

**Minutes of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment
Scrutiny Board**

**18th January 2018 at 5.30 pm
at the Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

Present: Councillor Hickey (Chair);
Councillor Ashman.

Apologies: Councillors Ahmed, Allcock, Crompton, Dhallu, Rouf
and Tagger.

As the meeting was inquorate this was a discussion only meeting.
The recommendations of this Board are not those of the full Board
which would be ratified at the next meeting).

1/18 **Minutes**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 16th November 2017
be recommended for approval as a correct record.

2/18 **Statutory Section 19 Flood Report**

The Service Manager, Highways provided the draft Section 19 Flood
Investigation Report arising from the June 2016 Flood Event.

The Flood Investigations report had been produced by Sandwell
Metropolitan Borough Council under the Flood and Water
Management Act 2010 (FWMA) as the Lead Local Flood Authority
(LLFA).

The Board was satisfied with the content of the report and
recommended that the Cabinet Member for Highways and

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Environment take this into account when the report was considered by Cabinet.

3/18 **Black Country Core Strategy - Consultation**

The Strategic Policy Manager and Executive Director – Neighbourhoods provided the Black Country Core Strategy Update.

The Strategic Policy Manager outlined the issues and options consultation process. He advised that the responses were being collated and assessed. The initial response rate to the consultation so far had been low in Sandwell and the responses were patchy. The results would be used to inform the next stage of the review – the preferred options stage, all four Black Country Local Authority Cabinets would have to approve.

The current programme, allowing of the Examination in Public in late 2020 envisages the reviewed Core Strategy being adopted in autumn 2021.

The Strategic Policy Manager advised that further updates would be brought to Board for pre-decision scrutiny in advance of key milestone dates. The Local Plan would be reviewed next year.

4/18 **Air Quality in Sandwell**

The Group Environmental Health Officer provided a report outlining the draft Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) 2018-2023 and the proposed public consultation process.

The Group Environmental Health Officer outlined the aims of the draft action plan which were:

- to reduce the overall health impacts and burdens of poor air quality;
- to achieve the national air quality NO₂ annual mean objective across the Borough in the shortest possible timeframe;
- to reduce PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations in order to protect human health.

She outlined the priorities, as follows:

- Priority 1 – Hot-spot locations;
- Priority 2 – Sustainable Transport Initiatives;

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- Priority 3 – Review the Council impact on air quality and develop a plan to reduce emissions from its activities.

The Action plan would outline how the Council would tackle poor air quality within its control.

The Group Environmental Health Officer referred to regional initiatives and working with the West Midlands Combined Authority to support local businesses, considering scrappage schemes for vehicles and other initiatives to improve air quality.

The Board discussed an initiative being trialled in Birmingham, the 'green wave'. The Birmingham radial and ring roads were ideal for trying out controlling traffic flow by ensuring vehicles were not stop start through each set of lights, thereby reducing pollution and congestion. This was achieved through a central control room monitoring traffic flow and reducing pressure by manually controlling the green lights to get the traffic moving through the city.

It was found that Sandwell the road network was not as compact, traffic signals were further apart and although some were centrally controlled the majority were controlled by boxes near the junction itself. The problems highlighted that it would not be cost effective to try to link traffic signals in Sandwell, although some were green waved by the control centre at Walsall. There would be no capital cost but the ongoing cost revenue to run the systems would not be sustainable.

It was discussed that there were more valuable sustainable travel solutions such as walking bus and use of planning process to insist on green travel plans, electrical charging points for vehicle and other new initiatives.

The Chair thanked officers for their attendance and presenting the items.

(Meeting ended 5:50 pm)

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