard projects.

The following key points were raised:

Windsor Street:

- a) Phase Two remediation required six months for treatment and six months for monitoring works.
- b) Cabinet had agreed the site redevelopment for housing via partnership with a Registered Social Landlord (RSL).

Nailer's Yard:

- a) Construction was progressing with completion expected in May 2026.
- b) Bruton Knowles had been appointed as property management agent for the commercial building.
- c) The Pavilion building operational model was under review.

Members questions and comments were as follows:

Windsor Street:

- What were the timeframe and costs for the groundwater treatment options as suggested feedback from Environment Agency (EA)? Officers explained the timeframe for Phase One and Phase Two as detailed in the report and reassured Members that although works would take six months for treatment works and six months for monitoring, there would be continuing progression with the project in other areas, such as applying for planning permission. Members were also advised that the works would be within budget for Phase Two remediation works.
- Members requested that the Board be included in updates for the RSL options, prior to Cabinet considerations. Further discussions were also raised that considerations for a local provider may be more beneficial for residents, particularly when reporting issues. In response the Executive Director explained that the options for selecting the suitable contractor was in progress, however, local needs would be a consideration.

Nailers Yard Site:

- Members noted that property agents Bruton Knowles had been appointed to undertake the property management of the commercial building but requested clarity on who would manage the Pavilion Buildings. In response the Board was advised that an operational model was being put in place to explore options

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6th January 2026

such as managing inhouse and considerations for third party involvement.

- Concerns were raised that GJS Dillon were continuing to receive enquiries for the commercial building, but no tangible lettings had been received. It was explained that due to delays in appointing Bruton Knowles, there had been some delays with progression, however, Officers were hopeful that an update could be provided at the next meeting in February 2026.
- An update with regards to progression with the release of the restrictive covenant was also requested by Members. It was explained by the Leader that conversations were in progress to escalate the matter and that an update would be provided to the Board. Further discussions continued with Members suggesting that delays with the progress of the covenant release and operational management of the Pavilion should be included as a risk to the Council which was noted by Officers.
- Members also requested an update on progress for the culvert works and costs associated for the project. Officers informed the Board that works to the culvert were progressing as per the current programme for 4th May 2026 completion. Weather conditions may lead to delays due to the works being carried out in the winter. The Project Manager explained that one complaint had been received from a local resident about the noise from the pumps but this was now resolved with Kier installing acoustic fencing.

The Leader and Officers concluded discussions and were pleased to inform the Board that a representative from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) had visited the Windsor Street and Nailers Yard site. The representative provided positive feedback, noting that the works were progressing well and highlighted that having a set completion date was a significant achievement when comparing progress made by other Local Authorities.

RESOLVED that the update on the progress of the Levelling Up Fund projects be noted.

80/23

LOCAL HERITAGE ACTION LIST (QUARTERLY UPDATE)

The Principal Conservation Officer presented progress of the Local Heritage Action Lists to the Board.

The key points raised were as follows:

- Four parishes had adopted local heritage lists.
- The Bromsgrove draft list was expected mid-January 2026.
- Recruitment was underway for full time Conservation Officer who was due to start in March 2026.
- There had been an increase in development management workload.

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Following the update, Members raised concerns about delays and the potential disadvantages to areas without local heritage listings being established. However, Officers reassured Members that non designated heritage assets were considered and would be picked up during the planning decision stage.

During discussions concerning the lack of resources to work on the lists and the recruitment of consultants, it was queried if additional consultancy would also be sourced for the impending increase in workload for the Local Plan. The Executive Director advised that work capacity was being reviewed by Senior Officers.

RESOLVED that the update on the progress of the Local Heritage Action List be noted.

81/23

WORCESTERSHIRE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - UPDATE

The Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) representative, Councillor B. Kumar had sent his apologies to the Board for the meeting. It was agreed that any queries, following consideration of the update provided and included in the agenda, would be deferred to the next meeting held in February 2026.

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

82/23

FINANCE AND BUDGET WORKING GROUP - MEMBERSHIP REPORT AND UPDATE

After consideration of the Finance and Budget Working Group Membership report and terms of reference the board agreed to the proposed membership of the working group for the 2025/26 municipal year.

RESOLVED that the Finance and Budget Working Group Membership Report be noted.

83/23

CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

Following consideration of the Cabinet Work Programme, Members requested and it was agreed that the inclusion of the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) findings report would be added to the Cabinet Work Programme.

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

84/23

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

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

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The following discussions were raised:

- Capacity of the Minor Works Team – The Chairman expressed his frustration at the lack of progress regarding his request for a report to consider the capacity of the Minor Works Teams. It was agreed that a meeting would be set up to discuss relevant details further with the Leader, Chairman of the Board and relevant Officers.
- Local Government Reform (LGR) - Regular updates was requested for the Boards' consideration which was noted by Officers.

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

85/23

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ACTION SHEET

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

Frustrations were raised by the Chairman regarding delays in progression for the update on Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger profit sharing arrangement negotiations. Members noted that a meeting had been held with the Leader and relevant Officers to discuss progression. Members noted that a briefing paper would be provided to Members of the Board at the next meeting to be held in February 2026.

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Action Sheet be noted.

86/23

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.

The meeting closed at 7.45 p.m.

Chairman

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Cabinet 2026

18th February

Particulate Monitoring – Update Report

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Kit Taylor
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Simon Wilkes, Director - Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Report Author	Chris Poole Job Title: Specialist Lead Officer (Air Quality), WRS Contact email: chris.poole@worcsregservices.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01562 738069
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No
Relevant Council Priority	Infrastructure & Environment
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to RECOMMEND that:-

- 1) Additional funding of £105,234.04 be added to the revenue budget for 2026/27;

And the Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE to NOTE that

- 2) subject to agreement of recommendation 1 above, the recommendations arising from the particulate matter report considered by Cabinet on 7th January 2026 will be presented for Council's consideration alongside this recommendation in February 2026.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) were asked by Council to prepare an options paper for additional Particulate Matter Monitoring within Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) area.
- 2.2 A report was presented to Cabinet on 7th January 2026 outlining the background to air quality and particulate matter in the District. The report presented at that time provided a rationale for enhanced particulate matter and specifically source apportionment research to establish levels and sources of pollution.

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2.3 A number of additional monitoring options were presented and Cabinet recommended Option E as set out in that report be considered at Full Council, subject to and with the requirement for, a further report being brought to Cabinet with greater clarity on costs for the recommended Option (E). This report provides clarity on final costs.

2.4 Option E was Option C and Option D combined. For reference a summary of these options is provided below:

2.5 **Low-cost sensors – extension [Option C].** This option would extend life of existing sensors for a further defined period, e.g. 1 – 3 years beyond expiration of current service and maintenance contract due December 2026. Option C addition allows for relocation of the existing units if required.

- Costs: £20,363.04 (3 units for 3 years, service and subscription)
- including costs for relocation (£3,915)
- Timeline for delivery: January 2027 to provide continuous monitoring
- Data: PM₁, PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, NO, NO₂ Monitoring Total only.

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

- Costs: £124,871
- Timeline for delivery: approximately 18 months
- Data: Chemical analyses and source apportionment of PM
- Costs: £124,871

2.7 The final costs of **Option E** therefore are £145,234.04

3 OPERATIONAL ISSUES

3.1 There are no anticipated operational issues, as the majority of the research will be completed by the University of Birmingham in relation to the supersite. Any work associated with the low cost sensors will be completed as part of the team's business as usual.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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- 4.1 The costs of the recommended Option E outlined within the report above are (One-off) £145,234.04.
- 4.2 It is proposed that expenditure would in year 2026/27.
- 4.3 There is currently no assigned budget available for this project. Any agreement to the proposal would need to be considered alongside other competing bids for funding from reserves.
- 4.4 Following request from WRS on behalf of the council, the Director of Public Health is committed to contributing £40,000 towards this project should approval by the Council be given. Thus the recommendation in 1 above is the cost of the project minus the contribution from the Director of Public Health.

5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Part IV of the Environment Act 1995, the Local Air Quality Management process (LAQM) and subsequent Policy Guidance (LAQM.PG22) and Technical Guidance (LAQM.TG22) documents set out the duty of local authorities to review and assess local air quality within their areas against a set of health-based objectives and work to improving poor air quality identified. Local Authorities in England are expected to report on nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), PM₁₀ and sulphur dioxide (SO₂) as standard within their Annual Status Reports. Under the Environment Act 2021, the UK government have set 2 legally-binding long-term targets to reduce concentrations of fine particulate matter, PM_{2.5}. Whilst the responsibility for meeting the PM_{2.5} targets sits with national government; local authorities have a role to play in delivering reductions in PM_{2.5} and are also required to report on actions taken within their ASR. The proposal supports the council's obligations to assess local air quality within its boundaries in accordance with LAQM regulations.
- 5.2 Poor air quality in general can affect peoples' health, playing a role in many chronic conditions such as cancer, asthma, heart disease and neurological changes linked to dementia. Air pollution is estimated to contribute to between 26,000 to 38,000 deaths per year in England (Chief Medical Officer's Report, 2022). Particulate Matter is considered to be the most important air pollutant in terms of health impacts. PM can have short-term health impacts over a single day when concentrations are elevated. Long-term exposure to PM increases mortality and morbidity from cardiovascular and respiratory diseases and can cause cancer. Effects are amplified in vulnerable groups including young children, the elderly, and those suffering from breathing problems like asthma. It is also causally linked to dementia

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and decline in cognitive function. There is growing evidence for associations with adverse birth outcomes and diabetes. The World Health Organization (WHO) advises there is no safe exposure level to PM.

6 OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Local Government Reorganisation

6.2 No impacts on LGR because it is anticipated the proposed schemes will be implemented before 1st May 2028.

6.3 Climate Change Implications

6.4 No impacts on climate change.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.6 No equality implications have been identified.

7 RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 Risk from not taking proposed action is limiting understanding of PM_{2.5} within the district's boundaries. Risks from implementing proposed action is that additional monitoring may identify an exceedance of an objective that is a national issue and the local authority is limited in powers to resolve.

8 APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1. Cabinet Report 7th January 2026 with full information on the project.

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Kit Taylor.	Advised by email 30.01.2026
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Simon Wilkes	28.01.2026
Financial Services	Debra Goodall	06.02.2026
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings	28.01.2026
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	N/A	N/A
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	N/A	N/A

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Inclusive Play Policy Statement

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Shirley Webb
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes / No
Relevant Assistant Director	Ruth Bamford Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services
Report Author	Ishrat Karimi Fini Parks and Events Service Manager Ishrat.karimifini@bromsgroveandderdditch.gov.uk 01527 881204
Wards Affected	Sanders Park & Hill Top (Sanders Park) Rubery South (St Chads) Side Moor (King George Vth Park) Norton (Lickey End) Other Wards: Alvechurch Village, Catshill South, Marlbrook, Rubery North, Wythall East, Hollywood, Bromsgrove Central, Aston Fields, Charford, Rock Hill, Slideslow, Hagley East, Belbroughton & Romsley, Catshill North, Avoncroft, Barnt Green & Hopwood, Drakes Cross
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	Yes
Relevant Council Priority	Infrastructure and Quality of Life Priorities in the Council Plan
Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet RESOLVE :-

- 1) **That the Inclusive Play Policy Statement be adopted Appendix C;**
- 2) **That the detailed audit of play provision at Sanders Park (against the Plan Inclusive Play Areas [PiPA] accreditation criteria/checklist) be approved; Appendix B**
- 3) **The proposals for Sanders Park be implemented within a 12-month period, strategic and local sites within the 24months.**

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- 4) That subject to completion of resolution 3 above, authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Culture Services to apply for accreditation for Sanders Park play area against the PiPA standard;
- 5) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Culture Services to develop plans to make the play space in Sanders Park a District wide exemplar for accessible and inclusive play;
- 6) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Culture to commission an assessment of the other strategic parks and other play areas against the PiPA standard/checklist and to establish the viability of gaining accreditation;
- 7) That the Design Checklist be approved as a tool for improving the accessibility and inclusivity of all other play spaces; and
- 8) To NOTE that a budget bid of £500,000 in the capital programme has been submitted to pay for inclusive play improvements and for additional officer support.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Bromsgrove District contains 85 equipped play areas. The Council directly manages 40 of these sites. The remaining sites are provided by parish councils, developers and management companies and charities.
- 2.2 The 2024 Play Assessment showed that 81.7% of households are within a 10-15 minute walking time of an equipped play area. However, access varies by ward. Areas with the highest deficiency include south-east Lowes Hill, Lickey Hills, Wythall East and Wythall West.
- 2.3 In December 2024, Cabinet adopted the Play Investment Strategy with a commitment to investment up to £2 million in equipped play over a 10-year period. This investment will reduce deficiencies in play provision and upgrade existing play spaces, to accommodate the inclusive play.
- 2.4 This policy responds to the legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, which places an anticipatory duty on the Council to identify and remove barriers to access for disabled people.
- 2.5 The policy has been developed through comprehensive research of national guidance from PiPA Play, Fields in Trust, Sensory Trust, Scope UK and Play England, as well as review of emerging play sufficiency frameworks in Wales and Scotland.

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3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The policy recognises that achieving high standards of accessible and inclusive play involves real challenges. Constraints include spatial limitations, public open space pressures, maintenance budgets and the diverse needs of disabled children.
- 3.2 Plan Inclusive Play Areas (PiPA) is the UK's only independent accreditation system for evaluating accessible and inclusive play area design. The PiPA standard is exceptionally high. Only one play space in the West Midlands has achieved accreditation. Achieving the highest tier requires inclusive or accessible toilet provision. Currently, only Sanders Park and St Chad's Recreation Ground have accessible toilet provision.
- 3.3 The policy takes a pragmatic four phase approach that balances ambition with practical constraints:

Inclusive play will be prioritised at Sanders Park and other strategic parks. All remaining play areas will also be reviewed to identify opportunities to enhance inclusivity within the available budget.

1: Sanders Park – The Council will carry out an assessment against the Plan Inclusive Play Areas (PiPA) standard and use the results to inform proposals for renewal and enhancement. The Council will then seek external accreditation against this national standard. Sanders Park will be promoted as an exemplar accessible and inclusive play space.

2: Other Strategic Parks – Learning from the Sanders Park audit will be applied to the other three strategic parks (St Chad's Recreation Ground, King George Vth Playing Field and Lickey End Recreation Ground) to establish the feasibility, viability and resources required to achieve the PiPA standard.

3: Other Play Spaces – For all other outdoor equipped play areas, the Council will seek to improve accessibility and inclusivity through use of an Inclusive Play Policy Assessment and Design Checklist. This tool will assist with achieving greater accessibility and record the impacts of planned changes at the design stage.

4. Play investment and Audit – The Council will continue to deliver improvements to play areas across the district in line with the priorities

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identified through the existing Play Audit and Investment Plan, over a 10 year period.

- 3.4 The Council will require play companies and contractors to propose changes using the checklist that increase accessibility and inclusivity. This will form part of design briefs and tender evaluation criteria.
- 3.5 The policy recognises that the Council has direct control of the 40 play spaces it owns and manages. The Council will work in partnership with other providers (parish councils, charities, community associations and management companies) to identify and deliver improvements for the remaining 45 play spaces across the district.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 In December 2024, Cabinet adopted the Play Investment Strategy with a commitment to investment up to £2m in equipped play over a 10-year period.
- 4.2 The Council has identified that an additional capital allocation investment of £500,000 will be required to deliver the significant contribution of the proposed improvements and supporting inclusive play priorities across the district as highlighted through the recent audit. This funding is essential to ensure that identified deficiencies can be addressed comprehensively and that upgraded play areas meet modern accessibility, safety, and quality standards. Without this investment, the programme would need to be significantly scaled back, risking delays or reductions in the delivery of priority improvements across the district.
- 4.3 The additional £500,000 will enable the Council to progress a balanced and equitable investment programme, ensuring that facilities across all wards receive the level of enhancement required. This allocation will support the design, procurement, and installation of inclusive play features, as well as associated infrastructure improvements. The funding request reflects both the rising costs of play equipment and the need to create high-quality, accessible spaces that align with the Council's commitment to inclusive and sustainable community amenities.
- 4.4 The Council has undertaken a procurement exercise for the Play and Investment Plan on behalf of parish councils. Consultants will be commissioned to determine the investment programme across play areas and to support the delivery of inclusive play infrastructure.

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5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council must comply with the Equality Act 2010, which includes the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149) and the Duty to Make Reasonable Adjustments (Section 20).
- 5.2 The duty is anticipatory. This means the Council must identify and remove barriers before disabled people encounter them. The Inclusive Play Policy sets out an ambition to exceed the legal minimum and to provide an exemplar play space at Sanders Park and if viable the other strategic parks.
- 5.3 The policy ensures the Council meets its legal obligations by embedding inclusivity into design and management of other play spaces from the outset.
- 5.4 The policy aligns with emerging play sufficiency legislation. Wales introduced play sufficiency duties in 2010 and Scotland followed in 2023. England is expected to introduce similar requirements through the Planning and Infrastructure Bill 2025.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 The policy establishes a clear framework for inclusive play provision that can be readily adopted or adapted under any future local government reorganisation arrangements. The standards and principles are transferable regardless of governance structure. This initiative offers a helpful "springboard" towards unitarisation in setting out the ambition for any new authority to build on regarding the promotion of inclusive play

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The policy directly supports the infrastructure priority in the Council Plan. The Council Plan states that parks and open spaces "provide green spaces where people and nature can flourish" and offer "opportunities for communities to come together, people to get active and for local businesses and initiatives to deliver activities and events."
- 6.3 The policy also supports the 'quality of life' thread that runs through the Council Plan. The vision aspires to "create a welcoming environment

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that prioritises quality of life, where residents and businesses feel a deep sense of belonging and connection."

6.4 Accessible play provision removes barriers that prevent disabled children and their families from enjoying play opportunities close to home. This contributes to health, wellbeing and social inclusion.

Climate Change Implications

6.5 The policy supports the Council Plan's 'green thread' by promoting sensory-rich environments that incorporate natural materials and opportunities to interact with nature. This helps children develop environmental awareness from an early age.

6.6 Accessible play provision located within walking distance of homes reduces reliance on car journeys. The policy's focus on connected networks of play spaces supports active travel.

6.7 Play equipment procurement will continue to consider sustainable materials and suppliers with environmental accreditation where these meet the performance and safety requirements.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.8 The policy directly addresses equalities by ensuring disabled children can access high-quality play opportunities.

6.10 The policy takes a family-centred approach, recognising that disabled and non-disabled siblings should be able to play together and that parents and carers (who may themselves have disabilities) need good sightlines and access.

6.11 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken. The assessment concluded that the policy will have positive impacts for disabled children and their families by removing barriers to play provision. No negative impacts were identified.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 The main risks and mitigating actions are:

7.2 Failure to provide accessible play provision would breach the Equality Act 2010. The policy mitigates this by establishing clear standards and embedding inclusivity into procurement processes.

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- 7.3 Economic pressures could affect the investment programme. The policy's phased approach allows progress to continue at different rates depending on available budget. The policy recognises that existing sites may have constraints.
- 7.4 Officers may require additional knowledge about inclusive play design. The policy addresses this by requiring play companies to demonstrate understanding of inclusive play principles and by promoting consultation with disabled children and families.
- 7.5 Without clear policy, inclusive play provision may be inconsistent. The policy mitigates this by setting clear standards and requiring inclusive play to be specified in design briefs and assessed in tender evaluation.

APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 Appendix A Bromsgrove Play Assessment site list (August 2024)
- 8.2 Appendix B Inclusive Play Policy Assessment and Design Checklist (December 2025)
- 8.3 Appendix C Inclusive Play Policy Statement (January 2026)
- 8.4 Appendix D Bromsgrove Play Investment Strategy (December 2024)

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Shirley Webb	21.01.26
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Guy Revans	21.01.26
Financial Services	Debra Goodall	28.01.26
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings/ Jess Bayley-Hill	28.01.26
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green	28.01.26
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Matthew Eccles	26.01.26

Appendix A - Bromsgrove Play Assessment Site List (August 2024)

Sort order	URN	Site Name	Play Hierarchy Existing	Play Hierarchy Future (Post Investment)	Strategic Park	Toilet Provision
1	73	Sanders Park Play Area	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	Sanders Park	Accessible WC (within 500m)
2	74	Sanders Park MUGAs	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	Sanders Park	Accessible WC (within 500m)
3	20	Sanders Park Basketball Court 2	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	Sanders Park	Accessible WC (within 500m)
4	71	St Chads Recreation Ground Play Area	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	St Chads Recreation Ground	Accessible WC (within 500m)
5	25	St Chads Recreation Ground - MUGA & Skatepark	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	St Chads Recreation Ground	Accessible WC (within 500m)
6	113	Lickey End Recreation Ground MUGA	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	Lickey End Recreation Ground	None
7	30	King George V Playing Field Play & MUGA	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	KGV Playing Fields	None
8	5	Aston Fields Recreation Ground Basketball Court	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None
9	37	Aston Fields Recreation Ground Play Area	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None
10	652	Barnsley Hall Play Area	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None
11	43	Bourneheath Village Hall Recreation Ground Play Area	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None
12	21	Braces Lane Recreation Ground Basketball Court	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None
13	64	Braces Lane Recreation Ground Play Area	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None
14	24	Callowbrook Lane MUGA	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None
15	70	Callowbrook Lane Play Area	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None
16	13	Charford Recreation Ground MUGA	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None
17	55	Charford Recreation Ground Play Area	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None

Appendix A - Bromsgrove Play Assessment Site List (August 2024)

18	52	Goodwood Road Play Area (Same as Lingfield Walk)	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None
19	80	Hollywood Lane Play Area	Local	Neighbourhood	-	None
20	653	Laurel Grove/Beech Grove	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None
21	51	Lingfield Walk	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None
22	72	Market Street Recreation Ground Play Area	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None
23	46	Pool Furlong Playing Field Play Area	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None
24	65	Shelley Close	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None
25	4	Swans Length MUGA	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None
26	33	Swans Length Play Area	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None
27	77	The Oakalls	Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood	-	None
28	78	Arundel Road Play Area	Local	Local	-	None
29	650	Boleyn Road	Local	Local	-	None
30	50	Fordhouse Road Play Area	Local	Local	-	None
31	609	Foxglove Way Play Area	Local	Local	-	None
32	661	George Road Playing Field	Local	Local	-	None
33	57	Kinver Drive Play Area	Local	Local	-	None
34	62	May Farm Close Play Area	Local	Local	-	None
35	595	Pool Furlong Outdoor Fitness	Local	Local	-	None
36	651	Silverdale Play Area	Local	Local	-	None
37	58	The Coppice Play Area	Local	Local	-	None
38	31	Upland Grove Basketball Court	Local	Local	-	None
39	657	Upland Grove Play Area	Local	Local	-	None
40	69	Villiers Road Play Area	Local	Local	-	None

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Bromsgrove Inclusive Play Policy Design Checklist

Name of Site		
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Play Hierarchy	Local Level <input type="checkbox"/>	Neighbourhood Level. <input type="checkbox"/>
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Local level spaces will be expected to provide at least 50% inclusive play equipment

Neighbourhood level spaces will be expected to provide at least 50% inclusive play equipment

Strategic Park?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
-----------------	------------------------------	-----------------------------

Accessible Toilet Provision - Is there accessible toilet provision on site (or nearby) within 500m?		
Yes (on site). <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes (wider area). <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

If a Strategic Park with accessible toilet provision, also carry out a full PiPA assessment with the aim of achieving a minimum of PiPA Bronze Standard

Brief description of proposed improvements		

Inclusive Play Policy Assessment

Complete the following sections, provide further comments as appropriate. The assessment should consider the 'whole' play area and its setting (not just the equipment that is being upgraded)

Universal Design -will the proposals:			
Remove or reduce barriers to access from walking routes, car parks (where provided) and public transport?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Provide firm, level surfaces suitable for wheelchairs and mobility aids	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Provide clear sightlines and intuitive navigation	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Provide equipment accessible to children with varying abilities	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Provide seating at different heights throughout the space	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Provide quiet areas for time-out alongside active zones	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Score (Count number of 'Yes" responses)		-	-

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Provide further comments where there are constraints that limit or prevent positive change against these criteria. (You may also consider the role of the wider green space in meeting these criteria).

Physical Play -will the proposals:

Equipment accessible to wheelchair users including transfer platforms, ramps or ground-level access	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Activities for different physical abilities and challenge levels	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Upper and lower body activities	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment allowing children with varying mobility to play together	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Space for wheelchair manoeuvring at equipment (minimum 1.8m diameter)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Score (Count number of 'Yes" responses)		-	-

Provide further comments where there are constraints that limit or prevent positive change against these criteria. (You may also consider the role of the wider green space in meeting these criteria).

Sensory-Rich Environments -will the proposals:

Engagement of at least three senses across the play area	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Strong colour contrast and visual interest	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Tactile elements (varied textures, materials, temperatures)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Auditory elements (sounds, musical features, quiet zones)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Natural materials for creative and sensory play	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Score (Count number of 'Yes" responses)		-	-

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Provide further comments where there are constraints that limit or prevent positive change against these criteria. (You may also consider the role of the wider green space in meeting these criteria).

Social Play -will the proposals:

Spaces where disabled and non-disabled children can play together	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment and features accommodating children with different abilities simultaneously	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Seating at various heights integrated throughout the space	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Areas for group activities and games	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Spaces for carers and parents to supervise and participate	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Score (Count number of 'Yes" responses)		-	-

Provide further comments where there are constraints that limit or prevent positive change against these criteria. (You may also consider the role of the wider green space in meeting these criteria).

Creative Play -will the proposals:

Loose materials (where appropriate) and natural features	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Open space for imaginative play and exploration	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Features for den-building and storytelling?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Quiet areas for contemplative play	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Score (Count number of 'Yes" responses)		-	-

Provide further comments where there are constraints that limit or prevent positive change against these criteria. (You may also consider the role of the wider green space in meeting these criteria).

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Provision for Neurodiversity - will the proposals:

Balance of stimulating and calming areas	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Spaces with reduced sensory input	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Clear structure and predictable layout	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Visual boundaries helping children understand the space	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Score (Count number of 'Yes" responses)		-	-

Provide further comments where there are constraints that limit or prevent positive change against these criteria. (You may also consider the role of the wider green space in meeting these criteria).

--

Other Comments or Observations

Are any other changes being introduced which will make the play area more accessible or inclusive?

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Scoring Summary

Theme	Score	Maximum Score
Universal Design	6	
Physical Play Opportunities	5	
Sensory Play Opportunities	5	
Social Play Opportunities	5	
Creative and Imaginative Play	4	
Provision for Neurodiversity	4	
Total Score		29

Target score – The minimum score that should be exceeded is 20 / 29. This may not be achievable in all circumstances, particularly where small scale changes are being implemented.

Note: Where the score for each theme is low (below 50%) consider what actions or changes can be made to achieve more accessible and inclusive play.

Completed by	
Date	

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Bromsgrove District Council Inclusive Play Policy Statement

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This policy sets out the Council's commitment to providing accessible and inclusive play opportunities for all children and young people. It establishes standards and principles that will guide the design, investment and improvement of play provision across the district. It proposes an approach to achieve accreditation against the national Plan Inclusive Play Areas (PiPA) standard for Sanders Park and an assessment of the viability and resources required to extend this to the other three strategic parks. A process for incremental improvements for other play spaces is proposed with mechanisms to achieve this.

2 Definitions

The UK Play Safety Forum and Children's Play Policy Forum recommend these definitions:

*An **Accessible Play Space** is a space which is barrier-free, allows users access to move around the space and offers participation opportunities for a range of differing abilities. Not every child of every ability will be able to actively use everything within an accessible play space.*

*An **Inclusive Play Space** provides a barrier-free environment, with supporting infrastructure, which meets the wide and varying play needs of every child. Disabled children and non-disabled children will enjoy high levels of participation opportunities, equally rich in play value.*

3 Context

3.1 Legal Framework

The Council must comply with the Equality Act 2010. This includes:

- The Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149);

- The Duty to Make Reasonable Adjustments (Section 20);
- Prohibiting discrimination against nine protected characteristics, including disability (alongside age, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation).

4 Vision and Aims

4.1 Vision

This Inclusive Play Policy sets out the ambition that:

“Every child deserves equal opportunities for play. We will take a planned approach to removing barriers that prevent access, creating play areas that meet the wide and varying needs of all children”.

The vision will be achieved by:

- Adopting a planned approach to removing and reducing barriers to accessing play;
- Creating spaces where disabled and non-disabled children play together;
- Sharing information about accessible provision.

5 Play Provision in Bromsgrove

Bromsgrove District Council has 40 play spaces across the district. A further 45 play spaces are managed and maintained by Parish Councils, Charities, Community Associations and Management Companies.

Bromsgrove District Council has direct control of the facilities it owns and manages. It will work in partnership with other providers to identify and deliver improvements to make play areas more accessible and inclusive.

Strategic Parks

Bromsgrove District Council has four Strategic Parks which typically act as destination spaces and typically provide a much greater range of visitor facilities and experiences and service a much larger catchment. These are Sanders Park, St Chad's Recreation Ground, King George Vth Playing Field and Lickey End Recreation Ground.

Each of these green spaces varies in terms of character, scale, and the visitor offer. However, Sanders Parks given its scale, range of facilities and central location is assumed to serve Bromsgrove Town and act as a destination space for other areas of the district.

These Strategic Parks all include 'Neighbourhood Level' play provision based on the Council's Play Hierarchy.

Bromsgrove District Council Play Hierarchy

Neighbourhood Level Play Provision

- Serve children within 800m walking distance (approximately 10-15 minutes walking time based on national standards¹);
- Typically, a minimum activity zone of 1000 square metres;
- Typically, at least 8 types of equipment;
- More diverse play opportunities (including sensory play) for a wider age range.

Local Level Play Provision

- Serve children within 400m walking distance (approximately 5-10 minutes walking time based on national standards¹);
- Typically, a minimum activity zone of 400 square metres;
- Typically, at least 5 types of equipment.

¹ Based on a review of data from 1) Fields in Trust (2018) Standards Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard and 2) Natural England (2023) Green Infrastructure Standards and 3) The Chartered Institute for Highways and Transportation.

The walking times cited above are presented as a guide, based on national guidance. It is accepted that some people included disabled people and children may take longer to walk the distances shown.

Appendix A contains a List of Council play spaces and their hierarchy.

6 National Standards

There is a lack of national standards for accessible and inclusive play. Plan Inclusive Play Areas (PiPA) is the UK's only independent accreditation system for evaluating accessible and inclusive play area design

PiPA sets out 3 core elements - Accessibility, Nurturing the Senses and Dynamic Play. In order to achieve the standard a formal assessment is carried out against 5 key areas:

- Plan to Go
- Plan to Access
- Plan to Play
- Plan for Rest & Recharging
- Plan for Engagement

The PiPA standard is an exceptionally high one as evidenced by only one play space in the West Midlands having achieved accreditation. Achieving the highest tier(s) against the standard also requires inclusive / accessible toilet provision. Currently, only Sanders Park and St Chads Recreation Ground have accessible toilet provision.

There are significant constraints associated with achieving high standards of accessible and inclusive play within Bromsgrove.

- The Bromsgrove Play Investment Strategy seeks to renew, sustain and enhance existing play facilities;
- Scale of investment / proposed changes at each play space varies (and some play spaces will experience only minor change);
- Spatial and physical constraints – Local level spaces are smaller than Neighbourhood level spaces offering less opportunity for delivering accessible and inclusive play;

- Public open space – high levels of use, anti-social behaviour, vandalism and limited maintenance budgets means that many spaces have limited sensory play;
- Diverse and complex needs of disabled children – within small play spaces there is limited scope to address the needs and circumstances of all disabled children equally.

❖ These issues are not unique to Bromsgrove and are real challenges for all providers of outdoor equipped play. This play policy seeks to set out a pragmatic approach that balances a commitment to more inclusive play with real word constraints.

7 Providing Accessible and Inclusive Play in Bromsgrove

To achieve the vision and aims of this policy, Bromsgrove District Council will

1. Carry out an assessment of Sanders Park against the PiPA standard and use the results of this audit to inform proposals for renewal and enhancement. The Council will then seek to achieve external accreditation against this national standard. Sanders Park will be promoted to all residents and visitors as an exemplar accessible and inclusive play space.
2. The learning from the audit of Sanders Park will be applied to the other three Strategic Parks to establish the feasibility, viability and the scale of resources required to achieve the PiPA standard.
3. For all other outdoor equipped play areas, the Council will seek to improve the current level of accessibility and inclusivity of play provision.
 - To achieve this an Inclusive Play Policy Assessment and Design Checklist (Appendix B) has been created as a tool to assist with achieving greater accessibility and inclusiveness of play spaces and to record the impacts of the planned changes at the design stage.
 - The Council will require play companies / contractors to propose changes using this checklist that will increase the accessibility and inclusivity of play spaces. This will form part of the design brief and the tender evaluation criteria applied to the award of contracts.

Appendix A – List of Play Spaces & Hierarchy

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Appendix B - Inclusive Play Policy Assessment and Design Checklist



LANDSCAPE
& HERITAGE

Bromsgrove Play Investment Strategy

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Bromsgrove Play Investment Strategy

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Appendix A – Detailed Costs by Site

Appendix B – Detailed Assessment of Sites for Further Review

1 Introduction

CFP was commissioned by Bromsgrove District Council to carry out a Play Investment Strategy in September 2023. The Strategy considers the expenditure required over the next ten years to maintain the District's outdoor equipped play areas to a high standard and of maintaining and enhancing the accessibility of these play spaces.

The study is based on the earlier play assessment which considered the distribution and accessibility of outdoor equipped play across Bromsgrove District. In order to sustain and enhance the current level of play provision across the District significant investment is required over the next ten years to replace ageing play equipment and associated infrastructure. Existing maintenance budgets are minimal and are used to ensure that play spaces are kept safe and comply with national and European standards. Specialist staff resources to achieve this are limited, shared across Bromsgrove and Redditch, and are applied reactively to prioritise the most urgent issues.

A capital investment programme for the Council's equipped play spaces would ensure the existing provision can be sustained and enhanced over the next ten years, providing greater play value and quality, more inclusive play and greater accessibility across the District. This would contribute directly to the Council Plan priorities around living independent, active and healthy lives and communities which are safe, well-maintained and green.

The study recognises the contribution of outdoor equipped play spaces provided by other organisations such as Parish Councils, private landowners and associated management companies in terms of the supply and accessibility. However, the investment strategy focuses on Bromsgrove District Council assets only.

Council Officers and Members work closely with many of these local organisations providing advice and support about maintenance and procurement. Planning gain is also used, where appropriate, to support investment in Parish Council and community managed play spaces. A capital investment programme would also allow more time for



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officers to adopt more strategic approaches to supporting Parish Councils and community based organisations to sustain and enhance their play provision.



2 The Benefits of Play

The value of play is well understood in terms of its role in children's development.

"From an early age, play is important to a child's development and learning. It isn't just physical. It can involve cognitive, imaginative, creative, emotional and social aspects. It is the main way most children express their impulse to explore, experiment and understand. Children of all ages play. Some may need support to get the best out of play. While few teenagers would describe what they do as play, they need time, space and freedom associated with play for younger age groups."

DCMS, 2004 Getting Serious About Play, A Review of Children's Play

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) – Article 31 Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

Outdoor equipped play is an important component of play provision and can contribute to:

- Physical Development - encouraging active play, physical activity, and gross motor skill development;
- Cognitive development - Stimulating problem-solving skills through navigating play equipment;
- Promoting imaginative and creative play;
- Social and Emotional Development - facilitating social interaction, cooperation, and communication among children;
- Health and Wellbeing - Contributing to overall physical and mental health by reducing sedentary behaviour which can help address childhood obesity;



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- Social Cohesion - as a gathering place for families and the local community which encourages social interaction;
- Environmental Awareness - encouraging exploration and connection with the outdoor environment;
- Inclusive and Accessible Design - integrating and supporting the participation of children with disabilities or special needs.

3 Policy Context

3.1 Bromsgrove Council Plan

Good quality outdoor play provision contributes to achieving the Council's strategic purposes. In particular there are strong links to :

- Living independent, active and healthy lives;
- Communities which are safe, well-maintained and green.



Play provision also contributes to the green thread priorities: Improving health and wellbeing and provision for young people can help provide diversionary activities contributing to reductions in crime and disorder.

3.2 Bromsgrove District Plan (2011 - 2030)

The Bromsgrove District Plan recognises the value of outdoor equipped play as part of wider open space provision:

“Ensuring the District’s communities have good health and well-being is a major priority for Bromsgrove. Key factors. . . . access to healthy housing, open space, an active lifestyle, cultural and community facilities”.

The District Plan also sets out accessibility standards for provision for children (10 mins) & young people (15 minutes) which are used as fundamental principles for the Play Accessibility Audit and Investment Strategy.

3.3 Leisure & Culture Strategy (2022 - 2032)

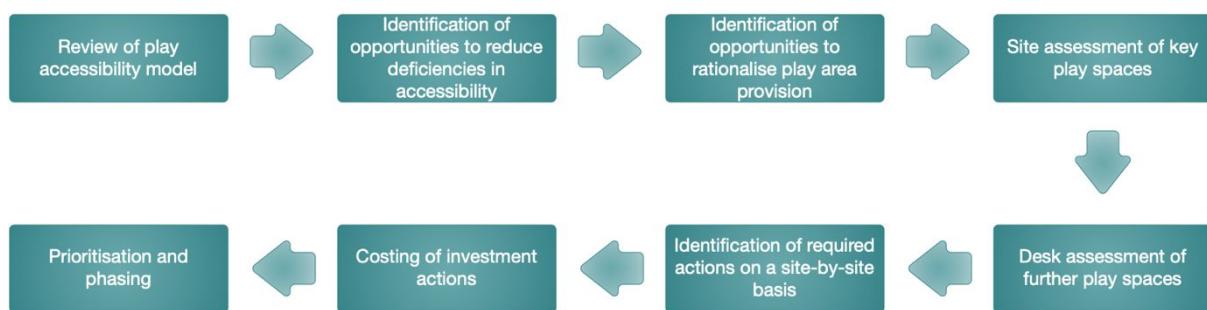
The Leisure and Culture Strategy highlights the need for a more strategic approach to increasing the quality of parks and play provision (& infrastructure). The Play Accessibility Audit and Investment Strategy have been developed to respond to the recommendations set out in the Leisure and Culture Strategy.

3.4 Bromsgrove Community Survey (2023)

Consultation with residents through the Bromsgrove Community Surveys highlights the importance of the maintenance of the landscape and environment (ranked 3rd) and providing well maintained parks and open spaces (ranked 4th).

4 Approach and Methodology

The Play Investment Strategy is based on the following approach:



Play Accessibility Model

The Bromsgrove Play Accessibility Model classifies outdoor equipped play spaces as local or neighbourhood level provision, depending on the range of equipment and age ranges catered for. The model is based on:

- Local Play Spaces - aimed at children who can go out to play independently, accessible within 400m (5-10 mins walking time);
- Neighbourhood Play Spaces - aimed at older children within 800m (10-15 mins walking time)

The walking time is based on a walking speed of 2.0 – 2.5 mph (using a straight-line buffer with allowance for street pattern). This is broadly consistent with national guidance published by the Fields in Trust (and the Chartered Institution for Highways and Transportation guidance)..

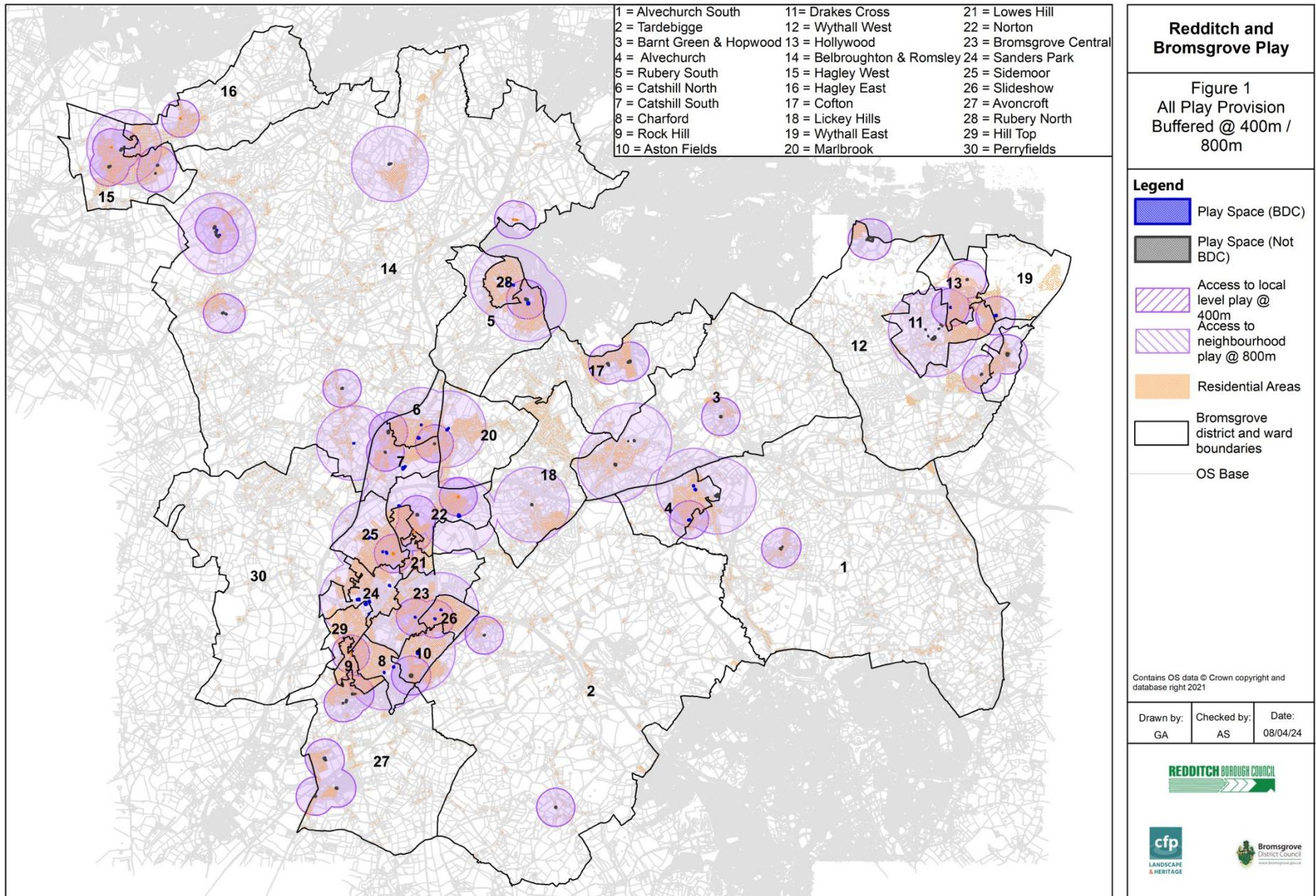
Based on this accessibility model approximately 81.7% of all households in Bromsgrove currently have access to a play space within a walk time of up to 10-15 minutes. This is shown in Figure 2 below.

It should be noted that a significant number of the supply of play areas within the District are not under the direct control of the District council. This reliance on external bodies or organisations to manage certain parks presents a potential vulnerability, as



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changes in their management arrangements, priorities, or resources could impact the availability and quality of these spaces.



Reducing Deficiencies in Access

Whilst the current level of play provision in Bromsgrove is good, approximately 18.3% of households in the District do not have access to a suitable outdoor play spaces within a walk of up to ten to fifteen minutes. This deficiency in access is not uniform and some wards have lower levels of access to play space than others. The areas of Bromsgrove Town with the highest levels of deficiency, as identified through the Play Accessibility Study, are the south-east of Lowes Hill ward, the south of Norton ward and the south of Rock Hill Ward. Out of the 'large settlements', a significant gap is present in Lickey Hills ward and in Wythall East and Wythall West wards. In addition, there are significant gaps in the 'small settlements' where there are small villages or 'isolated' residential properties, namely Alvechurch South, Perryfields, Tardebigge and Belbroughton & Romsley wards.

The play investment strategy has considered whether it is feasible and practicable to upgrade local level play spaces to neighbourhood level play spaces where this would reduce the deficiencies in accessibility.

Rationalising Play Area Provision

The play investment strategy has also considered where selected play areas that offer poor play value or are in poor condition could be removed without adversely affecting (or with minor impact) on the overall level of accessibility could be removed (when they reach the end of their serviceable lifespan, fail to meet European / National Standards, or risk becoming unsafe).

Annual maintenance costs for play spaces within Bromsgrove are approximately £57,500 (split approx. 65% staff time for inspections & maintenance and 35% equipment & materials). This equates to approximately £1,450 on average per play space per annum to maintain to a safe standard. Capital investment is then required on a 10 to 15 year cycle for replacement of play equipment along with safety surfacing, fencing, signage and furniture.



Rationalising play provision will help ensure that staff time and maintenance budgets can be used more effectively to maintain those play spaces that provide greater play value. Resources can also be directed towards those play spaces that are better used with greater footfall and which experience greater wear and tear, rather than those that are subjected to repeated vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

Open Spaces would continue to be retained as open space offering opportunities for informal play and recreation. It is recommended that local consultation is carried out to explore the options for these open spaces and consideration given to the most suitable facilities and features that could be provided in the future. This could include some form of natural, informal or quipped play and/or landscape improvements.

Site Assessment and Desk Assessment of Play Spaces

Where potential play spaces have been identified as candidates for upgrading from Local provision to Neighbourhood provision, these were visited by the consultants' team and BDC officers. Other play spaces were assessed through a desktop exercise and through online meetings between the consultants' team and BDC officers.

Identification of Actions

The site and desk assessment process identified a series of agree actions on a site-by-site basis. This has been a detailed assessment process looking at individual items of equipment, surfacing, fencing and entrances, signage and site furniture for each play space.

The identified actions have focused on:

- Play spaces that can feasibility be upgraded from Local to Neighbourhood level provision with the provision of additional items of play equipment or replacing outdated equipment with new;
- Play spaces that require investment in the first 12 months (from adoption of this strategy);
- Play spaces that are in reasonable condition but will require some investment in the next three years;

- Play spaces that are in reasonable condition but will require some investment in the next five to six years;
- Play spaces that are currently in reasonable condition but will require some investment in the next 7-10 years.

Costing of Actions

Detailed quotations and cost estimates from a range of play companies for work in Bromsgrove and Redditch over the last three years have been collated, reviewed and analysed to create a database of costs and a set of standard rates. These rates have been applied to the identified and recommended actions for each site to produce play space enhancement specifications and cost sheets.

A contingency allowance of 10% has been applied to each site cost estimate.

An inflationary allowance of 3% per annum has been applied to the site-based costings based on the anticipated year of delivery. The cost summary in spreadsheet form allows different inflationary allowances to be applied and modelled and to accommodate future changes. It is currently anticipated that the inflation rate will remain between 3% and 5.5% during the period covered by the Investment Strategy.

Prioritisation and Phasing

The table below sets out the principles that have been used to determine the priority rating and proposed timescales for investment. The overarching principle is to provide equality of access across the District addressing identified deficiencies, and then continue to invest in play spaces to ensure they are safe, comply with standards and offer good play value. The investment programme will also allow improvements in inclusive play to be delivered as well as introducing new play options and enhancing play value.

Five open spaces that currently have equipped play, particularly those that are small, or where the equipment is poorly located have been identified as needing further review. It is recommended that local consultation is carried out with residents and children and young people is carried out to explore options for these open spaces and consider what



form of play provision is most appropriate. This could include informal; play, natural play or other equipped play alongside landscape improvements.

These play spaces will continue to be monitored to ensure their safety and compliance with standards both now and as they approach 'end of life'. It may be that actions at these play spaces needs to be taken sooner than anticipated should their condition deteriorate faster than expected. One further play space (Boleyn Road) has been identified as a candidate for potential removal when it reaches 'end of life' since the provision is currently limited in scale and play value, it serves very few Bromsgrove residents and there is better alternative provision nearby.

Investment Principles	Priority Rating	Year
Immediate Investment <12 months	1	1
Those play spaces that require urgent action and where the condition rating is less than 1 year	2	2
Address deficiencies by increasing hierarchy : Local -> Neighbourhood and where action is required to maintain safe spaces.	3	3
Investment in 1- 3 year life span (Local & Neighbourhood)	4	4
Review, consult and consider options for the play space	5	5
Invest in 3-5 year life span or where upgrades have been identified	6	6
Retain and maintain (typically good for 5 years +). Deliver other investment where funding through planning gain	7	7 to 10

Where play spaces are in good condition and investment is proposed for years 7 to 10, consideration should be given to prioritising those wards with the poorest health outcomes. Lowes Hill, Cofton, Alvechurch South, Alvechurch Village, Barnt Green & Hopwood and Lickey Hills Wards were identified in the Play Accessibility Assessment as having the highest levels of childhood obesity (among 10 – 11 years olds).

5 Recommendations and Analysis

The play investment strategy is based on the following recommendations:

- Following consultation agreeing the preferred option for Foxgrove Way (2024-25) since the play area is in poor condition and approaching 'end of life';
- Urgent investment in Charford Recreation Ground (Neighbourhood) and Kinver Drive Play Area (Local) and Upland Grove Play Area (Local) (2025-26)
- Urgent removal of one local play spaces (Boleyn Road) that is near 'end of life' (2025-26);
- Upgrading 1 play space in Wythall East ward from Local to Neighbourhood level provision (2026/27) allowing 398 households to have improved access to play;
- Urgent upgrade to one Neighbourhood play space (Swan's Length in 2026/27);
- Upgrading 4 Neighbourhood play spaces and significant repairs and maintenance to one Local play space (2027/28);
- Local consultation to explore the options for 4 existing play spaces that are expected to be 'end of life' (2028/29). Open spaces to be retained but consideration given to the options to for play provision and whether this is informal, natural or equipped play alongside landscape improvements;
- Upgrading a further 3 Neighbourhood play spaces (2029/30);

And provisional costs for:

- Investing in a further 21 play spaces, that are currently in good condition but will need upgrading in the future (2030/31 onwards).

NB : Where play spaces are identified as being near 'end of life' and this is planned for Year 5, there may be instances where actions many need to be taken sooner at specific sites should the condition deteriorate more quickly than expected. This will be determined through the regular play safety inspection process.

The table below summarises the identified costs. The sequencing is based on the investment principles set out on page 12 of this report. This is driven by a combination of 1) upgrading of sites to increase the accessibility of play provision and 2) the current condition of the play facilities and their expected lifespan. There may be scope to bring investment forward for those spaces that are proposed to receive investment in years 7 to 10, subject to finances being available.

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029/30 - 2033/34	Total
No. of play spaces	1	4	2	5	4	3	21	39
Cost	£15,000	£161,400	£150,666	£207,242	£60,000	£134,351	£1,135,000	£1,848,659
Inflation @ 3%	£0	£4,842	£9,176	£19,217	£7,531	£21,399	£260,907	£156,828
Total	£15,000	£166,242	£159,841	£226,459	£67,531	£155,749	£1,395,907	£2,005,487

A more detailed breakdown by site and year is shown below. Detailed costs on a site by site basis are included in Appendix A.

Implementing these investment proposals will ensure that the quality of play is sustained and enhanced, providing better quality play experiences, more inclusive play and better accessibility.

A further 45 play spaces are provided by Parish Councils and developers / management companies. Discussion with Parish Councils in April and May 2023 (all 19 responded) to identify current and future provision indicated that there were no planned changes to the existing levels of provision. BDC will continue to work with Parish Councils, community associations and other providers to support ongoing play provision, subject to available resources.

On this basis the accessibility model indicates that 82.5% of households would have access to a play space within a walking time of up to 10-15 minutes. This is increase in the current level where 81.7% of households have access.

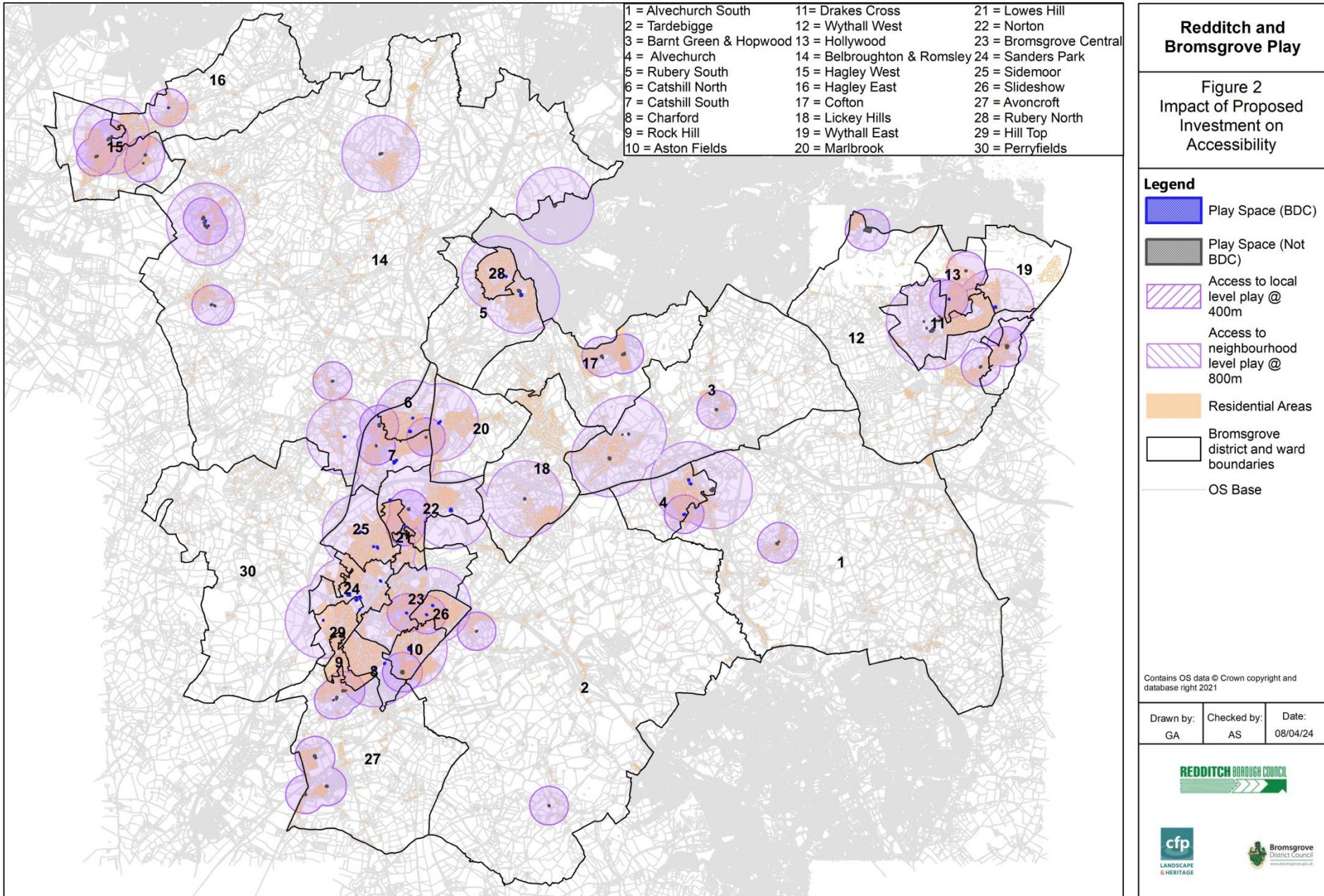
Figure 2 below shows the impact of the play investment proposals in terms of overall accessibility.

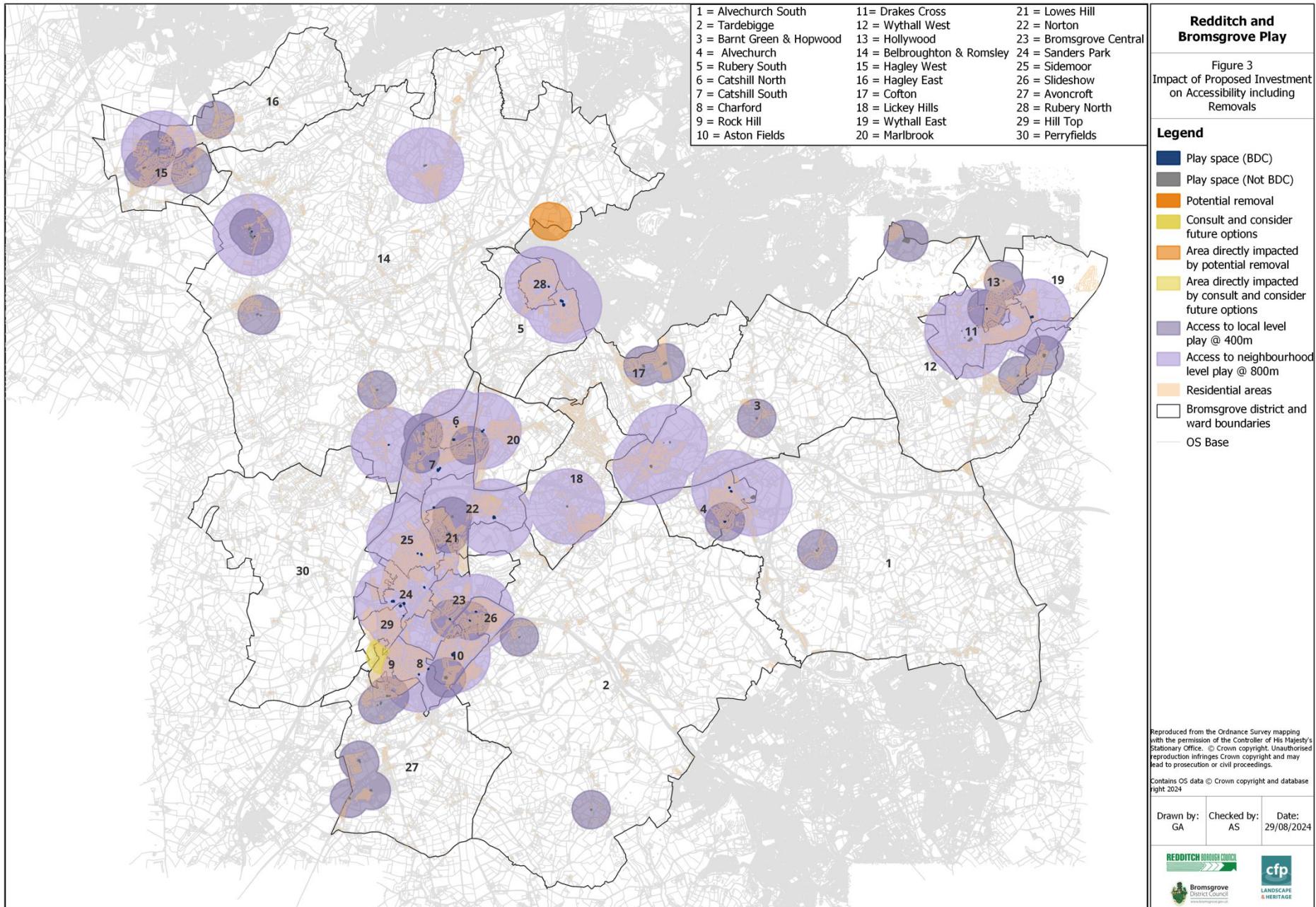


Play Investment Costs Based on Current Estimates

URN	Site Name	BDC Condition Rating	Play Hierarchy	Play Investment Action	Play Investment Cost(£)	Play Hierarchy Future	Priority Rating	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030/31 - 2034/35	Total	
609	Foxglove Way Play Area	Requires Immediate Action	Local	Agree Preferred Option	£15,000	Local	1	£15,000							£0	
55	Charford Recreation Ground Play Area	Good <1 Year	Neighbourhood	Upgrade	£59,884	Neighbourhood	2		£59,884						£59,884	
57	Kinver Drive Play Area	Good <1 Year	Local	Upgrade	£29,211	Local	2		£29,211						£29,211	
657	Upland Grove Play Area	Good <1 Year	Local	Upgrade	£57,306	Local	2		£57,306						£57,306	
650	Boleyn Road	Requires Urgent Action	Local	Remove Equipped Play & Enhance Open Space	£15,000	Local	2		£15,000						£15,000	
33	Swans Length Play Area	Good 1-3 Years	Neighbourhood	Urgent Upgrade	£78,254	Neighbourhood	3			£78,254					£78,254	
80	Hollywood Lane Play Area	Good 5+ years	Local	Upgrade to Neighbourhood	£72,412	Neighbourhood	3		£72,412						£72,412	
30	King George V Playing Field Play & MUGA	Good 1-3 Years	Neighbourhood	Upgrade	£35,695	Neighbourhood	4			£35,695					£35,695	
25	St Chads Recreation Ground - MUGA & Skatepark	Good 1-3 Years	Neighbourhood	Upgrade	£34,337	Neighbourhood	4			£34,337					£34,337	
71	St Chads Recreation Ground Play Area	Good 1-3 Years	Neighbourhood	Upgrade	£53,759	Neighbourhood	4			£53,759					£53,759	
74	Sanders Park MUGAs	Good 1-3 Years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£60,000	Neighbourhood	4			£60,000					£60,000	
50	Fordhouse Road Play Area	Good 1-3 Years	Local	Repairs & Maintenance	£23,452	Local	4			£23,452					£23,452	
651	Silverdale Play Area	Requires Urgent Action	Local	Consult & Consider Options	£15,000	Local	5					£15,000			£15,000	
31	Upland Grove Basketball Court	Requires Urgent Action	Local	Consult & Consider Options	£15,000	Local	5					£15,000			£15,000	
69	Villiers Road Play Area	Requires Urgent Action	Local	Consult & Consider Options	£15,000	Local	5					£15,000			£15,000	
58	The Coppice Play Area	Good 3-5 Years	Local	Consult & Consider Options	£15,000	Local	5					£15,000			£15,000	
65	Shelley Close	Good 3-5 years	Neighbourhood	Upgrade	£81,606	Neighbourhood	6						£81,606		£81,606	
4	Swans Length MUGA	Good 3-5 years	Neighbourhood	Repairs & Maintenance	£22,000	Neighbourhood	6						£22,000		£22,000	
77	The Oakalls	Good 3-5 years	Neighbourhood	Upgrade	£30,745	Neighbourhood	6						£30,745		£30,745	
78	Arundel Road Play Area	Good 5+ years	Local	Retain & maintain	£30,000	Local	7						£30,000		£30,000	
5	Aston Fields Recreation Ground Basketball Court	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£15,000	Neighbourhood	7						£15,000		£15,000	
37	Aston Fields Recreation Ground Play Area	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£80,000	Neighbourhood	7						£80,000		£80,000	
652	Barnsley Hall Play Area	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£80,000	Neighbourhood	7						£80,000		£80,000	
43	Bourneheath Village Hall Recreation Ground Play Area	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£80,000	Neighbourhood	7						£80,000		£80,000	
21	Braces Lane Recreation Ground Basketball Court	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£15,000	Neighbourhood	7						£15,000		£15,000	
64	Braces Lane Recreation Ground Play Area	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£80,000	Neighbourhood	7						£80,000		£80,000	
24	Callowbrook Lane MUGA	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£30,000	Neighbourhood	7						£30,000		£30,000	
70	Callowbrook Lane Play Area	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£80,000	Neighbourhood	7						£80,000		£80,000	
13	Charford Recreation Ground MUGA	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£30,000	Neighbourhood	7						£30,000		£30,000	
661	George Road Playing Field	Good 5+ years	Local	Retain & maintain	£30,000	Local	7						£30,000		£30,000	
52	Goodwood Road Play Area (Same as Lingfield Walk)	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£80,000	Neighbourhood	7						£80,000		£80,000	
653	Laurel Grove/Beech Grove	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£80,000	Neighbourhood	7						£80,000		£80,000	
113	Lickey End Recreation Ground MUGA	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£30,000	Neighbourhood	7						£30,000		£30,000	
51	Lingfield Walk	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£80,000	Neighbourhood	7						£80,000		£80,000	
72	Market Street Recreation Ground Play Area	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£80,000	Neighbourhood	7						£80,000		£80,000	
62	May Farm Close Play Area	Good 5+ years	Local	Retain & maintain	£30,000	Local	7						£30,000		£30,000	
595	Pool Furlong Outdoor Fitness	Good 5+ years	Local	Retain & maintain	£30,000	Local	7						£30,000		£30,000	
46	Pool Furlong Playing Field Play Area	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£80,000	Neighbourhood	7						£80,000		£80,000	
20	Sanders Park Basketball Court 2	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£15,000	Neighbourhood	7						£15,000		£15,000	
73	Sanders Park Play Area	Good 5+ years	Neighbourhood	Retain & maintain	£80,000	Neighbourhood	7						£80,000		£80,000	
SUB-TOTAL					£1,863,659			£15,000	£161,400	£150,666	£207,242	£60,000	£134,351	£1,135,000	£1,848,659	
INFLATION				SET RATE HERE -->	3.0%	INFLATION INDEX (MULTIPLIER)				1.0000	1.0300	1.0609	1.0927	1.1255	1.1593	1.2299
TOTALS								£15,000	£166,242	£159,841	£226,459	£67,531	£155,749	£1,395,907	£2,005,487	

Play Investment Costs based on current estimates. These are subject to fluctuation and will vary depending on the future condition of play spaces





Appendix A – Detailed Costs by Site

URN	50
Site Name	Fordhouse Road
Assessment	Upgrade to Nhood – not achievable. Retain as local provision.



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
Existing	Mixed seat swings	2	Item		
Existing	Climber	1	Item		
Existing	Slide	1	Item		
Existing	Springer	1	Item		
New	Bespoke Tower with Steel Slide and Bannister Bars	1	Item	£7,890.00	£7,890.00
Surfacing					
Existing	Rubber Mulch surfacing - Retain				
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain				
Existing	Grass - Retain				
New	Safer surfacing	55	Sqm	£65.00	£3,575.00
New	Tarmac surfacing for new pathways	30	Metres	£70.00	£2,100.00
Fencing / Gates					
Existing	Bow top fencing - Retain				
Existing	Flat top fencing - Retain				
Existing	Maintenance gate - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Self closing gate - Retain one	2	Item		
New	Supply 1m High Prosafe Self Closing Single Gate Powder Coated Yellow	1	Item	£1,250.00	£1,250.00
Furniture					
Existing	Bench - Retain	1			
Existing	Litter Bin - Retain	1			
New	Play area signage (fence mounted)	2	Item	£300.00	£600.00
Groundworks & removals					
New	Excavate & 100mm MOT sub-base for extension	55	Sqm	£33.00	£1,815.00
New	Excavate & 100mm MOT sub-base for new pathways	30	Metres	£33.00	£990.00
New	Removal and disposal of gate	1	Item	£150.00	£150.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£2,132.00
Total					£23,452.00

URN	80
Site Name	Hollywood Lane
Assessment	Upgrade to Nhood - achievable



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
Existing	Climbing wall - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Toddler swing - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Junior swing - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Embankment slide - Retain	1	Item		
New	Bespoke Two Tower Unit with Net and Steel Slide	1	Item	£12,039.81	£12,039.81
New	Talk & Tumble, Classic, Inground	1	Item	£1,839.00	£1,839.00
New	Steel swing frame	1	Item	£625.00	£625.00
New	Junior swing seat	1	Item	£125.00	£125.00
New	Repairs to slide	1	Item	£1,900.00	£1,900.00
Surfacing					
Existing	Grass - Retain				
New	Safer surfacing - rubber mulch	300	Sqm	£95.00	£28,500.00
New	Tarmac surfacing for new pathway	50	Sqm	£70.00	£3,500.00
Fencing / Gates					
Existing	Bow top fencing - Retain				
Existing	Gate - Retain	1	Item		
Furniture					
Existing	Bench - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Bin - Retain but move next to bench	1	Item	£500.00	£500.00
New	Play area signage (fence mounted)	1	Item	£300.00	£300.00
Groundworks & removals					
New	Excavate & 100mm MOT sub-base for safer surfacing areas	350	Sqm	£35.00	£12,250.00
New	Dig out and removal of play equipment	1	Item	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
New	Cut back vegetation	1	Item	£300.00	£300.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£6,582.88
Total					
					£72,411.69

URN	55
Site Name	Charford Recreation Ground Play Area
Assessment	Limited Life



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
Existing	Infant multi play unit	1	Item		
Existing	Play panel	2	Item		
Existing	Mixed swing	1	Item		
Existing	See saw	1	Item		
Existing	Cone climber	1	Item		
Existing	Boat rocker	1	Item		
Existing	MUGA	1	Item		
Existing	Skateboard ramps	3	Item		
New	Bespoke Two Tower Unit with Net and Steel Slide	1	Item	£12,039.81	£12,039.81
New	Junior swing seat	2	Item	£125.00	£250.00
New	General repairs to skate equipment	1	Item	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
New	General upkeep for MUGA	1	Item	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
Surfacing					
Existing	Wetpour surfacing - Retain				
Existing	Concrete surfacing - Retain				
Existing	Tarmac surfacing - Retain				
New	Wetpour surfacing for extension	100	Sqm	£65.00	£6,500.00
New	Tarmac pad for teen shelter	10	Sqm	£70.00	£700.00
Fencing / Gates					
Existing	Bow top fencing - Retain				
New	Dog grids	2	Item	£1,500.00	£3,000.00
New	Bow top fencing for extension	50	Lin m	£61.00	£3,050.00
Furniture					
Existing	Bench	1	Item		
Existing	Teen shelter	1	Item		
Existing	Litter bin	1	Item		
Existing	Play area signage (fence mounted)	2	Item	£300.00	£600.00
New	Litter bin	1	Item	£500.00	£500.00
Groundworks & removals					
New	Excavate & 100mm MOT sub-base for safer surfacing areas	100	Sqm	£35.00	£3,500.00
New	Excavate & 100mm MOT sub-base for tarmac pad	10	Sqm	£35.00	£350.00
New	Dig out & reposition of swings	1	Item	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Additional Works					
New	Additional Equipment	1	Item	£10,000.00	£10,000.00
Sub-total					
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£5,443.98
Total					
					£59,883.79

URN	65
Site Name	Shelley Close
Assessment	Good for 3-5 years



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
Existing	Zip wire - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Standing Carousel - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	MUGA - Retain	1	Item		
New	Junior Spica in Red	1	Item	£820.00	£820.00
New	Circular net climber	1	Item	£4,254.00	£4,254.00
New	Flymobile	1	Item	£1,613.00	£1,613.00
New	Cables for zipwire	1	Item	£400.00	£400.00
Surfacing					
New	Safer surfacing - Rubber mulch	350	Sqm	£95.00	£33,250.00
Fencing / Gates					
New	Partial rebound fencing	65	Lin m	£250.00	£16,250.00
Furniture					
New	Pine Bench with Backrest, Inground	1	Item	£600.00	£600.00
New	Litter bin	1	Item	£500.00	£500.00
New	Play area signage (fence mounted)	1	Item	£300.00	£300.00
Groundworks & removals					
New	Excavate & 100mm MOT sub-base for safer surfacing areas	350	Sqm	£35.00	£12,250.00
New	Dig out & removal of play equipment	1		£1,000.00	£1,000.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					£74,187.00
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£7,418.70
Total					£81,605.70

URN	71
Site Name	St Chads Rubery Recreation Ground Play Area
Assessment	Good for 1-3 years



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
Existing	Mixed swings - Retain	2	Item		
Existing	Toddler swing - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Basket swing - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Carousel - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Junior multi play unit - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Toddler multi play unit - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	See saw - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Springer - Retain	2	Item		
New	Circular net climber	1	Item	£4,254.00	£4,254.00
New	Combination Street Work Out Pro 2 Powder Coated Orange	1	Item	£4,470.29	£4,470.29
New	BLOQX 1 with Coated Corner in Orange/Grey/Night Sky Blue	1	Item	£5,497.14	£5,497.14
Surfacing					
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing - Retain				
Existing	Grass Matting - Retain				
Existing	Tarmac surfacing - Retain				
New	Rubber mulch to replace grass matting	110	Sqm	£95.00	£10,450.00
New	Safer surfacing - Wetpour skim over existing for 'blue' area.	200	Sqm	£50.00	£10,000.00
New	General repairs and maintenance until end of life	3	years	£3,000.00	£9,000.00
Fencing / Gates					
Existing	Bow top fencing - Retain				
Existing	Maintenance gate - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Self closing gate - Retain one	1	Item		
New	Supply 1m High Prosafe Self Closing Single Gate Powder Coated Yellow	1	Item	£1,250.00	£1,250.00
Furniture					
Existing	Snake bench - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Play area signage (freestanding) - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Frog litter bins - Retain	2	Item		
Groundworks					
New	Removal of equipment	1	Item	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					£48,871.43
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£4,887.14
Total					£53,758.57

URN	25
Site Name	St Chads Park Rubery Recreation Ground MUGA & Skatepark
Assessment	Good for 1-3 years



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rate	Cost
Equipment					
Existing	MUGA - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Fun box (roller sports) - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Goal posts - Retain	2	Item		
Existing	Half pipe (roller sports) - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Pyramid ramp (roller sports) - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Quarter pipe bank wall (roller sports) - Retain	1	Item		
New	General repairs and maintenance until end of life - Retain	10	Years	£2,500.00	£25,000.00
Surfacing					
Existing	Tarmac surfacing				
New	MUGA Paint & Sports Markings. Paint the playing area in different colours - with line markings for 5-a-side, Mini Tennis and Basketball	1	Item	£3,215.00	£3,215.00
Fencing / Gates					
N/A					
Furniture					
Existing	Bench - Retain	5	Item		
Existing	Perch seat - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Cycle racks - Retain	2	Item		
Existing	Litter bins - Retain	3	Item		
Existing	Skate bench - Retain	2	Item		
Groundworks					
New	Cut back vegetation - annual basis	10	Years	£300.00	£3,000.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
N/A					
Sub-total					£31,215.00
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£3,121.50
Total					£34,336.50

URN	77
Site Name	The Oakalls
Assessment	Good for 3-5 years



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
Existing	Seesaw - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Junior multi-play unit - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Toddler multi play unit - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Jeep - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Toadstool stepping pods - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Mixed seat swings - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Cone climber - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Spinning dish - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Inclusive springie - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Talk tubes - Retain	1	Item		
New	Spring for jeep replacement	1	Item	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
New	General repairs and maintenance until end of life	5	Years	£1,000.00	£5,000.00
Surfacing					
Existing	Wet Pour Surfacing				
New	Safer surfacing - Wetpour skim over existing.	300	Sqm	£50.00	£15,000.00
Fencing / Gates					
Existing	Bow top fencing - Retain				
Existing	Self closing gates - Retain	2	Item		
Furniture					
Existing	Frog litter bin - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Picnic table - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Memorial bench with back rest - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Free standing signage - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Bench - Retain	2	Item		
Groundworks					
N/A					
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£2,795.00
Total					£30,745.00

URN	33
Site Name	Swans Length Play Area
Assessment	Already neighbourhood provision. Upgrades required.



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
Existing	Spinner Bowl	1	Item		
Existing	Springer	1	Item		
Existing	Mixed swings - Replace frame and seat	1	Item		
Existing	Tunnel	1	Item		
Existing	Boulder trail	1	Item		
New	Bespoke Tower with Steel Slide and Bannister Bars	1	Item	£7,890.00	£7,890.00
New	Swing frame	1	Item	£625.00	£625.00
New	Swing seat	1	Item	£125.00	£125.00
New	Embankment slide	1	Item	£10,000.00	£10,000.00
New	Recycled plastic posts for fort	30	Item	£65.00	£1,950.00
New	Timber posts for tunnel	4	Item	£25.00	£100.00
Surfacing					
Existing	Grass				
New	Safer surfacing - rubber mulch	350	Sqm	£95.00	£33,250.00
Fencing / Gates					
Existing	Bow top fencing - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Maintenance gate - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Self closing gates - Retain one	2	Item		
New	Dog grid	1	Item	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
Furniture					
Existing	Bench - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Litter bin - Remove 1	2	Item		
Existing	Play area signage (freestanding)	1	Item		
New	Litter bin	1	Item	£500.00	£500.00
Groundworks					
New	Excavate & 100mm MOT sub-base for safer surfacing areas	350	Sqm	£35.00	£12,250.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£7,114.00
Total					
					£78,254.00

URN	4
Site Name	Swans Length MUGA
Assessment	Already neighbourhood provision. Upgrades required.



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
Existing	MUGA - Retain	1	Item		
Surfacing					
Existing	Macadam surfacing				
New	Repatch surfacing	100	Sqm	£100.00	£10,000.00
Existing	Rebound wall / fencing upgrade	1	item	£10,000.00	£10,000.00
Fencing / Gates					
N/A					
Furniture					
N/A					
Groundworks					
N/A					
Site Security (Prelims)					
N/A					
Sub-total					£20,000.00
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£2,000.00
Total					£22,000.00

URN	30
Site Name	King George V Playing Field Play Area & MUGA
Assessment	Good for 1-3 years



Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
Existing	Toddler swing	1	Item		
Existing	Junior swing	1	Item		
Existing	Climbing wall	1	Item		
Existing	Climber	1	Item		
Existing	Junior multi play unit	1	Item		
Existing	Toddler multi play unit	1	Item		
Existing	Spinner	1	Item		
Existing	Spica	1	Item		
Existing	Jumper	1	Item		
Existing	MUGA	1	Item		
New	Basket swing replacement	1	Item	£3,000.00	£3,000.00
New	General repairs and maintenance until end of life	3	Years	£3,000.00	£9,000.00
Surfacing					
Existing	Wetpour surfacing				
Existing	Tarmac surfacing				
New	Safer surfacing - Wetpour skim over shrinkage areas	250	Sqm	£50.00	£12,500.00
Fencing / Gates					
Existing	Bow top fencing - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Dog grid - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Maintenance gate - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Self closing gate - Retain	1	Item		
Furniture					
Existing	Bench - Retain	1	Item		
Existing	Litter bin - Retain	1	Item		
Groundworks & removals					
New	Removal of equipment - Trail	1	Item	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					£32,450.00
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£3,245.00
Total					£35,695.00

URN	657
Site Name	Upland Grove Play Area
Assessment	Good for <1 year



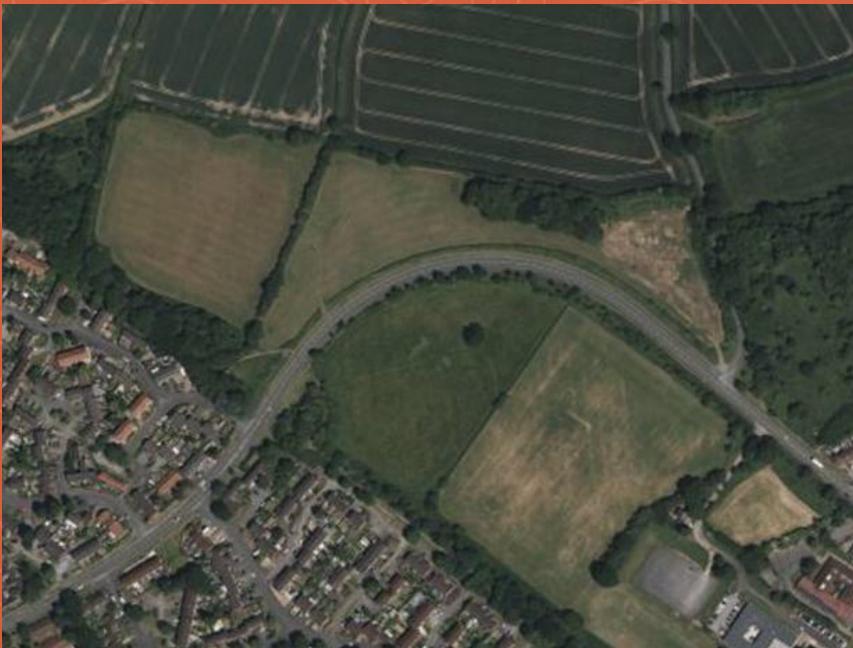
Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
New	Talk & Tumble, Classic, Inground	1	Item	£1,839.00	£1,839.00
New	Swing Frame -Includes 1 Duo Seat (yellow), 1 Cradle Seat & 1 Flat Se	1	Item	£4,268.00	£4,268.00
New	Ladybird Springer	1	Item	£970.00	£970.00
New	Swan Springer	1	Item	£1,371.00	£1,371.00
New	KOMPAN Spinner Bowl Inground 90cm, colour yellow	1	Item	£1,030.00	£1,030.00
New	Tile Slide Frog Play Panel	1	Item	£418.15	£418.15
Surfacing					
New	Safer surfacing - Wetpour	165	Sqm	£65.00	£10,725.00
Fencing / Gates					
New	Bow top fencing	55	Lin m	£60.00	£3,300.00
New	Supply 1m High Prosate Self Closing Single Gate Powder Coated Yellow	1	Item	£1,250.00	£1,250.00
New	Dog Grid	1	Item	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
Furniture					
New	Pine Bench with Backrest, Inground	1	Item	£600.00	£600.00
New	Litter bin	1	Item	£500.00	£500.00
New	Play area signage (fence mounted)	2	Item	£300.00	£600.00
Groundworks & removals					
New	Removal of all equipment - Toddler Swing & Infant Multi Unit, fencing and furniture	1	Item	£15,000.00	£15,000.00
New	Excavate & 100mm MOT sub-base for safer surfacing areas	165	Squared metres	£35.00	£5,775.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£5,209.62
Total					
					£57,305.77

URN	57
Site Name	Kinver Drive Play Area
Assessment	Good for <1 year

Status	Item	No.	Unit	Rates	Cost
Equipment					
New	Talk & Tumble, Classic, Inground	1	Item	£1,839.00	£1,839.00
New	Toddler Spica	1	Item	£1,156.00	£1,156.00
New	Ladybird Springer	1	Item	£970.00	£970.00
New	Water Lilies 4 way Springer	1	Item	£1,172.00	£1,172.00
New	Tile Slide Frog Play Panel	1	Item	£418.15	£418.15
Surfacing					
Existing	Safer surfacing - Retain	102	Sqm		
New	Wetpour surfacing - skim over existing	102	Sqm	£50.00	£5,100.00
Fencing / Gates					
Existing	Bow top fencing - Retain	40	Lin m		
New	Supply 1m High Prosafe Self Closing Single Gate Powder Coated Yellow	1	Item	£1,250.00	£1,250.00
Furniture					
New	Pine Bench with Backrest, Inground	1	Item	£600.00	£600.00
New	Litter bin	1	Item	£500.00	£500.00
New	Play area signage (fence mounted)	2	Item	£300.00	£600.00
Groundworks & removals					
New	Removal of all equipment - Slide, Spica & Seesaw & Furniture	1	Item	£10,000.00	£10,000.00
Site Security (Prelims)					
	Prelims	1	Item	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
	RPII Post Installation Inspection	1	Item	£450.00	£450.00
Sub-total					£26,555.15
Contingency	Contingency @ 10%	1	Item		£2,655.52
Total					£29,210.67

Appendix B – Detailed Assessment of Sites for Further Review

Site ID	650
Site Name	Boleyn Road Play Area
Street Address	Boleyn Road, Rubery, Birmingham, B45 0NG
Hierarchy	Local
Ward	Belbroughton & Romsley
Proposal	Removal of equipped play area. Open Space will be retained and enhanced for informal play and general recreation.
Justification	Boleyn Road play area is classified as local level provision. It is very limited fitness equipment of poor quality. It would need significant investment to upgrade it to an acceptable standard. Since it is 'end of life' it is proposed that the play area is removed.
Impact	<p>Boleyn Road Play Area only serves a very small area on the Birmingham border. The removal of the play area at Boleyn Road would result in only 10 households having to travel further to access play provision. The area is reasonably well served by 3 neighbourhood play spaces within Bromsgrove at:</p> <p>Callowbrook Lane Play Area & MUGA 1800m away (approx. 22-23 minutes' walk) and has adequate play provision.</p> <p>St Chads Rubery Recreation Ground Play Area, MUGA & Skatepark 2200m away (approx. 25-26 minutes' walk) and has adequate play provision.</p> <p>Hopwood Community Centre Playing Fields 2100m away (approx. 25-26 minutes' walk) and has adequate play provision, although this play space is not managed by BDC.</p> <p>The area is also well served by a neighbourhood space just outside of Bromsgrove district:</p> <p>Holly Hill Road Play Area and MUGA 950m away (approx. 11-12 minutes' walk). This play space is managed by BCC and is much better play provision available than that at Boleyn Road.</p> <p>N.B. The residential area to the south is outside of Bromsgrove district and ward boundaries.</p>
Recommendations	Remove Boleyn Road as it only serves a significantly small area and there is access to much better play provision at Holly Hill Road (BCC).



Boleyn Road Location



Boleyn Road Equipment



Boleyn Road Equipment



Boleyn Road Equipment



Site ID	609
Site Name	Foxglove Way Play Area
Street Address	Foxglove Way, Lickey End, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B60 1GQ.
Hierarchy	Local
Ward	Norton
Proposal	Review the options for enhancing the open space and landscape and the form of play provision.
Justification	Foxglove Way Play Area is classified as local level provision. It is very limited equipment and of poor quality and it is poorly sited very close to neighbouring housing. It would need significant investment to upgrade it to an acceptable standard. Since it is 'end of life' it is proposed that options for the open space are reviewed supported by local consultation.
Impact	<p>Within the local area there is currently a good level of provision, and consideration should be given to exploring the feasibility of enhancing the landscape and open space and considering other forms of informal and natural play provision. There are 3 neighbourhood play spaces at:</p> <p>Lickey End Recreation Ground 800m away (approx. 10 minutes' walk) and has adequate play provision.</p> <p>Barnsley Hall Play Area 1600m away (approx. 20 minutes' walk) and has adequate play provision.</p> <p>Blackwell Park Play Area 2000m away (approx. 24-25 minutes' walk) and has adequate play provision, although this is not managed by BDC.</p> <p>And 1 local play space at:</p> <p>Norton Farm Open Spaces 1200m away (approx. 15 min walk) and has some limited play provision, although this play space is not managed by BDC.</p>
Recommendations	Initial consultation and exploration of options for Foxglove Way commenced in Spring 2022. Further work should be carried out to review these options and to consult locally with residents and children and young people to agree a future vision for the open space.



Foxglove Way Location



Foxglove Way Play Area



Foxglove Way Location



Foxglove Way Play Area

Site ID	651
Site Name	Silverdale Play Area
Street Address	Silverdale Close, Sidemoor, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B61 8LD
Hierarchy	Local
Ward	Sidemoor
Proposal	Review the options for enhancing the open space and landscape and the form of play provision.
Justification	Silverdale play area is classified as local level provision. It is very limited equipment and the location is poorly sited, wedged in between neighbouring houses with poor access. It would need significant investment to upgrade it to an acceptable standard. Since it is 'end of life' it is proposed that the options for this open space are reviewed.
Impact	<p>The local area is very well served by 4 neighbourhood play spaces at:</p> <p>Laurel Grove / Beech Grove 150m away (approx. 1-2 minutes' walk) and has adequate play provision.</p> <p>King George V Playing Field 650m away (approx. 6-7 minutes' walk) and has adequate play provision.</p> <p>Market Street Recreation Ground 800m away (approx. 10 minutes' walk) and has adequate play provision.</p> <p>Barnsley Hall Play Area 1100m away (approx. 13-14 minutes' walk) and has adequate play provision.</p> <p>And 1 local play space at:</p> <p>Norton Farm Play Area 1000m away (approx. 11-12 minutes' walk) and has some limited play provision, although this play space is not managed by BDC.</p>
Recommendations	Review the options for enhancing the open space based on consultation with local residents and children and young people.



Silverdale Play Area Location



Silverdale Play Area



Access to Silverdale Play Area



Silverdale Play Area

Site ID	58
Site Name	The Coppice Play Area
Street Address	The Coppice, Hagley, Worcestershire, DY8 2XZ
Hierarchy	Local
Ward	Hagley West
Proposal	Review the options for enhancing the open space and landscape and the form of play provision.
Justification	The Coppice Play Area is classified as local level provision. It is very limited equipment and of poor quality and it is poorly sited on a private road and very close to neighbouring housing. It would need significant investment to upgrade it to an acceptable standard. The play area will be retained and options for the open space will be reviewed in 2029-30.
Impact	<p>The local area is generally well served by other provision in Hagley however it is noted that access to other play provision is difficult for young families due to stepped access to the footbridge over the railway line. Nearby provision includes:</p> <p>Neighbourhood Play at Hagley Community Centre Playing Fields & Skate Park 600m away (approx. 6-7 minutes' walk) and has adequate play provision, although this play space is not managed by BDC.</p> <p>And 4 local play space at:</p> <p>Chestnut Drive Play Area 650m away (approx. 6-7 min walk) and has some limited play provision, although this play space is not managed by BDC.</p> <p>The Greenway Play Area 650m away (approx. 6-7 min walk) and has some limited play provision, although this play space is not managed by BDC.</p> <p>Todd Gardens Play Area 1500m away (approx. 19-20 min walk) and has some limited play provision, although this play space is not managed by BDC.</p> <p>Amphlett Close Play Area 1500m away (approx. 19-20 min walk) and has some limited play provision, although this play space is not managed by BDC.</p>
Recommendations	Retain The Coppice play area whilst this meets national standards and then review future options for the open space based on consultation with local residents and children and young people



The Coppice Location



The Coppice Play Area



The Coppice Play Area



The Coppice Play Area

Site ID	31 & 657
Site Name	Upland Grove Play Area & Basketball Court
Street Address	Upland Grove, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B61 0EL
Hierarchy	Local
Ward	Norton
Proposal	Upgrade the local level play space and consider the options for the removal of the basketball court.
Justification	Upland Grove Play Area and Basketball Court is classified as local level provision. It is very limited equipment and of poor quality. Since it is 'end of life' the play area and basketball court were considered for removal. The basketball court will be removed but the play area will be retained and invested in to mitigate against deficiency within Norton Ward.
Impact	<p>The area is reasonably well served by 4 neighbourhood play spaces at:</p> <p>Lickey End Recreation Ground 1025m away (approx. 11-12 minutes' walk) and has adequate play provision.</p> <p>Laurel Grove / Beech Grove Play Area 975m away (approx. 11-12 minutes' walk) and has adequate play provision.</p> <p>King George V Playing Field 1300m away (approx. 15-16 minutes' walk) and has adequate play provision.</p> <p>Barnsley Hall Play Area 1050m away (approx. 12-13 minutes' walk) and has adequate play provision.</p> <p>And 1 local play space at:</p> <p>Norton Farm Open Spaces 725m away (approx. 8-9 min walk) and has some limited play provision, although this play space is not managed by BDC.</p> <p>N.B. it is not feasible to upgrade Silverdale Play Area to neighbourhood to address the red deficiency. Silverdale is poorly located in between neighbouring houses with poor access and low use. It would need significant investment to upgrade it to an acceptable standard.</p>
Recommendations	Reinvest to retain as local play provision and review opportunities to enhance to neighbourhood in the future if funding is available. Consult locally to review options for the open space where the basketball court is located.



Upland Grove Location



Upland Grove Play Area



Upland Grove Play Area



Basketball Court

Site ID	69
Site Name	Villiers Road Play Area
Street Address	Enfield Close, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B60 3JL
Hierarchy	Local
Ward	Rock Hill
Proposal	Review the options for enhancing the open space and landscape and the form of play provision.
Justification	Villiers Road play area is classified as local level provision. It is very limited equipment of poor quality and the location is poorly sited very close to neighbouring housing. It would need significant investment to upgrade it to an acceptable standard. Since it is nearing 'end of life' the options for play provision at this site should be reviewed.
Impact	<p>If the equipped play were to be removed at Villiers Road this would result in 391 households having to travel further to access play provision. However, the area is reasonably well served by 3 neighbourhood play spaces at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charford Recreation Ground 1225m away (approx. 15 minutes' walk) and has adequate play provision which is expected to be upgraded over the next 5 years. Sanders Park 1525m away (approx. 19-20 minutes' walk) and has adequate play provision. Aston Fields 1825m away (approx. 22-23 minutes' walk) and has adequate play provision. <p>A local space which is expected to be upgraded to neighbourhood level over the next 5 years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fordhouse Road Play Area 2000m away (approx. 24-25 minutes' walk). <p>And a further 3 local spaces, none of which are maintained by BDC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heath Close Play Area 1250m away (approx. 15 minutes' walk) and has some play provision. Stoke Prior Play Area 1350m away (approx. 16 minutes' walk) and has some play provision. Compass Way Play Area 1750m away (approx. 21-22 minutes walk) and has some play provision. <p>New neighbourhood level provision is planned as part of the Bellway Whitford Heights housing development which is currently under construction to the North. This play area will fall under BDC management and will be located roughly 1200m away (approx. 15 minutes' walk).</p>
Recommendations	Review the options for enhancing the open space based on consultation with local residents and children and young people. Options to be considered in the context of new play provision to be provided at Whitford Heights.

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Villiers Road Location



Villiers Road Play Area



Villiers Road Play Area



Villiers Road Play Area

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Bromsgrove Council Plan update

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Karen May
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Hannah Corredor
Report Author	Job Title: Policy Manager Contact: Rebecca Green email: r.green@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881616
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	All
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet RECOMMEND that:-

1) The Council Plan report and update table be noted.

2. BACKGROUND

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

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

2.2 The Council Plan 2024-2027 went to Cabinet in July 2024. This report summarises progress from August 2024 up to December 2025, highlighting areas of work that have contributed to delivering the priority objectives, projects and vision of the Council Plan.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- 2.3 Economic development is central to delivering the Council Plan, with a strong focus on supporting businesses, creating opportunities for individuals, and strengthening communities.
- 2.4 The economically active population in the District is 83.9%, higher than both the West Midlands and Great Britain figures, with the economically inactive figure at 16.1%, considerably lower than the regional and national figures*. There is a higher number of people in the district who have a level 4 qualification: 63%, versus 42.9% for the West Midlands and 47.2% for Great Britain**. Gross weekly pay is also higher in the district at £843.20***. The district is well positioned to take advantage of regional economic and employment opportunities.

*ONS data, Oct 24-Sep 25

**ONS data, Jan 24-Dec 24

***ONS annual survey of hours & earnings 2025

UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF)

- 2.5 Through the UKSPF, numerous grants have been awarded during the period, including Skills Boost Grants and match-funded Business Grants. The UKSPF has also provided funding for Enterprising Worcestershire, Careers Worcestershire, different employability schemes (including targeted support for NEET young people) and the Growth Hub.

Supporting businesses

- 2.6 Support for growing businesses has been provided through the Elevate programme. Elevate has two strands – one for all businesses and Elevate Manufacturing which supports the manufacturing sector. The programmes support businesses that have been trading for more than 3 years to develop growth plans to scale-up their business.

Innovation & Technology

- 2.7 The new Innovation Lighthouse programme aims to drive growth, competitiveness, and resilience in the local manufacturing sector. Participants received bespoke, one-to-one support from the renowned Warwick Manufacturing Group to develop new products or processes. They are also able to apply for a match-funded grant to deliver their project.

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- 2.8 Betaden, who has been supported by the Council, is a tech accelerator providing support to new and established businesses to develop new products and services and to commercialise their ideas.

Town & District Centres

- 2.9 Bromsgrove Town Centre has continued to develop, with the market being recognised nationally and hosting events such as the Christmas Lights. Work is progressing around a Town Centre Framework, which will support the development of a potential Business Improvement District. Action has also been taken through the courts to close shops that were selling illegal tobacco and vape items.
- 2.10 Work continues to be delivered in line with the Bromsgrove Centres Strategy (2023–2026), with ongoing officer support provided across all district centres as issues or challenges arise. This flexible, needs-led approach ensures that businesses, community partners and parish councils receive timely guidance, practical assistance and specialist expertise. Recent work includes supporting centre-based projects and public-realm improvements—such as the Rubery installation—and facilitating local enhancements like exploring the introduction of InPost lockers in Alvechurch. Officers also continue to contribute to planning, delivery and troubleshooting for events and activities across the district, including major seasonal events such as the annual Christmas Lights programme, helping to sustain vibrant, welcoming centres for residents, visitors and businesses.
- 2.11 There has been a focus on improving parking, with several of our car parks receiving national Park Mark status, EV charging points being installed and an annual Free Parking Day at Christmas time.

Key development projects

- 2.12 Key projects have also progressed. At the Windsor Street site, Phase 1 remediation is now complete. The project team are agreeing the programme for phase 2 remediation that will commence in Spring 2026 and take approximately twelve months to complete. The preferred option to develop the site was agreed by Cabinet in November 2025 which was to deliver residential in partnership with a Registered Social Landlord. Legal advice is being sought in relation to the preferred option, and a report will be brought back to Cabinet in 2026.
- 2.13 The Market Hall site, which following community input is now known as Nailers Yard, continues to progress, with the construction ongoing and a completion date of 4th May 2026. There is significant interest in

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terms of potential lettings for the new commercial space. A full business case was submitted to Birmingham City Council for funding from the former Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) in September 2025. Birmingham City Council's Cabinet approved the business case in January 2026 for the funding of £2.425m, to be paid in financial year 2026/27.

HOUSING

2.14 The Council Plan sets out our aspiration to create thriving and inclusive communities where everyone has access to safe, healthy, affordable, and environmentally responsible housing options.

Homelessness support

2.15 Bromsgrove District Council, in partnership with BDHT, has carried out research into the supply and demand for temporary accommodation and accommodation to meet the needs of those approaching as homeless. The resulting strategy and action recommended additional static temporary accommodation units be made available for homeless households. The Council has also joined with some of the other districts in Worcestershire to develop a shared Homelessness Strategy for 2026-2031 in line with the Government's National Plan to End Homelessness.

2.16 The Council has also looked at a range of options to support an increase in the supply of accommodation. The Council has made a grant available from low-cost housing receipts for BDHT to purchase additional units of temporary accommodation and permanent social rented housing to support the homelessness service to move households more quickly out of temporary accommodation into permanent accommodation. In addition, the Council is also developing an Empty Homes Strategy to work with homeowners or landlords of empty properties to bring them back into use.

2.17 The establishment of the Worcestershire Domestic Abuse Partnership Board and the provision of safe accommodation have led to more consistent standards of support across the county. Housing teams, alongside commissioned domestic abuse providers, now play a critical role in early identification, prevention, and sustaining safe accommodation for survivors.

Affordable housing

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2.18 The median house price to disposable household income affordability ratio for Bromsgrove was 9.7*, one of the highest in the West Midlands.

*ONS data 2024

2.19 The Council has recently consulted on the Affordable Housing Allocations Policy in conjunction with procuring a new more up to date homelessness, housing register and allocations system. The changes proposed will ensure that those with a local connection are given greater priority, whilst still recognising those households who do not need to meet local connection criteria such as armed forces personnel, care leaver and those fleeing Domestic Abuse.

Private rented sector

2.20 Support for the private rented sector continues to develop, with the Council hosting a Private Sector Landlord Forum, a chance to share best practice, get practical advice, and build stronger links between landlords and the Council. The Council has also been working with Citizens Advice to develop a debt advice service to Private Tenants and homeowners. This new service will ensure that where rent arrears and mortgage arrears are putting a home at risk, that households will be able to access support and advice to prevent this from happening. The team are the Worcestershire lead for the Renters Bill Act 2025, ensuring consistency for renters and landlords across the county.

Spadesbourne Homes

2.21 61 units were delivered on the site of the former Bromsgrove Council House by the District Council, incorporating green technology such as air source heat pumps, under floor heating, and solar panels (where feasible), with the properties achieving high EPC ratings. Spadesbourne Homes, the Council's wholly owned company, took over responsibility for 37 private rented sector units on the site. All properties were let to people with a local connection to Bromsgrove District and have been very positively received by the tenants and the wider community.

ENVIRONMENT

2.22 The Council Plan committed to safeguarding the natural environment, addressing issues such as biodiversity and climate change mitigation and supporting recycling and reducing waste reduction.

Environmental enforcement

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2.23 Increased environmental enforcement has helped to protect the beautiful environment of the district and minimise pollution. Since WRS took over the enviro-crime functions on behalf of Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils, WRS Officers have served 11 Community Protection Notices, 47 Fixed Penalty Notices and 1 section 215 (T&CPA) notice. We have 18 Enforcement files with PACE interviews arranged and have four files with legal to consider prosecution. The team remain committed to educating businesses and the public on how to dispose of waste properly, reducing fly-tipping and serving more FPNs where necessary.

Delivering the Environment Act

2.24 The Council Plan also set out our dedication to the delivery of the Environment Act and how we can work to reduce waste and increase recycling. We are compliant with dry recycling requirements of Simpler Recycling across Domestic and Commercial Waste Services. The Commercial Food Waste service has been implemented and with the recent approval to expand the service, additional clients will be secured. Residential food waste collection is due to be implemented in 2026, with capital funding from central government. Following work with WFDC and RBC to undertake market engagement with the private sector, the Domestic Food Waste Tender closed in December 2025. Vehicle orders have been placed, although in light of changes to how ongoing revenue funding from central govt has been provided, a financial pressure has been identified, and we are now exploring options regarding how we deliver this new service. This may require us to operate an in-house service which will require assessment of lease arrangements for additional land and a potential phased approach to commence the service at the earliest possible time beyond April 2026, in line with available funding.

Waste management systems

2.25 We remain committed to improving our waste management systems; an essential bin-swap programme has been delivered, bringing the Council in line with national standards. In 2025, Bromsgrove District Council introduced HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) as a renewable diesel alternative across its fleet and machinery; approximately 30% of fuel usage for the fleet has been swapped to HVO, reducing the carbon impact of operating services. This is further enhanced through the refuse fleet replacement programme that will run through to January 2026 for 15 new more environmentally friendly and efficient vehicles, with old trucks being sold for parts and scrap, with proceeds going back to the public purse.

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Biodiversity

2.26 Biodiversity has also been a key workstream, with the Biodiversity First Duty report being developed, which sets out continued engagement with the Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy, monitoring and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) through planning, enhancing biodiversity on Council-owned land and promoting citizen science and community engagement.

2.6 INFRASTRUCTURE

2.27 The infrastructure priority underpins all the other priorities, as they can only be delivered with the right infrastructure in place.

The Local Plan

2.28 The Local Plan is how communities can guide where and how future homes, businesses, and infrastructure will be developed. As part of the Local Plan process, a consultation on the Draft Development Strategy was undertaken for 16 weeks, from 30th June to 20th October, based on the requirements of the Statement of Community involvement, which identifies who is to be consulted and how that consultation should be delivered. Social media posts generated 785 engagements with the links. 20 individual consultation events were delivered across the district to allow all residents to access an event near them; every settlement with growth proposed had at least 1 event, including centrally accessible events in Bromsgrove Town and edge of conurbation events. Approximately 8000 responses were received via the various methods of engagement offered. these responses are now being processed by planning officers.

Air quality

2.29 Work on air quality within the district continues to be important; Clean Air Day is marked each June and the Behavioural Change officer and colleagues have visited schools in Bromsgrove to promote behavioural change. They have also visited several businesses and community groups in Hanover Street and Redditch Road to raise awareness of air quality, promote the real time air quality monitoring portal and behavioural change generally. The Bromsgrove District Council's Air Quality Annual Status Report was produced and submitted to Defra, reviewing the air quality monitoring data and status for 2024. This led to the revocation of air quality management areas in Redditch Road,

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Bromsgrove and Lickey End, Bromsgrove due to improving results from air quality monitoring.

VISION

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

2.31 Delivering for the community was also central to the Council Plan. The vision places quality of life for residents at the centre of how services are delivered, where communities and their safety and wellbeing are integral to all the priorities.

Bromsgrove Partnership and Collaborative

2.32 The importance of working in partnership is recognised in the Council Plan as we cannot meet the needs of our residents by working in isolation. One way we do this effectively is through the Bromsgrove Partnership (also our District Collaborative) which brings together representatives from partner agencies including NHS, Police, Fire, County and Parish Councils, a range of voluntary and community sector organisations and more.

2.33 The Board, Community Wellbeing, Better Environment and Ageing Well Partnership Groups continue to meet, and a regular Partnership bulletin is produced, all to help ensure local provision is as joined up as possible and any partnership opportunities to support our communities are recognised. Through the Ageing Well Group, the Older People's Forum in Bromsgrove has been restarted due to support from the Primary Care Network, District Council and other partners. The Ageing Well Group, and the Board, also recognised the needs of older people in relation to the 'digital switchover', so working together with partners, the District Council has supported local events to raise awareness.

2.34 The Cost-of-Living Partnership Group also continues to create a unified approach to alleviating the impact of the cost of living with the aim of improving the wellbeing of residents and communities. Following on from the production of cost-of-living leaflets and dedicated Council webpages, in response to consultation surveys, which showed residents were unsure where to go for support, discreet business cards of useful contacts were produced. Partners and District Councillors helped to distribute at events and locations in the community such as GP surgeries, libraries, shops, and community facilities like the Pod and Family Hub.

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- 2.35 Working with the County Council, the District Council has received an allocation of Household Support Fund (HSF) since it started, including the current phase 7, which runs up to end of March 2026. The District Council has distributed a proportion to local foodbanks and white goods schemes, as well as to BDHT's hardship scheme, with the majority of funds being used by the District Council to deliver a cash voucher scheme. The close working relationship with Citizens Advice Bromsgrove and Redditch and other voluntary and community sector organisations made this possible, as they were able to reach a number of households in need, many of whom would not have necessarily reached out to the Council.
- 2.36 The Knowledge Bank is a community services directory covering Bromsgrove and Redditch and it was redesigned at the end of 2024 to make it more inviting and user friendly. It's available publicly for all to use and is a searchable tool to help connect people to relevant support and activities. The Council, working closely with partners, in particular BARN (Bromsgrove and Redditch Network – who work with and support our voluntary and community groups) help us to update and maintain the content of the Knowledge Bank.

Community Safety

- 2.37 The Community Safety Team continue to deliver the Respect Programme, a therapeutic mentoring scheme which provides weekly support and guidance sessions to young people at risk of becoming victims and/or perpetrators of crime. A 'Right Path Project' using Serious Violence Duty funding allocated to Worcestershire, and working with South Worcestershire, has been commissioned by NWCSP. This delivers intensive 1:1 mentoring to support and guide young people who are at greater risk of criminalisation through use of violence, including those not accessing education and those at risk of permanent exclusion. The Right Path project was hugely successful in 2024/25 to the point of being oversubscribed. An Older and Vulnerable Persons Project has also been developed, with a Nominated Neighbour scheme in Alvechurch progressing well.

CCTV

- 2.38 In Bromsgrove District during the last 12 months the CCTV team have continued to support the safety of our communities, logging 348 CCTV incidents, completing 234 footage reviews and producing 81 videos for evidence. A new camera was also added in Bromsgrove, at the bus station, following a successful "Hot Spot" Funding Application through West Mercia Police.

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Lifeline

2.39 NEW Lifeline has been accredited to the Technology Enabled Care industry best practice Quality Standards Framework, which was achieved through rigorous external audit and no areas of improvement were identified. They continue to support a six week free service, enabling residents of Bromsgrove to try the Lifeline service. Over the last 12 months we have had approximately 70 people using the free service at any one time. During 2025 the team installed 225 equipment packages in within Bromsgrove. NEW Lifeline are also delivering continuity of service where a person becomes Care Act eligible and/or their support/care needs become more. The team have supported 89 residents of Bromsgrove through this Social Care funded partnership.

Family Hubs

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

Social Prescribing

2.41 Key activities undertaken by the Social Prescribing service have included continuing to promote the service and achieve positive outcomes with patients through their "What Matters to Me" plans. 956 referrals were received by the Social Prescribing service and 194 Bromsgrove residents were supported to access the Warmth on Prescription scheme.

Arts & events

2.42 Arts and events continue to be important to our residents and communities, and the council have supported numerous activities from the Christmas Lights in Bromsgrove and Rubery, to summer activity programmes. The ReNEW project was successful in obtaining over half a million pounds in Place Partnership funding from Arts Council England, which will support residents across Bromsgrove and Redditch to share their stories to creatively shape the future of both areas.

Bromsgrove Small Grants Scheme

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2.43 The Council has continued to support our residents, communities and VCS through the small grants scheme, which supported 12 local organisations in 2025, including the Alvechurch Community Larder, Fairfield Village Community Association and the Bromsgrove Youth and Community Hub.

Bromsgrove Urban & Rural Transport

2.44 The 'BURT' bus helps residents of Bromsgrove District who are unable to make essential journeys by other transport, whether this is because of mobility or disability issues, or because suitable services are not available. The service is operated by Bromsgrove and Redditch Network, with support from the Council. It currently has approximately 567 registered users and undertook roughly 4425 journeys in 2024-25.

ORGANISATIONAL PRIORITIES

Financial Stability

2.45 A primary organisational priority is financial stability and sustainability, because it underpins our ability to deliver the things that matter most to our community. We have focussed on maintaining strong financial grip and improving transparency, effective contract management, proactively managing our assets and applying rigour in securing value for money. Whilst finances have been challenging over recent years, the organisation has responded well in managing our limited resources effectively. As a result, the council has been well placed to weather the financial storms affecting all the public sector. We have focussed on making even better use of existing resources, embedding business improvement, and exploring alternative methods of delivery and continue to operate sound financial judgement in all our endeavours.

Sustainability

2.46 Ensuring that a green thread runs through all the services we design and deliver is essential as we adapt to address the implications of climate change. Changes to the fleet have been a key activity to reducing our carbon impact. A new Climate Change Strategy has been developed during 2025, aiming for adoption in 2026. We are also expanding the use of digital technologies where appropriate, including innovative use of AI, enabling more automation of services, freeing up capacity to deliver against the priorities of our communities and enabling greater digital access to our services.

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Partnerships

2.47 We continue to work closely with our partners in the public sector, such as Redditch Borough Council, Worcestershire County Council, West Mercia Police, and the NHS and parish councils. The Local Government Reorganisation consultation undertaken in 2025 involved the district level councils in Worcestershire working closely together to understand the implications of LGR for our residents and communities.

2.48 As detailed above, we collaborate with the voluntary and community sector across the district, with the Bromsgrove Partnership and Collaborative bringing together different organisations from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to work together to support the residents and communities of Bromsgrove District.

Culture- the 4 Ps

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

- Purpose
- People
- Pride
- Performance

2.50 Activities and initiatives have been undertaken to engage and support staff, including an internally delivered staff survey, staff wellbeing events at both Parkside and the Depot and enhanced inductions for new staff which include an opportunity to meet the Chief executive and the Corporate Leadership Team. Employee Assistance and Benefits programmes are also in place to support employees across the Council.

Local Government Reorganisation

2.51 Major changes are planned to councils across Worcestershire as part of the biggest shake-up of local government in more than 50 years, with the Government requiring 21 areas of England to restructure their system of local government before 2029, including Bromsgrove District Council. Through local government reorganisation, the Government is looking to replace Bromsgrove District, Malvern Hills District, Redditch Borough, Worcester City, Worcestershire County, Wychavon District and Wyre Forest District Councils with fewer councils.

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- 2.52 Bromsgrove District Council voted to submit an ambitious proposal to transform local government in Worcestershire to the Government: 'Transforming Worcestershire: Local government that works for people, powered by place and built for the future - The North and South Local Government Reorganisation Proposal for Worcestershire'. To reach that point, the council carried out public engagement during summer 2025 for residents to have their say on their preferred option, called 'Shape Worcestershire: Reorganising your local councils together'.
- 2.53 The attached table at Appendix 1 summarises the progress to date against the key objectives and projects described in the Council Plan.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The Council Plan is essential to provide the strategic direction for service delivery. Operationally, the content of the Council Plan has informed and will continue to the service business planning process; this helps to ensure that services deliver against the priorities and objectives identified. From 2026 onwards, updates against the Council Plan will be captured using a PowerBI dashboard, linking information from service business plans, quarterly performance and project highlight reports into a single coherent summary of our progress to date.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

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Relevant Strategic Purpose

6.1 The Council Plan articulates the priorities for Bromsgrove District Council; this report gives an update of progress against each priority area of work.

Climate Change Implications

6.2 A green thread runs through the Council plan, climate change and carbon reduction being key issues within the plan.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.3 There are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report; however, specific projects and activities identified in the Council Plan may need individual Equality Impact Assessments to meet the requirements of the Equality Act.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 Publishing a Council Plan makes the strategic direction of the Council clear to employees and Members and as such supports the management of risks identified around robust decision making and the accuracy/effectiveness of performance data.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1- Council Plan progress update

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Karen May	22/01/2026
Lead Director / Assistant Director	John Leach, Chief Executive	21/01/2026
Financial Services	Debra Goodall, Assistant Director	21/01/2026
Legal Services	Claire Felton, Assistant Director	10/02/2026
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green, Policy Manager	Report author
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Matthew Eccles, Climate Change Manager	20/01/2026

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Economic Development

Priority	Key Objective/Project	December 2025 update	RAG rating
Economic Development	Objective: Supporting our businesses	<p>UKSPF funded activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Business Grants: 2 grants were paid in Q2 25/26, with a further 6 approved for Bromsgrove. ○ Enterprising Worcestershire: In Bromsgrove in Q2 25/26, 3 business accessed advisor support (4 to date) 	
	Objective: Upskilling the workforce	<p>UKSPF funded activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Careers Worcestershire: In Bromsgrove in Q2 25/26, 55 people have been supported to gain employment (93 to date), with 13 getting a job (16 to date). ○ Employability support in Family Hubs: In Bromsgrove in Q2 25/26, 13 volunteering opportunities (21 to date), 5 people gaining a qualification (6 to date) and 5 people have been supported to gain employment (8 to date). ○ Employability skills programme: Grants have been made available for organisation to support NEET young people to re-engage. The support will be geographically based and focussed on the areas of highest need. 1 grant has been awarded to one organisation with 1 other application in progress. Delivery began October 2025. ○ Skills Boost: In Bromsgrove in Q2 25/26, 36 grants have been paid (42 to date), with a further 53 approved (70 to date). An additional £15k has been allocated to this programme to meet high demand. 	
	Objective: Enabling growth & Innovation	UKSPF has supported a Business Innovation and Productivity Programme. Warwick Manufacturing Group have been appointed to deliver the programme. Delivery will begin in Q3 25/26 and will support 4 businesses across the district.	
	Objective: Supporting entrepreneurship & job creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UKSPF funding has supported the Growth Hub, with 43 businesses in Bromsgrove supported during Q2 25/26, a total of 57 for the year to date. ○ Enterprising Worcestershire: In Bromsgrove in Q2 25/26, 6 entrepreneurs attended pre-start workshops (14 to date) 	

Economic Development

Economic Development	Objective: Vibrant town & district centres	Activity is focusing on the new Town Centre Strategic Framework; a Town Centre Steering Group is to be formed, which will develop an action plan and start the process of developing a Business Improvement District.	
	Project: Regeneration Sites- delivery of projects within the £14.5m Levelling Up Fund including Windsor Street and the Market Hall site	<p>Windsor Street: At the Windsor Street site, Phase 1 remediation is now complete. The project team are agreeing the programme for phase 2 remediation that will commence in Spring 2026 and take approximately twelve months to complete. The preferred option to develop the site was agreed by Cabinet in November 2025 which was to deliver residential in partnership with a Registered Social Landlord. Legal advice is being sought in relation to the preferred option, and a report will be brought back to Cabinet in 2026.</p> <p>Market Hall Site (Nailers Yard): The Market Hall site, which following community input is now known as Nailers Yard, continues to progress, with the construction ongoing and a completion date of 4th May 2026. There is significant interest in terms of potential lettings for the new commercial space. A full business case was submitted to Birmingham City Council (BCC) for GBSLEP funding in September 2025. Birmingham City Council's Cabinet approved the business case in January 2026 for the funding of £2.425m, to be paid in financial year 2026/27.</p>	
	Project: Centres Strategy - Implementation of yearly Centres Strategy action plan across the 8 centres within the district	The Centres Strategy will be reviewed in 6 months. The current Centres Strategy action plan is still live with the majority of the actions relating to the town centre. There is a focus on a new Town Centre Strategic Framework; a Town centre Steering Group is to be formed, which will develop an action plan and start the process of developing a Business Improvement District.	

Housing

Priority	Key Objective/Project	December 2025 update	RAG rating
6	Objective: Affordable & balanced housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New social housing at Burcot Lane fully let by BDHT ○ 100% of Spadesbourne Homes tenants at Burcot Lane site meeting the local connection criteria 	
	Objective: Energy efficient homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 382 residents have been supported with energy advise through our SLA with Act on Energy ○ Funding secured for the delivery of Warm Homes Local Grant to support households in fuel poverty and reduction in household carbon emissions. ○ Private Sector Housing Officers provide advice to landlords during inspections. ○ BDHT delivering a programme of energy efficient improvements to its stock 	
	Objective: Innovative housing provision	Redevelopment of the Windsor Street site to be for residential with the preferred option to work in partnership with a Registered Social Landlord	
	Project: Former Dolphin Centre car park- continue to explore different options for housing provision on the Town Centre site	A report will be considered by Overview & Scrutiny Board in February regarding the possible future use of all car park sites in Bromsgrove Town Centre. This will include consideration as to whether the Dolphin Centre Car Park/School Road should be retained for parking or could be redeveloped.	
	Project: New Local Plan- identification of the number of new housing that should be provided and where	A consultation on the Draft Development Strategy was undertaken for 16 weeks, from 30 th June to 20 th October, based on the requirements of the Statement of Community involvement, which identifies who is to be consulted and how that consultation should be delivered. Social media posts generated 785 engagements with the links. 20 individual consultation events were delivered across the district to allow all residents to access an event near them; every settlement with growth proposed had at least 1 event, including centrally accessible events in Bromsgrove Town and edge of conurbation events. Approximately 8000 responses were received via the various methods of engagement offered. these responses are now being processed by planning officers.	

Environment

Priority	Key Objective/Project	December 2025 update	RAG rating
Environment	Objective: Increased environmental enforcement	The partnership with WRS undertaking enforcement has seen a large number of investigations commenced which have led to increasing numbers of enforcement actions which are reported as part of the quarterly performance report.	Green
	Objective: Implementing the Environment Act 2021 (waste)	Commercial Food Waste service has been implemented and with the recent approval to expand the service additional clients will be secured. We are compliant with dry recycling requirements of Simpler Recycling across Domestic & Commercial Waste Services. The Domestic Food Waste Tender is scheduled to see bids returned by 8th December 2025. Vehicle orders are being placed as well as assessing lease arrangements and a potential phased approach to commence the service at the earliest possible time beyond April 2026.	Orange
	Objective: Carbon reduction	The development across services and with members the new 5-year Climate Change Strategy and action plan. This included an interactive Cabinet Advisory Group held on 23 October. The final report is coming to Cabinet in March 2026.	Orange
	Project: Low carbon fleet fuel options- continue with the fleet conversion and the electrification of smaller vehicles	Approximately 30% of fuel usage for the fleet has been swapped to HVO, reducing the carbon impact of operating services. This is further enhanced through the refuse fleet replacement programme that will run from December to January for 15 new more environmentally friendly and efficient vehicles.	Green
	Project: Bromsgrove District Heat Network- work with partners to develop, design and build the network, reducing carbon emissions	Following Cabinet approval of a revised approach, the project is now entering a reassessment phase. Work is underway to define the scope for commissioning an external consultant to undertake an options and viability review of the scheme, including potential alternative start locations and delivery models.	Orange

Infrastructure

Priority	Key Objective/Project	December 2025 update	RAG rating
Infrastructure	Objective: Delivering the new Local Plan	The consultation on the draft Development Strategy was undertaken for 16 weeks, from 30 th June to 20 th October, generating over 7000 responses which are being assessed and a new timeline for the Local Plan is being developed.	Orange
	Objective: Parks & open spaces	A rolling programme for attaining Green Flag status has been developed. Of the 4 parks identified, Sanders Park and Lickey End LNR have already received Green Flag Awards, with St Chads Park looking to be successful in 2026.	Orange
	Objective: Active travel	The authority continues to support Worcestershire County Council with its aim of improving local walking, wheeling and cycling routes across the county, including through the quarterly Active Travel Stakeholder Group.	Orange
	Project: Behaviour Change (air quality) - Utilising real time information, a programme of encouraging community groups to lead on reducing polluting behaviour, which has active travel as a key component	On the back of previous community engagement our Behavioural Change officer and colleagues have visited two schools in Bromsgrove to promote behavioural change during the quarter and have also visited a number of businesses and community groups in Hanover Street and Redditch Road to raise awareness of air quality, promote the real time air quality monitoring portal and behavioural change generally.	Green
	Project: We will also continue to work in partnership on transport and environmental projects locally, regionally and nationally	Ongoing engagement with WCC. The LCWIP plan is being developed, to be published in 2026 by WCC. Development of LTP5 is currently on hold awaiting new guidance.	Orange

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