

Public Document Pack



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 20TH MAY 2026

AT 6.00 P.M.

PARKSIDE SUITE - PARKSIDE

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

AGENDA

WELCOME

- 1. Election of Chairman 2026/27**
- 2. Election of Vice Chairman 2026/27**
- 3. Vote of Thanks to Retiring Office Holders**
- 4. To receive apologies for absence**

5. **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.

6. **To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 21st January 2026 (Pages 7 - 30)**

7. **To receive any announcements from the Chairman and/or Head of Paid Service**

8. **To receive any announcements from the Leader**

9. **To receive comments, questions or petitions from members of the public**

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

10. **Urgent Decisions (Pages 31 - 40)**

There have been two urgent decisions since the previous Council meeting on the Council Tax Resolutions and the appointment of the Section 151 Officer.

11. **Constitution Review (Pages 41 - 214)**

12. **Appointments to Committees 2026/27 (Including Political Balance) (Pages 215 - 234)**

The covering report and Appendix 2 to the report, detailing the Committee Terms of Reference, are attached to this agenda. Appendix 1 to the report, relating to the political balance figures, will follow in a supplementary pack for this meeting.

13. **Council Appointments to Outside Bodies 2026/27 (Pages 235 - 240)**

The covering report and an appendix listing the outside bodies requiring Council appointments have been attached to this agenda. The list of nominations will follow in a supplementary pack for the meeting.

14. **Bromsgrove District Local Plan - Notice of Intention to Commence Local Plan Preparation, Local Plan Timetable and Scoping Consultation (Pages 241 - 260)**

15. **Cabinet Recommendations** (Pages 261 - 262)

To consider recommendations from the meeting of Cabinet held on 20th April 2026.

Members are asked to note that the recommendations arising from the meeting of Cabinet held on 6th March were considered at the Council meeting held on 6th March 2026. In addition, Members are asked to note that there were no recommendations arising from the meeting of Cabinet held on 25th March 2026.

16. **Background information on the recommendations from Cabinet**

- (i) Revision of Environmental Crime Enforcement Policy (Pages 263 - 286)
- (ii) Introduction of Enforcement of Littering from Vehicles (Pages 287 - 296)
- (iii) Climate Change Strategy 2026 - 2031 (Pages 297 - 352)
- (iv) Empty Homes Strategy 2026 - 29 (Pages 353 - 376)
- (v) Renters Rights Act 2025 (Pages 377 - 386)

The covering report is attached. The appendix to the report will follow in a supplementary pack for the meeting.

- (vi) Quarter 3 2025/26 Finance and Performance Monitoring Report (Including Financial Savings) (Pages 387 - 428)

17. **To note the minutes of the meetings of Cabinet held on 6th March, 25th March and 20th April 2026** (Pages 429 - 464)

18. **Questions on Notice**

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

A period of up to 15 minutes is allocated for the asking and answering of questions. This may be extended at the discretion of the Chairman with the agreement of the majority of those present.

19. **Motions on Notice**

Any Motions on Notice for consideration at this meeting will follow in a supplementary pack.

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

20. **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**

J. Leach
Chief Executive

Parkside
Market Street
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B61 8DA

12th May 2026

If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact
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You are able to see and hear the livestream of the meeting from the Committee Pages of the website, alongside the agenda for the meeting.

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

Notes:

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



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- Meeting Minutes
- The Council's Constitution

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

21ST JANUARY 2026, AT 6.00 P.M.

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

Officers: Mr J. Leach, Mr. G. Revans, Mrs. C. Felton, D Goodall and Mrs J. Gresham

78\25 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D. Hopkins and D. Nicholl.

79\25 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor H. Jones declared a Pecuniary Interest in respect of Agenda Item 16 – Motions on Notice in that she was employed by the Member of Parliament for Bromsgrove.

Councillors S. Baxter, D. Forsythe and S. Peters declared an Other Disclosable Interest in respect of Agenda item 10 – Wythall Neighbourhood Plan as a member of Wythall Parish Council who had paid for the preparation of the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan.

The Members did not leave the meeting room during the consideration of these items and took part on the vote thereon.

[In respect of the preamble above, Councillor H. Jones left the meeting prior to the vote on Agenda Item 16 – Motions on Notice].

80\25 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 19TH NOVEMBER 2025**

The minutes from the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 19th November 2025 were submitted for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED that the minutes from the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 19th November 2025 be approved as a true and accurate record.

81\25

TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND/OR HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

The Chairman announced and congratulations were offered to the four community champions from Bromsgrove who had been awarded honours in the New Years' Honours List. The champions were as follows:

1. Victoria Wells OBE
2. Thomas Clarke-Forrest MBE
3. Wendy Latty BEM
4. Sabhijinder Singh Hayer (Sam) BEM

The Chairman was also saddened to announce that former Councillor Glenys Blackmoor has recently passed away. Councillor P. McDonald was invited to say a few words on behalf of the Labour Group. In doing so, it was noted that Glenys was a devoted Parish Councillor who served for twenty years. She was dedicated to improving the lives of others and had community spirit and an unwavering belief in public service. Former Councillor Blackmoor was passionate about saving the planet and cycled to all Council meetings. Details of the funeral arrangements were provided should any Members wish to attend.

The Chairman noted that all Members paid their respects to former Councillor Blackmoor's family and friends at this sad time.

There were no announcements from the Head of Paid Service in this occasion.

82\25

TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE LEADER

The Leader announced that Ms. J. Lorraine had been appointed as Interim Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer to the Council. Ms. Lorraine could not be in attendance for this meeting due to a prior engagement.

83\25

TO RECEIVE COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (TO FOLLOW)

Two members of the public had submitted a question for this meeting.

Ms. Trigg was in attendance (on Microsoft Teams) and asked the following question:

"What plans do you have to deal with the immediate Speculative Planning Applications already received outside of the Local Plan Consultation process and those that will likely be received over the coming weeks to ensure that the public is not vulnerable to unsustainable development outside the Local Plan consultation option that has only just closed and for which this Council hasn't published any response to it yet?"

The Local Planning Authority (LPA) was bound to determine planning applications in line with the development plan policies unless material considerations indicated otherwise. The emerging Local Plan update was not sufficiently progressed to carry any significant weight in the decision-making process. Therefore, the Bromsgrove District Plan (2017) provided the adopted development plan for consideration.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was a significant material consideration in determining planning applications. It emphasised that significant weight should be attached to the NPPF when making decisions, as it outlines the government's planning policies for England and guides how these should be applied. The NPPF aims to contribute to sustainable development, ensuring that planning policies reflect the government's commitment to economic growth, social objectives, and environmental considerations.

To be clear, material considerations concern the use and development of land in the public interest, and not to private considerations such as the applicant's personal conduct, covenants or property values. Each case is determined on its own merits.

It was reported that the second question had been submitted by Ms K. Van der Plank, who was not able to attend the meeting. It had been agreed prior to the meeting that a written response be provided. The Monitoring Officer read the question for Members' information. It read as follows:

"Could the Council please outline any measures that are being implemented to ensure all public venues and licensed premises within the District comply with Health and Safety Regulations".

84\25

URGENT DECISIONS

The Chairman informed Council that had been one Urgent Decision taken since the previous meeting of Council relating to the appointment of an Interim Section 151 Officer.

There was a request made that the names of those who approved Urgent Decisions be included in the published documents in the future in order to provide transparency for members of the public who were not aware of the names of Members and Officers involved in the process. The Chairman stated that the Urgent Decisions were included on the Council's website and if the names were not already included then this would be looked at for the future.

Members took the opportunity to thank the Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services for her hard work prior to the appointment of an Interim Section 151 Officer.

85\25

CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Chairman invited Members to provide an update in respect of substitute Members on the Overview and Scrutiny Board for the remainder of the municipal year.

In doing so, it was noted that the substitute for Councillor J. Clarke was Councillor D. Nicholl and that Councillor D. Forsythe would be the substitute for Conservative Group Members on the Board.

86\25

INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL 2026/27

The Leader presented the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) 2026/27 report for consideration by Council and thanked the IRP for the work undertaken in preparing the report.

In addition to the five recommendations made by the IRP there were three additional recommendations which proposed the following:

1. A Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) using the multiplier of 0.03 of the basic allowance be introduced for payments to Vice-Chairman of Committees on a per meeting basis where Members were required to act in the absence of the Chairman of that particular Committee. This was based on parity of arrangements already in place for the Chairman of the Electoral Matters Committee

2. A Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) using the multiplier of 0.03 of the basic allowance be introduced for payments to the Chairman of Licensing Sub-Committee hearings.
3. That the SRA of the Chairman of the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee be aligned with the Chairman of the Licensing Committee (approximately £35 per annum).

It was explained that given the relatively small multiplier being proposed to these new SRAs, it was not anticipated that the proposed recommendations 1 and 2 as detailed above would exceed £2,000 additional funding into the budget.

Following the presentation of the report and the additional recommendations Members expressed that they were pleased with the additional SRAs as detailed above, particularly as this had been suggested previously. In particular the additional SRA for the Chairman of Audit, Standards and Governance Committee given its importance for the Council.

Some Members expressed that they had been disappointed with some of the communications from members of the IRP. In addition to this it was noted that the panel seemed unbalanced in terms of Trade Union representation. It was important to recognise that currently there was not enough of an incentive for new Councillors to stand in elections as the remuneration did not reflect the amount of time Councillors spent executing their Council duties.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor K. May and seconded by Councillor S. Baxter.

RESOLVED that

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

- 5) the **Dependent Carer's Allowance** remains unchanged.
- 6) a **Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA)** using the multiplier of 0.03 of the basic allowance for payments to **Vice-Chairman of Committees** on a per meeting basis where **Members** were required to act in the absence of the **Chairman** of that particular **Committee**. This was based on parity of arrangements already in place for the **Chairman** of the **Electoral Matters Committee** be introduced.
- 7) a **Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA)** using the multiplier of 0.03 of the basic allowance for payments to the **Chairman of Licensing Sub-Committee** hearings be introduced.
- 8) the **SRA** of the **Chairman of the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee** be aligned with the **Chairman of the Licensing Committee** multiplier of 0.3 (approximately £35 per annum).

87\25

WYTHALL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Strategic Housing and Worcestershire Regulatory Services presented the Wythall Neighbourhood Plan. It was noted that this was a detailed plan and that Wythall Parish Council had worked extremely hard to develop an in depth and well thought out document.

Members welcomed the Plan and commented that it was a huge community effort to develop and that it included several priorities such as allotments, primary health care, Wythall station and signage for Wythall Library. Members felt that the last priority detailed could perhaps be funded by Worcestershire County Council, the Parish Council or a Bromsgrove District Council Members' Ward Fund contribution rather than it being classed as a priority.

There were some queries regarding affordable homes allocation in the Local Development Plan and any neighbourhood Plan that sat underneath the Plan. It was noted that the Local Development Plan superseded any Neighbourhood Plans therefore whatever the allocation in terms of the Local Development Plan would be applicable. However, further information would be provided to Members following the meeting.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor K. Taylor and seconded by Councillor K. May.

RESOLVED that

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

88\25

TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER A REPORT FROM THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Prior to presenting report the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing thanked the Chairman, the Leader and Officers who had been involved in the visit from Chadsgrove School. It had been a successful visit and one that the young people had really enjoyed.

The annual report from the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing was the presented for Members' consideration. This was a detailed report that highlighted some excellent work being undertaken across the District.

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There was a significant amount of work taking place in respect of Family Hubs. Members were informed that the Government had introduced a 'Best Start in Life' Strategy which included rolling out of Best Start Family Hubs. There had been communications provided as part of the projects, which included case studies of the work taking place.

Members were informed that Lifeline was a well-used and much needed service for vulnerable residents within the District. A significant number of calls were received on a daily basis. Lifeline was part of the CCTV Monitoring Centre. The Portfolio Holder suggested that if Members wished to visit the Monitoring Centre, they could contact Councillor Webb who would be happy to arrange a visit in order for Members to see the equipment on offer and the improving technology.

Information was provided on the Bromsgrove Partnership which enabled partners to be brought together resulting in an excellent working relationship which benefited residents. Newsletters were available to outline the work of the Partnership and other useful information to share.

Thanks were extended to all the Officers who worked in this area particularly Family Hub & Social Prescribing Team Leader, CCTV & Telecare Services Manager, Bromsgrove and Redditch Partnerships Manager, and Bromsgrove and Redditch Partnership Officer.

Members commented that this report outlined some of the best activities undertaken by the Council. The engagement events had been successful, and the Challenge Dad event was particularly welcomed to provide activities for fathers and children within the District.

There was a query regarding the response times for the Falls team and a delay experienced previously. It was noted that this was unusual and would be looked into. However, on the whole the Falls team were particularly responsive to call outs. In terms of maintenance of the Lifeline equipment, it was noted that there were regular spot checks. If there had been any issues experienced for residents with the equipment this was also unusual. There were a number of equipment options available from Lifeline which resulted in a solution for all service users.

Members queried access to the Community Transport as detailed in the report. Was this service available in the wider District and how could residents access this? Leaflets for the service were requested by Members, and the Cabinet Member undertook to provide some leaflets on this matter to Members. It was noted that partners were working together to provide Bromsgrove specific leaflets which outlined all

Community transport services within the District. Members were keen that the service also reached the outer areas of the District such as Alvechurch, Hagley and Rubery. However, Members were really pleased with this service for the residents of the District.

There had been some positive feedback in terms of the support provided by Hagley Library which had been supported by Hagley Parish Council. It was requested that this information be provided in order to pass on to the Parish Council.

It was confirmed that there were a number of initiatives in order to combat loneliness and isolation. An example of this was community walks which encouraged social interaction and physical activity. It was suggested that these kinds of initiatives be promoted more widely to increase uptake.

There was a query in respect of digital changeover and its particular impact on Lifeline and the equipment used and backup batteries etc. It was reported that a significant amount of work had been undertaken to cover this matter for residents. However, if there was further information this would be provided to Members to give assurance that there were arrangements in place in terms of a network issue. Information on how to contact electricity suppliers if there were vulnerable residents within Members' wards was provided. Members noted that there were some challenges in respect of connectivity, particularly in more rural areas within the District. Work was ongoing in order to provide a good service for all resident across the District and across the County.

Members stated that this was an excellent report which highlighted the great work that the Council and Members undertook in order to prevent social isolation and improve health and wellbeing for the residents of Bromsgrove.

No vote was required for this report.

89\25

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET

Particulate Monitoring

The Chairman informed Council that the report in respect of Particulate Monitoring had been deferred and a further report would be presented to Cabinet with costings to be considered as part of the Budget Setting process.

Pay Policy Statement 2026/27

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling presented the Pay Policy for Members' consideration.

In doing so it was noted that the Localism Act required English and Welsh local authorities to produce a Pay Policy statement. The Act required the statement to be approved by Full Council and adopted by 31st March each year for the subsequent financial year. Members were informed that the Pay Policy Statement for the Council was included at Appendix 1 to the report.

The purpose of the statement was to provide transparency with regard to the Council's approach to setting the pay of its employees by identifying the following:

- a) the methods by which salaries of all employees were determined
- b) the detail and level of remuneration of its most senior staff i.e. 'chief officers', as defined by the relevant legislation
- c) the Committee(s) responsible for ensuring the provisions set out in this statement were applied consistently throughout the Council and for recommending any amendments to the full Council.

The Council's pay and grading structure comprised of grades 1 – 11. These were followed by grades for Managers, Assistant Director 1, Assistant Director 2, Director WRS, Executive Director, Director of Finance S151 and then Chief Executive; all of which arose following the introduction of shared services with Redditch District Council.

Within each grade there were a number of salary/pay points. Up to and including grade 11 scale, at spinal column point 43, the Council used the nationally negotiated pay spine. Salary points above this were locally determined.

All Council posts were allocated to a grade within this pay structure, based on the application of a Job Evaluation process. Posts at Managers and above were evaluated by an external assessor using the Hay Job Evaluation scheme.

In common with the majority of authorities the Council was committed to the Local Government Employers national pay bargaining framework in respect of the national pay spine and annual cost of living increases

negotiated with the trade unions. All other pay related allowances are the subject of either nationally or locally negotiated rates.

Bromsgrove District Council was managed by a Senior Leadership Team who managed shared services across both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils. All of the posts listed had been job evaluated on this basis, with the salary costs for these posts split between both Councils.

The policy also set out the following:

- The recruitment of Chief Officers
- Additions to the salaries of Chief Officers (there is no Performance related pay)
- Termination payments
- Advertisement/publicity of posts

The Council's definition of lowest paid employees was persons employed under a contract of employment with the Council on full time (37 hours) equivalent salaries in accordance with the minimum spinal column point currently in use within the Council's grading structure. As at 1st April 2026 this was £24,413 per annum.

Following the presentation of the report, Members queried the level of pay for the lowest grade within the scale as detailed in the report. It was explained that there were no employees within the Council at that grade. However, Members were concerned that this level did not meet the current minimum wage. In order to provide more detailed information in respect of this report, it was deferred to the next meeting of the Council.

Business Rates - Discretionary Rates Relief Policy 2026/27

The Cabinet Member for Finance presented the Business Rates - Discretionary Rates Relief Policy 2026/27 for Members' consideration. In doing so it was noted that in terms of recommendation two (contained within the agenda pack) during the consideration of the report at Cabinet it had been noted that the rural settlement of Burcot should not have been allocated to Blackwell and Lickey Parish Council. In addition, Members had raised that Belbroughton was not the Parish Council name (as detailed in Appendix A), it was in fact Belbroughton and Fairfield. Both these had been updated prior to the consideration of the report at the Council meeting.

The Cabinet Member for Finance noted that this was an annual report which needed to be approved by full Council. There had been no proposed changes to the current successful policy from the previous year. Thus, providing stability for local organisations during economic uncertainty.

The scheme continued to support the Council Priority of supporting local people and local communities.

Section 47 of The Local Government Finance Act 1988 provided billing authorities with the power to award discretionary rate relief to ratepayers. The Localism Act 2011 and the Non-Domestic Rating Act 2023 removed some of the restrictions on the award to grant relief where it was reasonable and, in the interest, if taxpayers. The relief was shared fifty per cent with Government, forty per cent with the District Council nine per cent with the Worcestershire County Council and one per cent with the Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority.

For specific Government schemes, e.g. the 2026 supporting small businesses relief grant costs were fully reimbursed via Section 31 grants which ensured there was no impact on the Council's budget.

The key criteria for the financial years 2026-2027 focussed on supporting entities that delivered clear local community benefits and aligned with the Council's key policies.

Members were informed that charities in receipt of eighty per cent mandatory charitable relief could also receive a further twenty per cent discretionary relief, and not-for-profit organisations could also receive relief of up to one hundred per cent.

Support was available to Rural Settlements through this policy along with short term hardship relief in exceptional circumstances. Members were reminded that if they were aware of any businesses that received any relief it would be worth reminding them that they would need to re-apply for the new financial year.

Members queried the definition of a Rural Settlement in this context. It was reported that an area designated as rural was made by government and identified as a settlement with a population of less than three thousand people living there. Members were concerned, that there were some areas within their Wards that should potentially be included as rural settlements. However, it was noted that the list of Rural Settlements included within the report was provided by Government. If

Members wished to obtain further clarity on these settlements they should contact the Revenue Services Manager directly.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor S. T. Nock and seconded by Councillor K. May.

RESOLVED that

- 1) A non-domestic rates discretionary relief policy be approved and adopted from 1st April 2026; and**
- 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.**

Council Tax - Empty Homes Discounts and Premiums 2026/27

The Cabinet Member for Finance presented the Council Tax - Empty Homes Discounts and Premiums 2026/27 for the consideration of Members.

In doing so it was reported that Council tax discounts and premiums for empty properties would be applied from the 1st of April 2026. With the primary goal for these discounts and premiums to incentivise homeowners to bring long-term empty homes back into use to support local housing supply.

Determinations were made under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. This Act permitted Councils to apply one hundred per cent premium after a property had been empty for more for one year. The Council first introduced this 12-month threshold in April 2024.

The Policy stated that properties that were vacant and unfurnished for thirty days would be 100 per cent discounted. From day 31 onwards, there would be zero per cent discount with full council tax payable.

When major repair structural alterations were carried out there would be 100 per cent discount for a maximum of twelve months or six months post completion, whichever was sooner.

From 1st April 2026 for all dwellings except those excepted from premium by the Prescribed Classes of Dwellings regulations, the

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discount under section 11(2)(a) would not apply and the following premiums will be charged:

Period Unoccupied and Unfurnished	Premium Applied
Less than 5 years	100% premium (total charge 200%)
5 years or more, but less than 10 years	200% premium (total charge 300%)
10 years or more	300% premium (total charge 400%)

The Government had introduced mandatory exception classes to specific residents which were detailed as follows:

Class	Description	Exception
E	Dwelling which is or would be someone's sole or main residence if they were not residing in job-related armed forces accommodation.	Long-term empty and second home premiums.
F	Annexes forming part of or being treated as part of the main dwelling.	Long-term empty and second home premiums.
G	Dwelling which are being actively marketed for sale – time limited to 12 months.	Long-term empty and second home premiums.
H	Dwellings which are being actively marketed for let – time limited to 12 months.	Long-term empty and second home premiums.
I	Unoccupied dwellings which fell within the exempt class F (left empty by a deceased person) and where probate has been granted. Time limited to 12 months from probate.	Long-term empty and second home premiums.
J	Dwellings where the liable person is resident in a job-related dwelling provided by their employer, or for the liable person is a job-related dwelling.	Second home premiums and adjustment to discount for unoccupied furnished homes
K	Caravan pitches occupied by a caravan, or boat moorings occupied by a boat.	Second home premiums and adjustment to discount for

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		unoccupied furnished homes
L	Seasonal homes where year-round occupation is prohibited.	Second home premiums.
M	Vacant homes which require or are undergoing major repair works to render them habitable, or vacant homes undergoing a structural alteration.	Long-term empty homes premium.

Members welcomed the changes in terms premiums and discounts and queried whether these would be backdated. It was reported that this was a technical question and would be provided following the meeting.

It was questioned how the Council would know whether there was an empty home. It was reported that this was up to the taxpayer to report or that the Council would carry out a visit to the property to check the status in terms of whether it was occupied or empty.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor S. T. Nock and seconded by Councillor K. May.

RESOLVED 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 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 and did not implement additional council tax premiums for unoccupied and substantially furnished homes.**

Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27

The Cabinet Member for Finance presented the Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27 which sought to formally adopt the Council Tax Support Scheme 2026-2027.

It was reported that the Council was required to review and approve its local Council Tax reduction scheme annually by 11th of March each year.

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Members were informed that the recommendation from Cabinet was to retain the successful income banded scheme introduced in 2021 with one specific update to protect residents.

Maximum support was one hundred per cent for eligible working age residents. It was proposed that the bands be uprated by 3.8 per cent to align with national benefit increases.

The income banded model reduced administration burdens and aligned closely with the Universal Credit scheme. It was reported that the major precepting authorities had been consulted and were in agreement with this approach.

The Scheme had a total cost of just under £5 million shared between the District, which was thirteen per cent, Worcestershire County Council at seventy per cent, Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia at twelve per cent and Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority at five per cent.

Operating these bands was a balanced measure to maintain the real-time value of support for our most vulnerable residents without creating unsustainable pressures on the collection fund.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor S. T. Nock and seconded by Councillor K. May.

RESOLVED that 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.

90\25

TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CABINET HELD ON 7TH JANUARY 2026

During consideration of the minutes from the Cabinet meeting held on 7th January 2026 clarification on the WhatsApp and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy was requested, with particular focus on training. It was confirmed that training for staff would be provided. In addition, there was a Members' policy being prepared and training would be provided in due course.

91\25

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE (TO FOLLOW)

The Chairman explained that one Question on Notice had been submitted for this meeting.

Question submitted by Councillor S. Colella.

“Could the Leader please confirm that she will ask the Monitoring Officer to seek external legal advice from specialist Counsel on the validity and methodology of the setting of the housing targets by the government and report back to Group Leaders.”

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling provided a detailed response for Members’ consideration.

In doing so it was confirmed that the Assistant Director for Democratic, Legal and Procurement Services (and Monitoring Officer) had been contacted regarding this matter and had agreed to look into this matter and provide feedback to Group Leaders.

92\25

MOTIONS ON NOTICE (TO FOLLOW)

The Chairman advised Members that one Motion on Notice had been submitted for consideration at this meeting. Group Leaders had considered the Motion prior to the meeting and had agreed that this would not be debated at the meeting and a letter be sent on behalf of all Group Leaders.

Members expressed that they were not in agreement with the decision made by Group Leaders and wished to debate the Motion at this meeting.

Therefore, Council considered the following Motion on Notice that was submitted by Councillor J. Elledge:

“This Council invested a great amount of time and effort into ensuring our decision on the local government reorganisation was fully researched, considered, discussed and took note of our residents wishes. With 5 of the 6 Worcestershire District or Borough Councils backing the 2 unitary authorities, along with the majority of the residents who responded to the consultation, I am disgusted that our MP has chosen to support a single unitary authority.

I call upon the Cabinet Member for Local Government Reorganisation and Climate Change to urgently write to our MP, on behalf of the Council, vigorously opposing his position, laid out in Westminster last week supporting a single unitary authority, in direct conflict with the wishes of his constituents, and urging him to reconsider.”

Members discussed the Motion in detail including the following:

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- Members were unhappy that a letter would be sent in respect of this matter and that it would be more appropriate for a face-to-face discussion to take place.
- The use of some of the language within the Motion was not considered appropriate for submission to a Council meeting. There needed to be consistency in the approach to language used at Council both written and spoken.
- As an elected Member of Parliament (MP), the MP for Bromsgrove did have the right to speak on matters even if it was not in agreement with the proposal from the Council. Members raised that not all Councillors were in support of the two unitary proposal and this was also applicable if the local MP did not agree with the two unitary approach proposal. Members felt that the discussions should be measured and professional, even if they did not agree with the sentiment expressed by the MP. If Members were keen to contact the local MP, they could do that as an individual Member rather than submitting a Motion in this forum.
- If Members were not in agreement with the Group Leaders, who were elected by each Group, what was the process in order to address their dissatisfaction with such decisions.
- The structure of Motions on Notice and the wording of the context provided in the preamble. It was explained that the preamble was provided as previously when this had not been provided Members were unsure as to what the context was for the Motion. The wording for what the Motion was asking Council to do was usually provided at the end of the printed Motion. It was clarified by Officers that the action as detailed in the Motion, and what Members would be required to vote on was

“...call upon the Cabinet Member for Local Government Reorganisation and Climate Change to urgently write to our MP, on behalf of the Council, vigorously opposing his position, laid out in Westminster last week supporting a single unitary authority, in direct conflict with the wishes of his constituents, and urging him to reconsider”.

The Motion on Notice was proposed by Councillor J. Elledge and seconded by Councillor P. McDonald.

The Motion on Notice was subject to a recorded vote:

Members voting FOR the Motion on Notice:

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Councillors A. Bailes, R. Bailes, S. Baxter, J. Clarke, S. Colella, J. Elledge, E. Gray, C. Hotham, R. Hunter, B. Kumar, R. Lambert, M. Marshall, P. McDonald, S. Peters, S. Robinson, K. Taylor, H. Warren-Clarke, S. Webb, P. Whittaker and S. Evans (20).

Members voting AGAINST the Motion on Notice:

Councillors D. Forsythe, B. McEldowney and J. Stanley (3).

Members voting to ABSTAIN on the Motion on Notice:

Councillor S. Ammar, A. Dale. K. May, S.T. Nock (4).

Therefore, on being put to the vote, the Motion on Notice was carried.

RESOLVED that

The Council call upon the Cabinet Member for Local Government Reorganisation and Climate Change to urgently write to our MP, on behalf of the Council, vigorously opposing his position, laid out in Westminster last week supporting a single unitary authority, in direct conflict with the wishes of his constituents, and urging him to reconsider.

[Councillors H. Jones and J. Robinson left the meeting prior to the vote on this item].

93\25

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

There was no Urgent Business on this occasion.

94\25

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 S.100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006,

the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matters on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended:

Minute Item 95 – Medium Term Financial Plan 2026-27 to 2028-29 Fees and Charges and Consultation Outcomes including Worcestershire Regulatory Services Budget Recommendations.

95\25

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2026-27 TO 2028-29 FEES AND CHARGES AND CONSULTATION OUTCOMES INCLUDING WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet Member for Finance presented the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2026-27 to 2028-29 Fees and Charges and Consultation Outcomes including Worcestershire Regulatory Services Budget Recommendations for members consideration.

The report covered several areas as detailed below:

- The Chancellor's Autumn Statement
- The provisional Local Government Settlement
- The outcome of the public consultation on the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2026-27 to 2028-29 Fees and Charges and Consultation Outcomes including Worcestershire Regulatory Services Budget Recommendations
- Proposals for Fees and Charges
- Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Budget adjustments.

It was explained that this was Stage One of the Budget setting process with the final stage of approval due to take place in late February or early March 2026 once the Local Government Settlement was confirmed. There had also been some delays experienced for Worcestershire County Council who had proposed to agree their Budget later than anticipated.

It was reported that there would be discussions with all Groups individually and at Finance and Budget Working Group meetings in order for all Members to have the opportunity to contribute to the Budget Setting process, whilst recognising the challenging time frame along with the work that had to be undertaken.

Members were reminded that when considering the initial Budget in November 2025 it was reported that there was £1.03 million deficit for 2026/2027, £399,000 deficit for 2027/2028 and additional pressures emerging for 2028/2029.

The provisional Local Government Settlement confirmed a net reduction in core spending for Bromsgrove of £100,000 for 2026/2027, £500,000 for 2027/2028 and £900,000 for 2028/2029. This net reduction would be offset by half a million pounds in respect of traditional funding driven by the fairer funding review which redistributed resources based on assessed need and consolidated multiple grants.

Members were informed that there were several key pressures as follow:

- Fairer funding review impact phase reduction of £2 million over three years
- Inflationary pressures at 3.8 per cent
- Pay awards at two per cent plus a one per cent living adjustment.
- The cost of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). It was noted that there was a contingency of £250,000 in both 2026/2027 and 2027/2028 for preparatory work.

There had been some changes in terms of grant funding. It was reported that the New Homes Bonus funding had been scrapped and housing related grants consolidated.

Work streams currently underway by Officers were that contracts and recharges were being reviewed, rationalising support services and preparing for LGR.

In terms of Fees and Charges, the initial assumption had been a two per cent increase which equated to £100,000. However, following a detailed review of projected income levels of individual fees and charges, the uplift was now a further £152,000 in 2026/2027 and £153,000 ongoing from 2027/2028.

The Budget consultation outcomes were presented to Members. It was explained that the consultation was conducted from 20th November 2025 to 2nd January 2026.

There had been 223 completed surveys analysed which was lower than in the previous year when there had been 279 responses received. It was noted that there had been at least one response from every area within the District.

The top themes as detailed in the responses were infrastructure (roads, public amenities public transport), the impact of development, Bromsgrove Town Centre and supporting businesses. Most responses received agreed with the Fees and Charges rise of four per cent and nearly sixty per cent of respondents agreed with an increase of Council Tax of 1.9 per cent.

There were no changes in terms of the Capital Programme from papers considered previously.

Following the presentation of the report several areas were discussed in detail:

- Covid -19 Grant – Members were concerned that this was still being held in Reserves and whether the funding should be allocated to those services and businesses that required help, such as the hospitality sector.
- Garden Waste Fees and Charges Increase at 7% - Members were concerned that there was not robust oversight in terms of keeping correct records on whether residents had paid for the Garden Waste Service. It was raised that in some areas not all brown bins had been paid for but were being collected and some that had been paid for were not collected. Officers undertook to look at this matter further.
- Accessibility Update for Upland Grove Play Area – It was requested that information be provided on the Capital Bid discussed at the previous meeting of Council. Members were reminded that there was an Inclusive Play Policy which had recently been approved and was in the process of being implemented. The Play Audit Strategy would also be implemented once there had been a resolution for staffing in this service area. Members stated that as part of the consultation on the Budget, residents expressed that play areas and green spaces were important to them and this should be noted. It was raised that there had not been much movement in terms of works carried out so far in terms of the ten-year programme contained within the Strategy. It was felt that these works should get underway as soon as possible particularly in light of LGR.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor S. T. Nock and seconded by Councillor K. May.

RESOLVED 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.

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- 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.

(During consideration of this item, Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to move to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the grounds that it might include information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). However, there is no exempt information contained in this record).

The meeting closed at 9.04 p.m.

Chairman

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Agenda Item 10

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN UNDER URGENCY PROCEDURES

Subject: Council Tax Resolutions 2026/2027

Brief Statement of Subject Matter:

At the Extraordinary Council meeting on 6th March 2026 members considered the Council Tax recommendations from Cabinet for 2026/2027.

The following resolution referenced a table which included an error.

The Interim Director of Finance be authorised to make payments under section 90(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the collection fund by ten equal instalments between April 2026 to March 2027 as detailed below:-

	Precept (£)	Surplus/Deficit on Collection Fund (£)	Total to Pay (£)
Worcestershire County Council	67,631,975.84	76,853.64	67,708,829.48
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	11,772,603.70	13,865.63	11,786,469.33
Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority	4,118,298.75	13,950.93	4,132,249.68

The correct table is set out below:-

	Precept (£)	Surplus/Deficit on Collection Fund (£)	Total to Pay (£)
Worcestershire County Council	67,631,975.84	76,853.64	67,708,829.48
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	11,772,603.70	13,865.63	11,786,469.33
Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority	4,118,298.75	4,862.25	4,123,161.00

Decision: To approve the delegation to the Interim Director of Finance in the context of an updated and correct table.

Date: 18th March 2026

RESOLVED:

The Interim Director of Finance be authorised to make payments under section 90(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the collection fund by ten equal instalments between April 2026 to March 2027 as detailed below:-

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	Precept (£)	Surplus/Deficit on Collection Fund (£)	Total to Pay (£)
Worcestershire County Council	67,631,975.84	76,853.64	67,708,829.48
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	11,772,603.70	13,865.63	11,786,469.33
Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority	4,118,298.75	4,862.25	4,123,161.00

Grounds for Urgency:

There is a need for clarity to ensure that the delegation to the Interim Director of Finance can be carried out in a timely manner.

DECISION APPROVED BY:

.....
Chief Executive
Dated

.....
Section 151 Officer
Dated

.....
Monitoring Officer
Dated

.....
Leader
Dated
(Councillor May)

.....
Chairman, Overview & Scrutiny Board
Dated
(Councillor McDonld)

.....
Chairman
Dated
(Councillor Evans)

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN UNDER URGENCY PROCEDURES

Subject: Appointment of a Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer

Brief Statement of Subject Matter:

At a meeting of the Joint Appointments Committee held on 14th January 2026, Members agreed to commence a recruitment campaign prioritising the permanent appointment of a Director of Finance as the Council's Section 151 Officer. The recruitment campaign was subsequently launched with support from Penna recruitment consultants. Candidates were shortlisted and a panel of elected Members from the Joint Appointments Committee were subsequently involved in the interviews with short listed candidates.

At a subsequent meeting of the Joint Appointments Committee on 17th March 2026 Members agreed to recommend that, subject to successful reference and health checks and to members of the Cabinet not raising any objections to the appointment, James Walton be appointed to the position of Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer at the Council.

Currently, the authority has an interim Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer. However, there is a need to make a permanent appointment in order to provide continuity and stability within Financial Services. This will also assist with efficient budget management as Local Government Reorganisation progresses.

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

It is a legal requirement that the appointment of the Section 151 Officer, as a statutory officer, is made by full Council. This is set out in the relevant regulations (The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) Regulations 2001 (as amended) Schedule I Part II) which are reproduced in the Officer Employment Rules at Part 17 of the Constitution. Unfortunately, there are not due to be any Council meetings prior to 20th May 2026. To delay making a decision until this point could deter the best candidate from accepting the position and could also create uncertainty within Financial Services.

There is a requirement under the Officer Employment Procedure rules in the Council's constitution, to ensure that the Leader and any other Cabinet members are notified and have no objections to the offer of appointment for a Statutory Officer post. This must occur before an offer of appointment is made. In this instance, Cabinet members have been contacted following the Joint Appointments Committee meeting that took place on 17th March 2026.

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

Bromsgrove District Council is the employing authority for the position of Section 151 Officer. Subject to Members' approval of James Walton's appointment as Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer, he will need to be made available by Bromsgrove District Council under the shared services arrangements to perform such duties as are required by their post for Redditch Borough Council.

The position of Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer has been evaluated by West Midlands Employers to be £114,282 - £118,694. All costs for the position will be divided equally, on a 50:50 ratio, between Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Council.

It was previously agreed in January 2026 that the Interim Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer will remain in post until such time as a new Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer commences employment with the Council. This will ensure that the Council can continue to fulfil its statutory obligation to have a designated Section 151 Officer throughout any notice period for the successful candidate.

Decision: To consider and agree the appointment of a Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer for the Council.

Date: 18th March 2026

RESOLVED:

- 1) To approve the appointment of James Walton as Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer, to fulfil the purposes of Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, subject to satisfactory reference, medical and other eligibility checks and to no objections being raised by members of the Cabinet.**
- 2) Subject thereto, James Walton to be made available under the shared services arrangements with Redditch Borough Council to perform such duties as are required in his capacity as Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer for Redditch Borough Council.**

Grounds for Urgency:

This decision needs to be taken urgently because there is not due to be another Council meeting until the Annual Council meeting on 20th May 2026. A delay in appointing a permanent Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer until May could deter the most appropriate candidate from accepting the position which would impact on the Council's ability to achieve best value. The delay could also create uncertainty within the Financial Services team and impact on service continuity.

DECISION APPROVED BY:

.....
Chief Executive

.....
Dated

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.....
Monitoring Officer

.....
Dated

.....
Interim Section 151 Officer

.....
Dated

.....
Leader
(Councillor May)

.....
Dated

.....
Chairman, Overview & Scrutiny Board
(Councillor McDonald)

.....
Dated

.....
Chairman
(Councillor Evans)

.....
Dated

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT
AND
REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCILS

MEETING OF THE JOINT APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

17TH MARCH 2026, AT 5.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors K.J. May (Co-Chair), S. Harvey (Co-Chair), R. Bailes, W. Hartnett, R. J. Hunter, J. Spilsbury and P. J. Whittaker

Officers: Mr J. Leach, Mrs. C. Felton, Mrs B. Talbot and Mrs. J. Bayley-Hill

15 **NOMINATION OF CHAIR FOR THE MEETING**

A nomination was received for Councillor S. Harvey to chair the meeting.

The nomination was proposed by Councillor K. May and seconded by Councillor J. Spilsbury.

RESOLVED that

Councillor S. Harvey be appointed to Chair the meeting of the Joint Appointments Committee.

16 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor P. McDonald.

17 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

18 **RECOMMENDATION OF THE APPOINTMENT OF A SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE AS DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND SECTION 151 OFFICER (TO FOLLOW)**

The Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager presented a report detailing the outcomes of a recent process for the recruitment of a new Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer for the Councils.

The Committee was informed that the Members who had been appointed to the Appointments Panel had been involved in interviewing the candidates for the position. At the end of the process, the Panel had proposed that Mr James Walton should be appointed to the position. This proposal had received unanimous support from every Member of the Panel.

Members were advised that as this was a statutory officer position, there was a requirement for Council to agree to the appointment. Unfortunately, there was not due to be a meeting of Council at either authority until the scheduled Annual Council meetings in May 2026. Concerns were raised that delaying the appointment until this point would potentially cause considerable disruption at the authorities. Therefore, it was proposed that, subject to the Joint Appointment Committee's endorsement of Mr Walton's nomination, his appointment should be agreed through both Councils' urgent decision processes.

Following the presentation of the report, Members discussed the nomination and recruitment process in detail and in doing so commented on a number of points:

- The reasons why the Appointments Panel had concluded that Mr Walton would be the best candidate for the position. The Committee was informed that Mr Walton had been the most experienced candidate who had been interviewed, including prior experience of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and had stood out as the best candidate.
- The qualifications required for the position. Members were advised that Section 151 Officers needed to be qualified and registered with a professional accountancy body and Mr Walton fulfilled this brief.
- The assistance that had been provided by external recruitment consultants, Penna, which Members praised.
- The technical assessments that all of the candidates had been required to complete.
- Mr Walton's prior experience of working in District Councils, including with a Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Unitary Authorities, which would assist with Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils' preparation for LGR.
- The information that had been shared with all candidates about agile working arrangements in place in Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils, including the requirement for the successful candidate to attend evening meetings.
- The potential for the Joint Appointments Committee to be provided with a precis of each candidate's achievements for future senior officer recruitment processes.
- The potential for psychometric testing to be introduced for future senior officer recruitment processes.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor K. May and seconded by Councillor B. Hartnett.

RECOMMENDED each Council

- 1) **NOTE that the Joint Appointments Panel had completed a rigorous selection process to recruit a new Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer;**

- 2) **Approve the appointment of Mr James Walton as Director for Finance and Section 151 Officer (as an employee of Bromsgrove District Council). The commencement date would be as soon as possible, subject to references, medical and eligibility checks and his notice period; and**
- 3) **NOTE that the salary agreed for the Director of Finance and Section 151 was within the range approved by Bromsgrove District Council's Pay Policy as the employing authority.**

19

URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business for consideration on this occasion.

20

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the Joint Appointments Committee held on 14th January 2026 were submitted.

The minutes were proposed by Councillor S. Harvey and seconded by Councillor K. May.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Appointments Committee held on 14th January 2026 be approved as a true and correct record.

The meeting closed at 5.23 p.m.

Chairman

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20th May

Review of the Constitution Including Scheme of Delegations

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor K. May, Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling
Portfolio Holder Consulted		
Relevant Assistant Director		Claire Felton, Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services
Report Author	Job Title: Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services Contact	email: c.felton@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Wards Affected		All wards
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A
Relevant Council Priority		Sustainability
Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Council is asked to RESOLVE that:-

- 1) The current version of the Scheme of Delegations, as attached at Appendix 1, be adopted;**
- 2) The proposed new delegations for Community Services highlighted in track changes in Appendix 2 be approved;**
- 3) The updated Contract Procedure Rules, as attached at Appendix 3 be approved;**
- 4) The updated Financial Procedure Rules, as attached at Appendix 4 be approved;**
- 5) An update to the Scheme of Members' Allowances 2026/27, to incorporate reference to Members' eligibility to join the Local Government Pension Scheme, as detailed at Appendix 5, be approved;**
- 6) The Committee Terms of Reference for the Shareholders Committee, as detailed at Appendix 6, be updated to reflect the proposed membership of 5 rather than 4 members on the Committee.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council is required to review its scheme of delegations on an annual basis. This report presents the current scheme for noting.
- 2.2 This report also details the outcomes of the latest meeting of the Constitution Review Working Group (CRWG), held on 28th April 2026, at which various changes to the Council's constitution were discussed and recommended.
- 2.3 Members are invited to consider the background to the recommendations proposed by the CRWG and to determine whether to endorse the group's recommendations.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

Scheme of Delegations

- 3.1 The Council's Constitution currently requires that the Officer Scheme of Delegations be approved by Members at the Annual Meeting of the Council.
- 3.2 The Officer Scheme of Delegations is the part of the Constitution that gives authority for certain decisions to be delegated from Council, the Executive (Cabinet) or other Committees to certain specified officers. It sets out the decisions which are delegated by Council to officers and the decisions which are delegated by the Executive / Leader to officers. In relation to certain regulatory decisions, the delegation is from Council to the relevant Committee, namely the Planning Committee or Licensing Committee.
- 3.3 The Scheme of Delegations is regularly altered and updated to reflect changes in the operation of the Council, such as changes to officer job titles, and changes to legislation. Changes have been made by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with the delegation that currently exists to amend the scheme to reflect changes in legislation, job titles and the reallocation of functions.

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- 3.4 There have been numerous changes to job titles in particular in the areas of Housing and Community Services and Regeneration. A further change is that the new title of the Section 151 Officer is “Director of Finance”. In some sections, officers have therefore changed the generic term of “Assistant Directors” to “Directors” to cover this change of job title.
- 3.5 Deputisation arrangements for the Chief Executive are currently under review and the post of Deputy Chief Executive has therefore been retained for now. As the scheme allows for delegations to be passed up (as well as down), this means that for the time being any delegations made solely to the Deputy Chief Executive would be exercised by the Chief Executive, with those assigned to the Section 151 Officer remaining in place.
- 3.6 Members are asked to note that the existing delegations for Planning Enforcement and Envirocrime have been re-organised and transferred to a new section of the Regulatory Services delegations. This is to reflect the formal transfer of certain planning enforcement and enviro-crime functions to Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) in January 2024.
- 3.7 The Assistant Director for Community and Housing Services wishes to request the following amendments to the scheme:-
- Changes to the existing wording for CCTV/ Lifeline in relation to the ability of managers to make applications for tenders for additional services.
 - Formally adding a new delegation on Climate Change and Biodiversity which is one of the areas for which this service area is responsible.
 - Formally adding a new delegation regarding the operation of Burt and Shopmobility.
- 3.8 These proposed changes are highlighted in track changes in Appendix 2.
- 3.9 Any changes to delegations agreed by Members during the 2025/26 municipal year have been added to the scheme. The exceptions to this are any proposed changes that may have been endorsed by Cabinet in April but which still require approval by Council. Subject to approval, these delegations will need to be added later in the year.

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- 3.10 More detailed updating work on the Scheme of Delegations will be scheduled in for 2026/27. In particular, the creation of the post of Assistant Director for Regeneration and Property needs to be reflected by those delegations (previously shared amongst other Assistant Directors) being brought together in one part of the scheme.

Contract Procedure Rules

- 3.11 The current Contract Procedure Rules were adopted in 2016 and are grounded in EU procurement law and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Since then, the UK has introduced a new statutory procurement framework through the Procurement Act 2023, which applies to most public procurements commenced from 24th February 2025. To ensure legal compliance and good governance, the Council's Contract Procedure rules must be updated.
- 3.12 Thresholds and Competition: A new compliance trigger at £30,000 (inclusive of VAT) has been introduced in the 2026 rules, requiring officers to comply with statutory duties under Part 6 of the Procurement Act 2023. The historic focus on "quotes versus tenders" has been replaced with a clearer statutory compliance model which is required to comply with the Procurement Act 2023.
- 3.13 The updated Contract Procedure Rules strengthen the Council's ability to deliver public benefit, including supporting Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) and voluntary and community sector organisations. The rules provide that below-threshold procurements may, in defined circumstances, be reserved for specific supplier groups, subject to approval and a documented rationale.
- 3.14 Waivers and Exemptions: The updated Contract Procedure Rules clearly distinguish between statutory exemptions under Schedule 2 of the Procurement Act 2023 and waivers. Waivers are expressly prohibited for procurements above the World Trade Organisation/ Government Procurement Agreement (WTO/GPA) threshold, reducing legal and audit risk. This change is necessary to comply with the Procurement Act 2023.
- 3.15 Governance and Decision-Making: The updated rules more clearly link procurement decisions to the Council's Scheme of Delegation and Key Decision thresholds (currently £200,000). Requirements for contract sealing and risk management are also strengthened as required under the Procurement Act 2023.

Financial Procedure Rules

- 3.16 The Financial Procedure Rules form a key part of the Council's Constitution and provide the framework within which all financial activity must operate. Since their last full review in 2017, there have been significant changes in:
- Organisation structures and management responsibilities
 - Financial systems and digital processes
 - Legislative and regulatory requirements
 - Best practice in financial governance and control
- 3.17 The Financial Procedure Rules have undergone a comprehensive review to ensure they remain fit for purpose, reflect current organisational structures, support effective financial control and align with updated legislation, best practice and ways of working.
- 3.18 The revised rules do not represent a fundamental change in financial governance, but instead:
- Clarify responsibilities and delegations
 - Strengthen controls and accountability
 - Update terminology, thresholds and processes
 - Introduce new sections where operational or regulatory gaps existed
- 3.19 Governance, Roles and Terminology:
- Key changes include that references to Directors and Heads of Service have been updated to reflect the current structure, including Assistant Director and Corporate / Senior Leadership Teams.
 - There has been clearer articulation of Section 151 and Deputy Section 151 Officer responsibilities. The rules now explicitly identify the Section 151 Officer as Chief Financial Officer.
 - The Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services is now explicitly identified as the Deputy Section 151 Officer.
 - There are also enhanced arrangements around escalation, sign off and contingency arrangements.
 - Clearer links are made between the Council's constitution, financial governance, the Scheme of Delegation and Audit, Standards and Governance Committee oversight.

3.20 New and Expanded Policy Areas:

- Several new standalone sections have been included since 2017.
- A section on VAT has been added. This formalises responsibilities for VAT advice, compliance, invoicing and recovery. It clarifies the requirements around valid VAT invoices and HMRC liaison and provides explicit controls to reduce financial risk and penalties.
- A new section on trading accounts introduces governance and financial controls for Council trading activities. It requires annual budgets, medium-term forecasts and performance monitoring to be produced and aligns traded services with the same standards as core Council services.
- Revised debt write off thresholds and authorisations have been added which increase delegation limits. Clearer separation between officer level, Section 151 and Executive approvals have been introduced and formal recording and reporting requirements have been strengthened. There is also explicit provision for recovery of legal fees and interest and the section has been aligned with the corporate debt recovery policy.
- Funding bids require formal Section 151 Officer / Deputy Section 151 Officer sign off.
- Additional controls for accountable bodies and third-party arrangements with sign off by the Section 151 Officer.
- All material grant claims, funding returns or requests for draw-down of external funding shall be submitted under arrangements approved by the Section 151 Officer.
- Assistant Directors shall provide annual assurance statements to the Section 151 Officer confirming the adequacy and effectiveness of financial controls within their areas of responsibility, to support the Annual Governance Statement.
- Where Members choose to proceed with a course of action contrary to, or materially increasing risk beyond, the advice of the Section 151 Officer, this shall be explicitly recorded in the relevant decision report.

3.21 Budget Management and Virements:

- Virement thresholds have been significantly updated to reflect modern budget management processes, with increased lower and upper limits for officer approved virements. There has also been explicit prohibition on aggregation to bypass approval

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thresholds, and clear reporting requirements for high value virements to Cabinet.

- Clear differentiation has been made between virements, budget adjustments and supplementary estimates.
- These changes improve flexibility while maintaining Member oversight of material financial movements.

3.22 Asset Management and Disposals:

- Clearer capital and asset governance has been introduced with strengthening of business cases and alignment with the capital programme and the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- New disposal thresholds have been brought in with Cabinet approval required for disposals over specified values and clearer rules for disposals below market value.
- Enhanced reporting of surplus assets has been introduced, with earlier notification and stronger oversight of property decisions.

3.23 Procurement, Payments and Government Procurement Cards:

- Updated banking and procurement card arrangements have been put in place. These reflect the change in banking provider and provide stronger controls over card usage, coding, reconciliation and cash withdrawals. There are also explicit disciplinary consequences for misuse.
- Modernised payment controls have been utilised with greater use of electronic systems, clear controls around direct debits, prepayments and feeder systems and reinforced requirements to pay invoices within statutory timeframes.

3.24 Audit, Risk and Fraud:

- Enhanced audit reporting arrangements include more frequent reporting to Members and clearer responsibilities for responding to audit recommendations.
- Fraud and irregularity reporting now has clear escalation routes and has been aligned with Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption policies.
- Money Laundering has been updated to reflect current regulations and a formal Deputy MLRO has been appointed.

3.25 Overall impact:

- The revised Financial Procedure Rules strengthen financial control. They provide improved clarity for Members and officers

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and support robust governance, transparency and compliance with statutory duties.

Scheme of Members' Allowances

- 3.26 The Government recently confirmed that, from 11th May 2026, Councillors in England have been eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). This is on an opt-in basis and membership is not automatic. Eligible Councillors need to actively choose to opt in through the authority they serve.
- 3.27 Councillors in England have not been eligible for LGPS membership since 1st April 2014. From May 2026, Councillors in England will once again be aligned with the rest of the UK and able to join the LGPS 2014 Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) scheme.
- 3.28 Members' allowances schemes are required to provide, from 11th May 2026, that:
- a. members shall be entitled to a pension in accordance with a scheme made under section 1 of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013, and
 - b. the basic allowance or special responsibility allowance (or both, as the case may be) shall be treated as an amount in respect of which such a pension is payable.
- 3.29 The Current Scheme of Members' Allowances is based on recommendations proposed by the Independent Remuneration Panel and was agreed in January 2026 for implementation from 1st April 2026 onwards.
- 3.30 The Government's announcement that Councillors would now be eligible to join the LGPS was made after the current scheme of allowances was reviewed and adopted. There has not been an opportunity prior to Annual Council to report this update to Members. Therefore, to ensure that the Council operates in line with national requirements, it is proposed that the current scheme should be updated to reflect Members' eligibility to join the LGPS, as detailed at Appendix 5.

Committee Terms of Reference – Shareholders Committee

- 3.31 The Shareholders Committee forms part of the governance arrangements for the Council's company, Spadesbourne Homes Limited.

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- 3.32 In line with best practice, the Committee is a sub-committee of the Cabinet. Consequently, only Cabinet Members can be appointed as members of the Committee (although all group leaders are invited to attend meetings of this Committee to take part in the debate).
- 3.33 At the start of the 2025/26 municipal year, the number of seats on the Shareholders Committee was reduced from five to four. The decision was taken to reduce the number of seats to four due to the size of the Cabinet at that time.
- 3.34 However, unfortunately, there were difficulties experienced in 2025/26, in terms of organising meetings of the Committee that would be quorate. (The quorum for the Shareholders Committee is three).
- 3.35 To ensure that meetings can proceed as scheduled during the 2026/27 municipal year, it is proposed that the number of seats on the Shareholders Committee should be increased from four to five. This is reflected in the proposed updated terms of reference for the Committee, attached at Appendix 6 to this report.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Changes to the Financial Procedure Rules strengthen the governance framework through which resources are managed.
- 4.2 Changes to the Scheme of Members' Allowances 2026/27 to enable Members to participate in the LGPS will have financial implications for the Council. The estimated maximum costs if all councillors joined the pension fund are £53,000 for the Council. These costs were built into the Medium Term Financial Plan from 2027/28 onwards and any cost in 2026/27 would need to be funded from within the risk reserve.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Review and revision of the Constitution is governed by Article 15 of the Constitution.
- 5.2 Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) gives a general power to local authorities to discharge functions through officers. Local Authorities are required by the same Act to maintain a list of these, which is referred to as the Scheme of Delegation. This sets out those powers which can be carried out by officers of the Council.

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- 5.3 Whilst the CRWG meets throughout the year to review the Council's constitution, the group does not have the authority to make changes to the constitution. Instead, any suggested changes are recommended on to Council for determination.
- 5.4 The attached updated Contract Procedure Rules remove references to EU law and instead align fully with the Procurement Act 2023 and Procurement Regulations 2024. The WTO/GPA thresholds replace former EU thresholds. The updated thresholds are contained in a table within Part 2 to the 2026 rules.
- 5.5 The Financial Procedure Rules support the Council in meeting its statutory duties, including those under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. Approval will ensure the Council's Constitution remains up to date and legally robust.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 The introduction of more up to date Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Procedure Rules will assist in the transition to a new unitary authority.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The proposals detailed in this report support the Council's organisational priority of sustainability.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 There are no climate change implications.

Community Impact

- 6.4 Proposed changes to the delegations for Community Services are designed to enhance services provided to the local community.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.5 There are no equalities and diversity implications.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 A key risk associated with the details included in this report are failure to comply with governance requirements which may expose the Council to

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the risk of challenge by way of judicial review or which may result in awards of damages and costs against the Council and loss of reputation.

7.2 Failure to adopt the updated Contract Procedure Rules would expose the Council to:

- non-compliance with the Procurement Act 2023;
- increased risk of legal challenge;
- audit and reputational risk; and
- inconsistent procurement practice across services.

7.3 The new Financial Procedure Regulations will assist in managing financial risks across the organisation.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Updated Scheme of Delegations

Appendix 2 – Proposed Amendments to Community and Housing Delegations

Appendix 3 – Updated Contract Procedure Rules

Appendix 4 – Updated Financial Procedure Rules

Appendix 5 – Updated Scheme of Members' Allowances 2026/27

Appendix 6 – Updated Committee Terms of Reference – Shareholders Committee

Background Papers

Government Consultation 'Local Government Pension Scheme in England and Wales: Access for Elected Members – Government Response', accessible at [Government Consultation Response - Local Government Pension Scheme](#)

Worcestershire County Council [Worcestershire County Council - Pension Information \(Councillors\)](#)

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APPENDIX 1 Bromsgrove

Scheme of Delegation: Introduction

1. This Scheme of Delegation will be updated regularly. However:
 - a) any reference to specific legislation or to statutory provisions shall be deemed to refer to any relevant aspects of any successive legislation or statutory provisions;
 - b) reference to post holder shall be deemed to refer to any successor post holder(s) who is/are charged with the same responsibilities following any reorganisation or reallocation of functions, save that where there is any ambiguity as to who shall exercise a particular delegation of authority, the delegation shall refer to the higher-ranking officer(s). For the avoidance of doubt, successor post holder(s) include officers placed at the disposal of the Council under secondment arrangements pursuant to s113 of the Local Government Act 1972 or any other enactment or power.

Delegations to Committees and Sub-Committees

2. This Scheme of Delegation is not an exhaustive list of matters delegated to Committees and Sub-Committees. The Scheme of Delegation must be read in conjunction with the Terms of Reference for each Committee and Sub-Committee.

Delegations to Officers

3. All powers, duties and responsibilities appropriate and necessary for day to day operational activities shall be deemed to be delegated to the relevant Assistant Director with the responsibility for the discharge of that function or the exercise of that power unless otherwise specifically prescribed and shall include authority to incur normal revenue expenditure in the discharge of day to-day operational activities in accordance with Financial Regulations and where budgetary provision has been made unless the Cabinet or Section 151 Officer has placed a conditional approval on any such item. The Scheme of Delegations is not intended to be an exhaustive and complete list of delegations to officers.
4. Notwithstanding that functions are delegated to an officer, the relevant parent committee or other member body with decision-making powers will retain concurrent powers. An officer may decide not to exercise any function in relation to a particular matter and invite the relevant committee or member body with decision-making powers to do so instead.
5. Where an officer whose post is named under this Scheme is unable to act or is absent the powers delegated to him/her may be exercised by any officer authorised by him in writing or by any more senior officer in that officer's hierarchical line of management up to and including the Chief Executive except where this is not permitted in law or is subject to other qualification. Any delegation to the Chief Executive may in his/her

absence be exercised by the Executive Directors, Deputy Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer or Section 151 Officer as may be appropriate.

6. There are further delegations of powers which can be exercised by officers under Contract Procedure Rules.

Interpretation of the Scheme of Delegations

7. The Monitoring Officer shall be the final arbiter in relation to the interpretation and application of the Scheme.

APPENDIX 1 TRANSFORMATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES			
1. IT and Street naming and numbering			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
IT Development.	To monitor and update the Council's IT development strategy.	Cabinet/ Leader.	Assistant Director – Corporate Services and Transformation
Street Naming, House Numbering and Locality Names.	To determine all matters relating to street naming, house numbering and locality names.	Cabinet/ Leader.	Assistant Director – Corporate Services and Transformation following consultation with the Ward Member and, where relevant, Parish Council.
Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act.	See Corporate delegations	Council.	See corporate delegations

2. Human Resources			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Grants and Honoraria.	To make decisions on the payment of gratuities and honoraria to Council employees undertaking additional duties, provided budgetary provision exists.	Council.	Executive Director of Finance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.
Posts - Addition, Deletion.	Within the policy and budgets decided by the Council, to make decisions on the addition and deletion of posts and on adjustments to working conditions applying to particular posts (but not generally) insofar as it relates to a restructure which is not associated with the setting of the Council's budget.	Council.	Chief Executive.
Posts - Grading.	Within the policy and budgets decided by the Council, to make decisions on the grading of posts and on adjustments to working conditions applying to particular posts (but not generally).	Council.	Assistant Director - Corporate Services and Transformation
Seminars and Conferences.	To appoint the Council's representatives to meetings, seminars, conferences and other events which are not expected to be on-going.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Directors.
Appointment of Assistant Directors.	To make appointments (where appropriate in consultation with the Head of Paid Service).	Council.	Executive Directors.
Appointment of Executive Directors.	To make appointments.	Council.	Chief Executive.
Appointment of Staff (below the level of	To make appointments (where appropriate in consultation with the Executive Director(s)).	Council.	Assistant Directors.

Assistant Director).			
Appeals.	To consider and determine appeals in respect of discipline, dismissal, the exercising of delegations (in respect of pension matters) for staff below the level of Assistant Director.	Council.	Any one of the following: Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Executive Directors, Assistant Directors (other than Assistant Director - Corporate Services and Transformation) or a consultant selected by the Assistant Director - Corporate Services and Transformation.
Appeals (Job Evaluation).	To consider and determine appeals in respect of salary grading.	Council.	Any Officer of Assistant Director level or above or a consultant selected by the Assistant Director - Corporate Services and Transformation.
Careers Conventions.	To make decisions on Careers Conventions and the Council's involvement in work experience and similar schemes, relating to the training of young people.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director - Corporate Services and Transformation.

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Disciplinary and Capability Action.	1. Within the Council's approved disciplinary and capability procedures and National Conditions of Service, [to take disciplinary action against, (including) dismissal of the Head of Paid Service, s151 Officer or Monitoring Officer subject to compliance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 (as amended).	1. N/a.	1. Council.
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	<p>2. Within the Council's approved disciplinary and capability procedures, to take action against, (including dismissal of), Executive Directors, subject, in the case of any Officer designated as Chief Finance Officer or Monitoring Officer, to compliance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001.</p>	<p>2. Council.</p>	<p>2. Head of Paid Service.</p>
	<p>3. Within the Council's approved disciplinary and capability procedures, [to take action against including] dismissal of Assistant Directors and Assistant Chief Executive subject, in the case of any Officer designated as Chief Finance Officer or Monitoring Officer, to compliance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 (as amended).</p>	<p>3. Council.</p>	<p>3. Chief Executive/ Head of Paid Service or Executive Directors.</p>
	<p>4. Within the Council's approved disciplinary and capability procedures, [to take disciplinary action against (including] dismissal of any member of staff in the department concerned below Assistant Director level.</p>	<p>4. Council.</p>	<p>4. Assistant Directors.</p>

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Early Retirement Payments.	To exercise discretionary powers under the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) Regulations 2006 to make a single lump sum payment (including any redundancy payment where necessary) of up to no more than 52 weeks actual pay to any employee in accordance with agreed criteria.	Council.	Chief Executive in consultation with the The Executive Director of Finance, Assistant Director - Corporate Services and Transformation and the relevant Portfolio Holder.
Examination Success and other Achievements.	Within the budget determined by Council, to make decisions on matters arising from examination success or other special achievements by Council employees.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Directors in consultation with Assistant Director - Corporate Services and Transformation
Overtime Payments.	Within the budget determined by Council, to approve payments for overtime working where staff are required to work such overtime in pursuance of the Council's obligations or objectives.	Council.	Chief Executive, Deputy chief Executive, Executive Directors, and Assistant Directors.
Pay Award.	Within the budget determined by Council, to implement increases in respect of the annual cost of living pay award as negotiated and agreed by the National Joint Councils or the Joint national Council for all staff.	Council.	Financial Services Manager.
Pay Protection.	To determine an appropriate pay protection policy for all staff.	Council.	Assistant Director - Corporate Services and Transformation in consultation with the Chief Executive and Executive Director of Finance.

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Recruitment Scheme of Allowances.	To review on a regular basis the Council's policy and allowance rate in respect of the recruitment scheme of allowances (moving house).	Council.	Assistant Director - Corporate Services and Transformation
Terms and Conditions of Employment.	To determine HR policies and procedures and terms and conditions of employment (save where specified by statutory provisions) in respect of all staff (except the Chief Executive).	Council.	Assistant Director - Corporate Services and Transformation.
Travel Allowances.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To implement increases in respect of the lump sum and mileage allowance payable to all staff in accordance with circulars issued by the Joint National Council and National Joint Council. 2. To implement and review increases in respect of subsistence allowances on an annual basis. 	Council.	1. & 2. Financial Services Manager

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APPENDIX 1 CORPORATE DELEGATIONS

1. Corporate

Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Authentication of Documents.	To sign any document necessary to any legal procedure or proceedings on behalf of the Council.	Council.	Chief Executive (unless any enactment otherwise authorises or requires or the Council has given requisite authority to some other person).
Consultation Documents.	<p>1. To respond on behalf of the Council to consultation documents where there is insufficient time for a response to be agreed by Full Council and where it affects the District of Bromsgrove.</p> <p>[NOTE: For the purposes of this delegation a consultation shall not be regarded as affecting the District of Bromsgrove if it relates to a national issue and would have no more effect on Bromsgrove than it would on any other area.]</p> <p>2. To respond to consultations by the County Council in respect of proposals to carry out alterations to schools in the District or nearby.</p>	1. & 2. Council	<p>1. The Leader and Chief Executive in consultation with the relevant Executive Director or Assistant Director.</p> <p>2. Chief Executive following consultation with the relevant Ward Members.</p>

<p>Emergencies.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To act in accordance with the delegated procedures set out in the Emergency Plan. 2. To enable Officers to undertake appropriate communications activity during an emergency without recourse to members, should the situation require an immediate response. 3. To take any action and to incur expenditure essential to meet any immediate needs created by an emergency, including a cyber security attack, in accordance with the Financial Regulations. 4. To take any decisions, including key decisions, where any delay in taking the decision would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public interest to the extent that it is appropriate to exercise emergency powers. The Chief Executive will report any such decision to the next meeting of Council. 	<p>1. - 3. Cabinet Leader.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Executive Directors, & Assistant Directors. 2. Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Executive Director. 3. Assistant Directors with agreement of the Cabinet/ Leader or, if the Cabinet/ Leader is unavailable and in cases of extreme emergency only, the relevant Portfolio Holder. 4. Chief Executive or other Directors in his/her absence, following consultation with the Leader or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Leader
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<p>Proper Officer.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To sign summonses to Council Meetings and to receive notices regarding addresses to which summons to meeting is to be sent under provisions of paragraphs 4(1A) and 4(1B) of Schedule 12 to the Local Government Act 1972. 2. To be appointed "Proper Officer" in relation to the following provisions of the Local Government Act 1972: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sections 83(1) to (4) - Witness and receipt of acceptance of office. b. Section 84 - Receipt of declaration of resignation of office. c. Section 89 (1) (b): Receipt of notice of casual vacancy from two local electors. d. Section 229(5): Certification of photographic copies of document. e. Sections 234(1) and (2): Authentication of documents. f. Section 88 (2): Convening of meeting to fill casual 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chief Executive or in his/her absence the Monitoring Officer. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Chief Executive. b. Chief Executive. c. Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services. d. Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services. e. Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services. f. Chief Executive.
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	<p>vacancy in the office of Chairman.</p> <p>g. Section 210 (6) and (7): Charity functions of holders of offices with existing authorities transferred to holders of equivalent office with new authorities, or, if there is no such office to “Proper Officers”.</p> <p>h. Section 225: Deposit of documents.</p> <p>i. Section 236(9): To send copies of byelaws for parish records.</p> <p>j. Section 236(10): To send copies of byelaws to the County Council.</p> <p>k. Section 238: Certification of byelaws.</p> <p>l. Section 228 (3): Accounts of “any Proper Officer” to be open to inspection by any member.</p> <p>m. Section 191: Function with respect to ordnance survey.</p>		<p>g. Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services.</p> <p>h. Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services.</p> <p>i. Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services.</p> <p>j. Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services.</p> <p>k. Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services.</p> <p>l. Executive Director of Finance.</p> <p>m. Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.</p>
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	<p>n. Sections 115(2) and 146(1) (a) and (b): Receipt of money due from Officers declaration and certificates with regard to securities.</p> <p>o. Section 151.</p>		<p>n. Executive Director_of Finance.</p> <p>o. Executive Director_of Finance.</p>
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<p>Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To review, revise and update the Council's RIPA policy. 2. Under the provisions of Part 1 chapter 2 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 relating to the Accessing of Communications Data, to appoint officers to act as SPOCs (Single Point of Contact). 3. To grant authorisations, subject to approval by the Magistrate's Court, under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000 to conduct covert surveillance. 4. In relation to requests for Directed Surveillance, including authorisation as referred to above, to sign all necessary documents and forms whether by way of Authorisation, Review, or Cancellation 5. In relation to requests for Covert Human Intelligence Sources where the source is aged under 18, to sign all necessary documents and forms whether by way of Authorisation, Review, or Cancellation. 	<p>1. – 7. Council</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services. 2. Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Elections Services. 3. Assistant Directors authorised to do so under Appendix 2 of the RIPA policy. 4. Assistant Directors authorised to do so under Appendix 2 of the RIPA policy. 5. Chief Executive or in his/her absence the Deputy Chief Executive.
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	<p>6. To maintain the central record of documents, relating to RIPA policy, including authorisations.</p> <p>7. To carry out all necessary action to ensure that the Office of Surveillance Commissioners is satisfied with the Council's Policy and Procedures in respect of RIPA.</p>		<p>6. The Information Management Team under the supervision of the Assistant Director - Corporate Services and Transformation.</p> <p>7. Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services.</p>
Urgent Business.	To determine matters requiring attention as a matter of such urgency that formal reporting to Council, Cabinet or Committee is not possible.	Council or Cabinet/ Leader (as appropriate).	Chief Executive in consultation with the Cabinet/ Leader, s151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer, together with, where appropriate, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

2. Monitoring Officer			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Constitution and Scheme of Delegation - amendments.	1. To make amendments to the Scheme of Delegation and other areas of the Constitution in order to reflect changes in legislation or regulations, job titles and the reallocation of functions of the Council between departments, provided that the amendments do not extend or reduce the existing delegations or other powers and duties currently listed in the Constitution.	Council.	Monitoring Officer.
	2. To make amendments to that part of the Constitution which comprises the Management Arrangements to the extent that such amendment reflects either a change in personnel or changes to the corporate structure which have been agreed by Council.		Monitoring Officer.
Independent Members of Audit, Standards & Governance Committee.	To undertake all the administrative arrangements in respect of the recruitment of the Independent Member on the Committee, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short listing of candidates in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee for interview by the Appointments Committee; • Where only one candidate meets the essential criteria, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee to make recommendations to Council. 	Council.	Monitoring Officer.

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Independent Person	To make any future appointments to the role of Independent Person.	Council	Monitoring Officer
Outside Bodies.	To maintain and amend a list of external bodies and organisations to which Members have been appointed by the Council.	Council.	Monitoring Officer following consultation with the Leader.

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APPENDIX 1 ENVIRONMENT			
1. Business Waste Collection and Recycling Service			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Varying charges for the Business Waste Collection and Recycling service.	To vary charges for the Business Waste Collection service when agreeing terms with customers within a variance of plus or minus 25%	Council	Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services
2. Cemeteries			
Cemeteries.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To operate the Bromsgrove Cemetery and North Bromsgrove Cemetery within the Budget and Policy Framework. 2. To determine applications to sell flowers at Bromsgrove Cemetery and North Bromsgrove Cemetery and to determine a suitable charge. 3. To remove and dispose of floral tributes remaining on a grave where the grave owner has not complied with two written requests to remove tributes. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cabinet/Leader. 2. Cabinet/Leader. 3. Cabinet/Leader. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. & 2. Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services; Environmental Services Manager and Bereavement Services Manager; 3 Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services; Environmental Services Manager and Bereavement Services Manager
3. Use of land / dogs			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Flowers, Bulbs and Trees.	To approve requests from charitable organisations to plant flowers, bulbs and trees in	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing

	support of the Charity in parks and open spaces.		Property Services and Environmental Services Manager
Inland Revenue Mobile Advice Centre.	To determine requests to site a mobile tax advice centre on the Recreation Road South Car Park.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services.
Hay.	To determine requests to harvest hay from areas of recreation and amenity land subject to any environmental and conservation considerations and that any income generated be allocated to recreation purposes.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Dogs.	To make decisions connected with the control of dogs and fouling nuisance including the designation of areas of land under The Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act under the 1996- Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 and associated regulations.	Cabinet/ Leader.	Director of Worcestershire Regulatory Services. Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.

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Commented [SS1]: Dog fouling is now covered by WRS. Environment Services to retain powers in relation to Control of Dogs under the current legislation which is the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005

4. Car Parking and Transport

Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Car Parks - Holding of Events.	To determine requests to hold events on any Council car park.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services Assistant Director Regeneration and Property Services following consultation with the relevant Parish Council (if any).
Car Parking Order.	1. To make amendments to the Car Parking Order (other than alterations to car parking	1. Cabinet/ Leader.	1. Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services

	charges and excess penalty notice charges).		Assistant Director Regeneration and Property Services
	2. To make amendments to the Car Parking Order to alter car parking charges and excess penalty notice charges where such alterations have been approved by Council or Executive/ Leader, as appropriate.	2. Cabinet/ Leader.	2. Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services Assistant Director Regeneration and Property Services
Off Street Parking - Removal of Vehicles.	To arrange for the removal of any vehicle left in a parking place in contravention of an Order made by the Council under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 relating to off-street parking or to arrange for the alteration of the position of any vehicle so its position complies with the provision of such an Order.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services; and Environmental Services Manager
Goods Vehicles - Operators Licences.	To comment or object to applications made under the Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act 1985.	Council.	Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services; Environmental Services Manager.

5. Trees			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
High Hedges.	1. To determine High Hedge applications submitted in accordance with Part 8 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and to issue a remedial notice where appropriate when: a. such applications are submitted by or on behalf	1. Council.	1. Planning Committee

	<p>of any officer of the Council or any Parish Council within the District of Bromsgrove.</p> <p>b. such applications are submitted by or on behalf of any County, District or Parish Councillor whose ward is within the district of Bromsgrove.</p> <p>c. any County, District or Parish Councillor whose ward is within the District of Bromsgrove is affected by such an application.</p> <p>2. In all other circumstances to determine all High Hedge applications submitted in accordance with Part 8 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and to issue a remedial notice where appropriate.</p>	2. Planning Committee.	2. Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services.
Inspection Notices.	To serve notices of intended inspection under sections 196A, 196B, 214B and 325 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.	Planning Committee.	Principal Solicitor.
Rights of Entry - Proper Officer.	<p>1. To be designated as the Proper Officer for the purposes of authorising persons to enter onto land in connections with the exercise of functions under sections 196A, 196B and 214B and 324 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.</p> <p>2. To issue and serve notices of intended inspection under sections 196A and 214B, 324 and 325 of the Act.</p>	<p>1. Planning Committee.</p> <p>2. Planning Committee.</p>	<p>1. Assistant Director Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.</p> <p>2. Principal Solicitor.</p>
Tree Preservation Orders.	To initiate Tree Preservation Orders.	Council.	Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services.

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Commented [SS2]: Paras 1 and 2 amended to refer to powers of entry regarding tree enforcement

Tree Preservation Orders - Confirmation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To confirm Tree Preservation Orders under the provisions of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 in cases where objections have been received. 2. To confirm Tree Preservation Orders in all other cases. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council. 2. Planning Committee. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning Committee. 2. Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services
Tree Preservation Orders - Applications to Fell	To determine applications for the felling of large trees (i.e. mature or over-mature trees), major pruning operations (i.e. major canopy reduction, reshaping works) and contentious applications for tree work, whether or not as part of a planning application.	Council	Planning Committee
Tree Preservation Orders - Works to Protected Trees.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To authorise certain categories of works to protected trees. 2. To determine applications to carry out the following work: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the felling of small trees. b. the removal of dead, dying or diseased trees. c. pruning for reasons of health and safety to trees of any size. d. minor pruning works. e. the felling of conifers and pioneer trees species (including but not limited to birch, ash, rowan and hawthorn). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning Committee. 2. Planning Committee. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services. 2. Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services.
Tree Preservation Orders - Contravention.	To institute proceedings under S210 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 in respect of contraventions of Tree Preservation Orders.	Council	Planning Committee

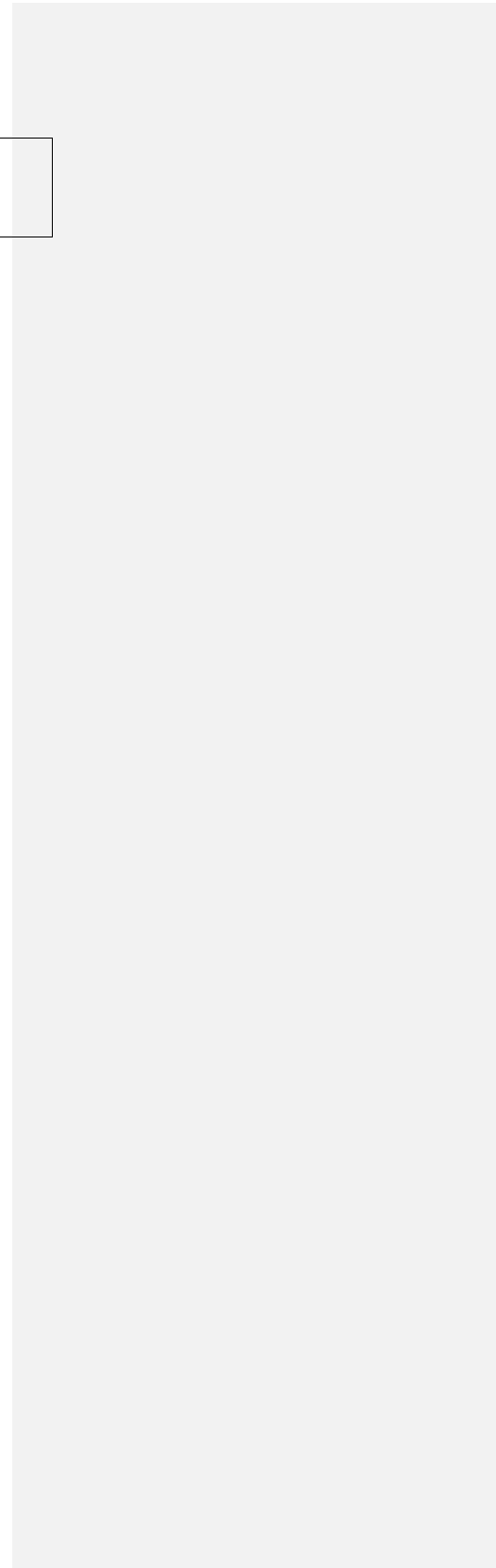
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<p>Tree Preservation Orders - revocation or variation.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To revoke or vary a Tree Preservation Order where the original confirmation was made by Planning Committee. 2. To revoke or vary in all other cases 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council 2. Planning Committee 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning Committee 2. Assistant Director of Environmental Housing Property Services
<p>Trees & Shrubs overhanging the Highway.</p>	<p>To serve notices under section 154 of the Highways Act 1980 requiring the lopping or cutting of the hedge, tree or shrub on the owner of a hedge, tree or shrub, or on the occupier of land on which a hedge tree or shrub is growing, which overhangs a highway or any other road or footpath to which the public has access so as to endanger or obstruct the passage of vehicles or pedestrians or obstructs or interferes with the view of drivers of vehicles or the light from a public lamp so as to remove the cause of danger, obstruction or interference.</p>	<p>Leader/Executive</p>	<p>Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services</p>
<p>Trees - Dangerous.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where notice is received under s23(2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 that trees are in such condition that they are likely to cause damage to persons or property on the land of the person giving notice: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To take any steps necessary to make the trees safe (whether by felling or otherwise) where the owner of the land is not known. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning Committee 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services

	<p>b. to serve a notice under s23 (3) of the Act on the owner or occupier of the land on which the trees are growing where the name and address of such or occupier is known requiring the taking of steps to make the trees safe and if the Notice is not complied with to take the steps specified therein and recover such expenses.</p> <p>2. To take any necessary action under s23 – 26 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to secure the removal of dangerous trees and to deal with dangerous excavations.</p>	<p>2. Planning Committee</p>	<p>2. Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services</p>
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6. Enforcement and Fixed Penalty Notices within Environmental Services			
Enforcement & Fixed Penalty Notices for Environmental Services	1. To take enforcement action in relation to the Council's enforcement powers under the legislation detailed in (a) below, including the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices.	Cabinet/Leader	Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services
	2. To select and authorise officers to take enforcement action in relation to the Council's enforcement powers under the legislation detailed in (a) below, including the power to give advice to offenders, to issue verbal warning and written warnings and issue Fixed Penalty Notices.	Cabinet/Leader	Assistant Director - of Environmental and Housing Property Services
	3. To commence court proceedings where necessary including authorising court proceedings, or defending any action	Cabinet/Leader	Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services consultation with Principal Solicitor.
	4. To administer Formal Cautions as an alternative to court Proceedings.	Cabinet/Leader	Officers authorised in writing by the Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services
	(a) Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978, Control of Pollution (Amendment) Act 1989, Environmental Protection Act 1990, Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 and Clean Neighbourhoods		

	and Environment Act 2005.		
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APPENDIX 1 HOUSING

Subject	Detail	Delegated by	Delegated to
Allocation of Accommodation	To approve nominations for housing applicants qualifying under the Council's Housing Allocations Policy.	Cabinet /Leader.	Strategic Housing Manager.
Housing Allocations Policy	To make amendments to the Council's Housing Allocations Policy that are deemed to be necessary to comply with Government guidance and which do not trigger the statutory duty to consult the persons affected by the changes pursuant to Section 163(8) of the Housing Act 1986.	Cabinet /Leader	Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services and the Assistant Director of Legal Democratic and Procurement Services
Asylum Seekers.	To approve the allocation of dwellings through nomination rights to asylum seekers to suit the requirements of individual cases.	Cabinet/Leader.	Strategic Housing Manager.
Homeless Persons.	To implement the provisions of the Housing Act 1996, the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.	Cabinet/Leader.	Strategic Housing Manager.
Housing Waiting List.	To approve nominations and arrangements where necessary to applicants on the Housing Needs Register in accordance with the Council's Allocation Policy.	Cabinet/Leader.	Strategic Housing Manager.

Commented [SS1]: New delegation added by report on Housing Allocations Policy dated 19th November 2025.

<p>Secure Tenancies.</p>	<p>To make nominations in respect of secure tenancies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. applicants who have not been granted tenancies but who have been selected under either sections 193 or 195 of the Housing Act 1996 and qualify for an offer of a secure tenancy from the Housing Register based on the Council's Allocations Scheme date order; andb. applicants who have been selected under sections 193 or 195 of the Housing Act 1996 and have become non-secure tenants and qualify from the Housing Register to be made secure tenants of their existing property based on the Council's Allocations Scheme date order.	<p>Cabinet/Leader.</p>	<p>Strategic Housing Manager.</p>
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APPENDIX 1 LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC AND PROCUREMENT SERVICES

1. Legal

Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Appeals.	To appeal on behalf of the Council against decisions of courts, tribunals or other decision-making bodies.	Council.	Principal Solicitor.
Dedications.	To approve dedications of cycleways, bridleways, footways, footpaths and highways where no objections to the proposal have been received.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services.
Documents, Orders and Notices (other than contracts falling under the Contracts Procedure Rules).	To sign or seal any document, Order or Notice on behalf of the Council and to serve or receive any documents on behalf of the Council.	Council.	Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services Or Principal Solicitor.
Footpaths.	<p>1. To deal with all matters relating to public footpaths where no objections to the proposal have been received.</p> <p>2. To comment on consultation to correct known errors to the definitive footpath maps and to comment on proposals to stop up or extinguish existing footpaths or to create new footpaths.</p>	<p>1. Planning Committee.</p> <p>2. Planning Committee.</p>	<p>1. Principal Solicitor.</p> <p>2. Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.</p>
Formation of Companies.	To undertake the formation of limited companies where this is calculated to facilitate or is	Cabinet/Leader.	Principal Solicitor.

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	conducive to the discharge of any of the Council's functions.		
Legal Advice and Assistance.	To provide legal advice, support and guidance (including the conduct of court proceedings) on behalf of external clients, including local authorities or other bodies to which the Council is empowered by legislation to provide legal advice.	Council/Cabinet / Leader (as appropriate).	Principal Solicitor.
Low Cost Housing Transactions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To administer the Council's Low Cost Housing Scheme, including the making of nominations and the sale of the Council's interest in dwellings. 2. To take all necessary action, including the institution of legal proceedings to recover deferred payments from the purchases of low cost homes who are in breach of covenants made in the purchase of these homes. 3. To revise fees in relation to low cost housing transactions. 	1. – 3. Cabinet/ Leader.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services. 2. Principal Solicitor. 3. Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services, Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services and Financial Services Manager in consultation with the relevant

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			Portfolio Holders.
Planning Consultants.	<p>1. To engage the services of consultants to advise officers and given evidence at public local enquiries.</p> <p>2. To engage the services of consultants in such cases as may be considered appropriate in appeals on planning and planning enforcement issues.</p>	<p>1. Cabinet/ Leader.</p> <p>2. Cabinet/ Leader</p>	<p>1. & 2. Principal Solicitor or Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.</p>
Police and Crime Panel – budget	To approve the budget for the administration of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel, providing no financial contribution is sought.	Council	Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services following consultation with the Leader of the Council.

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<p>Proceedings and Prosecutions.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To commence any proceedings/prosecutions considered necessary in relation to frauds or attempted frauds against the Council. 2. To prosecute or defend or to appear in or make arrangement for the Council to be represented in any proceedings before any court or tribunal and to deal with all procedural aspects of Court proceedings. 3. To authorise Officers to sign statements of Truth, Statutory Declarations and Affidavits on behalf of the Council. 4. To act as informant in the laying of an information to commence proceedings before the Magistrates Court. 5. To sign indictments in appropriate Crown Court proceedings. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council. 2. Council. 3. Council. 4. Council. 5. Council. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Principal Solicitor. 2. Principal Solicitor. 3. Principal Solicitor. 4. Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services. 5. Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services.
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	<p>6. To sign any document required as part of any court procedure including statutory demands or bankruptcy petitions.</p> <p>7. To select and authorise Officers to prosecute or defend on the council's behalf (subject to 9 below).</p> <p>8. To select and authorise Officers to appear on the Council's behalf in proceedings before a Magistrates' Court (subject to 9 below).</p> <p>9. To select and authorise Officers to appear before Magistrates Courts and Tribunals to:</p> <p>(a) represent the Council in the recovery of Council Tax and non-domestic rates monies due to the Council;</p> <p>(b) represent the Council before a Valuation Tribunal in consideration of any appeals which may arise concerning Council Tax and non-domestic rates.</p> <p>10. To prosecute or defend in respect of all environmental health related statutory provisions listed in Appendix EH1 of this scheme.</p>	<p>6. Council.</p> <p>7. Council.</p> <p>8. Council</p> <p>9. Council.</p> <p>10. Council.</p>	<p>6. Principal Solicitor.</p> <p>7. Principal Solicitor.</p> <p>8. Principal Solicitor.</p> <p>9. Principal Solicitor or Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services.</p> <p>10. Principal Solicitor.</p>

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	<p>11. To take such action (including but not limited to the institution of criminal or civil proceedings, or the prosecution or defence of proceedings, judicial review and any proceedings under section 222 of the Local Government Act 1972) as is considered appropriate, or to effect the wishes of the Council or to protect the interests of the Council.</p> <p>12. To take all necessary action, including the institution of legal proceedings, to recover deferred payments from the purchasers of low cost homes who are in breach of covenants.</p> <p>13. To institute proceedings relating to contravention of bye-laws.</p> <p>14. To lodge and prosecute applications to, and the defence of, proceedings in any statutory and administrative tribunal in connection with the employment of an Officer or a servant of the Council.</p>	<p>11. Council.</p> <p>12. Council.</p> <p>13. Council.</p> <p>14. Council.</p>	<p>11. Principal Solicitor.</p> <p>12. Principal Solicitor.</p> <p>13. Principal Solicitor.</p> <p>14. Principal Solicitor.</p>
Processions and Assemblies.	To apply to the Secretary of State under section 14A of the Public Order Act 1986 for consent to make an order prohibiting the holding of all trespassory assemblies in the district or a part of it and for such period of time as may be specified in the application.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services.
Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act.	See Under Corporate Delegations	-	-

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Road Closures - Temporary.	To determine requests to make Orders under section 21 of the Town and Police Clauses Act 1847.	Cabinet/Leader.	Principal Solicitor In consultation with Assistant Director of Environmental Services.
Seal.	To decide to which documents the common seal should be affixed and to attest the affixing of common seal.	Council.	Principal Solicitor.
Section 106 Agreements - Fees.	To determine the fee to be charged to commercial organizations for legal work undertaken in respect of Section 106 Agreements to which a commercial organization is a party.	Cabinet/Leader.	Principal Solicitor.
Trespassers and Unauthorised Encampments.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To take action including the institution of legal proceedings in relation to trespass or unauthorized encampments on any land or premises owned by the Council. 2. To take action including the institution of legal proceedings in relation to trespass or unauthorized encampments on any land or premises in the District insofar as the Council is empowered to do so. 3. To give directions under section 77 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. 	1. – 4. Cabinet / Leader.	1. – 4. Principal Solicitor.

	<p>4. To institute proceedings for an Order requiring the removal of any vehicle or other property on land within the District and any person residing in such vehicle in contravention of a direction given under section 77 of that Act.</p>		
2. Elections			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Fees for Election Duties.	To set within the approved budget the fees for various election duties and to make payments to those employed by the Returning Officer to carry out the duties related to an election.	Electoral Matters Committee.	Returning Officer.
Re-organisation of Community Governance.	To make Orders under section 86 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 or any subsequent or amending legislation.	Electoral Matters Committee.	Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services.
Alteration of Polling Places	To alter polling places outside compulsory review periods.	Electoral Matters Committee	Returning Officer following consultation with the Portfolio Holder and ward members.
Proper Officer.	<p>To be designated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Electoral Registration Officer under section 8 of the Representation of the People Act 1983; b. Returning Officer for elections of Councillors of the district and for elections for Councillors of parishes within the District under S53 of the Representation of the People Act 1983. 	Council.	Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services

Councillor post vacancies	To declare the office of Councillor vacant immediately after a person has ceased to be a Councillor where they have not attended a Council or Committee meeting for six months or more.	Council	Chief Executive as Proper Officer
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3. Democratic Services			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Programme of Council and Committee meetings.	To agree the programme of Council and Committee meetings.	Council.	Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services following consultation with the Executive/Leader and relevant Portfolio Holder.
Members' Expenses.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To administer payments made under the Members' Allowance Scheme. 2. To approve attendance at and payment of expenses for Members at conferences organised by external bodies in accordance with the Council's agreed policy and criteria. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council. 2. Council. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Principal Democratic Services Officer. 2. Principal Democratic Services Officer.
Remuneration Panel Members.	To undertake all the administrative arrangements, including short-listing of candidates, in respect of the recruitment of members to the Independent Remuneration Panel.	Council.	Principal Democratic Services Officer.

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APPENDIX 1 LEISURE AND CULTURE			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Allotments.	To grant, transfer and accept the termination of allotment tenancies.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Events on the High Street.	To determine requests to hold events in Bromsgrove High Street in accordance with policy.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Fairs, Circuses and Special Events.	Within the Budget and Policy Framework to determine arrangements for fairs, circuses and other special events on land or in buildings controlled by the Council.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Fees and Charges - Sports, Leisure, Community & Cultural services.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To review and amend the agreed maximum scale of fees and charges for sports and leisure activities as appropriate within the Budget and Policy Framework. 2. To vary the charges at the Leisure & Cultural facilities in response to additional competition and market demand. 3. To approve and implement promotional activities at all Sports, Leisure & Cultural facilities in order to maximise participation usage and /or income. 	1. to 3. Cabinet/Leader.	1. to 3. Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
National Health Campaigns.	To support regional & nationally recognised health and fitness campaigns in the Council's sports, cultural and leisure	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.

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	facilities by the implementation of additional activities/discounted sessions/fees as appropriate.		
Flowers, Bulbs and Trees.	To approve requests from charitable organisations to plant flowers, bulbs and trees in support of the Charity at locations in parks.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Play Areas.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Day-to-day management of play areas including Health and Safety matters, maintenance and renewals. 2. To determine representations/applications (retrospective or otherwise) received which fall within the standards and policies to be applied for play areas within residential estates. 	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Public Open Space.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To adopt Public Open Space on behalf of the Council which has previously been agreed as part of a Section 106 Agreement. 2. To negotiate the adoption of Public Open Space on behalf of the Council which has previously not been part of a Section 106 agreement. 	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure Cultural Services.
Recreational, Sports, Community & Cultural Facilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To determine applications for the free use of Council recreational facilities by non-commercial organisations which fall within the Budget and Policy Framework or other policies. 2. To determine applications for the use of the Recreation Ground, Bromsgrove and the Boleyn Road Recreation 		1. - 3. Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.

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	<p>Ground Frankley by fun fairs which fall within established policy.</p> <p>3. To determine applications for the use of non-commercial events of Council owned or managed recreational and sports facilities and/or parks and open spaces.</p> <p>4. To determine applications for the bookings of the Council's recreational and sports facilities.</p> <p>5. To determine applications from partners organisations relating to contract or SLA arrangement in line with relevant agreement & Council Policy frameworks.</p> <p>6. To determine dates for the closure of recreational facilities for Bank Holidays, Christmas and New Year Holidays.</p>		<p>4. Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services except that the agreement of the relevant Portfolio Holder is required to agree to any bookings by political or religious groups.</p> <p>5. Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.</p> <p>6. Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.</p>
Recreational Land.	To decide on arrangements for the access, usage & leasing of recreational land or facilities to parish Councils and other organisations and	Cabinet/Leader	Executive Director of Finance and Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure

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	to determine any applications for consents required under such leases.		and Cultural Services.
Recreational Provision.	Within the Budget and Policy Framework to make decisions on recreational provision which is being made in partnership with other organisations.	Cabinet	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Sanders Park & Open Spaces– Use by Hot Air Balloons.	To determine applications for the use of Sanders Park and Open Spaces for hot air balloon flights.	Cabinet	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Playing Pitches.	To grant hire agreements, licenses or lease arrangements for the use of such facilities in line with budget and Policy frameworks.	Cabinet	Assistant Director - Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.

APPENDIX 1 PLANNING			
1. Assets of Community Value			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Confirmation of valid application	To check validity of nominations of an asset of community value and reject if not appropriate or incomplete.	Cabinet.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Consultation	To arrange consultation on valid nominations of an asset; consultees to include Ward members.	Cabinet.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Recommend nomination	To recommend to Cabinet whether or not a nomination should be accepted and included on the list of Assets of Community Value.	Cabinet.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Review of decision	To review a decision to list a property as an Asset of Community Value.	Cabinet.	Executive Director of Environment and Communities
Assess compensation claims	To assess claims for compensation.	Cabinet.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Review compensation claims	To review and decide initial decisions about compensation.	Cabinet.	Executive Director of Environment and Communities

2. Building Control			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Building Regulations - Applications.	To determine applications under the Building Regulations 1991 and 2000.	Council.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Building Regulation - Charges.	To review and determine the scale of charges in accordance with the Building Act 1984 and the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 1998.	Council.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Dangerous Buildings.	To take such action as is considered necessary under sections 77 and 78 of the Building Act 1984 when the condition of any building is such as to render it necessary to require the owner to make it safe for the Council to take action to remove the danger, as a matter of urgency.	Council.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.
Demolition.	To determine applications for demolition under sections 80 and 81 of the Building Act 1984.	Council.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Ground Movement.	To take such action as may be necessary to deal with any events of structural distress and ground movement affecting properties in order to safeguard the public interest.	Council.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.

3. Development Control			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Prior Notification Procedure.	To require further details from the applicant when an application for prior determination is submitted in respect of permitted development for agricultural, forestry and telecommunications development.	Planning Committee.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Article 4 Directions.	To make Directions under Article 4(1) of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.	Planning Committee.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Certificate of Lawfulness.	To determine applications for Certificates of Lawfulness of Proposed Use of Development or Certificates of Existing Use of Development under sections 191 and 192 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.	Planning Committee.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Development Proposals by other Public Authorities.	To comment on proposals for development submitted by Worcestershire County Council and other public authorities.	Council.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Entry of Premises -Proper Officer.	To be designated as the Proper Officer for the purposes of authorising persons to enter onto land in connections with the exercise of functions under sections 196A, 196B, 214B , 324 and 325 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.	Planning Committee.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Inspection Notices.	To serve notices of intended inspection under sections 196A, 196B, 214B , 324 and 325 of the	Planning Committee.	Principal Solicitor.

Commented [SS1]: Amended to remove references to planning enforcement/ tree enforcement - retained for general DM purposes of entering land under sections 324 and 325

Commented [SS2]: As above - amended to remove for planning enforcement/ trees – retained for DM

	Town and Country Planning Act 1990.		
Landscaping Schemes.	To approve landscaping/tree planting schemes submitted as a result of planning permissions subject to such conditions as may be appropriate.	Planning Committee.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Minor Amendments.	To determine applications for minor amendments to approved plans.	Planning Committee.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Planning Agreements and Unilateral Undertakings.	To negotiate with developers and to approve the amounts to be received by the Council as financial contributions in lieu of on-site provision of affordable housing or recreational facilities/open space and as contributions towards the costs of highways works, educational provision or any other kind of provision by the Council or County Council.	Planning Committee.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Planning Agreements and Unilateral Undertakings.	To negotiate the legal, drafting and all terms of the agreements and undertaking, except for those which involve planning gain, restriction of the development or use of the land, obligations relating to the land and financial contributions. To execute and complete planning agreements.	Planning Committee. Planning Committee.	Principal Solicitor. Principal Solicitor.
Planning Agreements and Unilateral Undertakings.	To determine applications or requests for discharge or modification of planning agreements or undertakings (whether by approval or further agreement) unless it includes the following: a. Deletion, addition or variation of one or more of	Planning Committee.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.

	<p>the heads of terms originally approved by the Planning Committee.</p> <p>b. Significant change in the overall area of land to transferred to the Council.</p> <p>c. Significant change in financial contributions to be provided to the Council (except where this is as a result of a subsequent decision by the Planning Committee).</p> <p>d. Significant change in the any obligation to be performed by the developer or any restriction on the developer or the development or use in land.</p> <p>e. A member makes a written request for a case to be considered by the Planning Committee.</p>		
Planning Agreements and Unilateral Undertakings.	To approve the enforcement of a planning obligation.	Planning Committee.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Planning Applications.	<p>1. To determine:</p> <p>a) applications for dwelling houses where the number of houses to be provided is 10 or more.</p> <p>b) applications for the provision of a building or buildings with a floor space of 1000 square metres or more.</p> <p>c) other applications which have been called-in by a member for determination by Planning Committee</p>	1. Council	1. Planning Committee

	<p>provided that the application has been called-in in accordance with the procedure set out in paragraphs 6 - 7 of the introductory paragraphs to the Scheme of Delegations.</p> <p>d) applications by serving Officers and members</p> <p>e) applications by the Council or by Council Service Areas or Council departments.</p> <p>f) The Assistant Director of Planning and Regeneration considers that the application should be considered by the Planning Committee.</p> <p>2. To determine all other planning applications.</p> <p>NB: For the avoidance of doubt the term 'planning applications' include applications to vary or remove planning conditions attached to a planning permission, applications for development which has already been carried out and applications to extend the time for implementing planning permissions.</p>	<p>2. Planning Committee</p>	<p>2. Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.</p>
<p>Planning Applications.</p>	<p>To impose conditions on applications (for planning permission, listed building consent or Conservation area consent) which have been approved by the Planning Committee contrary to the Planning Officer's</p>	<p>Planning Committee.</p>	<p>Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Culture Services.</p>

	<p>recommendation where such conditions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Necessary. b. Relevant to planning. c. Relevant to the development which has been applied for. d. Enforceable. e. precise and f. Reasonable in all other aspects. 		
Listed Building and Conservation Area Consent.	<p>To determine applications for listed building consent and Conservation Area consent unless they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Applications for dwelling houses where the number of houses to be provided is 10 or more. b. Applications for the provision of a building or buildings with a floor space of 1000 square metres or more. c. Other applications which have been called-in by a member for determination by Planning Committee provided that the application has been called-in in accordance with the procedure set out in paragraphs 6 - 7 of the introductory paragraphs to the Scheme of Delegations. d. Applications by serving Officers and members. e. Applications by the Council or by Council Service Areas or Council departments. 	Planning Committee.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.

	The Assistant Director of Planning and Regeneration considers that the application should be considered by the Planning Committee.		
Appeals.	To take all action to defend the Council where there has been an appeal against a refusal to grant planning permission, listed building consent or conservation area consent: or any appeal arising out of the taking of enforcement action.	Planning Committee.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services in consultation with the Principal Solicitor.
Revocation and modification.	To revoke or modify planning permissions, listed building or conservation area consent under section 97 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and sections 23 and 74 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Area Acts) 1990	Planning Committee.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Completion Notice.	To authorise and serve a completion notices.	Planning Committee.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Declining Planning Applications.	To decide to decline to determine application on the grounds set out in sections 70A and 70B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and sections 81A and 81B of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Area Acts) 1990.	Planning Committee.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Advertisements.	To determine applications for express advertisement consent	Planning Committee.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.

Commented [SS3]: Amended to cover all types of appeals including those arising from the taking of any enforcement action

4. Heritage			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Local Heritage List	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To administer the Local Heritage List for Bromsgrove; 2. To approve draft selection criteria and final lists; 3. To publish for consultation draft sections of the Local Heritage List. 	Council	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services. 2. Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning. 3. Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services
5. Neighbourhood Planning			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Designation of Neighbourhood Area	To decide whether to accept and designate a Neighbourhood Area	Council	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services following consultation with the Ward Member(s) for the area affected and the Portfolio holder for Planning.
Designation of a Neighbourhood Forum	To decide whether to designate a community organisation as a Neighbourhood Forum		Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services following consultation with the Ward Member(s) for the area affected and

			the Portfolio holder for Planning.
Assessing the validity and acceptance of plans	To decide the validity and acceptance of submissions for a Neighbourhood Development Plan or a Neighbourhood Development Order, including assessing the compliance of the Plan/Order with other relevant policies and legislation.		Assistant Director of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure and Cultural Services following consultation with the Ward Member(s) for the area affected and the Portfolio holder for Planning.
Repeat proposals	To decide whether to decline to accept repeat proposals for Neighbourhood Development Plans or Neighbourhood Development Orders		Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services following consultation with the Ward Member(s) for the area affected and the Portfolio holder for Planning.
Appointment of Examiner	To appoint an Examiner for a Neighbourhood Development Plan or Order		Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services following consultation with the Ward Member(s) for the area affected and the Portfolio holder for Planning.

6. Planning Enforcement

Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Article 4 Directions:	To make Directions under Article 4(1) of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 1.	Planning Committee:	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services:
Breach of Condition Notices:	To authorise the issue and service of Breach of Condition Notices under section 187A of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 2.	Planning Committee:	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services in consultation with the Principal Solicitor:
Cautions:	To administer formal cautions to offenders as an alternative to Court proceedings.	Planning Committee:	Officers authorised in writing by the Assistant Director of

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Commented [SS4]: Deleted – this is duplicated from the DM delegations

Commented [SS5]: Moved to WRS Section

			Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services;	Commented [SS6]: Moved to WRS section
Enforcement Notices:	To authorise the issue and service of Enforcement Notices under section 172 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990:	Planning Committee:	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services;	Commented [SS7]: Moved to WRS section
Entry of Premises - Proper Officer:	To be designated as the Proper Officer for the purposes of authorising persons to enter onto land in connections with the exercise of functions under sections 196A and 196B, 214B, 324 and 325 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990:	Planning Committee:	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services;	Commented [SS8]: Powers of entry for enforcement in WRS section. Powers of entry already included in tree section for tree matters. DM section includes general right of entry under sections 324 and 325 for DM related need to enter land
Inspection Notices:	To serve notices of intended inspection under sections 196A, 196B, 214B, 324 and 325 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990:	Planning Committee:	Principal Solicitor;	Commented [SS9]: As above, powers found in WRS section for enforcement and set out in tree section and DM section for service of notices
Injunctions:	To seek injunctions in the High Court under Section 187B of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 or any other relevant statutory power restraining breaches of planning control 3:	Planning Committee:	Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services or Principal Solicitor following consultation with, where practicable, the Chairman of Planning Committee;	Commented [SS10]: Moved to WRS section
Listed Buildings - Enforcement Notices:	1.-To authorise the issue and service of Listed Building Enforcement Notices under section 38 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990: 2.-To authorise the issue and service of Listed Building Enforcement Notices under section 38 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in circumstances in cases of urgency when, in the opinion of Assistant Director of	1. Council. 2. Planning Committee:	1. Planning Committee. 2. Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services;	Commented [SS11]: Moved to WRS section

	Planning & Environment Services, reporting to Planning Committee is impractical:		
Planning Contravention Notices:	<p>1.-To serve Planning Contravention Notices under section 171C of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (and any other statutory power which enables the Council to require information about land):</p> <p>2.-To respond to offers to apply for planning permission or to refrain from carrying out any operations or activities following the service of a Planning Contravention Notice:</p> <p>3.1. _____</p>	<p>1.- Planning Committee:</p> <p>2.1. _____ Planning Committee.</p>	<p>1.- Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services</p> <p>2.1. _____ Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services Planning Contravention Notices.</p>
Stop Notices:	<p>1.- To authorise the issue and service of Stop Notices under section 183 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990:</p> <p>2.1. _____ To authorise the issue and service of Stop Notices under section 183 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 in cases of urgency when, in the opinion of Assistant Director of Planning & Environment Services, reporting to Planning Committee is impractical:</p>	<p>1.- Council:</p> <p>2. Planning Committee:</p>	<p>1.- Planning Committee:</p> <p>2. Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services in consultation with the Principal Solicitor:</p>
Temporary Stop Notice:	The issue and service Temporary Stop Notices under ss171E-H of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990:	Planning Committee:	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services in consultation with the Principal Solicitor:
Proper Maintenance of Land:	1.- To authorise the issue of notices under section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990:	Planning Committee:	1.- Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services:

Commented [SS12]: Moved to WRS Section

Commented [SS13]: Moved to WRS Section

Commented [SS14]: Moved to WRS Section

	2. To serve notices under section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990:		2. Principal Solicitor:
Appeals:	To take all action to defend the Council where there has been an appeal against a refusal to grant planning permission, listed building consent or conservation area consent.	Planning Committee:	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services in consultation with the Principal Solicitor.
Advertisement Controls:	1. To authorise the service of an advertisement discontinuance notice: 2. To take action for the control of advertisements (but not including the service of a discontinuance notice) in the interest of amenity and public safety under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007:	1. Council. 2. Planning Committee:	1. Planning Committee: 2. Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services in consultation with the Principal Solicitor:
67. Strategic Planning			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Inspection Notices.	To serve notices of intended inspection under sections 196A, 196B, 214B, 324 and 325 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.	Planning Committee.	Principal Solicitor.
Local Plan Enquiry.	To provide direction on behalf of the Council to any Local Plan/Local Development Framework Inquiry on policy issues and site details.	Council	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Rights of Entry - Proper Officer.	To be designated as the Proper Officer for the purposes of authorising persons to enter onto land in connections with the exercise of functions under section 324 and 325 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.	Planning Committee.	Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.

Commented [SS15]: Moved to WRS Section

Commented [SS16]: Moved to DM section and included with responding to all types of appeals (WRS agreement does not cover defending appeals)

Note: All delegations to Assistant Director of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services are to include any designated deputy, such designation to be in writing.

REGENERATION			
1. Economic Development			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Business Start - Up Grants.	To approve Business Start-Up Grants of up to £1,000 per individual applications.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Regeneration and Property Services.
Farmers' Markets.	To determine applications for consent for Farmers' Markets.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Regeneration and Property Services following consultation with the Executive/ Leader and or the relevant Portfolio Holder Deputy Executive/Leader.
Financial Assistance to Small Businesses.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To determine applications for grants of up to £500. To determine applications for grants of between £500 and £1,000. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet/Leader. Cabinet/Leader. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Assistant Director of Regeneration and Property Services. Assistant Director of Regeneration and Property Services following consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.
Markets.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To approve events to be held. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet/Leader. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Assistant Director of Regeneration

	2. To let stalls.	2. Cabinet/ Leader.	and Property Services. 2. Assistant Director of Regeneration and Property Services.
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APPENDIX 1 REGULATORY SERVICES

1. LICENSING

HEAD OF REGULATORY SERVICES (WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES)

To determine applications made for licences of premises for acupuncture, tattooing, ear piecing and electrolysis.

To determine applications for the registration of animal trainers and exhibitors.

To be responsible for inspections of premises are undertaken to ensure compliance with animal welfare licensing legislation and to engage veterinary surgeons for these purposes where necessary.

To authorise officers for the purpose of Part II of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

To be designated as “Proper Officer” for the provisions of the Breeding of Dogs Act 1973 and to act on behalf of the Council in respect of the provisions of the Act and to engage veterinary surgeons for the purpose of inspecting premises under the Act.

To determine applications for house to house and street collections.

To respond to applications where the Council is a responsible authority or consultee.

To be designated as “Proper Officer” for the purposes of the administration of the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 and to be authorised to carry out all appropriate functions including the entering of premises.

To grant consents for uncontested Street Amenity Consents under the Highways Act 1980

To authorise the entry of premises for the purpose of enforcing the provisions of the following legislation on behalf of the Council:

- Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963.
- Breeding of Dogs Act 1973.

- Gambling Act 2005.
- Licensing Act 2003.
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Acts 1976 and 1982.
- Town Police Clauses Act 1847.
- Zoo Licensing Act 1981.

To determine all matters under the Gambling Act 2005 except:

- Determination of fee levels.
- Applications for aviations to premises licences, provisional statements, club gaming/club machine permits and other permits where representations have been received and not withdrawn.
- Applications for transfer of premises licences where representations have been made by the Gambling Commission.
- Review of premises licenses.
- Decision to give a counter notice to a temporary use notice.
- Refusal of applications for registration by societies wishing to promote lotteries.

Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Operators', Vehicles and Drivers'

To determine all matters in relation to Hackney Carriage Drivers and Private Hire Operators, Vehicles and Drivers except:

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers

- Determination of applications where the applicant does not meet the Council's application criteria.
- "Suspension / revocation of a drivers licence, where suspension / revocation is required with immediate effect (in consultation with the Licensing Committee Chairman / Vice-Chairman) that since the grant of the licence they have:-
 - (i) been convicted of an offence involving dishonesty, indecency or violence; or
 - (ii) been convicted of an offence under or has failed to comply with the provision of the Act of 1847 or section 61 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976; or
 - (iii) any other reasonable cause.

subject to a report being presented to a meeting of the Licensing Sub-Committee."

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles

- Determination of an application where the vehicle does not meet the Council's application criteria.
- "Suspension / revocation / refuse to renew a vehicle licence, where suspension / revocation is required with immediate effect (in consultation with the Licensing Committee Chairman / Vice-Chairman) on any of the following grounds:-
 - (i) that the vehicle is unfit for use as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle;
 - (ii) any offence under, or non-compliance with, the provision of the Act of 1847 or section 60 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976; or
 - (iii) any other reasonable cause.

subject to a report being presented to a meeting of the Licensing Sub-Committee.

Operator's

- Determination of an application where the applicant does not meet the Council's criteria in respect of character.

Fares/Stand

- Revisions to the Council's Table of Hackney Carriage Fares.
- Appointment of Hackney Carriage stands/revisions to existing Hackney Carriage stands.

To suspend Premises and Club Premises Licences following non payment of fees under sections 55A and 92A of the Licensing Act 2003 (as amended)

To determine all matters under the Licensing Act except:

- Application to vary designated premises supervisors if representations are made.
- Applications for personal licences, premises licences/ club premises licences and provisional statements where representations have been received.
- Applications for Interim Authorities if a police representation is made.
- Application to vary premises licences/ club premises certificates if representations are made.
- Applications to review premises/ club premises certificate.
- Any interim steps following an application for an expedited review.
- Determination of Temporary Event Notices where representations have been **made** by the Police.
- Applications to transfer premises licences if representations are made.

- Applications for minor variations if representations are made by the Police.

To determine all matters relating to Market and Street Trading except:

- Designation of consent streets and non consent streets under Schedule 4 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982.
- Deciding the Council's policy in relation to the issue of street trading consents.

To determine applications for licences for riding establishments

To determine applications for Zoo Licensing

To carry out any other function or responsibility in relation to the legislation listed at RS1 not specifically referred to above

RS1

- Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963.
- Animal Welfare Act 2006.
- Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 2006.
- Breeding of Dogs Act 1973 and 1991.
- Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976.
- Gambling Act 2005.
- Licensing Act 2003.
- Local Government (Miscellaneous provisions) Acts 1976 and 1982.
- Pet Animals Act 1951.
- Police Factories Act (miscellaneous provisions) Act 1916.
- Riding establishments Acts 1964 and 1970.
- Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013.
- Vehicle Crime Act 2001 - Section 4 (13) - Motor Salvage Operators.
- Town Police Clauses Act 1847.
- Video Recordings Act 1984 and 1993.
- Licensing Act 2003.
- Hackney carriage licensing.
- Private Hire (including driver, vehicle and operator) licensing.
- Control of sex establishments (including lap dancing and sexual entertainment venues).
- Street Trading.
- Street amenity licences.
- Zoo Licensing Act 1981.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

HEAD OF REGULATORY SERVICES (WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES)

(i) In accordance with the legal agreement for Regulatory Services Shared Service, the Council has delegated to the Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services all the duties and functions listed below arising out of the legislation set out in Appendix RS 2.

- (a) Appointment of Inspectors, Authorised Officers or similar designated persons.
- (b) Undertaking inspections and investigation of complaints.
- (c) Signing and service of notices.
- (d) Signing and issuing, revoking and varying, any licence, permit, order or other document.
- (e) Executing, or arranging for the execution of, works in default.
- (f) Purchasing or otherwise procuring samples, seize equipment, goods and animals.
- (g) The exercise of powers of entry.
- (h) The engagement of specialist advisors/contractors to support/supplement service activity.
- (i) The institution of legal proceedings (in consultation with the Assistant Director of Legal Services of the Relevant Authority).
- (j) The obtaining of warrants of entry.

(ii) The Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services has authority to delegate further, in writing, all or any of their delegated functions to other officers, and may authorise certain of those officers to further delegate to officers under their management or control.

RS2

Accommodation Agencies Act 1953.

Administration of Justice Act 1970 (Section 40).

Agriculture (Safety, Health & Welfare Provisions) Act 1956.

Agriculture Act 1970.

Agriculture Produce (Grading & Marking) Acts 1928 & 1931.

Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963.

Animal By-Products Regulations 2005.

Animal Health & Welfare Act 1984.

Animal Health Act 1981.

Animal Health Act 2002.

Animal Welfare Act 2006.

Animals and Animal Products (Import & Export) (England) Regs 2006.

Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.
Avian Influenza (Preventative Measures) (England) Regulations 2006.
Avian Influenza (Vaccination) (England) Regulations 2006.
Biofuel (Labelling) Regulations 2004.
Bluetongue Regulations 2008.
Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999.
Breeding of Dogs Act 1973 and 1991.
Building Act 1984.
Business Protection from Misleading Marketing Regulations 2008.
Cancellation of Contracts made in a Consumers House or Place of Work etc Regulations 2008.
Caravan Sites Act 1968.
Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960.
Cat and Dog Fur (Control of Import, Export and Placing on Market) Regulation 2008.
Cattle Identification Regs 2007.
Charities Act 1993.
Children & Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco) Act 1991.
Children & Young Persons Act 1933.
Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970.
Cinemas Act 1985.
Civic Amenities Act 1967.
Civil Defence Act 1948 and Regulations made thereunder.
Clean Air Act 1993.
Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005.
Construction Products Regulations 1991.
Consumer Credit Act 1974.
Consumer Protection (Distance Selling) Regulations 2000.
Consumer Protection Act 1987.
Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008.
Control of Pollution Act 1974.
Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.
Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008.
Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.
Crystal Glass (Descriptions) Regs 1973.
Dangerous Dogs Act 1990
Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976.
Deer Act 1991.
Defective Premises Act 1972.
Development of Tourism Act 1969 (Section 18).
Disabled Persons Act 1981.
Distance Selling Regulations 2000.
Ecodesign for Energy-Using Product Regulations 2007.
Education Reform Act 1988.
Eggs (Marketing Standards) Regulations 2005.
Eggs and Chicks (England) Regulations 2008.
Electromagnetic Compatibility Regs 1992.
Electro-medical Equipment (EEC Requirements) Regs 1988.

Energy Act 1976 (Section 18).
Energy Conservation Act 1981 (Section 20).
Energy Efficiency (Refrigerators and Freezers) Regs 1997.
Energy Information (Combined Washer-driers) Regs 1997.
Energy Information (Dishwashers) Regs 1999.
Energy Information (Household Air Conditioners) (No.2) Regulations 2005.
Energy Information (Household Electric Ovens) Regulations 2003.
Energy Information (Household Refrigerators and Freezers) Regs 2004.
Energy Information (Lamps) Regs 1999.
Energy Information (Tumble Driers) Regs 1996.
Energy Information (Washing Machines) Regs 1996.
Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007.
Enterprise Act 2002.
Environment Act 1995.
Environmental Protection (Controls on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer) Regs 2002.
Environmental Protection Act 1990.
Estate Agents Act 1979.
Explosives Act 1875.
Export Restrictions (Foot and Mouth Disease) Regulations 2007.
Factories Act 1961.
Fair Trading Act 1973.
Farm and Garden Chemicals Act 1967.
Feed (Hygiene and Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2005.
Firework Act 2003.
Firework Regulations 2004.
Food & Environmental Protection Act 1985.
Food (Jelly Mini-Cups) (Emergency Control) (England) Regulations 2009.
Food (Suspension of the use of E128 Red 2G as food colour) (England) Regulations 2007.
Food Act 1984.
Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006.
Food of Particular Nutritional Uses (Addition of Substances for Specific Nutritional Purposes) (England) Regs 2009.
Food Safety Act 1990.
Food Standards Act 1999.
Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981 Part 1.
Fraud Act 2006.
Game Act 1831.
General Food Regulations 2004.
General Product Safety Regulations 2005.
Guard Dogs Act 1975.
Hallmarking Act 1973.
[Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974.](#)
Health Act 2006.
Highways Act 1980.

Home Energy Conservation Act 1995.
Home Information Pack Regulations 2007.
Home Safety Act 1961.
Horse Passports Regulations 2009.
House to House Collections Act 1939.
Housing & Planning Act 1986.
Housing Act 1980, 1985, 2004.
Hypnotism Act 1952.
Imported Food Regulations 1997.
Imported Food Regulations 2007.
Intoxicating Substances (Supply) Act 1985.
Land Drainage Acts 1976 & 1991.
Litter Act 1983.
Local Government & Housing Act 1989.
Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Acts 1976 & 1982.
Manufacturing and Storage of Explosives Regulations 2005.
Materials and Articles in Contact with Food England Regs 2007.
Measuring Instruments (Automatic Catchweighers) Regulations 2006.
Measuring Instruments (Automatic Discontinuous Totalisers) Regulations 2006.
Measuring Instruments (Automatic Gravimetric Filling Instruments) Regulations 2006.
Measuring Instruments (Beltweighers) Regulations 2006.
Measuring Instruments (Capacity Serving Measures) Regulations 2006.
Measuring Instruments (Cold Water Meters) Regulations 2006.
Measuring Instruments (Liquid Fuel and Lubricants) Regulations 2006.
Measuring Instruments (Liquid Fuel delivered from Road Tankers) Regulations 2006.
Measuring Instruments (Material Measures of Length) Regulations 2006.
Measuring Instruments (Non prescribed Instruments) Regulations 2006.
Measuring Instruments (Rail - Weighbridges) Regulations 2006.
Medicines Act 1968.
Mobile Homes Acts 1975 & 1993.
Motor Cycle Noise Act 1987.
National Assistance Act 1948 Sec 47.
Natural Mineral Water, Spring Water & Bottled Water England Regs 1999.
Noise & Statutory Nuisance Act 1993.
Noise Act 1996.
Non-Automatic Weighing Instruments (EEC Requirements) Regs 2000.
Offensive Weapons Act 1996.
Offices, Shops & Railway Premises Act 1963.
Official Controls (Animal Feed and Food) (England) Regs 2006.
Official Feed & Food Controls (England) Regs 2007.
Olive Oil (Marketing Standards) Regs 2003.
Olympic Symbol etc. (Protection) Act 1995.
Organic Product Regulations 2009.
Package Travel, Package Holidays & Package Tours Regs 1992.
Packaging (Essential Requirements) Regs 2003.
Party Wall Act 1966.
Performing Animals (Regulation) Act 1925.

Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 2002.
Pet Animals Act 1951.
Petroleum (Transfer of Licences) Act 1936.
Petroleum Consolidation Act 1928.
Planning (Hazardous substances) Act 1990.
Plastic Materials and Articles in Contact with Food England Regs 2009.
Poisons Act 1972.
Police, Factories etc (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1916.
Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999.
Poultry Meat (Water Content) Regs 1984.
Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949.
Prices Acts 1974 and 1975.
Private Security Industries Act 2001.
Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.
Products of Animal Origin (Disease Control) (England) Regulations 2008.
Products of Animal Origin (Import and Export) Regulations 1996 (as amended).
Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (England) Regulations 2006.
Property Mis-descriptions Act 1991.
Protection of Animals Act 1911 as amended.
Protection of Children (Tobacco) Act 1986.
Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984.
Public Health Acts (Amendment) Act 1907.
Public Health Acts 1875, 1925, 1936 & 1961.
Quick Frozen Food Stuffs (England) Regulations 2007.
Radio Equipment and Telecommunications Terminal Equipment Regs 2000.
REACH Enforcement Regulations 2008.
Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978.
Regulation (EC) No. 178/2002.
Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004.
Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004.
Regulation (EC) No. 854/2004.
Regulation (EC) No. 2073/2005.
Rent Act 1977.
Rice Products (Restrictions on First Packaging on the Market) (England) Regs 2006.
Riding Establishments Acts 1964 & 1970.
Road Traffic (Consequential Provisions) Act 1988.
Road Traffic (Foreign Vehicles) Act 1972.
Road Traffic Acts 1988 and 1991.
Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988.
Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (Section 5).
Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975.
Sale of Goods Act 1979.
Scotch Whisky Act 1988.
Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013.
Simple Pressure Vessels (Safety) Regs 1991.
Slaughter of Poultry Act 1967.
Slaughterhouses Act 1974.

Smokefree (Exemptions and Vehicles) Regulations 2007.
Smokefree (Penalties and Discounted Amounts) Regulations 2007.
Smoke-free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006.
Smokefree (Signs) Regulations 2007.
Smokefree (Vehicle Operators and Penalty Notices) Regulations 2007.
Sunday Trading Act 1994.
Supply of Goods and Services Act 1982.
Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regs 1992.
Telecommunications Act 1984.
Textile Products (Indications of Fibre Content) Regs 1986.
Theft Acts 1968 and 1978.
Timeshare Act 1992.
Town Police Clauses Act 1847.
Trade Descriptions Act 1968.
Trade Marks Act 1994.
Trading Standards - Agricultural (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1968.
Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (England) Regulations 2008.
Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts Regulations 1999.
Unsolicited Goods and Services Acts 1971 and 1975.
Video Recordings Acts 1984 and 1993.
Warm Homes & Energy Conservation Act 2000.
Water Acts 1973-2003.
Water Industry Act 1991.
Water Industry Act 1999.
Weeds Act 1959.
Weights and Measures Act 1985.
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
Wine Regulations 2009.
Worcester City Act 1985.
Zoo Licensing Act 1981.

3. ENVIROCRIME AND PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

HEAD OF REGULATORY SERVICES (WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES)

(i) In accordance with the Agreement for the Provision of Additional Shared Services dated 28th May 2025, the Council has delegated to the Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services the discharge of the additional duties and functions listed below arising out of the legislation set out in Appendix RS 3.

- (a) Undertaking inspections and investigation of complaints
- (b) Signing and service of notices
- (c) Signing and issuing, revoking and varying, any licence, permit, order or

other document

- (d) Executing, or arranging for the execution of, works in default
- (e) The exercise of powers of entry
- (f) The engagement of specialist advisors/contractors to support/supplement service activity
- (g) To determine the most suitable disposal following investigation (including use of written warnings, Fixed Penalty Notices and Cautions), or to refer matters to legal services for consideration for commencing prosecutions
- (h) The obtaining of warrants of entry

Arising out of or in connection with the following: -

- Planning Enforcement
- Community Protection Warnings and Notices in respect of waste issues or planning only
- Fly-tipping
- Dog Fouling
- Littering
- Duty of Care for Waste

(ii) The Head of Regulatory Services has authority to delegate further, in writing, all or any of their delegated functions to other officers, and may authorise certain of those officers to further delegate to officers under their management or control.

RS3

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisement) Regulations 2007.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Environment Protection Act 1990.

Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (sections 43-58).

Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005.

Control of Pollution (Amendment) Act 1989.

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APPENDIX 1 RESOURCES			
1. Finance			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Capital Programme.	To place with private firms any projects within the Capital Programme which it is not possible to undertake within the Council.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Directors in consultation with the Procurement Manager.
Corporate Risk Register.	To monitor, review and update the corporate and departmental risk registers.	Cabinet/Leader.	Executive Director of Finance in consultation with the Audit Board and the relevant Portfolio Holder.
Debts.	To write off irrecoverable debts: a. up to the value of £52,000500 . b. over £52,000500 .	a. & b. Cabinet/Leader.	a. Executive Director Finance Director of Finance and Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services b. Executive Director Finance Director of Finance with the agreement of the Leader of the Council.

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Local Government and Housing Act 1989.	To make determinations under the following Schedules and Sections of the Act: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part 1 Schedule 3 • Paragraph 9 (1) (b) Schedule 3 • Section 42 (2) (g) • Section 50 (3) (b) • Section 56 (1) • Section 60 (2) • Section 63 (1) 	Cabinet/Leader.	Financial Services Manager
Maturity Mortgages.	To deal with requests for the premature repayment of monies secured by maturity mortgages/local bonds.	Cabinet/Leader.	Financial Services Manager.
Tax Relief Reimbursement.	To be an authorized signatory of the purpose of making formal claims to the Inland Revenue for the periodic reimbursement of tax relief granted by the Council.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Customer Access and Financial Support. Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services
Utilities - Restoration or Continuance of Services.	To deal in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder and generally in accordance with emergency procedures with applications received pursuant to the arrangements according to section 33 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provision) Act 1976 (Public Utility Services to Dwellings) and to take such action as may be necessary for the recovery of any payments made by the Council in pursuance of such arrangements.	Cabinet/Leader.	Financial Services Manager Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services or Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
S106 Monies to the value of £15k	Authority to spend S106 monies up to a value of £ 2005 0k to spend in line with the S106 agreement which caused the receipt of the S106 monies.	Council	The S151 Officer, after consultation with the Ward Member.

2. Procurement

Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Approved Officers.	To nominate Approved Officers to undertake procurement on behalf of the Council accordance with Contract Procedure Rules.	Cabinet/Leader.	Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Assistant Directors.
Contracts.	To enter into contracts in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Directors.
Select List.	To decide the composition of Select Lists of contractors which are relevant to the Cabinet's work.	Cabinet/Leader.	Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Assistant Directors.
Selective Tendering Procedures.	To select contractors from an approved standing list of contractors.	Cabinet/Leader.	Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Assistant Directors.
Tenders.	To engage in the formal tender process in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Directors.

3. Revenues and Benefits

Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Cautions.	To administer cautions to offenders as an alternative to Court proceedings.	Council.	Officers authorised in writing by the Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services.
Council Tax.	To act in Council Tax matters under the powers of S101 of the Local Government Act 1972.	Council.	Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services.
Council Tax Support Scheme – Consultation	To carry out statutory consultation on the draft Council Tax Support Scheme in accordance with legislative guidelines.	Council	Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services following consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

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Court Proceedings.	To select and authorise officers to appear before Magistrates Courts and Tribunals to: (a) represent the Council in the recovery of Council Tax and non-domestic rates monies due to the Council; (b) represent the Council before a Valuation Tribunal in consideration of any appeals which may arise concerning Council Tax and non-domestic rates.	Council.	Principal Solicitor or Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services.
Discretionary Rate Relief - National Non-Domestic Rates.	To approve future Discretionary Rate Relief Awards subject to the criteria and policies of the Council.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services.
Essential Living Fund	To administer the Essential Living Fund in accordance with Council policy	Cabinet/Leader	Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services and the Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services:
Housing Benefit.	To deal with housing benefit determinations and notifications including the issue of written explanations and confirmations or amendments of previous determinations.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services and the Welfare Support Manager.
Council Tax Reduction	To administer the Council Tax Reduction scheme in accordance with Council policy (as determined by the Members)	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services.
Reduction of Council Tax Payable	The powers to reduce the Council Tax payable on a case-by-case basis, as provided by Section 13A 1(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992	Cabinet/Leader	Executive Director of Finance and Resources and the Revenue Services Manager
Local Valuation Court.	To select and authorise officers to appear for the Council at sittings of the Local Valuation Court.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services.

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Rate Relief (Mandatory).	To determine applications for mandatory rate relief under Section 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.	Cabinet/Leader.	Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services.
Council Tax Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policy (including the long term empty premium) - Council Section 13a1(C) Policy	To reduce the Council Tax payable on a case-by-case basis, as provided by Section 13A 1 (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.	Council	Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services and the Financial Support Manager Welfare Support Manager

4. Property Services

Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Applications for Planning Consent.	To submit planning applications on behalf of the Council where necessary for any project.	Council.	Executive Director of Finance
Erection of Structures on Council land.	To determine applications for consent for the erection of structures on land/properties on any land owned or managed by the Council, erection of which requires (under a covenant on the sale or lease of the properties), consent by the Council.	Cabinet/Leader.	Executive Director of Finance
Leasehold Reform Act Notices.	To serve notices and counter notices, institute proceedings and take any other necessary action under the Leasehold Reform Act 1967.	Cabinet/Leader.	Executive Director of Finance / Assistant Director of Regeneration and Property
Leases and Tenancies.	To agree terms for, and accept the surrender of, leases or	Cabinet/Leader.	Executive Director of Finance / Assistant

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	tenancies of properties allocated to his/her charge, in accordance with Council policy and the relevant legislation.		Director of Regeneration and Property
Management of Land.	To manage, maintain and undertake relevant negotiations in respect of the Council's properties allocated to his/her charge, in accordance with the Assets Management Plan and relevant legislation.	Cabinet/Leader.	Executive Director- Finance Director of Finance / Assistant Director of Regeneration and Property
Minor Matters affecting land.	To deal with minor matters affecting lands and to authorise the signing or sealing of any related documents.	Cabinet/Leader.	Executive Director- Finance Director of Finance / Assistant Director of Regeneration and Property
Notices relating to Land.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To give notice to quit and other notices for formal demands which are required in the interests of the Council. 2. To sign and serve notices and counter notice,:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) determining leases, tenancy agreements and licences to occupy (except residential premises held under Part V of the Housing Act 1957) and (b) under Part II of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 when the Council wishes to grant or oppose the grant of a new lease, tenancy or licence. 	Cabinet/Leader.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Executive Director- Finance Director of Finance / Assistant Director of Regeneration and Property 1.2. _____ 2. Executive Director- Finance Director of Finance / Assistant Director of Regeneration and Property

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<p>Purchase of Land.</p>	<p>1. To agree terms for the acquisition of land or individual properties required for an approved scheme after consultation with Chief Officers concerned complete the purchases where a capital scheme for the acquisition has been approved by the Council.</p> <p>2. To buy buildings or land at the best price reasonably obtainable in accordance with the Assets Management Plan and relevant legislation.</p>	<p>1. Cabinet/ Leader.</p> <p>2. Cabinet/ Leader.</p>	<p>1. Executive Director- Finance Director of Finance</p> <p>2. Executive Director- Finance Director of Finance</p>
<p>Repurchase of Former Council Houses.</p>	<p>To waive the right to repurchase former Council houses under the pre-emption clauses and to substitute the discount provisions contained in the Housing Act 1980.</p>	<p>Cabinet/Leader.</p>	<p>Executive Director- Finance Director of Finance</p>
<p>Recreational Land.</p>	<p>To decide on arrangements for the access, usage & leasing of recreational land or facilities to parish councils and other organisations and to determine any applications for consents required under such leases.</p>	<p>Cabinet/Leader.</p>	<p>Executive Director- Finance Director of Finance and Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.</p>
<p>Right to Buy - Postponement of Statutory Charge.</p>	<p>To determine requests for the postponement of the Council's statutory charge on property sold under the Right to Buy scheme.</p>	<p>Cabinet/Leader.</p>	<p>Executive Director- Finance Director of Finance</p>
<p>Sale of Land.</p>	<p>1. To determine applications for the purchase, grants of easements, rights of way and other minor licenses of small areas of land owned by the Council, which is defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - less than half a hectare in size and with a value of 	<p>1. Cabinet/ Leader.</p>	<p>1. Executive Director Finance Director of Finance following consultation with the Ward Member(s).</p>

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	<p>less than £49,999 plus VAT/fees)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - all garden licenses or grazing licenses regardless of the size of land <p>in accordance with Council policy for Minor Land Disposal.</p> <p>2. Following a Cabinet decision to declare as surplus, to sell buildings and land at the best price reasonably obtainable in accordance with the Assets management Plan and relevant legislation.</p>	2. Cabinet/Leader.	2. Executive Director- Finance <u>Director of Finance</u>
Parkside Suite	To grant to local charitable organisations free use of the Parkside Suite on up to 4 occasions per year.	Cabinet/Leader.	Executive Director- Finance <u>Director of Finance</u>
Temporary Use of Land.	To take up any offer received from the Department of the Environment for the temporary use of properties acquired for road schemes provided that terms offered are satisfactory.	Cabinet/Leader.	Executive Director- Finance <u>Director of Finance</u>
Use of Council facilities by the public.	To approve the use of the Committee Room and Parkside suite by external organisations and the public.	Cabinet/Leader.	Executive Director- Finance <u>Director of Finance</u>
Use of Land.	To determine applications for the use of small areas of land owned by the Council.	Cabinet/Leader.	Executive Director- Finance <u>Director of Finance / Assistant Director of Regeneration and Property</u>

APPENDIX 2 COMMUNITY SERVICES			
1. Strategic Housing			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Discretionary Housing Assistance Grants.	To determine applications for Housing Assistance Grants under the Regulatory (Housing Assistance Grants) (England and Wales) Order 2002.	Cabinet/ Leader.	Strategic Housing Manager Strategic Housing Services Manager.
Home improvement Agency	To deal with day to day management of the Home Improvement Agency Service	Cabinet	Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services/ Strategic Housing Manager Strategic Housing Services Manager/Private Sector Housing Manager Team Leader
Houses in Multiple Occupation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve, revoke and vary licences relating to houses in multiple occupation under the Housing Act 2004. 2. To sign housing-related notices for houses in multiple occupation under the Housing Act 2004. 3. To inspect conditions under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System - Housing Act 2004. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cabinet/ Leader 2. Cabinet/ Leader. 3. Cabinet/ Leader. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategic Housing Manager Strategic Housing Services Manager. 2. Strategic Housing Manager Strategic Housing Services Manager. 3. Strategic Housing Manager Strategic Housing Services Manager.

	4. To issue interim and final orders	4. Cabinet/ Leader	4. Strategic Housing Manager Strategic Housing Services Manager
Housing Act 1985 and Housing Act 2004.	To exercise all functions relating to housing conditions, issue of licences, service of orders and notices and powers of entry. To institute legal proceedings	Cabinet/ Leader.	Strategic Housing Manager Strategic Housing Services Manager Strategic Housing Manager Strategic Housing Services Manager in consultation with Principal Solicitor
Housing Associations - Nominations.	To deal with the nomination where necessary of homeless applicants to housing association dwellings.	Cabinet/ Leader.	Strategic Housing Manager Strategic Housing Services Manager .
Housing Capacity Study.	To update the site details and housing figures in the Housing Capacity Study on an annual basis using data from the Housing Land Availability Study.	Cabinet/ Leader.	Strategic Housing Manager Strategic Housing Services Manager .
Housing Corporation Social Housing Grant.	To administer and approve applications and to authorise payment of local authority grant and Housing Corporation Grant under the Housing Corporation IMS System.	Cabinet/ Leader.	Strategic Housing Manager Strategic Housing Services Manager .
Housing Grants.	To determine applications for housing grants under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.	Cabinet/ Leader.	Strategic Housing Manager Strategic Housing Services Manager .
Low Cost Housing.	1. To administer the Council's low cost housing scheme including the making of nominations and the sale of	1. Cabinet/ Leader.	1. Strategic Housing Manager Strategic Housing

	<p>the Council's interest in dwellings.</p> <p>2. To take all necessary action including the institution of legal proceedings to recover deferred payments from the purchases of low cost homes who are in breach of covenants made in the purchase of low cost housing.</p> <p>3. To revise fees in relation to low cost housing transactions.</p>	<p>2. Cabinet/ Leader.</p> <p>3. Cabinet/ Leader.</p>	<p>Services Manager.</p> <p>2. Principal Solicitor.</p> <p>3. Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services, Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services and Financial Services Manager in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders.</p>
<p>Low-Cost Housing Capital Receipts</p> <p><i>(New delegation agreed by Members in 2024/25)</i></p>	<p>To approve individual proposals for new developments or the purchase of existing satisfactory dwellings and flipping Shared Ownership to affordable or social rented properties and the spend relating to these, as and when they were brought forward.</p>	<p>Council</p>	<p>The Assistant Director Community and Housing Services following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing.</p>
<p>Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant.</p>	<p>1. To determine applications for housing grants under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.</p>	<p>1. Cabinet/ Leader.</p>	<p>1. Strategic Housing ManagerStrategic Housing Services Manager.</p>

	2. To grant extensions of time of up to six months within which improvements are to be completed.	2. Cabinet/ Leader.	2. Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services.
Protection from Eviction Act.	To take appropriate action (including the institution of criminal or civil proceedings).	Cabinet/ Leader	Assistant Director of Community & Housing Services or Principal Solicitor.
Utilities - Restoration or Continuance of Services.	To deal in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder and generally in accordance with emergency procedures with applications received pursuant to the arrangements according to section 33 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provision) Act 1976 (Public Utility Services to Dwellings) and to take such action as may be necessary for the recovery of any payments made by the Council in pursuance of such arrangements.	Cabinet/ Leader.	Executive Director Finance or Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services
Regulation of Mobile Home Sites	<p>To institute legal proceedings under section 1 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960</p> <p>To take all steps to manage and regulate Mobile Home Sites, including the exercise of power of entry under the following legislation:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 • Caravan Sites Act 1968 	<p>Council</p> <p>Cabinet/Leader</p>	<p>Strategic Housing ManagerStrategic Housing Services Manager in consultation with the Principal Solicitor</p> <p>Strategic Housing ManagerStrategic Housing Services Manager</p>

Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Sector) (England & Wales) Regulations 2015	To implement enforcement powers under the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Sector) (England & Wales) Regulations 2015	Cabinet	Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services
First Homes	To make amendments to Council's the First Homes Policy to reflect future Government guidance	Cabinet	Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing
Local Lettings Plan	To agree and adopt future Local Lettings Policies	Cabinet	Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing
Requisition for Information	To serve a requisition for information under section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976	Cabinet/Leader	Strategic Housing Manager Strategic Housing Services Manager
Boarding up of dangerous buildings	To serve notice under Section 9 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982	Cabinet/Leader	Strategic Housing Manager Strategic Housing Services Manager
Statutory Nuisance	To take all necessary action in relation to statutory nuisance under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.	Council	Strategic Housing Manager Strategic Housing Services Manager

COMMUNITY SERVICES			
1.Community Safety			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by:	Delegated to:
Civil Injunctions	To seek a civil injunction in accordance with Sections 1 –21 of the Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.	Council	Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services in consultation with the Principal Solicitor and where appropriate following consultation with the Ward Member.
Community Protection Notices and Fixed Penalty Notices	To serve Community Protection notices (and Fixed Penalty Notices in the event of a breach) in accordance with Section 43 – 58 of the Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.	Council	Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services, Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services, Director of Worcestershire Regulatory Services and the Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services.
Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs)	To initiate and implement the consultation process required to make a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in accordance with Sections 59 – 75 of the Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.	Cabinet	Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services, Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services and Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services
Closure Notices and Closure Orders	To issue Closure notices (up to 48 hours) and to apply for a Closure Order in accordance with Sections 76 – 93 of	Council	Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services, Assistant Director of

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	the Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.		Environmental and Housing Property Services, Assistant Director of Planning, Leisure and Cultural Services and Director of Worcestershire Regulatory Services
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2. CCTV/Lifeline and others			
Subject	Detail	Delegated by	Delegated to
CCTV/Lifeline	Day to day management of the 24 hour CCTV/NEW Lifeline Monitoring Centre, Installation Team and telephone answering out of hours service , in accordance with the Council's adopted codes of practice and industry best practice, and including the submission of tenders for additional services	Cabinet/Leader	CCTV and Lifeline Manager
Climate Change and Biodiversity	To deal with day-to-day management of Climate Change and Biodiversity, including the submission of funding bids to support this work.	Cabinet	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services]/[Strategic Services Manager]/[Climate Change and Biodiversity Manager]
Community Transport and Shopmobility	To deal with day-to-day management of BURT and Shopmobility Schemes	Cabinet	[Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services] / [Community Services Manager]

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APPENDIX 3 CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES PART 1

1. INTRODUCTION

What are Contract Procedure Rules?

- 1.1 The Contract Procedure Rules (CPRs), the [Financial Procedure Rules] together with the Procurement Act 2023 (PA 2023) and the Procurement Regulations 2024 provide the framework for procurement activity across the Council, setting out how contracts for goods, works and services should be procured and managed, and detailing the record keeping and reporting requirements related to procurement and contract management activity. The CPRs apply to all Officers across the Council.
- 1.2 The CPRs should not be seen in isolation, but rather as part of the overall regulatory framework of the Council as set out in the Constitution.

Why are CPRs needed?

- 1.3 The Local Government Act 1972 requires the Council to have standing orders for how it enters into contracts. The Local Government Act 2000 (Constitutions) Direction requires the Council's constitution to include its rules, regulations and procedures in respect of contracts. These CPRs are the standing orders required by the Local Government 1972 Act and The Local Government Act 2000 (Constitutions) Direction. These CPRs form part of the Council's Constitution and are, in effect, the instructions of the Council to Officers when dealing with contracts on behalf of the Council. In acting on behalf of the Council, Officers must also have regard to any guidance and procedures issued to support compliance with the CPRs.
- 1.4 The Council is under a legal duty to promote Best Value and to consider the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 and comply with Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. Every Officer engaged in the letting of contracts shall have regard to these duties and associated Council policies. Where compliance with these duties contradicts the requirements of any statutory legislation or specific best practice guidance, advice from Legal and Democratic Services must be obtained.
- 1.5 The CPRs apply to all contracts for the supply of works, goods and services, (including consultancy, utilities and concessions) to the Council, regardless of value

Exemptions

- 1.6 The following arrangements are exempted contracts under Schedule 2 of the Procurement Act 2023 (PA 2023) and therefore the sections in these CPRs which relate to procurements subject to the PA 2023 do not apply, including, without limitation:
 - 1.6.1 The acquisition (by whatever means) (or the acquisition of an interest in or right over) of land, buildings or any other complete work or a contract

concerning an interest or right over any such things. In this instance, the financial regulations apply except where services or works are required by the Council as part of the land transaction. e.g. development agreements. **Note** that this does not apply to any external professional services linked to the purchase or sale.

- 1.6.2 Contracts of employment for the appointment of individual members of staff, including members of staff sourced through employment agencies under a corporate contract or contracts with individuals appointed to a public office (which may include the appointment of non-executive directors). Any ambiguity on whether a contract is an employment contract or a consultancy contract covered by these CPRs should be referred to HR.
- 1.6.3 Grant agreements.
- 1.6.4 Supply of works, goods and services by the Council to a third party. However, the Assistant Director Legal Democratic and Procurement Services must be consulted where the Council is contemplating this route.
- 1.6.5 Contacts procured with an entity over which the Council has a form of 'control' as defined in Schedule 2 of the PA 2023.
- 1.6.6 Contracts procured with another contracting authority (or contracting authorities) with the intention to achieve common goals in the exercise of public functions, solely in the public interest and where no more than 20% of the activities intended to be carried out are for reasons other than for the purpose of public functions.
- 1.6.7 Contracts procured in collaboration with other local authorities where the Council is not the lead authority (subject to the necessary approvals having been obtained from the appropriate decision maker at the Council). The CPRs of the lead authority shall apply. Assurance should be sought that the lead authority is in compliance with its own contract procedure rules and the PA 2023.
- 1.6.8 Purchases made at public auction.
- 1.6.9 Contracts relating to the placement of deposits or raising loans under the Financial Procedure Rules.

Note 1: Exemptions are not waivers. For waivers see Rule 2.16 – 2.22.

Note 2: These CPRs apply to any sponsorship agreement the Council is a party to and/or any arrangements in relation to or in connection with sponsorship.

Authority to conduct procurement activity

- 1.7 The authority for an Officer who needs to:
 - 1.7.1 Undertake a procurement;
 - 1.7.2 Award a contract;
 - 1.7.3 Extend or vary a contract;
 - 1.7.4 Terminate a contract during a contract period (early contract termination)
- 1.8 Will emanate from a function of the Council that is delegated to them by either of the following:
 - 1.8.1 The Scheme of Delegation; or,
 - 1.8.2 A bespoke decision taken by members.

Basic principles

Procurements below the WTO/GPA tender threshold

- 1.9 All procurement procedures below the WTO/GPA tender threshold must:
 - 1.9.1 Support all relevant Council priorities and policies including the Medium Term Financial Plan,
 - 1.9.2 Comply with all legislative requirements including the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010,
 - 1.9.3 Be funded through the allocation of an appropriately established budget or external grant funding.
 - 1.9.4 Respect confidentiality during all stages of the formal tendering process. Officers must not disclose any information they have about potential suppliers to other persons/suppliers potentially competing for the same contract.
 - 1.9.5 Where the estimated value of the contract exceeds £30,000 including VAT but is below the WTO/GPA tender threshold, comply with the obligations set out Part 6 of the PA 2023.

Procurements above the WTO GPA tender threshold

- 1.10 In addition to the above, all procurement procedures above the WTO/GPA tender threshold must:
 - 1.10.1 Have regard to the importance of the objectives under the PA 2023 which are as follows:
 - (a) to deliver value for money by seeking to achieve the optimum combination of whole life costs and quality of outcome/s,
 - (b) to act, and be seen to act, with integrity,
 - (c) to maximise public benefit,

- (d) to share information for the purpose of allowing suppliers and others to understand the Council's procurement policies and decisions,
- (e) to treat suppliers the same unless a difference between the suppliers justifies different treatment. If this is the case, the Council must take all reasonable steps to ensure it does not put a supplier at an unfair advantage or disadvantage,
- (f) to have regard to the fact that small and medium-sized enterprises may face particular barriers to participation and consider whether such barriers can be removed or reduced,

1.10.2 Have regard to the national procurement policy statement,

- 1.11 Ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to identify and keep under review any actual or potential conflicts of interest and where a conflict of interest is identified, ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the conflict does not put a supplier at an unfair advantage or disadvantage.
- 1.12 Where the estimated value of a procurement exceeds the WTO/GPA tender threshold, all Authorised Officers must comply with the relevant procurement legislation and have regard to the applicable Cabinet Office guidance. Under the UK Government's transitional arrangements, procurements that commence after the entry into force of the PA 2023 on 24 February 2025 must be conducted by reference to the PA 2023 only (together with the regulations made under the PA 2023 and any guidance published by the UK Government), whilst those that were commenced under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 must continue to be procured and managed under those regulations. Any contracts awarded under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 will continue to be managed under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 until such a time as the contract or commercial tool (i.e. framework, dynamic purchasing system) ceases to exist.

All procurements

- 1.13 These CPRs shall be applied to the contracting activities of any arrangement for which the Council is the accountable body unless these CPRs state otherwise or the Council expressly agrees otherwise.
- 1.14 Records of procurement activity must be maintained as required by these CPRs and the award of contract must be published in accordance with the [Access to Information Rules] and the PA 2023
- 1.15 All contracts over £25,000 are to be entered on the Council's contracts register. This information must be updated if there is a change in the contract value. Contract Managers are responsible for notifying the Procurement Team of any updates and any additional contracts that need to be added to the register as soon as possible after they are awarded.

Authority to act

- 1.16 Where a new contract is required, or the variation or extension of an existing contract is required, the scheme of delegations in Part 2 of these CPRs provides the authority to take operational, executive and non-executive decisions relating to the area of responsibility.

Service specifications and options appraisal

- 1.17 At the start of any procurement activity, the Authorised Officer must develop the service specification and/or existing service design together with the requisite business case or service plan that identifies as a minimum:
- 1.17.1 Why the service is being commissioned; what is the need?
 - 1.17.2 The budget available and the length of the proposed contract;
 - 1.17.3 Assessment of the risks associated with the procurement and how they can be successfully managed;
 - 1.17.4 What is the best form of community or service-user engagement or consultation? Consideration should be given to how service users can actively participate in the designing, delivery and quality-monitoring of their service;
 - 1.17.5 Which, if any, social value outcomes will be achieved from the commissioning exercise, and how they can contribute towards meeting the Council's overall priorities;
 - 1.17.6 Alternative options that have been considered;
 - 1.17.7 Financial implications;
 - 1.17.8 Where the procurement involves a potential change to services provided by the Council, ensures compliance with the Council's duty to consult under Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999, and the Equality Act 2010;
 - 1.17.9 Ensures that the application of the Transfer of Undertaking Protection of Employment Regulations 2006 (TUPE) is considered and obtain advice from the Procurement Team and Legal and Democratic Services before proceeding with ITT / ITQ;
 - 1.17.10 Identifies the contract to be used for the procurement. Seek advice from the Procurement Team and Legal and Democratic Services at an early stage in the process;
 - 1.17.11 Ensures contract management is considered early and that the mechanisms for monitoring the contract are embedded in the specification and contract.
- 1.18 The provision of CPR 1.17.5 above may apply to services contracts, or services together with the purchase or hire of goods or the carrying out of works, where it is proportionate and relevant to do so to enable or facilitate compliance with the duty imposed by section 1 of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

- 1.19 Decisions taken during the procurement process must be clearly documented and show options considered and recommendations to be taken forward.

Reserving below UK Threshold procurements

- 1.20 On a case by case basis, procurements below the WTO/GPA tender threshold may be reserved:
- 1.20.1 By supplier location: This means being able to run a competition and specify that only suppliers located in a geographical area can bid; or
 - 1.20.2 By supplier type: For Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) / Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSEs), this means being able to run a competition and specify that only SMEs and VCSEs can bid.
- 1.21 Specific considerations and criteria must be met when using the provision of CPR 1.20 above, therefore Authorised Officers must engage with the Procurement Team and /or Legal and Democratic Services. for further guidance and written approval to use this provision. When opting to reserve a procurement by supplier location or supplier type, Authorised Officers are required to record the rationale / approval of their decision and keep with other procurement documents.

2. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Tender/Quotation acceptance

- 2.1 The Council shall only accept a Tender/Quote and award a contract to the bidder submitting the most advantageous Tender/Quote within budget.
- 2.2 For procurements of £50,000 and above the Authorised Officer shall produce a procurement evaluation report showing:
- 2.2.1 The subject matter, value and term (including potential extensions) of the contract;
 - 2.2.2 The procurement route followed and the reason why that procurement route was chosen;
 - 2.2.3 The name of each bidder who submitted a Tender and the result of each assessed Tender (i.e. total score);;
 - 2.2.4 Any conflicts of interest detected and subsequent measures taken;
 - 2.2.5 Details of due diligence checks carried out;
 - 2.2.6 The recommendation on which bidder should be awarded the contract..
- 2.3 Written notification to successful and unsuccessful bidders of the outcome of a procurement process should be provided as soon as practicable and where applicable, in accordance with the PA 2023.

- 2.4 For procurements above the WTO/GPA tender threshold or where the relevant legislation provides for a standstill period, the contract cannot be formally awarded until the bidders have been informed and the mandatory standstill period has elapsed.
- 2.5 The successful bidder will not be allowed to commence provisions of the goods, services or works until a formal written contract has been completed. The Authorised Officer must ensure that a completed copy of the contract is added to the Council's contract register.
- 2.6 Where necessary the contract award notice and contract details notice must be published on the central digital platform. The contract details notice must be published within 30 days of the contract being entered into.

Authority to procure, award, sign / seal, vary or extend a contract

- 2.7 Officers are authorised to procure, award, sign or seal, vary or extend a contract pursuant to the delegations set out in Part 2 of these CPRs.
- 2.8 Authority to award, sign or seal, vary or extend a contract of a value of £200,000 or above (the Key Decision threshold) must be obtained from the Cabinet.
- 2.9 Contracts must be executed as deeds by affixing the common seal of the Council in the following circumstances:
 - 2.9.1 Contracts of £200,000 or above (the Key Decision threshold) – unless agreed otherwise by Legal and Democratic Services;
 - 2.9.2 Setting up a new framework;
 - 2.9.3 All building and works-related contracts – unless agreed otherwise by Legal and Democratic Services; and
 - 2.9.4 Other high risk contracts (as advised by Legal and Democratic Services) where a longer limitation period of 12 years is required.
- 2.10 Before a contract can be sealed by the Council, the Authorised Officer must provide the Legal and Democratic Services with the relevant decision to award in writing from the appropriate decision maker. The sealing of the contract by Legal and Democratic Services is simply affixing the common seal and does not indicate that legal advice has been sought or that the Legal and Democratic Services approve the contract.
- 2.11 Authorised Officers shall ensure that each contract is on one of the Council's standard contract templates or that the terms and conditions of the contract are/is approved by Legal and Democratic Services prior to going out to tender/quote.

Extension or variation of contracts under the Procurement Act 2023

- 2.12 Any extension or variation of a contract must comply with these CPRs, the PA 2023 and all applicable legislation.

Modifications to Contracts under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or Concessions Contract Regulations 2016

2.13 Modification to contracts under the Contracts awarded under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Concessions Contract Regulations 2016 must comply with these CPRs, the Contracts under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or Concessions Contract Regulations 2016 and all applicable legislation and will only be considered where they comply with Regulation 72 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or Regulation 43 of the Concessions Contract Regulations 2016.

Direct Awards

2.14 A direct award is only to be used in exceptional circumstances and where expressly permitted under the PA 2023. Authorised Officers and/or Contract Managers are responsible for ensuring that direct awards are approved in advance of any action undertaken in all instances. As part of the approval process for use of a direct award, the Authorised Officer or Contract Manager must demonstrate that the price obtained is not in excess of the market price and that the contract represents best value.

2.15 Direct awards are governed by Chapter 3 of the PA 2023 which covers situations where a non-exempt contract above the WTO/GPA tender threshold is awarded without a competitive tendering procedure and is awarded directly to a supplier of the Council's choosing. The grounds for direct award under the PA 2023 include, but not limited to:

2.15.1 Urgency

- (a) An urgent decision is required, for example for the protection of life or property, or to maintain the delivery of a public service, and in the opinion of the Monitoring Officer and the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer, the waiver is in the Council's best interests, or necessary to meet the Council's obligations;
- (b) The Council must be able to evidence that it is a genuine emergency, that the events causing extreme urgency were unforeseeable, that is impossible to comply with the usual timescales for a procurement including through a framework or accelerated procurement, and that the situation is not attributable to the Council;
- (c) Such emergency contracts should be let for as short a period as possible to allow their replacement with a contract that is fully compliant with these CPRs at the earliest practicable opportunity.

2.15.2 Single suppliers

- (a) Where the suppliers, works or services:
 - (i) Concerns the creation of acquisition of unique work or art or artistic performance;

- (ii) Where a particular supplier is in possession of intellectual property or other exclusive rights and there are no reasonable alternatives, which means only the supplier with those rights can deliver the goods, services or works; or
- (iii) Where, due to an absence of competition for technical reasons and provided there are no reasonable alternatives, only a particular supplier can supply the goods, services or works required.

Additional or repeat goods, services or works

2.15.3 Where the Council wishes to award a contract above the WTO/GPA tender threshold to an existing supplier, including:

- (a) where the Council wishes to buy additional or to partly replace existing goods, services or works which are the same or compatible with existing provisions (both those already supplied or that are contracted to be supplied); or
- (b) where a contract has previously been awarded under a competitive tendering procedure and the tender notice or tender documents set out that the intention was to carry out a subsequent procurement of similar goods, services or works by direct award within five years of the original competitively tendered contract being awarded.

Waivers

- 2.16 A waiver to the CPRs should only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
- 2.17 A further waiver to the CPRs will generally not be granted where a waiver has previously been granted in respect of a contract.
- 2.18 A waiver to the CPRs is not required in the circumstances of instructing a barrister to provide specialist legal advice or for professional subscriptions.
- 2.19 A waiver to the CPRs must be approved in writing by the Deputy CEO S151 Officer. Where the contract is £50,000 or above, the relevant Portfolio Holder must also be consulted.
- 2.20 A “waiver to the CPRs form” must be completed by the Authorised Officer or Contract Manager seeking the waiver and must be signed by the relevant Executive Director. Evidenced reasons as to the legitimate need for the waiver must be provided. The form is available from the Procurement Team.
- 2.21 The Authorised Officer or Contract Manager must ensure the waiver form is signed by the Monitoring Officer and the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer [or the Chief Executive] and returned to the Procurement Team for recording on the waivers register.
- 2.22 Assistant Directors must monitor the use of waivers relevant to their department.

2.23 No waiver from the CPRs can be granted in respect of contracts above the WTO GPA tender threshold under the PA 2023.

3. RECORD KEEPING

3.1 Where the total value of a contract is up to £49,999 the Authorised Officer must maintain a record of:

3.1.1 ITQs / ITTs and quotations / tenders received;

3.1.2 Any exemption obtained and the reasons for the exemption;

3.1.3 Award criteria [in descending order of importance];

3.1.4 Written communications with the bidders during the procurement process; contractor awarded the contract;

3.1.5 Written communications with the successful contractor during the term of the contract.

3.2 Where the total value of a contract is £50,000 or above, the Authorised Officer must maintain a record of:

3.2.1 The information detailed in the procurement evaluation report produced in accordance with Rule 2.2 above;

3.2.2 The management of the contract;

3.2.3 Any exemption granted and the reasons for the exemption;

3.2.4 An evaluation of the contractor's performance;

3.2.5 Any other information as required under section 98 of the PA 2023 (where the contract is above the WTO/GPA tender threshold).

PART []

Appendix 3 Contract Procedure Rules Part 2

Rules, Regulations and Procedure for Contracts pursuant to The Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Government Act 2000 (Constitutions) (England) Direction 2000

Total Value of Whole Contract Period Including VAT*	Competition Requirements	Requirements	Authority to Procure	Authority to Award Contract / Appoint Contractor	Sign / Seal
Up to £3,000	Evidence of Best Value	<p>Must consider using existing corporate contract or an existing framework agreement provided costs are competitive and meets the Council's requirements for that contract;</p> <p>Consider local suppliers and/or local voluntary, charity and social enterprise (VCSE) sector interest;</p> <p>Competitive enquires must be undertaken and evidenced;</p> <p>Documents relating to the award of the contract must be recorded and retained for not less than 1 year (this can be in the form of an email);</p>	Officers authorised by managers who report to Assistant Directors under the Scheme of Delegation	Officers authorised by managers who report to Assistant Directors under the Scheme of Delegation	Signature

*Estimating contract values is to be inclusive of VAT for the purpose of applying thresholds. The publication of procurement notices is to be exclusive of VAT.

**Procurement WTO / GPA Thresholds were last updated on 1 January 2026

16506473-2

		<p>Award can be on price alone, but if the selected supplier is not the lowest quote, MAT evaluation should justify the selection;</p> <p>Consider using the Due North Electronic Portal Quick Quote Process.</p>			
£3,001 - £29,999	3 Written Quotes	<p>Must consider using existing corporate contract or an existing framework agreement provided costs are competitive and meets the Council's requirements for that contract; OR</p> <p>A minimum of 3 written quotations must be obtained from appropriately qualified and competent suppliers.</p> <p>Include 2 local suppliers and/or local VCSE and/or SME sector interest where appropriate;</p> <p>Consider using the Invitation to Quote/Tender by Advertisement procedure if appropriate;</p> <p>Consider using the Due North</p>	Assistant Directors(as defined by AD pay grades) under the Scheme of Delegation	Assistant Directors(as defined by AD pay grades) under the Scheme of Delegation	Signature

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**Procurement WTO / GPA Thresholds were last updated on 1 January 2026

		<p>Electronic Portal Quick Quote Process;</p> <p>Where 3 suppliers cannot be identified, the contract must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Openly advertised using the Due North Electronic Portal Quick Quote Process; or • Procured via a compliantly let framework agreement which meets the Council's requirements for that contract via the Due North Electronic Portal Quick Quote Process; <p>Where the contract is advertised the Council's advertisement documentation must be used.</p>			
£30,000 - £50,000	Invitation to Quote by Advertisement	Must consider using existing corporate contract or an existing framework agreement provided costs are competitive and meets the requirements of the Council for that contract; OR	Service Unit Managers, Executive Directors (as defined by pay grades) and the Chief Executive under the Scheme of	Service Unit Managers, Executive Directors (as defined by pay grades) and the Chief Executive under the Scheme of	Seal

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		<p>Must advertise the contract via a below-threshold tender notice on the central digital platform. Adverts on the central digital platform or such other platform as may be prescribed must include full, unrestricted and free direct internet access to relevant contract documents;</p> <p>Once a below-threshold tender notice has been published, must advertise the contract and invite expressions of interest via the Due North Electronic Portal.</p> <p>Contract must be advertised for a minimum of 15 working days;</p> <p>The Council's invitation to quote by advertisement documentation must be used.</p> <p>A contract details notice must be published on central digital finder;</p> <p>The Authorised Officer must consult the Procurement Team and the Legal, Democratic and</p>	<p>Delegation</p>	<p>Delegation</p>	
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**Procurement WTO / GPA Thresholds were last updated on 1 January 2026

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		Property Services Team to determine the procurement exercise.			
<p>£50,001 – WTO / GPA tender threshold:</p> <p>Goods & Services above</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £173,100 (excl. VAT) £207,720 (incl. VAT) <p>Works above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £4,327,500 (excl. VAT) £5,193,000 (incl. VAT) 	Invitation to Tender by Advertisement	<p>Must consider using existing corporate contract or an existing framework agreement provided costs are competitive and meets the Council's requirements for that contract; OR</p> <p>Must advertise the contract via a below-threshold tender notice on the central digital platform or such other platform as may be prescribed. Adverts on the central digital platform must include full, unrestricted and free direct internet access to relevant contract documents;</p> <p>Once a below-threshold tender notice has been published, Officers must advertise the contract and invite expressions of interest via the Due North Electronic Portal;</p> <p>Contract must be advertised for a</p>	<p>Up to £199,000:</p> <p>Service Unit Managers, Executive Directors (as defined by pay grades) and the Chief Executive under the Scheme of Delegation</p> <p>£200,000 and above (Key Decision threshold):</p> <p>Cabinet or as otherwise delegated by Cabinet</p>	<p>Up to £199,000:</p> <p>Service Unit Managers, Executive Directors (as defined by pay grades) and the Chief Executive under the Scheme of Delegation</p> <p>£200,000 and above (Key Decision threshold):</p> <p>Cabinet or as otherwise delegated by Cabinet</p>	<p>Seal</p> <p>Seal</p>

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**Procurement WTO / GPA Thresholds were last updated on 1 January 2026

		<p>minimum of 15 working days;</p> <p>The Council's invitation to tender by advertisement documentation must be used;</p> <p>A below-threshold tender notice must be published on central digital platform;</p> <p>The Authorised Officer must consult early the Procurement Team and the Legal, Democratic and Property Services Team to determine procurement exercise.</p>			
<p>Above WTO / GPA Threshold**</p> <p>Goods & Services above</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £173,100 (excl. VAT) • £207,720 (incl. VAT) <p>Works above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £4,327,500 	<p>Compliant Procurement Procedure or by Invitation to Tender by Advertisement</p>	<p>Must consider using existing corporate contract or an existing framework agreement provided costs are competitive which meets the Council's requirements for that contract; OR</p> <p>The contract must also be advertised via a tender notice on the central digital platform;</p> <p>By the Invitation to Tender by Advertisement procedure using the</p>	<p>Up to £199,000:</p> <p>Service Unit Managers, Executive Directors (as defined by pay grades) and the Chief Executive under the Scheme of Delegation</p> <p>£200,000 and above (Key Decision threshold):</p>	<p>Up to £199,000:</p> <p>Service Unit Managers, Executive Directors (as defined by pay grades) and the Chief Executive under the Scheme of Delegation</p> <p>£200,000 and above (Key Decision threshold):</p>	<p>Seal</p> <p>Seal</p>

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**Procurement WTO / GPA Thresholds were last updated on 1 January 2026

<p>(excl. VAT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £5,193,000 (incl. VAT) 		<p>Due North Electronic Portal.</p> <p>The Council's invitation to tender by advertisement documentation must be used;</p> <p>Adverts place on the central digital platform must include full, unrestricted and free direct internet access to relevant contract documents;</p> <p>The contract must be advertised for the periods specified in the Procurement Act 2024;</p> <p>The Authorised Officer must consult early the Procurement Team and the Legal, Democratic and Property Services Team to determine the procurement exercise;</p>	<p>Cabinet or as otherwise delegated by Cabinet</p>	<p>Cabinet or as otherwise delegated by Cabinet.</p>	
<p>Light Touch Regime</p>	<p>UK compliant Light Touch procurement process</p>	<p>Contracts involving the below supplies and services are subject to the 'light touch regime' if the value of the contract is above the WTO / GPA Threshold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health, social and related 	<p>Up to £199,000:</p> <p>Service Unit Managers, Executive Directors (as defined by pay grades) and the Chief Executive</p>	<p>Up to £199,000:</p> <p>Service Unit Managers, Executive Directors (as defined by pay grades) and the Chief Executive</p>	<p>Seal</p>

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**Procurement WTO / GPA Thresholds were last updated on 1 January 2026

		<p>services (unless included in the Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative social, educational, healthcare and cultural services; • Compulsory social security services; • Benefit services; • Other community, social and personal services including services furnished by trade unions, political organisations, youth associations and 9 other membership organisation services; • Legal Services (subject to not being an exempt contract under the PA 23) ; • Other administrative 	<p>under the Scheme of Delegation</p> <p>£200,000 and above (Key Decision threshold):</p> <p>Cabinet or as otherwise delegated by Cabinet</p>	<p>under the Scheme of Delegation</p> <p>£200,000 and above (Key Decision threshold):</p> <p>Cabinet or as otherwise delegated by Cabinet</p>	<p>Seal</p>
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**Procurement WTO / GPA Thresholds were last updated on 1 January 2026

		<p>services and government services;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of services to the community; • Prison related services, public security and rescue services; • Investigation and security services; • International services; • Postal services; • Miscellaneous services listed in Schedule 1 of The Procurement Regulations 2024. <p>The Authorised Officer must consult the Procurement Team and the Legal, Democratic and Property Services Team undertaking procurement under the Light Touch Regime.</p>			
Concessions	Compliant	A concession contract is an	As above	As above	As above

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	<p>procurement process under the Concessions Contracts Regulations 2016</p>	<p>agreement where suppliers are given the right to exploit works or services provided for their own gain. Suppliers can either receive consideration for their services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solely through third party sources; or • Partly through payment from the Council along with income from third parties (e.g. a services concession is where a supplier has a contract to manage a local authority's subsidised catering services for staff). <p>The risk in the concession making a profit rests with the supplier, not the Council.</p> <p>The Authorised Officer must consult the Procurement Team and the Legal, Democratic and Property Services Team before undertaking a Concession procurement.</p>			
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**Procurement WTO / GPA Thresholds were last updated on 1 January 2026

		Procurement Team and the Legal, Democratic and Property Services Team to determine the procurement exercise.			
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**Procurement WTO / GPA Thresholds were last updated on 1 January 2026

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Section 1 - Financial Procedure Rules

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APPENDIX A Responsibilities under the Financial Procedure Rules

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PART A FINANCIAL REGULATION POLICY (1.0)

Background

- 1.1 Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 *requires that “Every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their Officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs”.*
- 1.2 The person with overall responsibility for Bromsgrove District Council financial affairs under the act is the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) or Section 151 Officer. Bromsgrove District Council uses the Chartered Institute of Public Finance (CIPFA) guidance in defining the role of their Section 151 Officer:
- is a key member of the leadership team, helping it to develop and implement strategy and to resource and deliver the authority’s strategic objectives sustainably and in the public interest;
 - must be actively involved in, and able to bring influence to bear on, all material business decisions to ensure immediate and longer-term implications, opportunities and risks are fully considered, and alignment with the authority’s financial strategy; and
 - must lead the promotion and delivery by the whole authority of good financial management so that public money is safeguarded at all times and used appropriately, economically, efficiently and effectively.
- 1.3 To deliver these responsibilities the Section 151 Officer:
- must lead and direct a finance function that is resourced to be fit for purpose; and
 - must be professionally qualified and suitably experienced and adhere to ethical standards, ensuring compliance with legislation and codes of practice.
- 1.4 In accordance with the provisions set out in the Local Government Finance Act 1988 the Section 151 Officer has appointed a Deputy to act if they are unable to due to absence or illness.
- 1.5 The Financial Procedure Rules consist of this policy, the Financial Regulations and the Financial Guidance and apply to every Member and Officer of the Council and anyone acting on its behalf.

Purpose

- 1.6 The purpose of the Financial Procedures Rules are:
- Promote best value and improve service delivery;
 - Set out procedures for employees and members to meet the Council’s expected standards;
 - Demonstrate that controls are in place.

PART B FINANCIAL REGULATIONS (2.0)

- 2.1 All Members and Officers must comply with these Financial Procedure Rules at all times as applicable.
- 2.2 All Members and Officers must at all times when engaged on Council activities act in the interest of the Council.
- 2.3 All activities must comply with legislation, approved service plans and other Council policies or procedure documents.
- 2.4 All activities must seek to achieve value for money.
- 2.5 Managers must ensure that there are controls in place for every system under their management.
- 2.6 Adequate records must be kept for all transactions in all systems.
- 2.7 Members and Officers have a general responsibility for taking reasonable action to provide for the security of assets under their control and for ensuring that the use of these resources is legal, properly authorised, provide value for money and achieves best value.
- 2.8 The Chief Executive, Directors, Auditors and other Officers designated by them must have unrestricted access to all assets and records held on behalf of the Council.
- 2.9 Members, Officers and others acting on behalf of the Council are required to have proper regard to the advice and guidance issued by the Section 151 Officer on the Financial Procedure Rules.
- 2.10 Every report to Members require approval by the Section 151 Officer, or a nominee designated by the Section 151 Officer, setting out the financial implications of the recommendation(s) proposed.
- 2.11 The Council's expectation of propriety and accountability is that Members and Officers at all levels shall lead by example in ensuring adherence to financial and legal requirements, rules, procedures and practices.
- 2.12 Members and Officers at all levels shall act in accordance with the Council's anti-fraud and anti-corruption policies.
- 2.13 The Council also expects that individuals and organisations (e.g. suppliers, contractors, service providers) that it comes into contact with, shall act towards the Council with integrity and without thought or actions involving fraud or corruption and to ensure this will seek to include appropriate contractual provision and include provision in its tendering specifications wherever possible.
- 2.14 The Council's Scheme of Delegation is the formal record of delegation of financial decision making. This is available in Part 6 of the Constitution.

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- 2.15 These rules will be formally reviewed every five years. The revised rules will be considered by Councillors before reporting to Council for approval. In the meantime, if material changes make a review of the Rules necessary, this must be subject of a report by the Section 151 Officer.
- 2.16 Should an instance of non-compliance with these rules be discovered, the Section 151 Officer will, after consultation with the Chief Executive, make a report to the Leader, Full Council and / or Cabinet, as appropriate. Non-compliance with financial rules may also lead to disciplinary action being taken.
- 2.17 Any departure from these Financial Procedure Rules may only be made with the prior written approval of the Section 151 Officer. All requests must set out the rule to be departed from, the reason for the request, the risks and the proposed mitigating controls. All dispensations shall be recorded and reported to Audit, Standards and Governance Committee as appropriate.

PART C FINANCIAL GUIDANCE

3. Emergency decisions

- 3.1 In accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation to Officers and the Contract Procedure Rules, the Chief Executive and in his/her absence the S151 Officer/Monitoring Officer or Executive Director, are empowered to take all necessary decisions in cases of emergency.
- 3.2 Any decisions made under the 'emergency decision' arrangements shall be reported to Cabinet and Council.
- 3.3 Nothing in these finance procedure rules shall prevent expenditure required to meet immediate needs caused by a sudden emergency to which the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 applies, provided that such expenditure shall be reported as soon as possible to the appropriate Cabinet member and the Cabinet and subsequently Council.

4.0 Income charging policy.

- 4.1 Local authorities have a wide discretion to levy charges for services. Where charges can be set at the discretion of the Council, Assistant Directors must comply with the income and charging principles, including:
- a) The Council must aim to charge for all services where it is appropriate to do so, unless there are conflicting policies or legal reasons not to do so.
 - b) The Council must (subject to market conditions) aim to maximise income from fees and charges by ensuring that the full cost of provision and enforcement is recovered, unless there are contrary policies, legal or contractual reasons. Where the Council continues to subsidise the cost of services provided to customers, the level of subsidy must be clearly understood by the Service along with the impact on residents and partners.
 - c) Decisions to subsidise services, or to not make a charge for a service must be clearly linked to Council objectives, and the potential income that is not earned

must be a consideration in the decision. Cabinet is responsible for setting of fees and charges for services as part of the annual budget setting process. Any changes to fees and charges during the year will need to be approved by Council.

- d) Any concessionary scheme must be based on ability to pay and be applied in a consistent and transparent approach across all Council services.
- e) Where appropriate annual inflationary uplifts will be applied through the budget setting process, this will be agreed by Members as part of the budget setting process.

5.0 Income collection

5.1 The Section 151 Officer shall agree arrangements for the collection of all income and approve procedures and systems. In order to achieve this, the following controls must be followed:

- a) All income due to the Council is identified, charged correctly and billed promptly.
- b) All money received by an employee on behalf of the Council is paid without delay to the Section 151 Officer or to a nominated Officer or into the Council's specified bank account and is properly recorded.
- c) All receipts given for money must be on an official receipt form.
- d) All income is collected from the correct person, at the right time using the correct procedures and appropriate stationery and effective recovery action to pursue outstanding sums is taken within defined timescales.
- e) A formal approval process for write-offs of uncollectable debts must be followed using the criteria detailed in Section 5.2.
- f) Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.
- g) All income received shall be receipted immediately.
- h) Officers shall record all cash received immediately; its use for either personal or official purposes is strictly forbidden.
- i) All paying in records shall be retained securely in line with the Council's policies on the retention of documents.
- j) It is important that VAT shall be properly recorded and that advice must be sought from the Section 151 Officer or their nominee as appropriate. Failure to do so may result in the Council being unable to reclaim VAT and, in some circumstances, a penalty payment imposed by HMRC.
- k) Interest must be charged on unpaid debts, in accordance with the debt recovery policy.

- l) Legal fees incurred in the recovery of unpaid debt must be charged to the debtor in accordance with the debt recovery policy subject to any court order.
- m) Where use of recovery agents is permitted any costs from these agents must be recovered from the debtor (normally by the agents) where possible.

5.2 The Section 151 Officer has determined the following authorisations for writing off uncollectable debt:

Value	Recommendation	Examined/ Approved	Authorised
Credit balances	Income Officer Rents Team Leader Neighbourhood & Tenancy Team Leader, Senior and Officers Housing Experience manager Housing Business Support Officer Housing Benefits Overpayments Officer	Appropriate Service Supervisors/ Team Leaders	Appropriate Service Managers
Debts up to £5,000	Rent Officer Rent Team Leader Charging Team Leader Charging Officer Revenue Officer Housing Benefits Overpayments Officers	Service Managers	Section 151 / Deputy Section 151
Debts over £5,000	Rent Officer Rent Team Leader Charging Team Leader Charging Officer Revenue Officer Housing Benefits Overpayments Officers	Service Managers	Cabinet or another delegated Committee

Debts remitted by Magistrates or where a term of imprisonment has been served	Rent Officer Rent Team Leader Charging Team Leader Charging Officer Revenue Officer Housing Benefits Overpayments Officers	N/A	Section 151 / Deputy Section 151
Insolvency proceedings Administration Order (where claim has been formally acknowledged)	Rent Officer Rent Team Leader Charging Team Leader Charging Officer Revenue Officer Housing Benefits Overpayments Officers	N/A	Section 151 / Deputy Section 151 Officer
Debtor is deceased no prospect of dividend from estate	Rent Officer Rent Team Leader Charging Team Leader Charging Officer Revenue Officer Housing Benefits Overpayments Officers	N/A	Section 151 / Deputy Section 151 Officer
Debt matching agreements	Appropriate Service Managers		Section 151 / Deputy Section 151 Officer
Cases of hardship or discretionary write offs – up to £5,000	Appropriate Service Managers		Section 151 following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance
Cases of hardship or discretionary write offs – over £5,000	Appropriate Service Managers	Section 151	Cabinet

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- 5.3 Once raised, a debtor's invoice may not be cancelled except by full payment, the issue of a credit note or by its formal writing off. A credit note must only be issued to correct a factual inaccuracy or administrative error in the calculation and/or billing of the original debt, or to recognise that an overpayment of housing benefit is being recovered from an on-going benefit entitlement.
- 5.4 The value of unrecoverable debts written off will be charged back against the cost centre / service from which the original invoice was raised, thus cancelling the original credit to the service. This must only be overwritten in exceptional circumstances with the approval of the Section 151 Officer.
- 5.5 A record will be maintained by the Section 151 Officer of all bad debts written off under delegated approval given by the Financial rules under Section 5.
- 5.6 Where a debt is considered no longer valid (for example when an invoice has been raised in error) this debt must be cancelled with the authority of the Section 151 Officer or nominated deputy.
- 6.0 Orders for goods, works and services**
- 6.1 Orders shall not be issued for goods, work or services unless the cost is covered by an approved budget. No payment will be made without an authorised order, unless otherwise agreed by the Section 151 Officer or Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services.
- 6.2 All orders given on behalf of the Council shall be approved in electronic or written form in accordance with signatory limits as outlined in the scheme of delegation and within the Contract Procedure Rules and clearly detailing the nature and quantity of the works or services required and any relevant contract or agreed prices. All orders are to be authorised by Officers nominated by the appropriate Assistant Director who shall be responsible for official orders issued from his or her Service.
- 6.3 The key controls for ordering and paying for work, goods and services are:
- a) All works, goods and services are ordered only by appropriate persons and recorded.
 - b) All works, goods and services shall be ordered in accordance with the Contracts Procedure rules unless they are purchased from internal sources within the Council. Waivers must only be used in exceptional circumstances as outlined in the Contract Procedure Rules.
 - c) Works, goods and services received are checked to ensure they are in accordance with the order.
 - d) Payments are authorised by Officers who must certify that goods have been received to price, quantity and quality.

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- e) All payments are made to the correct person, for the correct amount and are properly recorded, regardless of the payment method.
 - f) All appropriate payment documents are retained and stored for the defined period in accordance with the Bromsgrove District Council Records Management Policy’.
 - g) All expenditure is accurately recorded against the right budget and any exceptions corrected, including VAT.
 - h) That processes are in place to maintain the security and integrity of data for transacting business electronically.

7.0 Payments

- 7.1 Individual Officers shall ensure that payments are authorised by appropriate Officers who must certify that goods and services have been received and that price, quantity and quality are in accordance with the initial order.
- 7.2 Assistant Directors shall maintain for their area a list of Authorised Officers showing their signing levels with specimen signatures, this is to be held on the Council intranet (The Orb). This list must be reviewed at intervals to ensure is up to date and accurate and any changes being reported promptly.
- 7.3 The payment of all monies from the Council, with the exception of sums payable from advance accounts or GPC cards shall be by BACS or other instruments drawn on the Council’s bank account by the Section 151 Officer, including cheques when payment by BACS is not possible for appropriate.
- 7.4 Payment will only be made if an invoice is addressed to Bromsgrove District Council. Payment will not be made on the basis of a statement or reminder unless an exception is approved by the Section 151 Officer/Deputy Section 151 Officer.
- 7.5 Prepayment for goods or services must be avoided where possible, in order to minimise risk to the Council. If a prepayment is unavoidable then it must be approved by the Deputy S151 Officer.

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- 7.6 Where an electronic file contains multiple payments, an Officer may authorise the whole file with one signature if his or her authorised limit is at least the value of the highest individual amount within that file.
- 7.7 Once certified, all accounts paid through the centralised payment system must be passed to the Payments Section that shall ensure that the required payment is made to the correct person by the agreed method of payment and that all expenditure including VAT is accurately recorded against the correct budget.
- 7.8 The use of feeder systems to generate payments will only be allowed if the Section 151 Officer is satisfied that the data integrity of the corporate financial system would not be compromised and that the feeder system works in accordance with these financial procedures.
- 7.9 Invoices do not need specific authorisation for payment in an electronic system where the invoice matches the authorised order and goods receipt, and all three are correctly entered into the system.
- 7.10 In accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Late Payment of Commercial Debts Regulations 2013, and to maximise performance under the contract; the Council has to process all undisputed invoices within 30 days of receipt. The same shall apply to contractors in respect of any subcontractor arrangements applied under the applicable Council contract(s). All Council contracts shall contain provisions to this effect. All accounts received must be recorded with the day of receipt. In the event of a claim for damages/interest for late payment, the amount will be charged to the budget of the Directorate responsible.
- 7.11 The Section 151 Officer shall ensure that all appropriate payment documentation is retained for the required period of time in accordance with the Bromsgrove District Council Records Management Policy.

Direct Debits

- 7.12 Payment for goods and services by use of direct debit must only be for those services where a monthly or periodic charge is applied (for example: utility bills). Direct debits from any Council bank account must be applied for by the relevant service and must only be set up with the authority of the Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services, or in their absence by the Section 151 Officer.
- 7.13 The Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services is responsible for maintaining and regularly reviewing a list of direct debits that are drawn from the Council's bank accounts. Assistant Directors are responsible for checking and confirming the accuracy of direct debits within their service areas and are to inform the Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services of any irregularities and also if a direct debit is no longer required.

8.0 Salaries, wages, pensions, travel and subsistence

- 8.1 Assistant Directors shall maintain for their area a list of Authorised Officers showing their signing levels with specimen signatures, this is to be held on the Council intranet. This list must be reviewed at intervals to ensure is up to date and accurate and any changes being reported promptly.
- 8.2 All claims for payment of allowances, subsistence, travelling and expenses must be submitted within two months of the period they relate to (and always by the end of April following the financial year end) on the approved form, duly certified in a form approved by the Section 151 Officer with all required supporting evidence including VAT receipts for expenses submitted where appropriate. Any exceptions shall require individual certification by both the Section 151 Officer and the Assistant Director.
- 8.3 The certification of claims by or on behalf of an Assistant Director shall be taken to mean that the Certifying Officer is satisfied that the journeys and the expenses incurred were necessary and authorised as being in line with the council's policies on travel and subsistence claims.
- 8.4 The Payroll Manager shall ensure that all appropriate payroll documents are retained for the required period of time in accordance with the Council Records Management Policy.
- 8.5 The Deputy Section 151 Officer will be responsible for the signing off of the payroll run prior to payment.
- 8.6 The Council reserves the right not to pay any travel and / or expense claims that are not submitted in a timely manner, without good reason. Line Managers are responsible for approving or not approving all claims. Any issues must be considered in accordance with established HR arrangements. .

9.0 Imprest accounts

- 9.1 The Section 151 Officer may provide petty cash advance / Imprest accounts for such employees as may need them for the purpose of defraying petty cash or other expenses. Petty cash shall be maintained in the Imprest account to meet minor expenditure on behalf of the Council. Payments in reimbursement of travelling or subsistence must not be paid out of petty cash accounts.
- 9.2 The Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services will maintain a record of all advances made and reconcile to the Council's main financial system.

In summary Officers operating an Imprest account will comply with the following procedures:

- a) Obtain and retain vouchers to support each payment from the Imprest account including official VAT receipts where appropriate.
- b) Make adequate arrangements in their office for the safe custody of the account including vouchers and any other supporting documentation.

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- c) Produce upon demand by the Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services cash and all vouchers to the total value of the Imprest account.
 - d) Record transactions promptly.
 - e) Reconcile and balance the account at least monthly with reconciliation sheets to be signed and retained by the Imprest holder.
 - f) Provide the Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services with a certificate of the value of the account held at 31st March each year.
 - g) Ensure that the Imprest is never used to cash personal cheques or to make personal loans.
 - h) Ensure that the only payments into the account are the reimbursement payments and any notes/coinage relating to purchases made by a cash advance from the Imprest account.
 - i) Ensure income due to the Council is collected and banked as provided in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules and not through an Imprest account.
 - j) On leaving the Council's employment, ceasing to be entitled to hold an Imprest advance or no longer requiring an Imprest advance, Officers must request that the Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services close the account. All funds and account documentation must be returned to the Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services.
 - k) A bank Imprest account cannot become overdrawn.
 - l) Submit a claim for reimbursement at least monthly or return a nil claim.

10.0 Banking arrangements and Government Procurement cards

- 10.1 All arrangements with the Council's bank concerning the Council's bank accounts and for the ordering and issue of cheques shall be made by, or under arrangements approved by, the Section 151 Officer. The Section 151 Officer shall be authorised to open and operate such banking accounts, as he or she may consider necessary. This authority shall include the power to give the necessary directions to the bank as to signatures for withdrawals.
- 10.2 Apart from payments from Government Procurement cards, petty cash, Imprest accounts, the normal method of payment due from the Council shall be by BACS or cheque. Direct debit and periodical payment arrangements shall require the prior agreement and authorisation of the Section 151 Officer or Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services.
- 10.3 All cheques and cheque stationery shall be ordered only on the authority of the Section 151 Officer or Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services who shall be satisfied that proper arrangements are in place for their safe custody. Where the

signature is printed on the cheque by a Council system, the signature shall be that of the Section 151 Officer.

- 10.4 The Section 151 Officer or Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services shall be responsible for authorising the issue of Government Procurement cards and determining spending limits. Cardholders are required to comply with the policy issued by the Section 151 Officer regulating the use of corporate credit cards as shown in Appendix B. Purchases must be made in accordance with the Contract Procedure rules. This policy will include the requirement for cardholders to provide the Exchequer Services Manager with a receipt and complete the online system with details of all items purchased including the general ledger code: this is due by 17th of each month.
- 10.5 See section 7 for regulations on the use of Direct Debits from the Council's bank accounts.

11.0 Preventing financial irregularities

- 11.1 All Officers are required under their contractual obligation to report financial irregularities at the earliest opportunity to their Manager or Section 151 Officer. The Section 151 Officer will report financial irregularities to the Chief Executive, Cabinet and the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee. Providers of services are required to highlight financial irregularities immediately as stipulated under the contract procedure rules.
- 11.2 The Section 151 Officer, in conjunction with audit, will determine the scope of any internal enquiries or investigations, subject to consultation with the relevant member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- 11.3 The Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the relevant member of the Senior Leadership Team, will decide whether any matter under investigation must be referred for Police investigation and take recovery action as appropriate on such matters.
- 11.4 The Section 151 Officer will inform the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer if a suspected irregularity occurs involving Officers who are his or her responsibility.
- 11.5 All Officers and members must report financial irregularities to the Section 151 Officer.
- 11.6 The Section 151 Officer will advise the relevant Assistant Director if the outcome of an audit investigation indicates improper behaviour by a member of staff; or the Monitoring Officer if the outcome of an audit investigation indicates improper behaviour by an Elected Member. The Assistant Director or Monitoring Officer will then instigate the relevant disciplinary/standards procedure.

12.0 Money laundering

- 12.1 The Section 151 Officer is appointed as the Money Laundering Reporting Officer (MLRO). This Officer shall ensure that all Officers likely to receive payments from the public, businesses or professions are aware of the Authority's responsibilities under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, the Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds (Information on the Payer) Regulations 2017. and any other relevant acts and

regulations, such as the Terrorism Act 2000. The Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services is appointed as the Deputy Money Laundering Reporting Officer.

- 12.2 The MLRO shall receive reports from Officers about suspicious payments of any value for any purpose and payments in cash in excess of £10,000 including in aggregate.
- 12.3 The MLRO shall report any instance of suspected money laundering to the serious organised crime agency.

13.0 Asset management

Introduction

- 13.1 The asset management section of the Council's Financial Procedure Rules provides a framework of principles, minimum requirements, levels of authority and delegations to ensure that the Council's asset portfolio is managed effectively to achieve maximum value for money.

Overarching principles

- 13.2 A set of overarching principles govern the operation of this section of the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.
- 13.3 These are:

Property

- a) All property owned or leased by Bromsgrove District Council is held corporately.
- b) Full Council is responsible for deciding the extent of the Property Portfolio and for agreeing acquisitions and disposals in line with the Council's Policy.
- c) The Section 151 Officer, is responsible for ensuring that the occupation of all Bromsgrove District Council property by Directorates or other tenants is in the interests of the Council as a whole.
- d) The Section 151 Officer has the authority to intervene in property matters to protect Bromsgrove District Council's overall interests.
- e) Resolution of disputes on property matters is overseen by the Chief Executive.
- f) All property transactions must be referred to the Section 151 Officer who shall seek the comments of all interested parties, including relevant Cabinet members, Directorates and local members, before the decision is taken to proceed. All decisions must be taken in accordance with the delegations set out in this section of the Council's Financial Procedure Rules, the functions scheme, and the decision-making procedures set out in the Council's Constitution.

General

- g) Capital investment on assets must be linked to priorities identified through the corporate planning process using a clear and objective prioritisation policy.
- h) Capital investment must be directed to obtain maximum benefit from available resources, taking account of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- i) Revenue implications of capital investment must be considered, including the revenue costs of any borrowing required, and spend to save funding may be available to pump prime investment that must demonstrate a clear financial pay back.

Acquisitions and improvements to assets

- 13.4 Before an asset is acquired or improved the need for investment must be clearly identified and appraised.
- 13.5 Prior to allocation of resources a business case must be prepared and approved by the relevant Assistant Director.
- 13.6 The Section 151 Officer will present the scored business case to the Corporate Leadership Team. Where the acquisition proposed is part of the annual budget setting process the Strategic Leadership Team will make recommendations to Cabinet for inclusion in the Medium-Term Financial Plan. Where the proposal is outside of the budget setting process the approval will follow the Council's virement procedures provided that the capital budget approved by Council is not exceeded.
- 13.7 The use of compulsory purchase powers must be approved by Cabinet.

Property

- 13.8 Property is to be used efficiently, effectively and economically with due regard to legislative requirements.
- 13.9 The occupation and use of property by a Directorate is subject to the Section 151 Officer approving all material changes to property, including change of use, appropriations, granting/taking of interests, alterations or additions. Such changes must then be reported to the Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services for correct accounting treatment and apportionment of charges.
- 13.10 The Section 151 Officer has the authority to undertake reviews of the property portfolio, or parts of it, to determine if it is optimised in terms of its utilisation, cost and value and within this to challenge the retention or use of existing properties occupied by Directorates or other tenants.

Disposals

- 13.11 Land, property and any other assets which are surplus to operational need are either to be reallocated to meet alternative needs or disposed of in line with statutory requirements and/or Bromsgrove District Council policies.

13.12 Directorates shall notify the Section 151 Officer of:

- a) Any property (or part) that is:
- Vacant.
 - Held against a future operational need.
 - Not used for the principal purpose for which it is held.
 - Likely to be surplus to requirements (with estimated timescale).
- b) Any statutory/process issues relevant to its disposal (e.g. prescribed consultation processes, reference to the Secretary of State, etc.).
- c) Any other issues which need to be considered prior to disposal.

13.13 The Cabinet must be informed of any surplus property to enable it to declare as surplus and further agree to the marketing of any surplus assets subject to any delegation in the scheme of delegations.

13.14 Any proposal to dispose of any Council asset with a value of £200,000 or more, or which is otherwise considered significant by the Assistant Director Regeneration and Property must be considered by Cabinet.

13.15 Any disposal below market value must be agreed in advance by the Section 151 Officer. Any disposal that is more than £2 million below market value will require approval from the Secretary of State.

Treatment of capital receipts

13.14 All capital receipts from disposals are deemed to be a corporate capital resource available for allocation in line with corporate priorities.

Financial Procedure Rules

13.15 All of the protocols set out in the Council's Financial Procedure Rules and the Financial Guidance (Part 3) and Chief Executive Schemes of Delegation must be adhered to. No transaction must be approved unless specific budgetary provision is identified,

except where the purchase is approved under the authority given in Paragraph 3.0 for emergency decisions.

14.0 Audit

14.1 The Section 151 Officer has responsibility for maintaining an adequate and effective internal audit service. This service has been delegated to the Worcestershire Internal Audit Shared Services (WAISS).

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- 14.2 The Section 151 Officer shall maintain strategic and annual audit plans that take account of the relative risks of the activities involved. He/she shall liaise with the Corporate Leadership Team on the audit strategy and plan.
- 14.3 WIASS is responsible for providing the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee with regular assurance reports that highlight any areas of concern regarding the effectiveness or level of compliance with agreed systems of internal control.
- 14.4 WIASS shall submit an annual report to the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee detailing internal audit activity for the previous year and reporting significant findings and areas of concern. WIASS shall also submit a quarterly progress report to the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee detailing progress against the audit programme.
- 14.5 WIASS shall provide a regular summary to the Leader, Chairman of Audit, Standards and Governance Committee and relevant Cabinet Member(s) of audit review reports following sharing of the detailed reports with Assistant Directors beforehand.
- 14.6 The Section 151 Officer, in conjunction with the Monitoring Officer, is responsible for producing an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for inclusion with the annual Statement of Accounts based on assurances provided by WIASS and also on risks and areas for improvement identified by Corporate Leadership Team. The AGS shall be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team and Audit, Standards and Governance Committee.
- 14.7 Officers shall ensure that internal and external auditors are provided with:
- a) Access at reasonable times to premises or land used by the Council.
 - b) Access at reasonable times to any employee or employees.
 - c) Access to all assets, records, documents, correspondence and control systems relating to any matter or business of the Council.
 - d) Any information and explanation considered necessary concerning any matter under examination.
- 14.8 Officers must account for cash, stores or any other Council property under their control and produce such items for inspection if required by WIASS.
- 14.9 Officers are required to consider and respond to audit reports and audit recommendations within two weeks.
- 14.10 Officers must ensure that any agreed actions arising from audit recommendations are carried out in a timely and efficient manner.
- 14.11 Where an appropriate response to audit recommendations has not been made within the agreed period, the Section 151 Officer shall refer the matter to the Chief Executive and/or the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee.

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- 14.12 Officers are responsible for notifying the Section 151 Officer or WIASS immediately in writing/electronic medium of any suspected or alleged fraud, theft, irregularity, improper use or misappropriation of Council property or resources. Pending investigation, all necessary steps must be taken to prevent further loss and secure records and documents against removal, destruction or alterations.
- 14.13 The Section 151 Officer is to investigate promptly all apparent, suspected or reported irregularity or fraud he/she becomes aware of. He/she shall report his/her findings to the Chief Executive to discuss and agree appropriate legal proceedings and/or disciplinary action, consulting with the relevant member(s) of the Corporate Leadership Team as appropriate.
- 14.14 Officers are responsible for ensuring that new systems for maintaining financial records, or records of assets, or changes to such systems are discussed and agreed with the Section 151 Officer prior to implementation.
- 14.15 Officers are responsible for ensuring that all paperwork and systems are up to date, kept securely and are made available for inspection by audit.
- 14.16 Officers shall ensure that all fundamental systems and other financial systems are reconciled on a regular basis and that records are up to date and available for audit inspection when required.

15.0 Revenue budget management

- 15.1 The Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services shall prepare and review annually a Medium-Term Financial Plan and strategy to provide an estimate of resources available to the Council and identify budget pressures.
- 15.2 Proposed budgets over periods of one year or longer shall be prepared by Assistant Directors, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, for consideration by the Cabinet, having regard to the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, before submission to Council.
- 15.3 The Cabinet shall recommend an annual budget to Council that includes the following:
- a) Annual capital and revenue budget.
 - b) Proposed contingencies, general reserves and specific reserves.
 - c) Council Tax requirement.
 - d) Treasury Management Policy and borrowing limits.
 - e) The Section 151 Officer statutory declaration on budget setting (section 25 statement on adequacy of balances and robustness of estimates).
- 15.4 Budget management ensures that resources allocated by Members are used for their intended purposes and that these resources are properly accounted for. Budgetary control is a continual process enabling the Council to review and adjust its budget

targets during the financial year. It also provides the mechanism to call to account Managers responsible for defined elements of the budget.

- 15.5 The structure and format of the revenue budget must be sufficient to permit effective financial management.
- 15.6 The overall budget setting process for both revenue and capital is controlled by the S151 Officer.
- 15.7 Budgets will be distributed to budget holders for consultation. Budget holders will work with Finance Officers to prepare detailed income and expenditure estimates for the forthcoming year, taking into account known service level changes, contractual commitments and financial constraints.
- 15.8 Budget holders must provide information on any legislative changes, statutory duties, demographic changes, which impact upon service trends and activity levels to inform the financial planning and budget setting process.

16.0 Capital budget management

- 16.1 The Cabinet shall, following the submission of proposals by the Corporate Leadership Team, recommend to Council:
 - a) A capital programme for each financial year.
 - b) A future indication of a capital programme over a four-year period.
 - c) The recommended funding method for each capital project (including the use of prudential borrowing, capital receipts, revenue or other financing methods).
- 16.2 Following the approval of a capital programme, and subject to any conditions specified in that programme, or specified by the relevant Cabinet member, the relevant Assistant Director shall take all appropriate action to carry into effect the approved schemes, within the budget and timescale agreed in the capital programme. Any material variation in cost or timescale shall be reported to the Cabinet.
- 16.3 Cabinet Members will monitor capital expenditure once budgets are approved by Council.
- 16.4 If a project has not started within the specified timeframe, being two years behind the intended start date it will require resubmitting before proceeding.
- 16.5 Any report for a project or policy of a capital nature shall include details of:
 - a) The estimated cost of the proposal.
 - b) Any phasing of the capital expenditure.
 - c) The proposed method of financing, whether by loan, revenue or otherwise.

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- d) The effect on the revenue estimates in the first and subsequent years.
 - e) The additional staff and grades required both initially and ultimately.
 - f) An assessment and measurement of the need for the scheme and the benefits it will produce.
 - g) A technical and financial appraisal of the alternative approaches to meeting the need. (larger projects only)
 - h) Milestones for the project to include the opportunity for gateway reviews

17.0 Budgetary Control

- 17.1 Each Assistant Director shall be responsible for monitoring the revenue and any capital budget relevant to his/her Directorate to ensure that such budgets are properly spent and not exceeded.
- 17.2 Any new proposal or variation which would materially affect the finances of the Council shall require approval by the Cabinet. Any budget virements must comply with the Council's scheme of budget virement.
- 17.3 The Council operates within an overall annual cash limit. As a result, all individual budgets are cash limited. Each budget holder is required to operate within their cash limit.
- 17.4 Assistant Directors shall monitor spend and income against budgets monthly and ensure, so far as practicable, that expenditure in excess of their net approved budgets is not incurred without prior approval. If actual income is expected to be below budget, this must also be actively managed.
- 17.5 If it appears to an Assistant Director that his/her overall cash limited budget may be exceeded, he/she shall report the details as soon as practicable and identify mitigating action. The overall position is then reported to the Cabinet.
- 17.6 Action plans must be put in place by each Directorate at an early stage in the financial year in order to manage potential overspendings (e.g. due to additional spending or below target income). Assistant Directors must ensure Officers adhere to the savings targets and take mitigating action if delivery is deemed to be at risk.
- 17.7 It is the duty of Assistant Directors to ensure that responsibility for budgetary control is clearly allocated to appropriate Officers in their Directorates. Assistant Directors shall nominate a Budget Manager for each cost centre. As a general principle budget responsibility must be aligned as closely as possible to the decision-making processes that commits expenditure.
- 17.8 Budget Managers are accountable for their budgets and the level of service to be delivered and must understand their financial responsibilities. Budget Managers must be responsible only for income and expenditure that they can influence.
- 17.9 Budget Managers are required to;

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- a) Follow an approved process for all expenditure.
 - b) Ensure that income and expenditure are properly recorded and accounted for.
 - c) Ensure that expenditure is committed only against an appropriate budget head.
 - d) Monitor performance levels/levels of service in conjunction with the budget and necessary action is taken to align service outputs and budget.
 - e) Monitor and control the gross expenditure budget position.
 - f) Investigate and report significant variances from approved budgets.

17.10 The Section 151 Officer shall establish an appropriate framework of budgetary control, monitored and reported through the financial system.

17.11 The Section 151 Officer shall provide Assistant Directors, budget holders and Cabinet members with quarterly financial management information reports in line with the Forward Plan.

17.12 The Section 151 Officer shall ensure that each Assistant Director has available timely information on receipts and payments on each budget which is sufficiently detailed to enable managers to fulfil their budgetary responsibilities.

17.13 The Financial Services Manager shall provide financial management training courses that all budget managers must attend.

17.14 All carry forwards or underspends or treatment of overspends at year end shall be subject to approval in accordance with arrangements determined by the Section 151 Officer approved by members as part of the budget process.

18.0 Virement

18.1 The Council operates a scheme of budget virement. This enables budget holders to manage budgets with a degree of flexibility within the overall policy framework determined by the Council and therefore optimise available use of resources.

18.2 Assistant Directors have authority to vire expenditure between individual budget heads in accordance with the virement policy.

18.3 Key controls for the virement policy are:

- a) Any variation from this policy requires the approval of Council.
- b) That the overall budget is developed by Cabinet and approved by Council. Assistant Directors and budget holders are authorised to incur expenditure in accordance with the estimates contained within the annual budget. The rules below cover virement; that is switching resources between budget heads. For the purposes of these rules a budget head is considered to be the standard service subdivision as defined by CIPFA. The scheme applies equally to a reduction in income as to an increase in expenditure.

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- 18.4 All virements must be entered onto the finance system for approval by an authorised Officer. There will be no virements below £10,000 unless authorised by the Section 151 Officer or Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services.
- 18.5 All virements below £200,000 and above £10,000 and within a single Cabinet Member Portfolio and a single Directorate budget must be approved by the service Assistant Director, following consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder and the Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services. Virements below £200,000 between two Directorate budgets or two Cabinet Member areas will require agreement of the Assistant Directors following consultation with the Cabinet Members as well as the Section 151 Officer. Capital and corporate budgets above £10,000 and up to £200,000 will require the approval of the Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services. All virements of above £200,000 shall be reported in the budget monitoring report provided to Cabinet.
- 18.6 There will be no virements from salary budget to other types of expenditure without approval from Cabinet.
- 18.7 Virements must not be aggregated or disaggregated in order to avoid the virement rules.
- 18.8 Where an approved budget is a lump sum budget or contingency intended for allocation during the year, its allocation will not be treated as a virement provided that the amount is used in accordance with the purposes for which it has been established and that Cabinet and / or Council has approved the basis and the terms including financial limits on which it will be allocated. Individual allocations in excess of the financial limits must be reported to Cabinet or Council as required.
- 18.9 All virements must be properly documented and approved.
- 18.10 Budget adjustments. Where there is a need to move a budget to a more appropriate cost centre or nominal code, without changing the purpose of the budget, then this is considered a 'budget adjustment' and must be made by the finance Officers with the authority of the Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services

Supplementary Estimates

- 18.11 In-year increases in budgets are referred to as supplementary estimates and any request for additional budget that increases the Council's cost of provision of services (net revenue or capital budget) must only be approved by Council (as with the annual budget setting).
- 18.12 Where a request for additional expenditure budget is matched by additional grant or contribution income and therefore there is no increase to the net revenue or capital budget, then the expenditure budget must be increased and the income or financing budget increased equally with no impact on the Council's net cost of services. This must be authorised by the Section 151 Officer and must be reported to Cabinet in the next available budget update report.

19.0 Insurance and risk management

- 19.1 All organisations, whether they are in the private or public sector, face risks to people, property and continued operations. Risk is defined as the chance or possibility of loss, damage or injury caused by an unwanted or uncertain action or event. Risk management is the planned and systematic approach to the identification, evaluation and control of risk.
- 19.3 Insurance has been the traditional means of protecting against loss, but this cannot be seen as the complete answer. By reducing or even preventing the incidence of losses (whether they result from crime or accident), the Council shall benefit from reduced costs of providing insurance cover and shall also avoid the disruption and wasted time caused by losses and insurance claims.
- 19.3 Through quarterly performance monitoring Audit, Standards and Governance Committee must be kept informed of items listed on the corporate risk registers.
- 19.4 The key controls for risk management and insurance are:
- a) Robust systems are in place to identify, assess, prevent or contain significant operational risks on an integrated basis and these systems are promoted throughout the organisation.
 - b) Acceptable levels of retained risk are identified and evaluated and arrangements are in place for their funding, either by internal provision or external insurance as appropriate.
 - c) Managers know that they are responsible for managing relevant risks and are provided with appropriate and timely information on claims experience and risk management initiatives relating to their areas of responsibility.
 - d) Procedures are in place to investigate and process claims within required timescales.
 - e) A monitoring process is in place to review regularly the effectiveness of risk reduction strategies and the operation of these controls. The risk management process must be conducted on a continuing basis.
- 19.5 The Section 151 Officer shall effect all insurance cover and negotiate all claims in consultation with the relevant Officer where appropriate.
- 19.6 Assistant Directors shall give prompt notification to the Section 151 Officer of all new risks, properties, vehicles and other assets that are required to be insured or any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 19.7 Assistant Directors shall promptly notify the Section 151 Officer in writing of any actual or potential loss, liability or damage or any event likely to lead to an insurance claim by or against the Council.

20.0 Loans, leasing and investments

- 20.1 The Section 151 Officer shall report to Cabinet, on an annual basis, with recommendations to Council to determine the limits for the borrowing of monies.
- 20.2 The Section 151 Officer shall borrow as necessary to finance the approved capital programme and deal with all matters in connection with the raising or repayment of loans and is authorised to borrow for meeting expenses pending the receipt of revenues.
- 20.3 All investments and all borrowing shall be made in the name of the Council.
- 20.4 Assistant Directors shall not enter into financial leasing arrangements except with the consent of the Section 151 Officer. Before entering into any lease agreement Assistant Directors shall submit details to the Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services to enable a financial appraisal to be undertaken, including alternative financing options and implications for accounting treatment.
- 20.5 Loans to third parties will only be made in exceptional circumstances, and having followed the Council's decision-making process.
- 20.6 The Section 151 Officer shall arrange the borrowing and investment activities of the Council in such a manner as to comply with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the Authority's Treasury Management Policy Statement.
- 20.7 The Section 151 Officer shall prepare an annual strategy with regard to investments, borrowing and the repayment of external debt. These are set out in the Treasury Management Strategy approved by full Council before the start of the new financial year.
- 20.8 The Treasury Management Strategy will include the following:
- Prospects for the economy and for interest rates;
 - Borrowing requirement and strategy;
 - Investment policy and strategy;
 - Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)
 - MRP statement;
 - Prudential indicators for the next three years providing assurance that the Council's capital plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable; and
 - The Treasury Management Policy Statement.
- 20.9 In addition, Cabinet will receive an annual treasury management report after the end of the financial year and will recommend to full Council for approval.

20.10 Cabinet will also receive treasury management reports as part of the quarterly budget monitoring updates.

21.0 Trust funds

21.1 The Section 151 Officer shall:

- a) Arrange for all trust funds to be held wherever possible in the name of the Authority. All Officers acting as trustees by virtue of their official position, as declared in register of interest, shall deposit securities, etc. relating to the trust with the Section 151 Officer unless the deed otherwise provides.
- b) Arrange where funds are held on behalf of third parties for their secure administration approved by the Section 151 Officer and to maintain written records of all transactions.
- c) Ensure that trust funds are operated within any relevant legislation and the specific requirement for each trust.

22.0 Inventories and stocks and stores

22.1 The Section 151 Officer shall:

- a) Advise on the form, layout and content of inventory records to be maintained by the Council.
- b) Advise on the arrangements for the care and custody of stocks and stores in Directorates.

22.2 Assistant Directors shall:

- a) Maintain inventories in a form approved by the Section 151 Officer to adequately record and describe all furniture, fittings and equipment, plant and machinery under their control. Disposable items such as stationery, goods for sale or materials may be held in store. They must be properly controlled and accounted for to ensure they are used only for Council purposes.
- b) Be responsible for the care and custody of the stocks and stores within his or her services and arrange for periodical test examinations of stocks, ensure insurance cover is adequately provided and ensure that all stocks are checked at least once a year, where appropriate, as determined by the Section 151 Officer. This is to be under the supervision of persons without direct responsibility for the custody of the stocks or stores being checked.
- c) Ensure attractive and portable items, such as computers, cameras and mobile technology devices are identified with security markings as belonging to the Council and appropriately controlled and secured.
- d) Make sure that property is only used in the course of the Council's business unless the Assistant Director concerned has given permission otherwise.

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- e) Assistant Directors are responsible for investigating discrepancies and pursuing them to a satisfactory conclusion. Where this is not possible or the amount is over £250, this must be reported to the Section 151 Officer and Head of Internal Audit.
- f) Adjustments in respect of stock deficiencies and surpluses shall be subject to the approval of the Section 151 Officer or Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services.
- g) Ensure that assets are identified, their location recorded and that they are appropriately marked and insured.
- h) Ensure stocks are maintained at reasonable levels and subject to a regular independent physical check. All discrepancies must be investigated and pursued to a satisfactory conclusion.
- i) Record the reasons for the chosen method of disposing of redundant stocks and equipment if not by competitive quotation or auction.
- 22.3 At any one time up to £5,000 may be written out of stock records with the Section 151 Officer approval. If the accumulated amount to be written out exceeds £10,000 during the financial year, a report must be made to Cabinet. Individual amounts in excess of £5,000 shall be approved by Cabinet.
- 22.4 Limit of the Council to write off and/or dispose of obsolete stock, per individual item:
- Estimated residual value up to £250 – Assistant Director
 - Estimated residual value over £250 – Section 151 Officer

23.0 Working for third parties and shared services

- 23.1 Current legislation enables the Council to provide a range of services to certain other bodies. Such work may enable the Directorate to maintain economies of scale and existing expertise. Arrangements must be in place to ensure that any risk associated with this work is minimised.
- 23.2 All proposals for the Council to undertake work for a third party shall be properly costed in accordance with guidance provided by the Section 151 Officer. Financial advice must be obtained from the Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services on the cost of providing the service.
- 23.3 All decisions for the Council to undertake work for a third party shall be made in accordance with the Council's formal decision-making processes and as set out in the Council's functions scheme and before any negotiations to work for third parties are concluded.
- 23.4 Officers must obtain statutory authority legal advice on the implications of providing the proposed service to the third party. All contracts for providing work for a third party shall be drawn up using guidance provided by the Council's Legal Services team.

23.5 Officers shall ensure that:

- a) All contracts are properly documented and a register of all contracts to supply goods and services to third parties is maintained by each Directorate.
- b) Appropriate identity checks on the third party are carried out in accordance with the Council's Anti-Money Laundering Policy and Guidance.
- c) Appropriate insurance arrangements are in place for the third-party work.
- d) The Council is not put at any risk of bad debts as a result of any third-party work.
- e) Wherever possible, payment is received in advance of the delivery of the service under a third-party contract.

24.0 Value Added Tax

- 24.1 The Section 151 Officer is responsible for advising, in the light of guidance by appropriate bodies and relevant legislation as it applies, on all taxation issues that affect the Council. Written advice shall be made available to all relevant employees.
- 24.2 The Section 151 Officer is responsible for maintaining the Council's tax records, making all tax payments, receiving tax credits and submitting tax returns by their due date as appropriate.
- 24.3 The Section 151 Officer or his / her authorised representative shall be responsible for liaising with HM Revenue and Customs on all VAT related matters and for submitting and signing the necessary returns / claims in a timely manner.
- 24.4 VAT must be correctly claimed on expenditure (input tax) and valid tax invoices retained by the Council.
- 24.5 VAT must be correctly charged on income from works, goods and services supplied by the Council (output tax) and a valid VAT invoice or VAT receipt issued to any party outside of the Council, in accordance with the form approved by the Section 151 Officer.
- 24.6 Under no circumstances shall an Officer or Member use the auspices of the Council to purchase goods or services for their own private purposes to avoid paying VAT. To do so will result in disciplinary action.

25.0 Trading Accounts

- 25.1 All trading accounts shall be subject to the same standards of financial control and audit as core council services. The Section 151 Officer shall ensure that appropriate systems are in place for income recognition, expenditure control and performance monitoring.
- 25.2 Each trading service shall prepare an annual budget and medium-term financial forecast, approved by the relevant committee or delegated officer. These shall include projected income, expenditure, capital investment and net contribution to the Council's overall financial position.

25.3 Charges for trading services shall be reviewed annually as part of the annual budget setting process and approved by the Council or delegated committee. Income shall be recorded promptly and accurately, with appropriate segregation of duties and reconciliation procedures.

26.0 Funding Bids

26.1 Any funding bids need to be signed off by the Section 151 Officer, or in their absence, the Deputy S151 Officer. The Section 151 Officer must have been involved in the discussion of any funding bids from the initiation of the bid.

27. Accountable Bodies

27.1 Where the Council is required to act as an Accountable Body for external funding or partnership arrangements, the Section 151 officer must be satisfied that the appropriate financial control, audit, reporting and risk management arrangements are in place before funds are accepted and distributed.

27.2 Where the Council holds or administers monies on behalf of third parties or individuals, such funds must be accounted for separately from Council funds, subject to appropriate controls and open to inspection and audit.

28. Grant Claim Approval

28.1 All material grant claims, funding returns or requests for draw-down of external funding shall be submitted under arrangements approved by the Section 151 Officer. The Section 151 Officer, or a nominated deputy, must be satisfied as to accuracy, eligibility and compliance with grant conditions before submission.

29 Annual Assurance Statements on internal controls

29.1 Assistant Directors shall provide annual assurance statements to the Section 151 Officer confirming the adequacy and effectiveness of financial controls within their areas of responsibility, to support the Annual Governance Statement.

30. Decision-making and member led financial risk

30.1 Where Members choose to proceed with a course of action contrary to, or materially increasing risk beyond, the advice of the Section 151 Officer, this shall be explicitly recorded in the relevant decision report.

Appendix A

Responsibilities under the Financial Procedure Rules

This Appendix provides details of responsibilities under the Financial Procedure Rules. It lists in a single place responsibilities that would otherwise be repeated in various sections of the Financial Procedure Rules. It confirms the overall responsibilities of the Council's Section 151 Officer, the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee and Members of the Corporate Leadership Team within the Financial Procedure Rules.

A1 Audit, Standards and Governance Committee responsibilities

- A1.1 Day to day responsibility for the Council's finances rests with Assistant Directors and their Managers as set out in these Financial Procedure Rules with some functions delegated to the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee.
- A1.2 Audit, Standards and Governance Committee shall oversee compliance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules for those functions within their Terms of Reference. Corporate Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring those functions within their Terms of Reference operate within the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.

A2 Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer) responsibilities

- A2.1 The Section 151 Officer has been appointed under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 as the Officer with responsibility for the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs.
- A2.2 Reference in these Financial Procedure Rules to the Section 151 Officer shall be taken to include any Officer nominated by the Section 151 Officer to act on his/her behalf.
- A2.3 The Section 151 Officer shall be entitled to attend a meeting of any body on which Members are represented where matters affecting the financial affairs of the Council are being discussed.
- A2.4 The Section 151 Officer, under the general direction of Cabinet, is responsible for determining the basis for all accounting procedures and financial records for the Council and for exercising a check over all financial matters.
- A2.5 The Section 151 Officer is responsible for maintaining a continuous review of the Financial Procedure Rules and advising the Audit & Governance Committee and Council of any additions or changes necessary.
- A2.6 The Section 151 Officer is responsible for reporting, where appropriate, breaches of the Financial Procedure Rules or any other element of the Constitution that relates to the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs to the Council and/or Audit, Standards and Governance Committee.
- A2.7 The Section 151 Officer is responsible for issuing advice and guidance to underpin the Financial Procedure Rules.

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- A2.8 The Section 151 Officer is responsible for maintaining adequate and effective audit arrangements for the Council and for ensuring that audit services complies with the public sector internal audit standards.
- A2.9 The Section 151 Officer is responsible for ensuring, in conjunction with the relevant member of the Senior Leadership Team, that the Council's disciplinary procedures are followed where the outcome of an audit or other investigation indicates fraud or irregularity.
- A2.10 The Section 151 Officer is responsible for ensuring that any case of fraud or loss or financial irregularity or bribery or corruption discovered or suspected to exist which involves the Council's interest shall be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy.
- A2.11 The Section 151 Officer is the Council's Money Laundering Reporting Officer and is also responsible for appointing a senior officer to be the Deputy to the Council's Money Laundering Reporting Officer.
- A2.12 The Section 151 Officer has overall responsibility for making payments on behalf of the Council.
- A2.13 The Section 151 Officer has overall responsibility for the Council's income and collection functions.
- A2.14 The Section 151 officer is responsible through the collection account to advise whether or not the Council should enter into a business rates (BR) pooling arrangement with other councils, having taken appropriate advice on the matter.
- A2.15 The Section 151 Officer is responsible for making payments to employees, former employees and Members on behalf of the Council.

A3 Corporate Leadership Team responsibilities

- A3.1 Members of the Corporate Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that all employees are aware of the content of the Financial Procedure Rules and other internal regulatory documents and that they are complied with.
- A3.2 Members of the Corporate Leadership Team are responsible for consulting with the Section 151 Officer on any matter within their area of responsibility that is liable to materially affect the finances of the Council before any provisional or other commitment is incurred or before reporting the matter to a Cabinet member.
- A3.3 Members of the Corporate Leadership Team are responsible for supplying the Section 151 Officer with all information necessary for the proper administration of the Council's affairs.
- A3.4 Members of the Corporate Leadership Team shall allow the Section 151 Officer and his/her authorised representatives access to all documents and records on demand.
- A3.5 Members of the Corporate Leadership Team shall maintain a sound system of internal control.

- A3.6 Members of the Corporate Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring those functions within their Terms of Reference operate within the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.
- A3.7 Members of the Corporate Leadership Team are responsible for informing Cabinet members promptly if the Council's Financial Procedure Rules are not being complied with.

Appendix B

GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT CARDS (GPC)

GUIDANCE FOR CARDHOLDERS

Contact Details

Natwest Cardholder Helpline

Telephone: 0370 010 1152
Mon - Fri 8.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m.
Sat 9.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.

Fax:

Lost or Stolen Cards

The Natwest General Procurement Card Loss Centre

Telephone: 0370 010 1152

Open 24 hours, 7 days a week.

Introduction

You have been selected to participate in the Government Procurement Card scheme (GPC). This scheme is designed to make it easier and more cost effective for employees to make low value purchases of goods and services for Council use. A low value purchase is not likely to exceed £250 and is likely to be substantially less. Using GPC you can purchase goods and services from suppliers who accept Mastercard.

GPC are not to be used to obtain cash except in exceptional circumstances and then only with the written permission of the Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services / Deputy Section 151 Officer.

We have implemented this new purchasing concept for lower value purchases because we feel it will help you to more quickly and easily obtain the goods and services you need to get your job done. It will reduce paperwork associated with the traditional purchase order process resulting in cost savings for the Council and a saving in time for you.

Your feedback will help us to fine-tune the scheme as we integrate it into our purchasing processes. If you have any comments or questions about the GPC scheme, please contact your Administrator who is:

**Exchequer Services Manager on 01527
64252 ext. 3614 or Steven Dodd on
01527 64252**

You must contact immediately if your card is

- **Lost or Stolen**
- **Changes to current limits required**
- **Changes to Merchant Category Codes**
- **You are leaving us**
- **You Change your name or address**
- **You have a change of job**
- **You no longer require a GPC Card**

If your card is lost or stolen please also contact:

**Nicola.parry@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk and
steven.dodd@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk**

What We Expect From You

- Your Purchasing Card is personal to you, no one else is authorised to use your card. Do not allow any other employee to use your card or quote its number when ordering.
- The card number must always be kept confidential.
- Do not share your PIN number with anyone.
- The card must be used in accordance with this user/procedure guide, and the Employee Agreement.
- It is to be used for business related purchases only, where there is not a more cost effective way of making the purchase.
- Suppliers that have contracts on the ERP system must be used via that portal. GPC must not be used outside of the purchasing system unless prior agreement is sought from the Exchequer Services Manager and the Deputy Section 151 officer.
- The types and values of purchases must be within the limits set. You are responsible for achieving best value for money.
- You are responsible for ensuring the security of the card.
- The card is restricted and officers are not permitted to obtain cash back facilities offered when making authorised purchases.
- You are responsible for reporting its loss, theft or misuse to The Royal Bank of Scotland Card Loss Centre Telephone 0370 010 1152 and your Administrator as soon as you notice your card is missing.

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- You will be asked to sign an Employee Agreement to this effect.
 - Misuse of the card as determined by non-compliance with this cardholder guide may result in action being taken under the Council's disciplinary procedures. In such circumstances the Card Administrator has authorisation to cancel your card without further notice.
 - Under no circumstance must the Card be used for paying an invoice.
 - You will be responsible for keeping a record and receipts for all your transactions these must be entered onto the online system each time you use your card completing all of the fields including the Cost Centre and Account Code information. Failure to complete this will result in your card being cancelled.
 - Full training and a username password will be given to you so that you can use the online system to record any purchases you make utilising the card. If you forget your password please contact the Card Administrator.
 - You must retain all VAT receipts along with the credit card receipt and produce these monthly
 - The responsibility of coding the statement is bestowed on the card holder.
 - The compliance agreement which is sent at the time of the application must be signed and read. The agreement is to ensure all responsibility is adhered to and the consequences of misuse or none coding are clearly explained.

What is a Purchasing card?

GPC cards is an alternative method to the current buying process of paying for low value, high volume goods or services. By simplifying transaction processing, it assists purchasing efficiency and will save RBC time and money. The current indicated savings from the Audit Office equate to £28 per transaction however this does not include the paper and other associated print/environmental savings when the need not to produce orders, delivery note and invoices is taken into account.

The Purchasing card looks like any normal debit/credit card, but is a procurement card, which means your total balance on your monthly statement must be settled in full.

It also means that the supplier is paid much more quickly (typically 3 to 5 days) rather than waiting for us to settle their invoice.

The card can be used at any establishment displaying the Mastercard symbol, in the UK. But we are looking for you to use suppliers who are capable of providing VAT reporting to level 3, this to facilitate further efficiency savings as the banks monthly returns of purchases made can be used to reclaim VAT from HMC&R. We are currently working with the Bank and the Suppliers we most commonly use to increase their VAT reporting capabilities to level 3.

Embossed on the card is the following:

Bromsgrove District Council
Your Name
Expiry Date
Card Number

Your Purchasing card offers the opportunity to improve both the focus and flexibility of purchasing procedures whilst reducing the volume of purchase orders, invoices and associated paperwork for small value purchases, improving the cost effectiveness of processing these types of transactions.

Your card is to be used for business expenditure only.

Controls

Each card has a maximum monthly expenditure limit and individual transaction limit.

Monthly Expenditure limit

The total amount you can spend on your card each month.

Transaction Limit

The total amount you can spend on any single purchase.

Both of these limits are inclusive of VAT and any carriage.

The limits were set on your card application form based upon your estimated spend pattern.

Merchant Category Group code blocking

A further control has been applied to your Purchasing card.

Each supplier capable of accepting your GPC card will be classified by a certain Merchant Category Group code. By the way of an additional control, any number of these codes can be blocked or left unblocked to ensure compliance with business policies and to mirror each cardholder's buying profile.

Please make a note of these limits/controls.

If you try to purchase goods and services that are outside of these limits, your transaction will be declined and could lead to embarrassment. If you can prove that your limits are unrealistic to your work or the purchases you have to regularly make using the card please discuss with your line manager prior to requesting any increase in same

As detailed above, if you try to use your card with a supplier whose Merchant Category Group code has been blocked on your Purchasing card, this will also lead to your card being declined.

If this occurs, please contact the Administrator immediately to discuss how your card can be updated to reflect your requirements.

Queries on Goods

Faulty or damaged goods supplied

If the cardholder rejects the goods purchased as unsatisfactory, he/she must inform the supplier immediately, and try to reach an agreement to return the goods and obtain a refund. The Royal Bank of Scotland is unable to become involved in any disputes between purchaser and supplier over the quality or suitability of goods purchased.

The supplier must arrange for a credit (refund) to be made to The Royal Bank of Scotland Purchasing Card Account which will then appear on a subsequent statement. To aid reconciliation, we suggest the cardholder retains a record of the credit at the time the goods are returned, rather than waiting for the statement to arrive.

Please note that refunds from abroad may vary from the original transaction amount due to exchange rates.

Goods not supplied/wrong goods supplied

If an item is charged to the cardholder's account but the goods or services ordered have not been received or are incorrect, the cardholder must contact the supplier to confirm that the goods have been supplied or the correct goods are being despatched.

A refund can be claimed from the supplier only after allowing 60 days from the transaction date for delivery of the correct goods.

APPENDIX 1

Employee Agreement

- a) I, Hereby accept a Purchasing Card. As a cardholder I agree to comply with the terms of the attached policy regarding my use of the Card.
- b) I have received and understood that I am being entrusted with a corporate charge card and will be making financial commitments on behalf of the company. I understand that the RBC is liable to the card provider for all the charges made on the card.
- c) I agree to use this card for business purchases only and agree not to charge personal purchases. I understand that the RBC will audit the use of this card and report and take appropriate action on any discrepancies.
- d) I will follow the established procedures for the use of the card. Failure to do so will result in cancellation of my card and disciplinary actions, including termination of employment.
- e) I have been given a copy of the Purchasing Card Policy and User Guide and understand the requirements for the Card's use.
- f) I agree to return the Card immediately upon request or upon termination of employment (including retirement). Should there be any organisational change, which cause my purchasing requirements to change, I agree to return my card and arrange for a new one, if appropriate.
- g) If the card is lost or stolen, I agree to notify Royal Bank of Scotland immediately by telephone and the Card Administrator as soon as possible thereafter.

Employees Signature..... Date.....

Card Number.....

Card Administrators Signature..... Date.....

Appendix C

Glossary of terms

In the Financial Procedure Rules the words and phrases in the left hand column have the meaning given in the right hand column;

Asset	Something the Council owns that has value, such as premises, vehicles, equipment or cash.
Audit	A specialist team that examines, evaluates and reports on the adequacy of internal control systems.
Budget	A statement of the authority's plans for revenue and capital expenditure and income over a specified period of time.
Capital	Spending, usually on major assets like a building, where the benefit of the asset lasts for more than one year.
Capital Programme	A budget generally covering a 3-5 year period relating to items of capital expenditure.
Capital receipts	Proceeds from the sale of fixed assets, such as land or buildings.
Cash Limit	The most that can be spent in an area in one year.
CIPFA	The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy is the leading professional accountancy body for public services in the UK. CIPFA has responsibility for setting good practice accounting standards for local government.
Financial Irregularities	Financial irregularities refer to actions or transactions that deviate from established financial rules, procedures or legal standards – often indicating errors, mismanagement or potential fraud.
Gross Expenditure	The total cost of providing the Council's services before taking into account income from government grants and fees and charges for services.
Imprests	Bank and petty cash floats.
Internal Control	The systems of control that help ensure the Council's objectives are achieved in an economical, efficient and effective way and consistent with safeguarding the Council's assets.
Inventory	A list of equipment and furniture.
Money Laundering	The practice of engaging in financial transactions in order to conceal the identity, source, and/or destination of money.
Officer	A person employed or appointed as a member of staff, including temporary staff and contractors.

Revenue budget	Budget relating to the day-to-day expenses associated with the provision of services.
Treasury Management	Management of the Council's cash balances on a daily basis, to obtain the best return while maintaining an acceptable level of risk.
Treasury Management Strategy	A document stating how the Council plans to borrow and optimise its return on its cash and investments in the coming financial year whilst ensuring the over-riding criterion of security of public money.
Virement	Transfers of budgets between one area and another.

Clarification of Post titles

Chief Executive	The Council's Head of Paid Service
S151 Officer	The Council's Chief Financial Officer (CFO) or Section 151 Officer
Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services	The Council's Deputy Section 151 Officer

APPENDIX 5

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SCHEME OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2026/27

The Council's Scheme of Members' Allowances was reviewed at the meeting of the Council held on 21st January 2026 following recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Worcestershire District Councils. It is the Council's intention that the Scheme should be reviewed annually.

The scheme for the financial year 2026/27 includes the following:

Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowance

- (a) A Basic Allowance payable to all Members of the Council of £6,095 which includes a payment for communications costs.
- (b) Special Responsibility Allowances to be paid to the holders of the following Offices, in addition to the Basic Allowance referred to above:

Position	Multiplier of Basic Allowance for 2026/27	Special Responsibility Allowance
Leader of the Council	3.0	£18,285
Deputy Leader (including SRA as a Portfolio Holder)	1.75	£10,666.25
Executive Members (Cabinet Portfolio Holders)	1.5	£9,142.50
Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Board	1.5	£9,142.50
Chairman of Planning Committee	1.0	£6,095
Chairman of Licensing Committee	0.3	£1,828.50
Chairman of Audit, Standards and Governance Committee	0.3	£1,828.50
Chairmen of Overview and Scrutiny Task Groups	0.25	£1,523.75

Chairman of Electoral Matters Committee	0.03	£182.85 per meeting
Chairman of Licensing Sub-Committee Hearing	0.03	£182.85 per meeting
Vice Chairmen of Committees	0.03	£182.85 (per meeting chaired)
Leaders of political groups	0.25	£1,523.75

Where Special Responsibility Allowance is payable per meeting, this will be payable to the person chairing that meeting.

In addition to the allowances set out above, an allowance of £6,095 is payable to the Chairman of the Council. This allowance is permitted in the Local Government Act 1972 and is separate to those which are reviewed by the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Local Government Pension Scheme

Formatted: Underline

Since 11th May 2026, councillors in England have been eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme. This is on an opt-in basis and membership is not automatic. Councillors need to actively choose to opt in.

It should be noted that a Member's basic allowance or special responsibility allowance (or both, as the case may be) shall be treated as an amount in respect of which such a pension is payable.

Childcare and Dependant Care Allowances

Childcare and dependant care allowances are payable to cover reasonable and legitimate costs incurred as a result of attendance at Approved Duties, **as defined in Appendix 1**. Evidence of costs incurred should be submitted with any claim.

Travelling and Subsistence Allowances

- (a) Travelling and subsistence allowances are payable for attendance at Approved Duties, **as defined in Appendix 1**.
- (b) Travelling expenses are paid in accordance with the approved HM Revenue and Customs mileage allowance rate which is currently 45p per mile, irrespective of vehicle engine capacity, subject to the production of valid VAT receipts for fuel purchased.
- (c) Councillors may claim actual expenditure incurred on tolls or parking fees, in addition to travelling allowances. Proof of expenditure must be provided.
- (d) The rate for travel by Taxi Cab shall not exceed:

Scheme of Allowances - 2 -

2026/27

- (i) In cases of urgency or where no public transport is reasonably available, the amount of the actual fare and any reasonable gratuity paid, and
- (ii) In any other case, the amount of the fare for travel by appropriate public transport.
- (e) Claims for travel by public transport must not exceed the ordinary standard class fare (or any available cheap fare as incurred).
- (f) If you are using your private vehicle for attendance at Council meetings, Committees, etc you should advise your insurance company and ensure that you have the necessary cover in place for such business journeys.
- (g) A cycling allowance may be paid at the same mileage rate as for vehicles.
- (h) Subsistence allowances are paid for duties over 4 hours where no refreshments have been provided. Members are reimbursed for actual expenses incurred up to the following maximum amounts, subject to the production of receipts:-

Breakfast	£ 8.00
Lunch	£ 12.00
Evening Meal	£ 25.00
Overnight Stay (accommodation only)	
London and annual conferences	£150.00
Other	£100.00

In very exceptional circumstances, these maximum amounts may be exceeded, subject to prior approval being obtained from the Head of Financial Services in each case and the action being reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

Claims for Allowances

Members should submit claims for allowances on a monthly basis within the deadlines specified.

Forgoing an Allowance

Any Member may elect to forgo their entitlement to all or part of their allowances if they so wish. If a Member has made this decision, he/she can change his/her mind, but not retrospectively.

Repayment of Allowance

A Councillor will be required to repay any allowances which they have already been paid in respect of any period during which they have:

- (a) Ceased to be a Member of the Council; or
- (b) Been in any other way not entitled to receive the allowance in respect of that period.

General Support for Councillors

Scheme of Allowances - 3 -

2026/27

In addition to the allowances set out in this scheme, Councillors are provided with IT equipment to support them in carrying out their Council duties. Councillors may also claim up to £100 per year towards broadband costs; full details about this are included in the Policy for Members' IT in the constitution.

Appendix 1

APPROVED DUTIES

1. Attendance at meetings of the Council or any of its committees or sub-committees as a member of that body, observer, invited attendee or to address such a body
2. Attendance at meetings of the Executive Cabinet or any of its committees or sub-committees as a member of that body, observer, invited attendee or to address such a body
3. Meetings of Working Groups or Panels established by the authority, any of its committees or sub-committees or by the Leader of the Council provided that members of at least two political groups have been invited to attend
4. Any duty undertaken by the Chairman of the Council, the Vice-Chairman of the Council, the Civic Head, the Deputy Civic Head or by the Leader of the Council in that role
5. Attendance by Portfolio Holders, Committee Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen at preparation or briefing meetings for formally convened meetings of the Council.
6. Meetings of area or neighbourhood committees or forums
7. Other Bodies to which the authority makes appointments or nominations, or any committee or sub-committee of such a body
8. Meetings of any association of authorities of which the Council is a member
9. Site visits, provided these are in connection with the discharge of the functions of the authority or any of its committees or sub-committees
10. Joint meetings with other local authorities, conferences, seminars, presentations, training or induction sessions, provided these are in connection with the discharge of the functions of the authority or of any of its committees or sub-committees.
11. Any other special duties which the Council may wish to approve from time to time, provided these are in connection with the discharge of the functions of the authority or any of its committees or sub-committees

Note: Members may not claim allowances from more than one body in respect of any duty.

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COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

PART 5

APPENDIX 6

SHAREHOLDERS COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

Number of members	4.5 (must all be members of the Cabinet)
Politically Balanced Y/N	N
Quorum	3
Procedure Rules applicable	Cabinet Procedure Rules
Terms of Reference	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To approve Spadesbourne Homes Limited’s business plan, including any material amendments to the business plan. This should be determined in the financial year prior to the application of the plan. 2) To approve any new development not contemplated in the agreed Spadesbourne Homes Limited business plan. 3) To approve the appointment and dismissal of all directors, including Alternate Directors and senior employees, at Spadesbourne Homes Limited. 4) To approve the terms and conditions of employment and severance package for any Executive Directors and senior employees of the Spadesbourne Homes Limited. 5) To approve the pay framework and job evaluation scheme for Spadesbourne Homes Limited. 6) To adopt the Governance Agreement between the Council and Spadesbourne Homes Limited and to approve any material changes to that agreement. 7) To monitor the performance of Spadesbourne Homes Limited. Quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports should be presented for Members’ consideration at every meeting of the Committee.

COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

PART 5

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

COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

PART 5

<p>Special provisions as to membership</p>	<p>Members of the Committee must all be members of the Cabinet. Only members of the Cabinet can sit as substitutes.</p> <p>The Leaders of each opposition group or their nominated substitute will be invited to attend meetings and be given full rights to participate in meetings although they will not be entitled to vote.</p> <p>Members, including substitute Members, should receive suitable training in respect of their roles on the Committee prior to participate in meetings.</p>
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Annual Council
2026

20th May

Political Balance and Committee Allocations Report

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Karen May	
Portfolio Holder Consulted			
Relevant Head of Service		Claire Felton, Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services	
Report Author Claire Felton	Job Title: Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services Contact email: c.felton@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: (01527) 64252		
Wards Affected		All	
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A	
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)		Sustainability	
Non-Key Decision			
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.			

1. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Council is asked to RESOLVE that:-

- 1) **for the ensuring Municipal Year, the Committees set out in the table in Appendix 1 of the report be appointed and that the representation of the different political groups on the Council on those Committees be as set out in that table until the next Annual Meeting of the Council, or until the next review of political representation under Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, whichever is the earlier.**
- 2) **Members be appointed to the Committees and as substitute members in accordance with nominations to be made by Group Leaders.**
- 3) **the terms of reference for the Boards and Committees as set out at Appendix 2 be confirmed.**

2. **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The political balance is reported for Members' consideration at Annual Council meetings.

Annual Council 2026

20th May

- 2.2 Further reports in respect of the political balance may be presented for Council's consideration during the municipal year should there be a change to the political composition of the authority.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The Council is required by law and/or its own Constitution to appoint various Boards and Committees, agree their terms of reference and to agree the allocation of seats which are subject to the rules of political proportionality. It must review the political balance on an annual basis.
- 3.2 The rules of political proportionality mean that the political balance of the Council needs to be reflected in the political composition of individual Boards and Committees. In addition, the total number of seats allocated to each group must reflect the political balance of the Council.
- 3.3 The proposed allocation of seats on each Board/Committee is done on a strict mathematical basis.
- 3.4 When the Council reviewed the constitution in June 2015, it agreed the principle of substitute members on the Planning and Licensing Committees undertaking the same training as the full members of the Committees. In order that such training can be run effectively by including all Councillors for whom it is most relevant, group leaders are asked to identify who will act as substitute members for the Licensing and Planning Committees for this municipal year.
- 3.5 It should be noted that there is a constitutional requirement for each Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Board to have a specific named substitute. Group leaders are therefore asked to identify who the specific named substitute is for each of their members on the Board as soon as possible in the municipal year.
- 3.6 For all other committees, substitutes will be notified to the Democratic Services Officers, as required, on the instruction of the Group concerned.
- 3.7 The Committee Terms of Reference, from Part 5 of the constitution, are reviewed each year at the Council meeting alongside the political balance. The current Committee terms of reference are attached at Appendix 2 for Members to confirm.
- 3.8 This Appendix does not include reference to the terms of reference for the Shareholders Committee. This is because an amendment to the terms of reference has been proposed separately in a report to the Annual Council meeting detailing proposed changes to the Constitution.

4. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Sections 15 -17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 place a duty on Councils to allocate the seats on certain committees in proportion to the size of the political groups on the Council.
- 5.2 The definition of a Political Group for these purposes is that it has a minimum of 2 members. The current composition of the Council is 11 Conservative group members, 7 Liberal Democrat group members, 6 Labour Group members, 6 Independent 2025 group members, and 1 non-aligned member.
- 5.3 A review of the political balance must take place as soon as is reasonably possible after a change occurs to the Council's political balance. Whilst there has been no change to the political balance since the figures were last reviewed, there is also a requirement for the political balance to be reviewed at the Annual Council meeting.

6. **OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**

Relevant Strategic Purpose

- 6.1 A review of the Council's political balance is required at the Annual Council meeting. The review will help to ensure that the Council remains sustainable.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.2 There are no specific climate change implications.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.3 There are no specific equalities and diversity implications.

7. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 Given there is a legal duty on Councils to allocate the seats on certain Committees in proportion to the size of the political groups on the Council, Members do need to agree the political balance.
- 7.2 There is a risk that if a political balance is not agreed for the Council this could cause reputational damage.

Annual Council 2026

20th May

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Political Balance May 2026 (to follow)

Appendix 2 – Committee Terms of Reference

AUDIT, STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Number of Members	11, none of whom may be members of the Cabinet + 2 co-opted non voting Parish Council representatives, who may not also be District Councillors, for the purpose of Standards
Attendance by other Councillors	Portfolio Holder with responsibility for finance expected to attend each meeting
Politically Balanced Y/N	Y
Quorum	5
Procedure applicable	<p>Rules</p> <p>Audit, Standards and Governance Committee Procedure Rules and Council Procedure Rules (with the exception of Council Procedure Rules 2-4, 6, 8-10, 12.2 – 12.3, 14, 17,19, 20 and 21) – if there is any conflict, Audit, Standards and Governance Committee Procedure Rules to take precedence</p>
Terms of Reference	<p><u>Stewardship and Audit</u></p> <p>To provide independent assurance to the Council in relation to:</p> <p>a. The effectiveness of the Council’s governance arrangements, risk management framework and internal control environment, including overseeing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk management strategies; • Anti-fraud arrangements; • Whistle-blowing strategies; • Internal and external audit activity • Democratic governance <p>b. the effectiveness of the Council’s financial and non-financial performance to the extent it affects</p>

	<p>exposure to risk and poor internal control;</p> <p>c. the annual governance statement.</p> <p>d. The review of the annual statement of accounts, confirming the appropriate accounting policies have been followed, including the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts.</p> <p><u>Appointment of External Auditors</u></p> <p>e. To arrange the recruitment and operation of the Council's Auditor Panel, in accordance with the requirements of the Audit and Accountability Act 2014.</p> <p><u>Standards</u></p> <p>f. Promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Councillors and any co-opted members of Council bodies.</p> <p>g. Assist Councillors and co-opted members to observe the Members' Code of Conduct.</p> <p>h. Advise the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct.</p> <p>i. Monitor the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct.</p> <p>j. Advise, train or arrange to train Councillors and co-opted members on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct.</p> <p>k. Formulate advice for Members and officers on declarations of gifts and hospitality and monitor and review the arrangements for recording interests, gifts and hospitality.</p> <p>l. Grant dispensations to Councillors and co-opted members from requirements relating to interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct.</p> <p>m. For both District and Parish Councils, deal with</p>
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	<p>any report from the Monitoring Officer following an investigation into a complaint concerning the Members' Code of Conduct (statutory requirement).</p> <p>n. For both District and Parish Councils, consider and determine allegations that a Councillor or co-opted Councillor may have failed to follow the Code of Conduct and where a breach of the Code is established, impose sanctions as delegated by full Council or make recommendations as to any sanctions to the appropriate person or body (statutory requirement).</p> <p>o. Monitor and review the operation of the Protocol on Member-Officer relations.</p> <p>p. Monitor and review the operation of the Protocol on Member-Member relations.</p>
Special provisions as to the Chairman	The Chairman shall where possible not be a member of a political group represented in Cabinet
Whipping arrangements	The party whip must not be applied
Substitutes	<p>Substitutes are permitted</p> <p>A substitute is permitted for the Co-opted Non-voting Parish Representative (who shall not be a member of the same Parish Council as either of the Parish members).</p>
Officer attendance	S151 Officer, Monitoring Officer and Audit Services Manager or their deputies are expected to attend each meeting.
Special provisions as to membership	<p>Quasi-judicial meetings training will be required before members sit on hearings.</p> <p>Members of the Cabinet or the Chairman of the Council may not be a member of or substitute on the Audit, Standards & Governance Committee.</p>

ELECTORAL MATTERS COMMITTEE

Number of Members	7
Politically Balanced Y/N	Y
Quorum	4
Procedure Rules applicable	Council Procedure Rules (with the exception of Council Procedure Rules 1-4, 9 - 11, 13.4, 13.5, 14, 15, 18.2, 20.1 and 22)
Terms of Reference	To exercise powers and undertake functions relating to electoral matters and elections
Special provisions relating to appointment of Chairman	None
Special provisions as to membership	None

JOINT APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE FOR BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL AND REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Local Authority Membership	Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council
Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service • Appointment of Joint Statutory Officer Posts
Number of Members	10 made up of the Leaders of Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council plus 4 members appointed by Bromsgrove District Council and 4 members appointed by Redditch Borough Council.
Politically Balanced	Yes
Quorum	6 subject to each Council being represented at a meeting by at least 1 member.
Procedure Rules applicable	The Joint Appointments Committee Composition and Terms of Reference in Part 17, together with all other applicable rules set out under the Constitution and all applicable law.

Terms of Reference	<p><u>1. Appointment of Chief Executive/ Head of Paid Service</u></p> <p>a. Subject to (b) below, to undertake and determine on behalf of the Councils the recruitment and selection of the Joint Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service including the final approval of terms and conditions of employment for that post.</p> <p>b. The final decision as to the appointment of the Joint Chief Executive/ Head of Paid Service shall be reserved to full meetings of both Councils.</p> <p>c. To confirm into post or otherwise, the successful candidate following any probationary or trial period.</p> <p><u>2. Appointment of Joint Statutory Officers Post</u></p> <p>a. Subject to (b) below, to undertake and determine on behalf of the Councils the recruitment and selection of any Joint Statutory Officer Posts. (including the final approval of terms and conditions of employment for that post.)</p> <p>b. The final decision as to the appointment of the Joint Statutory Officer Posts shall be reserved to full meetings of both Councils.</p> <p>3. General</p> <p>a. To be responsible for ad-hoc employment matters affecting any Joint Statutory Officer Posts, except for any disciplinary matters which would be determined by the Statutory Officers Disciplinary Panel.</p>
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Special provisions as to Chairmanship	To be chaired alternately between the respective Leaders.
Special provisions as to membership	<p>All members of the Committee must have undertaken appropriate training on recruitment and selection with the respective Council, prior to participating in the recruitment process.</p> <p>No substitutes shall be permitted.</p>
Additional information	There will be one standing Sub-Committee of the Joint Appointment Committee known as the Statutory Officer’s Disciplinary Panel

LICENSING COMMITTEE

Number of Members	13
Politically Balanced Y/N	Y
Quorum	6
Procedure applicable	Rules Council Procedure Rules (with the exception of Council Procedure Rules 2- 4, 6, 8-10, 12.2-12.3, 14, 17, 19, 20 and 21)
Terms of Reference	1. To exercise all powers and duties of the Council in licensing and registration except the determination of applications and other matters relating to licences or licence applications delegated to Licensing Sub-Committees; in particular (but not limited to) the exercise of all powers and duties conferred by the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005 and the Local Government (Miscellaneous) Provisions Act 1976.
Special provisions as to the Chairman	None
Whipping arrangements	No whipping is permitted
Special provisions as to membership	The Leader, the Deputy Leader and the Chairman of the Council may not be a member of the Licensing Committee

LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE (Parent Committee – Licensing Committee)

Number of Members	3 (from the membership of the Licensing Committee) with a fourth reserve Member on standby for each meeting
Politically Balanced Y/N	N
Quorum	3
Procedure applicable	Rules Council Procedure Rules (with the exception of Council Procedure Rules 2-4, 6, 8-10, 12.2-12.3, 14, 17, 19, 20, 21 and 25)
Terms of Reference	To consider and determine applications and hearings arising from the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005
Special provisions as to the Chairman	None
Special provisions as to membership	<p>Only those Councillors who have undertaken the training specified below may sit on the Licensing Sub- Committee: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Committee Process and Quasi-judicial principles training 2. Licensing Act/Gambling Act, taxi licensing and other licensing functions covered by Worcestershire Regulatory Services <p>The Leader, the Deputy Leader and the Chairman of the Council may not be a member of the Licensing Sub-Committee</p>

LICENSING (MISCELLANEOUS) SUB-COMMITTEE (Parent Committee – Licensing Committee)

Number of Members	3 (from the membership of the Licensing Committee)
Politically Balanced Y/N	N (but to include where possible a member of the opposition)
Quorum	3
Procedure applicable	Rules Council Procedure Rules (with the exception of Council Procedure Rules 2-4, 6, 8-10, 12.2-12.3, 14, 17, 19, 20, 21 and 25)
Terms of Reference	To determine licensing applications (other than those arising under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005) including (but not limited to): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. private hire and hackney carriage driver, operator and vehicle licensing; 2. street trading consents; 3. sex establishment applications; 4. street amenity consents
Special provisions as to the Chairman	None
Whipping arrangements	No whipping is permitted
Special provisions as to membership	The Leader, the Deputy Leader and the Chairman of the Council may not be a member of the Licensing (Miscellaneous) Sub-

	<p>Committee</p> <p>Only those Councillors who have undertaken the training specified below may sit on the Licensing (Miscellaneous) Sub-Committee.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Committee Process and Quasi-judicial principles training2. Licensing Act/Gambling Act, taxi licensing and other licensing functions covered by Worcestershire Regulatory Services
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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Number of Members	11, none of whom shall be members of the Cabinet
Politically Balanced Y/N	Y
Quorum	6
Procedure applicable	<p>Rules</p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules and Council Procedure Rules (with the exception of Council Procedure Rules 1-4, 9-11, 13.4, 13.5, 14, 18.2, 20.1 and 22) – where there is any conflict, Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules to take precedence</p>
Terms of Reference	<p>The general terms of reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Board will be to perform all overview and scrutiny functions on behalf of the Council in relation to any matter affecting the District and its inhabitants</p> <p>The specific terms of reference include:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To receive and consider Councillor Calls for Action b. To perform the functions relating to Crime and Disorder Scrutiny (in accordance with the Police and Justice Act 2006) c. To receive and consider Petitions d. To scrutinise the Budget e. To monitor performance improvement f. To identify unsatisfactory progress or performance and make recommendations on remedial action to the Cabinet; g. To monitor the following Council documents/strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Annual Report • Improvement Plan • Performance Management Strategy/Data Quality Strategy • Quarterly Finance & Performance Monitoring report
Special provisions as to the Chairman	The Chairman shall where possible not be a member of a political group represented in Cabinet
Officer attendance	A Director is expected to attend each meeting. The relevant Head of Service is expected to attend for consideration of any item within his/her area of responsibility
Whipping arrangements	When considering any matter in respect of which a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Board is subject to a party whip, the Councillor must declare the existence of the whip, and the nature of it before the commencement of the Overview and Scrutiny Board's deliberations on the matter. The declaration, and the detail of the whipping arrangements, shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
Substitutes	Substitutes are permitted. There will be a named substitute for each member of the Board who will be kept informed of all of the business of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, including receiving copies of the agenda for meetings of the Board, so that they are fully informed when attending meetings on behalf of the lead Member. [Substitutes cannot be used for Task Group meetings.]
Special provisions as to membership	Members of the Cabinet or the Chairman of the Council may not be a member of or substitute on the Overview & Scrutiny Board.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Number of Members	11
Politically Balanced Y/N	Y
Quorum	6
Procedure applicable	Rules Planning Procedure Rules and Council Procedure Rules (with the exception of Council Procedure Rules 1-4, 9-11, 13.4, 13.5, 14, 18.2, 20.1 and 22) – where there is any conflict, Planning Procedure Rules to take precedence
Terms of Reference	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To exercise all powers and duties of the Council on all matters relating to development control, including but not limited to:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. considering and determining applications for planning permission b. enforcement of planning control c. building preservation, Listed Buildings and Conservation areas d. Tree preservation orders e. Control of advertisements f. Footpath diversion orders under the Town and Country Planning legislation g. Certificates of Lawfulness h. Operational planning policies 2. To comment on proposals for development submitted by Worcestershire County Council and other public authorities 3. To determine High Hedges applications in accordance with Part 8 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
Special provisions as to	The Chairman of Planning cannot be a member of

the Chairman	Cabinet.
Substitutes	Trained substitutes are permitted
Special provisions as to membership	<p>Only those Councillors who have undertaken appropriate training may sit on the Planning Committee.</p> <p>The Leader may not be a member or act as a substitute for a member of the Planning Committee.</p>

SHAREHOLDERS COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

(The Shareholders Committee's terms of reference are not attached for this item as they are subject to proposed amendments and due to be considered under a separate item on the agenda dedicated to review of the Council's constitution.)

Outside Body Appointments 2026/27

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor K. J. May
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Head of Service		Claire Felton
Report Author Claire Felton	Job Title: Assistant Director, Legal, Democratic and Property Services Contact email: c.felton@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881429	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A
Relevant Council Priority		Sustainability
Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Council makes appointments and nominations to a number of Outside Bodies each year. This report sets out the details of the appointments which are made by the Council.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

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

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

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 No specific legislation governs the appointment or nomination of members to outside bodies by the Council. Depending on the nature of the relationship the Council has with the organisation, the legal status of the organisation, its corporate, charity or other status and its constitution, there are differing legal implications for the members sitting on these bodies.
- 5.2 The Local Authorities (Indemnities for Members and Officers) Order 2004 governs the Council's ability to indemnify members sitting on outside bodies.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 5.1 There are no implications for Local Government Reorganisation.

Relevant Council Priority

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

Climate Change Implications

- 5.3 There are no specific climate change implications.

Community Impact

- 5.4 Members who are appointed to serve on outside bodies on behalf of the Council can make a valuable contribution to the local community. This includes by serving on local Voluntary and Community Sector groups.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 5.5 There are no specific equalities and diversity implications.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices

Appendix 1 - list of appointments to outside bodies

Background Papers:

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

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor K. J. May	
Lead Director / Head of Service	Claire Felton, Assistant Director, Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services	
Financial Services	James Walton Director of Finance / Section 151 officer, BDC / RBC	
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor - Governance	

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Council Appointments to Outside Bodies

20th May 2026

Organisation	No. of Appts & Length of Office	Appointed 2025/2026	Nominations 2026/27
Amphlett Hall Management Committee	2 (previous years 4) 1 year	J. Robinson S. Webb	
Citizens' Advice Bromsgrove and Redditch	2 1 year	E. Gray S. Webb	
Hereford & Worcestershire Integrated Care Partnership Assembly	1 and a substitute (new group first appointment made by Council on 17th October 2022)	S. Webb Substitute: S. Baxter	
Midlands Joint Council for Environmental Protection	2 1 year	H. Rone-Clarke S. Evans	
West Mercia Police and Crime Panel <i>Rep and sub must be from majority (or otherwise largest) political group on the Council</i>	1 rep and 1 substitute	H. Jones Substitute: B. Kumar	
Worcestershire County Council Corporate Parenting Board	1 1 year	E. Gray	
Worcestershire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	1 1 year	Delegate to the next meeting of the O&S Board to determine	
Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board (previously Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee)	2 1 year To include relevant Portfolio holder and one other member of the controlling group and one substitute	K. Taylor H. Jones Substitute: M. Marshall	

Agenda Item 13

Organisation	No. of Appts & Length of Office	Appointed 2025/2026	Nominations 2026/27
WMTemps Partnership Board	1 1 year	K. May Substitute: S. Baxter	

Council
2026

20th May

Bromsgrove District Local Plan – Notice of Intention to Commence Local Plan Preparation, Local Plan Timetable

Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Sue Baxter
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Ruth Bamford
Report Author Mike Dunphy	Job Title: Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager email: m.dunphy@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 81325
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	Economic Development Environment Housing Infrastructure
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Council is asked to RESOLVE that

1. The Notice of Intention to Commence Local Plan Preparation, attached at Appendix A, be approved.

2. The Local Plan timetable attached at Appendix B, be approved.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Nationally there has been a change and there is a new system for plan making in the UK. For Bromsgrove District Council this means that a new plan needs to be prepared under the new system. The previous progress made on the Bromsgrove District Local Plan (that was being prepared under the old system), most notably the information obtained from consultation on the Draft Development Strategy over the Summer and Autumn of 2025, will be rolled forward into the new plan making system. This work will be used to help inform the decisions taken as the Council prepares a new draft plan.

2.2 Towards the end of last year work with respect to the above national changes in the planning regulations progressed, and in March 2026 the Government formally introduced the new 30+4 plan making system.

This system, in conjunction with changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), are intended to streamline plan-making to allow for quicker adoption of Local Plans, therefore increasing the delivery of housing and economic development across the country.

- 2.3 The purpose of this report is to outline the initial processes required to begin plan preparation under the new system, allowing the progression of the new Bromsgrove District Local Plan to adoption as quickly as possible.

3. **OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

Notice of Intention to Commence Local Plan Preparation

- 3.1 Appendix A contains a Notice of Intention to Commence Local Plan Preparation (the Notice). As can be seen, this notice contains the information required by the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 (the regulations). Publication of this notice is a requirement to begin the 4 month ‘scoping’ element of the new process before the 30-month process formally begins. This notice is a procedural step and well defined in the regulations. The Notice needs to be agreed before December 2026. The Council has received funding dependant on the Notice being published before the end of June 2026.

Local Plan Timetable

- 3.2 Appendix B contains a new timetable for the completion of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan under the new 30+4 process. This timetable has been reproduced in a simplified table below. The requirement for the publication of a Local Plan timetable and its contents is set out in the regulations.

Local plan event	Start date	End date
1) Publish local plan timetable under regulation 8	29 th June 2026	
2) Publish notice of intention to commence local plan preparation under regulation 19(1)	29 th June 2026	
3) Publish notice of scoping consultation under regulation 20(1)(b)	See event 4 Below	

Council
2026

20th May

Local plan event	Start date	End date
4) Scoping consultation under regulation 20	6 week period during July/August/September 2026TBC	
5) Gateway 1: Publish Gateway 1 self-assessment summary under regulation 21(3)	October 2026	
6) Publish summary of scoping consultation under regulation 22	October 2026	
7) Publish notice of local plan content and evidence consultation under regulation 23(1)(a)	June 2027	
8) Consultation on the proposed local plan content and evidence (not less than six weeks) under regulation 23	June 2027	July/August 2027
9) Publish summary of consultation on the proposed local plan content and evidence under regulation 24	October 2027	
10) Gateway 2: observations and advice will be sought under section 15CA(3) of the Act in accordance with regulation 26	October 2027	
11) Publish Gateway 2 observations and advice in accordance with section 15CA(5) of the Act and regulation 26(5)	November/December 2027	
12) Publish notice of proposed local plan consultation under regulation 27(1)(a)	March 2028	
13) Consultation on the proposed local plan (not less than eight weeks) under regulation 27	March 2028	April/May 2028
14) Publish summary of consultation on the proposed local plan under regulation 30	August/September 2028	
15) Gateway 3: observations and advice will be sought under section 15CA(3) of the Act in accordance with regulation 31	August/September 2028	
16) Publish Gateway 3 observations and advice in accordance with section 15CA(5) of the Act and regulation 31(5)	September/October 2028	

Local plan event	Start date	End date
17) Submit the proposed local plan for independent examination under section 15D(1) of the Act	October 2028	
18) Publish the examiner's recommendations and reasons in accordance with section 15D(13) of the Act and regulation 37.	TBC	
19) Adoption of the local plan under section 15EA of the Act	April 2029	

3.3 As can be seen from the timetable above, the intention is to publish the notice and the timetable formally on the 29th June, this provides for a robust timetable to be set, shows the Council's commitment to plan making in line with the governments aspirations, and will also allow for £108k of additional funding to be secured. The Scoping consultation will follow later in the summer with a report being considered at the July Council meeting. The details of this scoping consultation will be worked up with the Local Plan Cross Party Working Group that was established to satisfy one of the recommendations made by the Planning Advisory Service earlier this year, following their independent review of the approach to plan making by Bromsgrove District Council.

3.4 As opposed to the detailed guidance and regulations on the notice and the timetable, the requirements of exactly what a scoping consultation is are not set out explicitly. The guidance is repeated below:

"This consultation stage provides the local community and other key stakeholders with the opportunity to have their say at the very start of the plan-making process. You must ask for views on:

- *what to include in the local plan*
- *how to approach future local plan engagement*
- *any other matters that you want to consult on*

You must run your scoping consultation after you have given notice of intention to commence plan-making. This consultation should last for at least 21 days and must finish before you publish your Gateway 1 self-assessment summary. You should use the feedback from the scoping consultation to inform your community engagement strategy.

For this consultation, you must invite representations from the:

- *general consultation bodies you consider appropriate*

- *specific consultation bodies you consider may have an interest in the preparation of the local plan*

You do not have to invite anyone else, but anyone can make representations at this stage.”

- 3.5 The limited regulations only require the scoping document to addresses the following issues:
- What the Council should include in a Local Plan,
 - How you would like the Council to consult you during the preparation of the Local Plan.

As such it will not contain or set a spatial strategy or contain details on any future policy or site allocations. The scoping document will make it clear, that people who have already responded as part of the Draft Development Strategy consultation do not need to resubmit their representations, they will still be taken into account in the preparation of the plan under the new system. It will also be stressed that there will be further opportunities to comment on detailed policies and possible site allocations as the new plan progresses, as per the stages outlined below.

- 3.6 As can be seen from above, the purpose of the scoping document is to seek stakeholder views at the outset of the plan-making process. This includes, but is not limited to, local residents, parish councils, infrastructure providers, statutory agencies, local businesses, developers and agents. As the Council has already sought the views via a number of local plan consultations, the scoping document will be drafted to ensure the views relevant to the scope of the plan that have already been expressed are reflected in the document.
- 3.7 The ‘plan content and evidence’ stage (local plan event number 8 in the table above) of the system has been widely interpreted by the planning profession as being the first significant draft of the Local Plan. The timetable indicates that the Council will consult on the draft plan in the summer of 2027. This will allow for all the responses from the previous Draft Development Strategy consultation, the additional evidence such as the revised Green Belt review, and the further transport assessment, to be fed into this draft plan, and help develop a draft infrastructure plan to be published alongside it as part of the consultation. Following this consultation there will be a gateway assessment carried out by an assessor appointed by the planning inspectorate, which will consider issues the plan may be facing at this stage, and if necessary, suggest ways in which any issues may be overcome.

3.8 The ‘proposed local plan’ stage (event 13 in the table above) is in effect the submission plan which the Council would like to present to the inspector. This stage has been timetabled for Spring 2028. This is to allow for enough time to respond to the previous stages, and also for a third gateway check on the plan to be carried out by the planning inspectorate prior to formal submission.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Local Plan process has a budget of £823k, financed as follows:

4.2 An initial £645k has been identified in reserves from 2026/27 onwards to fund the evidence base development, Examination in Public costs and any associated legal fees.

4.3 Funding of £70k has been awarded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to progress the Green Belt Assessment. An additional £108k has been awarded by MHCLG to help progress the Local Plan. To release the £108k the following requirements must be met by the Council:

- Publish a Notice of Intention to commence Local Plan preparation by 30th June 2026; and
- Publish Gateway 1 self-assessment by 31st October 2026.

4.4 The total available budget is £823k is proposed to be spent as per the table below.

Evidence base costs BDC	£420k
Legal Fees	£125k
Examination costs	£100k
MHCLG Green Belt Review	£70k
MHCLG Plan Making	£108k
Total Local Plan Spend	£823k

4.5 Staffing resource comes from existing posts within the establishment supplemented by three additional posts There is currently one vacancy within the establishment and this, and additional posts, are currently in the process being recruited to.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The new plan making system is now set out in the following regulations
The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England)
Regulations 2026.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 In June 2025, MHCLG wrote to Chief Executives of the Worcestershire Councils with an update on Local Government Reorganisation. Included within that letter is the following statement:

'The Government also recognises that developing proposals could distract councils from their essential day-to-day activities. However, residents and businesses depend on councils to deliver crucial services and to continue the efforts needed to establish successful new unitary councils. This is particularly important for advancing local plans to allocate land for new homes. As mentioned in the invitation letters, the Government expects local planning councils to work towards adopting an up-to-date local plan as soon as possible. Local Government Reorganisation should not hinder this vital work, nor should the introduction of the new legal framework for local plan-making later this year or our strategic planning reforms. Significant financial support has already been provided to eligible councils to aid in plan-making, and we encourage councils to utilise additional support available through the Local Government Association's Planning Advisory Service.'

- 6.2 The position expressed above remains unchanged, plan-making must continue irrespective of the Local Government Reorganisation work.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.3 The Bromsgrove District Local Plan is relevant to the following Council priorities:

1. Economic Development
2. Housing
3. Environment
4. Infrastructure

Climate Change Implications

- 6.4 The Bromsgrove District Local Plan will have significant implications for climate change, shaping the location and nature of new housing, employment, and infrastructure development.

Community Impact Implications

- 6.6 The approval of the Notice of Intention to Commence Local Plan Preparation and Local Plan Timetable will provide the communities across Bromsgrove District with a valuable update on how the Bromsgrove District Local Plan will be progressed. The final adopted local plan will have policies and allocations which address high quality design, provide for safer communities and help to address wider health and wellbeing by providing communities facilities and accessible open space.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.7 The consultation process is open to all to comment.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The Bromsgrove District Local Plan progress is being monitored via the Council's Corporate Risk Register.
- 7.2 The risk of not progressing a new Local Plan has been discussed at length in many forums. Whilst the Council does not have to begin plan-making under the new system until December 2026, there is no need to delay the initial processes under the new system until then. MHCLG has made it very clear that it expects plan-making to continue at pace and will not be afraid to intervene if plan-making does not progress.
- 7.3 Plan-making is strongly encouraged without delay. It suggests that the Council is committed to plan-making. Whilst simply progressing the earlier stages of plan-making does not give the control an adopted Local Plan gives, progressing a Local Plan as identified by this report does help to provide evidence that the plan is progressing and shows a pathway to adopting a plan. This is useful information to use in other settings such as development management.
- 7.4 In addition, should the notice and timetable publication and the scoping consultation not take place as described in this report, then the additional funding secured will have to be returned to the Government.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix A Notice of Intention to Commence Local Plan Preparation

Council
2026

20th May

Appendix B Local Plan Timetable

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Sue Baxter	12.05.26
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Guy Revans /Ruth Bamford	12.05.26
Financial Services	James Walton	12.05.26
Legal Services	Claire Felton	12.05.26
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)		

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Bromsgrove District Council – Draft Notice to Commence

1 Bromsgrove District Local Plan – Notice of intention to commence local plan preparation

Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 – Part 4, Regulation 19

- 1.1 Bromsgrove District Council hereby gives notice on 29th June 2026 of its intention to commence local plan preparation on the ‘Bromsgrove District Local Plan’ (the title by which the local planning authority will refer to the local plan) in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026.
- 1.2 This notice provides the public and other stakeholders advance notice of plan-making and details so that they understand when and how they can get involved in preparing the Local Plan.
- 1.3 The Bromsgrove District Local Plan will be produced as a new style local plan under the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023. The Plan will be prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, which came into force on 25th March 2026, and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). In addition, the Plan will respond to the changes to the planning system through the proposed updates to the NPPF, published for consultation in December 2025.
- 1.4 In light of preparing the Local Plan under the new plan-making system, the Plan will be prepared and adopted within 30 months once it passes through Gateway 1. In line with the Regulations, the Council will allow a minimum of 4 months from the date of this Notice before formally commencing the 30-month plan preparation process and pass through Gateway 1. It is anticipated that formal commencement of the 30-month plan preparation process will begin in October 2026.
- 1.5 The Bromsgrove District Local Plan will only cover local plan matters. It will not cover minerals and waste as Worcestershire County Council is responsible for the preparation of planning policy for minerals and waste development in Worcestershire.
- 1.6 The work to-date on the emerging Bromsgrove District Local Plan, including the work and comments received on the Draft Development Strategy consultation between 30th June and 20th October 2025, will feed into the preparation of the Plan under the new plan-making system. Although the Council has carried out regulation 18 statutory consultations under the legacy plan-making system, the legal requirements of the new system requires the Council to follow the requirements of the new system from start to finish. This does not mean that we cannot use the work already undertaken in the legacy plan-making system.
- 1.7 The geographical area of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan will cover the entirety of the administrative area of Bromsgrove District Council only (ONS Code – E07000234), as shown in Figure 1 below. The Council is not proposing to prepare a joint local plan with another local planning authority.

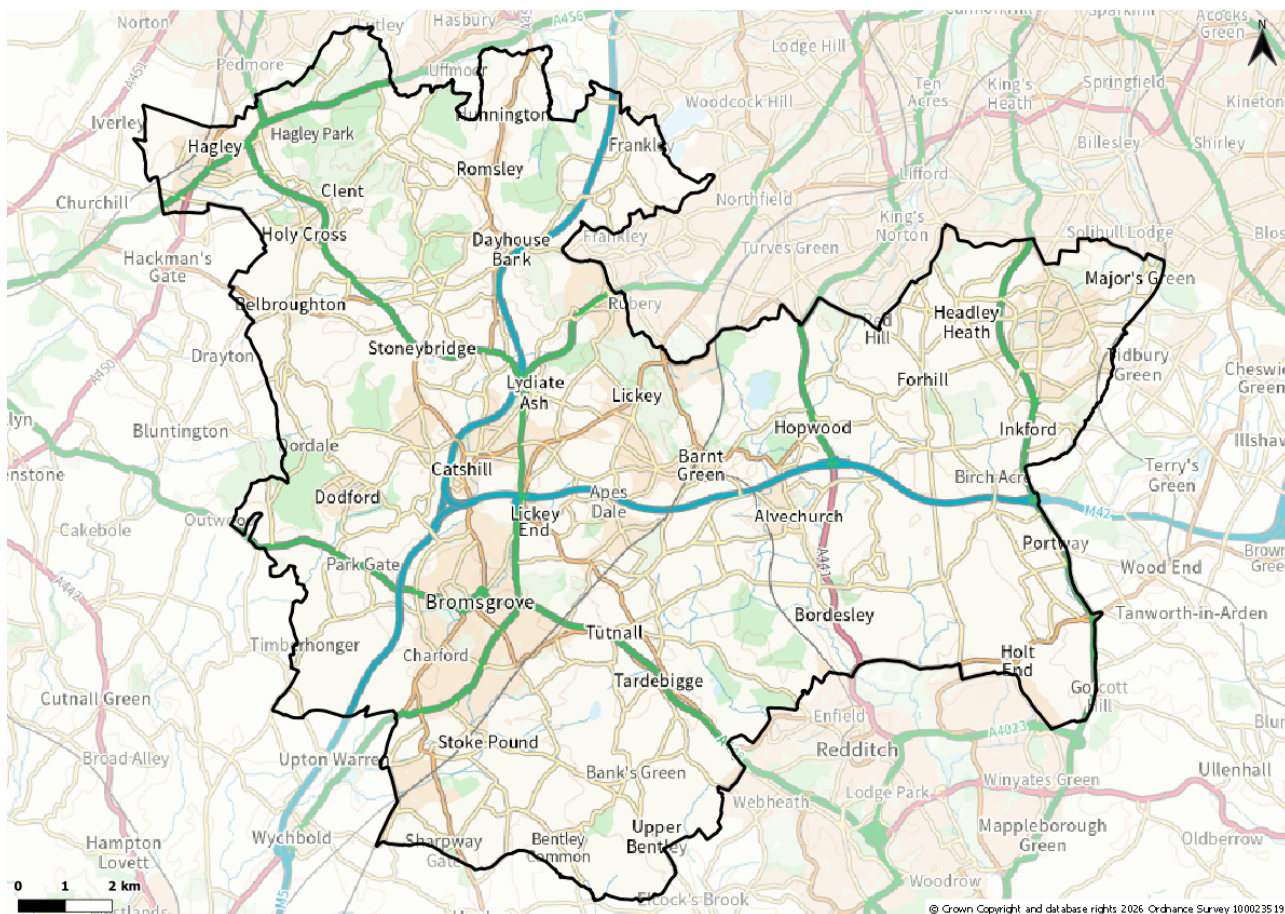


Figure 1: Bromsgrove District Council Boundary

1.8 The published Local Plan timetable for the preparation of the Local Plan can be found on our website, which includes details of where to inspect it at the Council’s offices and in District libraries during respective opening hours – [INSERT WEBLINK](#).

2 **Finding out more**

2.1 You can find out more about the emerging Local Plan on our website at – [INSERT WEBLINK](#).

2.2 Bromsgrove District Council’s Notice to Commence is available for inspection at Bromsgrove District Council, Parkside during office hours and at libraries across the District (Alvechurch Library, Bromsgrove Library, Catshill Community Library, Hagley Library, Rubery Library and Wythall Library) during their respective opening hours. Details and opening times of the libraries can be found online at – https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/libraries/find-library?field_district=645&field_type_of_library=All

2.3 If you have any questions or would like further information, you can contact the Council’s Strategic Planning team in the following ways:

By email: bromsgroveplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

By telephone: 01527 881288

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By post: Strategic Planning, Bromsgrove District Council, Parkside, Market Street,
Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B61 8DA.

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Bromsgrove District Council – Draft Local Plan Timetable

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Plan timetable sets out the anticipated key milestone dates for the preparation and adoption of the new Bromsgrove District Local Plan to be prepared by Bromsgrove District Council. The timetable outlines the opportunities for public and stakeholder engagement. The Local Plan timetable has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).
- 1.2 The Local Plan timetable came into effect on 29th June 2026 and replaces the Council's Local Development Scheme published in February 2025. The Council published its notice of intention to commence local plan preparation in accordance with regulation 19(1) of the above regulations on 29th June 2026, details of which is available on our website – **INSERT WEBLINK**.
- 1.3 The Bromsgrove District Local Plan will only cover local plan matters. It will not cover minerals and waste as Worcestershire County Council is responsible for the preparation of planning policy for minerals and waste development in Worcestershire.
- 1.4 The work to-date on the emerging Bromsgrove District Local Plan, including the work and comments received on the Draft Development Strategy consultation between 30th June and 20th October 2025, will feed into the preparation of the Plan under the new plan-making system. Although the Council has carried out regulation 18 statutory consultations under the legacy plan-making system, the legal requirements of the new system requires the Council to follow the requirements of the new system from start to finish. This does not mean that we cannot use the work already undertaken on the legacy plan-making system.

2 Scope of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan

- 2.1 The Bromsgrove District Plan (2011–2030) was formally adopted by Bromsgrove District Council in January 2017. This follows an independent examination in public and receipt of the Inspector's Report into the examination of the Plan, concluding that the Plan was judged to have been found 'sound'. The adoption of the District Plan superseded all policies contained within the previous Bromsgrove Local Plan 2004 and became part of the statutory development plan for the District.
- 2.2 The Council is now in the process of reviewing and replacing the Bromsgrove District Plan (2011–2030) which will set out a vision and strategy for where new housing, employment and other development alongside supporting infrastructure will take place up to the end of the plan period (2044). The Plan will also contain local policies that are not covered by the national decision-making policies to be contained in the forthcoming National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Together, these policies will be used to determine planning applications, guiding what can be built, where, and how. The scope and content of the Local Plan will be reviewed following the scoping consultation and the subsequent local plan content and evidence base consultation.
- 2.3 The emerging Bromsgrove District Local Plan will be produced as a new style local plan under the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023. The Plan will be prepared in

accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, which came into force on 25th March 2026, and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). In addition, the Plan will respond to the changes to the planning system through the proposed updates to the NPPF, published for consultation in December 2025. In light of preparing the Local Plan under the new plan-making system, the Plan will be prepared and adopted within 30 months once it passes through Gateway 1.

- 2.4 The geographical area of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan will cover the entirety of the administrative area of Bromsgrove District Council only (ONS Code – E07000234), as detailed in the notice of intention to commence local plan preparation – **INSERT WEBLINK**. The Council is not proposing to prepare a joint local plan with another local planning authority.
- 2.5 When the Council confirms whether it will be preparing any supplementary plans, these will be included in an update to the Local Plan timetable. For each supplementary plan, the subject matter and geographical area, site or sites that each of those supplementary plans is to relate to will be confirmed.
- 2.6 The Council must ensure that for every part of its area, the development plan includes requirements with respect to design that relates to development, or development of a particular description, which the authority considers should be met for planning permission for the development to be granted. The Council will ensure that the development plan includes requirements with respect to design to meet section 15F of the Act.

3 Timetable for the preparation of the new Bromsgrove District Local Plan

3.1 An overview of the new plan-making process is provided in Figure 1 below.

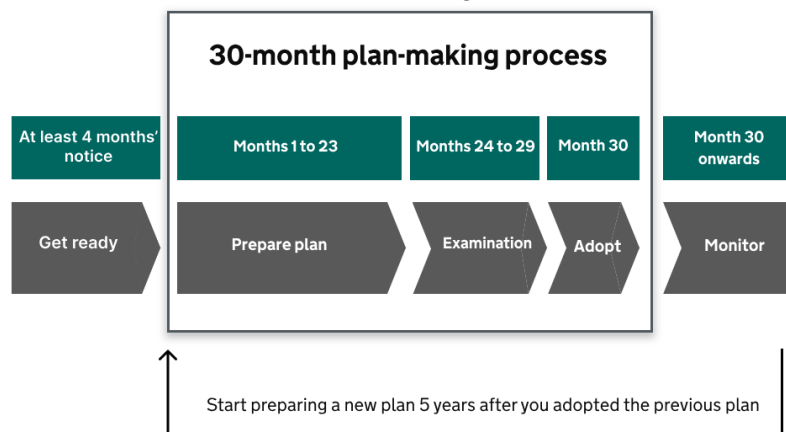


Figure 1: Illustration of the main stages and timings in the 30-month process (Source: GOV.UK <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/30-month-local-plan-process-an-overview>)

- 3.2 The first stage is to publish the local plan timetable and notice of commencement of plan-making. The notice is a minimum 4 months' notice before formally preparing the Local Plan and the start of the 30-month period to adopt the Local Plan. The commencement of the 30-month period starts when the Council passes through Gateway 1 (publication of the self-assessment summary).
- 3.3 The new local plan-making system allows for three consultations; a scoping consultation (before the 30-month formal process begins); proposed local plan content and evidence

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consultation; and finally, the proposed local plan consultation (prior to submission of the proposed local plan for independent examination).

- 3.4 The anticipated key milestone dates for the preparation and adoption of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan are shown in Table 1 below. The timetable will be updated as soon as is reasonably practicable once the relevant event has occurred or consultation has commenced.

Table 1: Local Plan timetable for the Bromsgrove District Local Plan

Local plan event	Start date	End date
1) Publish local plan timetable under regulation 8	29 th June 2026	
2) Publish notice of intention to commence local plan preparation under regulation 19(1)	29 th June 2026	
3) Publish notice of scoping consultation under regulation 20(1)(b)	See event 4 Below	
4) Scoping consultation under regulation 20	6 week period during July/August/September 2026 TBC	
5) Gateway 1: Publish Gateway 1 self-assessment summary under regulation 21(3)	October 2026	
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16) Publish Gateway 3 observations and advice in accordance with section 15CA(5) of the Act and regulation 31(5)	September/October 2028	

17) Submit the proposed local plan for independent examination under section 15D(1) of the Act	October 2028
18) Publish the examiner's recommendations and reasons in accordance with section 15D(13) of the Act and regulation 37.	TBC
19) Adoption of the local plan under section 15EA of the Act	April 2029

*Reference to a specific regulation means the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026

**Reference to "the Act" means the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)

4 Monitoring and updating of the Local Plan timetable

4.1 The Council will review the Local Plan timetable monthly from the date it came into effect and update it as necessary and as soon as is reasonably practicable when any changes are required.

4.2 The Council will also update the Local Plan timetable, as necessary and as soon as is reasonably practicable, including if any of the following events happen:

- Any further consultations that the Council decides to hold or if further observations and advice will be sought at Gateway 3 as necessary.
- Any key examination related events as necessary (main modifications consultation or pause of examination).
- If the Local Plan is withdrawn under section 15E of the Act or revoked under section 15G of the Act.
- Details of any supplementary plans that the Council decides to prepare.

4.3 A schedule of the amendments to the Local Plan timetable are recorded in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Schedule of amendments to the Local Plan timetable

<u>Amendment No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Schedule of amendments</u>

5 Finding out more

5.1 You can find out more about the emerging Local Plan on our website at – **INSERT WEBLINK**.

5.2 The Local Plan timetable is available for inspection at Bromsgrove District Council, Parkside during office hours and at libraries across the District (Alvechurch Library, Bromsgrove Library, Catshill Community Library, Hagley Library, Rubery Library and Wythall Library) during their respective opening hours. Details and opening times of the libraries can be found online at – https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/libraries/find-library?field_district=645&field_type_of_library=All

- 5.3 If you have any questions or would like further information, you can contact the Council's Strategic Planning team in the following ways:

By email: bromsgroveplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

By telephone: 01527 881288

By post: Strategic Planning, Bromsgrove District Council, Parkside, Market Street, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B61 8DA.

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Recommendations from the Cabinet meeting held on 20th April 2026

Revision of Environmental Crime Enforcement Policy

RECOMMENDED that the Bromsgrove and Redditch Enforcement Policy be adopted and replace the current Joint Environmental Enforcement.

Introduction of Enforcement of Littering from Vehicles

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) Civil enforcement of Littering from Vehicles be introduced;
- 2) The Civil Enforcement Team be given delegated authority to issue Litter Penalty Charge Notices;
- 3) The parking administration team be authorised to deal with appeals and enforcement matters in respect of Litter Penalty Charge Notices;
- 4) The Penalty Notice Charge be set at the level set by Council for Criminal offences where a Fixed Penalty Notice is served for Depositing Litter (section 87/88 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990) which for 2026/27 subject to Council approval are proposed to be set as:
 - a) £250; and
 - b) £125 for prompt payment (within 14 days); and
- 5) Authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Regeneration & Property to issue Penalty Notice Charges for Littering from Vehicles under The Littering From Vehicles Outside London (Keepers: Civil Penalties) Regulations 2018.

Climate Change Strategy 2026 to 2031

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) The Council's Climate Change Strategy 2026–2031 be approved; and
- 2) an annual review of the Climate Change Strategy be reported to Council.

Empty Homes Strategy

RECOMMENDED that the Bromsgrove District Council Empty Homes Strategy 2026 – 29 be adopted.

Renters Rights Act 2025

RECOMMENDED that the Scheme of Delegations be amended to incorporate new powers under the Renters Rights Act 2025.

Quarter 3 2025/26 Finance and Performance Monitoring Report (Including Financial Savings)

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) That the Balance Sheet Monitoring Position for Q3 is noted – which is the Treasury Monitoring Report and required to be reported to Council; and
- 2) That £120k capital funding be approved for work on fixing potholes on the Aston Road roundabout and the road leading to the depot.

Bromsgrove Environmental Crime Enforcement Policy

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Kit Taylor Councillor Peter Whittaker
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Simon Wilkes, Director Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Report Author Toni Ainscough	Job Title: Principal Officer Contact email:toni.ainscough@worcsregservices.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01562 738035	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A
Relevant Council Priority		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 Committee RECOMMEND that:-

- 1.1 **The Bromsgrove and Redditch Enforcement Policy be adopted and replace the current Joint Environmental Enforcement.**

2. **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Currently WRS's enforcement activities are being undertaken using the Joint Environmental Enforcement Strategy as in appendix 2.
- 2.2 The revised document in appendix 1 will only seek to cover activities that are enforced by Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS).

For the avoidance of doubt this **includes**:

- Fly tipping
- Littering
- Failure to dispose of waste appropriately
- Dog fouling

This revised enforcement policy **will not include**:

- Abandoned and nuisance vehicles and
- the enforcement of graffiti and fly posting

- 2.2 Officers are seeking to implement an enforcement document that reflects the current working strategies of enforcement practices and tools available to WRS.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 Officers at WRS are required when undertaking enforcement activities to have due regard to the current enforcement strategy. This document (appendix 2) does not include the enforcement options available to them.
- 3.2 An updated and current enforcement policy is required to enable Officers to make use of intelligence and use all suitable tools.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications. The proposed enforcement policy will align with WRS's approach to enforcement which covers the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices as an enforcement tool. This is used in lower-level offending to discharge the liability of the offence. Fines generate an income which is put back into the service

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 As set out at paragraph 1.2 of the new policy (Appendix 2), legislation provides for local authorities to be able to take enforcement action in relation to enviro crime incidents such as littering and fly tipping which are harmful to the environment. Action can be in the form of issuing civil penalty notices, use of community protection notices or bringing formal prosecutions through the courts. The main pieces of legislation under which these powers can be exercised are the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (sections 43-58), the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 and the Control of Pollution (Amendment) Act 1989.
- 5.2 Alongside the legislative powers listed above, in order for successful enforcement action to be taken, it is necessary for the Council to have an up to date enforcement policy to set out the framework of rules it will adhere to when it investigates breaches of the legislation.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 The implementation of this enforcement policy will strengthen the enforcement process now and in the future.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The proposal detailed within this report directly compliments Bromsgrove's Council Plan. The new strategy will assist the Council with addressing litter and dog mess and the impact of fly tipping and antisocial behaviour as part of the key objectives of the priority.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 This updated enforcement policy creates no material change to climate change implications but may offer minor environmental co-benefits to the district.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 The proposed enforcement policy will apply to all scenarios. However, due consideration will be given to public interest tests throughout the investigations that are undertaken.
- 6.5 The proposed policy will have a positive equality implication through the protection of public health and safety, which will support vulnerable members of the community who may be at greater risk from health implications due to dog fouling or improper disposal of waste.
- 6.6 The policy also explicitly recognises the importance of fair, independent and objective decisions that do not treat people differently because of any protected characteristic.
- 6.7 Accessible communication and guidance is a key part of this policy, ensuring that everyone can access information and support.
- 6.8 A wider Equality Impact Assessment is being undertaken with assistance from the Policy Team at Bromsgrove District Council to support how this policy can be implemented.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There is a risk that the Council, if the policy is not adopted, will be failing to make use of the most efficient tools to enable Environmental Enforcement and this could undermine the efficacy of the service.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Cabinet
2026

20th April

Appendix 1 – New Joint Environmental Enforcement Strategy.
Appendix 2 – Bromsgrove and Redditch Environmental Crime
Enforcement Policy.

Cabinet
2026

20th April

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Peter Whittaker PFH Env Services	03.02.2026 Notified.
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Simon Wilkes	24.02.2026.
Financial Services	Debra Goodall, AD Financial Services	13.02.2026 Consulted.
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor - Governance	18/02/26
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green, Policy Manager	06.03.2026
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Matt Eccles, Climate Change Manager	23.02.2026 Consulted

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Joint Environmental Enforcement Strategy Bromsgrove District Council & Redditch Borough Council

1.0 Introduction – Why do we need a Strategy?

- 1.1 In order to reduce crime and the fear of crime within a neighbourhood, signs of even low level crimes such as environmental crimes, need to be removed or reduced, as litter and dirty streets, graffiti, dumped rubbish and cars all give a feeling of unease whilst at the same time encouraging similar criminal behaviour. Environmental crimes have an adverse impact on the local environment and quality of life.
- 1.2 To mitigate against environmental crime, this Strategy focuses on not only the traditional aspects of environmental management, such as litter picking and sweeping and enforcement but also the softer elements such as advice giving and education (including both perpetrators and observers). However, by ensuring cases which do lead to enforcement are well publicised, a clear message will be sent out to other potential perpetrators of environmental crime.
- 1.3 Under the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) 1990, the Council has a duty to keep streets and public spaces clean and clear of litter and refuse. A range of powers for local authorities came into effect under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (CNEA) 2005. The CNEA has extended local authority powers to deal with issues that are considered environmental crime.
- 1.4 This Strategy supports Bromsgrove District Council's priorities of economic development, town centre and one community and all three Redditch Borough Council priorities – i.e. enterprising, safe and clean and green.

2.0 What is classed as 'environmental crime'?

- 2.1 The following are classed as environmental crimes and powers are given to Local Authorities to tackle these primarily through the EPA 1990, the CNEA 2004 and include:

2.2 Litter

Includes the offence of dropping litter as well as litter emanating from a business or littered private land which is open to the public such as a retail park or train station. Litter can also emanate from a premises which is not containing refuse correctly.

2.3 Fly-tipping

Varies in size from a single mattress or black bin bag to large-scale truck loads of construction, demolition and excavation waste. Some illegal dumps, whilst small in size, can be serious particularly if hazardous waste is involved. Waste is classed as a fly-tip if it is too large to be removed by a normal hand sweeping barrow. In simple terms, a single full bin bag upwards would constitute a fly-tip. Similarly several carrier bags full of rubbish dumped together would also constitute a single fly-tip. The majority of fly-tipping in Redditch is small amounts of domestic waste. In the more rural areas of Bromsgrove there are more instances of commercial loads of fly-tipping such as tyres, business or construction waste.

Appendix A – Joint Environmental Enforcement Strategy

2.3 **Dog fouling**

Offences whereby owners allow their dogs to foul on public open spaces. Please note that this enforcement activity does not include dog control orders or stray dogs, these are dealt with by Regulatory Services.

2.4 **Abandoned vehicles and nuisance vehicles**

Councils have a duty to deal with abandoned vehicles and can issue Fixed Penalty Notices for the offence. Please note that this enforcement activity does not carry out enforcement activities in relation to parking offences. In Redditch there is also a local policy which deals with the problem of untaxed nuisance vehicles which are parked on Council land which can be extended across Bromsgrove.

2.5 **Graffiti and fly-posting**

We are currently working on a cross service/partnership approach to tackling graffiti and fly-posting where the responsibilities of the different agencies and land owners will be clarified. However, environmental enforcement officers and Anti Social Behaviour Officers will take enforcement action in relation to these issues.

2.6 **Waste**

Covers offences in relation to waste receptacles, such as leaving bins permanently on public land, and non compliance with the Statutory Notice issued to all householders in relation to the household waste service. Covers both household and commercial waste issues, e.g. checking on waste transfer notes or waste carrier's licences

3.0 **Levels of Enforcement**

3.1 The interface between giving advice and more serious enforcement action is critical. In Bromsgrove and Redditch a staged approach is used as outlined below:

Stage 1	Advice given
Stage 2	Verbal warning
Stage 3	Written warning
Stage 4	Fixed penalty notice
Stage 5	Court proceedings

3.2 Environmental Enforcement Officers are given complete discretion towards the severity of the penalty. It should also be noted it is not necessary to progress through the stages and offences can be taken to stage 5 on a first account if this is considered appropriate.

3.3 The authorities will use the power whereby a discount on a FPN can be offered for early payment – full details of the amounts for the various offences are set out in appendix C. The standard period for payment of fixed penalties is set in the legislation at 14 days. Once a FPN has been issued, an authority cannot prosecute for the alleged offence if the fixed penalty is paid within this period and this must be stated on the notice itself. For this reason, the period during which a discount for early payment is offered, must be less than 14 days and to avoid confusion, guidance recommends that it should not be more than 10 days.

4.0 Awareness raising

- 4.1 An important part of the role of enforcement officers is to carry out proactive visible enforcement to tackle problems like littering and dog fouling.
- 4.2 Campaigning and the use of good quality promotional materials – statutory notices, standard letters, stickers, cards etc. plays an important part of this enforcement strategy. Additionally, regular publicity to promote our enforcement activities will take place, and we will ensure that we publicise successful outcomes in relation to a specific event.

5.0 Partnerships across the Council and with other Agencies

- 5.1 Environmental enforcement work supplements and forms part of our street cleaning and waste collection services. It supplements the schedules which are in place to keep the streets and other public open spaces clean and tidy and household waste collection services.
- 5.2 Working together with other service areas and agencies like social landlords is a critical part of the approach to tackling environmental crime. For example, in Redditch there are regular walkabouts in conjunction with tenancy and ASB officers as well as community support officers and police. Support of and attendance at events like PACT meetings is also an important part of our Strategy.

6.0 How do we check that what we are doing is working?

- 6.1 We will provide regular updates to Members on enforcement work and also report activities in relation to fly-tipping through the Flycapture database and any other such reporting systems that are required in the future.

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Bromsgrove and Redditch Environmental Crime Enforcement Policy.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Since June 2024, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) has delivered some environmental crime functions on behalf of Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils. This enforcement policy outlines the approach to be taken to tackle those environmental crimes that the shared service has been asked to address.
- 1.2 The following legislative provisions contain provisions that create criminal offences and provide local authorities and their officers with powers to tackle these. Legislation includes the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Control of Pollution Act 1989, Clean Neighborhoods and Environment Act 2005; Environment Act 1995 and Anti-Social Behavior Crime and Policing Act 2014. The common specific offences included are:
 - **Littering** to include the offence of dropping litter as and litter escaping from a business to include offences relating to public and private land.
 - **Fly tipping** from a single bin bag or mattress to large scale lorry-loads of waste. Most of the fly tipping in Redditch is single domestic waste items whereas Bromsgrove, being more rural, is more impacted by fly tipping by commercial enterprises.
 - **Failure to dispose of Waste appropriately** to include householder's and business's duty of care for how they manage and dispose of their waste. This includes any requirement to hold waste carriers licensing or requirements for waste transfer notes. The Duty of Care is a legal requirement for those dealing with certain kinds of waste to take all reasonable steps to keep it safe. It applies to anyone who is a holder of household, industrial and commercial waste, known as controlled waste.
 - **Dog Fouling** in public open spaces.
- 1.3 This policy supersedes the Joint Environmental Enforcement Strategy for Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council except for elements relating to abandoned and nuisance vehicles, and to the enforcement of graffiti and fly posting, which are outside of the scope of shared service activity and therefore also of this revision of the enforcement policy. These elements remain enforced by the Environmental Services team serving the two councils.
- 1.4 This Enforcement Policy explains how the Service will carry out its enforcement duties and, in addition, what business and citizens in the Bromsgrove and Redditch areas can expect. It will be applied by officers in relation to the functions listed in 1.2 above. It is distinct from any general Enforcement Policies of the individual local authority partners, which apply to other regulatory functions provided by them such as planning,



and from the general enforcement policy operated by the shared service covering its activities on behalf of the six district councils.

- 1.5 The primary outcome from service activities in this area is to ensure residents and businesses comply with legislation so that members of the public, businesses and their employees, and the environment are protected. The work should also ensure a level playing field for those involved in the commercial collection and disposal of waste. Fair, proportionate, and effective enforcement is essential to protecting the health, safety, and economic interests of all concerned, and there are a range of tools available to the Service to achieve this. Whilst in the main compliance will be achieved using advice and where needed, lower-level formal sanctions and actions, there will be a need to take people and businesses through the court process in some circumstances. These are outlined further in the policy.
- 1.6 In delivering these activities, the Service must also have regard to the various general duties imposed on the partner authorities e.g., section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act, and the general powers given to local government for the promotion of well-being under the various Local Government Acts. Officers are also obliged to ensure that their actions are in-line with provisions in the Human Rights Act 1998 when taking decisions relating to enforcement action.

2. Policy Scope

- 2.1 The shared service is committed to providing an effective service with officers carrying out their duties in an equitable, practical, and consistent manner. To achieve this, officers and the service will have regard to the principles in a number of documents that provide guidance or act as codes of practice which must be given due regard. These include:
 - The Regulators Code (DBaT)
 - Local Government Regulation's Home Authority Principle,
 - Office for Product Safety and Standards' (OPSS) Primary Authority Principle
 - The Crown Prosecution Service Code for Crown Prosecutors (as amended.)
 - Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Convention on Human Rights.
- 2.2 The Policy applies to actions in relation to all the relevant legislation enforced by the Service. Enforcement action for the purposes of this policy includes any action taken by officers aimed at ensuring that individuals or businesses comply with the law and goes beyond just formal enforcement action such as prosecution.

3 General Principles

- 3.1 Prevention is generally better than cure and the shared service's role therefore can involve actively working with householders and businesses to provide advice on and assist with achieving compliance. In line with its business methodology, where data



and intelligence identify a need for widespread educational or informative action to improve compliance, such actions will be delivered and prioritised as informal preventative measures. Where the service considers that formal action is necessary, each case will be considered on its own merits. However, there are general principles that apply to the way in which each case will be approached. These are set out in this Policy.

- 3.2 Regulatory matters will relate to both businesses and individuals. Both types of case will be treated in the same way and the general principles outlined around proportionality of action will be applied. Informal resolution will be tried before resorting to formal action and potentially the Courts, unless the law mandates that an authority must act in certain circumstances, or the circumstances are so serious that anything other than immediate formal action would be inappropriate. Even then, the service can use the discretion that all local authorities have as to the timeliness of taking formal action.
- 3.3 Enforcement decisions will be fair, independent, and objective and will not be influenced by issues such as ethnicity or national origin, gender, religious beliefs, political views or the sexual orientation of the suspect, victim, witness, or offender. Such decisions will not be affected by improper or undue pressure from any source. We will consider the views of any victim, injured party, or relevant person to establish the nature and extent of any harm or loss, and its significance, in making the decision to take formal action.
- 3.4 This enforcement policy helps to promote efficient and effective approaches to regulatory inspection and enforcement, which improve regulatory outcomes without imposing unnecessary burdens on business. We recognise the positive impact that the service can have on economic progress and growth in the local economy and see it as part of our role to encourage and support the growth of legitimate business activity within the legal framework provided by central government.

4 Intelligence and Risk

- 4.1 We will ensure that our resources are targeted where they will be most effective. We use intelligence, alongside the assessment of risk, to inform all aspects of our regulatory activity including:
 - Data collection and other information requirements.
 - Programmes of Inspection, Advice and support.
 - Enforcement activity and various forms of sanction.
- 4.2 Our approach to environmental crime will be intelligence-led and interventions will be driven by the assessment of data and information. Decisions on tactical actions will be influenced by:



- Compliance history (i.e., are there repeat offenders involved)
- Potential future risks (is there a likelihood of reoffending)
- Scale and severity (the size of incident, its wider impact, significance of the offence)

4.3 Intelligence will be used to direct inspection-based projects, targeting commercial sectors or businesses where there are known issues. Obviously, a complaint may also trigger a visit if that is the most appropriate response. We will review our approach to regulatory activities from time to time, to remove any unnecessary burdens from businesses.

5 Advice and Guidance

- 5.1 We will provide general information, advice, and guidance to make it easier for householders and businesses to understand and meet their obligations in clear, concise, and accessible language, using a range of appropriate formats and media. Information will cover all legal requirements relating to our activities, as well as changes to legal requirements. We will continue to ensure householders and businesses are aware of their legal obligations and where changes are of great significance, we will look at the best ways of informing householders and businesses of these changes e.g., through press releases, newsletters, social media, community groups or letter drops.
- 5.2 WRS will promote self service via Bromsgrove and Redditch's website to report environmental crimes, and an acknowledgement will be provided. When offering advice to businesses, the service will clearly distinguish between statutory requirements and advice/ guidance, aimed at improvements above minimum legal standards. WRS recognises its advice should help achieve compliance but impose the minimum burden required on the business concerned. Advice will be confirmed in writing, if requested.
- 5.3 Where a business knows it has a problem and seeks advice to remedy the situation; this will not normally trigger enforcement action unless the impacts on the environment or the public are severe. Where appropriate WRS will seek to support the remedial action to prevent future problems however must reserve the right to take enforcement action in serious cases.

6 Inspection and other surveillance tactics

- 6.1 WRS activity will be driven by intelligence. Inspection and other forms of market surveillance will inform us about problem areas or paint a picture of broader trends to help inform the deployment of resources.



6.2 WRS will focus its efforts where the assessment of intelligence or risk show there are areas where non-compliance is more likely or non-compliance poses a more serious risk to regulatory outcomes.

6.3 Where WRS and another law enforcement agency have a shared interest in an individual or business, we will seek to work together to tackle environmental crime. We will also share intelligence with other law enforcement bodies, where appropriate, to support regulatory outcomes. The service will also take account of the circumstances of smaller businesses, including any difficulties they may have in achieving compliance unless the non-compliance in question creates a serious risk.

7.0 **Enforcement Action**

7.1 In accordance with good practice, we will:

- Publish our Enforcement Policy,
- Report on our enforcement activities year on year to interested parties through an Annual Report,
- Follow-up enforcement actions where appropriate,
- Be transparent in the way in which we enforce requirements and, apply and determine penalties /sanctions/ formal actions (when such powers are made available.)

7.2 When considering what action should be taken, we will look to:

- Be proportionate to the nature of the offence and the harm caused,
- Change the behaviour of the offender,
- Eliminate any financial gain or benefit from non-compliance,
- Address the harm caused by regulatory non-compliance, where appropriate,
- Deter future non-compliance,
- Be responsive and consider what is appropriate for the particular offender and regulatory issue, and
- Avoid perverse incentives that might influence the choice of sanctioning response.

7.3 When considering formal enforcement action, we will, when appropriate, discuss the circumstances with those suspected of a breach and take these comments into account when deciding on the best approach, this will routinely form part of any investigation. Where a prosecution may be an option, the offender is likely to be offered an interview under the provisions of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, which will give an opportunity for the alleged offender to give their side of the story.

7.4 Where the outcome is a decision to send a file to the relevant legal service for them to consider prosecution, this will be reported to the potential defendants. For lesser



disposals, an explanation of the need for the action will be provided as soon as is reasonably practicable after the intervention.

7.5 Deciding what enforcement action is appropriate

In assessing what enforcement action is necessary and proportionate, consideration will be given to:

- The seriousness of compliance failure or offence.
- The individual or business's past compliance i.e. if this is a reoccurring issue.
- The scale and extent of the offence.
- The culpability of those involved i.e., was there guilty knowledge in the actions taken,
- Any official or professional guidance, legal opinions or case law.

7.6 Enforcement Options

There are many potential enforcement options in some legislative areas. The level of action taken will vary from no action/ verbal advice & assistance through to proceedings in Court. Examples of the main types of action that can be considered are shown below:

- No action/ verbal advice & assistance.
- Informal Action and Written Advice.
- Community Protection Warning
- Community Protection Notice
- Statutory Notice to produce information
- Fixed Penalty Notices
- Seizure of goods/equipment
- Simple Caution
- Prosecution
- Other Actions

7.7 No Action/ Verbal Advice or assistance

There will be circumstances where a contravention may not warrant action, or it may be inappropriate. Many minor contraventions can be dealt with via advice and/ or assistance. Where this is not appropriate, due to the behaviour of one party or where the complainant is from a vulnerable group, the service will consider the best option for intervention depending on the circumstances.

7.8 Informal Action and Written Advice

For minor breaches, we will give advice on how to put them right, including a deadline by which this must be done. The time allowed will be reasonable and take into account the seriousness of the contravention and the implications of the non-compliance.



Where the advice required is detailed, or there are potentially serious implications from the failure, the advice will be provided in writing. Failure to comply could result in further enforcement action.

Wherever possible we will advise alleged offenders about 'good practice', but we will clearly distinguish between what they must do to comply with the law and what is recommended best practice.

7.9 Community Protection Warning (CPW)

Issued under Part 4 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, CPW's are intended to address anti-social behaviour which unacceptably affects victims and the community. They act as a warning and must be issued prior to a Community Protection Notice (CPN) advising them to stop doing / do specific things and to take reasonable steps to achieve a specified result. A CPW or CPN can be served on an individual or a body such as a business. Failure to heed the warning contained within a CPW after giving a specified time frame where the effect continues may lead to service of a CPN. The purpose of a CPW is to prevent or reduce the effect of the conduct and the likelihood of it continuing or reoccurring.

7.10 Community Protection Notice (CPN)

Issued under the same legislation above, a CPN may be the next enforcement action should the warning of a CPW not be heeded. A CPN is appropriate where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a person or business's conduct:

- is having a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, and
- is unreasonable, and
- the behaviour is of a persistent or continuing nature.

A CPN outlines what steps must or must be taken in a given time frame. Failure to comply with a CPN without reasonable excuse may result in the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) with the fine being £100 for failing to comply with the requirements of the CPN. Alternatively, a FPN may not be appropriate, and the situation deemed severe enough to proceed straight to Court depending on the impact and in consideration with the principles of this enforcement policy. Items used in the commission of the offence may be seized. There is a right to appeal a CPN to a Magistrates Court within 21 days of issue.

7.11 Statutory notice to produce information

Officers of the Service have the power under various pieces of legislation, or through delegation, to issue notices that require information to assist in their investigations. This could include but is not limited to waste carriers license and waste transfer notes.



Failure to respond and produce the requested documents could result in FPN or prosecution.

All notices issued will contain details of any Appeals process that may be available to the recipient.

7.12 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's)

FPN's can be issued for the following offences:

- Littering - Depositing Litter (section 87/88 - Environmental Protection Act 1990)
- Failure to produce authority (Waste Carrier's Licence) (Section 5/5B Control of Pollution (Amendment) Act 1989)
- Failure to produce documentation (Waste Transfer Notes) (Section 34(5) and regulations made under it 34/ (6)/34A Environmental Protection Act 1990)
- Breach of Waste Duty of Care (section 34 Environmental Protection Act 1990)
- Fly Tipping - Depositing Controlled Waste (Section 34(1)(a) and Section 33(Z)(a) Environmental Protection Act 1990)
- Breach of Community Protection Notice (Section 52 of Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014)

FPN's are recognised as a low-level enforcement tool and avoid the defendant obtaining a criminal record. They will only be used in appropriate circumstances to give a fast and measured response to a situation. Where legislation permits an offence to be dealt with by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN), we may choose to administer a FPN on a first occasion, without issuing a warning. We will only issue a FPN if we are satisfied that there is enough evidence to consider prosecuting an individual for the offence the FPN is offered for as an opportunity to discharge their liability and avoid the risk of a criminal record. There may also be circumstances where it is considered that the offence is so severe and public interest tests (see later in 7.15 Institution of legal proceedings) require a case to be considered without the issue of an FPN.

7.13 Seizure of goods/equipment

We can seize a vehicle, trailer or mobile plant and their contents if it's believed it is being, has been or will be used to commit a waste crime such as fly-tipping. Vehicles and their contents can be seized under the Control of Pollution (Amendment) Act 1989 or the Environmental Protection Act 1990. A vehicle can be seized:

- If it is used in fly-tipping;
- If it is driven by somebody who is not registered as a waste carrier;
- If it is used to transfer waste to somebody who is not registered as the waste carrier;
- If it is being used at a site that is breaking the rules of an environmental permit;



There are also provisions in Section 51 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 to seize items used in the commission of offence. This legislation applies to the breaching of a CPN and can be undertaken prior to prosecution.

In both incidences such action is considered a last resort option where compliance has repeatedly not been achieved by other means and there are strict process measures that must be followed when carrying out this action.

7.14 The use of Simple Cautions

Where the public interest justifies it, the senior officer reviewing a case will consider offering a Simple Caution (or Reprimand/ Final Written Warning if the offender is below the age of 18.) In offering a Simple Caution, we will take account of the Home Office Guidelines in relation to the cautioning of offenders, and the Code for Crown Prosecutors. Where the offender is under 18 and a formal approach is being considered, appropriate bodies such as the Youth Offending Team will be consulted.

A Simple Caution requires an admission of guilt on behalf of the offender, however there is no sentence and there is no recorded conviction. A caution will remain on record for a period of 2 years and may be cited in Court should a further offence be committed and prosecuted during that time.

7.15 Institution of Legal Proceedings

Once an officer has completed their enquiries, a case report will be submitted to a senior officer, independent of the investigation, who will decide the most appropriate course of action using amongst other things, the criteria identified below.

Where the law has been broken, there is a range of enforcement options available and, under normal circumstances, a process of escalation will be used until either compliance is reached or there is no option other than to instigate proceedings. This approach would not be appropriate where there is a serious risk to public safety or the health of the environment, or the offences have been committed deliberately or negligently or involve deception, or where there is significant economic detriment or potential detriment caused by the activity. Each case is unique and will be considered on its own facts and merits.

The senior officer will take into consideration the requirements of the Code for Crown Prosecutors and other relevant codes before deciding whether to pass the file to the relevant legal officer for their review and the formal consideration of whether to authorise the institution of legal proceedings.

Before doing this, the senior officer will have to be satisfied that there is sufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction against each defendant for each offence



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identified. They must have concluded that a jury or bench of Magistrates, properly directed in accordance with the law, is more likely than not to convict the defendant of the charge alleged based on the evidence before them. To this end, the senior officer will look at all the available evidence, reliability of witnesses, supporting documentation and any other matters relating to the investigation. Only when this evidential test has been satisfied will the public interest to proceed with the prosecution be considered.

In deciding whether a prosecution will serve the public interest, the senior officer will balance factors for and against the prosecution carefully, fairly, and impartially. Some factors may increase the justification to prosecute whereas others may militate against. Below are some of the matters to be taken into consideration for and against criminal proceedings. This is not an exhaustive list and, as such, each case is taken strictly on its own individual merits:

Factors in Favour of Prosecution

- The offender was in a position of control within a business;
- The offence was premeditated and/or planned;
- The offender acted dishonestly, wilfully, or negligently.
- The offender targeted a vulnerable group or person.
- The seriousness of the offence is significant;
- The offender has benefited from the criminal conduct;
- The offender has received advice or a warning concerning the circumstances of the offence or similar matters.
- The offender has previous convictions that are relevant.
- The offence, though not serious in itself, is widespread in the area where it was committed.
- There are grounds to believe that the offence is likely to be continued or repeated, for example by a history of recurring conduct.
- The outcome of a prosecution might serve an important, informative purpose or establish a legal precedent.

Factors which would mitigate against the need for a prosecution

- The offence was minor in nature and because of a genuine mistake or misunderstanding, which did not involve significant negligence.
- The offender is vulnerable, for example through age-related issues, or was at the time of the offence suffering from significant mental or physical ill health, which contributed to the commission of the offence, and the offence was neither serious nor likely to be repeated.
- The offender put right the loss or harm caused prior to the intervention of the Service.
- The defendant was a youth at the time of the offence.
- There has been a long delay between the offence and any potential court action, unless either:



- (i) The offence is serious,
- (ii) The delay has been caused by the defendant or his/ her legal representatives,
- (iii) The offence has only recently come to light, or
- (iv) The complexity of the offence meant that there has been a long investigation.

7.16 Other Actions

Injunctive action is a civil law process that may be used to ensure that person or business desists from a particular pattern of behaviour or action. Whilst these are not the norm in dealing with regulatory matters, seeking an injunction may be the most appropriate method of disposal for an issue. A decision to seek an injunction would be taken by the legal officer for the relevant partner council and is most likely to be relevant where the normal legal processes such as the issuing of notices and prosecution have not led to resolution of a problem. WRS officers will work with the relevant partner legal team to develop such cases and support them being taken through the Court process.

If a CPN is breached, we can apply for a Remedial Order which may require the defendant to carry out specific works in line with the CPN or allow the work to be carried out on our behalf to remedy the breach. Refusing consent amounts to a breach of the Order which could possibly lead to further proceedings for contempt of court.

Some cases taken by the service can lead to applications being made under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA) for confiscation of assets, or a POCA investigation may run

alongside an investigation into breaches. These are likely to be the most serious cases, where there is persistence of offending over a long period of time or where the offences are deemed to be "lifestyle crime" under POCA. Their purpose is to recover the financial benefit that the offender has obtained from his criminal conduct. WRS will look to use these provisions in an appropriate manner.

8.0 Additional Information

The Senior Managers involved in making the more serious decisions will also have regard to legal advice from the relevant partner Head of Legal Services and will not instigate any legal proceedings without their authority.

8.1 Standards and Accountability

Where relevant WRS will create effective consultation and feedback opportunities to ensure we have continuing cooperative relationships with businesses and other interested parties. We will ensure our officers provide courteous and efficient services to residents and businesses. We will enable them to interpret and apply relevant legal requirements and ensure that they enforce requirements fairly and consistently in



similar situations. We will take account of comments from businesses and other interested parties regarding the behaviour and activity of our staff.

8.2 Liaison with other regulatory bodies and enforcement agencies

Where appropriate, enforcement activities within WRS will be coordinated with other regulatory bodies and enforcement agencies to maximise the effectiveness of any enforcement.

Where an enforcement matter affects a wide geographical area beyond the boundaries of Bromsgrove and Redditch Council areas involves enforcement by one or more other local authorities or organisations; where appropriate all relevant authorities and organisations will be informed of the matter as soon as possible and all enforcement activity coordinated with them.

WRS will share intelligence relating to wider regulatory matters with colleagues within the partner authorities, other regulatory bodies and enforcement agencies, and examples include:

- Government Departments and Agencies
- Police Forces and Fire Authorities
- Other Statutory Bodies
- Other Local Authorities

8.3 Obstruction of Officers

The areas of legislation covered by this policy make it a clear, that it is an offence to obstruct authorised officers in carrying out their roles. This includes offering the officer reasonable assistance in the conduct of their duties and investigations / inspections.

Section 6 and 7 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 and section 88 (8A) and (8B) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 make it an offence to fail to provide name and address or provide false or inaccurate name and address if an authorised officer proposes to give that person a fixed penalty notice in respect of nuisance parking an littering, respectively. These will be enforced, with Police assistance as required, to ensure that offences are dealt with at the lowest level possible.

The council regards the obstruction of, or assaults (physical and/or verbal) on, staff whilst lawfully carrying out their duties as a serious matter. Any instances will be referred to senior managers to determine the next steps, which may lead to legal proceedings against the perpetrator. Any threat or assault will not be tolerated.

8.4 Storage and Disclosure of Information

Information collected or recorded as part of the council's enforcement activities will be securely retained in a paper and/or electronic format for a period defined by legislation or



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required for future reference by the service. This information will include decisions taken about the choice of enforcement options.

The identity of a person providing the council with information about other people committing crime, will remain confidential unless prior agreement by the person is obtained, or its disclosure is authorised by law or by a court of law.

Personal data held manually or as computer records will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA). This information will be used in accordance with the council's

DPA registration. Exemptions to this include where information is disclosed to other agencies or used for another reason for the purposes of detecting or preventing crime. This will include the sharing of information between Council services and with the police and other enforcement agencies. Sharing of information relating to the Crime and Disorder Act will be undertaken in accordance with the appropriate information sharing protocol.

Right of access to information held by the council will be given on request, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information regulations 2004 unless the information is already publicly available (as described in the council's Publication Scheme). Exemptions can be found in the Act, Regulations and the council's publication scheme.

8.5 Appeals/Cancellation

There is no appeal process against the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice. Any dispute relating to the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice may mean the appellant will be invited to attend an interview under caution in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act. In the event of refusal to pay, then the matter will be considered for prosecution.

The Team Manager not previously involved in the case shall have the authority to cancel fixed penalty notices, but only if the notice is shown to have been wrongly served.

8.6 Further Information

Anyone requiring further information on this policy should contact Worcestershire Regulatory Services by writing to:

Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way,
Kidderminster,
Worcestershire
DY11 7WF
Or by e-mail to:
enquiries@worcsregservices.gov.uk

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Littering from Vehicles

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Kit Taylor Councillor Peter Whittaker
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Simon Wilkes, Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Report Author Toni Ainscough	Job Title: Toni Ainscough, Principal Officer (Environmental Enforcement) Contact email: toni.ainscough@worcestershire.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01562 738035
Wards Affected	ALL
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	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 Committee RECOMMEND that:-

- 1) **Civil enforcement of Littering from Vehicles be introduced.**
- 2) **The Civil Enforcement Team be given delegated authority to issue Litter Penalty Charge Notices.**
- 3) **The parking administration team be authorised to deal with appeals and enforcement matters in respect of Litter Penalty Charge Notices.**
- 4) **The Penalty Notice Charge be set at the level set by Council for Criminal offences where a Fixed Penalty Notice is served for Depositing Litter (section 87/88 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990) which for 2026/27 subject to Council approval are proposed to be set as:**
 - a) **£250; and**
 - b) **£125 for prompt payment (within 14 days).**
- 5) **Authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Regeneration & Property to issue Penalty Notice Charges for Littering from Vehicles under The Littering From Vehicles Outside London (Keepers: Civil Penalties) Regulations 2018.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Currently littering from vehicles is only enforced as a criminal offence and since June 2024 has been enforced by Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS). In line with the existing policy, enforcement has been discharged through informal action, Fixed Penalty Notices or consideration for prosecution. However, when littering occurs from a vehicle, to take formal enforcement action, there is a requirement to prove beyond reasonable doubt who committed the offence. Consequently, it can be difficult to identify the offender with sufficient certainty to take enforcement action.
- 2.2 On 1st April 2018, The Littering From Vehicles Outside London (Keepers: Civil Penalties) Regulations 2018 gave powers to litter authorities to issue Penalty Charge Notices to the keeper of a vehicle when the Council has reason to believe that litter was thrown from that vehicle onto land within the Council's control. This includes any highways within the district for which Bromsgrove District Council are the litter authority.
- 2.3 It is recommended that the Council introduces Litter Penalty Notices at the earliest opportunity and that the Civil Enforcement Team are given delegated authority to issue Litter Penalty Charge Notices and the parking administration team are authorised to deal with all appeals and enforcement matters in relation to these. Should Cabinet be mindful to introduce this proposal, communications to residents regarding the policy will ensue.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The Littering From Vehicles Outside London (Keepers: Civil Penalties) Regulations 2018 is a civil route based on the same model as the issue of a Penalty Charge Notice used for parking enforcement in Bromsgrove. Civil Enforcement Officers are in the District undertaking this duty on a day-to-day basis. If they are also able to issue a Penalty Notice Charge to a person depositing litter, this would be an effective use of time and resource whilst they are undertaking their parking enforcement duties.
- 3.2 Civil Enforcement Officers will only issue a Penalty Charge Notice if they witness the incident and will process this in a similar way to a system that is already in place (please see appendix 1 – flow chart).
- 3.3 Civil Enforcement Officers and parking administration team are already undertaking this service on behalf of Wychavon District Council.

- 3.4 These recommendations only concern littering from vehicles witnessed by Civil Enforcement Officers. All other officers of the Council or members of the public who witness littering from vehicles should report this to WRS using the report it form on the Council or WRS' websites or call WRS directly for investigation. Such reports will be investigated through the criminal route.
- 3.5 The legislation sets out that the Civil Penalty Notice Charge should be set the same as that level set by Council for Criminal offences where a Fixed Penalty Notice is served for Depositing Litter (section 87/88 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990). Subject to normal Council fees and charges setting processes the level is £250.00 reduced to £125.00 for prompt payment (within 14 days) from 1st April 2026.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The provision of Civil Enforcement Officers in Bromsgrove is through a contract with Wychavon District Council, managed by the Assistant Director of Economic Development, Property and Regeneration. The proposal is to expand the current Service Level Agreement (SLA) to include issuing of Penalty Notices for littering from vehicles The SLA variation itself will not incur any cost.
- 4.2 The Civil Enforcement Officers will be able to utilise their existing handheld devices, DVLA link and systems that they use. There are no additional equipment costs and only a small software set up cost which will be covered by the existing WRS Envirocrime budget.
- 4.3 The cost of each additional Penalty Notice that is served is negligible at 35 pence each. For any Penalty Notices that are unpaid, there is an additional £10 charge for debt recovery in line with the existing Service Level Agreement (SLA) arrangements for parking charges and will be covered by the current budget arrangements.
- 4.4 The current SLA arrangements set a contractual limit on Penalty Charges issued without additional costs. It is not anticipated that this limit will be exceeded. Publicity around the introduction of the enforcement will similarly reduce the likelihood of this.
- 4.5 The current team of Civil Enforcement Officers will be used and will be trained to monitor and report incidences of littering from vehicles during their parking duties. The parking administration team will be trained on the recovery of unpaid littering penalties with an added volume of correspondence to manage.

- 4.6 Intelligence collated in the course of the service delivery will be used to inform the targeted approach to the wider enviro-crime enforcement by WRS.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Littering from Vehicles (Outside London) Regulation 2018 derives from Section 88A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 which provides that the Secretary of State has the discretion to make regulations which may oblige the keeper of a vehicle to pay a fixed penalty to a litter authority where there is reason to believe that there has been littering in respect of the vehicle.

- 5.2 The legislation can be enforced by a local authority or charging authority for the offence of littering from a vehicle under Section 87 of the Environmental Protection Act. A person may be pursued through civil proceedings, where they throw down, drop or otherwise deposit any litter in respect of the vehicle and enforcement will be to a civil standard.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 None, other than the introduction of the enforcement of this legislation is consistent with neighbouring Wychavon District Council.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 This proposal supports the Council's environmental priority as it will contribute to safeguarding the natural environment. The priority specifically advises that increased environmental enforcement to protect the environment of the district key and that we will not tolerate environmental crimes such as fly tipping. This proposal will assist the Civil Enforcement Officers to deliver on this priority.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 No direct implications, however raising the profile of appropriate behaviour with regard to the environment helps support our Climate Change priorities.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.3 There are no specific equalities and diversity implications.

Cabinet 2026

20th April

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There is a risk of dilution of the CEO's parking duties. Although reporting littering from vehicles can be undertaken during the course of their current duties, it may distract from parking enforcement. The impact of this will be monitored.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Operational Flow Diagram.
Appendix 2 – FAQs

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Kit Taylor PFH WRS Peter Whittaker PFH Env Services	Consulted
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Simon Wilkes	Consulted
Financial Services	Debra Goodall	Consulted
Legal and Democratic Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor – Governance And Jess Bayley-Hill, Principal Democratic Services Officer	25.02.26

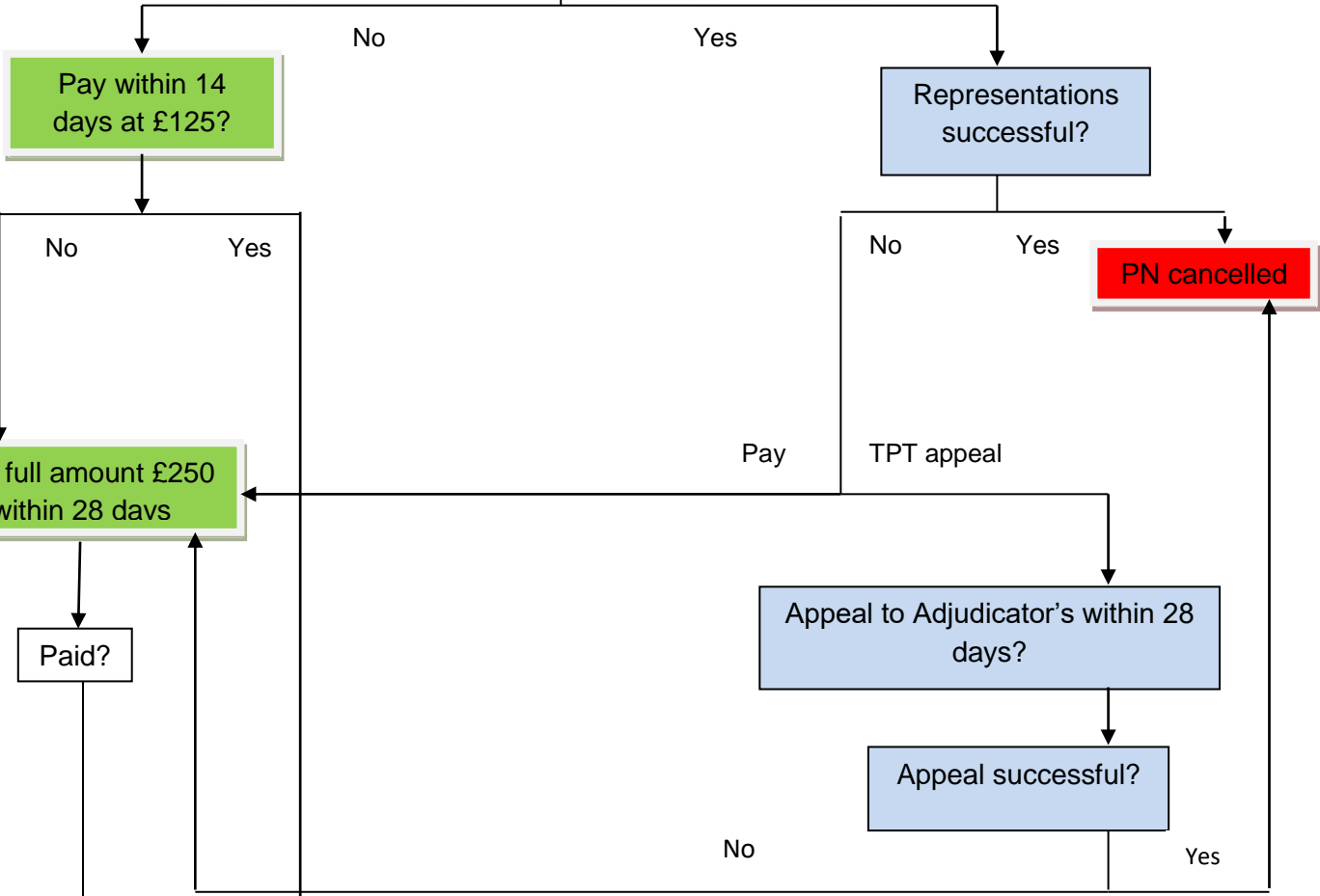
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Appendix 1

Littering contravention.

DVLA keeper details obtained and Penalty Notice sent to the registered keeper of the vehicle

Written representations?



No
Yes → **Case closed**

PN increases to £500

Paid within 14 days?

Register as a debt with TEC (£10 additional fee) and send Order for Recovery along with Witness Statement

Paid £510 within 21 days?

Register as a warrant and send to Enforcement Agents

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Appendix 2

Frequently Asked Questions

❖ **Why do you need this route when you have the criminal route for littering?**

The criminal route requires the person who littered. In the criminal route, if the person who littered was the passenger and the registered keeper does not supply the details we are unable to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN). This proposal seeks to empower the civil littering route where this clarification is not required. If a Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO) witnesses a littering from the vehicle, the registered keeper of the vehicle is responsible and would receive a Penalty Notice.

❖ **Will only Civil Enforcement Officers be able to issue Penalty Notices (PN)?**

Yes at this time.

❖ **What is the difference between a PN and FPN?**

Nothing as in effect they are the issuing of a fine.

❖ **Who will pursue the individual if left unpaid?**

The recovery of a PN is a set legislative process which is not dissimilar to that of a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN). There is a dedicated process and debt management system already in operation to process nonpayment of PCNs for parking charges a similar route will be used for the recovery of PNs. No investigation is required as the registered keeper is liable for the PN.

❖ **Are staff (CEOs) willing to issue PNs for littering offences?**

Staff are very willing and are currently frustrated that they are unable to issue Notices for the act of littering from vehicles when they see it on their patrols.

❖ **Will this proposal also cover people seen littering on the street?**

No, this proposal only applies to littering from vehicles. Any other littering witnessed would be reported to WRS to investigate via the criminal route.

❖ **Will there be scope to enable other Council Officers to use this route of compliance?**

Not at this time however if this proposal is approved it is something that could be considered in the future.

❖ **What is the additional cost?**

A small fee of 25p per PN will be due to fund the adjudication service (Traffic Penalty Tribunal) for cases that proceed to the independent tribunal service plus a DVLA enquiry cost per PN issued. If the PN is left unpaid and progresses, it will be

registered as a debt with the County Court at a cost of £10 per case. This amount is then added to the overall debt. It is not anticipated that many of these Notices will be issued (in Wychavon in 2025 only 5 were issued) but by approving the concept it gives Officers the option to issue.

Climate Change Strategy 2026-2031

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Sue Baxter
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Judith Wills
Report Author	Job Title: Climate Change Manger Contact email: matthew.eccles@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 07816112073	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A
Relevant Council Priority		The green thread
Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 1) The Council's Climate Change Strategy 2026–2031 be approved
- 2) an annual review of the Climate Change Strategy be reported to Council.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Bromsgrove District Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and committed to place climate considerations at the centre of decision-making. The proposed Climate Change Strategy 2026–2031 updates and replaces the previous Carbon Reduction Action Plan and sets out the pathway to Net Zero by 2040 for the Council's own operations, with a 50% reduction by 2030.
- 2.2 The Strategy aligns with the UK statutory target of Net Zero by 2050 and international commitments under the Paris Agreement; it also reflects the Council Plan's green thread, embedding climate action across services.
- 2.3 The Strategy focuses on priority themes where the Council has direct control or significant influence:
 - **Buildings – council estate** (energy efficiency & renewables),

- **Residential buildings** (retrofit & fuel poverty),
- **Transport** (fleet decarbonisation, EV infrastructure, active travel),
- **Planning & land use** (policies, Future Homes Standard readiness, district heat network feasibility),
- **Biodiversity** (BNG delivery, parks, nature recovery),
- **Waste & food** (recycling, weekly food waste collections, Anaerobic Digestion feasibility),
- **Collaboration & engagement** (partners, businesses, communities), and
- **Governance & finance** (training, procurement, reporting).

2.4 **Evidence base highlights (baseline & progress):**

- **Domestic retrofit:** £284,430 invested since 2019; a further c. £285,123 anticipated via Warm Homes Local Grant over three years (subject to eligibility and take-up).
- **Public EV charging:** installation programme underway (including 10 taxi chargers and additional units in 2025); chargers on BDC car parks have dispensed 612,986 kWh, saving an estimated ~479 tCO₂ for EV users to date.
- **Council energy:** estate-wide purchased energy shows a downward trend since 2021 solar PV at the Depot and further PV at BSLC are reducing purchased energy and costs.
- **Area emissions context:** DESNZ local authority GHG statistics (2005–2023) provide the latest official picture for Bromsgrove and Worcestershire.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

3.1 **Delivery approach.** A cross-service programme will coordinate actions and contribute to delivering on the strategies milestones and outcomes, overseen by the Climate Change Manager. The Climate Change team also provide services with the expertise and guidance is required.

3.2 **Governance.** The Strategy will be embedded in the Council's performance framework with annual Cabinet reporting. Climate implications are already a standard section in committee reports; options to introduce a simple climate impact assessment tool for officers to utilise.

To ensure the Strategy moves from high-level ambition to operational reality, Service-specific SMART actions and milestones will be embedded directly into the relevant Service Business Plans. This ensures that Assistant Directors and Service Managers maintain full ownership over the delivery methods required to meet the Climate Change Strategies outcomes.

The Climate Change Manager will act as the central corporate auditor, responsible for the annual monitoring and reporting of these milestones to Cabinet. By aligning these targets within departmental business plans, the Council ensures that accountability is held at the point of delivery, while the Climate Strategy serves as the overarching framework for progress and risk escalation.

Furthermore, to support tracking progress with the strategies milestones and outcomes a dashboard is being developed to allow the council to see the impact of these actions in terms of carbon savings and impacts on our residents.

- 3.3 **Partnerships.** Continued collaboration with Worcestershire County Council (e.g., LEVI on-street charging), Everyone Active, BDHT/Registered Providers, Act On Energy, Midland Net Zero Hub, Worcestershire Regulatory Services, will maximise delivery capacity and funding leverage.
- 3.4 **Current Activity.** Key operational programmes include PV at Bromsgrove Sport and Leisure Centre and lighting upgrades across the estate; Warm Homes retrofit; expansion of EV charging (including support to WCC's LEVI rollout); preparation for separate weekly food waste collections; and biodiversity improvements (mowing regimes, equipment electrification).

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Strategy will be delivered through a mix of existing revenue budgets, invest-to-save business cases, Capital Programme bids, and external funding as required by service areas
- 4.2 Officers will work with Finance to profile costs, savings, and funding sources through the Medium-Term Financial Plan, ensuring robust whole-life business cases. Officers will explore funding opportunities and partnerships with both public and private sectors to attract investment into the borough where possible to deliver climate change projects.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).** Under the Environment Act 2021, a mandatory minimum 10% BNG applies to qualifying planning applications (major developments from 12 February 2024; small sites from 2 April 2024). The Strategy supports implementation through development management and local plan policy.
- 5.2 **Waste & recycling reforms.** The Government's Simpler Recycling requirements standardise collections nationally; separate household

food waste collections are required by 31 March 2026, subject to transitional provisions. Preparatory work is underway to ensure operational readiness (collection system, communications, and processing).

- 5.3 **Procurement & contracts.** Delivery will align with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and proposed sustainable procurement updates, incorporating whole-life carbon and social value where proportionate and lawful.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 Any structural changes will be monitored. Programme sequencing (e.g., fleet transition and depot infrastructure) will be reviewed to minimise stranded costs, maintain service continuity, and align with any future operating model.
- 6.2 The strategy is constructed in a way that will allow it to be adapted to the new unitary authority.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The Strategy gives effect to the green thread within the Council Plan by reducing emissions, improving resilience, lowering energy costs, and supporting a greener local economy.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 Approval will enable the Council's primary framework to reduce operational and area-wide emissions, improve air quality, and support adaptation and nature recovery.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 Actions are designed to reduce fuel poverty and improve health outcomes (e.g., domestic retrofit, air quality). Equality Impact Assessments will be completed for major programmes to ensure fair access and mitigate unintended impacts.
- 6.5 All documents will be produced accessibly in line with the Council's corporate accessibility guidance.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 **Funding availability & affordability** – *Mitigation:* phased delivery, external grant maximisation, robust invest-to-save business cases.
Market capacity & supply chain constraints – *Mitigation:* early engagement, framework procurement, regional collaboration (e.g., Midlands Connect / MNZH).
Operational disruption during works – *Mitigation:* programme planning around service needs, contractor management, stakeholder communications.
Policy & regulatory change – *Mitigation:* horizon scanning, flexible delivery plans, governance oversight.
Data quality & benefits realisation – *Mitigation:* climate dashboard, baselines and KPIs; regular monitoring and reporting.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Climate Change Strategy 2026 - 2031

Cabinet
2026

20th April

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Sue Baxter	19/02/2026
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Judith Wills	12/02/2026
Financial Services	Debra Goodall	12/02/2026
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor - Governance	14/01/2026



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Bromsgrove District Council Climate Change Strategy 2026-2031

Agenda Item 16c



Foreword: John Leach

This Climate Change Strategy is designed to support the goals of the wider Council Plan, as we align all our efforts to deliver high-quality, reliable services for our residents.

Our approach here is practical and service-led: making energy efficiency upgrades to homes, adding solar PV and heat pumps to council buildings to reduce our carbon emissions, and improving biodiversity and soil health through land-management strategies to ensure green spaces continue to thrive for the public.

We will continue to modernise the vehicle fleet that works for residents, expand local EV charging infrastructure, and embed sustainability into our planning and procurement, ensuring that our decisions support both service excellence and environmental responsibility.

It's not only about reducing emissions. We want to help create healthier homes, safer streets, and resilient communities. By aligning climate action with our organisational priorities - financial and organisational stability, strong governance, and community-focused delivery - we can make meaningful progress toward net zero while protecting the services people depend on.

As we look ahead, we recognise that Local Government Reorganisation will shape how services are delivered across the county. This strategy is designed to be adaptable: ensuring that our climate commitments remain central to decision-making, whatever the governance structure. We will work closely with partners to maintain continuity of projects, align priorities, and explore opportunities for joint procurement and shared infrastructure investment. By building flexibility into our approach, we can safeguard progress toward net zero while supporting a smooth transition for residents and staff.





Foreword: Councillor Sue Baxter Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Local Government Reorganisation and Climate Change

I'm pleased to introduce our Climate Change Strategy, which plays a vital role in delivering the priorities set out in our Council Plan. Creating a cleaner, greener Bromsgrove is central to the thriving, forward-looking district we are building together. Our plan is ambitious but practical, focusing on what we can deliver now while preparing responsibly for the future.

Across the council we are already making good progress, upgrading our buildings, supporting greener travel, improving energy efficiency in homes, and protecting the natural environment. As with all our major projects, it is essential that we get this right for the long term, ensuring every step we take is safe, considered and benefits our communities.

Regeneration, improvement and climate action must go hand in hand. Towns and communities must keep moving to meet changing needs, and this strategy helps us do just that by reducing emissions, improving local places and strengthening resilience. It's all part of ensuring a green thread runs through all our decisions.

We know there is more to do, but this council continues to be energised, focused and determined. Working collaboratively across political groups, with partners and with our residents, we will keep delivering on our commitments and making Bromsgrove a district we can all be proud of.

Background & Introduction

What is climate change?

Climate change refers to the changing global and regional long-term weather patterns. Climate change is predominantly caused by the release of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere by human activity. These greenhouse gases trap heat from the sun warming the planet in a process called the enhanced greenhouse effect. Globally we are seeing severe consequences from more frequent and intense weather events such as droughts, heat waves, storms, rising sea levels and melting glacial ice, and we are seeing some of these impacts locally within the district (most notable intense droughts, heat waves and storms). These extreme weather events disrupt peoples' lives both in terms of physical and mental wellbeing and economically and have wider implications on communities and ecosystems.



Climate change in a local context

In 2015, the UK and 195 other countries signed the Paris Agreement¹, where they agreed to limit mean global temperature rise to 1.5°C above preindustrial levels to avoid catastrophic impacts from climate change. In 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a report² warning that urgent action was required to cut greenhouse gas emissions to limit global warming to 1.5°C; in order to reach this limit, CO2 emissions need to decline by approximately 45% from 2010 levels by the year 2030, and reach net zero by approximately 2050.

The UK Government has committed to Net Zero by 2050. Local Authorities (LA) are key in taking and influencing action on climate change due to the services they deliver, their regulatory functions, strategic functions, procurement powers and responsibilities as major employers. Bromsgrove District Council has set targets to reduce carbon emissions by 50% by 2030 and achieve Net Zero by 2040.

Modelling using the IPCC methodology for calculating Net Zero indicates that, under a business as usual trajectory, Bromsgrove District Council would reach a 50% emissions reduction around 2042/43 and Net Zero by around 2045. This highlights that the Council will only meet its target of 50% reduction by 2030 and Net Zero by 2040 if the actions set out in this Strategy are delivered at pace.

¹ 2015 Paris Agreement: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf

² 2018 IPCC report: <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

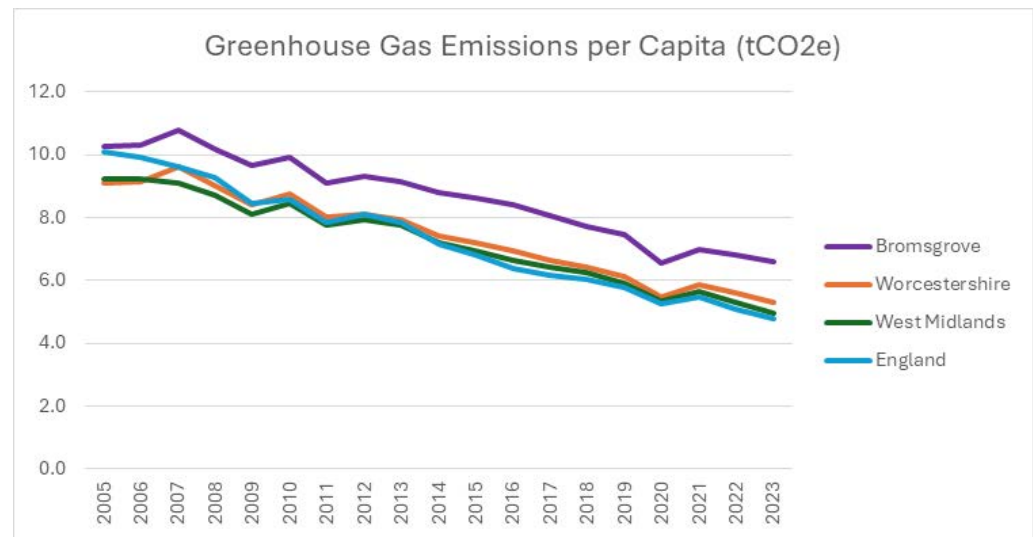
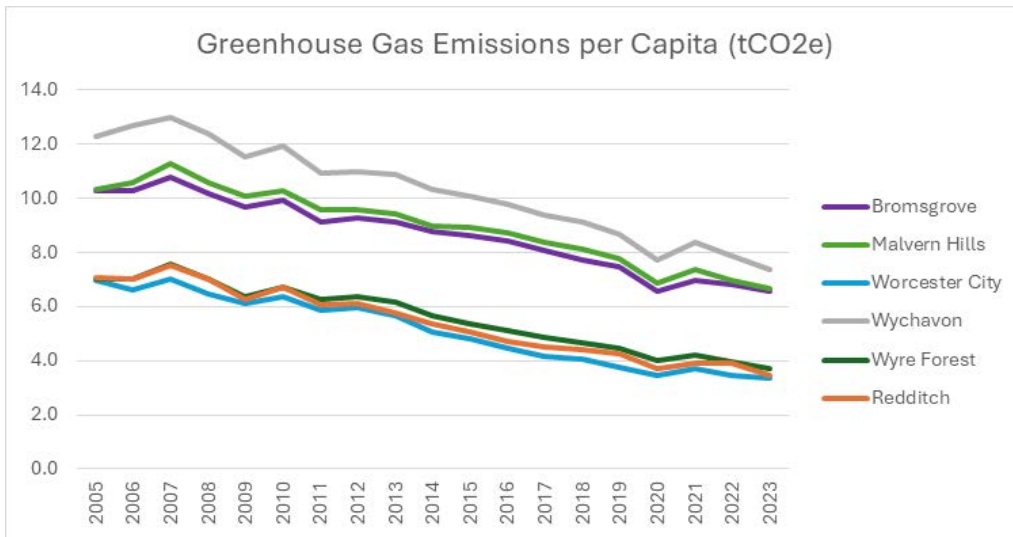


The programme of activity—including accelerated building upgrades, expansion of renewable energy generation, fleet decarbonisation, improved planning policy, biodiversity enhancement and reductions in Scope 3 emissions—provides a credible pathway to bring forward the projected dates.

Robust monitoring and transparent reporting of progress against the Strategy’s milestones will be critical to ensuring that delivery stays on track, enabling the Council to identify risks early, adjust approach where needed, and maintain momentum towards achieving its Net Zero target on time.

Improvements to the council’s emissions can be made on various levels, referred to as scopes. Scope 1 emissions are those that arise from the council’s combustion of fossil fuels - through the burning of gas in boilers and from internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles. Scope 2 emissions are those produced from electricity that the council purchases from the grid. Scope 3 emissions are those associated with products and services the council purchases (for example manufacturing and transport costs).

In 2023, the greenhouse gas emissions associated with Worcestershire were 3,253.5 ktCO₂e. The district of Bromsgrove was responsible for 662.7 ktCO₂e, and the emissions considered within the scope of the council’s influence totalled 356.6 kt CO₂e.



The figures above show the per capita emissions of Bromsgrove to regional and national statistics³. Bromsgrove has consistently produced more emissions per person than Worcestershire, West Midlands and England averages. However, the district continues to reduce emissions, with an average of 6.6 tCO₂e per capita.

Within Worcestershire, Bromsgrove's per capita emissions are lower than Malvern Hills and Wychavon. This is encouraging as Malvern Hills and Wychavon are similar districts in terms of demographics, socioeconomics and urban-rural spaces.

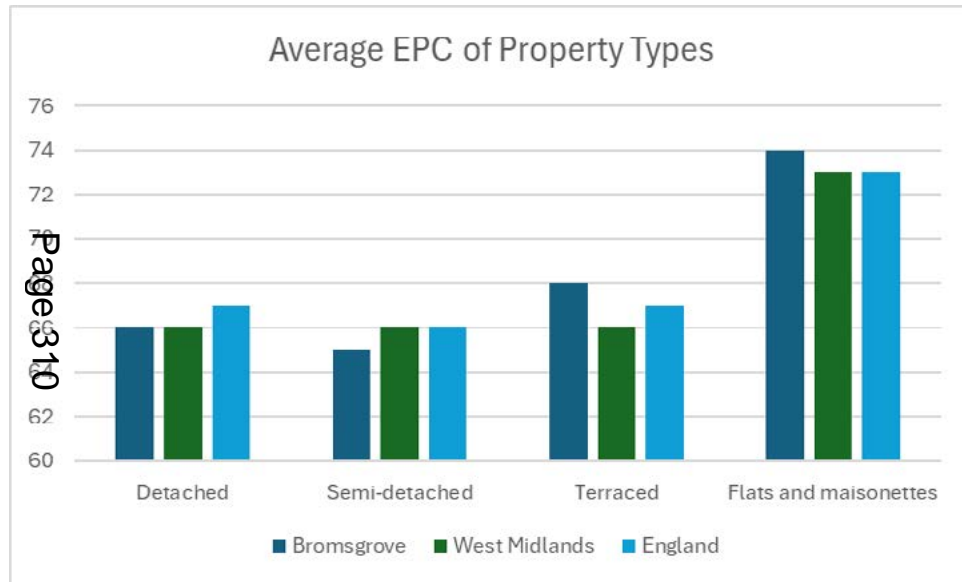
Bromsgrove District Council declared a climate emergency in 2019. Upon the declaration of this, the LA affirmed that it places the Climate Emergency at the centre of its decision-making process. A carbon reduction action plan was created with targets to assist in the reduction of carbon emissions, both from council functions and the wider sphere of influence. This action plan follows on from the carbon reduction action plan and considers actions the council will take to further reduce emissions (including carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases). This plan will be reviewed annually and refreshed after five years.

³ Data for figures: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-statistics-2005-to-2023>

Residential buildings

In Bromsgrove it is estimated that 71% of homes are owner occupied, with 14.3% private rented and 14.5% social rented including housing association properties. BDC has been looking to undertake a stock condition survey of homes across the district to best understand the housing stock and give officers an insight for future work in improving the energy efficiency of houses across the district.

Making homes more energy efficient helps to reduce bills, which helps to combat fuel poverty across the district. This has wider benefits as health risks from damp and mould are reduced, as well as reducing carbon emissions. Houses with higher EPC ratings are more energy efficient.



Energy efficiency score	Energy efficiency rating band
More than 91	A
81 to 91	B
69 to 80	C
55 to 68	D
39 to 54	E
21 to 38	F

The graph above shows Bromsgrove's EPC ratings compared to the West Midlands and England. Bromsgrove is in line with national and regional trends; while there are slight discrepancies between EPC numbers, it always falls within the same EPC band.

Since declaring a climate emergency in 2019 BDC has utilised several government funding streams to support improving the energy efficiency of homes across the district. This has so far resulted in **£284,430.76** of investment across the district and seeing improvements made to **21** homes.



Currently BDC is utilising Warm Homes Local Grant Funding to provide retrofitting works to homes across the district, across both privately owned homes and affordable housing over the next 3 years and could see a further **£285,123.08** worth of investment into the district. This work includes adding measures to homes such as insulation which reduces the heat lost, further reducing the consumption of energy.

As part of the clean growth strategy⁴, the national government has set targets for all fuel poor homes to be upgraded to EPC C by 2030 with an aspiration for as many homes as possible to be EPC Band C by 2035 where practical, cost-effective and affordable. Within the clean growth strategy there is also an

aim to improve the energy performance of privately rented homes, with as many as possible upgraded to EPC C by 2030.

Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) have led projects to improved energy efficiency within properties they own. Bromsgrove District Council have also worked with Spadesbourne Homes to support the build of new housing (some of which is affordable housing). For example, the properties on Burcot Close are built to higher energy efficiency standards, with solar PV installed on the roofs and air source heat pumps as a standard. The council works with Act On Energy who provide advice and support to homeowners in making homes more energy efficient.

Burcot Lane is an £8.6m housing development delivered on behalf of Bromsgrove District Council. The scheme is the first of its kind for the council and included demolition of the original Bromsgrove Council House site, which has made way for 18, two and three-bed houses, 39, one-bed apartments and 4 two-bed maisonettes - a mixture of timber frame and steel frame dwellings.

⁴ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ad5f11ded915d32a3a70c03/clean-growth-strategy-correction-april-2018.pdf>

The houses incorporated a number of renewable measures that resulted in EPC A rated scoring in excess of 100. Measures included air source heat pumps with underfloor heating to ground floors, MVHR, Waste Water Heat Recovery and PV and battery arrays. Air tightness achieved was below 3.5m³/m².hr, which incorporated an energy efficient thermal fabric and high performance thermal bridge details.

The apartments also incorporated a number of renewable measures that resulted in EPC B rated scores in excess of 85. Measures included air source heat pumps with underfloor heating throughout, MVHR and PV arrays. Air tightness achieved was below 4.0m³/m².hr, and like the houses, incorporated an energy efficient thermal fabric and high performance thermal bridge details.

The properties are a mixture of affordable rent, private rent, shared ownership and market properties.

Funding for the project came from both Bromsgrove District Council, alongside a grant from Homes England under its Local Authority Accelerated Construction Programme, with the project secured under the DPP3 Framework.



Future Milestones:

Actions	Service area	Milestone and data	Timescale	Outcomes/targets
Improve energy efficiency of new residential buildings across district	Planning/ housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore feasibility of new homes to be built operationally net zero 	2028	<p>Outcomes: Reduced energy bills</p> <p>Warmer homes - fewer illnesses</p> <p>Reduction in household carbon emissions</p>

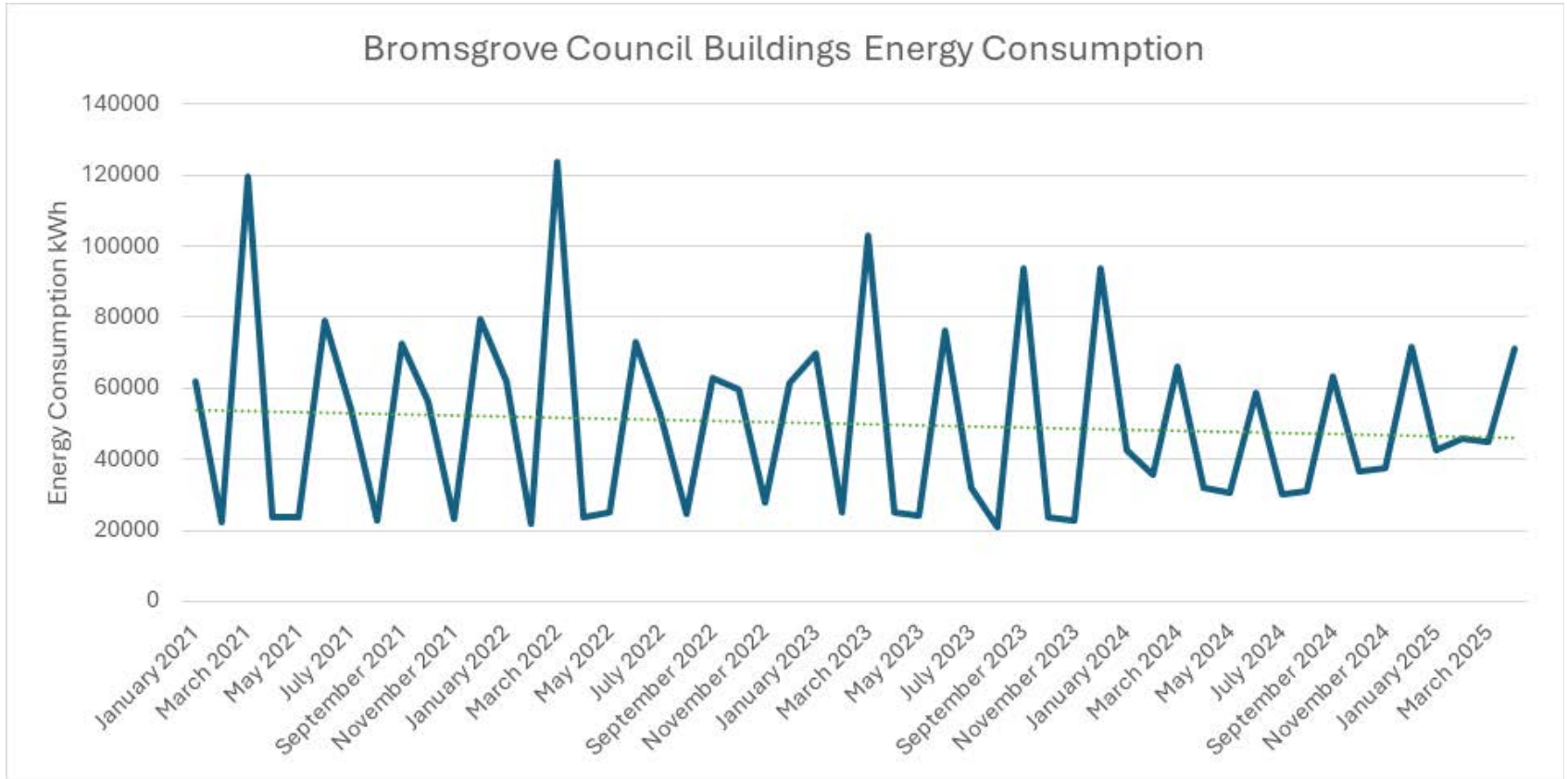
Retrofit houses with lowest EPC	Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the retrofitting of homes utilising the Warm Homes Local Grant (WHLG) funding • Secure funding for further retrofit projects in line with the Warm Homes Plan • Seek out partnerships to develop an offer for the able to pay market in line with government proposals in the Warm Homes Plan • With Energy Advice Service provider to support households needing support with energy bills to explore access to retrofit schemes and reduce fuel poverty • Identify and enable opportunities to retrofit listed buildings and residential properties in conservation areas by publishing heritage appropriate retrofit guidance and delivering at least three pilot or demonstrator projects in partnership with conservation officers and housing providers-appropriate retrofit guidance and delivering at least three pilot or demonstrator projects, in partnership with conservation officers and housing providers 	<p>2028</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>March 2028</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>March 2027</p>	<p>Outcomes: Reduced energy bills Warmer homes and less instances of damp and mould which reduce associated health risks Improve each area’s average EPC score above the national/ regional average Reduction in fuel poverty Reduced household carbon emissions Increased local supply chain employment opportunities, increased local skills base, support the transition to green economy Target: 20 Private Homes retrofitted under WHLG by 2028</p>
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Council to actively support landlords with Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards of homes	Housing/WRS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support landlords to progress towards MEES compliance (EPC C by 2030) by providing advice, guidance and signposting to funding, retrofit support and exemption routes, and by working with partners to remove local barriers to delivery. 	2030	Outcomes: Reduced energy bills Warmer homes and less instances of damp and mould which reduce associated health risks Reduced household emissions
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Buildings - council

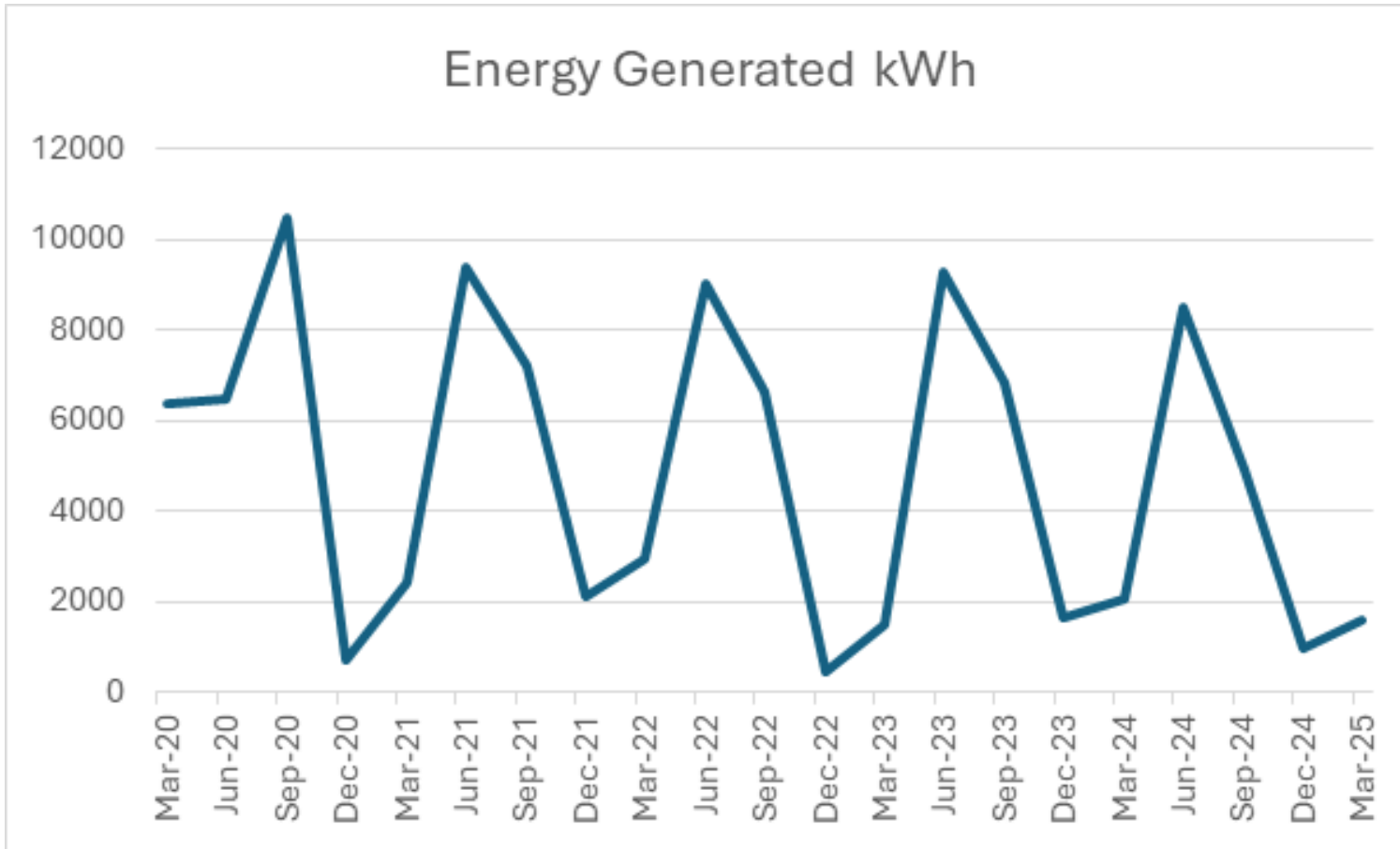
Reduction in energy consumption in council buildings reduces emissions released. The creation (and consumption) of renewable energy (e.g. from solar PV) reduced emissions further, as no greenhouse gases are released in the production of this energy. The council's buildings have undergone significant improvements to reduce emissions, such as retrofitting solar panels and heat pumps (e.g. at Bromsgrove District Council Depot). As a result, fewer emissions are released in the process of powering these buildings. Where surplus energy is created, this is transferred back into the grid, creating green energy for other consumers. There are also economic benefits as less energy is purchased from external providers. Where the council does buy energy, it is on a 100% green tariff, which also helps to reduce emissions.





The graph above shows purchased energy consumption from council buildings. Energy consumption varies throughout the year, but the average monthly consumption has reduced as shown by the trendline.

The trendline shows that energy consumption is decreasing on average, and since 2021 consumption has decreased by approximately 20% (based on trendline figures). Winter peaks have also decreased, indicating that less energy is being used in these months.



The graph above shows the energy generated by solar PV installed on the Bromsgrove District Council Depot. The seasonal dips are due to reduced levels of sunlight in winter, but even during these months energy is created by solar panels.

Currently there is work underway to install solar panels on Bromsgrove Sport And Leisure Centre along with a programme of ongoing lighting upgrades to more energy efficient LED lighting in other council buildings.

Future Milestones

Actions	Service area	Milestone and data	Timescale	Outcomes/targets
<p>Improve efficiency/renewable energy generation of council buildings</p> <p>Page 317</p>	Property services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and publish a strategic approach to identifying building improvement opportunities and funding sources, to inform future designs, planning decisions and capital investment. Implement energy efficiency upgrades to priority buildings in line with the building's improvement and funding strategy, where funding, approvals and business cases are in place. Investigate opportunities to reduce energy demand in Council buildings, including through behavioural and operational measures such as reducing internal temperatures where appropriate. Implement energy efficiency upgrades to Council-owned listed buildings and properties within conservation areas, where applicable, using heritage-appropriate measures and subject to funding, consents and technical feasibility Continue to deploy renewable energy technologies on Council owned buildings where technically and financially feasible, prioritising sites identified through feasibility work and capital planning 	<p>2028</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026</p> <p>2027 - 2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	<p>Outcomes: Carbon emissions and energy use from Council-owned buildings reduce through improved efficiency, low-carbon technologies and increased on-site renewables, improving resilience and value for money.</p> <p>Target: Reduce carbon emissions from Council-owned buildings year-on-year, with an ambition to achieve EPC C or equivalent across the portfolio by 2030 where technically, financially and operationally feasible.</p>

Transport

The council's transport comprises of council owned vehicles (such as refuse collection lorries), vans and staff-owned vehicles. All of these vehicles have impacts on the environment, however, where possible a switch in fuel type or to electric reduces emissions released. Alongside council owned vehicles, across the borough emissions can be reduced by the public using electric cars. As well as releasing carbon emissions, petrol and diesel vehicles cause high rates air pollution, so switching to EV or public transport can help to reduce this.

Alongside council owned vehicles, across the district emissions can be reduced by the public using electric cars. As well as releasing carbon emissions, petrol and diesel vehicles cause high rates air pollution, so switching the EV or public transport can help to reduce this. Since 2020 Bromsgrove District Council has worked to install a number of public EV charging points with **10** being installed as part of a government funded taxi charging scheme, and a further 2 installed in 2025. To date the EV chargers on Bromsgrove's car parks have dispensed **612,986 KWh** of electricity which has resulted in **479 tonnes** of CO2 saved by EV drivers using our chargers. Work is ongoing to install further chargers across the district. This includes supporting Worcestershire County Council with delivery of their LEVI project which will see a number of on street chargers put in place to support those residents who don't have access to off street parking to charge their vehicles at home.



An air quality management zone is in place on the Worcester Road, and working with Worcestershire Regulatory Services strategies are in place to help to reduce air pollution

Bromsgrove On Demand (BOD) bus operates between the railway station, town centre and surrounding areas of Bromsgrove district. It is aimed at reducing congestion and improving public transport options for local residence. As this fleet is expanding, options for electric or hybrid vehicles are being considered in order to reduce emissions.

Bromsgrove Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan is being developed and will be published in summer 2026. This plan is being created to improve active travel. A key benefit of the LCWIP will be the enhanced safety of highways and footways for everyone, as well as less congestion and saving money on transport costs.



Future Milestones

Actions	Service area	Milestone and data	Timescale	Outcomes/targets
<p>Supporting transition to zero emissions vehicles</p>	<p>All Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By the end of the strategy period, reduce staff business mileage by a further 10% compared to March 2026, through increased use of remote working, digital meetings and sustainable travel options. Identify and implement practical ways the Council can support staff to transition to electric vehicles, including policy review, infrastructure provision and incentives, where feasible By the end of the strategy period, increase uptake of public transport and active travel for Council business and commuting, through travel planning, policy support, communications and improved facilities where feasible Install electric vehicle charging infrastructure on suitable Council owned land, building on the current programme of work with Zest and supporting Worcestershire County Council in the delivery of the LEVI programme, where technically and financially feasible 	<p>2026-2028</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	<p>Outcomes: Emissions from Council related travel reduce as business mileage falls and cleaner travel choices are adopted, supported by EV charging on Council land to enable long-term transport decarbonisation.</p> <p>Target: Reduce staff business mileage by 10% by the end of the strategy period (2031), compared to the March 2026 baseline.</p> <p>Support the ongoing phased roll-out of electric vehicle charging infrastructure through the Zest partnership, contributing to delivery of up to 120 chargers across 30+ sites in Bromsgrove and Redditch, subject to feasibility and funding.</p>

<p>Support wider public with transition to zero emission transport</p>	<p>Climate Change and Comms Economic Development and Regeneration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support residents and businesses to transition to electric vehicles by providing information, signposting to grants and infrastructure, and enabling access to charging where feasible • Encourage and enable increased use of public transport and active travel by residents through partnership working, information, and support for local improvements where feasible • Support the growth of green jobs and skills locally by working with partners, employers and training providers to enable employment opportunities linked to the low carbon transition. • Embed and support delivery of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), including the implementation of priority routes where funding and delivery mechanisms are in place (Bromsgrove's to be published June 2026) 	<p>2026-2031 2026-2031 2026-2031 2026-2031</p>	<p>Transport emissions reduce as cleaner travel choices, including EVs, public transport and active travel, become more accessible, supporting improved air quality, health and growth in green jobs and skills.</p>
<p>De-carbonising of council's transport fleet</p>	<p>Environmental Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressively reduce emissions from the Council's fleet by prioritising replacement with newer, more efficient and lower-emission vehicles through the fleet replacement programme, and by adopting zero-emission or alternative fuel vehicles (such as HVO) where infrastructure, funding and operational requirements allow 	<p>2026-2031</p>	<p>Fleet emissions reduce through phased replacement with more efficient, lower-emission and alternative-fuel vehicles, delivering lower fuel costs and improved air quality</p>

Improve air quality	Worcestershire Regulatory Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with Worcestershire Regulatory Services to implement the actions and recommendations of the Worcester Road Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP), supported by ongoing monitoring of particulate matter on Worcester Road and across the district. 	2026-2031	Outcomes: Local air quality improves as transport-related pollution declines, supported by partnership working with WRS and the County Council to assess proportionate low-emission/low-traffic interventions, alongside behaviour-change measures that increase use of low-emission, active and sustainable travel.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in partnership with Worcestershire Regulatory Services and Worcestershire County Council to investigate the feasibility and potential benefits of low emission or low traffic interventions in Bromsgrove, where appropriate. emission or low-traffic interventions across the district, where appropriate. 	2026-2031	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support improvements in local air quality by promoting active travel, public transport and reduced car use, working with partners to encourage behaviour change. 	2026-2031	



Planning and Land Use

As land use develops/redevelops, the planning regulations have a huge impact on emissions and efficiency of buildings.

A significant proportion of emissions can be reduced through future planning and developments. By meeting stricter energy standards and constructing buildings to a higher energy efficiency/with technology such as solar PV already installed, the council can contribute to a reduction in emissions across the district.

The council considers the environmental impact of new developments when developing the local plan. While new developments cannot be built without creating emissions, the council seeks options which have the lowest impact on the environment.

The council is undertaking a feasibility study for a district heat network, which would reduce emissions and energy bills for those on the network.

Within the local plan⁵ there is a green thread running through which includes new developments using an increased proportion of energy from renewable sources, improvements in air quality and reduced carbon footprint.

Bromsgrove's draft development plan⁶ aims to meet the needs of the district in terms of economic development, housing, environment and infrastructure. The plan includes proposed housing developments in Bromsgrove, Alvechurch, Barnt Green, Catshill, Hagley, Wythall, Stoke Prior and Frankley. The plan states that when applications for planning permission are submitted, they will need to follow various policies, including a climate change policy. The council is committed to safeguarding the natural environment, addressing issues ranging from

⁵ <https://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/media/samhiyxl/bromsgrove-district-plan-2011-2030.pdf>

⁶ https://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/media/axrfhe4n/bdc_localplanconsultationdocjune25_webrev.pdf

biodiversity conservation (including on site biodiversity net gain) to climate change mitigation, supporting recycling to reducing waste production, all with the goal of enhancing the quality of life for current and future generations. As well as new housing developments, the council is creating new natural infrastructure such as canal towpath enhancements and connections into longer leisure routes; soft landscaping improvements; allotment improvements; on site provision of parks and recreation facilities/financial contributions to existing facilities; expand green spaces offer, on-site Biodiversity Net Gain; open spaces linked by green corridors to benefit both wildlife and pedestrians. The council plan also includes additional public transport across the district, bike/e-scooter rental and improved opportunities for active travel.



Future Milestone

Actions	Service area	Milestone and data	Timescale	Outcomes/targets
<p>Ensure the new Local Plan embeds strong climate change, sustainability and adaptation policies—covering buildings, transport, biodiversity, energy and infrastructure—to support delivery of the Climate Change Strategy when adopted.</p>	<p>Planning, Climate Change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the next draft Local Plan stage, develop policy wording that embeds climate mitigation and adaptation requirements—such as Future Homes Standard (FHS) compliance for qualifying permissions—in line with national transition arrangements and the Council’s Climate Change Strategy. • From 2026 onwards, ensure ongoing collaboration between Climate Change, Planning Policy, and relevant service areas so that emerging Local Plan policies reflect current evidence, carbon-reduction priorities, adaptation needs and infrastructure opportunities. • By 2028, develop and update the Local Plan evidence base relating to climate change, including renewable energy opportunities, sustainable transport, green infrastructure, nature recovery and resilience, to support sound policy drafting and examination. • By 2029, progress the Local Plan to the adoption stage in line with the Council’s agreed timetable, ensuring climate-related policies are retained and strengthened through examination. 	<p>2026-2029</p> <p>2026-2029</p> <p>2028</p> <p>2029</p>	<p>The new Local Plan strengthens the planning framework so future development supports lower carbon buildings, sustainable transport and enhanced biodiversity, helping align planning decisions with the Climate Change Strategy and improve resilience across the district.</p>

<p>Support the deployment of rooftop solar on commercial buildings through feasibility, partnerships and enabling delivery models (e.g., leases or PPAs), to reduce emissions and energy costs across the local economy.</p>	<p>Climate Change, Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2027, identify and prioritise commercial buildings suitable for rooftop solar using desk-based screening (roof size/orientation/age), basic structural/red-flag checks, and indicative grid capacity and planning considerations. • From 2026 onwards, engage targeted owners, landlords and tenants to understand appetite, lease terms, roof access/maintenance responsibilities, and preferred commercial models (rooftop lease, landlord-funded CAPEX, third-party PPA). • By 2028, establish preferred delivery routes (e.g., framework/partner for financed PPAs; guidance for landlord-funded installs), including outline heads of terms, standard due-diligence (structural surveys, warranties), and grid application approach. • From 2028, support a first tranche of viable schemes to progress (subject to surveys, consents, roof condition, and DNO connection), focusing on sites with strong business cases and willing counterparties. 	<p>2027</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2028</p> <p>2028</p>	<p>Increased deployment of rooftop solar on commercial buildings, supporting lower energy costs for businesses, reduced carbon emissions and greater local energy resilience through a growing pipeline of viable solar projects enabled by partnership working.</p>
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Bromsgrove District Heat Network	Planning/housing/ climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2027, develop and agree the scope for a feasibility and options study for a potential district heat network in Bromsgrove, ensuring it reflects technical, financial, legal and stakeholder requirements. 	2027	A viable pathway for a Bromsgrove district heat network is established through detailed feasibility work, business case development and partnership engagement, helping enable low-carbon heat, reduced emissions and long-term energy resilience if the scheme proceeds to delivery.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2028, complete a feasibility and options study to assess the viability of a district heat network, including potential heat sources, anchor loads, site options and delivery models. 	2028	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, engage key internal and external stakeholders, including DESNZ/MNZH, Worcestershire partners and potential heat users, to support evidence development and explore collaborative opportunities. 	2026-2031	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between 2028 and 2030, identify appropriate funding routes and delivery pathways to support next steps if the district heat network is viable. 	2028-2030	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2031, prepare for next-phase business case development or early implementation steps where the scheme is shown to be viable and supported by funding, governance and partner agreement. 	2031	



Governance and Finance

In order for the council to make key improvements in carbon emissions and reach net zero by 2040, a key aspect is ensuring that net zero and carbon reduction targets are embedded across the council's plans, and are then followed through.

Within the council staff there is a dedicated climate change team employing two FTE colleagues. As well as this within the elected members

of the council, Councillor Baxter is the portfolio holder for climate change. These roles ensure that climate change implications are considered within all aspects of council actions before they are passed.

All reports taken through the committee process have a required assessment of climate change implications included (we are exploring using a climate impact assessment tool to support officers with this process).

Carbon literacy training has been provided to all members of the senior managers, with ongoing training provided to elected members and officers within in the council. The council is looking to review the provision of carbon literacy training to include all staff at all levels.

The council continues to seek out funding to support the delivery and implementation of the climate change strategy.

The council are auditing the current scope 3 emissions created through their operations with an aim to reduce these. These emissions refer to those that are out of control of the council, through the transport and production of good that the council uses.

Local Government Reorganisation

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) is a key governance consideration that may impact the delivery of climate objectives and the implementation of this strategy.

The reorganisation of local government in Worcestershire presents both challenges and opportunities for delivering Bromsgrove's Climate Change Strategy. Structural changes could affect governance, funding streams, and service delivery models, which in turn may influence the pace and scope of climate action.

Key Considerations:

Continuity of Commitments: Regardless of structural changes, Bromsgrove District Council remains committed to achieving Net Zero by 2040 and embedding climate action across all services.

Risk Management: Bromsgrove District Council will consider mitigations of delays that LGR could create for infrastructure projects (e.g., EV charging roll-out, depot upgrades) and planning policy updates. These risks and mitigations will be monitored through the Corporate Risk Register.

Opportunities for Collaboration: A reorganised authority could unlock economies of scale, shared expertise, and joint investment in large-scale projects such as district heat networks, renewable energy generation, and biodiversity enhancement.

Alignment of Strategies: Post-reorganisation, climate strategies across the new governance structure will need harmonisation to ensure consistent targets and reporting.



Future Milestones

Actions	Service area	Milestone and data	Timescale	Outcomes/targets
<p>Reduction of scope 3 emissions through procurement, purchasing and audit</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 330</p>	<p>Legal, democratic Services, property, services, Economic Development and Regeneration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review key day-to-day purchasing lines and suppliers to identify opportunities to reduce carbon impacts, waste and cost, and to inform more sustainable procurement decisions. Undertake proportionate environmental impact assessments of key suppliers to identify Scope 3 emissions hotspots and opportunities to reduce carbon impacts through procurement and contract management. Introduce a time-limited stationery amnesty while reviewing existing stock, to reduce unnecessary purchasing, minimise waste and use existing resources more effectively. Embed processes for the return, reuse or appropriate recycling of unused IT equipment and electronic items, to reduce waste and Scope 3 emissions from purchasing. 	<p>2026</p> <p>2026-2027</p> <p>2026</p> <p>2026</p>	<p>Scope 3 emissions are reduced through more sustainable procurement, improved use of resources and reduced waste across day-to-day Council operations</p>

<p>Audit of server rooms and IT usage for scope 3</p>	<p>Property Services and ICT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete an audit of Council-owned server rooms and on-premise IT usage to establish a baseline for energy use, utilisation and Scope 3 emissions • Develop an action plan to reduce emissions from server rooms and IT usage, identifying priority actions, responsibilities and opportunities for efficiency, consolidation or decommissioning. • Improve understanding of emissions associated with cloud-based services and external data centres used by the Council, through supplier engagement and available reporting, to inform future IT and procurement decisions. 	<p>2026</p> <p>2027</p> <p>2027</p>	<p>Emissions associated with IT systems and data storage are better understood and reduced over time through improved efficiency, informed decision-making and supplier engagement</p>
<p>Accurately identify the risks of climate change to the local area within the council's Corporate Risk Register</p>	<p>Legal, democratic, property</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and assess the key climate-related risks to the local area and Council operations and incorporate these risks into the Council's Corporate Risk Register. • Regularly review and update climate-related risks within the Corporate Risk Register to reflect emerging evidence, local impacts and changes in policy or operations 	<p>2026</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	<p>Climate-related risks to the local area and Council services are clearly understood, monitored and managed through the Council's corporate risk framework</p>

<p>Implement a sustainable procurement policy that supports areawide net zero ambitions and embeds tackling the climate emergency as a core procurement priority</p>	<p>Legal, democratic, property</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 2026, implement updated procurement policy and guidance that encourages more sustainable and locally sourced procurement where appropriate, in line with legal and valueformoney requirements. • Work with Procurement to improve and consistently apply the Council’s procurement tools, ensuring climate and carbon considerations are embedded across purchasing decisions. 	<p>2026-2031 2026-2031</p>	<p>Procurement decisions increasingly support net zero ambitions by reducing Scope 3 emissions, strengthening local supply chains and embedding climate considerations into purchasing across the Council.</p>
<p>Strengthen internal governance of energy purchasing and on-site generation to support carbon reduction and value for money</p>	<p>Property Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly review and monitor the Council’s energy purchasing arrangements, prioritising green tariffs and lowercarbon options where they offer value for money and security of supply. • Ensure solar photovoltaic systems on Council-owned buildings are appropriately maintained and optimised, including routine inspection and cleaning where required, to maximise performance and carbon savings. 	<p>2026-2031 2026-2031</p>	<p>Energy purchasing and on-site generation are effectively governed and optimised, supporting carbon reduction, resilience and value for money across Council operations.</p>

<p>Report transparently on the Council's greenhouse gas emissions to support accountability, decision-making and progress tracking.</p>	<p>Property Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a climate change dashboard to report on the Council's greenhouse gas emissions and, where data is available, wider district-level emissions, to support transparency and informed decision-making. • Regularly monitor and report on the Council's greenhouse gas emissions to track progress against targets and inform future action. • Ensure the Council meets all relevant statutory and voluntary requirements for greenhouse gas emissions reporting, in line with national guidance and best practice. 	<p>2026</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	<p>The Council's greenhouse gas emissions are accurately monitored, transparently reported and used to inform decision-making and continuous improvement.</p>
<p>Improve climate change awareness and carbon literacy across the Council through transparent leadership training and accessible learning opportunities for staff and Members.</p>	<p>HR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish details of climate awareness training undertaken by senior management and relevant Members (including Cabinet Members and Committee Chairs), to support transparency and leadership by example. • Develop and embed ongoing climate change awareness training for staff and Members, including induction content for new starters, to support informed decision-making and action. • Provide an optional pathway for staff and Members to achieve a recognised carbon literacy certificate, where appropriate, to build organisational capacity for climate mitigation and adaptation. 	<p>2026</p> <p>2026</p> <p>2027</p>	<p>Staff and Members are better informed and equipped to consider climate change impacts, mitigation and adaptation in decision-making, supported by transparent leadership and improved carbon literacy.</p>

<p>Embed a consistent climate impact assessment approach into Council decision-making to ensure climate implications are considered across all policies and reports.</p>	<p>Climate change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2026, review the current climate change commentary in committee reports and explore options for strengthening it into a proportionate climate impact assessment approach, including implications for officers preparing reports. • Pilot and embed a consistent climate impact assessment approach within committee and key decision reports, supported by guidance for officers. • From 2027 onwards, keep the climate impact assessment approach under review to ensure it remains proportionate, effective and aligned with best practice and organisational change. 	<p>2026</p> <p>2027</p> <p>2027</p>	<p>Climate implications are routinely and consistently considered in Council decision-making, supporting more informed, transparent and climate-aware outcomes.</p>
<p>Proactively identify and secure funding to support the delivery of climate change mitigation and adaptation activity.</p>	<p>Climate change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 2026, proactively identify and track relevant external funding opportunities to support climate change mitigation and adaptation projects, working with internal and external partners where appropriate. • By the end of the strategy period, secure and deploy external funding, where available, to support priority climate change projects identified through the Climate Change Strategy and delivery plans. 	<p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	<p>External funding is maximised to support the delivery of climate change priorities, reducing reliance on core Council budgets and enabling wider action.</p>

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Biodiversity

Biodiversity is intrinsically linked with the climate crisis. The natural environment to the health and wellbeing of society and provides 'ecosystem services' to regulate our environment, produce clean air and pollinate our crops. Through increased biodiversity and the conservation and restoration of natural spaces, it is possible to reduce emissions helping to mitigate climate change by absorbing carbon from the air. However, climate change is a significant cause of biodiversity loss, as species and ecosystems are affected by changes in weather patterns and extreme weather events. Significant carbon dioxide emissions are caused by land use change, which is also a key driver for biodiversity and ecological loss. In severe cases, entire species and/or ecosystems can be lost, which can have devastating effects on human health and economic stability. As a Local Planning Authority, Bromsgrove District Council is legally required to ensure that most new developments deliver Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) under the Environment Act 2021. This means that any qualifying planning application must demonstrate a minimum 10% increase in biodiversity value compared to the pre-development state of the site.

The district of Bromsgrove contains several areas of land ranked moderate to high value for conservation and wildlife, such as Lickey, Waseley and Clent hills which are important safeguarded heathlands. Corridors of land linking these areas are also important for the ecology of the area. Where the public has access, co-benefits such as improved health and wellbeing are also of importance, contributing to higher quality of life. Sanders Park and Lickey End Recreation Ground have both been awarded Green Flag status, an international quality mark for parks and green spaces, which ensures that the parks are accessible to the public, whilst also ensuring that the environment is protected.

The council has committed to mowing green spaces less in order to increase biodiversity, such as wildflower verges to help with insect populations. New planning



and development projects include biodiversity net gain to ensure that biodiversity conservation continues. Within the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and Management and Maintenance Plans actions are include which will conserve and enhance biodiversity.

The environmental services team for Bromsgrove and Redditch have begun the transition to electric power tools, moving away from 2-stroke petrol tools. This includes 9 short reach hedge cutters, 6 long reach hedge cutters and 3 strimmer's. Electric chainsaws and blowers are being trialled with an aim to these being replaced as well.

Future Milestones

Actions	Service area	Milestone and data	Timescale	Outcomes/targets
Reduce the Council's reliance on harmful pesticides by trialling alternative approaches, preparing for regulatory change, and adopting more environmentally responsible practices where feasible.	Property Services/ Environmental Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current pesticide stock levels and usage across relevant services to establish a baseline and identify opportunities for reduction. 	2026	The Council reduces its reliance on harmful pesticides over time through evidence-based trials, regulatory readiness and the adoption of lower-impact alternatives, supporting biodiversity and environmental protection.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proceed with the purchase of equipment for non chemical or lower impact weed control methods following successful trial and monitoring effectiveness cost, and operational suitability. 	2026-2031	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep pesticide use under review in response to emerging legislation and guidance on substances such as glyphosate, adapting practices as required to remain compliant and reduce environmental impact. 	2026-2031	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor developments in the market for alternative products, equipment and practices to further reduce reliance on harmful pesticides over time. 	2026-2031	

<p>Progressively transition Council equipment and machinery to battery-powered or lower-emission alternatives where feasible.</p>	<p>Environmental Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2026, complete a stock audit of Council-owned equipment and machinery to understand age, usage, fuel type and opportunities for transition to lower-emission alternatives. • From 2026 onwards, replace equipment and machinery with battery-powered or lower-emission alternatives at end of life, where operationally suitable and financially viable. 	<p>2026 2026-2031</p>	<p>Council equipment and machinery become progressively lower-emission over time, reducing carbon impacts, noise and air pollution while maintaining service delivery.</p>
<p>Improve biodiversity and carbon sequestration within Council-managed green spaces through changes to land management, including reduced mowing, habitat enhancement and improved soil health.</p>	<p>Planning, regeneration and leisure, Property Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify priority green spaces for biodiversity and soil-health improvements and secure funding, where available, to support changes in land-management and enhancement projects. • Implement biodiversity-led management of selected green spaces, including reduced mowing regimes and habitat creation, where appropriate. • Improve soil health within green spaces through appropriate management practices that enhance biodiversity and increase carbon sequestration, where feasible. • From 2027, implement and expand biodiversity and soil-health improvement projects where evidence, funding and operational experience support wider roll-out. 	<p>2026-2031 2026-2031 2026-2031 2027-2031</p>	<p>Council-managed green spaces support richer biodiversity, healthier soils and increased carbon sequestration, while continuing to meet community and operational needs.</p>

<p>Embed effective governance, monitoring and delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), while supporting opportunities to enhance biodiversity beyond statutory planning requirements.</p>	<p>Planning, regeneration and leisure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a clear mechanism to monitor, record and report on Biodiversity Net Gain outcomes from new developments, in line with national requirements and local planning processes. • Identify and support opportunities to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain beyond statutory planning requirements, including offsite provision, partnerships and Councilled land-management where appropriate. • Align Biodiversity Net Gain delivery with wider biodiversity, green space and climate objectives to maximise environmental benefits where possible. 	<p>2026-2031 2026-2031 2027-2031</p>	<p>Biodiversity Net Gain is effectively governed, monitored and delivered, contributing to enhanced biodiversity outcomes both through the planning system and wider voluntary action.</p>
<p>Report on Biodiversity actions and outcomes in line with the Council's Biodiversity Duty, ensuring delivery, transparency and continuous improvement.</p>	<p>All services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with relevant services to develop and implement action plans aligned with the priorities and actions set out in the Council's Biodiversity Duty Report. • By the next statutory reporting deadline, complete and publish the Council's Biodiversity Duty Report, setting out progress, outcomes and next steps. • From 2026, use biodiversity reporting to review progress, share learning and inform future policy, land-management and investment decisions. 	<p>2026 2031 2026-2031</p>	<p>The Council meets its Biodiversity Duty through clear reporting, coordinated delivery across services and continuous improvement in biodiversity outcomes.</p>

<p>Increase and manage tree cover as part of a wider approach to biodiversity, soil health and nature-based climate action.</p>	<p>Leisure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase tree cover in suitable locations and develop a long-term tree management plan to ensure trees are appropriately managed as they establish and mature. • Ensure new tree planting uses a mix of appropriate native and climate-resilient species to enhance biodiversity and reduce the risk of monoculture. • From 2026 onwards, integrate tree planting with soil-health and land-management practices that maximise biodiversity and carbon sequestration, recognising the role of healthy soils alongside tree cover. • From 2026 onwards, work with residents who wish to participate in greening initiatives, including tree planting and nature-friendly gardens, to support biodiversity and local environmental quality. • From 2026 onwards, provide public information and education on the role of trees in the district, including species choice, lifespan, management needs and their relationship to biodiversity and carbon reduction. 	<p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	<p>Tree cover increases in a planned and resilient way, contributing to biodiversity, place-making and public engagement, while being integrated with soil-based approaches that deliver effective long-term carbon sequestration.</p>
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Collaboration and Engagement

Bromsgrove District Council works alongside community partners including the Artrix and Everyone Active (BSLC). The Artrix has installed air source heat pumps and solar panels to reduce carbon emissions. Bromsgrove Sport and Leisure Centre has reduced the temperature of the water in the swimming pool, making significant reductions in emissions caused by heating. Bromsgrove Sport and Leisure Centre has also had solar panels installed on its roof. Bromsgrove District Council hosts an annual Green Fair. This is a family event to communicate the message of a low carbon future to the wider community as well as eco-friendly initiatives.

Climate officers are frequently working with those at risk from climate change, in particular lower income homes who are eligible for improvements to the energy efficiency of their homes through grants, often with the support of Act On Energy. This improves Bromsgrove's health economy by improving air quality within homes and reducing damp and mould.

The council works with external bodies to reduce emissions further across the district. Within the police force the exchange of evidence has become digitalised so that police staff take fewer journeys to collect evidence, thus reducing emissions and allowing officers to be available for more urgent needs.

Bromsgrove District Council is a member of Worcestershire Public Sector Sustainability Group, helping to reduce emissions across the county.



The council works with Worcestershire Regulatory Services to monitor air quality across the district and to try and improve areas where air quality is particularly poor.

As part of the leisure and culture strategy, the council will develop a partnership with the National Trust to deliver the 8 Hills project, creating a regional park that boosts nature, recreation, sustainable farming and active travel. This can help to improve Bromsgrove's health economy by encouraging people to become more active.

<https://moderngovwebpublic.bromsgrove.gov.uk/ielssueDetails.aspx?IId=35037&PlanId=0&Opt=3#AI32830>⁷

Outside of the public sector organisations BDC is an active member of the Better Environment group and works with 3rd sector organisations supporting residents across the district with environmental projects or access to funding a resources in managing through the cost-of-living crisis, fuel poverty community clean ups and accessing transport across the district.



Future Milestones

Actions	Service area	Milestone and data	Timescale	Outcomes/targets
Work with local educational institutions to support climate change awareness, skills and engagement among children and young people.	Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2026, engage with local schools and educational institutions to identify opportunities for climate-related engagement and plan future events or activities. From 2026 onwards, deliver a rolling programme of climate change engagement activities with local schools and educational institutions, subject to capacity and partnership arrangements. 	<p>2026</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	Children and young people are better informed and engaged on climate change and sustainability, supported through partnership working with local educational institutions.
Engage with community groups to support, inform and shape local climate-related initiatives across the district.	Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, engage with community groups through planned and proportionate meetings or forums to support local climate action and share information on Council priorities and activity. From 2026 onwards, ensure feedback and views from community engagement are captured, considered and, where appropriate, used to inform the Council's Climate Change Strategy delivery and action planning. 	<p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	Community groups are actively engaged in climate action, with local knowledge and perspectives helping to shape and support delivery of the Council's climate priorities.

<p>Deliver inclusive community outreach to ensure those most affected by climate change are informed, heard and able to engage with local climate action.</p>	<p>Climate Change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, ensure community outreach and engagement activities are inclusive and designed to reach residents and groups most affected by climate change impacts. From 2026 onwards, deliver targeted community engagement workshops, where appropriate, to raise awareness, build understanding and support participation in local climate action. 	<p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	<p>Community outreach is inclusive and accessible, enabling those most affected by climate change to engage with and contribute to local climate action.</p>
<p>Share best practice and collaborate with the County Council, neighbouring local authorities and public-sector partners to support delivery of net zero and climate resilience objectives.</p>	<p>Climate Change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, engage in regular partnership working with Worcestershire County Council, neighbouring local authorities and public-sector organisations to share best practice and support delivery of climate and net zero initiatives (for example, EV infrastructure and LEVI delivery). From 2026 onwards, work with partners to ensure continuity of climate change activity, data and learning in the event of Local Government Reorganisation, supporting effective transition and shared approaches where required. Subject to the outcomes of Local Government Reorganisation, support the alignment of climate priorities, actions and reporting across new or revised governance arrangements. 	<p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	<p>Climate action is strengthened through effective collaboration, shared learning and continuity of approach across the county, neighbouring authorities and the wider public sector, including through periods of organisational change.</p>

<p>Support the exploration and development of community energy initiatives, including potential community microgrids and district heat networks, in partnership with local communities and specialist organisations.</p>	<p>Planning/ housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2027, seek external expertise to assess the feasibility of community energy opportunities within the district, including the potential for community microgrids or district heat networks and identification of suitable locations where appropriate. • By 2027, engage with community groups, parish councils and other local stakeholders to understand appetite for community energy projects and to raise awareness of potential opportunities and benefits. 	<p>2027 2027</p>	<p>Communities are supported to explore and develop locally led energy solutions, contributing to decarbonisation, energy resilience and local benefit where feasible.</p>
<p>Engage and support local businesses to reduce emissions and improve energy efficiency, building on evidence from local decarbonisation studies and partnership working.</p>	<p>Climate Change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 2027 onwards, use learning from local decarbonisation studies in Redditch and Worcester to inform wider engagement with local businesses on decarbonisation opportunities, including energy efficiency, low-carbon heat and renewable energy. 	<p>2026-2031</p>	<p>Local businesses are supported to understand and progress decarbonisation opportunities, building on evidence-based studies and partnership working to reduce emissions and strengthen the local economy.</p>

<p>Work in partnership with other public-sector organisations to identify and support opportunities to improve the energy efficiency and de-carbonisation of public-sector buildings.</p> <p>Page 345</p>	<p>Property Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2027, identify opportunities to work with other public-sector organisations (such as the police, fire service, NHS and schools) where buildings are shared, co-located or in close proximity to Council assets, to explore joint energy efficiency or decarbonisation opportunities. • By 2027, work with partners to identify and pursue appropriate funding opportunities and delivery mechanisms to support energy efficiency and decarbonisation measures in shared or neighbouring public-sector buildings. • From 2028 onwards, support the implementation of joint energy efficiency and decarbonisation projects in public-sector buildings where funding, partner agreement and governance arrangements are in place. 	<p>2027-2031</p> <p>2027-2031</p> <p>2028-2031</p>	<p>Public-sector organisations work collaboratively to improve the energy efficiency and de-carbonisation of buildings, reducing emissions, costs and duplication across the local public estate.</p>
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Waste reduction and Food

The council operates weekly domestic waste collections, alternating between recycling and general waste collection. Commercial food waste is being collected by the council and in 2026 food waste bin collections will begin for households, which will reduce the amount of food waste going to landfill which releases vast amounts of methane. Bromsgrove District Council is a 'collection authority' and the disposal of waste collected is the responsibility of Worcestershire County Council. Currently the County Council has a Waste Core Strategy that covers the period to 2027, the Council is signed up to the Worcestershire & Herefordshire Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS). The JMWMS sets out our targets for the reduction and recovery of household waste and runs until 2034.

Reducing residential and commercial waste has huge benefits for the environment and economically. By seeking alternatives to buying new/replacing items straight away, few materials are required. This means that from the start of a product's life-cycle, there are fewer emissions involved in extracting materials, manufacturing and transport, as well as the use of earth's resources. Within the district, monthly repair cafes are held where broken items can be taken to be fixed, both saving money as well as reducing waste going to landfill.

With the statutory roll-out of weekly food waste collections by March 2026 under the Environment Act 2021, Bromsgrove District Council has an opportunity to align waste management with local energy generation. The implementation of separate food waste services not only supports national recycling targets but also unlocks the potential for anaerobic digestion - a technology that converts organic waste into renewable biomethane and biofertilizer.

Recent regional analysis, including work supported by the Midlands Net Zero Hub, has highlighted the potential role anaerobic digestion could play in Worcestershire as part of a wider, integrated approach to waste, energy and land management. Where appropriate, anaerobic digestion can support decarbonisation of the energy system, reduce reliance on fossil gas, and return nutrients to soils through digestate.

By supporting the effective capture and treatment of food waste, the Council can help enable opportunities to convert unavoidable waste into valuable energy and soil-enhancing products, contributing to emissions reduction, energy resilience and the growth of low-carbon infrastructure across the county.



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Future Milestone

Actions	Service area	Milestone and data	Timescale	Outcomes/targets
<p>Increase recycling rates across the district through improved communication, public engagement and targeted investment in recycling and waste reduction initiatives.</p> <p>Page 348</p>	<p>Environmental</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2026 onwards, deliver targeted communications to residents and businesses to improve understanding of what can be recycled, reduce contamination and encourage positive recycling behaviours across the district. From 2026 onwards, undertake public engagement activities to encourage increased recycling and waste reduction, using feedback to shape future communications and initiatives where appropriate. By 2031, increase the districtwide recycling rate to 50% of all household waste, supported by external funding where available and the delivery of community-led recycling and waste reduction projects. By 2027, work with waste and recycling contractors and service providers to improve understanding of recycling performance, data quality and operational practices, and identify opportunities to increase recycling rates and reduce residual waste. 	<p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2031</p> <p>2027</p>	<p>Recycling rates increase across the district as residents and communities are better informed, engaged and supported to reduce waste and recycle more effectively.</p>

<p>Reduce overall waste arisings across the district through behaviour change, reuse initiatives and targeted support for waste prevention.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 349</p>	<p>Environmental and Climate Change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 2026 onwards, deliver targeted public communications campaigns to encourage waste reduction and reuse, including participation in national initiatives such as Plastic Free July. • From 2026 onwards, support initiatives that redistribute surplus food and reduce food waste, working with community organisations and partners where appropriate. • From 2026 onwards, support the development of community-led reuse initiatives, such as swap shops and furniture reuse schemes, to prevent waste and extend product lifespans. • From 2026 onwards, deliver regular internal communications and guidance to support staff in reducing waste in Council operations and in their own behaviours. • By 2031, reduce overall household waste arisings across the district by 10% compared to the baseline year. 	<p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2031</p>	<p>Overall waste arisings reduce as residents, communities and the Council are better supported to prevent waste, reuse materials and reduce consumption.</p>
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<p>Reduce food waste and associated emissions by supporting the roll-out of separate food waste collections and encouraging effective use by households and Council services.</p>	<p>Environmental, Property Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 2026, support the distribution of food waste bins to households and relevant Council buildings across the district as part of the national food waste collection programme. • From 2026 onwards, deliver targeted communications and engagement to encourage residents and Council services to use food waste collections correctly, reducing the amount of food waste placed in general waste. 	<p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	<p>Food waste is increasingly diverted from general waste through effective collection, improved public participation and reduced methane emissions from disposal.</p>
<p>Manage the green waste service in a phased and sustainable way to support waste reduction and composting, while managing operational capacity and demand.</p>	<p>Environmental Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 2026 onwards, manage and optimise the existing green waste collection service, recognising current capacity constraints and reviewing performance and demand to inform any future changes where feasible. • From 2026 onwards, deliver targeted communications to support correct use of the green waste service and manage resident expectations. • From 2026 onwards, monitor green waste volumes, contamination and operational impacts to inform future service development where feasible. 	<p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	<p>Green waste is increasingly diverted from general waste through a well-managed, phased collection service that balances environmental benefit with operational capacity.</p>

<p>Support local food growing to improve food resilience, community wellbeing and environmental outcomes through engagement, demonstration and partnership working.</p>	<p>Environmental</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 2026 onwards, encourage local food growing by sharing good practice, guidance and local growing initiatives through markets, communications and partnership working. • From 2026 onwards, support the delivery of local food growing demonstrations and learning opportunities, such as allotment or community garden demonstrations, where capacity and partnerships allow. • From 2026 onwards, seek and secure external funding (for example from the National Lottery and other grant programmes) to support local food growing, skills and community-led initiatives where available. 	<p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p> <p>2026-2031</p>	<p>Local food growing is supported through community-led initiatives, improved skills and access to funding, contributing to resilience, wellbeing and more sustainable food systems.</p>
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Cabinet

20th April 2026

Empty Homes Strategy

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Kit Taylor
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Judith Willis Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services
Report Author Maria Bailey	Job Title: Senior Housing Strategy Officer Contact email: maria.bailey@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 07768 307628
Wards Affected	No specific ward relevance
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	Not Applicable
Relevant Council Priority	Housing
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to **RECOMMEND** to Council that: -

- 1) **The Bromsgrove District Council Empty Homes Strategy 2026 – 29 be adopted.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 According to the national council tax database for 2025, there were 542, 276 empty homes recorded in October across England, representing 2.1 % of all homes. Action to tackle empty homes has a significant potential to address national housing needs.
- 2.2 In October 2025, Bromsgrove District had 635 empty homes, of which 384 had been empty for more than 6 months. At the same time there were 3749 households on the housing register seeking affordable housing.
- 2.3 Bromsgrove District Council is committed to identifying empty homes and developing options for bringing them back into use as quickly as possible. The empty homes strategy sets out priorities and actions to

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tackle empty homes across the District and to use the most effective interventions to do so.

- 2.4 The aim of the strategy is to:
- help alleviate housing need
 - improve housing conditions
 - offer a wider choice of housing to residents
 - minimise the blight that can result where properties are left empty and neglected.
- 2.5 Empty homes can have a negative impact on a local area for several reasons, they:
- attract pests and vermin
 - can become a focal point for illegal activities such as anti-social behaviour, vandalism and fly tipping
 - increase the risk of squatting
 - fall into disrepair – increasing renovation costs and possible risks to the public if structures are unsafe
 - increase pressure on public resources.
- 2.6 An empty home is a dwelling which is unoccupied and substantially unfurnished. There are two main types of empty homes. Short term empty homes are dwellings which have been unoccupied for under six months. It is often the case that these are in the process of sale. Short term empty homes naturally occur as people's circumstances change, and they move between homes.
- 2.7 Long term empty homes are dwellings which have been unoccupied and are substantially unfurnished for six months or longer. Bringing long term, privately owned empty homes back into use is the focus of this strategy. Rather than representing a natural process of change, long term empty homes indicate there may be other factors leading to a property remaining empty.
- 2.8 Residential properties remain empty for various reasons, for example resolving legal ownership as part of an inheritance process. Other factors include new homes waiting for a buyer, owners abandoning properties, owners having a lack of funds for repairs and refurbishment,

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waiting for planning consent or decision, repossession and perceived difficulties in renting. There is also evidence that some owners have sentimental attachment to a property and are reluctant to part with it for emotional reasons.

- 2.9 There is no act of parliament that creates a duty on local housing authorities to tackle empty homes. However, Councils do have a general housing duty to review housing conditions and needs as laid out in the Housing Act 1985.
- 2.10 National policy focuses on empowering local authorities to bring vacant dwellings back in to use, guided by a local empty homes strategy. Local authorities have the discretion to charge empty home owners council tax premiums and have a range of legislative powers to tackle empty homes.
- 2.11 Since April 2013 local authorities have been able to charge a council tax premium on homes, empty for more than 2 years, that is, an amount charged on top of the council tax due. In April 2024, this was extended to properties empty for more than one year.
- 2.12 Some empty home owners are exempt from paying council tax. The key reasons for this are the owner: is deceased and the property is subject to probate, has moved to hospital or into a care home or the owner is a charity.
- 2.13 The Local Government Association (LGA) has developed good practice guidance for tackling empty homes. LGA good practice approaches focus on systematically identifying and recording empty homes in their areas and engaging, encouraging and using enforcement (where necessary) to bring homes back in to use. Legislative powers for tackling empty homes can be found in appendix 1 to this report
- 2.14 Across the wider West Midlands, the proportion of empty homes varies widely by local authority area. In October 2025, Stratford upon Avon had the highest number of long-term empty homes per 1000 dwellings at 18.38 and Solihull the least at 5.51. Bromsgrove featured amongst the lowest 10 local authorities at 8.88 empty homes per 1000 dwellings.

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- 2.15 The strategic approach to tackling empty homes and delivering on our commitment, is centred around three priority areas:

Priority 1 - Develop systems, processes and multi-agency working

Priority 2 - Improve intervention pathways, resources and performance

Priority 3 - Strengthen early intervention, engagement and monitoring

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 This Empty Homes Strategy will be implemented by the Private Sector Housing Team and additional funding has been provided through Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant to increase an existing officer's part time role in order to provide a proactive approach to Empty Homes.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 A contribution of £7,680 from Bromsgrove District Council's Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant (26/27) has been agreed to support the funding of the part-time empty homes officer, referred to above in 3.1. Funding was agreed by Cabinet on the 7th January 26 (Homelessness Prevention, Rough Sleeper and Domestic Abuse Grants Funding 2026/27 Report).

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is no act of parliament that creates a duty on local housing authorities to tackle empty homes. However, councils do have a general housing duty to review housing conditions and needs as laid out in the Housing Act 1985.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

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

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Relevant Council Priority

6.2 Tackling Empty Homes positively impacts:

- Housing

Climate Change Implications

6.3 Bringing Empty Homes back into use will include improvements to the condition and efficiency of the private sector housing stock within Bromsgrove which will positively impact on the Council's approach to mitigate Climate Change

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.4 No specific equalities and diversity implications have been identified

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 This strategy aims to mitigate risks to the local community from neglected housing.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Bromsgrove District Council Empty Homes Strategy 2026
– 29

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Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Kit Taylor Portfolio Holder for Housing	22.02.26
Assistant Director	Judith Willis Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services	26.02.26
Financial Services	Julie Lorraine, Director of Finance	12.02.26
Legal and Democratic Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor Governance and Jess Bayley-Hill, Principal Democratic Services Officer	23.02.26
Climate Change Officer (if climate change implications apply)	Matt Bough, Strategic Housing and Business Support Manager	13.02.26

Bromsgrove District Council

Empty Homes Strategy 2026 – 2029



Bromsgrove
District Council

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

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Priority 1 - Develop systems, processes and multi-agency working

Priority 2 - Improve intervention pathways, resources and performance

Priority 3 - Strengthen early intervention, engagement and monitoring

Appendix 1 - Legislative Powers for Tackling Empty Homes

Appendix 2 – Strategy Action Plan

I am delighted to introduce this new Bromsgrove Empty Homes Strategy. Addressing the issue of Empty Homes is a key priority for the Council as we want to ensure that we are maximising the use of our existing housing stock.

Safe and secure homes provide stability for people living across Bromsgrove District. However, empty homes in our communities diminish the quality of the environment overall and can lead to vandalism and other crimes. At a time of high housing need and increasing homelessness, empty homes are a waste of a valuable opportunity to provide a family with somewhere to build a successful future.

The aim of this strategy is to make the best use of all existing housing across our district, and it reflects a step change in our commitment to bringing empty homes back into use. Bromsgrove District Council already helps willing empty home owners with problems they may be experiencing. Now we plan to invest additional resources to provide a more proactive approach to enable us to contact owners of properties empty for more than 6 months and work collaboratively to find the right solutions to complex situations.

This strategy will not punish homeowners with valid reasons for vacancy (e.g. in care, serving in the armed forces), instead it targets those who allow assets to fall into disrepair, reducing housing availability for Bromsgrove residents.

The Council carefully monitors the number of empty homes across the district. We are committed to finding new ways of ensuring, wherever possible, all housing is brought back into use, including adopting best practice, learning from successful approaches elsewhere and talking to our empty home owners to find out what support they need.

We are looking forward to seeing this new approach to tackle the scandal of empty homes, bringing more of them back to life as warm safe places to live.

Councillor Kit Taylor
Cabinet Member for Housing

Introduction

In October 2025, Bromsgrove District had 635 empty homes, of which 384 had been empty for more than 6 months. At the same time there were 3,487 households on the housing register requiring affordable housing. This strategy lays out how the Council will address local empty homes, supporting home owners to bring properties back in to use as quickly as possible and to use enforcement where appropriate.

Bromsgrove District Council is committed to addressing the diverse housing needs of the local community and to ensure quality homes are available for residents and families. The council monitors the number of empty homes in the District and bringing empty homes back into use, is a key objective to support this commitment.

The aim of this strategy is to:

- help alleviate housing need
- to improve housing conditions
- to offer a wider choice of housing to residents, and
- to minimise the blight that can result where properties are left empty and neglected

Empty homes can have a negative impact on a local area for several reasons, they:

- attract pests and vermin
- become a focal point for illegal activities such as anti-social behaviour and vandalism
- increased risk of squatting
- fall into disrepair – increasing renovation costs and possible risk to the public if structures are unsafe
- increased pressure on public resources
- attracts fly tipping

Our commitment

Bromsgrove District Council commits to work with owners of empty homes and develop options for bringing them back into use. The aim of this strategy is to bring long-term empty properties back into use by setting out clear empty homes' priorities across the District and to use the most effective and proportionate interventions.

What is an empty home?

An empty home is a dwelling which is unoccupied and substantially unfurnished. There are two main types of empty homes. Short term empty homes are dwellings which have been unoccupied for under six months. It is often the case that these are in the process of sale. Short term empty homes naturally occur as people's circumstances change, and they move between homes.

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Long-term empty homes are dwellings which have been unoccupied and are substantially unfurnished for six months or longer. Bringing long-term, privately owned empty homes back into use is the focus of this strategy. Rather than representing a natural process of change, long-term empty homes indicate there may be other factors leading to a property remaining empty.

What are the reasons behind empty homes?

Residential properties remain empty for various reasons, for example resolving legal ownership as part of an inheritance process. Other factors include new homes waiting for a buyer, owners abandoning properties, owners having a lack of funds for repairs and refurbishment, waiting for planning consent or decision, repossession and perceived difficulties in renting. There is also evidence that some owners have sentimental attachment to a property and are reluctant to part with it for emotional reasons.

Some owners do not engage with the council, and they may be unaware of the issues with their property and the effect it is having on the local area. These are often the properties which can fall into disrepair and stand empty for numerous years. It is essential that the council understands the reasons and intentions behind the properties remaining empty to be able to tailor an approach to support the owner in reaching the best possible outcome.

Advantages of bringing empty homes back in to use

Advantages of bringing empty homes back in to use include:

- reducing and discouraging levels of anti-social behaviour, crime, fly-tipping and vandalism
- increasing the provision of affordable housing
- recovering debt owed to the council
- supporting corporate economic growth and development priorities, objectives and strategies
- improving an area, reducing environmental decline and local people's quality of life resulting from living near a long-term empty home
- reducing additional council tax premiums for home owners

National Context

According to the council tax database for 2025, there were 542,276 empty homes recorded in October across England, representing 2.1% of all homes. This number has risen by 8% since 2024. Of all empty homes, 309,856 were recorded as long-term empty, 57%.

Action to tackle empty homes has a significant potential to address national housing needs. At the end of June 2025, 86,650 households were in temporary accommodation across England and owed a main housing duty by the local housing authority.

National empty homes policy focuses on empowering local authorities to bring vacant dwellings back in to use, guided by a local empty homes strategy. Local authorities have the discretion to charge empty home owners council tax premiums and have a range of legislative powers to tackle empty homes (*appendix 1*). There is no act of parliament that creates a duty on local housing authorities to tackle empty homes. However, councils have a general housing duty to review housing conditions and needs.

Council Tax Premiums

Since April 2013, local authorities have been able to charge a council tax premium on homes empty for more than 2 years, that is, an amount charged on top of the council tax due. From April 2021, local authorities could charge a premium of up to 100% for dwellings that had been empty for between 2 to 5 years, up to 200% for dwellings that had been empty for between 5 to 10 years, and up to 300% for dwellings that have been empty for 10 years or more. Since April 2024, local authorities have been able to charge a premium on properties empty for more than 1 year.

In 2025, 291 out of 296 authorities charged a premium on empty homes. Across England, 153,000 home owners were charged a premium, 28.2% of all empty homes. Some empty home owners are exempt from paying council tax. The key reasons for this are the owner:

- is deceased and the property is subject to probate
- has moved to hospital or into a care home
- is a charity

Good Practice

The Local Government Association's (LGA) 2023 report, *A Practical Approach for Councils on Dealing with Empty Homes*, lays out recommendations for best practice identified through case studies and research exploring local authorities' empty homes approaches. LGA good practice approaches focus on systematically identifying and recording empty homes in their areas and engaging, encouraging and using enforcement to bring homes back in to use. Case studies in the report cover the benefits of well-trained and dedicated staff working to effective procedures.

Local Context

Agenda Item 16d

Bromsgrove is situated in the north of Worcestershire and has a population of 101,685. In December 2025, there were 3,487 people on the housing register in need of affordable housing. In October 2025, Bromsgrove District had 635 empty homes, of which 384 had been empty for more than 6 months. Bringing empty homes back into residential use, could contribute to meeting the district's housing needs.

National data shows that in October 2025 there were 33,215 long-term empty homes, across the wider West Midlands area (1), representing 1.26% of all dwellings or 12.6 per 1000 dwellings. Across the region, the number of empty homes increased by 4782 (16.8%) between October 2024 and October 2025.

The proportion of empty homes varies widely by local authority area. In October 2025, Stratford upon Avon had the highest number of long-term empty homes per 1000 dwellings at 18.38 and Solihull the least at 5.51. Bromsgrove featured amongst the lowest 10 local authorities at 8.88 empty homes per 1000 dwellings.

Number of Long-Term Empty Homes in Worcestershire

Local Authority	Per 1000 Dwellings	Number Long-erm Empty Homes 2025	Number Long-Term Empty Homes 2024	Change since October 2024	
Bromsgrove	8.88	384	369	15	4.0 %
Malvern Hills	15.97	621	626	-5	-0.8 %
Redditch	8.43	320	283	37	13.0 %
Worcester	14.53	698	653	45	7.0 %
Wychavon	13.71	857	886	-29	-3.3%
Wyre Forest	7.40	364	337	27	8.0%
Worcestershire	11.59	3244	3154	90	2.9%

Source: Council Tax Base Oct 2025 & Oct2024

Wychavon achieved a reduction in the number of empty homes over the period, one of the top 5 highest reductions across the wider West Midlands. Rugby achieved the highest reduction, 212 empty homes brought back in to use since 2024. Birmingham saw the highest increase at 1,654 empty homes.

When the number of long term empty homes and all empty homes in Bromsgrove are compared with the number of dwellings in the area, we can see that approximately 61%, are 6 months or over empty. This indicates property owners may be facing challenges to bringing them back into residential use, once homes become empty. Bromsgrove is in line with Worcestershire and England statistics.

(1) In the context of the Council Tax Base, the wider West Midlands refers to Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Midlands and Worcestershire (ONS)

Local Authority	All Empty Homes 2025	Long-Term Empty Homes 2025
Bromsgrove	1.47%	0.89%

Worcestershire	1.91%	1.16%
England	2.10%	1.20%

In October 2025 there were 384 long-term empty homes in Bromsgrove. The table below shows how these were dispersed over council tax banding. Just over 56% of all empty homes are in bands A to C.

Council Tax Banding	Number	Percentage
A	60	15.6
B	75	19.5
C	82	21.4
D	56	14.6
E	40	10.4
F	40	10.4
G	24	6.3
H	7	1.8

Of the 635 empty homes, 393 were paying full council tax. 178 were paying an empty homes premium, which constitutes 28.0% of all empty homes. This was above the county average of 19.3% and just below the average for England of 28.2%. There were 64 properties exempted from paying council tax. The reasons for this are varied but are most commonly that, the owner is deceased and their estate is in probate or that the owner has moved to receive or provide care elsewhere.

From April 2026, where an empty home owner does not qualify for an exemption, Bromsgrove District Council premiums will be charged as follows:

Time Empty	Council Tax Premium
1- 5 years	100%
5-10 years	200%
10 years plus	300%

Empty Homes Strategic Priorities

Our approach to tackling empty homes and delivering on our commitment, is centred around three priority areas:

Priority 1

Develop systems, processes and multi-agency working

Priority 2

Improve intervention pathways, resources and performance

Priority 3

Strengthen early intervention, engagement and monitoring

The strategy action plan (*appendix 2*) lays out details of how each of the strategic priorities will be delivered.

Accountability

Officers will implement the action plan, and progress will be monitored through regular performance reports.

Appendix 1 Legislative Powers for Tackling Empty Homes

Legislation	Summary of Power	Lead Department	Timescale	Priority Use	Notes / Practical Considerations	If Owner Cannot Be Located
Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949	Require owner to keep property free from rats/mice and remove accumulations of waste.	Private Sector Housing/ Worcestershire Regulatory Services	Quick	First-line	Can be used immediately if infestations or waste are visible. Covers gardens and interiors. Cost recovery.	Serve notice to last known address, affix to property, and proceed with works in default if no response. Recover costs via local land charge.
Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 s.29	Secure unsecured or dangerous empty building to prevent unauthorised entry.	Private Sector Housing (with Legal & Property Services)	Quick	First-line / Escalation	48 hrs notice unless urgent. Works in default recoverable from owner.	Affix notice to property and proceed to secure if no owner contact. Charge costs to property as a land charge.
Building Act 1984 s.77 & s.78	Order owner to make building safe (s.77) or take emergency action (s.78).	Private Sector Housing/ Building Control	Quick (s.78) / Medium (s77)	First-line / Escalation	s.78 allows immediate works if imminent danger. Cost recoverable from owner.	Proceed under s.78 without owner consent if imminent danger. For s.77, serve notice to last known address and property. Charge costs as land charge

Legislation	Summary of Power	Lead Department	Timescale	Priority Use	Notes / Practical Considerations	If Owner Cannot Be Located
Building Act 1984 s.79	Require repair/restoration or demolition of ruinous/dilapidated buildings affecting amenity.	North Worcestershire Building Control	Medium	Escalation	Limited to amenity impact. Can require rubbish removal from site.	Serve notice to last known address and property. Works in default possible if no owner found. Costs recoverable.
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 s.215	Require improvement of land/building where condition harms local amenity.	Planning Enforcement	Medium	First-line / Escalation	Minimum 28 days compliance. Used for overgrown/derelict sites.	Serve notice to last known address and affix to site. Works in default if no owner found; costs recovered as land charge.
Housing Act 2004	Require works to remove Category 1 or 2 hazards under HHSRS.	Private Sector Housing	Medium	First-line / Escalation	Enables works in default, fines. Powers of entry included.	Serve to last known address and property. If no access, use power of entry (with warrant if needed). Works in default recoverable.
Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO)	Take control of empty home to let/manage it.	Private Sector Housing, Strategic Housing and Business	Medium / Long-term	Escalation	Must be empty 6+ months. High capital and management resource required.	Can proceed even without contact, reasonable steps to locate owner

Legislation	Summary of Power	Lead Department	Timescale	Priority Use	Notes / Practical Considerations	If Owner Cannot Be Located
		Development Manager (with Legal & Cabinet approval)				required, then apply to First-tier Tribunal.
Enforced Sale Procedure (LPA 1925 s.103)	Force sale of property to recover debts over £1,000.	Legal Services (triggered by Private Sector Housing, Council Tax Recovery, or Housing Strategy)	Medium	Escalation / Last resort	Simpler than CPO. Can be linked to works in default or council tax arrears.	Ownership not required for contact, sale can proceed based on registered title and debt charge.
Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO)	Acquire property without owner consent to bring into use.	Private Sector Housing, Strategic Housing and Business Development Manager (with Legal & Cabinet approval)	Long-term	Last resort	Cabinet approval required. Must show voluntary action attempts first.	Can proceed without contact, but must evidence reasonable attempts to trace owner. Notice published and posted on site.
Housing Act 1985 s.17	Compulsory purchase to improve housing stock or bring empty homes into use.	Private Sector Housing, Strategic Housing and Business Development Manager (with Legal & Cabinet approval)	Long-term	Last resort	Needs Secretary of State approval. High cost. Disposal to RSL/developer/owner-occupier.	Can proceed without contact, but must evidence reasonable attempts to trace owner. Notice published and posted on site.

Empty Homes Strategy – Action Plan

This action plan has been developed in line with the Local Government Association’s Empty Homes Toolkit, which promotes a staged approach focused on accurate data, early engagement, proportionate enforcement and strong partnership working.

The plan reflects LGA best practice by prioritising the establishment of reliable data and governance arrangements first, followed by structured engagement and intervention pathways, and then scaling up early intervention and enforcement activity once systems are embedded.

The phased delivery model ensures the Council builds capability incrementally, demonstrates value for money, and uses enforcement powers proportionately and effectively to bring empty homes back into use.

Priority 1 – Develop systems, processes and multi-agency working.

Action	KPI / Measure	Start	End	Key Milestones	Responsible Team(s)
Develop systems to record and track empty homes across the district	Centralised empty homes system goes live, 100% of known empty homes logged and tracked	1 st Aug 2026	1 st January 2027	System design complete (1 st August 2026); Go-live (Jan 2027)	Private Sector Housing (Lead), Council Tax
Develop and embed data-sharing processes between PSH and Council Tax	Data-sharing arrangement agreed; routine data transfer embedded as business as usual	1 st July 2026	1 st Sept 2026	Data-sharing agreement signed (1 st July 2026); Automated / routine transfer in place (1 st Sept 2026)	Council Tax (Lead), Information Management, Private Sector Housing
Participate in joint departmental and agency working group for complex cases	Quarterly meetings held; minimum 5 complex cases reviewed and actioned per year	15 th June 2026	Ongoing	First meeting attended (15 th June 2026)	Private Sector Housing (Lead), Council Tax, Planning, Building Control, Legal Services,

					Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Review options for public reporting of empty homes	Online reporting route improved and promoted; baseline established for number of public referrals	1 st July 2026	31 st Dec 2027	Online updates completed (1 st Oct 2026); Communications campaign launched (Dec 2026)	Web Team (Lead), Private Sector Housing, Communications, Customer Services

Priority 2 – Improve intervention pathways, resources and performance

Action	KPI / Measure	Start	End	Key Milestones	Responsible Team(s)
Review PSH processes using support, advice, incentives and enforcement	Baseline established for case progression times; standard empty homes case pathway approved and implemented	1 st September 2026	1 st December 2026	Process mapping completed (30 th Sep 2026); Pathway approved (1 st December 2026)	Private Sector Housing (Lead), Legal Services, Finance, Strategic Housing
Identify range of support, incentives and enforcement options	Menu of support and enforcement tools agreed and documented	1 st October 2026	1 st March 2027	Options appraisal completed (1 st December 2026); Toolkit approved (1 st March 2027)	Private Sector Housing (Lead), Strategic Housing
Develop scoring matrix aligned to LGA Empty Homes Toolkit	Scoring matrix designed and applied to 100% of empty home cases	1 st November 2026	1 st March 2027	Draft criteria (1 st December 2026); Full implementation (1 st March 2027)	Private Sector Housing (Lead)
Analyse effectiveness of empty homes processes	Annual performance report produced; improvement actions agreed and tracked	1 st December 2027	1 st February 2028 (then annual)	Baseline dashboard (1 st November 2027); Year-end analysis (Feb 2028)	Private Sector Housing (Lead), Strategic Housing

Identify and explore good practice to address barriers	Benchmarking completed; practice note adopted and implemented	1 st December 2027	31 st March 2028	Desk research (Dec 2027); Peer engagement (Mar 2028); Practice adoption (Jun 2028)	Private Sector Housing (Lead), Strategic Housing, Empty Homes Regional Network
Develop targets to bring empty homes back into use	Annual and strategy-level targets set; quarterly monitoring in place	1 st Sept 2026	15 th Dec 2026	Baseline agreed (Oct 2026); Draft targets (Nov 2026); Sign-off (Dec 2026)	Private Sector Housing

Phase 3 – Strengthen early intervention, engagement and monitoring

Action	KPI / Measure	Start	End	Key Milestones	Responsible Team(s)
Develop early intervention processes for newly identified empty homes	From go-live, 100% of newly identified empty homes contacted within 12 weeks	1 st Nov 2026	28 th Feb 2027	Workflow design complete (30 Nov 2026); Go-live (Feb 2027)	Private Sector Housing (Lead), Council Tax
Create survey to establish effectiveness of early intervention for previous empty homes owners	Survey designed and issued	1 st Jan 2027	31 st Mar 2027	Survey design (Feb 2027)	Private Sector Housing
Consult previous owners of empty homes	Annual survey completed; action log agreed and monitored	1 st April 2027	30 th June 2027	Findings Report (June 2027)	Private Sector Housing (Lead)

Monitor and report on homes brought back into use	Annual empty homes performance report published	1 st Jan 2027	Ongoing	First annual report published (Apr 2027)	Private Sector Housing
Explore options to increase homes brought back into use (complex / multi-agency cases)	Options appraised annually; at least one new delivery option piloted	1 st Jan 2027	31 st Dec 2027	Long list (Mar 2027); Shortlist & pilots (Jul–Sep 2027); Appraisal (Dec 2027)	Multi-Agency Working Group (Lead), Legal, Finance, Registered Providers / Partners

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Renters Rights Act 2025

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Kit Taylor
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Assistant Director Community and Housing Services
Report Author: Katie Sharp-Fisher	Job Title: Private Sector Housing Manager Contact email: k.sharp-fisher@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881437
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	Housing
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE that

- 1) The update provided in the report in respect of the Renters Rights Act 2025 be noted.
- 2) The new burdens funding of £16,575.66 be noted.

The Cabinet is asked to RECOMMEND that:-

- 3) The Scheme of Delegations be amended to incorporate new powers under the Renters Rights Act 2025 in accordance with the wording set out at Appendix 1

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Renters Rights Act 2025 (RRA25) obtained Royal Assent on the 27th October 2025 with reforms being introduced through a phased approach with new investigatory power being implemented from the 27th December 2025. Phase 1 will commence on the 1st May 2026. The RRA25 represents the most significant reform of the private rented sector in a generation with the aim to improve security, fairness, and standards for private tenants while strengthening enforcement powers for local authorities.

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- 2.2 The estimated private rented sector (PRS) in Bromsgrove is 4,395 (Office for National Statistics (2021 Census) and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Live Tables on Dwelling Stock.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The Private Sector Housing Team currently investigates and enforces non-compliance under the Housing Act 2004, with a primary focus on the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), which addresses property disrepair and hazards.

- 3.2 The Renters' Rights Act 2025 will be implemented across three phases as set out below:

- 3.3 **Phase 1** will take effect from 1st May 2026 and includes the following elements:

- **Abolish section 21 'no fault' evictions** – landlords in the PRS will no longer be able to use section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 to evict their tenants.
- **Introduces Assured Periodic Tenancies** in the private rented sector – the vast majority of new tenancies and existing tenancies in the PRS will become Assured Periodic Tenancies. This means tenants will be able to stay in their property for as long as they want, or until a landlord serves a valid section 8 notice. Tenants will be able to end their tenancy by giving two months' notice.
- **Reform possession grounds** in the PRS so they are fair for both parties – landlords will only be able to evict tenants when they have a valid reason. Possession grounds will be extended to make it easier for landlords to evict tenants who commit anti-social behaviour, or who are in serious persistent rent arrears. (Appendix 2)
- **Limit rent increases** to once a year in the PRS – landlords will have to follow the revised section 13 procedure and provide the tenant with a notice detailing the proposed rent increase at least two months before it is due to take effect.
- **Ban rental bidding and rent in advance** – landlords and letting agents will not be able to ask for, encourage, or accept an offer that is higher than the advertised rent. Landlords and agents will also not be able to request more than one month's rent in advance.
- **Make it illegal to discriminate against renters** who have children or receive benefits – landlords and letting agents will not be able to do anything to make a tenant less likely to rent a property (or prevent them from renting it) because they have children or receive benefits. This includes withholding information about a property (including its

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availability), stopping someone from viewing it, or refusing to grant a tenancy.

- **Require landlords in the PRS to consider tenant requests to rent with a pet** – landlords will have an initial 28 days to consider their tenant's request, and they will have to provide valid reasons if they refuse it.
- **Strengthen both local council enforcement and rent repayment orders** - civil penalties will be expanded, and there will be a new requirement for local councils to report on enforcement activity. Rent repayment orders will be extended to superior landlords, the maximum penalty will be doubled, and repeat offenders required to pay the maximum amount.

3.3 **Phase 2** will take effect from 2027 (specific dates to be confirmed) and includes the following elements across two stages:

3.4 Stage 1 involves the regional rollout of the database for Landlords and Local Councils. Signing up to the PRS Database will be mandatory for all PRS landlords and they will be required to pay an annual fee which will be confirmed closer to launch.

3.5 Regulations will mandate landlord registration, payment of a fee and the provision of key information by landlords including -

- The landlord's contact details. This will include capturing relevant information from all joint landlords.
- The property details including the full address, type of property (flat/house), number of bedrooms, number of households/residents and confirming whether the property is occupied and furnished, etc.
- Safety information – Gas, Electric and Energy Performance Certificates – so tenants are assured about the safety and energy efficiency of the property.

3.6 Stage 2 involves the further roll out of the database and introduction of the Ombudsman. Public access and data sharing will be enabled following the launch of landlord registration.

3.7 The Ombudsman will provide a redress service for private rented sector tenants when things go wrong. It will also support landlords with tools, guidance and training on handling complaints from tenants early. The Ombudsman scheme will be mandatory for PRS landlords. Landlords will be required to fund the service through a fair and proportionate charging model which is due to be confirmed closer to launch.

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- 3.8 Implementation of the Ombudsman will happen after the introduction of the database, and the government are exploring ways to share information between the database and the Ombudsman to minimise landlord sign-up burden.
- 3.9 The development of the Ombudsman will happen in stages:
- Stage 1 will happen at least 12-18 months before implementation. The Secretary of State will choose a scheme administrator to run the new service, which will then need time to scale up.
 - Stage 2 will require landlords to be members of the new service, expected to be in 2028, when the Secretary of State is confident the service is ready for delivery. We will make sure landlords are given sufficient notice in advance of requiring them to be members of the scheme.
- 3.10 **Phase 3** involves the introduction of a new Decent Homes Standard (DHS) in the PRS (dates of implementation to be confirmed following consultation but likely between 2035- 2037).
- 3.11 A DHS will be introduced to the PRS for the first time. This will ensure that all PRS properties meet a minimum standard of housing quality and provide local councils with powers to take enforcement action if PRS properties fail to meet it.
- 3.12 While the deadline for implementation may be some years away, the expectation is that landlords should commence works earlier wherever feasible, remaining mindful of the effect of property conditions on tenants.
- 3.13 In addition to these measures, the Government has consulted on plans to require all domestic privately rented properties in England and Wales to meet Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) of EPC C or equivalent by 2030 unless a valid exemption is in place. Further details will be set out surrounding this in due course.
- 3.14 As part of the pathway to applying the DHS to the PRS, the Housing, Health & Safety Hazard Rating System (HHSRS) will be reviewed.
- 3.15 Awaab's Law will also be extended to the PRS, setting clear legally enforceable timeframes within which PRS landlords must make homes safe where they contain serious hazards. This will empower tenants to challenge dangerous conditions in their homes.

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- 3.16 It should be noted that the Decent Homes Standard already applies to social housing and Awaab's law applies to social housing from 27th October 2025.
- 3.17 Under the RRA25, the Private Sector Housing Teams powers will expand to include investigation and enforcement of: -
- Tenancy agreement clauses
 - Illegal eviction and harassment
 - Breaches for grounds of possession e.g. re-letting property before 12 months if using sale as reason for possession
 - Time limits on possession grounds
- 3.18 As a result of new legislation, powers and tenants' rights, there are several new areas that the service has not dealt with before such as anti-discrimination, rent bidding and rent increases and unreasonable refusal of pet requests. This will require training to address knowledge gaps, upskilling staff as well as additional resources to respond to the demand and change of enquiries.
- 3.19 The primary anticipated impacts on the service relate to an increase in demand generated through enquiries from tenants surrounding their rights, the identification and enforcement of offences and an increase in homeless presentations as a result of section 21 notices being issued in the lead up to the implementation of phase 1 and a potential reduction in PRS accommodation post implementation.
- 3.20 The Private Sector Housing team is a shared service between Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council. The officers are able to undertake enforcement across all tenures, including private rented, socially rented, owner-occupied and empty properties.
- 3.21 Training, development and upskilling the workforce will be undertaken to ensure that key staff in the service have the knowledge and skillset to provide support, respond to and enforce the Act relevant to their role. This will ensure customers receive the best possible service and build trust and confidence with customers as well as key stakeholders.
- 3.21 To support compliance with the RRA25 Bromsgrove District Council has secured and allocated funding to implement a regulatory case management system. This system will play a crucial role in enabling the council to meet new statutory duties under the Act. Once operational the

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new system will provide robust data reporting to central government as required by the RRA

- 3.22 Officers will update the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy 2026 to align it with the new duties that have been implemented by the RAA25 and bring forward to a future committee. It is anticipated that this will be in June 2026.
- 3.23 In the meantime some updating to the Scheme of Delegations is required to enable officers to start taking on some of the new powers under the RRA25. Accordingly, Members are referred to the revised delegations at Appendix 1, and are asked to recommend to Council that the changes be approved.
- 3.24 By way of explanation, officers would comment on the proposed changes as follows: -
- Deletion of the first paragraph is to tidy up the wording and set out all the legislation in one list in the second paragraph.
 - The references to the RRA 25 in paragraph 2 will enable officers to use the new investigatory powers conferred on Local Housing Authorities and to report on statistics to the government.
 - The references to the RRA 25 in paragraph 3 will enable officers to investigate the new offences relating to discriminating against tenants and the requirement to state the rent.
- 3.25 Members are asked to note that once the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy has been finalised, there will be a further request to add delegations under the RRA25 details of which will be included in the next report coming to committee.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Government has provided New Burdens Funding 2025/26 to support Local Authorities with the implementation costs. Bromsgrove District Council has been allocated £16,575.66 to support the Council to undertake preparatory work for the new responsibilities around enforcement and reporting enforcement activity in private rented sector housing arising from the Renters' Rights Act 2025.
- 4.2 Once enforcement activity starts to take place under the Act there is potential for income to be received from the imposition of civil penalties. This will be from the issuing of Civil Penalty Notices (CPNs) and new style "financial penalties" for certain offences.

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The relevant government guidance states that: -

“Income received from civil penalties must be used by local housing authorities to meet costs and expenses incurred in or associated with their private rented sector enforcement functions. Income that is not used for this purpose must be paid to central government.”

- 4.3 Income may also be received following the establishment of the Landlord Database. This is due to be implemented in Phase 2 with guidance to be provided. However, it is expected that a share of the landlord registration fees will be provided to the local authority. This must be used for private sector housing activities.
- 4.4 The Government has also confirmed that the below amounts have been added to the Council’s final allocation of the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse grant 2026-29 and is provided to support local housing authorities towards meeting their homelessness duties as a result of any new burdens linked directly to the Renters’ Rights Act 2025

2026/27	£34,332
2027/28	£16,165
2028/29	£0
Total	£50,497

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Currently informal action is used in addition to the use of formal powers, and the provisions of the Act are likely to limit such informal action in the future.
- 5.2 The Council must ensure these duties and powers are exercised in accordance with the criteria outlined within the Act. This requires amendments to the Scheme of Delegation to cover the provisions of the Act (Appendix 1).
- 5.3 There are significant changes to the Council’s enforcement powers where landlords have not complied with their duties, have failed to keep the property in a decent standard and have carried out illegal evictions. The Private Sector Housing Enforcement and Civil Penalty Policy will require updating and will be brought to a future Executive Committee. It is expected that the MHCLG will produce guidance for debt recovery.

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6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 The RRA25 introduces new duties to local housing authorities and the unitary authority will take over these duties.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The implementation of the RRA25 enables Bromsgrove District Council to meet one of the Council's priorities of 'Community & Housing'. The legislation directly impacts upon the residents throughout the community by ensuring that houses are safe and warm enabling the residents to be happy and Bromsgrove a safe place to live.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 No direct impact on climate change, although changes to the Decent Homes Standard are likely to require improvements to the energy efficiency of homes which will have a positive impact.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 Equalities and diversity implications have been considered as part of the process to introduce new legislation by the Government.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The following risks and opportunities have been identified to inform planning and mitigation.

- Increased enquiries to both PRS and housing options:
 - Provide clear, consistent information to all internal and external partners through website information, landlord emails and internal scripts for all teams.
- Short implementation timescales:
 - Develop early workflows and deliver training to all relevant staff ahead of Phase 1.
- Some landlords may choose to exit the PRS due to perceived regulatory burden, leading to a reduction in available rental stock
- Reduced PRS availability, rising evictions, and higher demand for homelessness support may increase Temporary Accommodation placements and expenditure

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- Increased workload for PSH, Housing Options, and Legal Services may require additional budget for staffing, training, legal costs, and system improvements.
- Increased enforcement activity and financial penalties may lead to higher levels of debt to recover, requiring additional administration and legal oversight.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Proposed amendments to Scheme of Delegations

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Kit Taylor	26/02/2026
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Judith Willis Assistant Director Community and Housing Services	17/02/2026
Financial Services	Deb Goodall Assistant Director Financial Services	17/02/2026
Legal and Democratic Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor – Governance and Jess Bayley-Hill, Principal Democratic Services Officer	25.02.26

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet

20th April 2026

Quarter 3 Finance and Performance Report 2025/26

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

SUMMARY

Regular budget monitoring, reporting forms the basis of good governance and best practice in budget management. Councillors and committees should be able to rely on the information provided to assist in sound decision making around budgets and spending plans for the Council.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE that the following are noted:

- 1) The current Revenue position of **£314k** adverse variance.
- 2) The current Capital spending of **£13.593m** against a revised budget of **£21.876m** as set out in **Appendix A**.
- 3) The current savings delivery is **£1.457m** against an annual target of **£1.213m** for 2025/26. This is included in the above Revenue position
- 4) The Earmarked Reserves balances of **£11.266m** as set out in Appendix B.
- 5) The Ward Budget allocation position to date is 22 approved allocations at £23,433.59, leaving a balance of £38,556.41 to be allocated before year end as set out in Appendix C.
- 6) There is an updated procurements position set out in appendix D, with any new items over £200,000 to be included on the forward plan.
- 7) The position on Council Tax and Business Rates be noted.
- 8) The position on benefits processing be noted.
- 9) The Q3 position on Corporate Performance Indicators be noted.

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The Executive is asked to **RECOMMEND** that:

- 10) That the Balance Sheet Monitoring Position for Q3 is noted – which is the Treasury Monitoring Report and required to be reported to Council.
- 11) That £120k capital funding is approved work on the fixing potholes on the Aston Road roundabout and the road leading to the depot.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This Quarter 3 Financial and Performance Monitoring Report provides a comprehensive overview of Bromsgrove District Council's finance and performance for the period April to December 2025. It outlines the Council's revenue and capital positions, savings delivery, procurement pipeline, and progress on key strategic projects, along with performance against key indicators.
- 2.2 As of the end of Q3, the Council is forecasting a **£314k revenue overspend** for the full financial year. This compares to a £336k revenue overspend forecast in 2024/25 at Quarter 2. The £514k is primarily driven by costs relating to Waste Management due to the aging fleet and associated agency costs, offset by increased income in waste services and additional costs within Finance relating to agency cover for vacancies and consultancy costs for Section 151 Officer and VAT support. These costs have been offset by vacancy management and underspends in Corporate Financing together with the recognition of £200k of Revenue Grants Received in Advance in 2024/25.
- 2.3 There has been a positive movement of £22k relating to increased street naming and numbering income (Business Transformation and Organisational Development) of £76k and increased UKSPF grant funding of £23k offset by an increase in fleet costs (Environmental Services) of £77k. These movements are explained within the body of the main report.
- 2.4 The Council has delivered **£1.457m of its £1.213m savings target**, exceeding the full-year target by £0.224m as at Quarter 3. Capital expenditure to date stands at **£13.593m** against a revised budget of **£21.876m** proposed to support ongoing commitments. This budget includes £14.891m of carry forwards from 2024/25.
- 2.5 Key capital projects include the **Levelling Up-funded Windsor Street and Nailers Yard schemes**. The Windsor Street scheme has completed phase one remediation works and discussions are being held with the Environment Agency regarding any required remediation works under phase two. The Nailers' Yard scheme construction stage is now progressing with a revised completion date of 6th May 2026.

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- 2.6 The Council's **collection rates** for Council Tax and Business Rates remain strong, with Q3 performance close to or exceeding national averages. Benefits processing times are within expected parameters, despite increased complexity in cases retained by the Council.
- 2.7 The report also includes updates on **ward budget allocations, earmarked reserves, and treasury management performance**, with no new borrowing undertaken and **£6m in short-term investments** held at quarter-end.
- 2.8 The Council continues to monitor its financial position closely, with regular engagement between service managers and finance officers to address emerging risks and ensure delivery of strategic priorities.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the Council's draft Revenue and Capital Outturn position for the first 9 months of the financial year (April – December 2025) and associated performance data. This report presents:
- The Council's forecast yearly outturn revenue monitoring position for 2025/26 based on data to the end of Quarter 3 including delivery of the savings targets and fees and charges income as set out in the 2025 MTFP.
 - The position in respect of balance sheet monitoring as requested by the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee including the Treasury Management Report.
 - The spending as at Q3 of Ward Budget Funds.
 - The updated procurement pipeline of Council projects to be delivered over the next 12 months in order to properly resource plans for the delivery of these projects.
 - The Council's performance against the strategic priorities outlined in the Council Plan Addendum, including operational measures to demonstrate how the council is delivering its services to customers is the subject of separate report elsewhere on the agenda.

4. **DETAILED PERFORMANCE**

Financial Performance

- 4.1 As part of the monitoring process, a detailed review has been undertaken to ensure that issues are considered, and significant savings and cost pressures are addressed. This report sets out, based on the position at the end of Quarter 3, the projected revenue outturn position for the full 2025/26 financial year and explains key variances against budget.

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- 4.2 The £15.3m full year revenue budget included in the table below is the budget that was approved by Council in February 2025.

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Budget Variances

- 4.3 The draft position is set out in the above table.
- 4.4 Overall, the Council is currently forecasting a full year revenue overspend of £314k at Quarter 3 as explained in the Executive Summary. This position will continue to be reviewed particularly given the impact of the increasing costs linked to inflation and further updates will be provided to Councillors throughout 2025/26. This includes service projections as follows:

Business Transformation £24k underspend

- 4.4.1 Business Transformation & Organisational Development are forecasting an underspend of £24k due to increased street naming and numbering income of £10k and Training savings of £45k offset by additional costs of Apprenticeship Levy of £31k.

Community and Housing GF Services £286k overspend

- 4.4.2 Community & Housing Services are forecasting a £286k overspend.

There are £98k increased charges from BT which is an uncontrollable charge. There is also £178k in additional bed and breakfast costs which have been offset by a reduction in other net variations of £27k.

There are additional charges of £37k relating to increased utility bills.

Corporate Services £864k underspend

- 4.4.3 Corporate Services is forecasting an £864k underspend

There has been an £886k net underspend due to over achievement on vacancy management, corporate efficiencies other savings in inflation and utility budgets across the whole Council offset by £7k communication costs relating to Local Government Reorganisation, £21k additional postage costs across the whole council and other costs of £16k. Additionally, there was an extra cost due to a Local Government Reorganisation appraisal report of £59k, which was partially offset by grant income of £37k.

There are other net underspends of £44k.

Environmental Services £884k overspend

- 4.4.4 Environmental Services are forecasting a £884k above budget.

This variance above budget is due to an overspend on Waste Management of £919k

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additional costs on maintenance of the aging fleet and hire costs of vehicles to maintain service– these costs will reduce with the introduction of the new fleet as previously reported.

There are also agency costs of £416k to cover vacant posts and a mixture of long and short term sickness. This has been offset by a £193k contribution to the current vacant post salary savings to corporate.

Additional disposal costs of £238k arose from additional business on Commercial Services that is linked to additional income of £654k, for which a business case to formally expand the service and adjust budget lines for 2026/27 has now been approved.

Aside from Waste Management there is a £64k pressure for Wyre Forest Contract - North Worcestershire Water Management Group in Land Drainage.

There has also been additional costs of £94k in Stores and Depot for their Building Maintenance and Property Costs (To reflect the age of the buildings and increase cost a Capital bid has been submitted to address the issue)

Financial and Customer Services £674k overspend

- 4.4.5 Finance & Customer Services are forecasting an overspend of £674k due to £90k on VAT support from PS Tax on the VAT returns to HMRC, £50k to Bruton Knowles for Insurance Property valuations for the Statement of Accounts, £225k on Agency staff due to cover for vacancies, and a housing subsidy budget re-alignment of £402k and other net variations of £6k. All of the above is offset by a VAT receipt of £99k.

A review of resourcing arrangements is ongoing.

Legal, Democratic and Elections Services £58k overspend

- 4.4.6 Legal, Democratic and Property Services are forecasting a £58k overspend due to miscoding of £9k Landlord costs on the Artrix charged to Legal in error and £41k Ward Budget miscoded to Democratic Services. This will be corrected as part of the budget setting process. There are also increased Civica license costs of £8k which are expected to be reimbursed..

Planning and Leisure Services £7k underspend

- 4.4.7 Planning and Leisure Services are forecasting a net £7k underspend

This is due to £85k additional staffing costs as a result of increased costs of agency staff due to maternity cover. At Quarter 3 there was £58k underachieved income in Building Control and Arts and Development.

There have been savings in salaries on Parks and Events of £63k and Planning and Policy of £67k due to a planned review of Leisure services. There are other additional net variations of £6k.

Final projected outturn figure has changed from £1.15m to £1.01m. This is mainly due to the fact that planning income is now achieving budgeted target income figure due to the unusually high value transactions in Dec. The overall forecast is showing a forecasted underspend of roughly £7k. The change in outturn is mainly to do with development management planning income target now being achieved.

Regeneration & Property £177k overspend

- 4.4.8 Regeneration and Property are forecasting a £177k overspend due to an overspend on the carpark service which analyses as a shortfall in car parking revenue of £72k as a result of the first half hour being free, £27k due to unforeseen rental costs, £27k of additional MiPermit charges, £43k overspend on recharges to Wychavon DC due to higher shared service costs, £27k additional rent on St John's car park, £13k road surfacing costs and £7k enforcement overspend. This has been offset by a £16k underspend on Multistorey Car Park due to site being unoccupied.

Within Economic Development, there are £46k savings from UKSPF staffing vacancy offset by £20k shared service recharges.

This has been offset by additional income at Parkside of £34k offset by one-off costs for Road Maintenance of £32k and £5k additional bus shelter costs.

Regulatory Client £99k overspend

- 4.4.9 Regulatory Services are forecasting an overspend of £99k due to £48k underachieved income in Taxi Licencing as a result of lower than anticipated licencing volumes and default works of £39k. This is a re-occurring year on year pattern and will be addressed in the 2026/27 budget setting process. There are minor net overspends of £5k

There are also budgeted efficiency savings of £7k which due to the nature of the service will not be met.

Corporate Financing £970k underspend

- 4.4.10 Corporate Financing is showing additional income of £970k due to £427k Grant Income, £187k Investment Interest Income, £281k savings on Interest Payable and £200k of Revenue Grants Received in 24/25 now recognised in 25/26 offset by £125k in underachieved Fees & Charges Income which will be addressed in the budget setting process.

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Savings Targets

4.4.11 The Council had £1.213m of savings targets in 2025/26. The Council has delivered £1.457m of these savings in Q3, therefore the target has been exceeded by £0.244m. A review is currently being undertaken of vacant posts. Savings against target are shown in the table below:

	2025/26 £m	Adjusted 2025/26 £m	Total 2025/26 £m	Savings identified as at Quarter 3 £m	
Service Reviews	(0.405)	0.405	0		Consolidated corporately
Finance Vacancies	(0.100)	0.100	0		Consolidated corporately
Environmental Services Partnership	(0.050)		(0.050)	0	Work ongoing
2023/24 Items	(0.555)	0.505	(0.050)	0	
In year corporate target		(0.913)	(0.913)	(1.231)	£1.147m from vacancy management and £0.084m from efficiencies. Expected to be met in full.
Directorate savings		(0.250)	(0.250)	(0.226)	There is an expected outturn of £226k in savings.
2025/26 Items	0	(1.163)	(1.163)	(1.457)	
Total Savings	(0.555)	(0.658)	(1.213)	(1.457)	

4.5 Cash Management

Borrowing

- As of the 31st December 2025, there were no short-term borrowings. The Council has no long-term borrowings.

Investments

- On 31st December 2025 there were £6m short-term investments held.

Capital Monitoring

4.6 A capital programme of £17.352m was approved in the Budget for 2025/26 in February 2025. This has been fully reviewed as part of the MTFP using actual data as at the end of December 2024. The table below and detail in **Appendix A** set out the Capital Programme schemes that are approved for the MTFP time horizon. At this stage, additional grants of £3.916m had been received, resulting in a total capital budget of

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£21.268m. At Quarter 3, additional grants of £4.524m have been received in year revising the total capital budget for 2025/26 to £21.876m.

4.7 Many of these schemes are already in partial delivery in the 2025/26 financial year. By approving this list, the Council also agreed sums not spent in 2024/25 (and 2023/24 by default if schemes originated earlier than 2024/25 as sums have been carried forward through to the 2024/25 MTFS Report) to be carried forward into 2025/26. The table also splits amounts by funding source, Council or third party.

Year	Total Programme	Revised Total	Council Funded	Grant Funded
2024/5	6,376,987	21,267,936	10,996,671	10,271,265
Carry Fwd	14,890,949			
2025/6	17,351,727		8,017,369	9,334,358
2026/7	3,222,841		2,422,841	800,000
2027/8	2,469,459		1,669,459	800,000
2028/9	2,310,531		1,510,531	800,000
2029/30	2,373,749		1,573,749	800,000

4.8 Included in this funding the Council also have the following Grant Funded Schemes which are being delivered in 2025/26:

- The two Levelling Up schemes – Windsor Street (formerly project titled as ‘Old Fire Station’) and Nailers’ Yard (formerly known as ‘Market Hall’) are funding via £14.5m of Levelling Up funding, UKSPF funding, £2,425m of monies held in trust by Birmingham City Council on behalf of the former Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) and up to £2.1m funded by the Council.
- For the Nailers’ Yard Scheme:
 - Construction is progressing on site. The revised completion date is 6th May 2026 (previously 26th January 2026) due to culvert works. The cost of the scheme has increased as a result of this.
 - GJS Dillon have received several enquiries for office space and GF food and beverage unit. They have prepared the service charge schedules for the commercial building. Bruton Knowles are instructed as property management agents for the commercial building. The operator of the Pavilion building will be appointed by April 2026.
- For the Windsor Street Scheme:
 - Brownfield Solutions have completed phase one ground water monitoring on site. Phase two is due to commence in March 2026 which will involve barrier injection works to reduce the levels of PFAS and PFOS further. This will take five weeks to install followed by 12 months of monitoring. By April 2026, the Council will have a clean site that is ready to be redeveloped.
 - Cabinet agreed the delivery option for residential use on the site in November 2025. The regeneration team are undertaking soft market testing with RSLs to gauge interest in the site.

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- Public Realm work is now fully completed, and the underspend is approximately £925k

The final business case for GBS LEP funding was signed off by Birmingham City Council on 20th January 2026. The grant funding agreement for £2.425m will now be put in place from April 2026. Therefore, BDC may have to use short-term borrowing or reserves until the funding is available.

- In December 2025, the Government announced that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) would be extended by 6 months. No additional funding has been provided but the 2025/26 allocation of £917,878, made up of a mix of capital (£286,083) and revenue (£631,795), now needs to be spent by 30/09/2026. The funds are being spent in line with the approved UKSPF Investment Plan with £540,215 defrayed to the end of Q3.

- 4.9 The outturn spend is £13.593m against the revised capital budget totals £21.876m and is detailed in **Appendix A**. It should be noted that as per the budget decision carry forwards of £14.891m will be rolled forward from 2024/25 into 2025/26 to take account of slippage from 2024/25.

Earmarked Reserves

- 4.10 The updated position, taking account of the now submitted draft accounts for 2024/25, are set out in **Appendix B**. As part of the MTFP all reserves were thoroughly reviewed for their requirement and additional reserves set up as per that report. At the 31st December 2025, based on the present MTFP that was approved by Council on the 25 February, the Council holds £11.266 million of Earmarked Reserves and is forecasting to hold £12.245m by 31 March 2026.

Ward Budgets

- 4.11 This report is for the first nine months showing what has been spent to date on Ward budgets. Each Ward Member has £2,000 to spend on Ward Initiatives subject to the rules of the Scheme which were approved by Council. As of the 31st December there have been applications from 22 Members approved totalling £23,443.59. There are still 9 Members who have not allocated any funding and overall, £38,556.41 is still to be allocated. This year's funding allocations must be spent by the 31st March. Full detail is set out in **Appendix C**.

Balance Sheet Monitoring Position

- 4.12 There has been the request from Audit Committee that the Council include Balance Sheet Monitoring as part of this report.

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4.13 This initial balance sheet reporting is set out as the Q3 Treasury Report which is attached as **Appendix D**. This report sets out the Councils debt and borrowing position for Q3 2025/26. Included in this is how the Council is using its working capital as well as measurement of the Councils Prudential Indicators, this appendix will need to be noted and approved that Council note the position.

Procurement Pipeline

4.14 The Procurement pipeline is shown in **Appendix E**. The Council's Procurement Pipeline includes details of contracts expected to be reprocured and new procurement projects expected to be undertaken in the future. Those happening in the next 12 months and over £200k will need to be put on the Forward Plan. The pipeline is refreshed quarterly.

- There are 11 contracts that are over the key decision threshold of £200k
- There are 9 contracts procured by Redditch Borough Council on behalf of Bromsgrove District Council.

Collection Fund

4.15 The Council acts as collecting authority for itself, other major preceptors and the parishes for Council Tax. The Council also collects business rates on behalf of central government, the County Council and for itself. The Council's own precept accounts for about 11% of monies collected from Council tax and about 40% of business rates collected after paying government levies, additional tariff to central government and 10% across to Worcestershire County Council.

4.16 The Council aims to collect 98.5% of Council Tax receipts (national average is 95.8%) which equates to a total sum of £87.505 million. Performance against this target for this financial year is shown in the table below:

	Target %age (cumulative)	Actual %age (cumulative)	Amount collected (cumulative) £ millions
Quarter 1	28.95	28.80	25.605
Quarter 2	56.74	56.58	50.261
Quarter 3	84.63	84.95	75.495
Quarter 4	98.5		

4.17 Due to the use of ten monthly collections the percentage for each quarter is not a simple 25%. Government reforms are proposing enforcing a move to monthly collections (in twelfths).

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- 4.18 The Council aims to collect 98.0% of business rate receipts (national average is 95.8%) which equates to a total sum of £31.132m. Performance against this target for this financial year is shown in the table below:

	Target %age (cumulative)	Actual %age (cumulative)	Amount collected (cumulative) £ millions
Quarter 1	26.00	28.34	9.082
Quarter 2	55.66	56.82	18.051
Quarter 3	80.73	79.65	25.838
Quarter 4	98.0		

Benefits

- 4.19 Benefit claim statistics are summarised in the table below:

New claims	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3		Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3
Average processing time	20 days	16 days	11 days	Number processed this quarter	95	83	614*
Changes to claims							
Average processing time	10 days	9 days	5 days	Number processed this quarter	1215	1095	1862*

* These figures have been temporarily inflated due to rent frequency changes by Bromsgrove District Housing Trust.

- 4.20 Recent changes to benefits has meant that many of the simpler claims have been transferred to DWP, leaving the more complex cases with local authorities – this has impacted on average processing time. DWP expect new claims to be processed within a 30-day timeframe.

Performance

- 4.21 Corporate Performance Indicators are included as Appendix F to this report.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 These are contained in the main body of the report.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 No Legal implications have been identified.

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7. Strategic Purpose Implications

Relevant Strategic Purpose

7.1 The Strategic purposes are included in the Council’s corporate plan and guides the Council’s approach to budget making ensuring we focus on the issues and what are most important for the borough and our communities. Our Financial monitoring and strategies are integrated within all of our Strategic Purposes.

Climate Change Implications

7.2 The green thread runs through the Council plan. The Financial monitoring report has implications on climate change, and these will be addressed and reviewed when relevant by climate change officers to ensure the correct procedures have been followed to ensure any impacts on climate change are fully understood.

8. Other Implications

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

8.1 None as a direct result of this report.

Operational Implications

8.2 Managers meet with finance officers to consider the current financial position and to ensure actions are in place to mitigate any overspends.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 Items identified in the Finance and Performance monitoring is included in a number of the Corporate Risks. These are listed below. The mitigations to these risks are set out in the Risk Report, of which the Quarter 1 Report is reported to Audit, Governance and Standards Committee in July:

- COR 10 - Decisions made to address financial pressures and implement new projects.
- COR16 – Management of Contracts.
- COR17 – Resolution of the Approved Budget Position.
- COR19 – Adequate Workforce Planning.
- COR20 – Financial Position Rectification.
- COR22 - Delivery of Levelling Up and UK SPF Initiatives
- COR23 – Cost of Living Crisis
- COR25 – The new Environment Bill

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10. APPENDICES

- Appendix A – Capital Outturn
- Appendix B – Reserves Position
- Appendix C – Ward Budget Position
- Appendix D – Treasury Management Position
- Appendix E – Procurement Pipeline
- Appendix F – Quarter 3 Corporate Performance Indicators

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Appendix A - Capital Outturn

Capital Project	Description	2025/26 Total (Original) £	2025/26 Total (Incl C/F's) £	25/26 Spend £
Large Schemes				
Levelling Up Fund				
200072	- Market Hall	9,228,000	11,555,322	8,879,315
200073	- Ex-Fire Station/Windsor Street	0	-54,247	113,508
UK Shared Prosperity Fund				
200086	(UKSPF Funding BDC 2024/2025)	918,000	938,000	
200082	CCTV Digital Upgrade (UKSPF)	0	33,668	
200083	Centres Public Realm Improvement Programme (UKSPF)			
Other Schemes				
200008	Funding for DFGs	1,285,847	1,442,899	838,651
200009	Home Repairs Assistance	50,000	215,602	
200010	Energy Efficiency Installation	0	212,190	
200019	Fleet Replacemnet new line	1,265,000	3,173,318	2,030,833
200022	Replacement Parking Machines	100,000	94,134	5,000
200030	Wheelie Bin Purchase	120,000	-48,671	1,401,234
200033	Bus Shelters	18,000	34,345	
200045	Greener Homes	0	-6,125	
200069	Cisco Network Update	34,877	34,877	32,185
200070	Server Replacement	18,500	188,049	67,038
200071	Laptop Refresh	5,000	36,249	20,263
200075	Sanders Park	0	-103,763	24,727
200102	Fleet Replacement cost	15,000	24,400	
200103	Wheely Bin Increases		85,000	
200076	Play Area, POS and Sport improvements at Lickey End Recreation Ground in accordance with the S106 Agreement	0	30,582	104,455
200079	Footpaths	75,000	32,020	75,811
200104	Buildings	100,000	262,426	
200105	Initial Play Audit Requirements	0	451,000	
200105	Updated Play Audit Requirements (Dec 24)	166,242	166,242	
200106	New ongoing Cyber security budget	25,000	50,000	
200107	Artrix - Landlord Obligations	20,000	22,414	
	Wild Flower Machinery	0	62,000	
	Food Waste Collection - fund for Vechicles and containers	902,511	902,511	
	Replacement Wheeled Bins	2,200,000	2,200,000	
	Parkside - Requirement for a firewall	9,750	9,750	
	Laptops for new Starters	25,000	25,000	
	Salary Capitalisation	750,000	750,000	
200016	New Finance Enterprise system	20,000	40,000	
		17,351,727	21,876,441	13,593,020

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Appendix B - Earmarked Reserves

	Balance at 31/3/25	Transfers in 2025/26	Transfers out 2025/26	Balance at 31/3/26	Transfers to general fund at 31/03/2026	Transfers from general fund at 31/03/2026	Balance at 31/3/26
General Fund Reserve	13,381	(2,216)	145	11,310	5,944	(4,852)	12,402
General Fund Earmarked Reserves:							
Building Control Other	7			7	(7)		0
Building Control Partnerships	82			82			82
Community Services - Climate Change	196	65		261	(20)		241
Local Plan Enquiry	487			487			487
Economic Growth Development	911			911			911
Election Services	85			85			85
Environmental Vehicles	27			27			27
Financial Services - Business Rate Retention	3,476			3,476	(2,476)		1,000
Pension Reserve	200			200			200
Finance Contingency	330	70		400			400
Finance Revenues Reserve	0			0			0
Community Services - CAB	181			181			181
Localising Council Tax	107			107			107
ELF funding	138			138			138
DWP Grant (Benefits)	128			128			128
Universal Credit / Benefits System / Grants	164			164	(164)		0
Housing Schemes	455		(67)	388	(388)		0
DCLG Homeless Grant	267			267			267
Housing Welfare Reform	112			112			112
Disabled Facilities Grant	30			30			30
ICT Refresh Reserve	81			81			81
ERP Systems	116			116			116
Leisure/Community Safety	115			115	(55)		60
Local Neighbourhood Partnerships	16			16			16
Other	81			81	(81)		0
Planning & Regeneration	599			599	(68)		531
Regulatory Services (Partner Share)	86			86	(4)		82
Shared Services (Severance Costs)	311			311	(311)		0
Ward Budget Initiative	0	234	(78)	156			156
Council Tax Hardship Fund	79			79			79
Artrix Holding Trust	29			29			29
EPR Funding Allocation	0	1,004		1,004			1,004
Covid-19 (General Covid Grant)	766			766	(766)		0
Covid-19 (Collection Fund)	1,604			1,604	(1,604)		0
Ukrainian Support	0	785		785			785
Social Prescribing	0	57		57			57
Shopmobility Donations	0	1		1			1
<u>New Reserves - MTFP 2026</u>							
Risk and Resilience Reserve						2,500	2,500
LGR Reserve						1,000	1,000
Community Investment Fund						1,250	1,250
Particulate Monitoring						102	102
Total General Fund	11,266	2,216	(145)	13,337	(5,944)	4,852	12,245

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Appendix C - Ward Budget Spending Q3 - Funds Allocated to 31 December

Councillor Ward Fund Balances – 25/26

Activity	Spend	Balance £2,000
Cllr Alan Bailes	300.00	1,700.00
Cllr Ruth Lambert	1,978.80	21.20
Cllr Sam Ammar	2,000.00	0
Cllr Ester Gray	1,700.00	300.00
Cllr Peter McDonald	1,850.00	150.00
Cllr Harrison Rone-Clarke	0	2,000.00
Cllr Anita Dale	1,500.00	500.00
Cllr Webb	2,000.00	0
Cllr Hunter	524.79	1,476.21
Cllr Rachel Bailes	2,000.00	0
Cllr Sue Baxter	500.00	1,500.00
Cllr J Clarke	250	1,750.00
Cllr Stephen Colella	0	2,000.00
Cllr J Elledge	0	2,000.00
Cllr Derek Forsythe	500.00	1,500.00
Cllr D Hopkins	683.00	1,317.00
Cllr Charlie Hotham	750.00	1,250.00
Cllr Helen Jones	0	2,000.00
Cllr B Kumar	1,900.00	100.00
Cllr M Marshall	1,000.00	1,000.00
Cllr Karen May	907.00	1,093.00
Cllr Bernard McEldowney	1,350.00	650.00

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Activity	Spend	Balance £2,000
Cllr D Nicholl	250.00	1,750.00
Cllr Simon Nock	500.00	1,500.00
Cllr S Peters	500.00	1,500.00
Cllr J Robinson	0	2,000.00
Cllr S Robinson	0	2,000.00
Cllr J Stanley	500.00	1,500.00
Cllr Kit Taylor	0	2,000.00
Cllr Peter Whittaker	0	2,000.00
Cllr S Evans	0	2,000.00
Overall Totals	23,443.59	38,556.41

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Appendix D - Q3 Treasury Management Position

1. SUMMARY

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

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet are asked to:

- **Note the Council's Treasury performance for Q3 of the financial year 25/26.**
- **Note the position in relation to the Council's Prudential indicators.**

3. BACKGROUND

Introduction

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

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

External Context

3.3 **Economic background:** Early in the first quarter was dominated by US trade tariffs and the negative impact on equity and bond markets. While this was reversed somewhat in the second quarter with equity markets making gains, it also saw a divergence in US and UK government bond yields. UK yields persisted at higher levels as investors demanded higher returns in the form of term premia due to the more uncertain UK fiscal and economic position.

3.4 The latter part of the period included the government's November autumn Budget. Despite much speculation and drip-feeding of potential policies in the weeks leading up to the event, what was ultimately announced was generally deemed more muted than had been anticipated, helping ease investors' fears of significantly higher government borrowing.

3.5 UK consumer price inflation (CPI) inflation was 3.2% in November 2025, down from 3.6% in the previous month and lower than the 3.5% expected, but still well above the Bank of

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England (BoE) target. Core CPI eased to 3.2% from 3.4%, against forecasts of it staying at 3.6%.

- 3.6 According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the UK economy expanded by 0.7% in the first quarter of the calendar year, by 0.3% in Q2 and by 0.1% in Q3. Of the subsequent monthly figures, the ONS estimated that GDP fell by 0.1% in October.
- 3.7 The labour market continued to ease over the period as unemployment rose, vacancies fell and inactivity remained flat. In the three months to October 2025, the unemployment rate rose to 5.1%, higher than the level previously expected by the BoE, while the employment rate slipped to 74.9%.
- 3.8 The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted 5-4 to cut Bank Rate to 3.75% in December 2025, as was expected. Policymakers wanting a cut judged that disinflation was established while those preferring to hold Bank Rate at 4% argued that inflation risks remained sufficiently material to leave it untouched at this stage.
- 3.9 The November BoE Monetary Policy Report projected GDP would expand by a modest 0.2% in calendar Q4 2025. Estimates of inflation in the report were quickly out of date when CPI fell quicker than expected in November. Predictions of a modestly growing economy were echoed by the Office for Budget Responsibility in its Economic and Fiscal Outlook published with the Autumn Statement which revised down its estimate of annual GDP to around 1.5% between 2025 and 2030.
- 3.10 Arlingclose, the authority's treasury adviser, held a central view that Bank Rate would be cut further in 2025/26 with most BoE policymakers remaining more worried about weak GDP growth than higher inflation. In line with Arlingclose's central forecast, Bank Rate was reduced to 3.75% in December. Further cuts are expected in 2026, with the central forecast being that Bank Rate will be eased to around 3.25%.
- 3.11 The US Federal Reserve continued cutting rates, reducing Fed Funds Rate target range by 0.25% at its December meeting to 3.50%-3.75%. The meeting minutes noted that most policymakers judged that further rate cuts would be likely in 2026 if inflation continues to ease, however they were still divided in their assessment of the risks between inflation and unemployment.
- 3.12 The European Central Bank (ECB) held its key interest rates in December for a fourth consecutive meeting, maintaining the deposit rate at 2.0% and the main refinancing rate at 2.15%. The ECB maintained that future policy decisions will remain data-dependent, that inflation is close to its 2% target and that the euro area economy continues to

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expand despite a challenging global environment, including heightened geopolitical risks and trade tensions.

- 3.13 **Financial Markets:** After declining sharply early in the period, sentiment in financial markets has been mostly buoyant, but risky assets remained volatile. Bond yields initially declined early in the period, but increasing uncertainty around the UK's economic and fiscal outlook caused medium and longer yields to rise. Yields remained elevated until the third quarter when the potential negative impact of the UK Budget were deemed less than expected and yields eased modestly.
- 3.14 Equity markets gained the previous declines seen in the April sell-off and have continued to rise, even in the face of ongoing uncertainty around the existence of an AI-related 'bubble' and concentration in US and global stock markets.
- 3.15 Over the period, the 10-year UK benchmark gilt yield started at 4.65% and ended at 4.48%. However, these nine months saw significant volatility with the 10-year yield hitting a low of 4.39% and a high of 4.82%. It was a similar picture for the 20-year gilt which started at 5.18% and ended at 5.11% with a low and high of 5.05% and 5.55% respectively. The Sterling Overnight Rate (SONIA) averaged 4.10% over the nine months to 31st December.
- 3.16 **Credit review:** Arlingclose maintained its recommended maximum unsecured duration limit on most of the banks on its counterparty list at 6 months. The other banks remain on 100 days.
- 3.17 Earlier in the period, Fitch upgraded NatWest Group and related entities to AA- from A+ and placed Clydesdale Bank's long-term A- rating on Rating Watch Positive. Fitch later upgraded Clydesdale Bank and HSBC, but downgraded Lancashire CC and Close Brothers.
- 3.18 In May, Moody's downgraded the United States sovereign long-term rating to Aa1 and affirmed OP Corporate's rating at Aa3. Moody's later upgraded Transport for London, Allied Irish Banks, Bank of Ireland, Toronto-Dominion Bank, DZ Bank, Nordea and HSBC and downgraded Close Brothers.
- 3.19 S&P upgraded Clydesdale Bank, Allied Irish Banks and Bank of Ireland, and assigned Warrington Council a BBB+ rating.
- 3.20 After spiking in April following the US trade tariff announcements, UK credit default swap (CDS) prices trended down before picking up modestly in October and November. They

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declined again in December and ended the year in line with levels seen in the first half of the year and most of 2024.

- 3.21 European banks' CDS prices have generally been flatter and lower compared to the UK, as have Singaporean and Australian lenders while some Canadian bank CDS prices have remained elevated since the beginning of the period in part due to ongoing trade tensions with the US.
- 3.22 At the end of the period CDS prices for all banks on Arlingclose's counterparty list remained within limits deemed satisfactory for maintaining credit advice at current durations.
- 3.23 Financial market volatility is expected to remain, and CDS levels will be monitored for signs of ongoing credit stress. As ever, the institutions and durations on the Authority's counterparty list recommended by Arlingclose remain under constant review.

Local Context

- 3.24 On 31st December 2025, the Authority had £16.89m net borrowing arising from its revenue and capital income and expenditure. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while balance sheet resources are the underlying resources available for investment. These factors are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Balance Sheet Summary

	31.9.25	31.12.25
	Actual	Actual
	£m	£m
General Fund CFR	31.26	31.26
Total CFR	31.26	31.26
Less: External borrowing**	0	0
Internal borrowing	31.26	31.26
Less: Usable reserves	-11.27	-11.27
Less: Working capital	-3.10	-3.10
Net borrowing	16.89	16.89

* Finance leases, PFI liabilities and transferred debt that form part of the Authority's total debt

** shows only loans to which the Authority is committed and excludes optional refinancing

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3.25 The treasury management position at 31st December and the change over the quarter is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Treasury Management Summary

	30.9.25 Balance £m	Movement £m	31.12.25 Balance £m	31.12.25 Rate %
Long-term borrowing				
Short-term borrowing	0	0	0	
Total borrowing	0	0	0	
Short-term investments				
Cash and cash equivalents	7.0	-1.0	6.0	
Total investments	7.0	-1.0	6.0	
Net investments	7.0	-1.0	6.0	

Borrowing Strategy and Activity

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

3.27 Policy interest rates have risen substantially since 2021 although they have largely plateaued over the last year. Over the last quarter gilt yields have risen slightly overall, having had a number of peaks and troughs. There has been downward pressure from lower inflation figures, but also upward pressure from unexpectantly positive economic data. Data from the US continues to impact global markets including UK gilt yields.

3.28 The PWLB certainty rate for 10-year maturity loans was 5.38% at the beginning of the period and 5.34% at the end. The lowest available 10-year maturity certainty rate was 5.17% and the highest was 5.62%. Rates for 20-year maturity loans ranged from 5.71% to 6.30% during the period, and 50-year maturity loans from 5.46% to 6.14%. The cost of

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short-term borrowing from other local authorities has been similar to Base Rate during the period at 4.0% to 4.5%.

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

3.30 **Loans Portfolio:** At 31st December the Authority held no loans, with no movement from 30th September 2025 as per table 3 below, as part of its strategy for funding previous and current years’ capital programmes.

Table 3: Borrowing Position

	31.9.25 Balance £m	Net Movement £m	31.12.25 Balance £m
Public Works Loan Board			
Banks (LOBO)			
Banks (fixed term)			
Local authorities (long-term)			
Local authorities (short-term)	0	0	0
Total borrowing	0	0	0

Treasury Investment Activity

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

3.32 The Authority does not hold any invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. During the period, the Authority’s

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investment balances ranged between £3.5 and £11.5 million due to timing differences between income and expenditure. The investment position is shown in table 4 below.

Table 4: Treasury Investment Position

	30.9.25 Balance £m	Net Movement £m	31.12.25 Balance £m	31.12.25 Income Return %	31.12.25 Weighted Average Maturity days
Banks & building societies (unsecured)					
Banks & building societies (secured deposits)					
Covered bonds (secured)					
Government	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Local authorities and other govt entities					
Corporate bonds and loans					
Money Market Funds	7.0	-1.0	6.0	2.8%	30
	7.0	0.0	6.0		

- 3.33 Both the CIPFA Code and government guidance require the Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its treasury investments before seeking the optimum rate of return, or yield. The Authority’s objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.
- 3.34 As demonstrated by the liability benchmark in this report, the Authority expects to be a long-term investor and treasury investments therefore include both short-term low risk instruments to manage day-to-day cash flows and longer-term instruments where limited additional risk is accepted in return for higher investment income to support local public services.
- 3.35 Bank Rate was reduced to 3.75% in December 2025 and remained at that level through the rest of the quarter. Short-term interest rates largely followed this trend, staying close

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to the Bank Rate. The rates on DMADF deposits have been constant at 3.95%.

Non-Treasury Investments

- 3.36 The definition of investments in the Treasury Management Code now covers all the financial assets of the Authority as well as other non-financial assets which the Authority holds primarily for financial return. Investments that do not meet the definition of treasury management investments (i.e. management of surplus cash) are categorised as either for service purposes (made explicitly to further service objectives) and or for commercial purposes (made primarily for financial return).
- 3.37 Investment Guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Welsh Government also includes within the definition of investments all such assets held partially or wholly for financial return.

Treasury Performance

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

Table 5: Performance

	Actual £m	Budget £m	Over/ under	Actual %	Benchmark %	Over/ Under
Total borrowing	0.0	0.0	0.0			
PFI and Finance leases	0.0	0.0	0.0			
Total debt	0.0	0.0	0.0			
Total treasury investments	6.0	0.0	6.0			
				n/a	n/a	n/a

MRP Regulations

- 3.39 On 10th April 2024 amended legislation and revised statutory guidance were published on Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). The majority of the changes take effect from the 2025/26 financial year, although there is a requirement that for capital loans given on or after 7th May 2024 sufficient MRP must be charged so that the outstanding Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) in respect of the loan is no higher than the principal outstanding less the Expected Credit Loss (ECL) charge for that loan.
- 3.40 The regulations also require that local authorities cannot exclude any amount of their CFR from their MRP calculation unless by an exception set out in law. Capital receipts cannot

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be used to directly replace, in whole or part, the prudent charge to revenue for MRP (there are specific exceptions for capital loans and leased assets).

Compliance

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

Table 6: Investment Limits

	2025/26 Maximum	31.12.25 Actual	2025/26 Limit	Complied? Yes/No
Any single organisation, except the UK Government	£4m each			
UK Central Government	Unlimited			
Unsecured investments with banks and building societies	£2.5m in total			
Loans to unrated corporates	£1m in total			
Money Market Funds	£20m in total	6.0m		Yes
Foreign countries	£5m per country			
Real Estate Investment Trusts	£2.5m in total			

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

Table 7: Debt and the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary

	Q3 2025/26 Maximum	31.12.25 Actual	2025/26 Operational Boundary	2025/26 Authorised Limit	Complied? Yes/No
Borrowing	0m	0m	55,000	60,000	Yes
PFI and Finance Leases	Nil	Nil	1,000	1,000	Yes
Total debt	0m	0m	56,000	61,000	

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

Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

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

Liability Benchmark

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

	31.3.25	31.3.26	31.3.27	31.3.28
	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
Loans CFR	31.26	34.54	36.26	38.12
Less: Usable Reserves	-11.27	-11.14	-10.42	-9.86
Less: Working Capital	-3.10	-3.10	-3.10	-3.10
Net loans requirement	16.89	20.30	22.74	25.16
Plus: Liquidity allowance	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20
Liability benchmark	17.09	20.50	22.94	25.36
Existing borrowing	0	6.20	11.10	12.95

3.46 Following on from the medium-term forecast above, the long-term liability benchmark assumes capital expenditure funded by borrowing of £12.95m, minimum revenue provision on new capital expenditure based on a 40-year asset life and income, expenditure and reserves all increasing by inflation of 2.0% p.a. This is shown in the chart below together with the maturity profile of the Authority’s existing borrowing. Presently borrowing has been delivered through the use of internal resources and the Council has no long-term borrowing.

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Maturity Structure of Borrowing

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

	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	31.12.25 Actual	Complied?
Under 12 months	50%	0%	0%	Yes
12 months and within 24 months	50%	0%	0%	Yes
24 months and within 5 years	50%	0%	0%	Yes
5 years and within 10 years	50%	0%	0%	Yes
10 years and above	100%	0%	0%	Yes

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

Long-term Treasury Management Investments

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

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	No fixed date
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£0.5m	£0.5m	£0.5m	£0.5m
Actual principal invested beyond year end	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Complied?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

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

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Additional indicators

Security:

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

	2025/26 Target	31.12.25 Actual	Complied?
Portfolio average credit rating	A	UK Govt	Yes

Liquidity:

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

	31.12.25 Actual	2025/26 Target	Complied?
Total cash available within 3 months	Nil	Nil	Yes
Total sum borrowed in past 3 months without prior notice	Nil	Nil	Yes

Interest Rate Exposures:

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

Interest rate risk indicator	2025/26 Target	31.12.25 Actual	Complied?
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>rise</u> in interest rates	500,000	0	Yes
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>fall</u> in interest rates	500,000	0	Yes

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

	<u>30/09/25</u>	<u>31/12/25</u>
Bank Rate	4.00%	3.75%
1-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.58%	4.37%
5-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.95%	4.78%
10-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	5.53%	5.34%
20-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	6.14%	5.88%
50-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	5.98%	5.71%

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

4. IMPLICATIONS

Legal Implications

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

Service / Operational Implications

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

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

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

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 There is always significant risk in relation to treasury transactions, this is why Councils appoint Treasury advisors, which in the case of Bromsgrove is Arlingclose. In addition, there is the requirement in this area to provide an Annual Strategy report containing indicators/limits that must be met, a quarterly update and closure report all of which must be reported to full Council.

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6. APPENDICES

None

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

MTFP 2025/26 – February 2025 which contains this year’s Capital Strategy, Treasury Management Strategy and MRP Policy.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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Appendix E - Procurement Pipeline to 31 December 2025

Title	Council	Contract Value £
Fleet Replacement	Bromsgrove	2,846,000
Wheeled Bin Purchase, Delivery and Collection for Recycling of Existing V	Bromsgrove	2,200,000
Refuse and Recycling Products	Bromsgrove	700,000
Replacement Parking Machines	Bromsgrove	517,000
Microsoft Licenses	Bromsgrove	483,000
PROVIDE Kennelling of Dogs	Bromsgrove	450,000
Planning/GIS/Gazeteer	Bromsgrove	400,000
Supply of HVO Fuel	Bromsgrove	300,000
Air Quality Analysers	Bromsgrove	250,000
Data Access Services	Bromsgrove	200,000
Supply of Fuel	Bromsgrove	820,000
Software for Lifeline Site	Joint	257,300
Property Asset Management System	Joint	250,000
Domestic Food Waste Collection Contract	Joint	23,000,000
Hybrid Mail Solution - Sending Letters	Joint	2,500,000
Corporate Building Electrical Contract	Joint	2,500,000
Food Caddy Purchase and Delivery	Joint	1,300,000
Public Space CCTV Maintenance	Joint	400,000
Lifeline Call Handling	Joint	200,000
eFinancials RTU Extension	Joint	208,598

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Economic Development

Measure name	Type	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Target	Average	Aim	Trend
Business grant funding awarded	£	£92,420.66	£175,836.56	£0.00	£2,599.39	£8,804.00	£23,869.80		⬆️	
This is the cumulative amount of grant paid for 2025/26. In Q3 grants were paid to an IT company and a manufacturer.										
Business grant funding- % spent	%	37%	70.30%	0%	2.20%	7.40%	20%		⬆️	
28% of the total grant pot has been allocated. 2 grants were paid this quarter - an elevate growth grant and an innovation grant. The businesses receiving the grant are an IT company and a manufacturing company.										

Environment

Measure name	Type	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Target	Average	Aim	Trend
% household waste recycled or composted	%	41.34	36.79	53.36	44.79%	44.00%		44%	⬆️	
# of flytips	#	484	568	635	668	524	650		⬇️	
Average time taken to remove fly-tipping reported	# days	5.7	4	3	3	3	5		⬇️	
# active environmental enforcement cases	#			126	124	80				
# environmental enforcement fixed penalty notices	#	0	6	4	15	22				
No. of households supported by energy advice service (AoE)	#	320	240	377	382	213			⬆️	

Housing

Measure name	Type	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Target	Average	Aim	Trend
% of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks (or agreed extension)	%	78.5	84.6	92.8	86.6	94	60%		⬆️	
% of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks (or agreed extension)	%	88.5	87.2	87.7	88	89	70%		⬆️	
No. of planning enforcement actions taken- cases opened	#	29	14	41	24	26				
No. of planning enforcement actions taken- cases closed	#	31	16	48	63	53				
% of Building Control applications determined within 5 weeks (or 8 weeks on agreement)	%	100	100	100	97	95	85		⬆️	
Number of threatened with homelessness preventions	#	8	8	12	7	12				
No. of households in temporary accommodation- snapshot	#	23	33	34	26	37			⬇️	
Cost of B & B placements	£	£50,241.62	£42,711.24	£31,132.64	£46,503.28	£21,307.00			⬇️	

Infrastructure

Measure name	Type	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Target	Average	Aim	Trend
% of green flags awarded	%	50	50	50	50	50	75		⬆️	

Work continues with Green Flag applications for Sanders Park, Overdale and Lickey End.

Community Safety

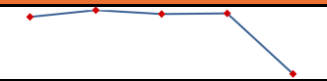
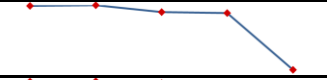


Measure name	Type	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Target	Average	Aim	Trend
# crimes recorded (excluding ASB)	#	1329	1275	1396	1418	Data not available			⬇️	
ASB	#	208	238	301	267	Data not available			⬇️	

*there is a lag with this data as it is obtained using verified figures from Police.uk and they are not currently available.

Organisational Priorities

Measure name	Type	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Target	Average	Aim	Trend
% of media enquiries responded to within agreed timescales	#	100	100	100	100	100	100		↑	
Council Tax Collection Rate	%	84.14%	98.12%	28.80%	56.58%	85.00%	84.46%		↑	
Business Rates Collection Rate	%	81.06%	98.18%	28.34%	56.82%	80.00%	80.23%		↑	
Housing Benefit: Speed of processing new claims	# days	17	11.7	19.7	12	11		20	↓	
Housing Benefit: Speed of processing change of circumstances	# days	9.3	4.7	9.7	8.3	11		8	↓	
Housing Benefit: Local Authority error rate	%	0.31	0.26	0.48	0.16	0	0.48		↓	
# complaints received	#	11	17	11	33	25				
Average working days to respond to complaints	# days	6.6	16.6	18.2	4.7	6	10			
% complaints answered within 10 days	%	72.7	68.8	75	96.8	84	95%		↑	
Performance reduced in the following directorates: Environmental and Housing Property Services (73%) & Planning & Leisure Services (83%)										
Staff turnover rates	%	8.50%	9.80%	10.20%	9.20%	12.40%		13.40%	↓	
Sickness absence- long term	# days per FTE	5.03	6.4	2.88	3.19	3		7.8	↓	

SLM Leisure Data

Measure name	Type	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Target	Average	Aim	Trend
Total no. of visits including EA cards and non-card holders	#	92,060	102,739	96,589	97,569	Not available	168,332		↑	
No. gym members	#	2,716	2,749	2,460	2,414	Not available	3,750		↑	
Swimming lessons - children enrolled on scheme	#	1,236	1,242	1,206	1,171	Not available	2,400		↑	
RIDDOR reportable events	#	0	0	0	0	Not available	0		↓	

The centre's targets follow the 2017 contract award but have been affected by increased local competition. Although visits fell this quarter, engagement and retention remain strong, with average length of stay 23% above the regional average and attrition consistently low. Ongoing performance reporting and quarterly reviews support joint work between Council Officers and Everyone Active to deliver the best outcomes at Bromsgrove Sport and Leisure Centre.

*there is a one quarter lag with this data

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

FRIDAY 6TH MARCH 2026, AT 5.00 P.M.

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

Officers: Mr J. Leach, Ms. J. Lorraine, Mrs. C. Felton, Mrs. D. Goodall and Mrs J. Gresham

82/25 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S. Baxter.

83/25 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

84/25 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 18TH FEBRUARY 2026**

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 18th February 2026 were submitted for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 18th February 2026 be approved as a true and accurate record.

85/25 **COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTIONS 2026/27**

The Assistant Director of Finance & Customer Services presented the Council Tax Resolutions 2026/27 for Members' consideration.

The report provided an overview of the requirements, context, and key figures relating to the Council Tax Resolution for the 2026/27 financial year, including the council tax base, precept impacts, and known external factors influencing the overall bill.

Also included was the formal calculation of the Council Tax Base for 2026/27, which must be approved annually in accordance with statutory regulations.

Members were informed that the calculated tax base for the whole District for 2026/27 was 38,409.8 Band D equivalent properties. This figure was based on data as of 30th November 2025, and adjusted for dwelling changes, discounts, exemptions, and a 1 per cent non-collection allowance. This tax base formed the foundation for setting the District Council's own Council Tax requirement.

For 2025/26, the District Council's Band D charge was £257.48, with a budget strategy focused on service resilience and maintaining increases below inflation. The District Council element for 2026/27 would increase by 2.99 per cent, taking Band D to £265.18.

It was noted that the Council continued to operate within significant national financial pressures and was maintaining a focus on protecting frontline services and financial stability.

The overall Council Tax bill included several external precepts as follows:

- The Worcestershire County Council (WCC) 2026/27 budget included an 8.98 per cent increase, taking the charge to £1,760.80 for a Band D bill.
- West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner precept for 2026/27 was set to rise by 5.15 per cent, increasing the Band D charge to £306.50.
- Hereford & Worcester Fire & Rescue Service precept for 2026/27 figure was set to rise by 4.89 per cent; increasing the Band D charge to £107.22.
- Parish Councils were setting their 2026/27 precepts separately, with an average rise of 8.77 per cent.

The Council remained committed to financial stability, recognising the tax base calculation as a core part of the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

There were several national factors which impacted on the Council Tax setting process this year including WCC financial pressures, wider public sector pay decisions, and inflationary service costs. These continued to shape the environment in which the District must set its own Council Tax requirement.

It was noted that if the Council Tax Resolutions were agreed at the Council meeting directly after this meeting, the Council Tax bills would be issued to residents accordingly.

Following the presentation, it was reported that a support mechanism would be put in place in order to help residents who might be impacted with the Council Tax increase. It was hoped that support would be provided at an early stage. The Benefits Team were aware that this approach would be taken. In addition to this, the Council operated a Council Tax Support Fund which also provided support to residents who qualified for this scheme.

Members welcomed this approach in order to provide appropriate support to those vulnerable residents within the District who required additional assistance.

RESOLVED to **NOTE** that at its meeting on 7th January 2026 Cabinet approved the calculated Council Tax Base 2026/27 as:

- (a) for the whole council area as 38,409.8 [item T in the formula in section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]; and
- (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a parish precept relate the amount as shown in column 5 of **schedule 1**.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) The calculation for the council tax requirement for the council's own purposes for 2026/27 (excluding parish precepts) as **£10,185,510.76**
- 2) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2026/27 in accordance with sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - a) £43,803,037.52 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in section 31A(2) of the Act (taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils) (i.e., gross expenditure)
 - b) £32,121,303.24 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in section 31A(3) of the Act. (i.e gross income).
 - c) £11,681,734.28 being the amount by which the aggregate of 1.2.2(a) above exceeds the aggregate of 1.2.2(b) above, calculated by the council, in accordance with section 31A(4) of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in section 31B of the Act).
 - d) £304.13 being the amount at 1.2.2(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1.1(a) above), calculated by the council, in

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- accordance with section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (including parish precepts).
- e) £1,496,223.52 being the aggregate amount of all special items (parish precepts) referred to in section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached **schedule 3**)
 - f) £265.18 being the amount at 1.2.2(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 1.2.2(e) above by Item T (1.1 (a) above), calculated by the council, in accordance with section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no parish precept relates.
 - g) The amounts shown in column 4 of **schedule 1**. These are the basic amount of council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of the council's area shown in column 1 of the schedule respectively to which special items relate, calculated by the council in accordance with section 34(3) of the Act. (District and parish combined at band D).
 - h) The amounts shown in columns 7 to 14 of **schedule 1** being the amount given by multiplying the amount at 1.2.2(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number of dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the council, in accordance with section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.
- 3) It is to be noted that for the year 2026/27, Worcestershire County Council, Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia, and Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority have issued precepts to the council in accordance with section 40 of the Act for each category of dwelling in the council's area as indicated below:

	Valuation Bands							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Worcestershire County Council	1,173.87	1,369.51	1,565.16	1,760.80	2,152.09	2,543.38	2,943.67	3,521.60
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	204.33	238.39	272.44	306.50	374.61	442.72	510.83	613.00
Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority	71.48	83.39	95.31	107.22	131.05	154.87	178.70	214.44

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- 4) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 1.2.2(h) and 1.2.3 above, that Bromsgrove District Council in accordance with sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 hereby sets the amounts shown in **schedule 2** as the amounts of council tax for 2026/27 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.
- 5) The Interim Director of Finance be authorised to make payments under section 90(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the collection fund by ten equal instalments between April 2026 to March 2027 as detailed below

	Precept (£)	Surplus/Deficit on Collection Fund (£)	Total to Pay (£)
Worcestershire County Council	67,631,975.84	76,853.64	67,708,829.48
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	11,772,603.70	13,865.63	11,786,469.33
Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority	4,118,298.75	13,950.93	4,132,249.68

- 6) The Interim Director of Finance by authorised to make transfers under section 97 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the collection fund to the general fund the sum of £11,695,685.21 being the council's own demand on the collection fund (£10,185,510.76) and parish precepts (£1,496,223.52) and the distribution of the surplus/deficit on the collection fund (£13,950.93).
- 7) That the Interim Director of Finance be authorised to make payments from the general fund to parish councils the sums listed on **Schedule 3** by two equal instalments on 1st April 2026 and 1st October 2026 in respect of the precept levied on the council.
- 8) That the above resolutions to be signed by the Chief Executive for use in legal proceedings in the Magistrates' Court for the recovery of unpaid council taxes.
- 9) Notices of the making of the said council taxes signed by the Chief Executive are given by advertisement in the local press under section 38(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

86/25

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

There was no Urgent Business on this occasion.

The meeting closed at 5.20 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY 25TH MARCH 2026, AT 6.00 P.M.

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

Officers: Mr. G. Revans, Ms. D. Goodall, Ms J. Willis,
Ms. A. Delahunty and Mrs J. Gresham

87/25 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

88/25 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

89/25 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE CABINET HELD ON 6TH MARCH 2026**

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 6th March 2026 were submitted for Members' consideration.

Members raised that following the meeting an error had been identified in the following resolution which referenced a table that had included an error.

The Interim Director of Finance be authorised to make payments under section 90(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the collection fund by ten equal instalments between April 2026 to March 2027 as detailed below:-

	Precept (£)	Surplus/Deficit on Collection Fund (£)	Total to Pay (£)
Worcestershire County Council	67,631,975.84	76,853.64	67,708,829.48
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	11,772,603.70	13,865.63	11,786,469.33
Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority	4,118,298.75	13,950.93	4,132,249.68

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The correct table should have read: -

	Precept (£)	Surplus/Deficit on Collection Fund (£)	Total to Pay (£)
Worcestershire County Council	67,631,975.84	76,853.64	67,708,829.48
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	11,772,603.70	13,865.63	11,786,469.33
Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority	4,118,298.75	4,862.25	4,123,161.00

This error had now been resolved and a Decision taken under Urgency Procedure Rules on 18th March 2026. Members requested that this be noted in the minutes for the Council meeting that also took place on 6th March 2026 prior to their publication.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 6th March 2026 be approved as a true and accurate record.

90/25

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 10TH FEBRUARY 2026

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 10th February 2026. It was noted there were no outstanding recommendations from this meeting.

It was confirmed that no reports due for consideration at this Cabinet meeting were pre-scrutinised by the Board at its meeting held on 24th March 2026.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 10th February 2026 be noted.

91/25

SHARED HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2026-2031

The Housing Development & Strategy Manager presented the Shared Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2026-2031 for Members' consideration.

In doing so the following was highlighted:

- The Homelessness Act 2002 required all housing authorities to have a homelessness strategy in place which was based on a review of all forms of homelessness in their local authority area.

- It was intended that this Strategy would sit under the existing Worcestershire Strategic Housing Board Plan.
- In developing the Strategy, a comprehensive assessment of the nature and extent of homelessness across the local authority areas was carried out. This included engaging those who had a lived experience of homelessness, rough sleeping and domestic abuse. A consultation event was held on 30th September 2025 with partners and stakeholders, to consider housing from both a strategic and client-based perspective. This event included partners from a variety of statutory and voluntary organisations. Going forward the approach to homelessness and rough sleeping would move from crisis to prevention.
- The new Shared Homelessness Strategy, in partnership with Redditch Borough Council, Malvern Hills District Council, Wychavon District Council and Wyre Forest District Council, built on the success of the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-25, which emphasised prevention, intervention, recovery and joined-up systems, which were core themes echoed in the new National Plan. Members were informed that Worcester City Council were not involved in this Strategy and had decided to implement a separate strategy designed to address the specific homelessness and rough sleeping situation experienced in Worcester City area. The local authorities aimed to eliminate unlawful use of Bed and Breakfast facilities for families (beyond statutory short stays) and improve the quality of temporary accommodation and aimed to halve long-term rough sleeping.
- Local authorities were expected to tackle the structural causes of homelessness by building more affordable and social homes and support the reform of the private rented sector by working with landlords and tenants to help them to sustain their accommodation where possible.
- The new Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant would provide funding to develop services to support the strategy. Members had previously considered a report which had provided detail on spending priorities for the next three years. Members queried the allocation for this grant. It was explained that the funding was allocated as follows:
 - Total allocation over three years - £1,636,130
 - Homelessness and Rough Sleeping allocation – £1,474,308
 - Domestic Abuse Grant allocation - £111,315
 - Renters' Rights Act allocation - £50,497

Members thanked Officers for the comprehensive report on such an important matter. It was noted that there was a typographical error contained within the report at paragraph 2.6. It was confirmed that the Councils involved in this Strategy were confirmed as Redditch Borough Council, Malvern Hills District Council, Wychavon District Council and Wyre Forest District Council.

Members noted that homelessness was a statutory duty for the Council, and the Strategy must be agreed, once the consultation had taken place, in order for the Council to continue to be compliant.

It was queried why Worcester City Council had opted out of this Strategy. Officers explained that the needs within the Worcester City area were specific, with greater numbers of homelessness and rough sleepers experienced. Worcester City Council required a more bespoke strategy that met specific needs. However, it was noted by Members that a collaborative approach would have been positive in order for Councils across Worcestershire to share experiences in terms of homelessness and rough sleeping.

In terms of the Action Plan contained within the Strategy there was a large number of actions that needed to be undertaken. Members queried how would this be implemented and how would the success of the implementation be measured? It was noted that a local action plan would be produced which would help to assess the more specific actions and outcomes for Bromsgrove.

Members were interested as to whether there would be an impact as a result of the new Renters' Rights Act legislation. Officers explained that there may have been more landlords exiting the market and serving Section 21 No Fault Eviction Notices prior to the implementation of the Renters' Rights Act but once in force the only way to end a tenancy would be through breaching the tenancy agreement for example rent arrears and anti-social behaviour or because the landlord wanted to sell or move into the property. This gave housing options services an opportunity to work with landlords to try, wherever possible to sustain the tenancy and avoid the household being made homeless. If a landlord did decide to sell the property there would be time limits on when a rental property could be let again following its removal from the rental market. Landlords would need to provide an

information sheet produced by the Government to their tenants to confirm the changes to their rights. There was some concern on how much awareness landlords had in terms of the details within the new legislation.

RESOLVED that the draft Shared Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026-2031 and action plan be approved for public consultation for six weeks starting 13th April 2026.

92/25

PLANNING ADVISORY SERVICE REVIEW

The Executive Director presented the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) Review for the consideration of Cabinet. In doing so, the following was highlighted:

- The review covered the Bromsgrove District Council's Local Plan production and the Development Management decision making framework.
- PAS noted that the Planning service was operating in a complex environment in a District that was made up of eighty-nine per cent Green Belt and had only 2.4 years of housing land supply left which led to speculative development.
- The report noted that the Council was currently under No Overall Control (NOC). This had led to a greater need for cross party collaboration.
- Development Management processes were broadly very sound. However, early engagement between Members and Officers was not always consistent with regard to applications.
- The Review had noted that Planning was increasingly being viewed through a party-political lens rather than a shared Corporate Priority.
- Trust needed to be rebuilt between Members and Officers.
- There were significant obstacles in meeting the Local Development Plan timetable, not least in the absence of the national plan making regulations and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).
- There was a need to embed governance arrangements in order to foster cross-party consensus around the Local Plan. This would mean development of a compelling spatial vision, and the completion of the evidence base and working with key partners such as Worcestershire County Council.
- PAS noted that the Council must create an environment where behaviours reflected shared goals rather than individual political agendas.

- The report made it clear that Planning was a key Corporate Risk.
- The political leadership and senior managers needed to support and enable Officers and Members to make difficult but necessary decisions.
- It was noted that Bromsgrove District Council's Planning service was at a critical juncture, and that leadership and senior management must have a clear opportunity to address the current risks but also set a new tone for how Councillors, Officers and senior leadership worked together, collectively taking responsibility for how Planning shaped the future of the District.
- As a result of the Review, fifteen recommendations were made - eight related to Development Management and the decision-making process and seven to the Local Plan development. The recommendations aimed to build consensus, develop an agreed vision, training, resources and improved partner relations. Officers had drawn up an action plan as to how the recommendations could best be delivered, these were included in Appendix 2 to the report.
- The PAS Review had been presented to Group Leaders at a meeting held on 28th January 2026. It was also pre-scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 10th February 2026. The points raised by the Board were included in Appendix 3 to the report; and the recommendation in respect of joint Member and Officer Planning training was reflected in the action plan.
- A key recommendation from the Review in order to build political consensus, was that a cross-party Working Group be established with a defined, politically balance membership proportionate to Group size. Given it was important to move things forward – including responding to consultation on the National Planning Framework by Group Leaders - this Local Plan Cross Party Working Group (LPCPWG) should be established with immediate effect. It was highlighted that this had taken place and that the LPCPWG had already met twice.
- A meeting with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee had also taken place. This had resulted in some suggestions regarding the operation of the Planning Committee being agreed and implemented as soon as practicable. A number of other matters that needed more in-depth consideration had been referred to the Constitution Review Working Group.
- A draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) had been produced and sent to Worcestershire County Council (WCC), for comment and discussion.
- Resourcing requirements had been identified for both the Local Plan and Development Management areas. These had

recognised that additional staff were required in both areas and also due to the increase in Planning applications. These additional roles would be funded through Planning income or if necessary, from the Financial Resilience Reserve Fund.

- It should be noted that the Development Management element of the Review and report was paid for by the Planning Advisory Service and was therefore carried out at no cost to the Council. The Local Plan element cost a total of £17,744.
- Members were asked to note that failure to adopt a new Local Plan prior to LGR in April 2028 created uncertainty over Plan ownership, as the new Authority would have the final decision on adoption and implementation. The Council had written to Wyre Forest District Council regarding the potential for a North Worcestershire Local Plan and this was rejected in favour of a single District Plan for their area.
- A significant Risk Implications section had been included in this report.

Following the presentation of the report there was a detailed discussion which included:

- Governance of the LPCPWG – Cabinet was informed that a suggestion had been made by some Members that the membership of the Working Group be made up of two Members from each political group within the Council rather than it being politically balanced. However, it was noted that the PAS Review had stated that the new LPCPWG had a ‘defined membership proportionate to group sizes’ within the Council. In terms of the Chairman of the LPCPWG, there had been discussions regarding the potential of an Officer being appointed to this role. The PAS Review had however, suggested the possibility of the Working Group being chaired by the Leader of the Council (which was the current arrangement) or relevant Assistant Director. However, it was noted that the preferred arrangement was that this be a Member-led Working Group. Members discussed the possibility of the appointment of an ‘independent’ Chairman particularly as this matter was highly emotive for both Members and residents. Members queried whether it would be possible for a member of the PAS Review peer team or the Legal Counsel who currently provided advice to the Working Group to chair the meetings. It was suggested that this approach might provide a clear narrative and impartial advice in terms of the development of the Local Plan. Officers undertook to look into the chairing of the LPCPWG further and update Members regarding the options accordingly. It

was important for Members to understand if the external chairing approach was taken that it could incur significant costs for the Council and that governance arrangements in terms of Chairman's casting votes would need to be carefully considered.

- Members were clear that this matter must move forward quickly and appropriately. Particularly due to the deadlines imposed by the Government. It was noted that if a collective decision could not be made by Members, there was the risk of Government intervention in plan-making which would see decisions on the future direction of growth for Bromsgrove being taken away from the Council. Collective decision-making and cross-party working was key in order to provide the best outcomes for the residents of the District.
- A significant amount of pressure was currently being placed on Officers. This had been raised as part of the PAS Review which had highlighted Officer ill-health and burnout. This was something that must be avoided and Members should aim to be 'on the same page' in terms of the decisions making process going forward.
- Cabinet was keen that this be a transparent process. Meetings with individuals or small groups of Members should be avoided, as detailed in the PAS report, in order to ensure transparency of the process and encourage cross party working and collective decision making. It was important that decisions be made through the LPCPWG. If any specific areas needed to be discussed outside of these meetings they should be carried out at Group Leader level, in line with the usual approach taken in these matters. Discussions and decisions made by the LPCPWG could then be communicated to all Members at Planning Advisory Meetings open to all Members.
- Draft Terms of Reference (ToR) of the LPCPWG – These were still to be agreed, and Officers were undertaking work to move this forward. It was hoped that the draft ToR would be considered and agreed at the next meeting of the LPCPWG. It was noted that (as detailed in the previous bullet point) that the ToR should be agreed at a meeting of the LPCPWG.
- Timeline of decision making for the Local Development Plan – Members queried when the final decision for the Local Development Plan needed to be made. Although it was noted there was a Government deadline of December 2026, it was hoped that a collective decision be made by June 2026. This would ensure that the Council was in the best position to start the implementation of the Local Plan prior to LGR.

- Adoption of the PAS Recommendations – it was noted that all recommendations made as a result of the PAS Review be adopted by the Council including those in respect of the Planning Committee. It was confirmed that this would be the case. Any recommendations that needed to be considered by the Constitution Review Working Group would be referred accordingly. In terms of Member and Officer training as detailed within the report, Officers were currently liaising with training providers for Green and Grey Belt training, and a Local Plan and Planning Committee workshops was also in the process of being arranged. It was hoped that most of these sessions would be completed prior to the start of the new municipal year. Officers will be meeting with the Planning Advisory Service to discuss the wider training programme that was recommended.
- The Cabinet Member for Planning, Strategic Housing and Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) had been approached by Ward Members who wished to discuss matters regarding the relevant Wards in order to better understand the process. These meetings could be facilitated with representatives from the Legal and Planning teams in attendance as appropriate.
- A typographical error was highlighted in paragraph 5.1 contained within the report.

Following the detailed discussion, Members thanked the PAS peer team for carrying out a robust and detailed review. Thanks were also extended to all Officers and Members involved in the review and preparation of the report.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The findings of the Planning Advisory Service (“PAS”) Report dated January 2026 be noted.
- 2) The comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding consideration of the PAS Report noted.
- 3) The recommendations made by the PAS be accepted and implemented.
- 4) The progress made to date as set out in the report be noted and the Planning Advisory Service Recommendations Action Plan be adopted.

93/25

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,

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**BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, CONSIDERS TO BE OF
SO URGENT A NATURE THAT IT CANNOT WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT
MEETING**

There was no Urgent Business on this occasion.

The meeting closed at 7.08 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

MONDAY 20TH APRIL 2026, AT 6.00 P.M.

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

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

Councillor J.W. Robinson

Officers: Mr J. Leach, Mr. J. Walton, Mrs. D. Goodall, Mrs.
R. Egan, Mr. M. Cox, Mr. M. Bough, Ms. T. Ainscough,
Ms. M. Bailey, Mrs. H. Mole, Mr. M Eccles, Ms. G. Harris, Miss. K.
Sharp-Fisher and Mrs J. Gresham

94/25 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

95/25 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

96/25 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE CABINET HELD ON 25TH MARCH 2026**

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 25th March 2026 were
submitted for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 25th March
2026 be approved as a true and accurate record.

97/25 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
BOARD HELD ON 24TH MARCH 2026**

The Leader took the opportunity to welcome the newly appointed
Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer to Bromsgrove District
Council.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was invited to
present the minutes from the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held

on 24th March 2026. In doing so it was noted that there were no outstanding recommendations from this meeting. However, a number of Cabinet reports had been pre-scrutinised at the Board meeting held on 14th April 2026 and at the two Finance and Budget Scrutiny Meetings held on 13th and 20th April 2026. Any recommendations made as a result of this pre-scrutiny would be discussed during consideration of the reports at this meeting.

RESOLVED that the minutes from the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 24th March 2026 be noted.

98/25

REVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME ENFORCEMENT POLICY

The Principal Officer (Planning & Enviro- Crime Enforcement) from Worcestershire regulatory Services (WRS) presented the Revision of Environmental Crime Enforcement Policy for Members' consideration.

Cabinet Members were advised that this was an updated policy which adhered to the most up to date legislation. This policy aimed to reflect the most current working practices in enforcement.

The updated policy was welcomed by Members and expressed that it would lead to better compliance in the disposal of waste within the District. However, it was also felt that when the policy was launched there needed to be a communications strategy that ran alongside. This would help support the policy, particularly in respect of the emphasis on the public's responsibility for waste until it was removed. Members felt it would be appropriate for the communications to include information regarding residents who were disposing of waste through a third party, and the importance of requesting sight of a disposal license to ensure the waste would be disposed of legally and responsibly.

RECOMMENDED that the Bromsgrove and Redditch Enforcement Policy be adopted and replace the current Joint Environmental Enforcement.

99/25

INTRODUCTION OF ENFORCEMENT OF LITTERING FROM VEHICLES

The Principal Officer (Planning & Enviro- Crime Enforcement) from Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) presented the Introduction of Enforcement of Littering from Vehicles for Members' consideration.

In doing so it was noted that this policy enabled littering from vehicles to be tackled through civil enforcement in the future. This would help to

assist in dealing with this matter, which was problematic, particularly in rural areas of the District. If the policy was approved, it was considered a reactive and proactive response and would enable the Civil Enforcement Team to issue Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) to the Registered Keeper of the vehicle from which the litter was thrown. It was noted that this would result in an additional resource in the tackling of litter within the District.

In terms of the PCN level, it was stated that this would be £250 and £125 (for prompt payment).

Members felt that along with the introduction of this type of enforcement, it was important to communicate a robust anti-littering message to residents. This would ensure that residents were aware if a littering offence was committed from a vehicle, and that the Registered Keeper was responsible for the PCN. It was also requested that the communications should remind residents of the risk to Council staff in carrying out increased litter picks as part of their role and as a result of littering.

Councillor J. Robinson, who was in attendance at this meeting, queried whether there would be a targeted approach to this enforcement and how evidence would be gathered. Officers confirmed that this would not be targeted but would rely on the Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO) witnessing the offence and obtaining video evidence on their body worn camera equipment. The PCN would be issued by administrative staff when the CEO returned to the office, in much the same way as a parking PCN was issued.

The right to appeal was also queried, particularly as the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) might not have the most up to date information on the Registered Keeper of a vehicle, or if the registration license plate was incorrect. This might result in letters being received from an enforcement agency to the incorrect person or address. Officers explained that there would be very few instances when this would happen, however there would be the opportunity for review in some cases.

In terms of whether this would only be applicable to vehicles registered within the UK, it was confirmed that this was the case as it would be difficult to enforce for vehicles from outside the UK.

Members queried whether there would be additional training provided to CEOs to carry out these additional duties. It was noted that CEOs were already trained to carry out enforcement as part of their role. As

Members were aware, Wychavon District Council provided parking enforcement for the Council and CEOs already carried out this type of littering enforcement in Wychavon and therefore the training would be easily applied within Bromsgrove. Officers explained that there had been five littering PCNs issued by Wychavon District Council in 2025.

On being put to the vote it was

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) Civil enforcement of Littering from Vehicles be introduced;
- 2) The Civil Enforcement Team be given delegated authority to issue Litter Penalty Charge Notices;
- 3) The parking administration team be authorised to deal with appeals and enforcement matters in respect of Litter Penalty Charge Notices;
- 4) The Penalty Notice Charge be set at the level set by Council for Criminal offences where a Fixed Penalty Notice is served for Depositing Litter (section 87/88 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990) which for 2026/27 subject to Council approval are proposed to be set as:
 - a) £250; and
 - b) £125 for prompt payment (within 14 days); and
- 5) Authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Regeneration & Property to issue Penalty Notice Charges for Littering from Vehicles under The Littering From Vehicles Outside London (Keepers: Civil Penalties) Regulations 2018.

100/25

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND

The UK Prosperity Fund Manager presented the Community Investment Fund report. In doing so it was noted that on 25th February 2026, the Council resolved to create a reserve of £1.25 million for a Community Investment Fund to enable agile investments to meet local community needs. In addition to this, an uplift in respect of Members' Ward Budgets from £2,000 to £5,000 and therefore £93,000 of this reserve was allocated to accommodate this increase.

The process for the allocation of funding for projects would be competitive, and applications evaluated against the assessment criteria in the policy and a scoring matrix based on these criteria applied. A panel of at least three officers would independently assess each application, followed by a moderation process to review and align scores. The resulting list of proposed decisions would be reviewed by the Assistant Director Regeneration and Property Services who would make recommendations to the Executive Director Environment and Communities. The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling and the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Strategic Housing would then be consulted on the recommended decisions before applicants were informed of the outcome.

The final recommendation contained within the report was in respect of funding for 0.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) for a post to administer the funding.

The Leader explained that this report had been pre-scrutinised by the Finance and Budget Working Group at its meeting on 13th April 2026 where some recommendations were made and ratified at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board at its meeting on 14th April 2026. The recommendations were as follows:

- 1) Regarding Bromsgrove District Departments – any projects put forward must have the approval of the Ward Member.
- 2) Bromsgrove District Departments help and assist Ward Members with any projects they may put forward.
- 3) That the Panel should be Cross-Party.
- 4) If Ward Members feel they cannot sponsor a project, then it cannot go ahead.
- 5) Consideration should be given to an appeal process.

These recommendations were discussed in detail. It was stated that applications for this funding must be in line with Council Priorities. In terms of Council departments applying for funding this was not an opportunity for any service area who had not applied for a Budget Bid to apply for funding. The process of approval was clear within the funding criteria and with an Officer panel evaluating the applications, this would ensure that the funding would be available more quickly and the process less bureaucratic. There had been funding rounds undertaken previously, such as the New Homes Bonus, which had been long and protracted and taken up a considerable amount of Member time and Officer resource. The Leader confirmed that both she and / or the

Deputy Leader would remove themselves from considering any projects that might be a conflict of interest for them. This was the advantage of both Members being consulted as part of the application process.

In respect of recommendations 1 and 4 above, it was confirmed that Ward Members would be consulted as part of the application process. Ward Members would need to provide confirmation that they were in support of a project within their Ward. Where a Ward Member was not in support of a project, they would need to provide a clear rationale, as to the reasons why they did not support the project, especially where it related to a Council priority. This would be taken into account as part of the evaluation process. It was agreed that it was the responsibility of the applicant to provide further details to the Ward Member if they were not initially supportive of the project. Alternative wording was proposed for recommendation 1 as detailed below:

'Any project proposal that had potential implications for a ward must include feedback from the Ward Member and be provided for consideration by the Executive Director Environment and Communities following consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Strategic Housing and Assistant Director Regeneration and Property.'

The Chairman of the Board expressed that he required more surety around the proposed wording and requested that the word 'feedback' be replaced with 'confirmation'. This request was accepted.

There was a discussion regarding recommendation 2 above regarding support from Bromsgrove District departments. Members were informed that technical support via initially the Assistant Director would be made available to advise as appropriate whilst recognising council officers would not be leading on bids from communities. An amendment to the wording was suggested as follows:

'Support Ward Members to fulfil their community leadership role in working with the communities by accessing any appropriate technical support via Assistant Directors in the first instance, whilst ensuring bids were owned and developed by Ward Members and their communities.'

The Chairman of the Board accepted this amendment.

The recommendation regarding a cross-party panel was noted. It was confirmed that it was not intended to create a Member panel or

committee at this time for determination of Community Investment Funding.

Whilst an appeal process was not supported at this time, a rationale would be provided by the Executive Director for Environment and Communities for any decisions made regarding bids, following consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling and the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Strategic Housing in liaison with the Assistant Director for Regeneration and Property Services.

Members queried the 0.5 FTE allocation to the administering of the fund. The Overview and Scrutiny Board had understood that this would be divided between Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils resulting in 0.25 FTE for each Council. It was clarified that the post would be 0.5 FTE at each Council and not 0.25 FTE. The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was pleased that this was the case.

As there were three rounds of funding available, Members felt it was prudent to undertake the first round of funding, which was due to start imminently. It was determined that following the first round, which would be monitored closely, a review of the process took place to accommodate any lessons learnt and make any amendments to the process if necessary. It was reiterated that this process involved ownership by the Ward Member and communities and it was not for the Council to undertake all the work.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The Community Investment Fund policy be approved;
- 2) Recommendations in relation to the Community Investment Fund to be received from the Assistant Director Regeneration and Property with delegated authority for spend, upon receipt of those recommendations, to be granted to the Executive Director Environment and Communities following consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling and the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Strategic Housing;
- 3) £93,000 of the Community Investment Fund be allocated to Members' Ward Budgets;

- 4) Up to £43,792 of the Community Investment Fund be allocated to the cost of administering the fund;
- 5) Any project proposal that had potential implications for a ward must include confirmation from the Ward Member and be provided for consideration by the Executive Director Environment and Communities following consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Strategic Housing and Assistant Director Regeneration and Property;
- 6) Ward Members were supported to fulfil their community leadership role in working with the communities by accessing any appropriate technical support via Assistant Directors in the first instance, whilst ensuring bids were owned and developed by Ward Members and their communities;
- 7) Where a project does not receive the support of a Ward Member this would be taken into account as part of the evaluation process;
- 8) A rationale would be provided by the Executive Director Environment and Communities for any decisions regarding bids, following consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships, Economic Development and Enabling, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Strategic Housing in liaison with the Assistant Director Regeneration and Property; and
- 9) A review of the process of the Community Investment Fund be undertaken following the completion of the first round of funding.

101/25

CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY 2026 TO 2031

The Climate Change Manager presented the Climate Change Strategy 2026 to 2031. In doing so, the following was highlighted:

- The Climate Change Strategy 2026 to 2031 replaced the previously approved Strategy. The new Strategy focused on priority themes where the Council had direct control or significant influence such as:

- Buildings within the Council's Estate
 - Residential Buildings
 - Transport
 - Planning and Land Use
 - Biodiversity
 - Waste and Food
 - Collaboration and Engagement
 - Governance and Finance
-
- The Strategy would be embedded in the Council's performance framework with annual reporting to Cabinet and Council. Members were reminded that Climate Change implications were already included in all Committee reports.
 - In order to ensure the Strategy moved from high-level ambition to operational reality, Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART) actions and milestones would be included directly in the relevant Service Business Plans. It was hoped that this would ensure that Assistant Directors and Service Managers maintained full ownership over the delivery methods required to meet the Climate Change Strategy outcomes.
 - The Climate Change Manager would act as the central corporate auditor, responsible for the annual monitoring and reporting of these milestones to Cabinet and Council. Members noted that although the Climate Change Manager would be the auditor, it was the responsibility of all Service areas to embed and take ownership of policies and processes in respect of Climate Change within their Service Area.
 - Partnerships would be instrumental in delivering the Strategy. There would be continued collaboration with Worcestershire County Council, Everyone Active, BDHT/Registered Providers, Act On Energy, Midland Net Zero Hub, Worcestershire Regulatory Services, in order to maximise delivery capacity and funding leverage.
 - There were some key operational programmes that would be undertaken which included:
 - PV at Bromsgrove Sport and Leisure Centre
 - Lighting upgrades across the Council's estate
 - Warm Homes retrofit
 - Expansion of EV charging
 - Preparation for separate weekly food waste collections
 - Biodiversity improvements

- The Strategy would be delivered through a mix of existing revenue budgets, invest-to-save business cases, Capital Programme bids, and external funding as required by service areas.
- Within the context of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), this was an adaptable Strategy which had been prepared and could be passed over to the new Authority in whatever structure was adopted.
- An annual report would be provided to ascertain the status of milestones and actions within the Strategy.

Members welcomed the ambitious Strategy and requested that areas of commonality between neighbouring Districts be considered during the implementation of the Climate Change Strategy 2026 to 2031 particularly in light of LGR.

It was raised that the previous Carbon Reduction Action Plan had set out the pathway to Net Zero by 2040 for the Council's own operations, with a 50 per cent reduction by 2030. Given that the Council would no longer be operating in its current form in 2030, what would be the Council's reduction in its operation in May 2028, when the new unitary authority would be established? It was noted that currently the Council's operations were successfully moving towards the 50 per cent reduction and were already close to attaining this result. The exact reduction in 2028 was not recorded within the report, however Officers looked to provide this information as part of the annual update of the Strategy reported to Council.

Further clarification was requested on whether the District would be establishing an anaerobic digester in the future. It was noted that a definitive answer could not be provided on this matter. An anaerobic digester would come at a considerable expense to the Council and require significant capacity. Both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils were committed to providing a Food Waste Collection service in October 2026 in line with legislation. However, Members were keen to understand what the journey was for the neighbouring Councils in terms of food waste. It seemed that not all Councils would be operating a food waste collection service within the Government guidelines and it was queried why this was the case. Officers would provide updates on these areas as part of the annual updates.

It was noted that as the previous Cabinet Member for Climate Change had been consulted as part of the completion of the Strategy. The contents of the Strategy would not be amended to reflect the change in

portfolio responsibly and that she would present the report when it was considered at Full Council in the new municipal year.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) The Council's Climate Change Strategy 2026–2031 be approved; and
- 2) an annual review of the Climate Change Strategy be reported to Council.

102/25

EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY

The Senior Strategic Housing Officer presented the Empty Homes Strategy for Members' consideration.

It was reported that according to the national council tax database for 2025, there were 542,276 empty homes recorded in October across England, representing 2.1 per cent of all homes. In October 2025, Bromsgrove District had 635 empty homes, of which 384 had been empty for more than 6 months.

The Council was committed to identifying empty homes and developing options for bringing them back into use as quickly as possible.

Cabinet was informed that the aim of the Strategy was to:

- help alleviate housing need
- improve housing conditions
- offer a wider choice of housing to residents
- minimise the blight that can result where properties are left empty and neglected.

The strategic approach to tackling empty homes and delivering on the Council's commitment, was centred around three priority areas:

- Priority 1 - Develop systems, processes and multi-agency working
- Priority 2 - Improve intervention pathways, resources and performance
- Priority 3 - Strengthen early intervention, engagement and monitoring

It was explained that an empty home was a dwelling which was unoccupied and substantially unfurnished. There were two main types of

empty homes. Short term empty homes were dwellings which had been unoccupied for under six months. It was often the case that these were in the process of sale. Short term empty homes naturally occurred as people's circumstances changed, and they moved between homes.

Long term empty homes were dwellings which had been unoccupied and were substantially unfurnished for six months or longer. Bringing long term, privately owned empty homes back into use was the focus of this Strategy. Rather than representing a natural process of change, long term empty homes indicated there may be other factors leading to a property remaining empty.

Residential properties remained empty for various reasons, for example resolving legal ownership as part of an inheritance process. Other factors included new homes waiting for a buyer, owners abandoning properties and owners having a lack of funds for repairs and refurbishment.

There was no Act of Parliament that created a duty on local housing authorities to tackle empty homes. However, Councils did have a general housing duty to review housing conditions and needs as defined in the Housing Act 1985.

National policy focused on empowering Local Authorities to bring vacant dwellings back in to use, guided by a local empty homes strategy. Local Authorities had the discretion to charge empty homeowners council tax premiums and had a range of legislative powers to tackle empty homes.

A contribution of £7,680 from Bromsgrove District Council's Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant (26/27) had been agreed to support the funding of the part-time Empty Homes Officer.

Members welcomed this important Strategy and thanked the Senior Strategic Housing Officer for the comprehensive report.

Members questioned whether this process would be undertaken quickly in terms of getting empty homes back on the open market. Officers explained that this would be the responsibility of the Private Sector Housing Team to manage this process as quickly and effectively as possible. It was reported that since November 2025, five long term empty homes had been released on the open market, which was a great result for the District.

RECOMMENDED that the Bromsgrove District Council Empty Homes Strategy 2026 – 29 be adopted.

103/25

RENTERS RIGHTS ACT 2025

The Private Sector Housing Manager presented the Renters Rights Act 2025 report.

In doing so it was noted that The Renters Rights Act 2025 (RRA25) obtained Royal Assent in October 2025 with reforms being introduced through a phased approach.

Phase 1 would take effect from 1st May 2026 and included the following elements:

- The abolition of Section 21 'no fault' evictions.
- The introduction of Assured Periodic Tenancies in the private rented sector.
- The reform of possession grounds in the Private Rent Sector (PRS) so they are fair for both parties.
- The limitation of rent increases to once a year.
- Ban rental bidding and rent in advance.
- It would be illegal to discriminate against renters who had children or received benefits.
- Required landlords in the (PRS) to consider tenant requests to rent with a pet.
- Strengthen both local council enforcement and rent repayment orders.

Members were informed that Phase 2 would take effect from late 2026 and included the following elements across two stages:

- 1) Stage 1 the regional rollout of the database for Landlords and Local Councils. Signing up to the PRS Database would be mandatory for all PRS landlords and they would be required to pay an annual fee, the amount of which was still to be confirmed.
- 2) Stage 2 involved the further roll out of the database and introduction of the Ombudsman.

Phase 3 involved the introduction of a new Decent Homes Standard (DHS) in the PRS. It was reported that the dates of implementation were still to be confirmed following consultation, but it was likely to start in 2035.

In addition to these measures, the Government had consulted on plans to require all domestic privately rented properties in England and Wales to meet Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) of Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) C or equivalent by 2030 unless a valid exemption was in place. Awaab's Law would also be extended to the PRS, this dealt with mould and damp in properties and required landlords to make housing safe where they contained serious hazards.

New Burdens Funding 2025/26 had been provided by Government to support Local Authorities with the implementation costs. It was reported that Bromsgrove District Council had been allocated £16,575.66 to support the Council to undertake preparatory work for the new responsibilities around enforcement and reporting enforcement activity in private rented sector housing arising from the Renters' Rights Act 2025. In addition to this, Government had also confirmed that £34,332 for 2026/27 and £16,165 for 2027/28 had been added to the Council's final allocation of the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant 2026-29.

Following the presentation of the report, Members queried what the current EPC rating must be in the PRS. It was reported that currently rental properties could not be an F rating or below, however, it was confirmed that there were not many properties at this rating within the District.

It was hoped that this legislation would succeed in doing what it was intended to do by Government. However, there were some reservations that it could reduce the numbers of rental properties available and increase homelessness across the District in the long term.

Members requested that a review be undertaken in six months to see the effects of the legislation and ascertain the impact on the District.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The update provided in the report in respect of the Renters Rights Act 2025 be noted;
- 2) The new burdens funding of £16,575.66 be noted; and

- 3) A review be undertaken in six months to see the effects of the Renters Rights Act 2025 legislation and ascertain the impact on the District.

RECOMMENDED that

- 4) The Scheme of Delegations be amended to incorporate new powers under the Renters Rights Act 2025.

104/25

QUARTER 3 2025/26 FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT (INCLUDING FINANCIAL SAVINGS)

The Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services presented the Quarter Three 2025/26 Finance and Performance Monitoring Report (including Financial Savings) for the consideration of Cabinet, which covered the period April to December 2025.

The report provided an update on the Council's forecast revenue and capital outturn, savings delivery, reserves, treasury management, and key performance information.

At Quarter Three, the Council was forecasting a £314,000 revenue overspend for the full year. This represented a broadly stable position compared with previous forecasts and reflected ongoing financial management actions taken during the year.

The overall position included the impact of both service-level pressures and favourable movements within corporate financing.

The key message was that the position remained manageable, but there were material service pressures that continued to require close monitoring into Quarter Four and beyond.

In terms of revenue pressures and underspends the most significant overspend was within Environmental Services, currently forecast at £884,000. This was mainly driven by waste management pressures linked to the ageing vehicle fleet, higher maintenance and hire costs, and the use of agency staff to cover vacancies and sickness. These pressures were expected to reduce once the new fleet was fully introduced.

Finance and Customer Services was forecasting a £674,000 overspend. This primarily related to agency staffing costs to cover vacancies, specialist VAT support and insurance property valuation work required

for the Statement of Accounts, alongside a housing benefit subsidy budget realignment. A review of resourcing arrangements was ongoing.

The overspends were largely offset by significant underspends elsewhere. Corporate Services was forecasting an £864,000 underspend due mainly to vacancy management, corporate efficiencies, and lower-than-expected inflation and utility costs. Corporate Financing was also showing a £970k underspend, driven by higher investment interest income, savings on interest payable, and the recognition of revenue grants received in advance in the previous financial year.

The Council had a savings target of £1.213m for 2025/26. As of Quarter Three, savings of £1.457m had been delivered, exceeding the target by approximately £244,000. The majority of savings had been achieved through vacancy management and corporate efficiencies. Further work was underway to review vacant posts and ensure that these savings were sustainable into future years.

Capital expenditure to date totalled £13.593m against a revised capital budget of £21.876m, which included additional grants received and carry forwards from previous years.

Key schemes included Nailers' Yard, where construction was progressing with a revised completion date of 6th May 2026, and the Windsor Street site, where remediation works were continuing to prepare the site for redevelopment.

Public Realm works had been completed and were reporting a notable underspend.

While delivery continued, there might be short-term cashflow implications pending the receipt of some external grant funding.

At the end of Quarter Three, earmarked reserves stood at £11.266m and were forecast to rise to £12.245m by 31st March 2026. This remained consistent with the approved Medium-Term Financial Plan and provided a reasonable level of resilience to manage known risks and future pressures.

The Council continued to operate without external borrowing. At the end of December 2025, £6m was held in short-term investments. Treasury activity remained fully compliant with approved prudential indicators, and returns had benefited from the higher interest rate environment.

Council Tax and Business Rates collection performance remained strong and was close to or above national averages. Benefits processing times had improved during the year, despite increased complexity in cases retained by the Council. Overall, corporate performance indicators were broadly on track at Quarter Three.

Following the presentation of the report, there were several areas discussed in detail. These included the consideration of this report at a Finance and Budget Working Group meeting held on 20th April. There had been several actions as a result of this pre-scrutiny including:

- Further information in respect of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) funding which was due to be received by the Council.
- Information on the costs of temporary accommodation. There had been a request made that the Assistant Director for Communities and Housing Services be invited to a meeting of the FBWG in the new municipal year.
- Funding for potholes at the Aston Road roundabout. This was an unadopted roundabout, maintained by the Council, which needed to be repaired if it was to be adopted in the future.
- Further information on the £64,000 pressure from North Worcestershire Water Management (NWWM). Cabinet queried whether the pressure would be shared between the partner Authorities. It was confirmed that this was the case.
- Clarification on the £27,000 additional rent on St John's car park. Members noted that this was referred to as 'Waitrose' car park.

In respect of all these actions, Cabinet requested that they also receive a copy of the information provided to FBWG Members.

Members also requested clarification on the £46,000 savings in terms from UK Shared Prosperity Fund within Economic Development. This was particularly pertinent given the approval of the funding for the 0.5 FTE approved as part of the Community Infrastructure Fund considered earlier at this meeting.

Vacancies and agency costs had also been discussed at the FBWG meeting earlier that day. Clarification on whether vacancies should be considered as underspends or savings was queried. Information was provided on when a vacancy would be considered an underspend and instances when it would be a saving. It was also clarified why a 'central pot' was used to hold funds when there were vacancies and that it was returned to the Service area when it was filled. It was noted that some

roles were particularly difficult to recruit to and therefore the monies might stay in the 'central pot' for long periods of time. However, once the role was recruited to the proportionate (depending on when in the financial year the role was recruited to) amount was returned to the specific service area. Concerns had been raised in respect of agency costs, and it was noted these were carefully monitored. However, it was noted that Environmental Services used agency staff regularly as there was often long-term sickness due to the physical nature of the roles within that Service area.

The Cabinet Member for Finance stated that the Quarters Three and Four reports would be presented to Council at its meeting in July 2026. The reporting schedule would be looked at closely to provide timely reporting to Members and the most up to date information as possible.

The Performance & Improvement Manager presented the Quarter Three Performance Monitoring report for Members consideration. The data had remained largely stable since the previous report at Quarter Two. A request was made that for future reports, any data that had not be received for a specific performance measured, be reported in a different way. This was to ensure that when assessing the data it showed that reporting was still taking place in this area.

RESOLVED that the following be noted:

- 1) The current Revenue position of £314k adverse variance;
- 2) The current Capital spending of £13.593m against a revised budget of £21.876m;
- 3) The current savings delivery is £1.457m against an annual target of £1.213m for 2025/26. This is included in the above Revenue position;
- 4) The Earmarked Reserves balances of £11.266m;
- 5) The Ward Budget allocation position to date is 22 approved allocations at £23,433.59, leaving a balance of £38,556.41 to be allocated before year end;
- 6) There is an updated procurements position, with any new items over £200,000 to be included on the forward plan;
- 7) The position on Council Tax and Business Rates be noted;
- 8) The position on benefits processing be noted;
- 9) The Q3 position on Corporate Performance Indicators be noted;
- 10) The Council's Treasury performance for Q3 of the financial year 25/26;
- 11) The position in relation to the Council's Prudential indicators;

RECOMMENDED that

- 12) That the Balance Sheet Monitoring Position for Q3 is noted – which is the Treasury Monitoring Report and required to be reported to Council; and
- 13) That £120k capital funding be approved for work on fixing potholes on the Aston Road roundabout and the road leading to the depot.

105/25

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

There was no Urgent Business on this occasion.

The meeting closed at 8.00 p.m.

Chairman

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