

Agenda

Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board

Thursday 1 April 2021 at 5.45pm

The meeting will be conducted virtually via Microsoft Teams in accordance with The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Please click on the link below to view the meeting:

[Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board – 01/04/2021](#)

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. 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.



3. Minutes

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2021 as a correct record.

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.

5. Tenant Agreement and Participation

To consider the update on the review of Tenant Engagement and Participation and the dissolution of the current Tenant Review Panel and the proposed new model.

6. Question and Answer Session with the Cabinet Member for Homes

To ask questions of the Cabinet Member for Homes on matters within the terms of reference of this Scrutiny Board.

7. Sandwell Aquatics Centre Project Update

To consider information presented on the progress of the Sandwell Aquatics Centre.

D Stevens

Chief Executive

Sandwell Council House

Freeth Street

Oldbury

West Midlands

Distribution

Councillors Moore (Chair);

Councillor P M Hughes (Vice-Chair);

Councillors Akhter, Bawa, Bostan, Chidley, Edwards, M Gill, S Jones, Padda and Sandars.

Co-opted Member: -

Mr J Cash.



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Minutes of Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Board

**25 February 2021 at 5:45pm
Online Virtual Meeting**

Present: Councillor Moore (Chair)
Councillors Bostan, Bawa, Edwards, M Gill and Sandars.

Officers: Alan Caddick (Director of Housing and Communities);
Dawn Winter (Service Manager);
Neil Cox (Director of Business Strategy and Change);
Liz Nembhard (Operations Manager);
Nicola Plant (Service Manager).

6/21 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S Jones

7/21 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

8/21 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interests made at the meeting.



9/21 **Additional Item of Business**

There were no additional items of business to be considered at the meeting.

10/21 **Trading Standards Update**

The Director of Business Strategy and Transformation introduced the item highlighting that the previous twelve months had been very challenging for Trading Standards when the behaviour and conduct of businesses was under more scrutiny than ever before. The Director was proud of the way the Trading Standards team's had adapted and of their response to the pandemic.

The Service manager presented an overview of the service's responsibilities and background of the team's approach to information and data gathering was provided.

It was outlined that there were two key impacts for the Trading Standards team throughout their pandemic response – reduced operational capacity and the need for the team's skills and services as part of the council's wider COVID response.

It was explained that since March 2020 the Trading Standards team had worked with Environmental Health, Licensing and Environmental Protection teams and Public Health to co-ordinate the enforcement, compliance and education response and to deliver the council's COVID response for businesses. Throughout this period redirection of activity had been managed to ensure essential and high priority work continued.

The Operations Manager provided a breakdown of the activity since April 2020. It was explained that 1300 complaints and concerns had been received, relating to business restriction, price gauging, PPE, cancellations of goods/services and scams. The team had also provided support and guidance to the council businesses, public and partners on COVID restrictions legislation and had issued safe working to 257 high risk businesses and direct guidance to 98 businesses. Officers explained that the team had been working with the Police on supported joint enforcement



activity and has issued 4 Directions (legal letters), 7 Prohibition Notices and 3 Fixed Penalty Notices to the value of £4000. Trading Standards had a range of powers to use but did try to go out and educate businesses, because enforcement was the last resort.

The Board was informed of the usual activity of the Trading Standards team aside from their COVID response activity. This included 328 civil advice referrals, case work on prosecution cases, forfeiture orders, sampling project on allergens, guidance on Brexit and scams. It was explained that the Trading Standards team worked alongside Action Fraud, Friends Against Scams and provided key messaging for social media posts on scams.

The Board noted the planned activity for the team for 2021-22, in line with business priorities which were aligned to corporate plan, there were key areas to focus on, a continued response to COVID, and where the team had not been as proactive as they would have liked, due to the pandemic to make sure they were a priority. This work included work alongside HMRC on Illegal Tobacco/Age Restricted Sales, responding to legislation as it occurs following the UK's exit from the European Union, planning enforcement activity for the 2022 Commonwealth Games as well as the teams continued COVID Response work.

From the comments and questions raised by members of the Scrutiny Board, the following responses were made, and issues highlighted: -

- The Trading Standards team were able to keep on top of citizen referrals through the pandemic and had a sizeable resource compared to other service areas. The impact of business closures and approach to risk management meant that the team had to reprioritise some of their usual work. Operationally, areas such as test purchasing had become more reactive throughout the pandemic. With eased restrictions and lowered transmission levels in the coming months appropriate work would continue.
- In relation to the Commonwealth Games – The team would work on and around the aquatics centre in line with



legislation to focus on trademarks, advertising and merchandise to establish ensured economic benefits for the area.

- Service area had good working relationships with the Police throughout the pandemic and regularly shared intelligence. Joint operations were in place before the pandemic and would continue beyond COVID related activity.
- Trading Standards had worked with businesses providing advice and guidance on lawful operations during pandemic, the team would continue to work with businesses as lockdown eased.
- Action against illegal scrap metal collectors had continued. The team worked closely with regional partners and the police on this enforcement and would provide further information to this scrutiny board on the theft of catalytic convertors across the borough.

Agreed that the Director – Business Strategy and Change provide information to members of the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board on the theft of catalytic convertors across the borough.

11/21

Library and Archive Services Update

The Scrutiny Board received a presentation on the impact of COVID-19 on the Council's Library and Archive services. It was explained that Libraries were recognised as an essential service throughout the pandemic, with library workers considered Key Workers. The Director of Housing and Communities provided background on the impact of the pandemic on Library and Archive services.

The Service Manager advised that the report outlined an increase in digital membership and borrowing since 23rd March 2020, with a greater demand in service for eBooks and new services, this had declined since physical books were allowed to be borrowed. Digital exclusion across Sandwell was noted. Library and Archive Services provided a blended offer of services to residents which included both digital and physical borrowing. The Board noted that



only 10% of library services were offered and that staff had low morale and motivation as they were not able to deliver normal levels of support to residents on the front line.

The Board noted that four libraries were currently in operation - Central – West Bromwich, Wednesbury, Smethwick and Glebefields – Tipton, they were open with reduced opening hours and staff worked on a rota basis. These libraries provided order and collect service, grab and go service and provided access to computers for essential use. 'Essential use' had not been defined and was not being policed, it was explained that for some residents who were suffering with isolation or mental health issues, use of computers and interaction was deemed essential. The Service was continuing to provide online story times, craft activities and entertainers during school holidays. The Home Library service operated a contactless service for vulnerable users.

The Board notes that given the recent Government announcement, the service was planning a phased reopening from 12 April 2021. However, officers were waiting for further information and government guidance.

The Board noted that this phased return would include the reopening of 13 outlying libraries, restarting the Mobile library, focus on the Transforming Local Services programme, reopening Blackheath Library and the relocation of Oldbury Library from Jack Judge House to Oldbury Council House. It was explained to the Board that the digital access strategy would be reviewed, feasibility for a new Archive Centre would be explored and a bid would be put forward for the Towns Fund and West Bromwich regeneration activity to create a service delivery hub utilising the Central Library and Town Hall Assets.

From the comments and questions raised by members of the Scrutiny Board, the following responses were made, and issues highlighted: -

- Due to legal obligations and British legislation on storing Archives, Smethwick Library basement was not a suitable



location to store public records. Sandwell rented space on a short-term basis in Dudley Archive Hub to store public records. Overflow archives were stored in West Bromwich Town Hall basement. A feasibility study on Archive Centres was underway by the National Archive Centre. The service would consider this study when looking at future options for Sandwell Archive Hubs. Not only were conditions i.e. temperature and humidity, a factor, accessibility for residents was also important. The Library and Archive Service were working with external consultants and a report had been drafted on potential sites and costing for an Archive Hub, once finalised the report would be shared across the council.

- Should closure occur again, long term planning was difficult to determine but the service would ensure availability for local people and a continued approach to creative events and online offerings. The library had adhered to guidelines and considered the wider landscape throughout the pandemic, they had followed the council's reset and recovery approach, consulted with public health and worked with unions and members and would do this in future in the event of a national lockdown. Given the increased public awareness and understanding of safety measures, the library service would take a more measured approach to closures in this situation.
- The library's Facebook page would continue to do online events and would consider sharing their online offerings with the Council's communications team to promote on social media.
- Relocation of Oldbury Library from Jack Judge House to Oldbury Council House would contribute to the council's One Stop Shop initiative to provide a range of services for residents in the council house and make better use of space in Jack Judge House. The library was expected to be in the main building in an area that was previously home to the council's planning service. Costs of the relocation were not available to share during the meeting. Costs and plans would be shared with members of this scrutiny board on the relocation of Oldbury Library.



Agreed: -

- That the Director of Housing and Communities circulate information, including original plans and drawings, to members of this scrutiny board on the financial implications and decision-making process of moving Council Library Services from Jack Judge House to Oldbury Council House.
- That the Director of Housing and Communities provide information on the future planning and COVID recovery of the Library and Archive Services to a future meeting of this scrutiny board.
- That the Director of Housing and Communities provide a report to a future meeting of this scrutiny board on the feasibility study of the Archive Centres.

Meeting ended at 7:07pm

Click [here](#) to watch a recording of the meeting

Contact: democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk



Report to Safer and Active Communities Committee

1 April 2021

Subject:	Tenant Engagement and Participation
Director:	Director of Housing and Communities Director Alan Caddick
Contact Officer:	Housing Services Manager, Nigel Collumbell Nigel_collumbell@sandwell.gov.uk Business Manager – Community Partnerships, Manny Sehmbi Manny_sehmbi@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 Consider the update on the review of Tenant Engagement and Participation.
- 1.2 Consider the dissolution of the current Tenant Review Panel and the proposed new model.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The review of Tenant Engagement and Participation will reflect changes in Legislation and Regulatory Standards.
- 2.2 A review of Tenant Engagement and Participation reflects good practice, but in addition there is an increase in expectations due to changes in the following:



- Regulator of Social Housing
- Housing Ombudsman
- National Housing Federation’s Code of Governance
- Build & Fire Safety Bill
- Regulatory Standards (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards>)

2.3 The Regulatory Standards outline specific expectations and outcomes that providers are expected to achieve. Providers’ boards and local authorities are responsible for meeting the relevant standards and determining how this is done. The Regulatory Framework encompasses a tenant involvement standard.

2.4 The proposed new tenant scrutiny model will not only reflect the above but also reflect good practice as outlined in Successful Scrutiny of Council Tenant and the National Tenant Engagement Standards, as outlined by Tpas (Tenant Participation Advisory Services)

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Strong resilient communities Through strengthening tenant engagement and participation, it will enable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stronger relationship between the council and tenants ○ Enhanced information and communication ○ An opportunity for tenants to develop ○ Develop a greater sense of place within the community
	<p>Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods Through involving tenants in housing services through a more coproduced approach will enable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improvement to services for tenants ○ Better value for money ○ Improved customer experience and satisfaction ○ Better customer loyalty



4 Background:

- 4.1 The Charter for Social Housing Residents Social Housing White Paper 2020, where 'Government is re-booting consumer regulation to ensure landlords adopt the right behaviours and can be held to account for their actions by tenants. 'This is the Heart of the White Paper' –*Jane Everton, MHCLG*
- 4.2 This White Paper is the follow up to the Green Paper - A New Deal for Social Housing, that was published in August 2018 and is part of the government's ongoing response to the Grenfell Tower tragedy and the Hackett review.
- 4.3 The White Paper highlights the need for transparency, openness and accountability, and outlines 7 key promises to tenants in social housing, these are:
- To be safe in your home
 - To know how your landlord is performing and hold it to account
 - To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly
 - To be treated with respect
 - To have your voice heard by your landlord
 - To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in
 - To be supported to take a first step to ownership
- 4.4 The updated (Tpas) National Engagement Standards reflect Regulatory requirements as discussed in 2.3, with clear principles and actions for social landlords to adapt to continuously improve the way residents are involved in shaping & improving services. The Tpas Standards can be used as a framework, to guide our work against the backdrop of the political & regulatory changes ahead
- 4.5 In May 2018 Dame Judith Hackett published a report into building regulation and fire safety, and one of the key recommendations covers the need to reassert the role and voice of residents ensuring residents have access to key information about their building and its safety measures.



Hence the empowerment of tenants and their involvement of such developments is key.

4.6 The Council have developed the Vision 2030 and the Sandwell Plan which impacts on communities and residents of Sandwell and supports the need to engage and empower tenants and residents within their community. In addition, the current impact of covid on our communities reinforces the need to engage with our communities in local service design and delivery.

4.7 All the above reinforces the need to continue to support and develop tenant involvement and participation and strengthen the tenants voice within the Council and wider neighbourhoods. As well as legal and statutory reasons for the review, as well as the fact that the Regulatory Standards recommend a review is undertaken every 3 years.

5 **Current Structure:**

5.1 The Council has a Tenant Complaints Panel. This group forms part of the Council's complaints procedure, which provides the opportunity for tenants who make an appeal and to be given the option to be heard by a group of their peers.

5.2 SCIPS (Sandwell Community Information and Participation Service) plays an important role in supporting tenants in Sandwell, to be involved and to influence decisions affecting their homes and neighbourhoods. The Council have renewed the grant agreement for a further 3 years, taking the agreement to the 31st March 2023.

5.3 The Council supports the Tenant Review Panel (TRP), which is made up of tenants and a leaseholder, with a role to support service improvement and to scrutinise elements of housing services. A representative of this group sits on the councils Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board.



5.4 The TRP is made up of 9 tenants and 1 leaseholder but currently has 4 vacancies and has been the case for some considerable time. The role of the group is to work on behalf of tenants and leaseholders to drive forward continuous improvement in the delivery of the Council's Housing Services, through providing challenge and scrutiny of services

6 Activity to Date:

6.1 Initially this review was brought to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny (SNAC) on the 30th January 2020 for discussion but also requesting a member of the group be part of the working group. Below is a summary of activity that has taken place to date:

- Initial discussions took place with Cabinet Member for Homes, SNAC and Tenant Review Panel (TRP)
- Established a working group to explore and codesign different models and structures
- Consultation with existing engagement & participation structures
- Tpas engaged as Critical Friend
- Feedback to Working Group on Consultation and presentation from Tpas on good practice models
- Following above discussions draft Terms of Reference and Engagement Model presented to the Working Group
- Update provided to Cabinet Member for Homes and TRP
- Cabinet workshop took place on 10.03.21

6.2 As part of the work that has taken place, a draft Resident and Leaseholder Involvement Model has been drafted. The model can be seen in Appendix 1 and provides an outline as to the different levels of involvement and types of potential activities, some of which are in existence, but some are suggestions for going forward. It is anticipated that the model of involvement will evolve over time.

The involvement model also looks to encompass a set of underlying principles that will be developed by those involved from officers to residents. In addition, the model acknowledges and recognises that different approaches are relevant dependent on the purpose of the involvement and therefore will require varying levels of involvement.



6.3 Appendix 2 provides an overview of the governance structure and where the proposed Resident & Leaseholder Scrutiny Panel fits, along with the suggestion of a Cllr representative.

Potentially the Cllr representative could be represented by:

1. Cabinet Member for Homes
2. Cabinet Advisor
3. A nominee from the SNAC committee

Or it could be a combination of and/or for example Cabinet Member for Housing may delegate to the Cabinet Advisor.

The benefits of having such a role would be:

- By being co-opted onto the group would enable the representative to be part of the group and be involved in discussions
- Providing a voice & advocate through political channels
- Support the fostering of good relationships between Cabinet and Scrutiny
- Stronger communication between Cabinet & Scrutiny, supporting joining up on areas of interest

Appendix 3 provides a draft job description.

6.4 To support the development of the proposed Resident & Leaseholder Scrutiny Panel a draft Terms of Reference (TOR) have been developed, please see Appendix 4.

The TOR are based on the document Successful Scrutiny for Council Tenants & The National Tenant Engagement Standards (Tpas) and have been discussed and shared with Democratic Services.

The key differences with the proposed TOR is that membership would be 8 tenants and 2 leaseholders, as opposed to 9 tenants and 1 leaseholder. Also, members of the group would serve for a maximum period of three years and not stand for reselection.



There would be a recruitment process which yet to be agreed but is anticipated would be a recruitment process with a view to encourage broader representation and more diverse membership.

7 Next Steps:

- 7.1 Subject to discussions, it is proposed to take this paper to Cabinet and to then feedback to the Tenant Engagement and Participation Working Group. If Cabinet agree the new model, then the proposal will be to dissolve the current TRP and set up an Implementation Group.
- 7.2 The Implementation Group would replace the Tenant Engagement and Participation Working Group and would work to support the development of the Scrutiny Panel and to develop further detail behind the Involvement Model

8 Alternative Options

- 8.1 If the Board does not consider the update then the chance to have any input to the Review may be missed.

9 Implications

Resources:	Financial, staffing, land/building implications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no specific resource implications arising from this report.
Legal and Governance:	Legal implications including regulations/law under which proposals are required/permitted and constitutional provisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are set out in The Charter for Social Housing Residents Social Housing White Paper (https://www.tpas.org.uk/the-white-paper) • These are set out in the Regulatory Standards (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards).
Risk:	Risk implications, including any mitigating measures planned/taken, health and safety, insurance implications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no specific resource implications arising from this report.



Equality:	<p>Implications for equality (all aspects and characteristics) including how meeting Equality Duty, equality impact assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The review will develop refreshed and strengthened methods of tenant involvement, engagement and participation which will help to address inequalities and challenge the stigmatisation of tenants.
Health and Wellbeing:	<p>Implications of the proposals on health and wellbeing of our communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no specific health and wellbeing implications arising from this report
Social Value	<p>Implications for social value and how the proposals are meeting this (for e.g. employment of local traders, young people)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no specific social value implications arising from this report

10. Appendices

Appendix 1. Proposed Engagement Model

Appendix 2. Governance Structure

Appendix 3. Draft Cllr Representative Role Description

Appendix 4. Draft Terms of Reference

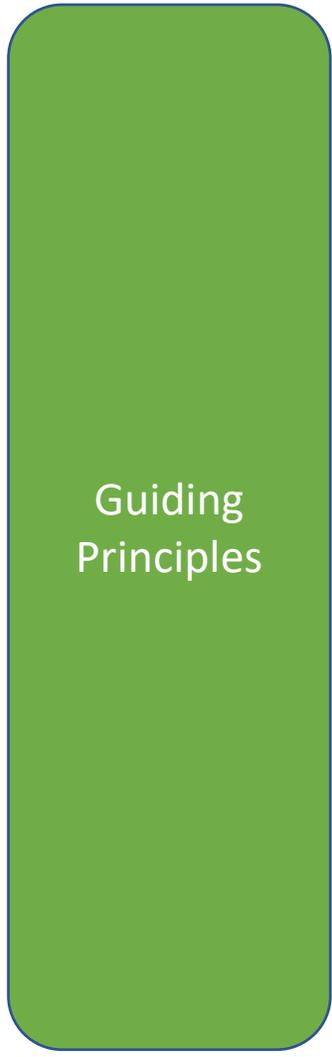
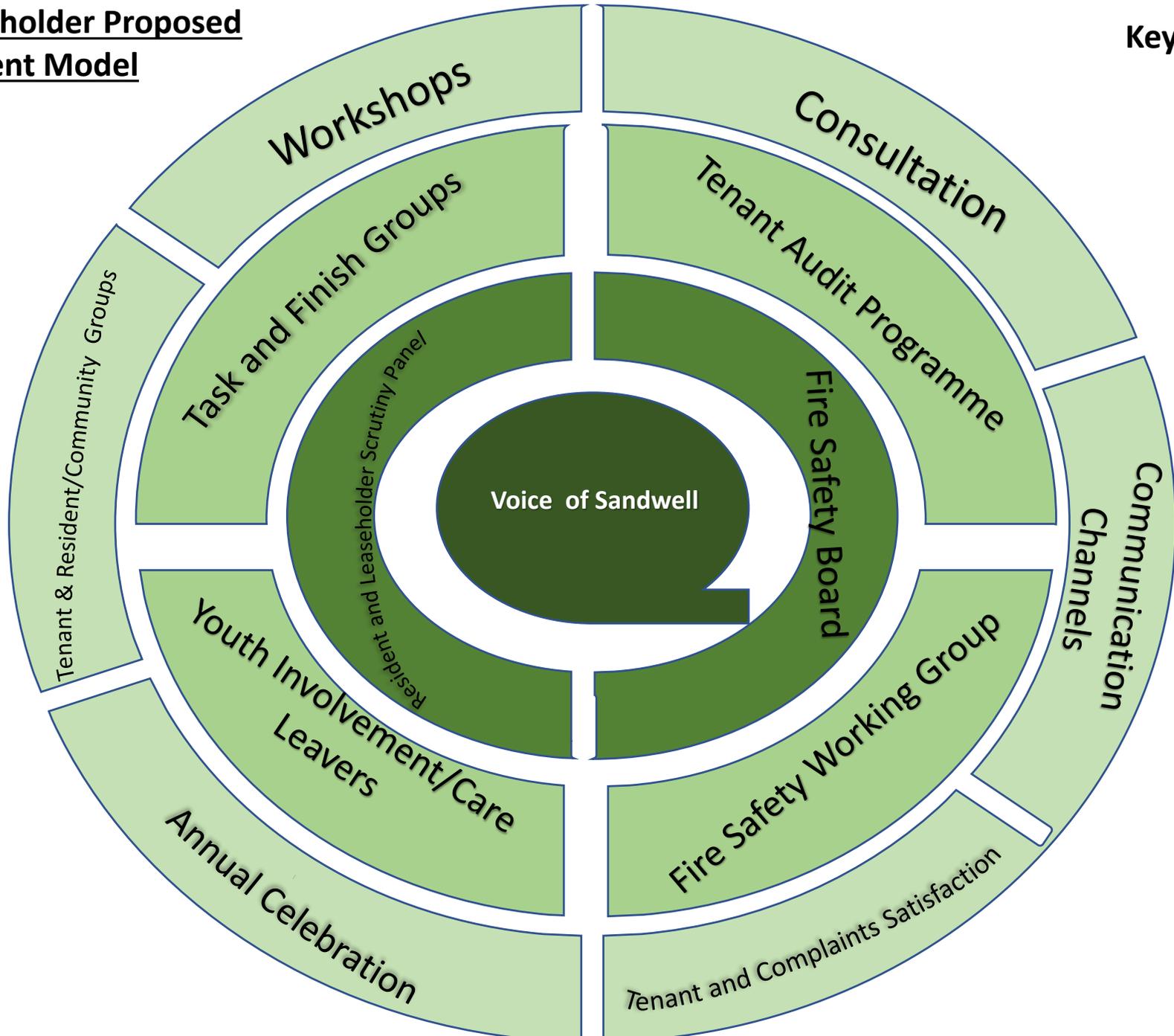
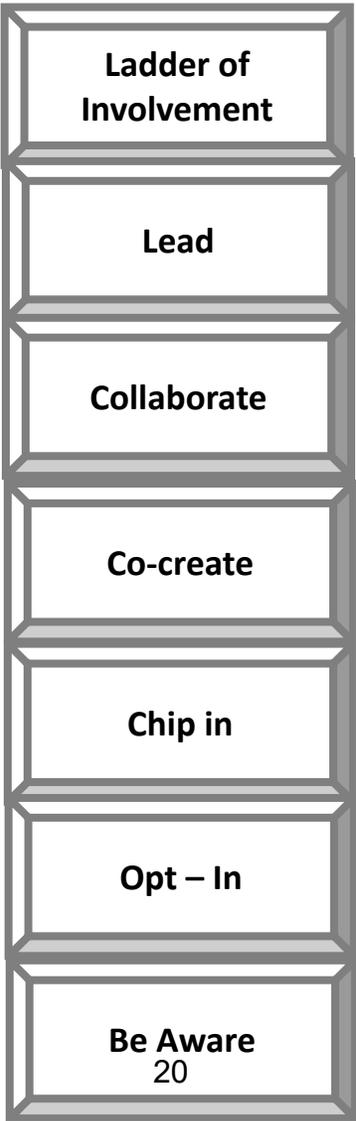
11. Background Papers

- The Charter for Social Housing Residents White Paper – November 2020 <https://www.tpas.org.uk/the-white-paper>
- Successful Scrutiny for Council Tenants – Tpas 2020
- The National Tenant Engagement Standards – Tpas 2020
- Regulatory Standards - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards>
- Green Paper, A New Deal for Social Housing 2018
- Responses to the Grenfell Fire and Report from Dame Hackitt (May 2018)



**Resident & Leaseholder Proposed
Involvement Model**

- Key**
- Our tenants
 - Service Shapers
 - Formal Involvement



Resident & Leaseholder Scrutiny Panel Proposed Model

Overview and Scrutiny

https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200197/councillors_committees_and_meetings/3694/overview_and_scrutiny

Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board
(Made up of Chair plus 4 Chairs of Scrutiny Boards)

Children's Services and
Education Scrutiny
Board

Economy Skills Transport
and Environment Scrutiny
Board

Health and Adult Social
Care Scrutiny Board

Safer Neighbourhoods
and Active Communities
Scrutiny Board

**Cllr Representative For
Resident & Leaseholder**
Providing voice and advocate through political
channels

Director of Housing and
Assets

Building
Safety
Board

Resident & Leaseholder Scrutiny Panel

Role Description for Resident & Leaseholder Scrutiny Panel Councillor Representative

Corporate Responsibilities:

1. To develop and promote tenant and resident engagement and participation as part of Vision 2030 and aligned to Regulatory Standards and The Charter for Social Housing Residents Social Housing White Paper.
2. To endeavour to meet the aspirations of the Council and the tenants of the Borough through continuous improvement in Housing Service delivery, the implementation of best practice and the recognition of the diversity of the population of the Borough.
3. To ensure the promotion of equality in service provision, in consultation with appropriate Cabinet Members in relation to tenant and resident engagement and participation.
4. To ensure, where appropriate the full involvement of local residents and communities to aid the decision-making process of the Council, as necessary.

Duties:

5. To provide support to the Executive Leadership Team and Cabinet on all aspects associated with their role.
6. To be an advocate and champion on key areas discussed at the Resident & Leaseholder Scrutiny Panel, and to assist with reporting and decision making at Executive Leadership Team level.
7. To liaise with Council officers, partners and other agencies to ensure appropriate communication and engagement associated with their champion role.

8. To provide advice and guidance, where appropriate, on all social housing matters relating to policy and strategy, whilst taking a lead role developing policy and acting as a conduit between the Resident & Leaseholder Scrutiny Panel and Cabinet.
9. To be aware of legislation and ongoing local and national developments on matters relevant to their champion role.
10. To research the changing landscape and advise the Cabinet of future issues that could affect current policies, legislation and processes.
11. To engage with, and canvas views of, members to advise the Cabinet relating to their portfolio.
12. To inform the Member Development Programme on all aspects that may enhance the skill, knowledge and experience of elected members associated with their role.
13. To comply with the Member/Officer protocol as set out in the Constitution.
14. To take part in training and development programmes to ensure that this role is undertaken as effectively as possible.

Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Group

Draft Terms of Reference

1. Name of Group

1.1 The Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Group.

2. Background

2.1 Scrutiny a process for carrying out resident-led reviews of all housing services. It is stated in housing regulation and forms a large part of an organisational approach to welcoming in-depth examination.”

2.2 Under the regulatory framework for social housing, resident-led scrutiny is a key requirement for social housing landlords regarding the delivery of housing services.

2.3 Tenant scrutiny aims to give tenants more power in holding their landlord to account for their decisions, performance, and conduct

3. Purpose of the Group

3.1 To ensure that tenant and leaseholder scrutiny is delivered in line with the Tenant Engagement standards which are: -

3.2 All influence and scrutiny engagement are outcome focused. It is designed to improve services and communities as well as provide value for money and transparency.

3.3 Tenants, leaseholders, and communities can influence appropriate strategy, policy, standards, approaches and performance targets.

3.4 Customer insight information is used with engaged tenants, leaseholders, and communities to influence decisions and co design services and approaches.

3.5 There is engagement in performance monitoring, learning from performance information and improving performance through effective challenge.

- 3.6 Where appropriate there is engagement to build in area-based performance management and approaches that provide area-based accountability.
- 3.7 There is a framework for engagement that holds the organisation to account through collaborative, yet independent tenant led scrutiny approaches.
- 3.8 There is engagement in understanding, resolving, and learning from complaints.
- 3.9 There is clarity about the role of tenant influence and scrutiny within the organisation amongst members of the governing body and senior management team.
- 3.10 The Group can make recommendation for changes to Housing Policy to the Cabinet Member for Homes, and/or Service Delivery to the Director of Housing & Assets.

4. **Role of the Group**

- 4.1 To develop an annual work plan aligned to housing regulatory legislations specifically the Charter for Social Housing Residents and the Building and Fire Safety Bill.
- 4.2 Ensure residents are engaged in the housing service and good quality effective tenant led scrutiny is delivered across Sandwell.
- 4.3 Commission active projects and processes to consult residents on the housing service.
- 4.4 To examine performance information identifying improvement measures to ensure targets are being met
- 4.5 To challenge stigma and to celebrate the positive contribution of tenants and residents within the housing service and the wider community.
- 4.6 To ensure an effective communication strategy is in place to inform tenants of the outcomes of scrutiny and encourage wider involvement
- 4.6 To nominate a representative to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board
- 4.7 To contribute to the production of the Annual Report to Tenants ensuring it is published and widely available

5. Support for the Group

- 5.1 The Group will be supported by a designated officer who will be responsible for ensuring that the Group have all the information they need. This officer will also be responsible for ensuring services and staff work effectively with the Group to support the scrutiny process.
- 5.2 The group will adopt virtual meetings when necessary.
- 5.3 Group members will be provided with a training and development plan to ensure they have the confidence and skills to deliver their role.
- 5.4 All reasonable out of pocket expenses will be provided to Group members

6. Membership and Recruitment

- 6.1 The Group will have a membership of ten. Eight members will be tenants and two will be leaseholders.
- 6.2 One third of the Group must stand down each year. Members of the Group can serve for a maximum period of three years and cannot stand for re-election.
- 6.3 Members of the Group must be current tenants and leaseholders of the Council. Membership is open to anyone over the age of 18, however, there are a number of exceptions where tenants will be excluded from membership and although cases will be considered individually, they include: -
 - tenants who are in serious breach of the conditions set out in their tenancy agreement; the seriousness of the breach will be the decision of the Housing Service Manager
 - tenants who have previously breached confidentiality requirements through the involvement processes of the Council.
 - where a tenant ceases to be a tenant of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council;
 - any employee of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council;

All the above apply throughout the term of the office and not just at election.

6.4 Any resulting casual vacancy shall be filled as soon as possible in accordance with the recruitment process.

6.5 The Group will elect a Chair and Vice Chair for the group.

7. Meetings

7.1 The programme of meetings will be agreed annually by the Group, with the opportunity for virtual meetings as necessary.

7.2 Meetings will normally be held in a location that is accessible and acceptable to all members.

7.3 The meeting shall commence at the time and place stated in the notice of the meeting, subject to a quorum being present.

7.4 The quorum for meetings of the Group shall be 4

7.5 In the event of a quorum not being obtained at the commencement of or at any point during the meeting, the meeting may continue for the purposes of debating an item, but no formal decisions may be made.

7.6 Any member of the group can request items to be included on the agenda.

7.7 Meetings will be held at least four times per year.

7.8 Training and additional special meetings may be arranged dependent on the need.

7.9 The designated officer, in consultation with the Chair, will determine the content of any agenda

7.10 The designated officer will be responsible for the distribution of the agenda and any supporting papers for each meeting of the Group at least five working days before the meeting.

8. Conduct at Meetings

8.1 Group members will be required to adhere to an agreed code of conduct

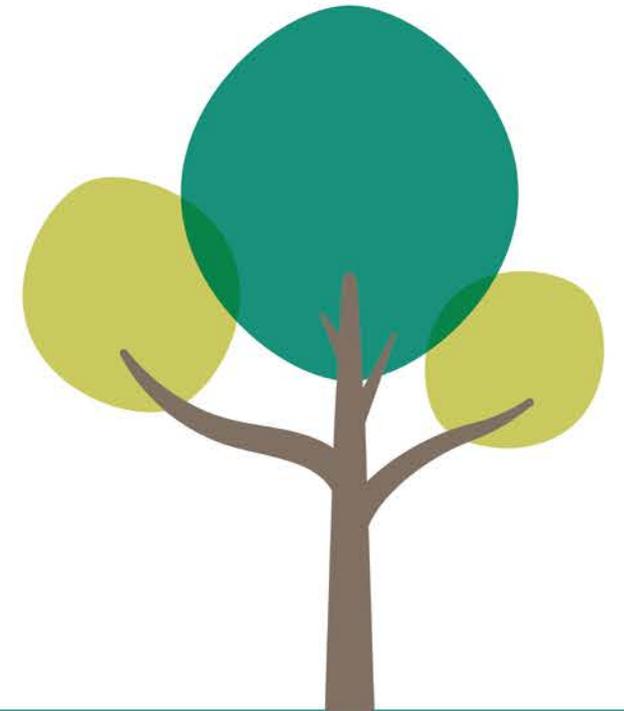
8.2 Group members to allow up to 15 minutes at the start of the meeting for a quorum to be present

- 8.3 Any members of the Group must declare a conflict of interest as soon as it arises
- 8.4 The Group will reach decisions by consensus. If this is not possible members will vote on an issue by a show of hands; a majority of one will be required to agree a decision. In the event of a tie, the motion will not be carried, and the Chair will have a casting vote.
- 8.5 Members shall have regard where appropriate to the confidential or commercially sensitive nature of information presented at meetings of the Group and shall undertake not to disclose such information to third parties, unless required to do so by law.

9. **Equalities and Diversity**

- 9.1 The Group will recognise the existence and importance of the different ages, races, genders, abilities and lifestyles within the resident profile and will strive to ensure that no group or individual will be disadvantaged as a consequence of its activities. The Group will be committed to promoting equality of opportunity to all persons in every respect of activities carried out by it.

Tenant Engagement and Participation



Why Now?

Political
Changes

Regulatory
Changes

Tenant Scrutiny
Reflecting Good
Practice

Sandwell Plan &
Vision 2030

Renewed focus
and recognition
of residents'
voice



The Charter for Social Housing Residents

Social Housing White Paper

‘Residents in social housing are being promised stronger consumer rights along with more opportunity to scrutinise council and housing associations landlords.’ LGIU

‘Government is re-booting consumer regulation to ensure landlords adopt the right behaviours and can be held to account for their actions by tenants. ‘This is the Heart of the White Paper’ –Jane Everton, MHCLG

<https://www.tpas.org.uk/the-white-paper> - 2 minute video



White Paper

7 Key Promises to Tenants in Social Housing

To be Safe in your home

To know how your landlord is performing and hold it to account

To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly

To be treated with respect

To have your voice heard by your landlord

To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in

To be supported to take a first step to ownership



National Engagement Standards - Tpas



Current Structures to Support Tenants' Voice

Tenants Complaints Panel

Part of Council's complaints procedure

opportunity for tenants to be heard by a group of their peers.

SCIPS (Sandwell Community Information & Participation Services)

Supporting tenants in Sandwell to be involved and influence decisions affecting their homes & neighbourhoods

Current grant agreement until 31st March 2023.

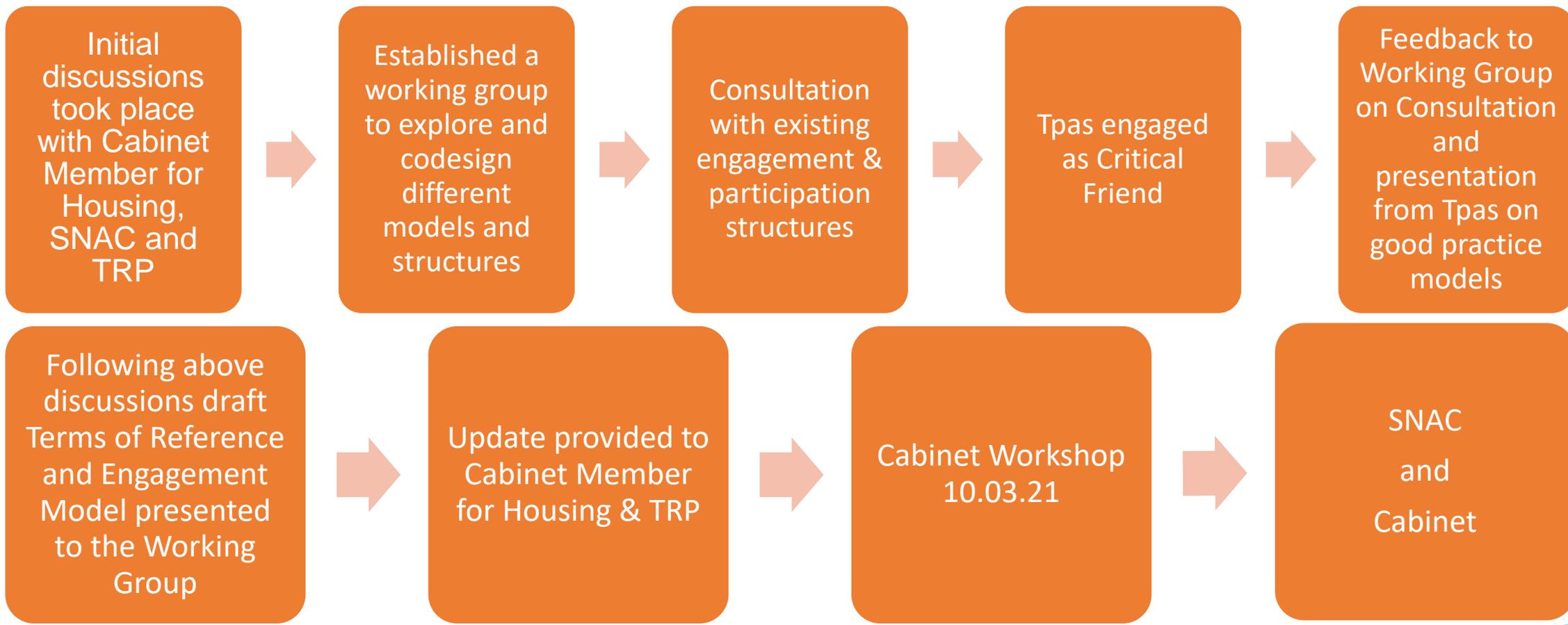
Tenant Review Panel (TRP)

Role of TRP is to support service improvement and to scrutinise elements of housing services

A representative of this group sits on the councils Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board

TRP is made up of 9 tenants and 1 leaseholder but currently has 4 vacancies and has been the case for some considerable time

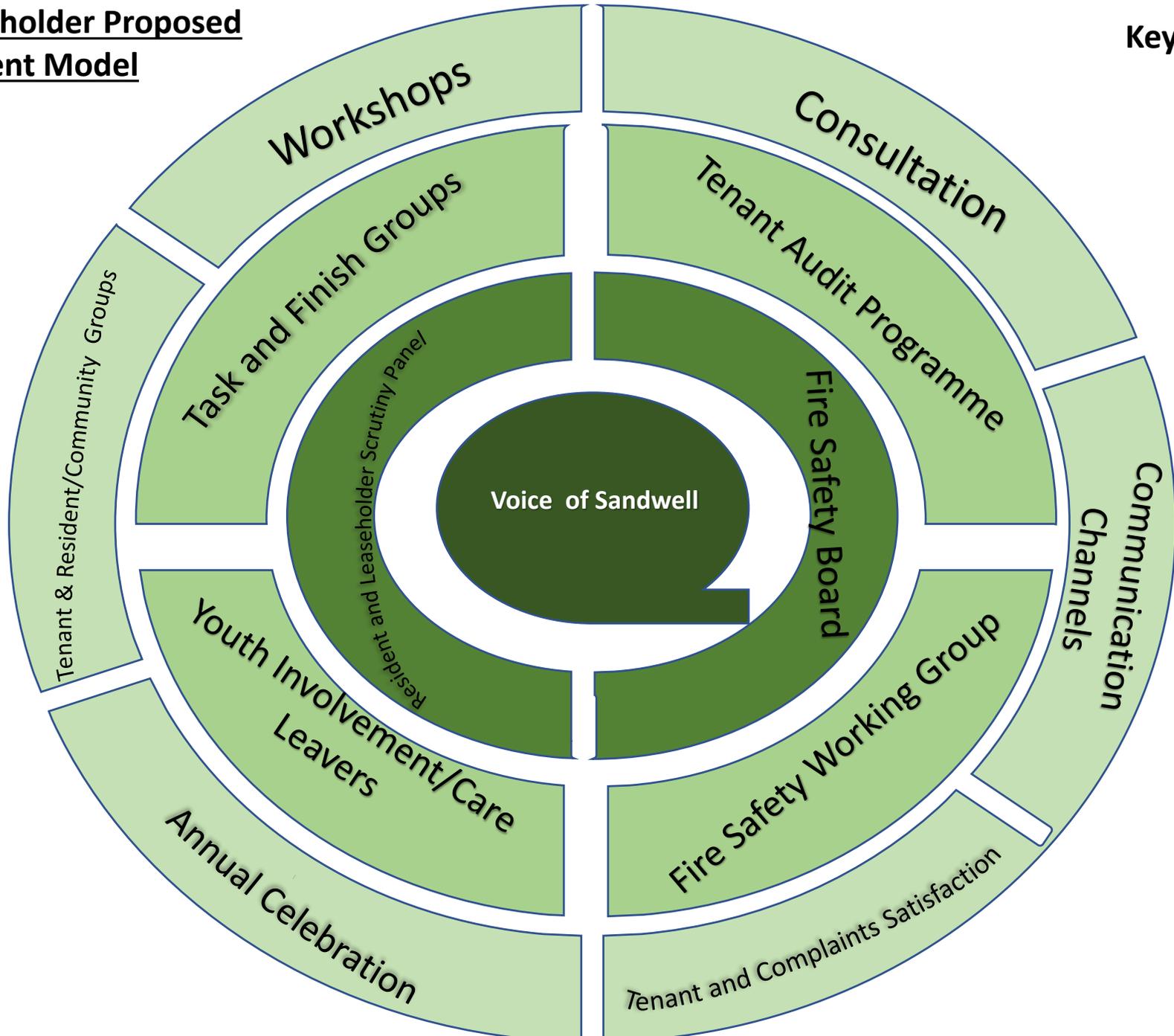
Progress to Date:



Resident & Leaseholder Proposed Involvement Model

- Key**
- Our tenants
 - Service Shapers
 - Formal Involvement

Ladder of Involvement
Lead
Collaborate
Co-create
Chip in
Opt – In
Be Aware 36



Guiding Principles

Resident & Leaseholder Scrutiny Panel Proposed Model

Overview and Scrutiny

https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200197/councillors_committees_and_meetings/3694/overview_and_scrutiny

Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board
(Made up of Chair plus 4 Chairs of Scrutiny Boards)

Children's Services and
Education Scrutiny
Board

Economy Skills Transport
and Environment Scrutiny
Board

Health and Adult Social
Care Scrutiny Board

Safer Neighbourhoods
and Active Communities
Scrutiny Board

**Cllr Representative For
Resident & Leaseholder**
Providing voice and advocate through political
channels

Director of Housing and
Assets

Building
Safety
Board

Resident & Leaseholder Scrutiny Panel

Draft Terms of Reference (TOR)

“... a process for carrying out resident-led reviews of all areas of an organisation’s business. It is stated in housing regulation and forms a large part of an organisational approach to welcoming in-depth examination.” Tpas

- **Outlines the role, purpose and potential membership of the group**
 - The Group will have a membership of 10 - 8 members will be tenants and 2 will be leaseholders
 - Members of the Group can serve for a maximum period of three years and cannot stand for reselection
- **To further agree recruitment process**
 - Possible Expression of Interests, using a Recruitment process
 - Encouraging diversity of membership, broader representation
- **A learning & development programme will be developed to support the members of the group**
- **The new group will also need to agree priority areas for the work plan**
 - Such as Fire Safety, Complaints, Performance etc.



Recommendations:

- Consider the update on the review of Tenant Engagement and Participation.
- Consider the dissolution of the current Tenant Review Panel and the proposed new model.



Report to Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board

1 April 2021

Subject:	Question and Answer Session with the Cabinet Member for Homes
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In order to enable members of the Scrutiny Board to formulate questions of the Cabinet Member for Homes on areas of his portfolio that is within the remit of this Board, please see highlighted areas below from the Terms of Reference for this Scrutiny Board.

As set out in the Scrutiny Procedure Rules contained in Part 4 of the Council's Constitution to scrutinise recommendations, consider referrals under the Call for Action process, and contribute to decision making and policy development through pre-decision scrutiny processes in relation to the following matters:-

1. crime and community safety (Cabinet Member for Safer Communities);
2. trading standards (Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economic Growth);
3. emergency planning and civil resilience (Cabinet Member for Safer Communities);
4. leisure and tourism opportunities in the borough (Cabinet Member for Safer Communities);

5. libraries, museums and the Community History and Archive Service (Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economic Growth);
6. the planning and provision of green spaces including parks and local nature reserves (Cabinet Member for Safer Communities);
7. voluntary and community sector support (Cabinet Member for Safer Communities);
8. partnership working to strengthen the third sector in Sandwell (Cabinet Member for Safer Communities);
9. community development (Cabinet Member for Safer Communities);
10. strategic housing policy (Cabinet Member for Homes);
11. social housing (Cabinet Member for Homes);
12. private rented sector rented accommodation (Cabinet Member for Homes);
13. homelessness (Cabinet Member for Homes).

In relation to the Council's scrutiny functions as set out in section 19 Police and Justice Act 2006, the Board will:

- (a) scrutinise decisions and actions of the Council and "responsible bodies" (as defined in section 5 Crime and Disorder Act 1998) relating to the performance of crime and disorder functions
- (b) consider local crime and disorder matters referred to the Board by a councillor;
- (c) make reports and recommendations to the Council and responsible bodies

The responsibilities relating to the Cabinet Member for Homes is set out below.

Cabinet Member for Homes – Cllr Keith Allcock	
<div style="background-color: #1a3d54; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="background-color: white; color: #1a3d54; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold; font-size: 0.8em; margin-right: 10px;">Ambition 7</div> <div style="flex-grow: 1;">  <p style="color: white; font-size: 0.9em;">We now have many new homes to meet a full range of housing needs in attractive neighbourhoods and close to key transport routes.</p> </div> </div> </div>	
Scope	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Strategy • Housing Development • Council Housing Stock • Private Sector Housing • Strategic Housing • Housing Support 	
Key Portfolio Responsibilities	
<p>Unless otherwise delegated, to exercise all executive powers and authority, including the provision of political leadership and strategic policy direction, in relation to all executive functions, duties, powers and responsibilities falling within the scope and responsibilities of this Portfolio.</p> <p>To act as the Council’s principal spokesperson on Council policy and/or matters falling within the scope of this Portfolio affecting the Borough or its citizens at local, regional, national and international level as directed by the Leader of the Council.</p> <p>To be the Executive lead with the Combined Authority in relation to all the functions, duties and responsibilities falling within this Portfolio.</p> <p>Where not otherwise reserved to the Council, a Committee of the Council or other body under the Local Authority Functions Regulations, or where authority has not been delegated to a Chief Officer and, in consultation with a relevant Cabinet Member, as necessary, to take the lead responsibility within the Executive for:-</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The delivery of Ambition 7 in collaboration with partners across Sandwell and the wider region. <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">Officer Lead: Director – Housing and Communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing conditions in the private sector and the Housing Agency Service, including improvement, clearance and association enforcement. <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">Officer Lead: Executive Director – Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public and private sector housing development. <p>Officer Lead: Director – Regeneration and Growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development and implementation of Selective Licensing Schemes across the Borough <p>Officer Lead: Executive Director – Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Executive Director – Neighbourhoods Director – Housing and Communities</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development, implementation and review of local housing strategy, all housing policies and neighbourhood housing plans, including private sector housing in collaboration with stakeholders. <p>Officer Lead: Executive Director – Neighbourhoods Director – Housing and Communities Director – Regeneration and Growth Executive Director – Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A collaborative, multi partnership approach to homelessness. <p>Officer Lead: Executive Director – Neighbourhoods Director – Housing and Communities</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The strategic direction of the Council's interests in relation to the development and delivery of housing of all types and tenures, including transient groups and unauthorised encampments. <p>Officer Lead: Director – Regeneration and Growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The direction for and delivery of the Council's investment in and management responsibilities for the authority's housing stock, including maintenance. <p>Officer Lead: Executive Director – Neighbourhoods Director – Housing and Communities</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development and implementation of different housing delivery mechanisms in collaboration with the development industry and local housing providers. <p>Officer Lead: Director – Regeneration and Growth</p>	

Report to Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board

1 April 2021

Subject:	Sandwell Aquatics Centre Project Update
Director:	Tammy Stokes Interim Director – Regeneration and Growth
Contact Officer:	Chris Jones Project Director chris2_jones@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board:
- 1.1.1 Consider and comment upon the information presented on the progress of the Sandwell Aquatics Centre; and
 - 1.1.2 Identify any recommendations it wishes to make.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 This is an update report on the progress of a live project.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people</p> <p>The delivery of the new Aquatics Centre will provide children and young people with opportunities to participate in physical activity and sport that have not been open to them previously.</p>
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	<p>People live well and age well</p> <p>The delivery of the new Aquatics Centre will provide the residents of Sandwell with enhanced opportunities to participate in physical activity and sport and provide opportunities to improve and maintain their physical and mental health and wellbeing.</p>
	<p>Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods</p> <p>The development of new and improvement of existing facilities (the delivery of the new Aquatics Centre and the highway infrastructure improvements) will make Sandwell a more attractive place to live.</p>
	<p>A strong and inclusive economy</p> <p>The delivery of the new Aquatics Centre will put Sandwell on the map and will support the development of a strong and inclusive economy in Sandwell.</p>
	<p>A connected and accessible Sandwell</p> <p>The project will see improvements in the highways infrastructure around the Aquatics Centre with a focus on sustainable and active travel, including links to local train stations.</p>

4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 A report on progress was presented to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Panel on the 26 November 2020. This report builds upon the progress identified in the previous report.
- 4.2 Although there has been inclement weather (high winds and freezing temperatures) in the period since the last report, work has continued positively on the Aquatics Centre project and it remains on target to be handed over to the Birmingham 2022 Organising Committee on time.
- 4.3 In January 2021 in response to the national spike in the COVID-19 infection rate, the site was proactively closed for 24 hours to ensure that the safety measures in place to protect operatives was still effective. Lateral Flow Testing is now also in place on site with all operatives have two tests each week to ensure that infection rates are managed.



Since these tests have been put in place over 1500 tests have been completed and all results have been negative. The site is being managed in line with the Construction Leadership Council's Site Operating Procedures Version 7 and all health and safety arrangements continue to be reviewed on a regular basis.

4.4 Building upon the activities which were highlighted in the previous report to the panel, the following works are now complete / have been started:

- All pool tanks have been measured and pressure tested to ensure that the dimensions are correct and that there are no leaks – all three pools have passed these test;
- The dive tower and associated springboard plinths have been installed;
- The primary steel frame for the building is complete;
- The cladding to the front section of the building and the eastern elevation is complete and is also progressing well on the western elevation;
- Work has commenced on the roof for the building and the roof liner sheets are 75% complete;
- Curtain walling is complete on the front section of the building, with some glazing in place, and is progressing well on the western elevation;
- Masonry work has commenced and is progressing well internal to the building; and
- First fix M&E works have commenced and are progressing well.

4.5 Over the next few months the following actions will happen:

- Work will continue on the completion of the cladding, roofing, and curtain walling with a view to having the building fully watertight by June 2021;
- Work will continue on first fix M&E works; and
- Work will commence on work to the pool hall, including laying of tiles in pools.

4.6 In the period, work has also been completed on phase one of the highways works required to support the delivery of the Aquatics Centre. The focus of all highways works associated with the project is, whilst of course maintaining traffic flow in the area, to support sustainable and active travel. The works which have now been completed is as follows:



- Dog Kennel Lane and Bristnall Hall Road – two new zebra crossings;
- Manor Road / Holly Lane – traffic island to signalised junction with pedestrian crossings and advance stop areas for cyclists;
- Manor Road / Londonderry Lane - traffic island to signalised junction with pedestrian crossings and advance stop areas for cyclists;
- Holly Lane / St Pauls Road – give way junction to signalised junction with pedestrian crossings and advance stop areas for cyclists; and
- Londonderry Lane – puffin crossing upgrade to toucan crossing and associated cycle path.

4.7 Final designs are being developed for highways works phase two which will include improvements to Queens Road / Londonderry Lane Island and also environmental improvements to Londonderry Road. These designs will be finalised in April 2021 prior to being consulted on shortly after.

4.8 A regular newsletter updating on progress on site is distributed to local residents with two newsletters being released since the previous scrutiny meeting.

5 Alternative Options

5.1 There are no alternative options associated with this report.

6 Implications

Resources:	The project is on target to be delivered within the funding allocated to it at the meeting of Cabinet on 20 November 2019. No further funding has been required from Sandwell Council for the delivery of the project.
Legal and Governance:	There are no specific legal or governance considerations arising from this report.
Risk:	A full quantified risk register is in place for the project and is reviewed on a monthly basis. Risk is a standing item Sandwell Aquatics Centre Project Board.
Equality:	There are no equality implications as a result of this report.



Health and Wellbeing:	The Sandwell Aquatics Centre will contribute to the leisure offer in the borough, providing a world-class facility for our residents to be active, contributing to healthy lives.
Social Value	The benefits created by the construction of the Aquatics Centre are already being felt with local people winning new jobs and gaining valuable skills and experience.

