

Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board Agenda

Friday 25 September 2020 at 5.45pm

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[Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board – 25 September 2020](#)

This agenda gives notice of items to be considered in private as required by Regulations 5 (4) and (5) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

- 1. Apologies**
To receive any apologies for absence.
- 2. Minutes**
To confirm the minutes of the meetings held on 6 and 20 August 2020 as correct records.
- 3. Declarations of Interest**
 - (a) To receive any declarations of interest from members relating to any item on the agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Conduct and/or S106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
 - (b) To receive any declarations of the existence and nature of any political Party Whip on any matter to be considered at the meeting.
- 4. Additional Items of Business**
To determine whether there are any additional items of business arising which should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Public Items

- 5. Reset and Recovery – Phase 1 Findings**
To consider the findings from Phase 1 of the Reset and Recovery Framework.
- 6. Senior Management Restructure**
To consider the proposals relating to the restructuring of the Council's senior management.
- 7. Executive Forward Plan – October 2020**
To receive, for information, the Executive Forward Plan

David Stevens
Chief Executive

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Freeth Street
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West Midlands

Distribution:

Councillor L Giles (Chair);
Councillors E M Giles, Moore and Rollins.

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Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board

Apologies for Absence

The Board will receive any apologies for absence from the members of the Board.

Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board

Thursday 6 August 2020 at 5.45pm

Present: Councillors E M Giles, Moore and Rollins.

In Attendance: Councillors Piper and Preece.

Officers: David Stevens (Chief Executive), Clare Sandland (Service Manager - Finance), Charlie Davey (Business Partner – Finance).

17/20 **Election of Chair**

Councillor Moore was elected Chair for the duration of the meeting.

(Meeting adjourned 5.47pm-5.57pm)

18/20 **Election of Chair**

Due to remote connectivity issues, the Scrutiny Management Board elected Councillor Rollins as Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

19/20 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor L Giles.

20/20 **Matter of Urgency**

There were no additional items of business to consider as matters of urgency.

21/20 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interests declared at the meeting.

22/20 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

23/20 **2019/20 Financial Outturn**

At its meeting on 22nd July, 2020 the Cabinet referred the proposals arising from the 2019/20 directorate outturn reports for each service area to the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board for consideration.

The General Fund balance at the end of 2019/20 was £42.061m. This included £8.641m of target carry forwards, £20.941m of earmarked central items and £1.009m for a Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO), leaving a free balance of £11.470m which equated to 4.59% of net General Fund expenditure.

At a directorate level, excluding Public Health and the Housing Revenue Account, the outturn for 2019/20 was a surplus of £1.548m. Including, Public Health and Central Items, the outturn for 2019/20 was a surplus of £1.813m.

At the end of 2018/19, a total of £27.075m was held in earmarked reserves. £18.939m was added to these reserves during 2019/20 leaving a remaining balance of £46.014m at the end of the financial year. The main reasons for the large increase to reserves were the establishment of a Public Health Grant reserve (£4.842m), and the receipt of COVID 19 Emergency Grant income late in March, which was required to be moved to an earmarked reserve (£12.369m).

From the comments and questions by councillors, the following responses were made and issues highlighted:-

- at the end of 2019/20 the Council's reserves were £46m, which was the equivalent of 18.5% of general fund expenditure.
- COVID-19 had caused uncertainty at local, national and global levels and the full financial impact was not yet known. However, there was approximately £12m in additional expenditure and an £8.7m loss of service income as a result of the pandemic so far.
- whilst the Council had received some emergency funding from the Government to meet some of the costs associated with COVID-19, there was still a funding gap.
- the impact on Council Tax and Business Rate collection would be known in 2020/21 as the pandemic only had an impact from mid-March onwards. Recent announcements by Government indicated that deficits would be able to be repaid over a three year period.
- the Chief Executive and Deputy Leader of the Council held weekly briefings with the borough's Members of Parliament to ensure they were aware of all issues impacting on the Council.
- the Council was in ongoing discussions with the two providers that operated its leisure facilities; Sandwell Leisure Trust and Places Trust.
- a significant proportion of Adult Social Care budget came via the Better Care Fund. Within Adult Social Care savings had been deferred by using savings from previous years, but in 2019/20 a number of services that were largely Better Care Fund funded were trialled to see if they could operate within only that funding rather than with any local authority funding. Services operated without significant performance problems, so for 2020/21 the Council's core funding for those services was reduced and the savings delivered.

- Better Care Fund was partially a grant from central Government to local authorities, the balance was funding that was given to the Clinical Commissioning Group and they were required to work with the Council on a pooled budget – the Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group then jointly decide what that budget is spent on.
- Sandwell's settlement was reduced year on year, and savings were required by all directorates. Even when there was no savings target, there was no increase in budgets but factors such as increases in national living wage and inflationary increases for external providers requiring efficiency savings to still be identified.
- members felt that Adult Social Care workers should be better remunerated to reflect the importance of their work, which had been highlighted throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The Chief Executive indicated that this would need to be raised with the borough's Members of Parliament to make representations at a national level.
- within 2019/20 there was minimal impact as a result of COVID-19 and social distancing; this would be reported throughout the 2020/21 financial monitoring process.

Resolved that the Leader and Chief Executive communicate to the four Members of Parliament for the borough of Sandwell the need for Government investment in Adult Social Care through local government, in recognition of the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on that sector and the individual sacrifice that many employees in that sector have had to make during the pandemic.

24/20

Executive Forward Plan

The Board received the Executive Forward Plan for August 2020.

Potential Item for Inclusion on the Scrutiny Work Programme

With the permission of the Chair, Councillor Preece suggested to the Scrutiny Management Board that the risk of industrial action in relation to Sandwell Leisure Trust could be an item for consideration by scrutiny. This matter would be discussed with the Chair of the Scrutiny Management Board and relevant officers to determine an appropriate way forward.

Meeting ended at 6.36pm

Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board

Thursday 20 August 2020 at 5.45pm

Present: Councillors E M Giles, Moore and Rollins.

In Attendance: Councillors Piper and Preece.

Officers: David Stevens (Chief Executive), Alison Knight (Executive Director – Neighbourhoods), Tammy Stokes (Interim Director – Regeneration and Growth), Surjit Tour (Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer), Chris Ward (Director – Education, Skills and Employment), Maria Price (Service Manager – Legal Services) and David Harris (Senior Service Manager).

26/20 **Election of Chair**

Councillor Rollins was elected Chair for the duration of the meeting.

27/20 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor L Giles.

28/20 **Matter of Urgency**

There were no additional items of business to consider as matters of urgency.

29/20 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Moore declared that he had been a Cabinet Member during the time of the acquisition of 1 Providence Place by the Council in 2014.

Future Use of 1 Providence Place and other assets in West Bromwich town centre

On 22nd July, 2020 the Cabinet approved that 1 Providence Place was surplus to the Council's office accommodation requirements. Prior to taking a report to Cabinet for decision on the future use of 1 Providence Place, the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board was asked to consider the options for the future use of the site, including leasing the building for private office accommodation, converting the building to residential, or the sale of the asset.

The preferred future use of the asset was the disposal of the property and the adjacent development plot for best consideration and to also enable the development of a new Free School on these sites.

It was reported that the Council had already received a direct approach from the DfE in connection with the availability of the following Council owned assets:

- 1 Providence Place;
- the Providence Place development plot; and
- space in West Bromwich Town Hall

An extensive site search, undertaken subsequent to approval of a Free School application in June 2019, the DfE had, during September – October 2019, formally identified these assets as the preferred sites to accommodate the development and operation of a new 750 place secondary Free School sponsored by Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust (Shireland CAT), in partnership with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO). It was expected that the school would open in 2023.

The Board was informed that the proposed new academy was part of the Government Free School programme which the DfE was responsible for delivering. If re-use of the council's assets was not approved for the Free School, the DfE will look to build the school outside of Sandwell. This would create a significant risk for the Council and potentially result in being unable to meet the statutory duty of providing every child in Sandwell with a school place. Further, it would have a significant impact on the Council's capital programme and create a larger cash flow challenge over the next

5 years. In addition, Sandwell would miss the opportunity of a prestigious arts and cultural offer in West Bromwich town centre.

Alternative proposals for 1 Providence Place had been considered, including retention of the asset by the Council for investment purposes, conversion to residential properties using the Housing Revenue Account, or disposal for best consideration to realise the optimum alternative use of the asset for the future. Officers reported that whilst all options, including retention, had inherent risks a disposal to the DfE did safeguard the future use for a purpose that was certain to provide a range of positive outcomes, which was the rationale for that proposal being reported for consideration by Cabinet.

From the comments and questions by councillors, the following responses were made and issues highlighted:-

- if the Council did not dispose of the site to the DfE for inclusion in its Free School programme the Council would need to go through a different process to secure school provision, including identifying and working with a sponsor – this would not include the CBSO and the unique opportunity that presented.
- the Free School with CBSO would be the first of its kind to be created in collaboration with an orchestra and would provide the young people of Sandwell with a unique opportunity
- the proposals for disposal to the DfE had been assessed by the Strategic Investment Unit and received a score of 55%. The threshold for unconditional approval was set by the Council at 69%. However, it was acknowledged that the assessment did not factor in social value or wider strategic benefits to the Council and the borough.
- other potential sites within West Bromwich had been considered for the DfE Free School, but these were determined to not be appropriate.
- as part of any agreement to fund the Free School, the use of West Bromwich Town Hall for cultural events arranged by the school would be required. This would be for 19 times per

year, although additional uses could be negotiated. This would not prevent other community uses of the Town Hall from taking place at other times.

- the Council was working with the CBSO and Shireland CAT to ensure that Sandwell children would get priority for places.
- the DfE had indicated that if the Council was unable to agree to the disposal of 1 Providence Place for the purposes of the Free School, then it would instead be looking at sites in other boroughs.
- it was queried whether the Council's external auditors had been consulted on over the proposals.

31/20 **Exclusion of Public and Press**

Resolved that the public and press be excluded from the rest of the meeting to avoid the possible disclosure of exempt information under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to information) (Variation) Order, 2006, relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

32/20 **Future Use of 1 Providence Place and other assets in West Bromwich town centre**

The Scrutiny Management Board continued its discussions relating to the future use of 1 Providence Place and other assets in West Bromwich town centre and an overview of the site's connection to the former strategic partnership between the Council and BT was given.

Members were satisfied with the information included in the report and presented to the meeting and noted that the matter would be the subject of a Cabinet decision in due course. The Scrutiny Management Board did ask that the views of the Council's external auditors on the proposals be sought, in advance of that decision being made.

Resolved that the Executive Director – Neighbourhoods and Interim Director – Regeneration and Growth be requested to seek the views of the Council’s external auditors on the proposals for the future of 1 Providence Place, West Bromwich.

Meeting ended at 6.49pm following an adjournment between 6.27pm and 6.30pm

Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board

Declaration of Interests

Members to declare:-

- (a) any interest in matters to be discussed at the meeting;
- (b) the existence and nature of any political Party Whip on any matter to be considered at the meeting.

REPORT TO

BUDGET AND CORPORATE SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

25 September 2020

Subject:	Reset and Recovery – Phase One Findings
Cabinet Portfolio:	Deputy Leader Councillor Crompton
Director:	David Stevens Chief Executive Neil Cox Director – Prevention & Protection
Contribution towards Vision 2030:	
Contact Officer(s):	Alex Goddard alexander_goddard@sandwell.gov.uk

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Scrutiny Management Board:

1. Consider the information presented to the meeting in relation to Phase One of the reset and recovery framework, the findings from this work and further detail on Phase Two activity.
2. Identify any recommendations it wishes to make in relation to the information presented to it.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 At its meeting on 18 June 2020, the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board considered a report on the Council's reset and recovery plans in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since that time work has continued and this report provides the Scrutiny Management Board with an update on this work.

2 **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

These are set out in the attached report to Cabinet.

3 **APPENDICES:**


Appendix A – Report to Cabinet
Appendix B – Community Impact
Appendix C – Economic Impact
Appendix D – Staff Impact

David Stevens
Chief Executive

Neil Cox
Director – Prevention and Protection

REPORT TO CABINET

23 September 2020

Subject:	Reset and Recovery – Phase One Findings
Presenting Cabinet Member:	Deputy Leader Councillor Crompton
Director:	David Stevens Chief Executive Neil Cox Director – Prevention & Protection
Contribution towards Vision 2030:	
Key Decision:	No
Cabinet Member Approval and Date:	
Director Approval:	7 September 2020
Reason for Urgency:	N/A
Exempt Information Ref:	N/A
Ward Councillor (s) Consulted (if applicable):	Town Workshops held in August 2020 – all members invited.
Scrutiny Consultation Considered?	Findings to be presented to scrutiny in October 2020.
Contact Officer(s):	Kate Ashley – Strategic Lead Sarah Sprung – Senior Lead Officer Jane Alexander – Senior Lead Officer

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Consider the findings from the impact assessment work undertaken on communities, economy, staff and finance.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To apprise Cabinet of the activity undertaken in Phase One of the reset and recovery framework, the findings from this work and further detail on Phase Two activity.

2 IMPLICATION FOR VISION 2030

- 2.1 Recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic with our communities, stakeholders and partners will have a positive impact on all ambitions contained in the Vision

3 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 On 6 May 2020, the Emergency Committee approved the council's approach to the Recovery and Reset Plan. This set out the political, financial and social context within which the council will need to plan its recovery. The report stated that the development of the recovery plan will be driven by the strategic outcomes set out in Sandwell Council's Corporate Plan "Big Plans for a Great Place for the People of Sandwell", as agreed on 10 March 2020:



- 3.2 Furthermore, at its meeting on 27 May 2020 the Emergency Committee endorsed the proposed framework for reset and recovery, as detailed below:



- 3.3 The priority for Phase 1, our immediate post-crisis response, has been to move out of lockdown safely and ensure that we retain flexibility to respond to changes in the local infection rate to support the most vulnerable in our communities.
- 3.4 To this end, the council's Response Plan (as agreed on 27 March 2020) has been continually monitored at the Reset & Recovery Board and reviewed to provide assurance that the council:
- Continues to meet the objectives of the initial response plan
 - Provides appropriate levels of response activity as restrictions have been lifted and operations scaled back
 - Ensures flexibility in our response activity should we need to scale back up in event of local lockdown
- 3.5 As response activity has been reduced or ceased as appropriate, actions have been closed. Where a response activity continues to be delivered and is required longer term, this has been moved to service delivery plans as business as usual. Response activity will be stepped up as necessary, as set out in the Local Outbreak Plan and within the structure of the Incident Management Team.
- 3.6 At the operational level, services have continued to operate business continuity measures and work remotely wherever possible. However, as government restrictions have been lifted, services across the council have needed to respond by restarting limited activity. To move out of lockdown safely, an assurance process for these restart plans has been established, involving sign off of risk assessments and mobilisation plans from consultees including Public Health, Health & Safety, ICT, Finance, Facilities Management and Trade Unions via Human Resources. This process ensures that all appropriate risk assessments have been carried out and appropriate mitigating actions identified and implemented. Final decisions on the restart of services are made by the Reset & Recovery Board, chaired by the Chief Executive, and services that have restarted following approval are invited back to the Board after a few weeks to report any issues in restarting. These decisions are taken in the context of the local situation on COVID community transmission, and restart decisions are reviewed and rescinded where the risk to staff and service users has increased to unsafe levels.
- 3.7 In order to achieve the required outcomes from Phase 1 on understanding the impact of COVID-19, on 18 June 2020 the Reset and Recovery Board established three impact working groups:-



3.8 Each Impact Working Group was made up of officers from across the Council and representatives from our Strategic Partnerships.

3.9 Each group had the following remit: -

- i. to share impact intelligence (including service user/ community intelligence) from directorate areas and external contacts, discuss findings, themes and future implications
- ii. to agree the key messages from analysis of the intelligence to feed into the overall impact report, with particular focus on the following points: -
 - o The impact of COVID-19 on existing issues (negative/positive impact)
 - o Whether COVID-19 resulted in new issues for the borough/council?
 - o Suggest areas for the next stage (thematic working groups).

Financial Impact

3.10 Officers have been working to understand the full financial impact of COVID-19 on the Council, both in terms of loss of income and additional costs.

4 THE CURRENT POSITION

4.1 The Impact Working Groups have now concluded their initial analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on our borough, although it is acknowledged that the effects of COVID-19 will continue to be felt by our communities for some time to come. We will work to continue to understand this developing picture to ensure that the Council continues to respond to any new and emerging needs.

Community Impact Working Group

4.2 This group, led by the Executive Director - Children's Services and the Director – Housing and Communities, has met twice during July and August 2020. Made up of officers from across the Council's Directorates the group has pooled their collective intelligence to develop a deeper

understanding of how COVID-19 has impacted the communities of Sandwell.

- 4.3 Overall, we found that the effect of COVID-19 on our communities reflected that of the national picture, experiencing issues around mental health, food insecurity, digital exclusion, financial hardship and social stresses.
- 4.4 Also, like the national picture our BAME communities have been affected greatly by the pandemic.
- 4.5 A more comprehensive view of the findings from the Community Impact Working Group is attached at Appendix 1, the points below represent some of the key findings identified: -
 - i. COVID-19 has exacerbated existing weaknesses in Sandwell's community, related to underlying poverty and deprivation
 - ii. We need to do something different to address these underlying vulnerabilities
 - iii. To do this well, we need to ensure:
 - a. Engagement is done in the right way and is culturally sensitive
 - b. Changes in our own organisation to do things more corporately
 - c. Focus more resources in areas of most need
 - d. Clear measures of success

Economic Impact Working Group

- 4.6 This group, led by the Executive Director – Neighbourhoods, has met twice and has focused on the impact on businesses and the local economy as it is currently emerging.
- 4.7 The Group has sought to capture national and regional intelligence and has drawn on service provider experiences and insights. We have also drawn on intelligence from West Midlands Combined Authority and the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership.
- 4.8 There have been lots of national headlines regarding the impact of COVID-19 on the economy, while this is important the Group have focused on how this translates at a local level.
- 4.9 Specifically, the following vulnerabilities have been identified for Sandwell:
 - - i. Sandwell has the lowest gross disposable household income (GDHI) per head in West Midlands at £13,359; at 0.11 per thousand

rate is the lowest number of high-growth firms per population in the West Midlands.

- ii. The centre for progressive policy has predicted a productivity drop of 36% of gross value added in Sandwell during quarter 2 of 2020
- iii. Research suggests that places with higher entrepreneurial activity than Sandwell recovered faster after the 2008 crisis. This makes the case for business support in Sandwell even stronger
- iv. The Federation of Small Businesses in the UK expects some 25% of SME businesses to close in 2020.
- v. 6.8% of people (16-64) in Sandwell are self-employed -around 13,818 people, and the self-employed are particularly vulnerable group within the crisis

4.10 Therefore, the challenges identified for Sandwell are: -

- i. Disproportionate impact on young people – lack of apprenticeship vacancies, University options, unstable employment
- ii. Low skills base – Sandwell’s starting point is lower, residents who become unemployed and are less skilled are usually less resilient financially and in finding new employment.
- iii. Impact on those 50 plus – as with other Economic crisis it is forecast people aged 50 plus will be disproportionately impacted
- iv. Skills and employment support demand will be different – higher skilled cohort, more disadvantaged move further away from the labour market
- v. Digital exclusion/poverty – still a major barrier for residents to complete training/upskill
- vi. Mental health – anxiety for those returning to work or accessing the labour market

4.11 Finally, it was recognised that we need to understand more about the detailed economic impact on our BAME communities in order to tackle the issues as an organisation.

4.12 Further detail on the findings of this Impact Working Group are attached at Appendix 2.

Staff Impact Working Group

4.13 Led by the Interim Director – Human Resources and supported by colleagues from Human Resources this group has sought to utilise existing networks in place to capture experiences, views and thoughts from the workforce.

4.14 In developing its findings, the Group has drawn on staff surveys, HR data, staff focus groups and the virtual staff conferences held in July 2020.

- 4.15 The Workplace Vision programme had previously undertaken a survey in May 2020 to understand staff experiences during lockdown, the survey sought to understand how staff were coping working at home including impact on health and wellbeing. Within the survey staff were asked if they would like to become work place vision champions for their work area, to cascade key messages and to be points of contact for consultation and engagement. This group of individuals formed two focus groups that met to discuss staff experiences, responses of management and future workforce needs.
- 4.16 The key messages from the work undertaken by the Group are:
- i. Staff have coped well with adapting quickly to a new working style and maintaining service delivery in adverse circumstances
 - ii. It is recognised that this style of working has not suited everybody equally for a variety of reasons
 - iii. We need to now define the new operating model and embed this within the organisation
 - iv. We have to balance the needs of staff with the needs of the organisation
 - v. We have to continue to listen to the voice of our staff through regular pulse surveys
 - vi. Augment communications mechanisms in light of remote working, particularly with the frontline and those without remote access
- 4.17 Further detail on the findings of the Staff Impact Working Group are attached at Appendix 3.

Financial Impact

- 4.18 The Council submits monthly returns to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to illustrate the financial impact of COVID-19. The table below shows a summary of the latest return which was submitted on 4th September. It compares the Covid-related pressures (including the non-delivery of some savings plans) against the covid emergency grant funding which results in a £4.260m shortfall. This has improved since last month's return, mainly as a result of an improvement in the estimated shortfall against Council Tax and Business Rates. There is still significant uncertainty around this particular area but officers are hoping to be clearer on this over the next couple of months. This is because:
- a number of businesses have asked to defer their Business Rates payments to September so the Revenues and Benefits team will know how many of these have actually been able to pay.
 - the impact of the end of the job retention scheme on council tax collection rates will also become evident.

4.19 This shortfall will continue to change through the remainder of the financial year and will need to be incorporated into the current review of the council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy. The majority of assumptions within this will need to be revised as a result of Covid and Members will receive further reports and briefings as this review progresses.

	2020/21 Projection	
	£'000	£'000
Covid Related Expenditure (SMBC)	5,874	
Covid Related Expenditure (SCT)	410	
Covid Pressure - savings not achieved	5,512	11,795
Loss of Service Income	7,379	
Loss of Commercial Income	1,359	8,738
Total Service Pressures	20,533	20,533
Loss of Council Tax / Business Rates		8,900
Total SMBC Pressure		29,433
Covid Emergency Grant		(25,173)
Total SMBC Pressure		4,260
		4,260

Service Impact

4.20 Our analysis has also involved considering the impact of Covid on the Council's services. This analysis has been based on gathering service level impact information directly from services over April and June this year. Subsequently, departmental management teams have discussed the key messages for taking forward into their business planning processes. Some of the key messages are as follows:

Change in demand

4.21 There have been huge differences of experience between services across the council – some being overwhelmed by the response to Covid and others suffering drop offs in demand when buildings and facilities that they operate from have been closed. However, most service areas reported that they were managing demand effectively despite the disruption.

4.22 There has also been a changing picture over time and many services that had initial reduced demand in lockdown have now seen demand spring back and in some cases to outstrip pre-Covid levels e.g. planning and highways.

4.23 The type of demand has also changed and many services reported that they are delivering more functions remotely e.g. e-books, training packages, client support, assessments and partnership meetings.

Impact on service outcomes

- 4.24 Services have successfully minimised most impact on service outcomes by changing the way they have been delivering services. Some of the impacts on services can be summarised as follows:
- i. Loss of income due to a variety of factors – facilities closed, debt and arrears rising, reduced fees. Risk that income loss may rise as recession deepens
 - ii. Sustainability of facilities/ venues going forward
 - iii. Reduced ability of service users/ partners to report safeguarding or other concerns and issues being hidden
 - iv. Expected surge when referrals increase/ schools return and ability to cope with surge
 - v. Business deflection onto Covid-related matters at cost of delivering business as usual
 - vi. Mental Health of staff due to isolation working at home
 - vii. Health and safety risk of services such as inspections being suspended
 - viii. Health and safety risk of staff being exposed to infection - maintaining adequate social distancing whilst delivering services/ reopening services

Key messages identified for taking forward into business planning

- 4.25 The following represent key areas of focus for us in the coming months: -
- i. Develop corporate future operating model as foundation for further business transformation and embed the new normal
 - ii. Review corporate communications methods in the light of the new normal – internally and externally with the community
 - iii. Focus on understanding and supporting the health and wellbeing of staff as they work remotely
 - iv. Capitalise on further opportunity for channel shift at the same time as focusing on digital exclusion in the community
 - v. Ensuring resources in the right place to maximise capital opportunities for funding
 - vi. Consider ways to restore income levels and speculate to accumulate
 - vii. Consider use of resources for supporting the most vulnerable communities and building resilience
 - viii. Nurture a one council approach to Community Wealth Building as a means of supporting the local economy

Transformational Programmes

- 4.26 As well as understanding the impact on service delivery and outcomes, we also sought to identify the impact of the pandemic on the council's key transformational projects and determine whether these were still fit for purpose to enable the council's recovery programme. This included projects such as Workplace Vision, Transforming Local Services, Oracle Fusion, Technology Modernisation, Digital Transformation, Strategic Asset Management and various customer access improvement projects.

4.27 Overall, this assessment found that these transformational projects remain generally fit for purpose, with positive direction of travel in all areas. There is a recognition that some details and specific outcomes of projects need to be reviewed within the context of COVID-19 and associated restrictions. However, work has continued to progress in all areas during crisis period with a focus on what could be achieved with remote working or whilst wider strategic decisions are made. This has been particularly seen by the massive increase demand for and implementation of remote working technology and digital channels across the council.

4.28 Delays have been seen on some projects whilst teams:

- i. Have dealt with urgent requests to support/enable council's crisis response rather than pre-existing project plans
- ii. Paused implementation of projects due to impracticability of difficulties in managing change appropriately with remote workforce or inability of contractors to meet new requirements
- iii. Work on redesigning and reprofiling the approach to accommodate remote workforce and new demands (such as social distancing)

4.29 Key lessons to consider in future strategic and business planning include:

- i. Strategic communications are key to set the direction for transformation across the council
- ii. There has been a fast pace of design and implementation of change, which exceeded pre-COVID expectations. Therefore, the expectations around the pace of change and realisation of benefits needs to be managed appropriately
- iii. Given the financial uncertainty of the council in the medium term, we will need to consider how current and future projects are resourced and what can be committed

Phase Two Activity

4.30 As stated in the Emergency Committee report on 6 May 2020 the recovery plan will be driven by the strategic outcomes in our Corporate Plan.

4.31 The job we have to do now is to use the intelligence generated in our impact analysis to inform development of a revised corporate plan. We need to ensure that what we offer as a Council continues to meet the needs of the communities we serve.

4.32 To achieve this a number of thematic groups will be established, made up of officers from across the Council. These Groups will start to do the detailed work of assessing the impact findings against our current offer to establish where we may need to reshape or enhance provision so that we continue to operate effectively as an organisation and provide support for residents and communities where they need it.

5 CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)

- 5.1 Town Workshops were held with elected members, this ensured that all members had the opportunity to participate, and add intelligence to, the impact analysis. Discussions that took place in this series of seven events were fed through to the impact working groups.
- 5.2 The Chief Executive held a series of staff focus groups, to both offer staff an opportunity to ask questions and to hear about staff experiences of lockdown, challenges in working from home and ideas they may have for the future. Again, this intelligence was fed into the Impact Working Groups.
- 5.3 Looking forward it is paramount that the key messages from the impact work are shared and discussed across our organisation and with our partners, so we can develop a shared understanding of the challenges we face and the positives we want to harness.
- 5.4 We want to build on the positive feedback we have received from staff in relation to the Virtual conferences held in July, one of the benefits of operating in a virtual world is that we are not limited by venue size and we can bring the whole workforce together to hear one message.
- 5.5 Below are the key areas of activity for September and October, further sessions will be added as the work continues and evolves:-
- i. Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board
 - ii. Council
 - iii. All Member Briefing Session
 - iv. Service Manager Briefing
 - v. Two All Staff Briefing Sessions
 - vi. Four workshops with the Community and Voluntary Sector
 - vii. Strategic Partnership Briefing

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 6.1 The framework set out in the report approved by the Emergency Committee will result in the development of plans to enable the organisation and the borough to recover from the impact of COVID-19, therefore alternative options are not required at this stage. When developing approaches and determining specific activities, it will be essential to consider alternative options to ensure the most appropriate way forward is agreed.

7 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The development of the Reset and Recovery Plan will not require specific resources over and above those already allocated to corporate planning activities within the 2020/21 budget.
- 7.2 Integral to the approach is the understanding of the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the council's budget and medium-term financial strategy. This will influence all reset and recovery activity and is embedded in the Working Principles set out above.

8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 Transparency in decision making and accountability for delivery of the Reset and Recovery Plan will be key to its success. Governance will feed into the existing democratic arrangements and develop over time as more functions come back online. Links to regional activity will be key to the recovery of the council and borough, working in partnership with others, sharing intelligence and maximising the opportunities for Sandwell as whole.

9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken on the reset and recovery process, no specific activity was required on the framework. However, the impact assessments of COVID-19 carried out as part of this framework will highlight if any specific groups have been impacted more than others. This intelligence will drive priorities and activity within the Reset and Recovery Plan.
- 9.2 Throughout the development of the Reset and Recovery Plan, equality impact assessments will be conducted on specific proposals at the appropriate time.

10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 Any information used to compile this report is subject to information governance legislation and is managed in accordance with the council's policies and protocols. A Data Protection Impact Assessment is not required.

11 CRIME AND DISORDER AND RISK ASSESSMENT

- 11.1 There is no requirement to carry out a Crime and Disorder and Risk Assessment.

12 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS

- 12.1 The information contained within the appendices associated with this report will be incorporated into specific plans developed as a result of this framework.

13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)

- 13.1 The immediate impact of COVID-19 on the health and wellbeing of both Sandwell residents and council staff has been captured through the impact assessments. These impact assessments have identified priorities for action that will be assessed further in Phase 2 of the recovery framework. The longer-term impacts will not be understood for some time, it will be important to continue to update our impact assessments throughout the planning period to ensure any planned activity addresses the key issues.

14 IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND

- 14.1 The restart of services and the return of services to operating from the council estate requires a co-ordinated and planned approach to ensure staff and service users are as safe as possible. Risk assessments and appropriate mitigations are carried out before these services are 'switched on'. Work continues to prepare our buildings for returning staff.
- 14.2 Throughout the response phase of the pandemic, a high proportion of staff have successfully operated remotely working at home. We are capturing the lessons from staff throughout this period to understand what works and how to address barriers that arise. This intelligence will be incorporated into our plans for a future flexible workforce.
- 14.3 As part of the development of the Reset and Recovery Plan and in response to increased financial pressures on council budgets, we will need to review the council's corporate estate rationalise costs and ensure it accommodates the future needs of a more flexible workforce.

15 CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 The work carried out over the last few months has captured data and intelligence from a broad range of sources. This has enabled us to determine the impact of COVID-19 on the borough and on the organisation.

15.2 It is clear from our experiences of responding to the crisis that we work better by coming together. Therefore, the key messages from this intelligence should be shared and discussed widely in order to identify the best activities and approaches to address the issues.

15.3 Members are asked to consider the findings from the impact assessment work in order to shape the future priorities for the council and Sandwell as a whole.

16 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

16.1 [Emergency Committee Report – 6 May 2020](#)

16.2 [Emergency Committee Report - 27 May 2020](#)

17 **APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – Community Impact

Appendix B – Economic Impact

Appendix C – Staff Impact

David Stevens
Chief Executive

Neil Cox
Director – Prevention and Protection

Impact of Covid on the Community



Sources of intelligence

- This chapter focuses on the impact on people and place to the end of July
- Captures the national evidence
- Led by the Community Impact Working Group
- Drawn on local service provider experience, insights and caseload
- Town member workshops
- Public data on infections/ fatalities
- Neighbourhood level impact and vulnerability



National Context

- As well as the direct impacts of Covid, restrictive social distancing and lockdown measures have had major and unequal impacts on society
- Public Health England findings:
 - mental health and personal relationships have deteriorated
 - Disrupted delivery of NHS meaning long term conditions may worsen, delayed diagnoses
 - Unhealthy behaviours increasing – alcohol misuse, decreased physical activity
 - Exacerbating impact of poor quality housing – 12% had no access to a garden



National Context continued

- Food insecurity and financial hardship
- Children and young people hit hardest – by social distancing/lockdown, closure of schools and concern about increasing abuse in the home
- Increased civic participation in response to Covid and positive impact on social cohesion
- Decrease in car journeys shortlived and may be lasting damage on public transport system. More people are cycling
- Covid has exposed and exacerbated long standing inequalities in society



Sandwell evidence

- Evidence suggests Sandwell reflects the national picture

Mental Health

- SCVO survey identifies mental health as a significant widespread issue – due to isolation, lack of daily provisions, employment worries and this is expected to grow
- CAMHS referrals halved in lockdown but have since recovered and further rise is expected as schools return
- Pandemic has galvanised safeguarding partnerships



Sandwell evidence

Food insecurity, digital exclusion and financial hardship

- food security has been exacerbated
- Demand for food vouchers up 188% (358% in Smethwick) by early June
- 3,451 food parcels delivered to vulnerable households
- 1,586 laptops distributed from DfE for children and young people (some lacked broadband as well)
- The effects of digital exclusion have been exacerbated with reliance on online during lockdown – e.g. hindering benefit take up
- Eligibility for free school meals up 90% on previous year
- Mounting household debt – which has direct impact on Council's ability to support people. Housing arrears up 26.6%, council tax collection down 2.1% and cost of CTRS increased by £3m



Sandwell evidence

Social Stress

- Signs of neighbourhood stress have arisen due to the increase in mental health, wellbeing and financial issues
- Homelessness successes in reducing numbers and engaging with rough sleepers but homelessness is expected to increase because
- Households facing eviction once ban on evictions lifted in August
- ASB incidents increased by 50% in March and April and crime is expected to increase as financial hardship deepens
- Reports of domestic abuse have increased by 22% compared with the same period last year
- Concern about level of hidden abuse exacerbated by social restrictions



Sandwell evidence

Black Asian and Minority Ethnic Groups

- Public Health survey of BAME groups underlined that communities that are heavily interconnected have been affected more than others
- “Epidemic of loneliness, isolation, health fears, anxiety due to family separation”
- Challenges of living with other family members of all ages for long periods
- Fear has been deepened by language barriers
- Highlights need to understand BAME needs better
- Intergenerational housing- normally a strength but one of the reasons for being more vulnerable to the pandemic
- A concern that Covid has widened inequality and community leaders are determined to address this



Sandwell evidence

Young People

- 509 young people surveyed
 - A third were worried
 - A fifth were lonely
 - A quarter were stressed
 - A small number were angry, sad and having trouble sleeping
- Most difficult aspect was not seeing family and friends
- Half welcomed more time spent with their family in lockdown
- 652 children shielding and half of these are in West Bromwich and Smethwick
- Service providers concerned about long term impact on learning in younger children, especially those in challenging home environments



Sandwell evidence

Volunteering and the Voluntary/Community Sector

- Huge increase in volunteering- 732 residents signed up to the SCVO database
- 400 actively deployed, supporting 1000 residents, voluntary organisations and telephone befriending
- Almost all said they would do it again
- Third sector faces widespread pressure – increased demand from users at the same time as closure/depletion of services in lockdown
- Most have maintained service delivery by changing how they work, forcing innovation
- Medium sized organisations most affected – a third had suspended services altogether



Sandwell evidence

Town member workshops

- Reinforced our findings on community impact
- Particular concerns about mental health, financial impact on households, ensuring effective communication and digital exclusion

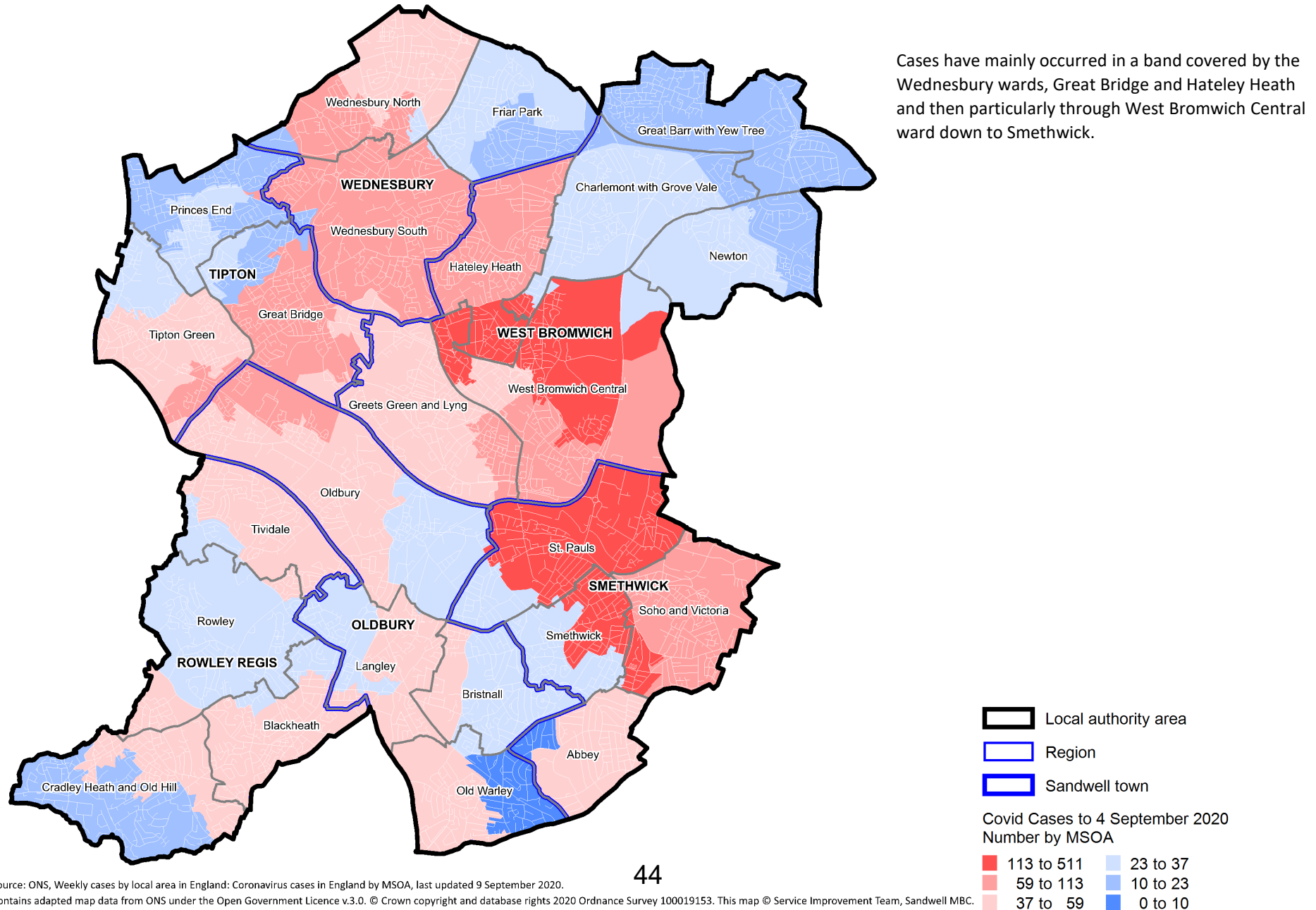


Direct Impact of Covid in Sandwell

- The following maps illustrate the impact of Covid across the wards in Sandwell
- These maps represent a snapshot in time
- Note that the concentration of Covid infection and deaths is in the central band of Sandwell that reflects our areas of greatest deprivation



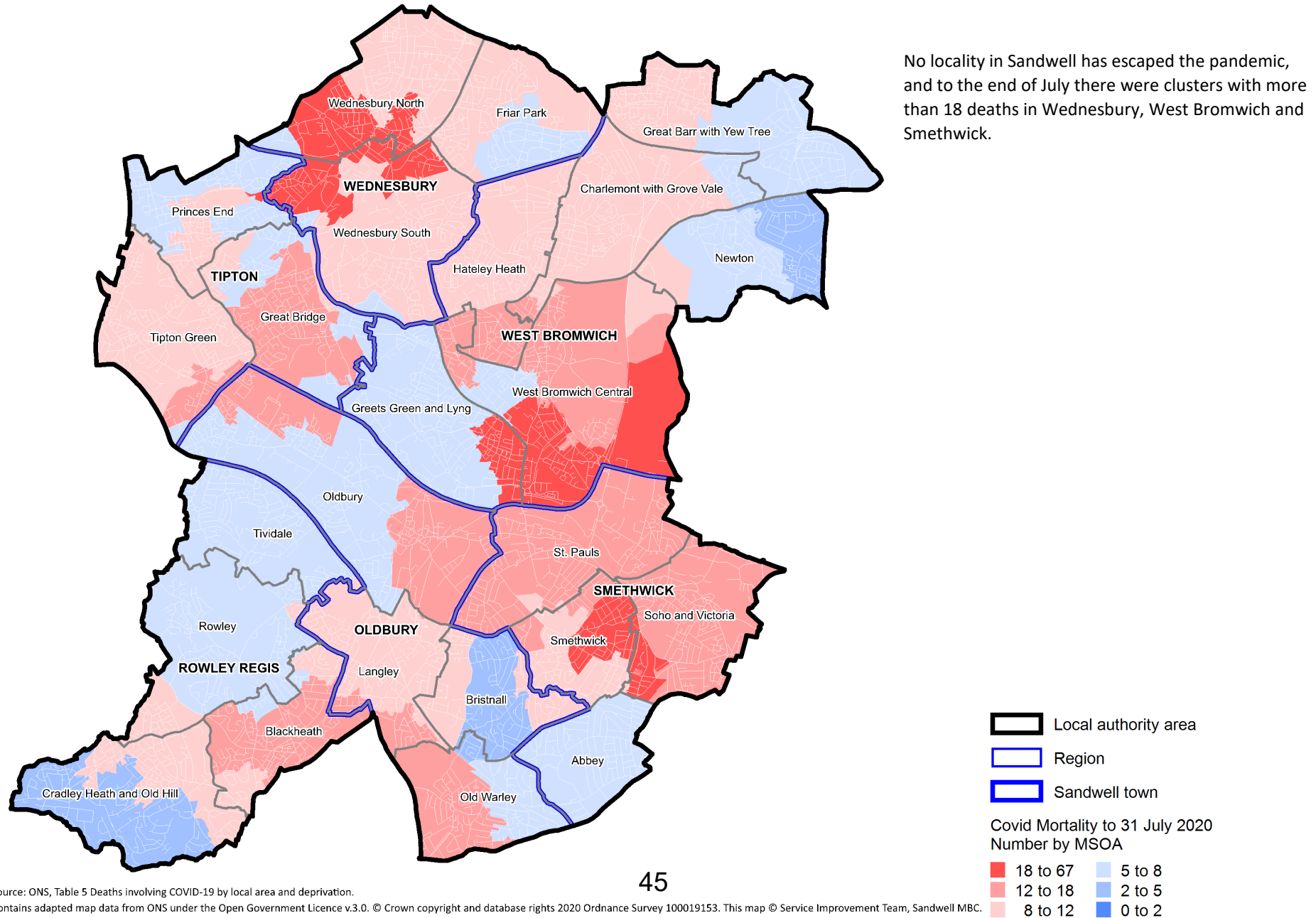
Direct Impact - Number of Covid-19 cases to 4 September 2020



Source: ONS, Weekly cases by local area in England: Coronavirus cases in England by MSAO, last updated 9 September 2020.

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Direct Impact - Number of Covid-19 deaths to 31 July 2020



Source: ONS, Table 5 Deaths involving COVID-19 by local area and deprivation.

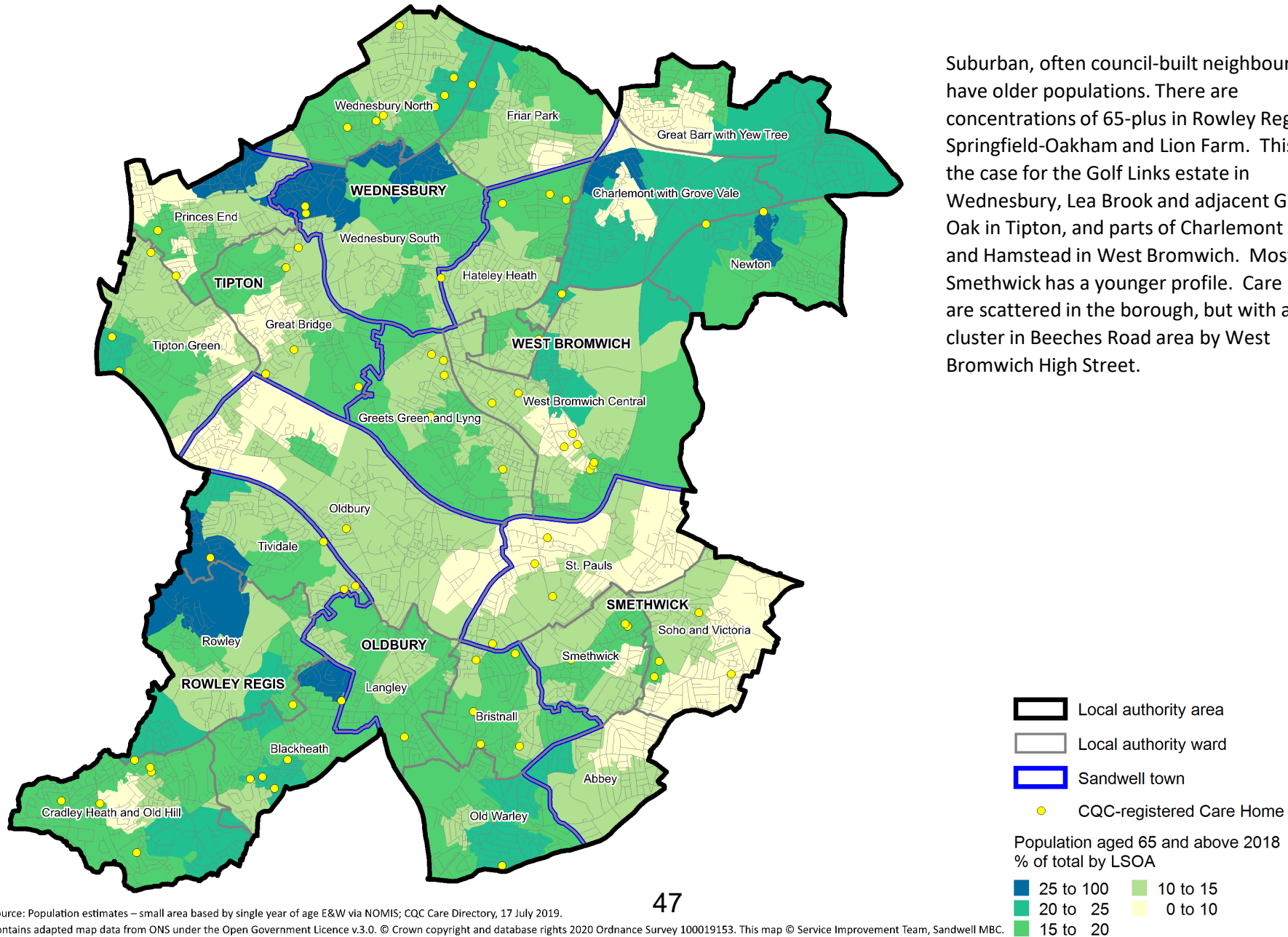
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Community Vulnerability to Covid

- Studies have shown that in addition to personal long term health issues, Covid risk factors also include gender, older age, deprivation, overcrowding and ethnicity
- Sandwell is a densely-populated inner-urban area
- Deprivation is widespread but concentrated in the central part of the borough
- Spatial impact in the Borough is highly uneven
- The following maps illustrate some of the known risk factors and therefore indicate where future vulnerability to Covid may lie – there is not necessarily a causal link
- Parts of Tipton, Central Wednesbury, Central West Bromwich and Smethwick emerge as areas vulnerable to Covid



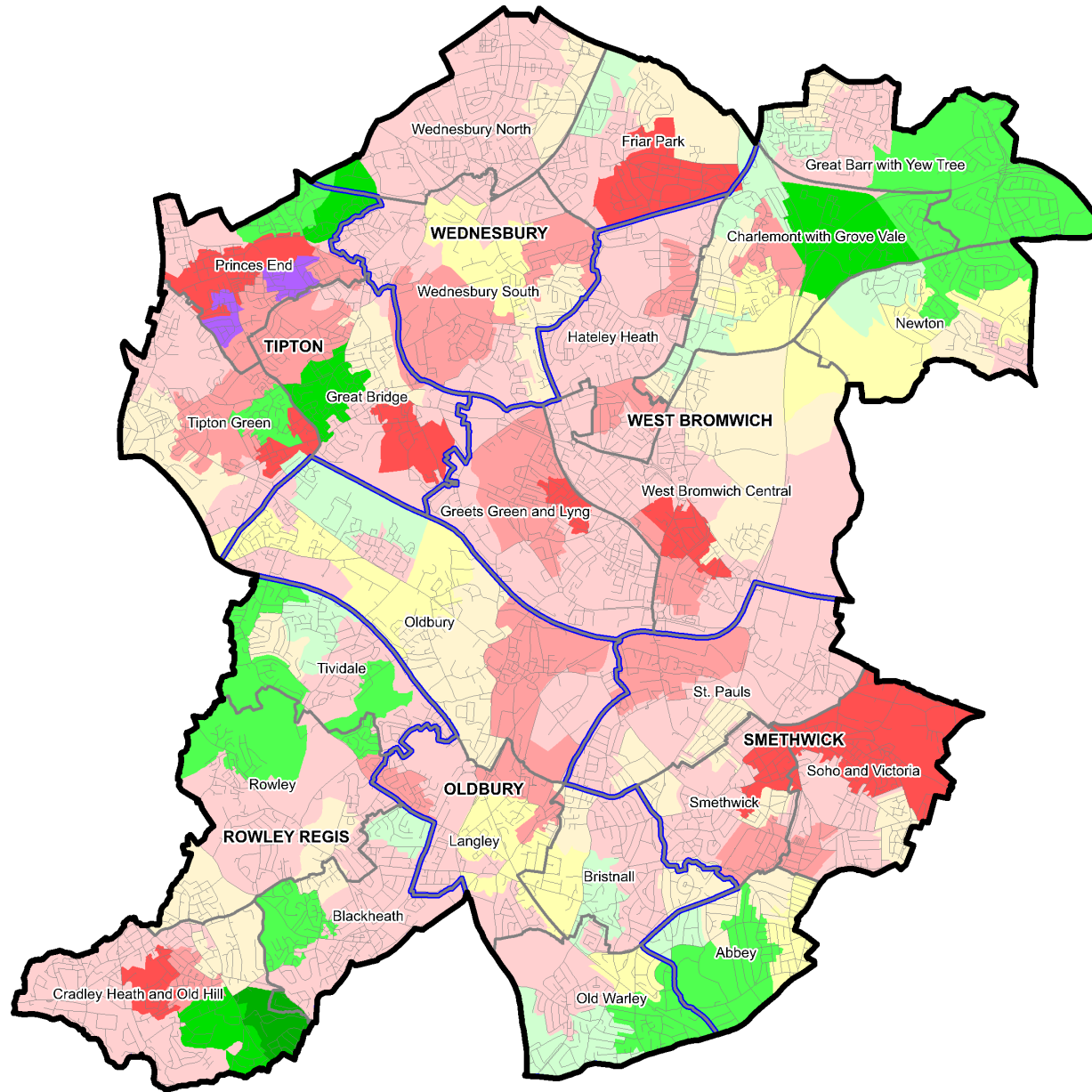
Risk Factor: Population Aged 65-plus 2018 and Care Homes 2019



Source: Population estimates – small area based by single year of age E&W via NOMIS; CQC Care Directory, 17 July 2019.

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








Risk Factor: Multiple Deprivation 2019



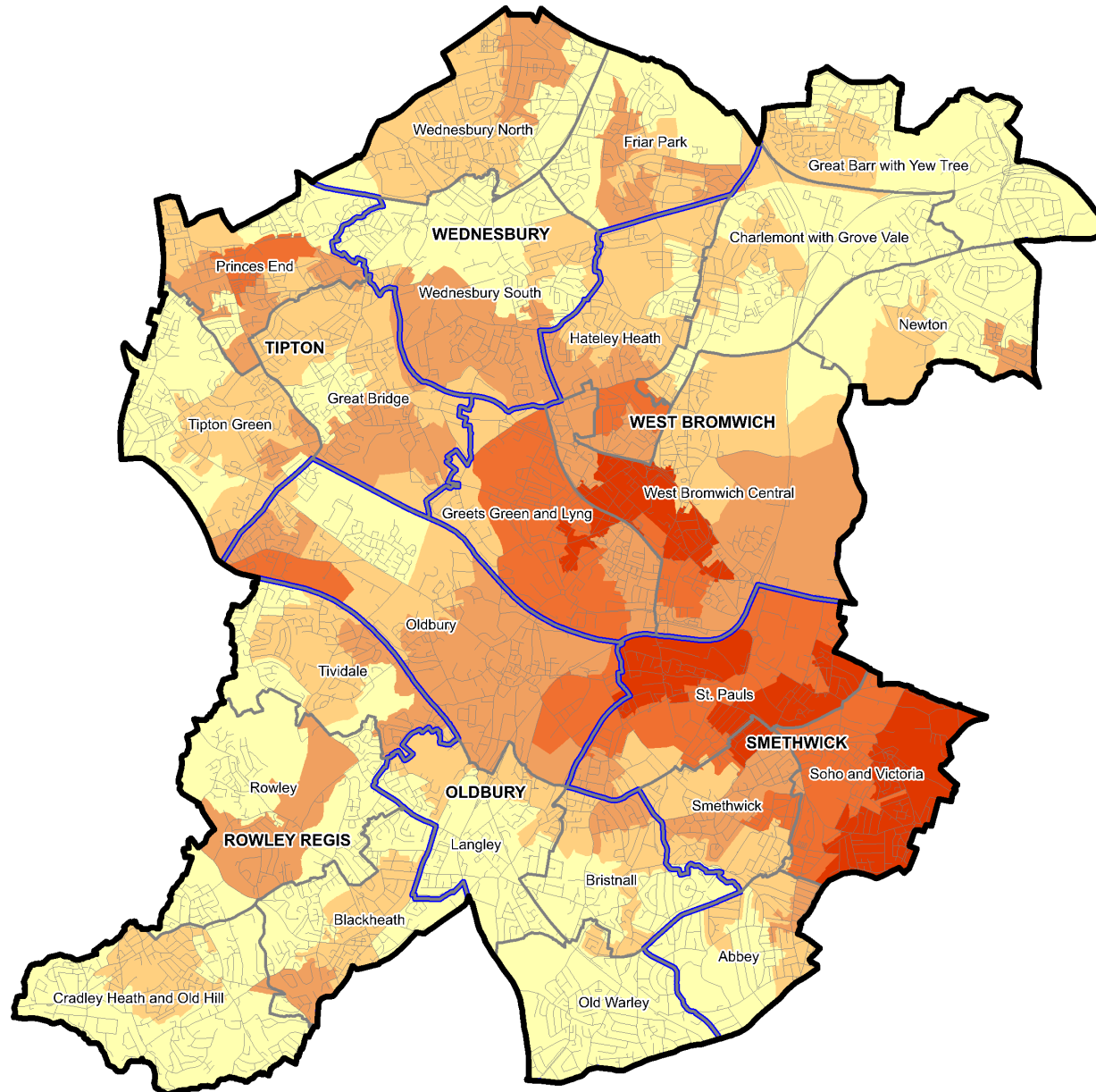
Although deprivation is widespread in Sandwell, a corridor of severe deprivation from Tipton to Smethwick and in major council estates was evident by 1981. Successive indices of relative English deprivation at locality level (IMD) show improvement between 2004 and 2019. Only parts of Tibbington in Tipton now fall in the 1% most deprived locality. However, Windmill Lane and Uplands in Smethwick; parts of Cradley Heath in Rowley Regis; Beeches Road and Hamblett's South in West Bromwich; and the large Friar Park estate in Wednesbury all fall in the worst 5%. So do further parts of Tipton, next to increasingly affluent Toll End, which has benefited from significant new housing. Otherwise the least deprived areas are all on the fringe of the borough, notably the North-East; Old Warley, Bearwood and Old Hill in the south and Oakham and Gospel Oak in the east. The map shows that although its severity is diluted, much of Tipton, Wednesbury, central West Bromwich and Smethwick fall in the most deprived 10% neighbourhoods in England and are therefore at risk from Covid.

-  Local authority area
-  Local authority ward
-  Sandwell town

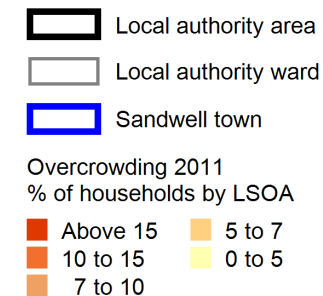
Indices of Deprivation 2019 - Overall IMD
Position in percentile ranking of 32,844 LSOA

-  1% most deprived
-  1 to 5
-  5 to 10
-  10 to 20
-  20 to 30
-  30 to 40
-  40 to 50
-  50 to 60
-  60 to 70
-  70 to 80
-  80 to 90
-  90 to 100

Risk Factor: Overcrowding 2011

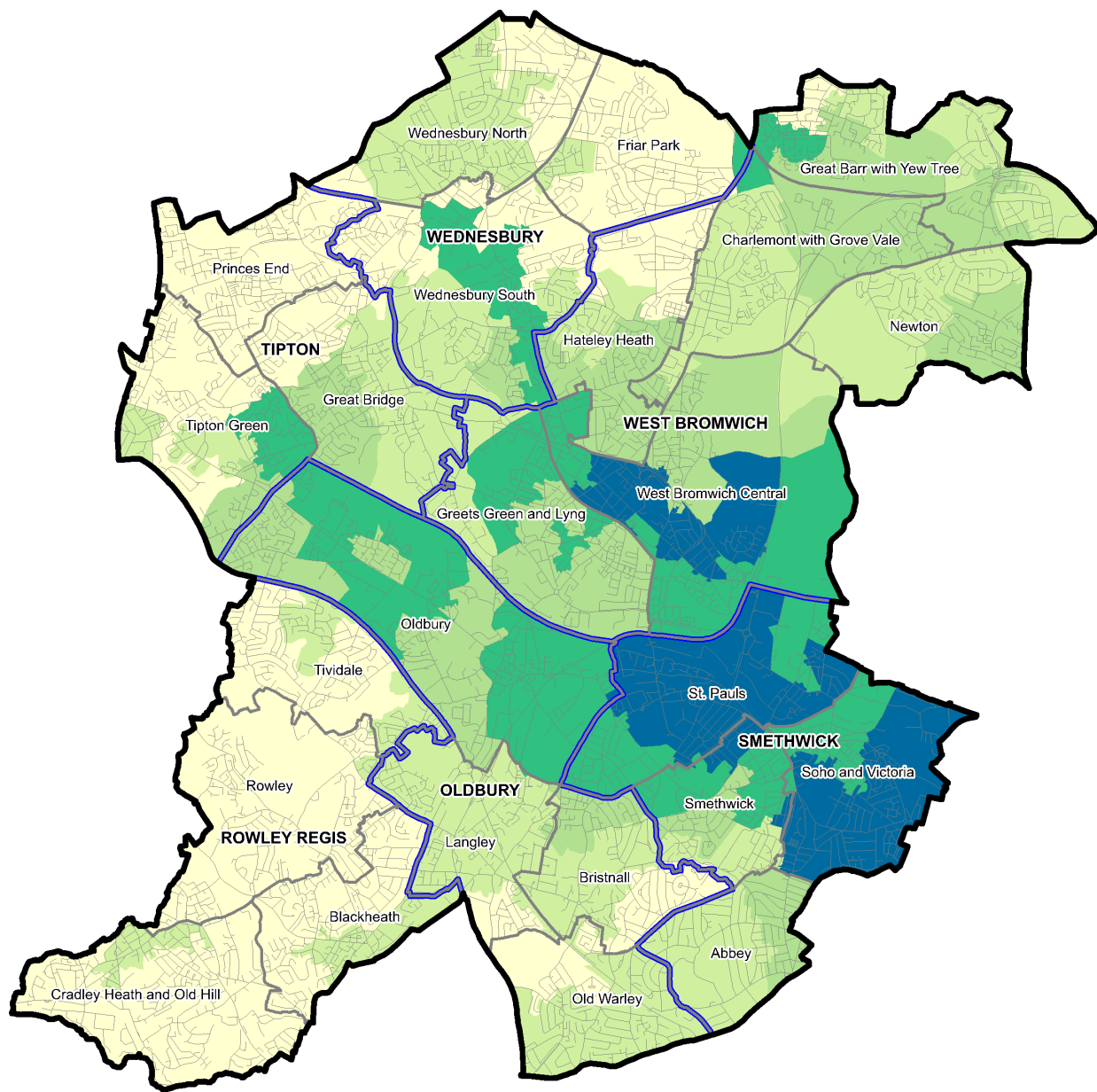


Housing density is about proximity and where it results in overcrowding it is especially problematic. In Sandwell it is concentrated in areas of pre-1919 housing and localities of mainly flats. This map examines overcrowding in 2011, affecting more than 15% of households in Lodge Road and Beeches Road in central West Bromwich; in Galton Village, the West Smethwick and North Smethwick neighbourhoods as well as Cape Hill and Windmill Lane. Analysis of localised population and dwelling change in areas overcrowded in 2011 suggests the problem has since worsened, especially in Cape Hill and Beeches Road. Overcrowding is particularly a Smethwick issue.






Note: A household with at least one bedroom too few for the number and composition of people living in the household is considered overcrowded by the bedroom standard.
 Source: Census 2011 Table QS412EW via NOMIS.
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




Risk Factor: Black, Asian and Minority Ethnicity 2011



Older, cheap, private housing areas historically act as reception areas for immigration. Smethwick, which gained the UK's first Sikh temple as well as notoriety for race politics in the 1960s, is now strongly BAME as well as being ethnically diverse. This is also true of the neighbourhoods off West Bromwich High Street. BAME communities expanded strongly across Sandwell in the 2000s, and community cohesion activity is a continuing council focus. This is otherwise a risk factor for social stress and economic pressure after Covid. More immediately, areas mapped at above 75% BAME are at risk from Covid, especially given their pattern of deprivation and overcrowding. Fresh inflows have since generated 'super-diversity' in many of these BAME areas, often via the private rented sector. Net international migration in Sandwell in 2013-18 was 10,301 people and 37.3% of live births were to non-UK born mothers in 2018.

-  Local authority area
-  Local authority ward
-  Sandwell town

Black Asian and Minority Ethnicity 2011
% of population by LSOA

-  75 to 100
-  20 to 35
-  50 to 75
-  0 to 20
-  35 to 50

Key findings/recommendations

- Covid has exacerbated existing weaknesses in Sandwell's community, related to underlying poverty and deprivation
- We need to do something different to address these underlying vulnerabilities
- To do this well, we need to ensure:
 - Engagement is done in the right way and is culturally sensitive
 - Changes in our own organisation to do things more corporately
 - Focus more resources in areas of most need
 - Clear measures of success



Impact of Covid on the Local Economy



Sources of Intelligence

- This chapter focuses on the impact on businesses and the local economy as it is currently emerging
- Captures national and regional evidence
- Led by the Community Wealth and Economic Resilience Delivery Group
- Drawn on local service provider experience and insights
- Public economic data
- West Midlands Combined Authority intelligence
- Black Country LEP intelligence



National Context

- Biggest impact of Covid on business were the restrictions on opening and social distancing
- They has been a gradual reopening from June
- UK has officially entered recession – economy declined 20.4% in Q2 – the worst economic crisis on record
- On reopening, the economy expanded 8.7% from its low base
- Labour market statistics lag the reality on the ground but show a stark reduction in the number of employees on payrolls and a significant decrease in the number of hours worked
- UK Federation of small businesses expects 25% of SMEs to close in 2020
- IFS says that young workers under 25, females and low earners are more likely to be impacted
- Concerns about prospects for young people



West Midlands Context

- Unemployment rate in the West Midlands is 4.4%, above the UK rate of 3.9%
- The number of WMCA young claimants (16-24 yrs) increased 88% from March to June (this figure was 122% nationally)
- KPMG predicts the WM region will feel the biggest impact – forecasting a contraction of 10% - largely due to reliance on automotive industry which experienced a severe downturn
- Levels of furlough are higher in the WM than many other areas
- Since lockdown there have been a raft business closure and redundancy announcements



West Midlands context continued

- Pandemic has exacerbated the problems on our high streets. Anticipated that the number of shops on the high street could halve in next two years – 2020 online spend up 50% on 2019
- High knowledge/ high skilled workers have been more able to work from home – therefore leaving those working in retail, manufacturing and warehousing more at risk of infection and this could lead to a divergence
- International and domestic trade loss – 57% of firms seen drop in international trade and 48% seen loss in domestic revenue
- Social distancing continues to impact businesses after lockdown has eased. Made some businesses unviable to reopen



Sandwell's Economic Vulnerabilities

- Sandwell has the lowest gross disposable household income (GDHI) per head in West Midlands at £13,359; at 0.11 per thousand rate is the lowest number of high-growth firms per population in the West Midlands.
- The centre for progressive policy has predicted a productivity drop of 36% of gross value added in Sandwell during quarter 2 of 2020
- Research suggests that places with higher entrepreneurial activity than Sandwell recovered faster after the 2008 crisis. This makes the case for business support in Sandwell even stronger
- The Federation of Small Businesses in the UK expects some 25% of SME businesses to close in 2020.
- 6.8% of people (16-64) in Sandwell are self-employed -around 13,818 people, and the self-employed are particularly vulnerable group within the crisis



Sandwell COVID-19 Vulnerability Index

Overall Vulnerability Index for MSOA's with Wards by Quintile

Overall Vulnerability Index for MSOA's with Wards by Quintile

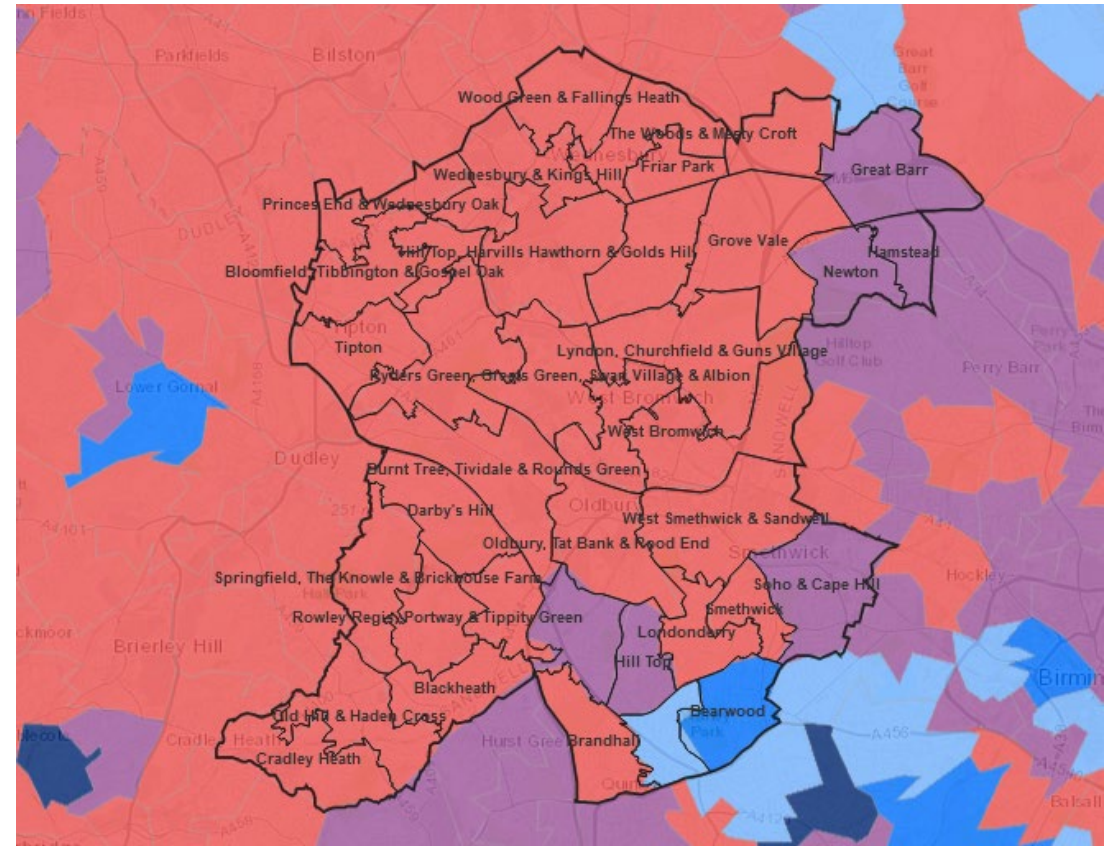
The British Red Cross has developed a COVID-19 Vulnerability index at MSOA and Local Authority level. The index combines multiple sources of (mostly) open data to identify vulnerable areas and groups within Local Authorities and neighbourhoods (MSOA's).

The Index consists of the following indicators :

- **Clinical vulnerability** (underlying health conditions)
- **Health & wellbeing including mental health** (loneliness, healthy life expectancy at 65)
- **Economic vulnerability** (recipients of social care benefits, employment & support allowance, disability benefits, Universal Credit)
- **Social and geographical vulnerability** (barriers to housing and services, poor living environment, digital exclusion)

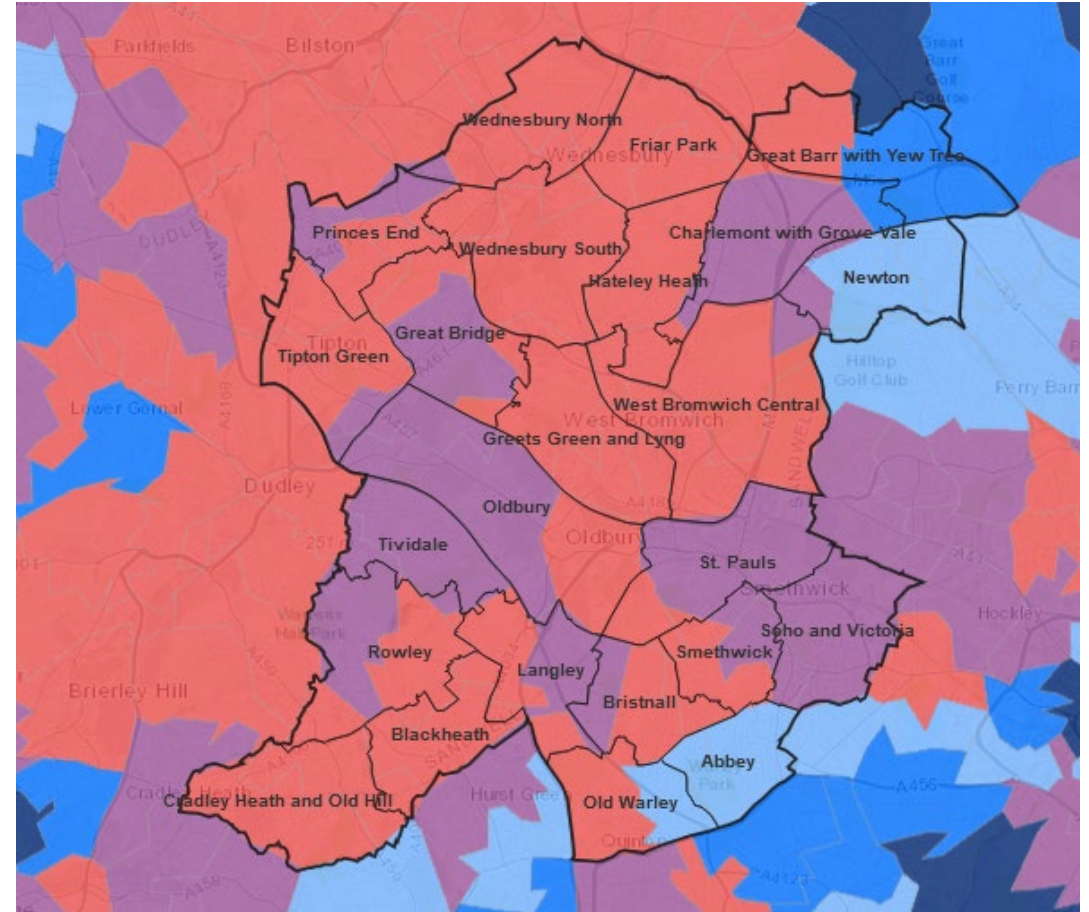
Across Sandwell, 36 MSOA's (95%) were categorised in the top 2 more vulnerable quintiles with 30 MSOA's in the most vulnerable quintile (79%).

At a local authority level Sandwell overall ranked in the most vulnerable quintile alongside the other 3 Black Country local authorities.



Economic Vulnerability Index for MSOA's by Quintile

Focusing on economic vulnerability (recipients of social care benefits, employment & support allowance, disability benefits, Universal Credit) across Sandwell, 33 MSOA's (87%) were categorised in the top 2 more vulnerable quintiles with 18 MSOA's (47%) in the most vulnerable.



Sandwell Impacts

- IFS study suggests 15,700 jobs affected in Sandwell– jobs affected (12.7%). Only looked at specific sectors, therefore figures could be higher
- Young workers, female and low earners impacted
- 12% drop in unique vacancies and a mismatch in redundancies and what's available to apply for
- Concern that when furloughing ends in October, there will be further spike in redundancies
- University opportunities locally may be more limited
- Concern that there may not be enough college places if education is becoming more appealing than work
- Digital exclusion – 10% of young people we worked with had no access to IT
- Higher skilled applying for lower skilled jobs, causing knock on effect to lower skilled
- Job Centre Plus says that mental health is a big issue

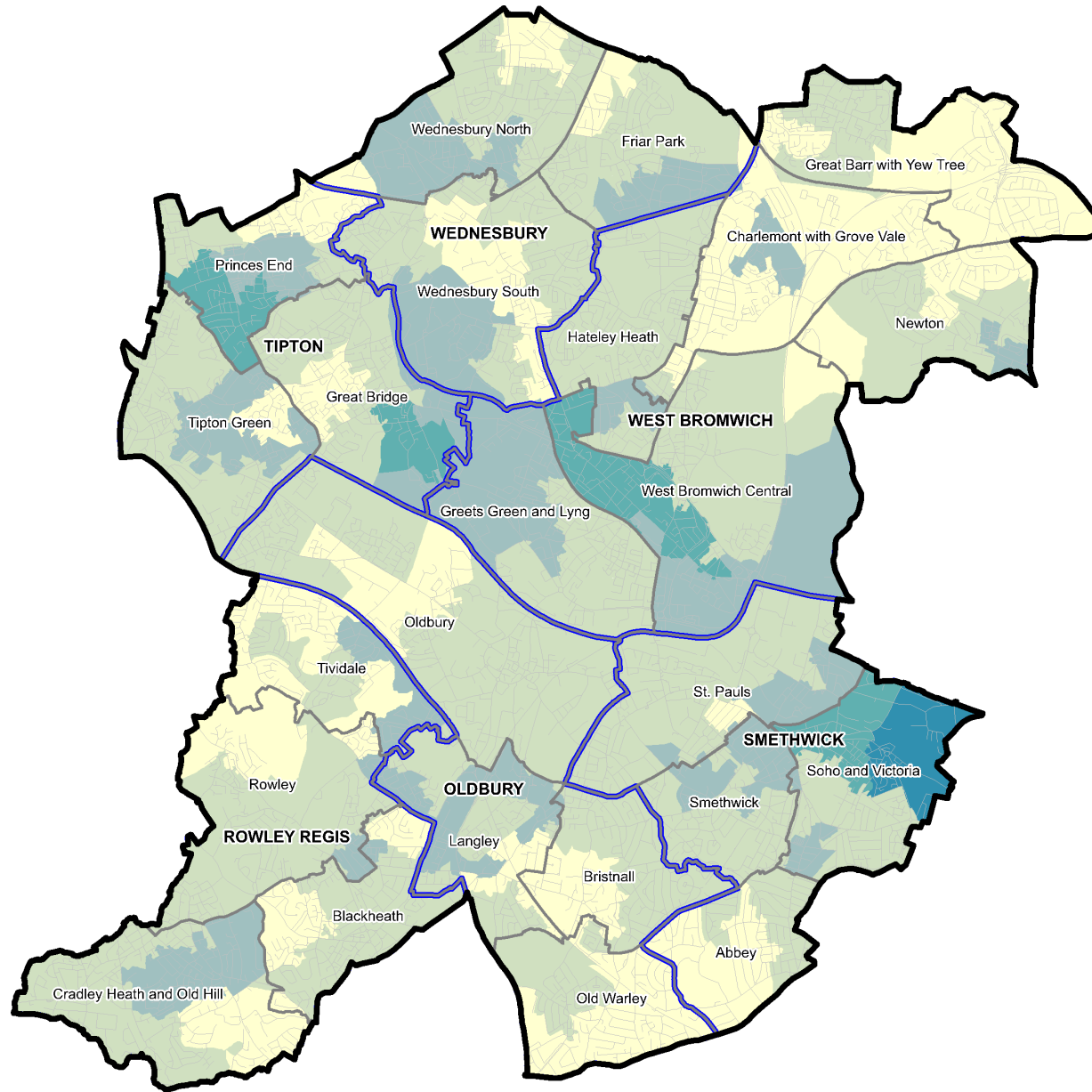


Unemployment and Universal Credit

- So far, unemployment has more than doubled during the year to reach 18,995
- By July, 9.3% of working age people were unemployed – above the regional level but lower than Birmingham or Wolverhampton
- Concern is that once furloughing ends in October, unemployment will rise significantly more
- Universal Credit claims doubled from February to July to 35,285 people
- The following maps show how unemployment and universal credit claimants have increased across our neighbourhoods – February to June/July



Unemployment February 2020



Comparison with February here and July overleaf for the claimant unemployment rate show an alarming, widespread deterioration with the largest increases in hitherto more buoyant areas.

- Local authority area
- Local authority ward
- Sandwell town

Claimant unemployment rate February 2020
% of population 2018 aged 16-64 by LSOA

- Above 16.2
- 12.9 to 16.2
- 9.7 to 12.9
- 6.5 to 9.7
- 3.2 to 6.5
- 0 to 3.2

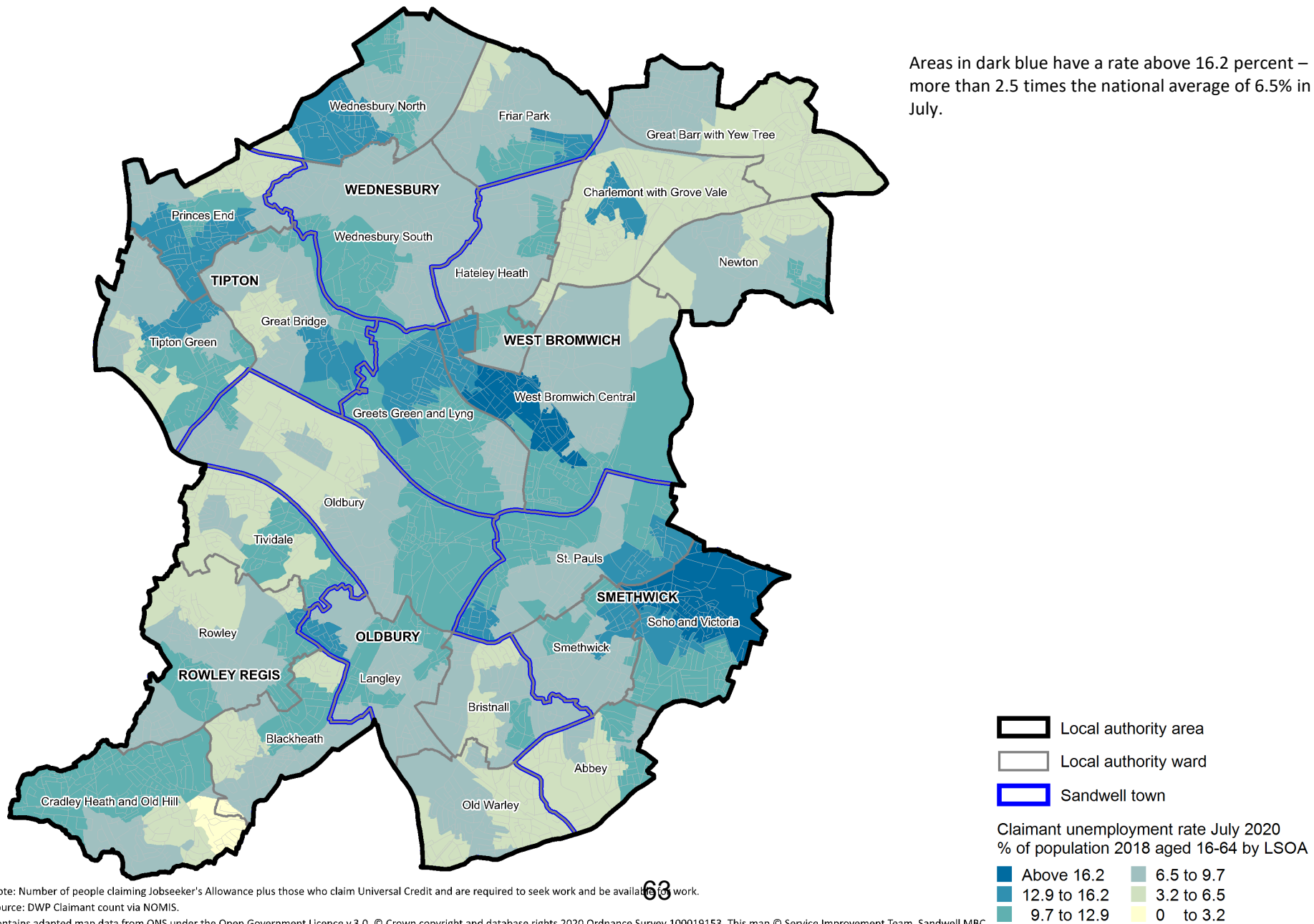
Note: Number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance plus those who claim Universal Credit and are required to seek work and be available for work.

Source: DWP Claimant count via NOMIS.

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Unemployment July 2020

Areas in dark blue have a rate above 16.2 percent – more than 2.5 times the national average of 6.5% in July.

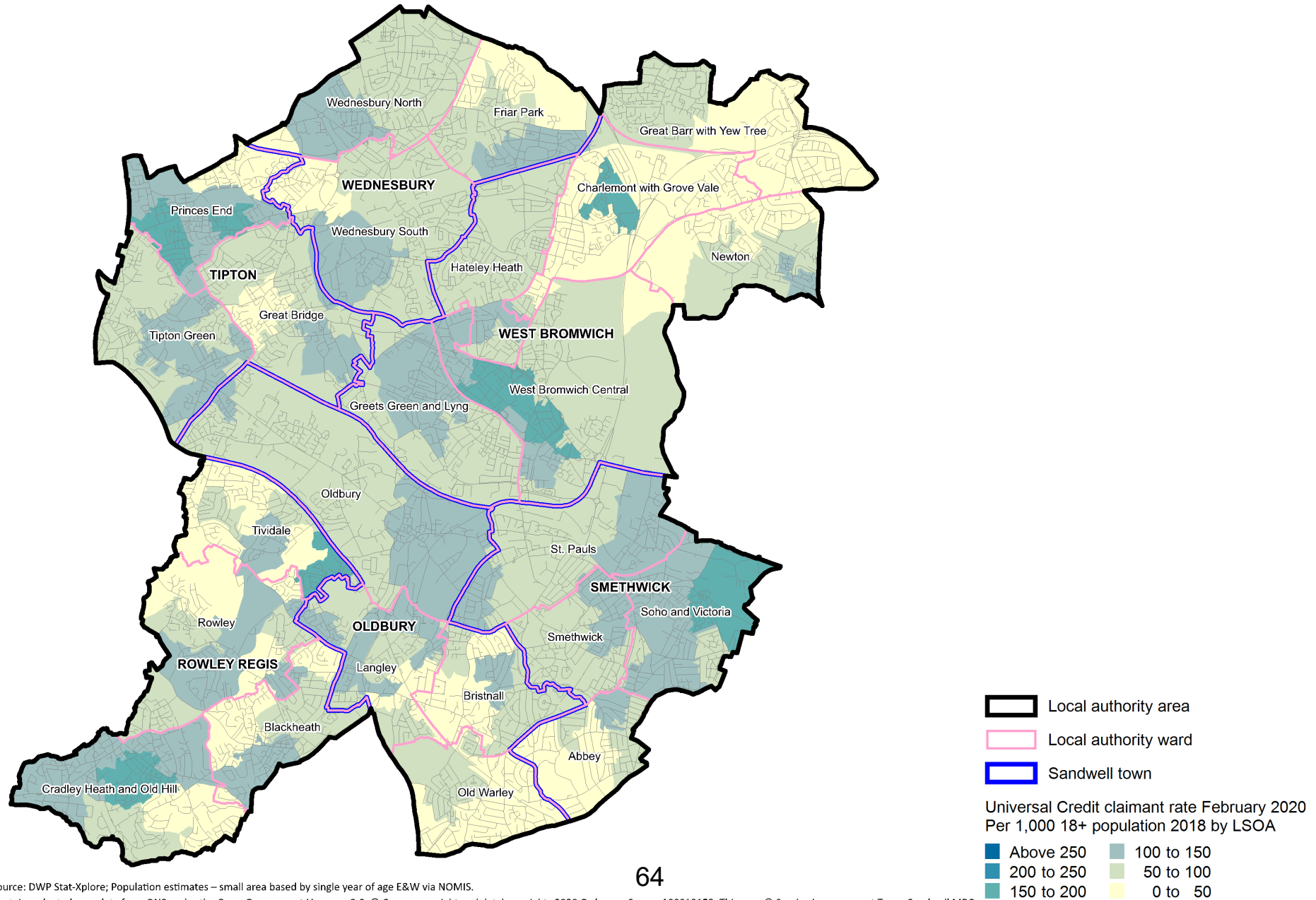


Note: Number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance plus those who claim Universal Credit and are required to seek work and be available for work.

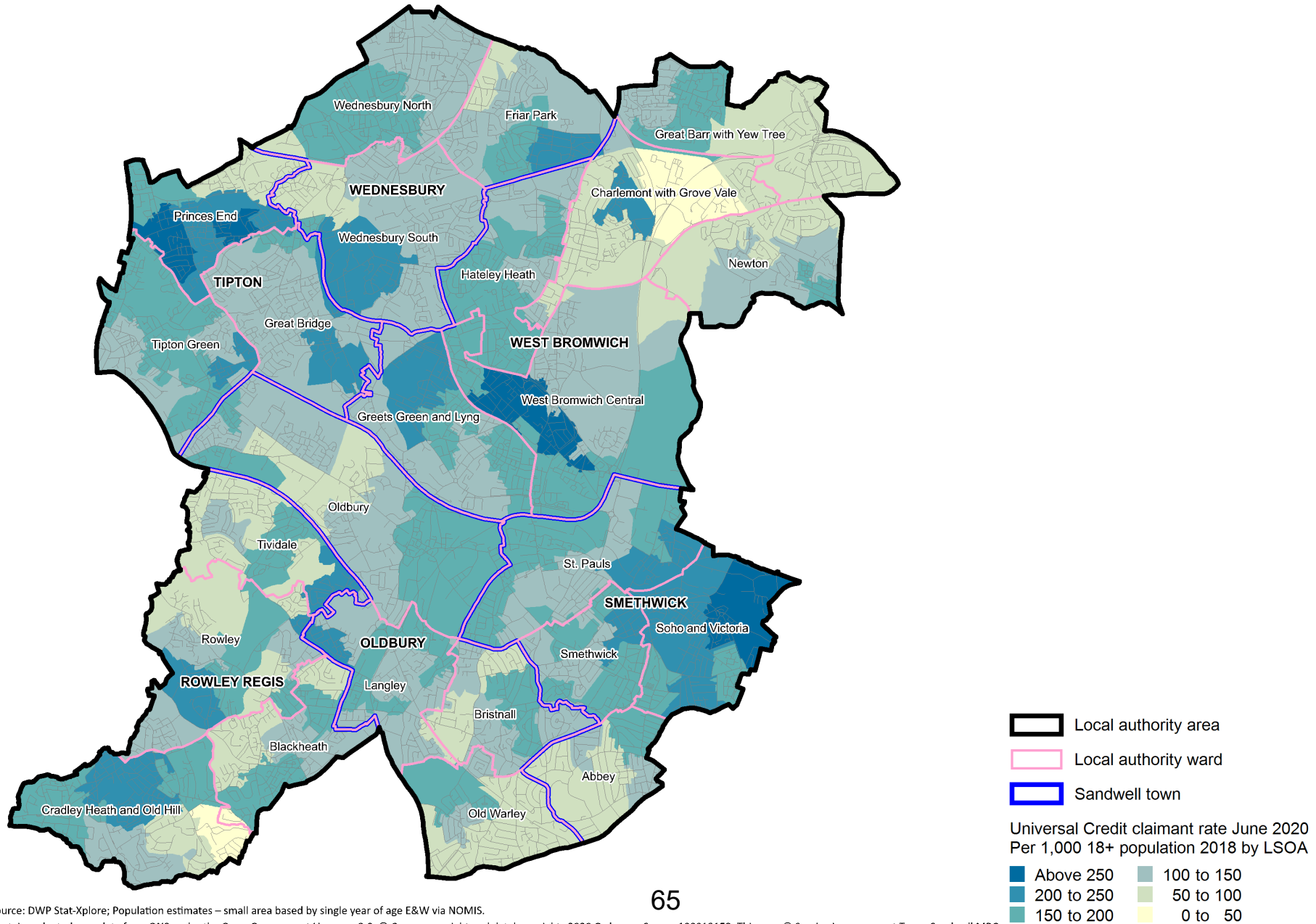
Source: DWP Claimant count via NOMIS.

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Universal Credit claimants February 2020



Universal Credit claimants June 2020



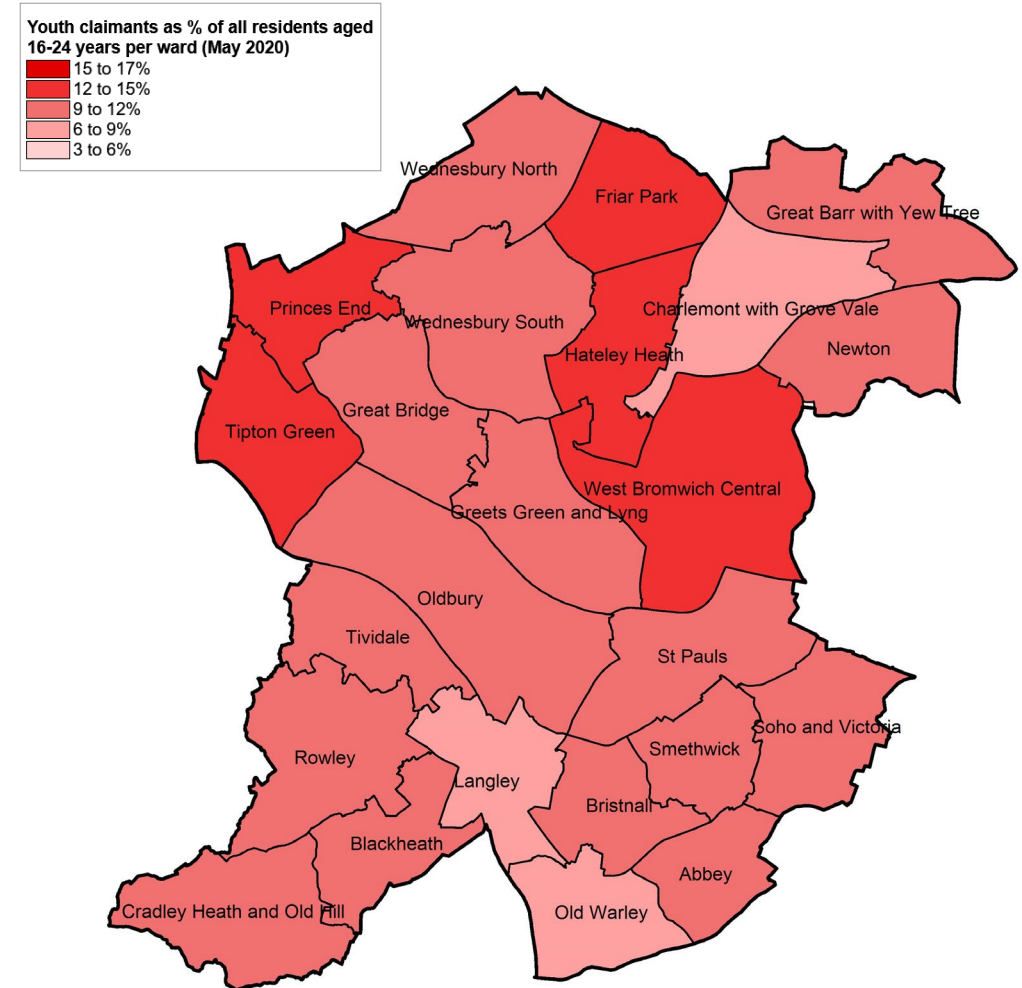
Source: DWP Stat-Xplore; Population estimates – small area based by single year of age E&W via NOMIS.
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Sandwell Youth Claimants (Aged 16-24):

Ward Analysis (aged 16-24)

Out of the 24 wards within Sandwell, all 20 all are above the national average of 7.1% for the number of claimants as a percentage of residents aged 16 – 24 years old in May 2020.

The top three wards in Sandwell that have the highest number of claimants as a percentage of residents aged 16 – 24 years old are in Princes End at 15.0%, West Bromwich Central at 13.6% and Tipton Green at 13.0%.



Financial Support for Businesses

- SBRR and Retail Leisure and Hospitality Covid Grants
 - Ended August
 - £54.9m awarded through Revs and Bens Team, totalling 4857 grants
 - Support for applicants
 - 1154 businesses contacted through outreach to offer financial support
- AIM for Gold (ERDF) adapted to Covid – to meet operational delivery and staff skills needs
- Discretionary Grants to businesses
 - Closed August
 - 241 grants given to the value of £1.9m
 - Average value of grant £7,988
 - 19% were given to manufacturing firms, 15% wholesale/retail, 10% arts, entertainment and recreation



Actions already being taken

- WMCA initiative to kickstart the WM economy presented to government
- WM Recovery Coordination Group formed to develop priorities to inform regional recovery
- Outreach and communication with businesses e.g PPE, Think Sandwell Business Support, Reopening the High Street Safely Fund
- Development of Community Wealth and Inclusive economy programme
- Redundancy support
- Apprenticeship support
- Training provision
- School leaver support



Sandwell's Challenges

- **Disproportionate impact on young people** – lack of apprenticeship vacancies, University options, unstable employment
- **Low skills base** – Sandwell's starting point is lower, residents who become unemployed and are less skilled are usually less resilient financially and in finding new employment.
- **Impact on those 50 plus** – as with other Economic crisis it is forecast people aged 50 plus will be disproportionately impacted
- **Skills and employment support demand will be different** – higher skilled cohort, more disadvantaged move further away from the labour market
- **Digital exclusion/poverty** – still a major barrier for residents to complete training/upskill
- **Mental health** – anxiety for those returning to work or accessing the labour market



Themes emerging for Sandwell Skills Strategy

- Support for young people
- Digital poverty and poor digital skills
- Support for Businesses – in terms of skills for growth and/or redundancy support
- Promoting Careers for the Future - such as healthcare, teaching, social care, etc.
- Support for Retraining for Adult Learners
- Support for over 50s
- Mental Health and resilience support



Other Key messages/recommendations

- Digital exclusion needs to be addressed in everything we do
- Need to understand more about detailed economic impact on BAME community in order to tackle the issues as an organisation



Impact of Covid on our Staff



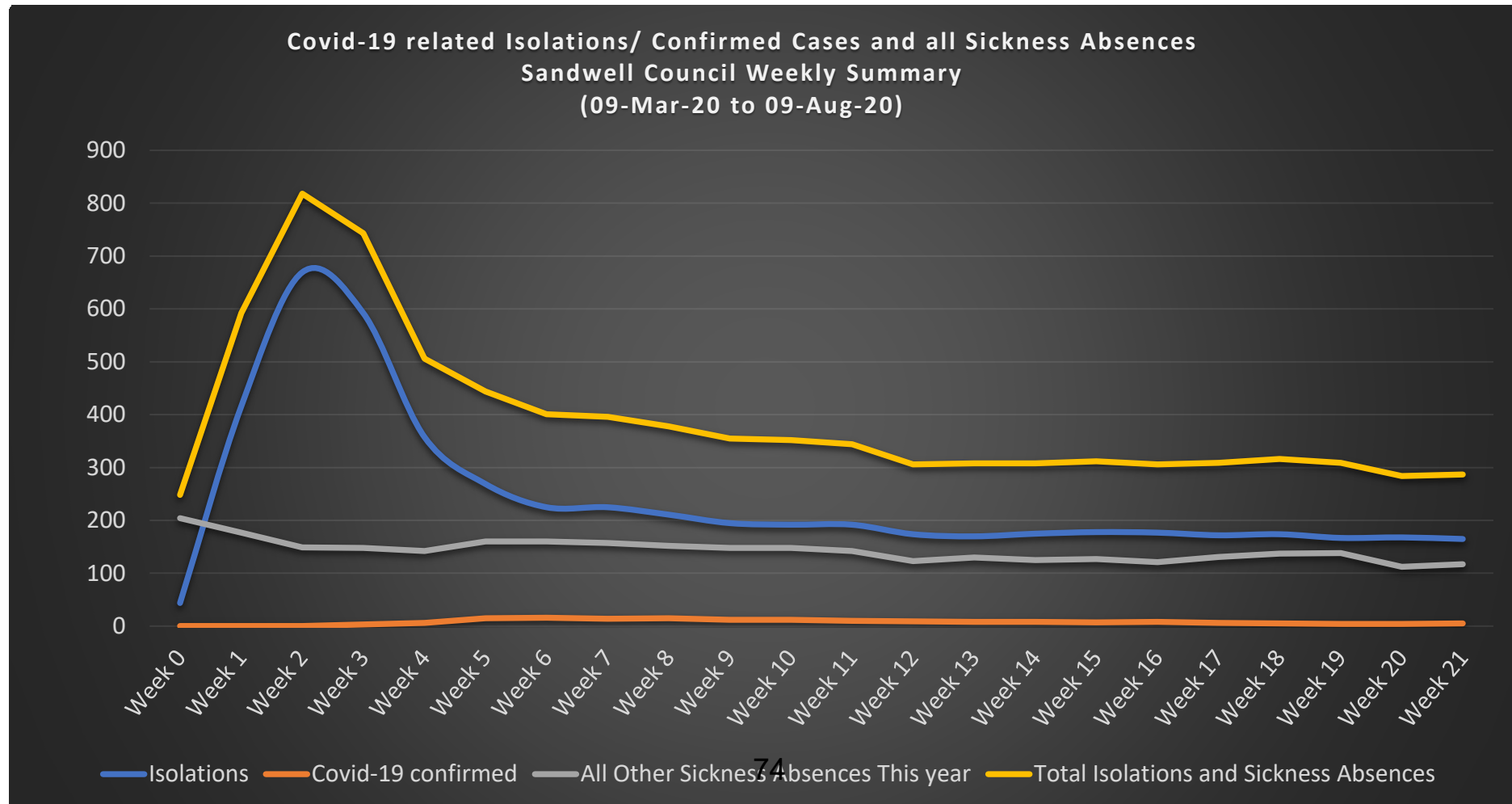
Sources of Intelligence

- This chapter focuses on the impact of Covid on the council's staff
- Drawn from staff surveys, HR data, staff focus groups and the virtual staff conferences in July
- Led by the Staff Impact Working Group



Sickness Absence Sandwell Council

The chart shows the actual number of employees either isolating due to the coronavirus; off sick with confirmed Covid-19 and for all other sickness absence reasons. The number of employees going into isolation accelerated in week 1 and peaked in week 2, with the number of new cases progressively declining after the initial peak and the curve flattening from week 8 onwards.

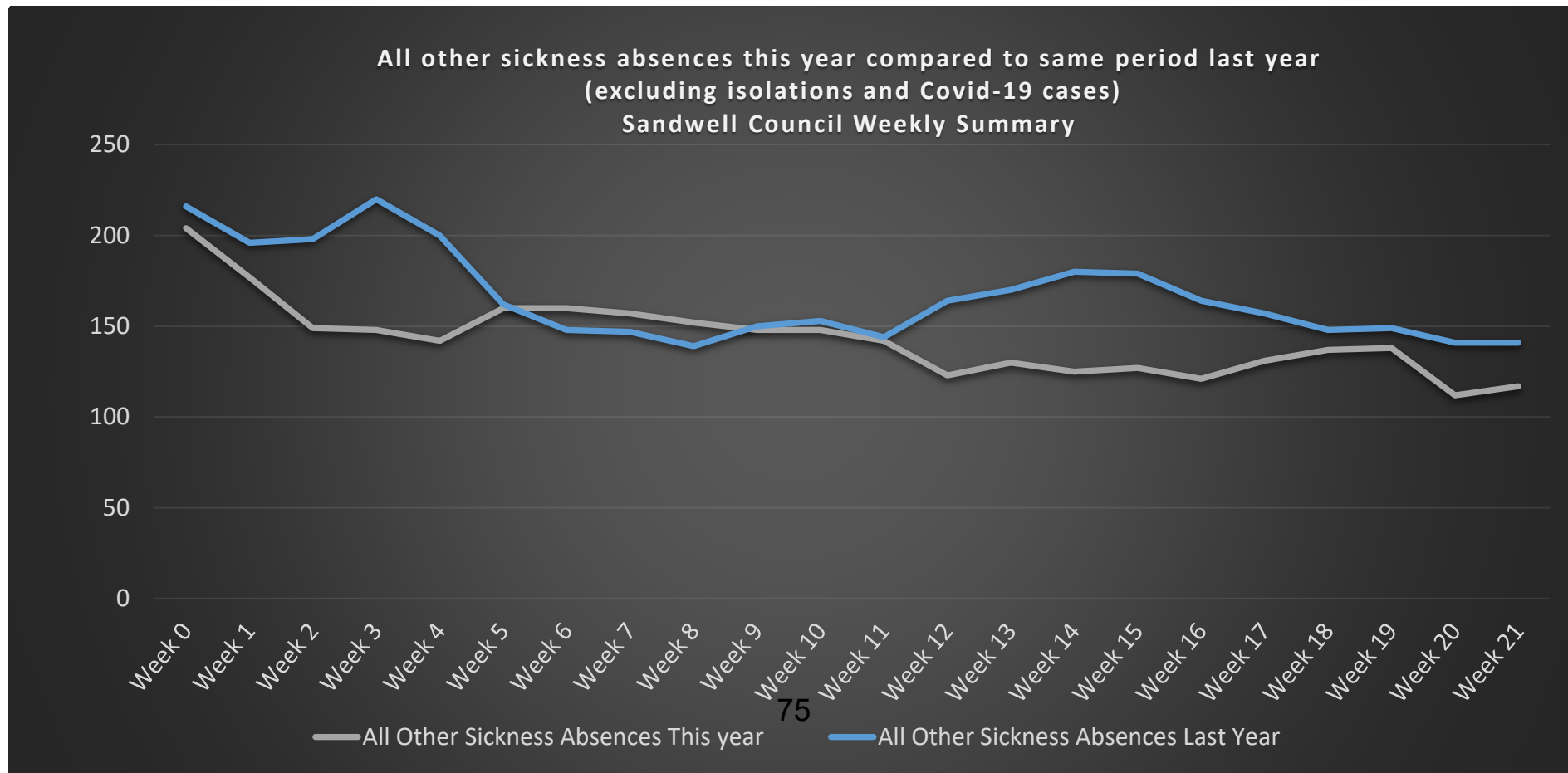


Sickness Absence Sandwell Council

The chart shows the actual number of employees off sick week-by-week this year compared to the same period last year. For consistency of comparison, isolations due to coronavirus and confirmed covid-19 cases have been excluded.

On whole the number of employees reporting sick each week since the lockdown began in March this year was lower compared to the same period last year. The exceptions are weeks 6 to 8 which show a small weekly increase this year compared to last year.

On average 60 fewer employees reported sick between weeks 3-5 of the lockdown compared to the same period last year. Similarly on average 46 fewer employees reported sick between weeks 12-16 of the lockdown compared to the same period last year.



A new style of working

- The Workplace Vision Survey was completed between April and June at the height of the pandemic
- At that time, 88% of staff were working at home and a further 6% were doing a combination of home and office
- This was a massive shift in the style of working within a very short time frame
- Through the surveys and focus groups, we have found that staff are very proud and positive about how we have responded to the pandemic as an organisation
- Considering so few of us worked permanently from home, we have seized the challenges of delivery services from home and adapted well. The technology has mostly been reliable in assisting this.
- However, in the July employee survey, only 65% said they would like to WFH on permanent basis



Wellbeing and mental health

- In the July employee survey, staff rated themselves as pretty healthy in regards to their mental health and wellbeing- 7 out of 10
- Staff have appreciated having the potential to balance home and work life and many have enjoyed not having a commute
- However, some people have experienced hugely increased workloads and back to back virtual meetings
- The practice of separating home and work life has been more difficult working at home
- Balancing caring responsibilities and work has placed added pressure on staff but most managers have been flexible
- The sense of isolation of some staff working from home has increased over time
- For various reasons, some staff have found working at home very stressful and have requested to work from the office when they can
- A quarter of staff have experienced a close bereavement



Things that have gone well

- Most managers have been managing flexibly/ sympathetically
- Staff found that communications have been consistent and good
- The virtual staff conferences were liked by all members of the focus groups, asking for more in the future
- Technology allowing remote working has mostly worked well



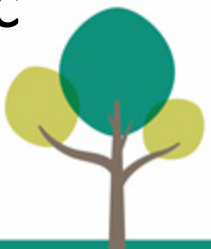
Some of the difficulties experienced

- balancing caring responsibilities has been hard and some managers have not been as flexible or accommodating as they could be
- IT has been an issue for some staff, telephony and printing mentioned specifically
- The major limitation of the current communication methods is that not every front-line employee is online and therefore is not getting the same level of staff communication. There is a clear need to devise proper mechanisms for communicating with actual front-line employees.



Concerns/worries expressed

- Job insecurity concerns post Covid/ financial insecurity of council
- Uncertain when coming back to work and to what building
- Need to be clear about what the new normal will be like and put training in place
- Reassurance needed over social distancing/ safety in workplace when do return to work
- Home environment may not be conducive for everyone
- Concern about returning to work when vulnerable/shielding
- Concern about safety of BAME employees working in the community
- Concern that IT has let some services down – telephony/ printing etc



Staff suggestions for improvement

- Focus groups suggested that there was a need for more training for managers and staff
- Need to be clear about what the new normal will be like and put training in place
- Managers needed training on how best to manage staff during this COVID pandemic, and what is expected of them as a manager during the pandemic
- Staff require training on how to get the most of the IT software they have available, so that they can become more comfortable with the software and start to maximise its benefits
- Clear mode of communication for those staff that do not have remote access



Actions already being taken

- An Intranet page was created as a central access point for any wellbeing and training support. It also provides the latest information regarding COVID 19
- Reviewing SMART working guidance. This ensures that the working guidance answers any questions that staff may have in regards from WFH
- WFM toolkit
- Increase in dates and access to iACT managers/colleague training. The iACT course gives participants a good understanding of mental health and wellbeing issues
- ICT support package (Tips and Tricks) e.g. Training for MS Teams/Webinars



Key messages/recommendations


- Staff have coped well with adapting quickly to a new working style and maintaining service delivery in adverse circumstances
- Recognise that this style has not suited everybody equally for a variety of reasons
- Need to now define the new operating model and embed in the organisation
- Balancing needs of staff with the needs of the organisation
- Continue to listen to staff voice through regular pulse surveys
- Augment communications mechanisms in light of remote working, particularly with the frontline and those without remote access



REPORT TO

**BUDGET AND CORPORATE
SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**

25 September 2020

Subject:	Senior Management Restructure
Director:	David Stevens Chief Executive
Contribution towards Vision 2030:	
Contact Officer(s):	Alex Goddard alexander_goddard@sandwell.gov.uk

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Scrutiny Management Board:

1. Consider the information presented to the meeting in relation to the restructure of the Council's senior management.
2. Identify any recommendations it wishes to make in relation to the information presented to it.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides the Scrutiny Management Board to consider and comment on the proposals relating to the restructure of the Council's senior management that will be considered by Council in due course.

2 **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

These are set out in the attached report to Council, which was deferred at the July meeting.

3 **APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – Report to Council

Appendix B – Senior Management Structure Proposals

Appendix C – Proposed Structure

David Stevens
Chief Executive

SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

9 July 2020

Subject:	Senior Management Restructure and associated constitutional provisions
Director:	David Stevens – Chief Executive
Contribution towards Vision 2030:	
Contact Officer(s):	Elaine Newsome

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That :

1. The recommendations of the Chief Officer Terms and Conditions Committee taken on 1 July 2020 in relation to the Senior Management Structure of the Council be approved;
2. The Director of Law and Governance be authorised to make administrative amendments to the Council’s Constitution in accordance with the resulting required changes arising from the senior management review.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval to the recommendations of the Chief Officer Terms and Conditions Committee in respect of the senior management restructure proposal.
- 1.2 To seek approval to consequential constitutional changes arising from the management review.

2 IMPLICATIONS FOR VISION 2030

- 2.1 The senior management structure of the Council supports the achievement of the Council's vision and corporate priorities and the demands placed on it by the current context and future pressures.

3 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Chief Officer Terms and Conditions Committee at their meeting on the 1st July 2020, considered and recommended approval by Council, of a senior management restructure. The restructure proposals outline a flatter management structure and reporting lines which are designed to meet the needs of the organisation as outlined in the Corporate Plan – “Big Plans for a Great Place”.
- 3.2 Should Council approve the proposals, a series of administrative changes will be required to the Constitution, to reflect the changes to the structure. Any changes that are significant, for example, delegations to the proposed Deputy Chief Executive, will be brought back to a future meeting of Council for further consideration.

4 THE CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 The Chief Executive has reviewed the Council's senior management structure and made recommendations to the Chief Officer Terms and Conditions Committee with a view to adopting a structure for the delivery of the Council's corporate vision and strategic objectives. The report outlining the proposed restructure is attached at Appendix 1. It is important to note that Appendix 1 referenced in the attached report is not included as this contained the detailed feedback from the individual consultees and as such is exempt information that was considered by the Committee as part of their deliberations.
- 4.2 Council is now requested to consider the recommendations of the Chief Officer Terms and Conditions Committee for the approval of the revised structure.
- 4.3 Should the recommendations be approved and the revised structure implemented, the council's Scheme of Delegation will require associated changes to ensure that it accords to the management structure. Whilst the majority of these will be administrative in nature, where any substantial changes are required, these will be submitted to a future meeting of Council for approval.

5 CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)

5.1 All colleagues identified in the restructure have been consulted on the proposals.

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

6.1 Council could opt not to accept the recommendations of the Chief Officer Terms and Conditions Committee and associated constitutional changes.

7 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 These are contained in the body of the report at appendix 1.

8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 The proposed constitutional changes would be administrative in nature and would enable the scheme of delegation to accord with the structural changes to the councils Leadership team.

9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 None associated with this report.

10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

10.1 None associated with this report.

11 CRIME AND DISORDER AND RISK ASSESSMENT

11.1 None associated with this report.

12 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS

12.1 The proposed senior management restructure aims to support the achievement of the Council's corporate ambition for the borough. The associated constitutional changes ensure that there is consistency across all sections of the constitution in line with the changes arising from the restructure.

13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)

13.1 None associated with this report.

14 IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND

14.1 None associated with this report.

15 CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

15.1 Where broad scope changes to the senior management structure are proposed, Council is required to consider the recommendations of the Chief Officer Terms and Conditions Committee. Similarly, changes to the constitution are a matter for Council to determine.

16 BACKGROUND PAPERS

16.1 None


17 APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Report to the Chief Officer Terms and Conditions Committee

David Stevens
Chief Executive

REPORT TO CHIEF OFFICER TERMS AND CONDITIONS COMMITTEE

1st July 2020

Subject:	Revised Senior Management Structure Proposals
Director:	David Stevens Chief Executive
Contribution towards Vision 2030:	
Contact Officer(s):	Sue Stanhope Interim Director of Human Resources
DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS	
<p>That the Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. having previously authorised the Chief Executive to formally consult all relevant Council officers as necessary on the proposals, that Committee receive the outcome of the consultation in relation to the senior management restructure; 2. having considered the outcome of the consultation and the Chief Executive's proposals to restructure the senior management team of the Council (including the realignment of services), approves the proposals and recommends it for approval by Full Council. 	

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report details the Chief Executive's proposals for the restructure of the Council's senior management team in order to meet the demands placed on the Council to deliver and/or meet Sandwell's Vision 2030, the Council's corporate ambitions and priorities and budgetary challenges facing the Council.
- 1.2 Ambitious plans have been articulated in the proposed Corporate Plan - "Big Plans for a Great Place" ("the proposed Corporate Plan") for Sandwell to be a fairer, more optimistic and resilient place in future. The proposed Corporate Plan outlines key strategic priorities that will deliver healthier, more prosperous and successful outcomes for the people of Sandwell - through a 'one council, one team' approach that promotes effective engagement and close working with the residents, businesses and partners across the Borough.
- 1.3 The proposed Corporate Plan seeks to create opportunities that will raise the profile and standing of Sandwell (and the Council) on the local, regional, national and international stages. It focuses on creating a Borough where people are proud of their local area, have better paid jobs and opportunities, supported by increased skills for the Borough wide workforce and exciting and appealing opportunities for young people.
- 1.4 The proposed new senior management structure for the Council described in this report responds to those ambitions and outcomes by organising the most senior officer leadership team within the Council in a way that places emphasis on grouping services and allows for more effective working and efficiencies of scale to be realised.

2 IMPLICATION FOR VISION 2030

- 2.1 The Vision 2030 clearly articulates the aspiration that in 2030, Sandwell will be a thriving, optimistic and resilient community. It describes that the Borough will be a place where people are proud to belong, where they choose to bring up our families, where people feel safe and cared for, enjoying good health, rewarding work, feeling connected and valued in their neighbourhoods and communities, confident in the future, and benefiting fully from a revitalised West Midlands.
- 2.2 The senior management team restructure detailed in this report will support the Council reach that aspiration as well as enable the delivery of the proposed Corporate Plan and budget challenges and plans for the Council.

3 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The proposed Corporate Plan, and the work that has been undertaken to date on developing it, has helped to inform the proposed senior management team restructure.
- 3.2 The proposed Corporate Plan articulates the strategic direction of the Council over the next 5 years and provides a framework to enable the Council to organise itself to deliver the six strategic outcomes set out within it, namely: -
- The best start in life for children and young people
 - People live well and age well
 - Strong, resilient communities
 - Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods
 - A strong and Inclusive Economy
 - A connected and accessible Sandwell
- 3.3 Central to delivery of the Council's ambitions and priorities is the need to also drive a change in culture across the Council. This will be achieved through the 'one team, one council' approach. The proposed restructure will enable the Council to build on important initiatives such as Workplace Vision, and continue its ambition to create a modern efficient Council that is capable of delivering the proposed Corporate Plan, vis-à-vis Vision 2030, at pace.
- 3.4 The proposed senior management restructure also recognises that there are a number of key priority areas for the Council that need to be effectively managed and driven. These include, but are not limited to, the following areas:

The **improvement of children's social care services** is a priority for Sandwell ensuring the delivery of outcomes by the new council owned Sandwell Childrens' Trust, driving a new cross-cutting Resilient Families programme. The role and expectations placed upon the Council has changed with the establishment of the Trust that need to be taken account of while ensuring the Council's statutory duty is effectively discharged.

Our **Regeneration and Inclusive Growth Strategy** sets out how everyone can contribute to Sandwell's growth and provides the platform for how all parts of the Council will work with businesses, colleges, schools and the voluntary and community sector as well as our regional partners in the West Midlands Combined Authority and Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership to grow our local and regional economy.

The development of **Town Plans** has been a real priority during 2018, working with our partners and local members as well as consulting with residents and local school pupils to identify the priorities for each of our six unique towns leading to healthier communities, increased employment opportunities, prevention and response to community issues and positive regeneration of places and communities.

We have an ambitious programme for **housing delivery** over the coming years with plans to deliver approximately 630 units made up of houses, bungalows and flats. This will lead to an increase in the Council's housing stock through building on land it already owns or by buying properties off plan from other larger housing developments.

This is a huge opportunity to maximise opportunities within each Town to **transform local services** delivered at a local level to ensure that they are meeting residents' needs within towns as well as providing the shared space where wider community activity can thrive and develop.

Developing **collaborative ways of working with health**, maximising resources such as the Better Care Fund, to support people to live in their own homes longer, prevent hospital admissions, and for those in hospital to be discharged in a timely way.

3.5 The aim of the proposed restructure is to deliver on the proposed Corporate Plan six outcomes, key priorities detailed above in paragraph 3.4 (as well as be able to meet emerging priorities over the coming years) and support the delivery of wider objectives detailed below (which is not an exhaustive list) that are considered integral to the Council achieving success: -

- Create a flatter management structure with clearer lines of accountabilities and a greater emphasis on collaborative working, with decision-making engaging and involving the Council's customer/service users and other stakeholders as much as possible.
- Drive improvements in the quality of service delivery, driving improvement and effective performance management through bold and innovative approaches/initiatives.
- Ensure that the statutory roles (at senior level) are acknowledged and satisfactorily understood and embedded.

- Utilise resources effectively to ensure that there is effective leadership capacity to meet the demands on the Council and deliver the identified ambition, outcomes, priorities detailed above, and improvements such as embedding a flexible and agile workforce capable of responding to changing circumstances and demands, removing silo working, identifying efficiencies and reducing waste, and maximising economies of scale.
- Delivering joined-up service units that promote a ‘whole-solution’ mind set and approach.
- Rebalancing of existing service areas to effectively meet the needs of Sandwell residents, maximise opportunities and drive delivery.

3.6 To achieve all the above, it is recognised that if the proposed senior management team structure is approved, there will be a need to also review and realign (as appropriate) services that fall within the remit of each role. Consideration has been given to where existing services currently sit and where they should sit under the proposed restructure. The headline proposal for the realignment of services/functions is attached as Appendix 2. It is important to reinforce that this outline description of service areas will also be subject to ongoing consultation with the leadership team both prior to and after appointment in order to refine these both in light of the proposed restructure but also to ensure that the implications of COVID 19 are reflected appropriately and that the Council is best placed to meet the challenges over the coming period.

3.7 It is further recognised that to achieve the ambitions, outcomes and priorities of the Council, particularly those outlined within this report, a review of senior roles falling below Directors posts will be necessary. To effectively do this, certainty is necessary at the senior management team level so that detailed service reviews can be managed, undertaken, and any resulting changes (if any) implemented effectively and at pace.

4 THE CURRENT POSITION

4.1 The current senior leadership structure was agreed over three years ago in February 2017 to meet the challenges that faced the organisation at that particular point in time.

4.2 This structure established the four Executive Director posts and some changes in Director posts. The current structure consists of the following posts:-

- Chief Executive (£147,523)
- Executive Director of Adult Services (£122,977 to £136,679)

- Executive Director of Children’s Services (£122,977 to £136,679)
- Executive Director - Neighbourhoods (£122,977 to £136,679)
- Executive Director of Resources (£122,977 to £136,679)
- Director of Adult Social Care (£92,547 to £107,922)
- Director of Education, Skills and Employment (£92,547 to £107,922)
- Director of Housing and Communities (£92,547 to £107,922)
- Director of Law and Governance (£92,547 to £107,922)
- Director of Protection and Prevention. (£92,547 to £107,922)
- Director of Public Health, (£92,547 to £107,922)
- Director of Regeneration and Growth (£92,547 to £107,922)

4.3 The total cost of the current senior management structure is £1,825,000 inclusive of on costs.

4.4 In the present structure the Chief Executive has the four Executive Director roles as direct reports. In turn the Executive Directors then have the following director posts reporting to them.

- Executive Director of Neighbourhoods
 - Director of Housing and Communities
 - Director of Regeneration and Growth
- Executive Director of Children’s Services
 - Director of Education
- Executive Director of Resources
 - Director of Law and Governance
- Executive Director of Adult Social Care
 - Director of Adult Social Care
 - Director of Protection and Prevention
 - Director of Public Health

5. PROPOSED STRUCTURE

5.1 The current structure has been reviewed in line with the business ambitions, outcomes, priorities and needs set out in this report and the proposed changes to the Council’s senior management structure are detailed in paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 below.

5.2 The proposed new structure will result in the following Chief Officer and senior leadership team structure for the Council:

- A new post of **Deputy Chief Executive** (£122,977 to £136,679) will have responsibility for all those services that are focussed on

delivering front line services to the people of Sandwell, and will line manage five Director posts, namely:

- **Director of Public Health** (£92,547 to £107,922) – this post will remain in line with legislation and lead on all matters to do with Public Health
- **Director of Adult Social Care** (£92,547 to £107,922) - this post is the statutory post and will remain in the new structure
- A new post of **Director of Housing** (£92,547 to £107,922) - all housing commissioning, delivery and management functions including strategic housing in the Council will be grouped together under this new role in recognition of the priority placed on delivery of housing in the Borough.
- A new post of **Director of Children and Education** (£92,547 to £107,922) – this role will combine the Director of Children’s Services (DCS) and Director of Education roles to ensure effective oversight of the Sandwell Childrens’ Trust, management of children’s services, advocacy for children and young people in schools and colleges, and the Council’s education function.
- A new post of **Director of Borough & Communities** (£92,547 to £107,922) - this role will be responsible for all the front line operational “place” services (excluding housing) and will responsible for driving the neighbourhood delivery agenda.

5.3 It is proposed that the remaining posts in the new structure will report directly to the Chief Executive. These are detailed below:

- The new post of **Deputy Chief Executive** as detailed above.
- A new post of **Director of Finance** (£92,547 to £107,922) – this post will be responsible for managing the council’s budget, finance (and associated) services and be the statutory Section 151 officer (Chief Finance Officer)
- **Director of Regeneration and Growth** (£92,547 to £107,922) - this post will substantively remain unchanged and will be leading on all strategic regeneration opportunities as well as supporting work with the Combined Authority and the Black Country Partnership as they relate to regeneration issues
- **Director of Law and Governance** (£92,547 to £107,922) – this post will remain unchanged and will be responsible for ensuring robust

governance processes are in place and be the Council's statutory Monitoring Officer

- A new post of **Director of Business Strategy & Change** (£92,547 to £107,922) – this post will bring together all the resources required to deliver transformation and change within the council. This will include responsibility for services such as Human Resources, ICT, business intelligence, communications and marketing.

- 5.4 Subject to the senior management proposals being approved and to ensure operational efficiency, there has been work undertaken as described in paragraph 3.6 to identify the most effective location of services to ensure that the organisation can meet the demands of the proposed Corporate Plan and Vision 2030.
- 5.5 The rationale and proposals have been developed following discussion with the Executive who has provided clear strategic direction to enable a clear way forward to be articulated, underpinned by a culture of fairness, openness and transparency.
- 5.6 In summary the proposals contained in this report recommend the following changes to the establishment structure:

Deletion and removal from the establishment of the following Chief Officer posts:-

- Executive Director of Adult Services,
- Executive Director of Children's Services,
- Executive Director - Neighbourhoods,
- Executive Director of Resources,
- Director of Education, Skills and Employment,
- Director of Housing and Communities,
- Director of Protection and Prevention.

Creation and establishment of the following Chief Officer posts:

- Deputy Chief Executive, (£122,977 to £136,679)
- Director of Borough & Communities (£92,547 to £107,922)
- Director of Business Strategy & Change. (£92,547 to £107,922)
- Director of Children and Education (£92,547 to £107,922)
- Director of Finance (& Section 151 Officer), (£92,547 to £107,922)
- Director of Housing, (£92,547 to £107,922)

The following posts remain unchanged:

- Director of Adult Social Care, (£92,547 to £107,922)
- Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer (£92,547 to £107,922)
- Director of Public Health, (£92,547 to £107,922)

- Director of Regeneration and Growth (£92,547 to £107,922)

- 5.7 The total cost of the current senior management structure is £1,825,000 inclusive of on costs and the cost of the proposed senior management structure is £1,724,000 inclusive of on costs.
- 5.8 Subject to the proposed senior management structure, a pragmatic approach will be taken in line with Council policies and procedures to the filling of any new roles in the structure. The purpose of taking this approach is to provide as much stability and clarity and prevent any unnecessary disruption.
- 5.9 For existing posts where a significant part of the post remains unchanged the current post holders will be assimilated into these roles in accordance with Council policy and arrangements and employment law. It is proposed that this will apply to the following roles: -
- Director of Adult Social Care
 - Director of Law and Governance
 - Director of Public Health
- 5.10 For all new posts, the authority to recruit into these posts will sit with the Chief Officer Terms and Conditions Committee (COTCC). To ensure an equitable, fair and transparent process it is recommended that there is a two-stage approach to recruitment.
- 5.11 In accordance with established Council policies and procedures in the first stage of the process all Executive Directors will be given the opportunity to apply for the role of Deputy Chief Executive. Application will be via an expression of interest (EOI) form which invites candidates to detail their knowledge, skills and experience and their suitability for the role.
- 5.12 The COTCC will consider all EOIs received and interview the candidate(s) as necessary. If COTCC believe it is possible to make an appointment they will confirm this to the candidate. If it is considered that it is not possible to make an appointment to this role then the role will be advertised externally.

- 5.13 The second stage of the process will see all remaining Executive Directors and Directors being included in the ringfence for the new Director roles. Application will be via an expression of interest form which invites candidates to detail their knowledge, skills and experience and their suitability for the role. Where it is clear that there is only one candidate who meets the essential requirement for a post and that there is significant alignment with their previous post it will be recommended to Committee that they be assimilated into the role.
- 5.14 The COTCC will consider all EOIs received and interview the candidate(s) as necessary. If COTCC believe it is possible to make an appointment they will confirm this to the candidate.
- 5.15 For any officers facing a reduction in their pay as a result of the implementation of the proposed restructure, they will receive pay protection for up to 12 months from implementation of the change.

6 CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)

- 6.1 Those employees who are directly affected by these changes have been involved in initial discussions with the Chief Executive which has contributed to the development the proposals outlined this report. Formal consultation has been undertaken following the decision of committee in February 2020.
- 6.2 The Chief Executive has considered all relevant comments and views from consultees in proposing the final senior management structure for consideration and approval by the Committee (and onwards approval to Full Council as appropriate).
- 6.3 A number of comments were received in relation to the detail of services within each Directorate and these have informed the final structure before Committee. A significant part of the outcome from consultation related to the proposal to delete the post of Executive Director of Children's Services and Director of Education, Skills and Employment and create one post of Director of Children's and Education. The concern expressed was predominantly focussed on the removal of the capacity at the senior level, with a clear view expressed from the Officers concerned that both posts were still required in the structure moving forward. The views expressed were considered at length and the important relationship between children's services and education is acknowledged, however having undertaken research on other councils of a similar size and considered the existence of the Children's Trust it is not intended to separate the two areas and in the proposed structure they will remain under the single Director post.

This post will have a dotted reporting line to the Chief Executive for any matter associated with performing the statutory role of DCS. For all other matters they will report to the Deputy Chief Executive.

- 6.4 Where the consultees have agreed the outcome of the consultation is attached in full as Appendix 1 for consideration by Committee. A response will be sent to each individual who responded to the consultation addressing any detailed concerns raised.

7 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 7.1 A number of alternative structures were considered during the discussion and design phase but these were discounted as it was considered that they did not meet the requirements of the organisation going forward.

8 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 At the time of writing the report in February seeking approval to consult on the draft proposals we were unaware that the pandemic would have the impact that it has both on the lives of people in Sandwell but also on call for council services and demands on our finances. The challenges on our services will continue and it is likely that whilst we may achieve freedoms and flexibilities over the next few months that we are unlikely to be in receipt of the funding required to close the gap that has been caused by COVID 19. As we move through 2020 it is critical that we ensure that the structure that we put in place enables us to deliver a balanced budget outturn for 2020. Through these proposals whilst the overall number of posts remains the same there is a small saving to be achieved by the deletion of three posts at executive director level.
- 8.2 It is anticipated that further savings as well as a better alignment of services and removal of duplication will be achieved with the future detailed work on the review of services realigned underneath the proposed senior management team structure.
- 8.3 The costs of the proposed senior management team structure is detailed within the report. The Council has a legal obligation under its Pay Policy to openly publish the salaries paid to its senior management.

9 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 It is the duty of the Chief Executive as head of paid service, where he considers it appropriate to do so, to prepare a report and seek approval of the Council in respect of the following:

(1) the manner in which the discharge by the authority of its different functions is co-ordinated;

(2) the number and grades of staff required by the authority for the discharge of its functions;

(3) the organisation of the authority's staff; and

(4) the appointment and proper management of the authority's staff.

9.2 The Council is required to follow relevant Council policies and procedures and comply with applicable employment legislation and case law concerning staff related matters.

10 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

10.1 The recommendations contained within this report have not identified any issues which would discriminate against any disadvantaged or vulnerable persons.

10.2 The Council must follow its equality and diversity policies and procedures, thereby ensuring fairness and equal opportunity for all.

11 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

11.1 This report relates to the employment position and roles of a number of senior officers with whom formal consultation has yet to be undertaken. This gives rise to data protection issues that are managed through Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and processes and procedures followed particularly in relation to consultation and the filling/recruit of the roles falling within the scope of the proposed senior management team restructure.

12 CRIME AND DISORDER AND RISK ASSESSMENT

12.1 There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from the contents of this report.

13 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS

13.1 There are no sustainability issues connected to the recommendations contained within this report.

14 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)

14.1 There are no direct specific health and wellbeing implications arising from the contents of this report.

15 IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND

15.1 There are no direct specific impacts on any council managed land or property.

16 CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

16.1 The report details the rationale and basis for the proposed senior management restructure. The recommendations to the Committee seek approval of the proposals for recommendation to Full Council for approval.

17 BACKGROUND PAPERS

17.1 Chief Officer Terms and Conditions Committee Report - Revised Senior Management Structure Proposals. 21st February 2020.

18 APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Individual consultation feedback

Appendix 2 - Outline areas of responsibility

David Stevens
Chief Executive

Areas of responsibility in proposed restructure

The areas described below are intended to be an outline and indicative description only of where services will report in the proposed structure. It is intended to give Members an overview of how the proposed structure will look and where broad responsibilities will lie. Further work will need to be undertaken on the detail in particular in those areas where services that were previously in a number of Directorates are coming together in one.

Chief Executive

Vision 2030
Council Plan
Our Council Programme
Financial Strategy
Corporate Governance
Assurance framework
Positioning the Borough

Deputy Chief Executive

Voluntary and Community Sector Officer Champion
Resettlement Programme
Sandwell for Everyone
Corporate Parenting
Safer Sandwell Partnerships
Green Champion
Major contracts

Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer

Section 151 officer
Audit Services
Strategic Financial advice and support
Revenue & Benefits
Financial and investment Strategy
Procurement Service (non-people services)
Commercial Services

Director of Business Strategy and Change

Future Strategy and policy development
Our Council Programme and Council plan
Strategic Partnerships
Insight and Performance
Corporate Assurance
Digital Infrastructure and Data
ICT Digital Transformation
Organisational Development (HRD/HRM)

Business improvement
Projects and programmes
Executive support
Health and Safety

Director of Law and Governance

Monitoring Officer
Democracy
Legal Services
Equality and Diversity
Electoral Registration
Elections and Referenda
Information Governance
Councillor support

Director of Regeneration and Growth

Borough development
Skills and employability
Growth / investment strategy
Enterprise
Planning
Strategic projects
Adult education and apprenticeships
Black Country impact
Sandwell at Work
Sandwell Learning Platform
Connexions service

Director of Borough Economy

Climate change
Transport
Environmental services
Business services
Waste and recycling

Director of Housing and Assets

Sandwell council housing stock
Tenant management organisations
Homelessness prevention strategy
Private Housing and improvement
Housing policy and insight
Temporary and Independent Living
Accommodation
Housing Strategy

Director of Children and Education

Youth offending
Early intervention

Education Psychology
Specialist support
Headstart
Safeguarding
Children's Commissioning
Children's Improvement
Traded Services
School Improvement
School organisation
SEND

Director of Adult Social Care

Assessment and Planning
Adult Care and support provision
Adults Commissioning
ASC and PHE procurement
Integrated working
Carers support
Approved Mental Health Practitioners and Assessments
Independent Living Services

Director of Public Health

Public Health commissioning
Community safety and cohesion
Health improvement
Health Protection
Intelligence and Evidence
Sandwell Active and Sports Health partnerships

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
October 2020
Forward Plan list of decisions to be taken by the Executive and
Notice of Decisions to be taken in private session.

Representations to a decision being taken in Private Session, where indicated must be e-mailed to Democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk or in writing to Democratic Services, Sandwell Council House, Oldbury, B69 3DP.

The Council defines a Key Decision as:

- (a) an executive decision which is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which exceeds that included in any approved revenue or capital budget or the limits set out within an approved borrowing or investment strategy and was not the subject of specific grant; or
- (b) an executive decision which is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure, the making of savings or the generation of income amounting to:
 - £250,000 or more where the service area budget exceeds £10m;
 - £100,000 or more where the service area budget is less than £10m; or
- (c) an executive decision which is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards of the Borough

All items listed in the Executive Notice will be listed as a key decision using the above criteria. Business items which are not defined as a Key Decision may be referred to the Cabinet for information and/or decision but will not be listed in the Executive Notice.

Items listed in the notice of Executive Decisions to be taken in Private Session will list the relevant exemption information as related to the Local Government Act 1972 12A as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 set out as follows:-

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information that is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes:-
 - to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

The Cabinet/Members of the Executive are as follows:- Councillors Ali, Allcock, Crompton, Millard, Padda, Shaeen, Singh, Taylor and Underhill.

The following items set out key decisions to be taken by the Executive in public session:-

	Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
1	<p>Childcare Sufficiency Report 2019-2020 and Action Plan</p> <p>Contact Officer: Sally Dowie</p> <p>Director: Lesley Hagger, Executive Director of Children’s Services/Chris Ward - Director of Education, Skills and Employment</p>	Best Start in Life (Cllr Underhill)	14 October 2020		<p>Report by (directors): Chris Ward, Director – Education, Skills and Employment</p> <p>Appendix Sandwell Childcare Sufficiency</p> <p>Source: Early Education and Childcare Statutory guidance for local authorities</p>

Title/Subject		Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
2	<p>The Re Development of King Street, Wednesbury, WS10 7PQ</p> <p>Contact Officer: David Harris</p> <p>Director: Tammy Stokes – Regeneration & Growth</p>	<p>Inclusive Economic Growth (Cllr Millard)</p> <p>Resources and Core Services (Cllr Ali)</p>	14 October 2020		Report
3	<p>Urban Design & Building Services Water Hygiene Services</p> <p>Contact Officer: David Harris</p> <p>Director: Tammy Stokes – Regeneration & Growth</p>	<p>Inclusive Economic Growth (Cllr Millard)</p>	14 October 2020		Report

Title/Subject		Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
4	<p>Canal and Waterways SPD</p> <p>Contact Officer: Andy Miller/Zoe Wilson</p> <p>Director: Tammy Stokes – Interim Director Regeneration and Growth/Alison Knight – Executive Director – Neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Inclusive Economic Growth (Cllr Millard)</p> <p>Sustainable Transport (Cllr Taylor)</p>	14 October 2020		
5	<p>Promoting Independence – Care at Home Service Contract Award</p> <p>Contact Officer: Daljit Bhangal/Christine Guest</p> <p>Director: Neil Cox – Director of Prevention & Protection</p>	<p>Living Healthy Lives (Cllr Shaeen)</p>	14 October 2020		

Title/Subject		Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
6	<p>Trusted Assessors Contract</p> <p>Contact Officer: Sukhbinder Virk/Christine Guest</p> <p>Director: Neil Cox – Director of Prevention & Protection</p>	Living Healthy Lives (Cllr Shaeen)	14 October 2020		
7	<p>Better Care Funds - Assertive Outreach Capacity for Treatment Resistant Individuals</p> <p>Contact Officer: Mary Bailey/Ainee Khan</p> <p>Director: Lisa McNally – Director of Public Health</p>	Living Healthy Lives (Cllr Shaeen)	14 October 2020		

Title/Subject		Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
8	<p>Pre & Post Dementia Diagnostic Support Service</p> <p>Contact Officer: Maxine Groves/Christine Guest</p> <p>Director: Director: Neil Cox – Director – Prevention and Protection</p>	Living Healthy Lives (Cllr Shaeen)	14 October 2020		
9	<p>Leasehold/Right to Buy Buildings Insurance</p> <p>Contact Officer: Narinder Phagura</p> <p>Director: Executive Director - Resources</p>	Resources and Core Services (Cllr Ali)	14 October 2020	No	Cabinet report

Title/Subject		Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
10	<p>Winter Maintenance Plan</p> <p>Contact Officer: Barry Ridgway</p> <p>Director: Tammy Stokes – Interim Director Regeneration and Growth</p>	Sustainable Transport	14 October 2020	No	Winter Maintenance Plan