

# Agenda

## Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board

**Monday, 14 February 2022 at 5.00 pm**

**In the Council Chamber, The Council House, Freet Street, Oldbury, B69 3DB**

**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 for Absence**

To receive any apologies for absence.

**2 Declarations of Interest and Party Whip**

Members to declare any interests and party whip in matters to be discussed at the meeting.

**3 Minutes**

7 - 16

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2021 as a correct record.

**4 Urgent Business**

To determine whether there are any additional items of business to be considered as a matter of urgency.



5	<b>Update on Youth Facilities Review</b>	17 - 102
	Members to consider the Update on the Youth Facilities Review.	
6	<b>Update on the Performance of Sandwell Children's Trust</b>	103 - 106
	Members to receive and comment on an update on the Performance of Sandwell Children's Trust.	
7	<b>Cabinet Response to SEND Recommendations</b>	107 - 120
	Members to receive a response from Cabinet on the SEND Recommendations.	
8	<b>Forward Plan</b>	121 - 144
	Members to consider the Cabinet Forward Plan.	
9	<b>Work Programme</b>	145 - 146
	Members to consider and note the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Work Programme.	

**Kim Bromley-Derry CBE DL**  
**Interim Chief Executive**  
Sandwell Council House  
Freeth Street  
Oldbury  
West Midlands

**Distribution**

Councillor Shackleton (Chair)  
Councillors W Gill, Chidley, E A Giles, Hadley, Hinchliff, Henlan, McVittie,  
Millar, V Smith, and Webb.  
Co-opted Members K Heeley and K Kujawa – Sogbesan

Contact: [democratic\\_services@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk)

## Information about meetings in Sandwell



If you are attending the meeting and require assistance to access the venue, please contact Democratic Services ([democratic\\_services@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk)).



If the fire alarm sounds, please follow the instructions of the officers present and leave the building by the nearest exit.



Only people invited to speak at a meeting may do so. Everyone at the meeting is expected to be respectful and listen to the discussion.



Agendas with reports with exempt information should be treated as private and confidential. It is your responsibility to ensure that any such reports are kept secure. After the meeting confidential papers should be disposed of in a secure way.



This meeting may be recorded and broadcast on the Internet. If this is the case, it will be confirmed at the meeting and further information will be provided.



You are allowed to use devices for the purposes of recording or reporting during the public session of the meeting. When using your devices they must not disrupt the meeting – please ensure they are set to silent.



Members who cannot attend the meeting should submit apologies by contacting Democratic Services ([democratic\\_services@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk))



All agenda, reports, minutes for Sandwell Council's meetings, councillor details and more are available from our [website](#)

## Minutes of Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board

**Monday 29 November at 5.00pm**  
**in the Council Chamber, Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

**Present:** Councillor Shackleton (Chair)  
Councillors Chidley, E A Giles, W Gill, Hinchliff, Millar,  
McVittie, Smith and Webb;  
Co-opted Member K Kujawa-Sogbesan (Secondary School  
Governor representative)

**Officers:** Michael Jarrett (Director of Children's Services)  
Melanie Barnett (Group Head Inclusive Learning Services);  
Sue Moore (Group Head Education Support Services);  
Samantha Harman (Play Strategy Manager);  
Matt Powis (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and  
Connor Robinson (Democratic Services Officer).

### 36/21 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Chambers and co-opted member K Heeley.

### 37/21 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### 38/21 **Minutes**

Councillor Giles highlighted that herself and Councillors Chidley and Hinchliff were present at the previous meeting held on 23 August 2021 and did not submit their apologies.



## **Resolved:-**

- (1) that the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 23 August , be approved, subject to the insertion of Councillors Chidley, E A Giles and Hinchliff as present and necessary deletion in Minute No.23/21.
- (2) That, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 September were agreed as a correct record.

### **39/21 Additional Item of Business**

There were no additional items of business to consider.

Members of the Board welcomed Michael Jarrett as the new Director of Children's Services and Education and wished him well in his new role.

### **40/21 Elective Home Education**

The Board considered an update and report to the Elective Home Education review.

The Director of Children's Services and Group Head Education Support Services gave an update to the Board. It was noted that nationally Elective Home Education (EHE) was under the spotlight, it was understood that the number of children who were electively home educated had increased nationally, a trend that was mirrored in Sandwell. The continued increase in numbers of those electively home educated had led to calls for a national register. Children in Sandwell who chose EHE were already recorded on a local register, however this was not mandatory. There was safeguards in place to ensure the wellbeing of those children and young people in EHE however, there remained a risk that some children would be under the radar.

The three main reasons reported for parents choosing to EHE were cultural/lifestyle, dissatisfaction with school and the ongoing pandemic. Throughout the pandemic the numbers of children and young people in EHE had increased, as restriction measures had eased, and schools returned to pre-pandemic operations, it was believed that a reverse trend would have occurred with those



children and young people returning to school. The return to school had not been as dramatic as was predicted and an increase in restrictions was predicted to lead to a slowing of the process.

For those in EHE it was difficult to monitor and track their progress. Any assessments undertaken would require parent engagement with colleges. Not being automatically enrolled on assessments led to questions on post-16 destinations. However, the Review undertaken by the House of Commons Education Committee raised the possibility of tighter rules for EHE children.

The destinations of those young people in EHE was varied, 67 were now in the equivalent stage of leaving Year 11. There were 10 young people who were part of the Inspire Programme at Halesowen College who had achieved their qualifications and were moving onto further education, apprenticeships or work. In addition, two had benefited from EHE provision at NOVA Oldbury and had progressed into further education. There were 32 young people joining college courses. Three had started traineeships and 13 had progressed into A-Level study.

Following comments and questions from members of the Board, the following responses were made, and issues highlighted:-

- Those in EHE cannot be forced to follow the National Curriculum, any change to this would require a law change through Parliament.
- The Council welcomed parent engagement however, this was not a mandatory requirement. Only safeguarding concerns were a valid reasons for home visits. however parents, do not have to allow access to the home.
- Engagement with the Council was and continued to be encouraged. A summer activities programme over four weeks was attended by 34 children with workshops in STEM and outdoor activities and was well received by both children and parents.
- Though not required to do so, resource packs had been distributed to families to support them in their EHE.
- There were 576 children and young people currently in EHE, prior to the pandemic it was 334. A change in numbers that was reflected nationally.



- When the Council receives notification of any parent wanting to EHE, the EHE Team would communicate with the parents and school to establish the reason behind the decision and ensure all options had been considered before a final decision was made.
- The Council would welcome a national register as noted in the House of Commons report, there remains however strong opposition against such a move among parents
- Once restrictions were lifted, parents of those children being EHE would be contacted and consulted on the possible use of learning spaces in Council buildings such as libraries.
- Among those children in EHE, 20 had an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). There had been a steady increase in children with EHCPs being in EHE. All children with an EHCP and in EHE were known to the Local Authority.
- Those children and young people who were in EHE and were eligible for Free School Meals were entitled to receive them. A measure that had been taken by Sandwell Council and not replicated nationally.

Those parents who had taken their child out of school because of the pandemic were welcome to speak to the Admissions Team about returning to school.

The Board thanked Group Head Education Support Services for her attendance.

### **Resolved:-**

- (1) The Board considered the Elective Home Education Scrutiny Working Group report and approved the following recommendations to Cabinet:
  - (a) that the EHE resource pack be reviewed and edited to make it more accessible to parents;
  - (b) that The EHE website be refreshed to provide information, guides and links to other information and links to EHE forums for advice and support;
  - (c) to identify resource and support within the council to facilitate the refresh;





- (d) that additional spaces and facilities be identified for EHE groups to meet and carry out activities, and that competitive rates for use of those facilities be negotiated for EHE group use;
  - (e) that the Council develop a mechanism for resources to be shared for EHE, such as a hub for books or other educational material to be kept;
  - (f) that youth social networks, such as 'Just Youth', be promoted on the EHE website for users to find out what's on in Sandwell for young people and to encourage engagement;
  - (g) to raise awareness of the SEN and EHCP support available and access for children.
  - (h) that the Cabinet Member for Best Start in Life and the DCS, on behalf of the Council, be requested to write to the Secretary of State for Education, Nadhim Zahawi and to the Parliamentary Select Committee Inquiry of Home Education, to register this council's findings from the Elective Home Education review which highlights the need for regulation and resources for Elective Home Education; and to endorse a letter from the Association of EHE Professionals which asks whether consideration is being given to strengthening the legislation to provide further safeguards for children who are EHE.
- (2) that Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board receive an update report to consider the position in relation to post Covid fluctuations and the Education Committee Inquiry on Home Education as detailed in Appendix 4.



## Holiday Activities and Food Programme

The Play Strategy Manager introduced the report with a short video demonstrating the Summer Holiday Activities and Food Programme.

The Summer Holiday Activities and Food Programme had enabled a wide variety of activities and engagement to be undertaken across the Borough:

- Just under £500,000 grant funding had been awarded to Sandwell Partners.
- Just under 7,000 children had been reached.
- There had been 18,360 meals delivered.
- Activities and engagements had led to 60,000 contact hours with children and young people.
- Just under 900 sessions had taken place.
- There had been 48 voluntary and community organisations funded through the grant.

The Holiday Activities and Food Programme had a large uptake across the Borough, the largest group was from the primary sector, while there had been outreach to engage elder children through the Youth Council and SHAPE numbers were noticeably lower. It was important to provide activities that children both younger and older wanted to participate in to which an effort had been made to appeal to as many children and young people as possible.

The volunteers had been key to the success of the Programme, going forward the Programme hoped that the volunteers would continue and that more partners could be brought on board, it was hoped that in future holiday programmes, schools and their facilities could be utilised. The Programme had been given assurances until 2025 however the Department for Education (DfE) had not yet provided any specific numbers on funding.

Free School Meals would continue to be provided during holiday and half-term going forward into Easter 2022. The voucher scheme currently deployed across the Programme had been under review by the DfE and it was unclear if it would be continued in future programmes.



The Programme had been focused across the six towns in Sandwell to engage and reach children and families. Although aimed those children in receipt of Free School Meals, children who did not meet the offer but needed the provision had been catered for. It was also important that children and young people could bring along their friends and be included even if they were not in receipt of Free School Meals. The Programme was all about facilitating positive experiences with family and friends.

Once the DfE had confirmed the funding for the Programme going forward, a marketing and communications officer role would be established. The funding for the role would come from a 10% allocation of the DfE grant earmarked for administration.

Following comments and questions from members of the Board, the following responses were made, and issues highlighted:-

- The staff who work at the residential sites managed by Sandwell Council had been utilised in the Programme events throughout the Summer. During the Christmas holidays two excursions had been planned and were fully booked. It was hoped that the staff and centres would be fully utilised going forward.
- It was important that those who attended and may not have access to a hot meal be given that option.
- The Programmes across the school holidays provide an opportunity to engage and teach children and young people about health, wellbeing, being active and eating right, ideas that will form the basis of the Programme going forward.
- Young people had indicated that they would like the Programme to teach them life skills and provide them with something positive that they can use in their future.
- The Commonwealth Games provided an opportunity to widen the offer of the Programme and really provide something unique going forward.
- There was still work to be done to ensure that the Programme provides engagement and activities for those with SEND. Work was underway to facilitate those with SEND and it was hoped that through working with schools and special schools the Programme could welcome everyone and provide for them.



- The Sandwell Leisure Trust had not had the capacity to support the Programme in 2021, it was hoped this would change in the future.
- The Programme was about ensuring there was an offer for children and families during the school holidays. It provided activities and engagement that brought the community together.

**Resolved:-**

That, the Holiday Activities and Food Programme be noted.

42/21

**Impact of the lockdown on children and families - Working Group**

The Chair proposed a working group review that she wished the Board to undertake. The pandemic had had a real impact on Sandwell, children and families had and continued to struggle, it was crucial that the Council understood the issues and challenges facing families in the Borough in order to best respond to their needs.

Previous Board meetings had set out responses to the pandemic throughout 2020 and 2021, using this as a baseline eight key point had been identified that the proposed working would investigate and consider. A scoping document was been presented to the Board for consideration.

The eight points identified were:

1. Children’s Centres, Early Years (parents and staff groups) and nursery (non-statutory settings)
2. The Children’s Trust, Virtual School, Care Leavers and Corporate Parenting Board (Care Leavers)
3. Key Stage 1
4. Key Stage 2
5. Secondary Education
6. Connexions training opportunities, assessments for exams and entry to higher education
7. Health issues such as CAMHS and mental health
8. Vulnerable Children’s Groups



The scoping documented would be circulated to members along with the eight considered points for them to identify any particular area they wished to focus on.

**Resolved** that the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board undertake a review into the impact of the lockdown on children and families.

43/21 **Scrutiny Action Tracker**

The Board noted the Scrutiny Action Tracker. It was noted that the recommendations made by the Board regarding the Scrutiny Review of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transport Models had been accepted by Cabinet.

44/21 **Forward Plan**

The Board noted the Cabinet Forward Plan. It was agreed that Schools Funding 2022/2023 would be considered by the Board at the next meeting.

45/21 **Work Programme**

The Board noted the Work Programme. The next scheduled meeting of the Board would receive an update on the Youth Facilities Scrutiny Review.

Meeting ended at 18.30p.m

Contact: [democratic\\_services@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk)



This page is intentionally left blank

## Report to Children’s Services and Education Scrutiny Board

**Monday 14 February 2022**

<b>Subject:</b>	Update on Youth Facilities Review
<b>Director:</b>	Director Children’s Services and Education, Michael Jarrett
<b>Contact Officers:</b>	Youth Service Managers, Tariq Karim and Dawn Maleki <a href="mailto:tariq_karim@sandwell.gov.uk">tariq_karim@sandwell.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:dawn_maleki@sandwell.gov.uk">dawn_maleki@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

### 1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Children’s Services and Education Scrutiny Board receive an update on progress on the recommendations made in the Youth Facilities Scrutiny Review 20 June 2020 and make any comments and recommendations as necessary.





### 2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Children’s Services and Education Scrutiny Board requested regular update reports on the progress made against the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review into Youth Facilities.





### 3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p><b>Best start in life for children and young people</b> -We will ensure every young person has access to high quality youth work and youth provision in their towns and neighbourhoods, providing them with something to do, somewhere to go and someone to talk to, enabling them to thrive and achieve their full potential.</p>
	<p><b>People live well and age well</b> – We will support young people to be connected with their communities and to have healthy and fulfilling lives, providing them with activities and services that help to improve their wellbeing.</p>
	<p><b>Strong resilient communities</b> – We will ensure that our towns become welcoming places for young people where they have access to activities and facilities that make them feel part of their community.</p>
	<p><b>A connected and accessible Sandwell</b> – We will aim to ensure our youth facilities and activities are accessible to all young people in the Borough.</p>

### 4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 Between January and March 2020 a review was undertaken by the Children’s Services and Education Scrutiny Board into what young people have, want and need in regards youth facilities in Sandwell.

The purpose was to gather information to inform a youth facilities sufficiency strategy for Sandwell.

4.2 The Children’s Services and Education Scrutiny Board made a set of recommendations which were agreed by Cabinet on 22 July 2020 and an Executive response was presented to Scrutiny Board on 21 September 2020, which included an update on progress made against the recommendations.

4.3 During the time the recommendations were made, the Service had to re-prioritise the focus of its work due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

In partnership with other services, the Youth Service targeted its resources into detached youth work, working in areas of the Borough where young people were continuing to gather during lockdowns and





restrictions, rather than social distancing and following government guidance, and encouraged them to change their behaviours.

Youth workers also supported education colleagues with support for individual children and families by providing welfare contact by telephone and home visits, delivering food parcels and laptops and delivering education packs to Children Missing Education.

The Youth Service, being one of few Services, still able to deliver face to face work with young people conducted a survey into the impact of Covid which was completed by 509 young people.

The feedback from the Young People's Service Covid Survey Report (see Appendix 1) re-enforced the recommendations made in the Youth Facilities Scrutiny Review.

- 4.4 The update on the recommendations is attached at Appendix 2 for consideration of the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board.

The current Youth Service offer is attached in Appendix 3.

## 5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The purpose of the Scrutiny Review into Youth Facilities was to consider whether the current offer meets the needs of young people and to explore alternative options.



## 6 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	There continues to be increasing demands for youth provision and facilities without an increase in resources.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	There is a statutory requirement for the Council to do all that is reasonably practicable to secure and publicise a sufficient local offer for young people.
<b>Risk:</b>	There are no risk implications arising from this report.
<b>Equality:</b>	Having a sufficient youth offer across the Borough will ensure there is an equity of opportunity for all young people to access good quality youth work and youth provision.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	Providing access to youth activities and youth provision has a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of young people.
<b>Social Value</b>	The development of a range of youth facilities will encourage cross sector (voluntary sector and private business) working together to provide a sufficient youth offer for young people.

## 7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Sandwell Young People’s Services 2020 Covid Survey Report

Appendix 2 - Update on Recommendations

Appendix 3 - Youth Service Provision List

## 8. Background Papers

Scrutiny Working Group Report





## Youth Facilities Work Group



**Councillor Rajbir Singh (Chair)**



**Councillor Jenny Chidley**



**Councillor Richard McVittie**



**Councillor Liam Preece**

# Review of Youth Facilities in Sandwell

<b>Content</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Introduction from the Chair	3
2. Executive Summary	4
3. Background	5
4. Local Context	9
5. Youth Facilities Review	15
6. Findings	20
7. Conclusions	24
8. Recommendations	27
9. Working Group Comments	28
 <b>Appendices</b>	
1. Staffing Structure	32
2. Feedback table	33
3. Six town profiles	42
4. Voluntary Sector Funding	43
5. Sandwell Vision Ambitions	46

## **1.0 Introduction from Chair**

The 'best start for all our children' is vital for a healthy and thriving future community in Sandwell. I hope everyone will agree with this statement and take action to turn this aspiration into a reality in Sandwell.

From the outset, the overriding purpose of reviewing our youth facilities was to ensure that young people received the best possible support and services that the council and its partners can provide within a limited cash envelope.

I am very grateful to Sandwell Council officers and councillors, who engaged our fantastic young people, because they are best placed to know what our communities need and take decisions about how best to organise vital services for young people.

The Scrutiny Review Group has acted as an advocate for young people living in Sandwell and provided honest and constructive challenge during this review. Without urgent action to examine our existing youth services, we are at danger of providing services that are not relevant to young people for the longer term and risk a lost generation with nowhere to turn.

Youth Work is more than simply being in spaces where young people are, or may be, and providing something for them to do. It is an important distinction to make and to recognise this when making decisions about the purpose and functions of Sandwell's Youth Service.

We carried out the review of Youth Facilities across Sandwell to ensure that young people's perspective led our future planning.

The impact of ten years of budget cuts is a reduction in youth facilities, universal youth services and capacity to provide sufficient youth provision. The review has highlighted the need to consider how much provision is required, the way youth work is provided and the impact of youth work on crime, confidence and the best start in life.

Our play and youth services benefit the wellbeing of children and young people, they are a vital component of successful lives and contribute to social value within Sandwell's communities. The best start in life for children and young people is one of the six outcomes in the 2020 corporate plan "Big Plans for a Great Place for the People of Sandwell". We want to work with residents, partners and businesses to create a healthier, more successful future for the young people of Sandwell.

The Covid-19 Pandemic has wide ranging implications for young people and it is even more important for Sandwell to focus on the needs and wants of our youth service offer now and in the future.

This report sets out the process, findings and recommendations of the work group which will be considered by the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board and subsequently by Cabinet to respond to the findings and recommendations.

## 2.0 Executive Summary

In April 2019 the All Party Parliamentary Group published its [report - youth affairs](#) from the inquiry into 'The Role and Sufficiency of Youth Work', and in July 2019, the government launched a review into how the statutory guidance for Local Authorities on providing youth services can be more useful for local youth service provision and young people themselves.

The rationale for establishing a Youth Facilities Working Group was the need to consider current local youth provision and the role and sufficiency of youth work in line with the statutory guidance for Local Authorities.

Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board [27 January 2020](#) agreed the scope and project plan to carry out the review from January to March 2020. More about the review process can be seen in paragraph 5 of the report.

**The focus of the review was to understand the current levels of youth provision and if it was sufficient.**

As a result of austerity and budget reductions Sandwell's youth service and the facilities that it offered to young people has reduced over a decade. The impact of this change has not been assessed.

Facilities for young people are not only provided by the local authority – there are many activities provided by Sandwell's community and voluntary sector and companies such as Sandwell Leisure Trust, but there is no information available to assess whether the provision meets need.

**The Working Group wanted to find out Sandwell Young People's view about local provision.**

During the course of the review Members visited youth facilities, met with parents, providers and young people to find out their opinions and information about our youth facilities and to hear about the facilities young people have, need and want. Young people from the SHAPE youth forum have participated in the local decision-making process, gathered evidence, participated in forums and held a 'Question Time' session with members.

**This report captures current provision, where there are gaps, what young people think about the provision and what more they need and want.**

The Working Group has gathered evidence, considered all findings and drawn conclusions to inform recommendations to the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board. The report provides a summary of findings and a temperature gauge of what young people need and want more of for the future youth provision in Sandwell.

### **Sandwell's Vision**

High quality play and youth services improve the life chances of children and young people and acknowledge that children and young people have a right to enjoy their childhood as well as enabling them to develop the confidence and aspirations for a successful adulthood. Youth and play services benefit whole communities, local neighbourhoods, families and individual children and young people.

## **3.0 Background**

### **3.1 National Policy Context**

National Youth Agency definition of Youth Work - 'Youth work is an educational process that engages with young people in a curriculum built from their lived experience, and their personal beliefs and aspirations. This process extends and deepens a young person's understanding of themselves, their community and the world in which they live and supports them to proactively bring about positive changes. The youth worker builds positive relationships with young people based on mutual respect.' (*Vision for Youth Work in England to 2020*).

The YMCA recent report '[Out of Service](#)' highlights that youth services exist to provide a sense of belonging, a safe space, and the opportunity for young people to enjoy being young. However, for almost a decade, local authorities have struggled under the weight of funding pressures, meaning youth services are being forced to endure continued and damaging cuts.

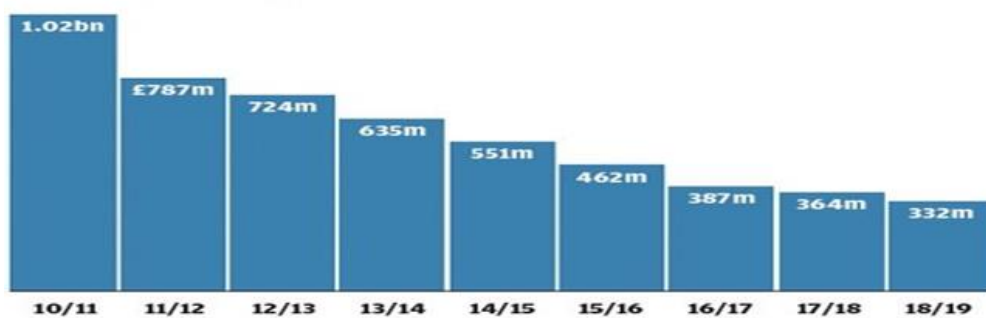
**'The last decade was not good for youth work. The statistics are well known: since 2010, hundreds of youth clubs have been closed; thousands of youth work jobs lost; and more than 100,000 places for young people scrapped – the result of a 75 per cent reduction in council youth work budgets.'**

Derren Hayes, Children & Young People Now Magazine, 28 January 2020

Analysis by the Commons Home Affairs Committee found that councils spent nearly £1bn less in real terms on youth services in 2018/19 than they did in 2010. Operating on dramatically reduced resources has not only seen councils slim down their youth work provision, but increasingly focus what little they have on interventions targeted at young people most in need of support.

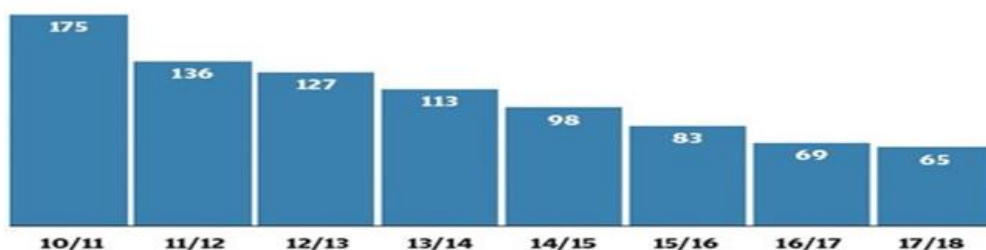
### TRENDS IN COUNCIL YOUTH SERVICES SINCE 2010

#### Spending on young people's services



Source: Section 251 returns by local authorities, DJE

#### Changes in spending per young person



Source: Youth work review, APPG for Youth Affairs, April 2019

Every region of England has each seen funding for youth services cut by more than 60% since 2010. Some of the most severely affected experienced average cuts of as much as 74% in the North West, 76% in the North East, and 80% in the West Midlands.

## 3.2 The Cost of Austerity

The funding reductions have resulted in the amount spent on universal services, provision that is open to all young people, fall and spending on targeted provision rise. The shift has raised concerns among some youth work experts that targeted provision is seen as a short-term fix for a range of social problems rather than investing in long-term relationships with young people through informal education.

The House of Commons, Home Affairs Committee Serious Youth Violence report (July 2019) highlighted the need for partners to work together in a multi-agency approach. Serious violence has got worse after youth service cuts, police cuts, more children being excluded from school and a failure of statutory agencies to keep them safe.



The Government recognised that more needed to be done to intervene early in young people's lives, making sure they have safe places to go to and trusted adults to help them and protect them from harm. So much of this support has been stripped away, leaving children vulnerable to exploitation by criminal groups.

'Youth services are in tatters after almost a decade of austerity. Our research has shown that since 2010 government cuts have forced 940 youth centres to close with the loss of 4,500 youth workers.

*Head of local government at Unison, Jon Richards.*

### 3.3 The Value of Youth Work

The YMCA 'Out of Service' report also highlights that youth services have a vital role to play in **tackling crime, gang culture and loneliness**.

The report found that a quarter of young people do not spend time with their friends outside of school due to a **fear of gangs**. A third also stopped seeing friends away from school as they **did not feel safe on the streets**.

Only half of young people could identify any **youth services near them**, despite 55% believing they help keep young people off the streets, the report found.

In addition to reducing crime, more than half of those surveyed also said youth services gave them the opportunity to develop **new skills and improve their confidence and self-esteem**.

These findings show that what they are crying out for are the very things youth services are specifically designed to provide. Every young person deserves a **safe space, a trusted adult and the opportunity to enjoy being young**. Young people are telling us what they need – in their own words – and in order to support them now and in the future, they must be listened to and acted upon.

### 3.4 The Wider Benefits of Youth Work

It has long been recognised that youth work has wider benefits for youth and for the community.

'The positive impacts of youth work make it cost effective in the medium to long term and include; improved engagement with school and education; a positive impact on the incidence of crime and anti-social behaviour amongst

young people; improvement in the wider learning and social skills of young people and helps to keep young people safe'. (Unite 2005)

Youth workers in communities and in specialist projects have regularly been shown to play important roles in supporting young people to make informed choices and deal with the range of challenges they encounter – from drugs and knife crime to mental ill-health and loneliness. In many cases, young people and the community themselves want more youth work above other services to help tackle these issues. (The role of Youth Services to reduce youth crime (NYA 2019)

In September 2019 it was reported that as youth budgets have shrunk over recent years, violent crime had spiked. Police chiefs and campaigners said it was no coincidence.

**West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner Mr Jamieson said:**

*“The Government had slashed council budgets. After years of austerity, youth services have been cut back to the bone. Young people used to be offered help, support and activities which enabled them to lead happy and successful lives”.*

*“Now, many of the services have been axed and it has left young people with limited life chances and no place to turn. I am deeply concerned that these cuts, combined with rising levels of school exclusions, are fuelling violent crime”.*

In January 2020 the Government announced additional budget for Police services. Mr Jamieson said that ‘whilst good quality policing is crucial to reducing crime, other services have a big role to play too. We need to see an increase in youth services if the government are serious about tackling the root causes of crime too.’

In March 2020, the All-Parliamentary Group (APPG) report on knife crime and

Nationally, youth violence has become a hugely contentious public and political issue and the debate about the causes, extent and solutions seems to constantly occupy the media.

Neighbouring Authority **City of Wolverhampton Council** carried out a review of Youth Violent Crime in January 2020 and highlighted the need to support existing good work and to ensure that those with the knowledge, expertise and resources; who are best placed to make such judgements are supported and encouraged to do so.

One of the reviews ten recommendations was to continue to support young people in the City through **the provision of sustained and co-ordinated youth provision**, strategically informed by the Youth Engagement Strategy.

violence reduction - [Securing a Brighter Future](#) made some strong links between youth service closures and the rise in knife crime, as well as making recommendations for a national audit of current youth services, funding for Local Authorities (LA) to sustain youth work, statutory requirement for a minimum level of professional youth service provision in each LA area and investment in professional youth workforce.

The Local Government [Bright Futures Report 2017](#) (Updated in 2019) highlighted that there was increasing evidence about where early help can add real value, such as through preventing children and young people from experiencing adverse childhood experiences, to the value of supporting families to improve their lives.

The need for young people's voices to be central to the provision offered to them, for them to be able to participate and feel included in their communities, and able to access information, support and services they need to develop skills and knowledge and to be safe and well.

Developing services they need and want is a focus for this working group review of Youth Facilities.

## **5.0 Local Context**

Sandwell town profiles and infographic summaries are available through following the link to [Sandwell Trends](#).

In 2017, a research project - Aspire Sandwell was conducted to evaluate the levels of aspirations amongst Key Stage 3 pupils across Sandwell. Young people were consulted and focus groups highlighted that students had high aspirations but did not know how to achieve them – often students would state option choices that did not link their future careers and that they did not know whom to talk to about their careers. Local stakeholders have been consulted during this review relating to local youth facilities.

### **4.1 Sandwell Council Resources**

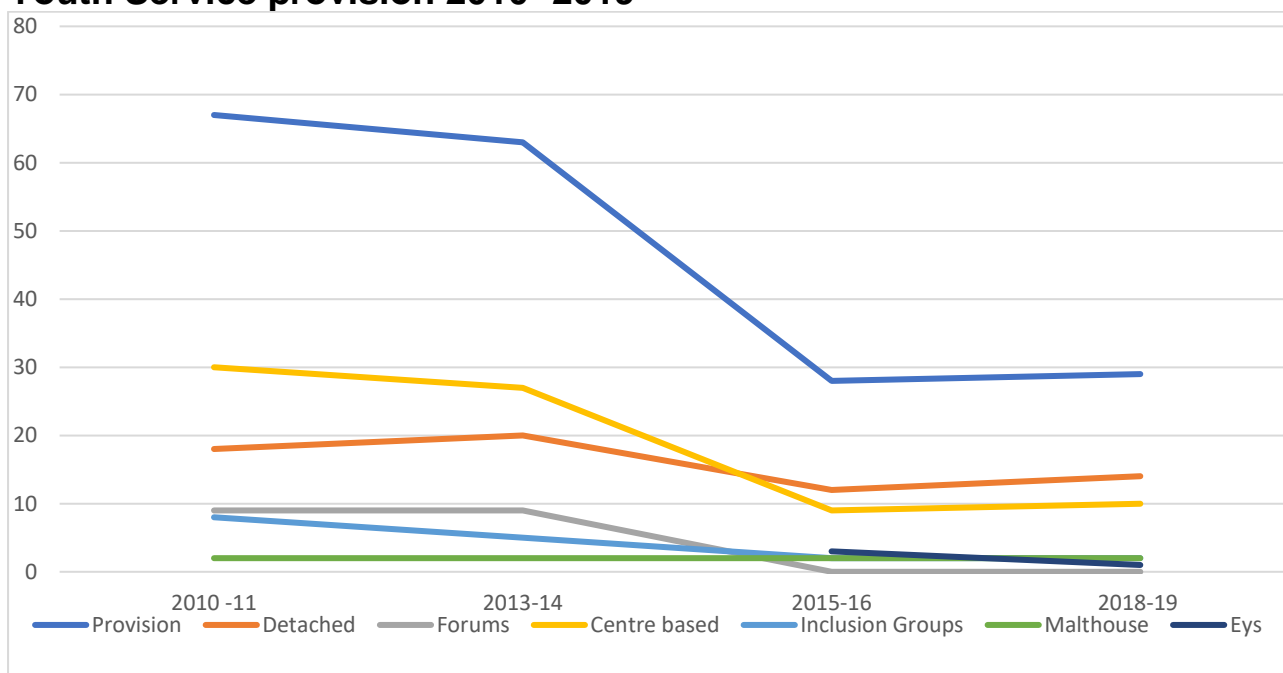
Despite recent years of austerity and the impact on local government budgets, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council has maintained a budget for some important services for children and young people that many other local authorities have not managed to protect.

The figures in the table below demonstrate the reduction between 2010-2019 and how Sandwell has continued to invest in youth services.

Financial Year	Staffing Budget	Non Staffing Budget	Total Expenditure Budget	Total Income Generation	Target Funding
2010-11	2,261,000	1,357,800	3,618,800	-1,143,200	2,475,600
2013-14	1,562,600	1,036,700	2,599,300	-281,000	2,318,300
2017-18	790,600	269,600	1,060,200	-144,900	915,300
2018-19	828,100	279,200	1,107,300	-141,900	965,400
2019-20	858,700	279,200	1,137,900	-141,900	996,000

The budget reduction resulted in a marked reduction in youth provision between 2010-2019 and the way in which youth services were provided.

### Youth Service provision 2010- 2019



- April 2010 - 11 – 67 provisions (18 detached teams, 9 forums, 30 centre based, 8 inclusion groups, 2 Malthouse)
- April 2013 - 14 – 63 provisions (20 detached teams, 9 forums, 27 centre based, 5 inclusion groups, 2 Malthouse)
- April 2015 - 16 – 28 provisions (12 detached teams, 0 forums, 9 centre based, 2 inclusion groups, 3 EYS Groups, 2 Malthouse) – Youth Service total loss 54%
- April 2018 - 19 – 29 provisions (14 detached teams, 0 forums, 10 centre based, 2 inclusion groups, 1 EYS Group, 2 Malthouse) Lost 1 Girls Group and 1 Boys Group
- April 2019 -20 – 28 provisions (14 detached teams, 0 forums, 9 centre based, 3 inclusion groups, 1 EYS Group, 1 Malthouse) Lost Hill Top YC and BLAST, Gained Wednesbury YC and Multi-Activity SEND Group
- Current Facilities: 8 youth clubs, Detached team, EYS (Enhanced Youth Service), Malthouse Outdoor Education Centre, Coneygre Arts Centre, Youth Buses, Teamworx, SHAPE programme.

## 4.2 Funding

Sandwell Council current youth provision costs in the region of £1 million. The Council continues to apply for funding for youth provision from a variety of funding pots. In 2018-19 Sandwell Council accessed external funding of £5,000 via Emerge (funded by Spirit of 2012) and Youth Services accessed £12,949 of funding for projects from Sandwell MBC Youth Offer budget.

### The purpose of the Youth Offer Budget

The budget was split equally across the 6 towns and wards, was to support and empower Sandwell's young people and the provision of local services, activities and facilities that were of great value to local young people and communities.

Therefore, the budget was used to support internal and external projects that demonstrated they would support young people to be engaged in activities, feel safe and empowered to make positive lifestyle choices.

Since Town Grants funding, which included the Youth Offer Budget, were transferred to Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisation (SCVO) in January 2020 any groups internal or external who require funding would have to apply to SCVO.

### Breakdown of Youth Offer Awarded 2018/2019 and 2019/20:

2018/19 Town	Total Spend
Smethwick	£ 6,667.88
Oldbury	£ 2,372.40
Rowley Regis	£ 6,259.29
Tipton	£ 4,648.40
Wednesbury	£ 6,776.05
West Bromwich	£10,726.16
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£37,450.18</b>

2019/20 Town	Total Spend
Smethwick	£ 1,800.00
Oldbury	£ 3,832.37
Rowley Regis	£ 3,432.11
Tipton	£ 4,195.00
Wednesbury	£ 10,696.11
West Bromwich	£ 6,447.05
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£ 30,402.64</b>

Further to total spend a breakdown of the Youth Funding for 2018/19 and 2019/20 for both internal and external funding awards can be seen at appendix X.

The appendix identifies the Group name, amount of funding, town and project for each award.

### **Future Funding**

The Government has recognised the need to invest in young people's futures and announced in October 2019, a £12 million boost in youth projects across the Country, as part of the Government's commitment to help young people thrive and level up opportunities. This funding has supported Scouts and Guides groups, NHS volunteering by young people and the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme.

In December 2019, The Queens speech highlighted that a £3.6 billion Towns Fund for towns across England has been brought into level up our regions. In September, 100 places were selected to develop proposals for a Town Deal of up to £25 million, 3 Towns in Sandwell were included in the invitation to develop proposals.

In February 2020 Sandwell Council approved grant fund of £311,000 for Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) to lead on awarding small grants and run the Vision 2030 Community Grants Programme. The funding is not specifically for youth facilities, however voluntary and community groups will be able to apply for small grants of up to £5,000 to support projects, activities and events that support Sandwell's Vision 2030 and are linked to the following:

- Building social connections
- Youth activities
- Healthy lifestyles

In March 2020, the coronavirus pandemic changed the landscape for services, for young people and youth work. The lock-down and social distancing requirements changed the focus of what we do to keep young people safe. Detached youth work has continued on a daily basis across the Borough with a focus on making sure young people understand the Government guidelines about social isolation/ social distancing and keeping themselves, friends and families safe. Messaging has also taken place through the [Facebook page](#) and virtual activities have been offered online.

**It is almost certain that funding, in the wider emergency context, will be reviewed and that the funding assumptions highlighted in the review may be revised and public bodies be asked to divert to urgency measures.**

### 4.3 The Current Youth Offer

There are 8 youth clubs altogether with at least one per town in Sandwell offering personal and professional development workshops for accreditation opportunities around First Aid, Food Hygiene, Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) providing skills for life and Arts Award.

Workshops are also offered on drugs & alcohol, sexual health, smoking awareness, teenage pregnancy, sexual exploitation, bullying, self-image, confidence and more. Clubs provide social and recreational activities too. Youth clubs develop an action plan with young people that drive activities based on young people's needs.

The Youth Service works closely with a range of partners, particularly the police and schools, and it works well alongside the play service, but these are not currently linked together organisationally, nor strategically or operationally. Sustainability of services is reliant on the continued provision of funding for services, some of which are directly funded through government grants or traded income.

Sandwell also runs its youth participation work through the SHAPE Programme and focuses on 5 key areas; Staying Safe, Being Healthy, Enjoying & Achieving, Making a Positive Contribution and Economic Wellbeing. The Youth Service has been integral to the development of the programme over the past 5 years and Sandwell's Youth Service staff enable the SHAPE programme to be delivered. Youth Service staff provide both strategic and practical support to the programme and have helped develop much of the activity on the ground including SHAPE Your Talent, Youth Conferences, surveys, youth takeovers, anti-bullying roadshows and the annual Youth Festival's.

There continues to be increasing demands on the youth and play services to support community and borough wide events. In particular, the Youth Service is called upon to provide support to local activities by providing the Climbing wall, youth buses and provision of live music from Coneygre Arts Centre. In addition, there is pressure to deliver the Youth Offer in some towns where there is a shortfall in voluntary sector provision.

Enhanced Youth Support has proven to be an integral part of the Youth Service offer. This service provides support to both individuals and groups through targeted interventions and referrals are received through a number of partners including schools, Community Operating Groups (COG's), Police and Children's Centres. The success has been such that demand is beginning to exceed capacity.

The current staffing structure can be seen at appendix 1 to the report.



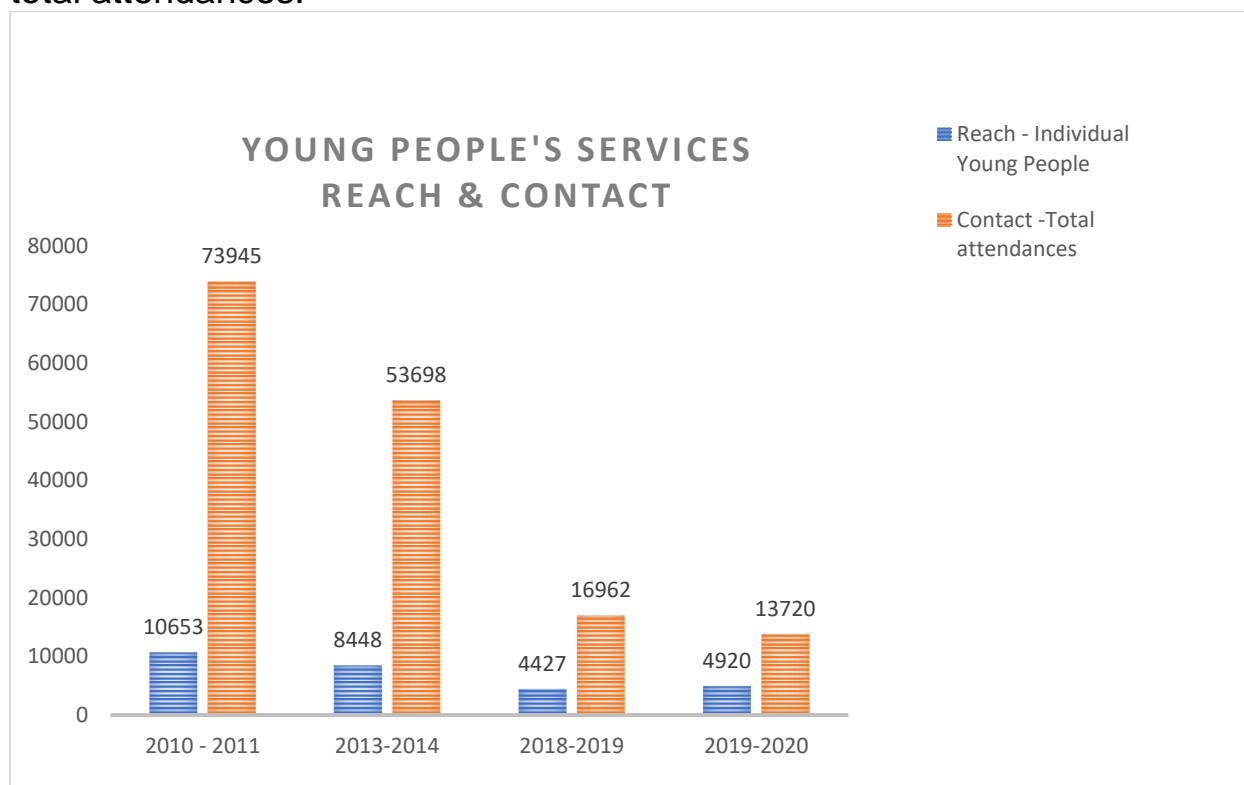
In addition to physical provision young people are encouraged to use social media, Just Youth is a [website](#) designed by young people for young people. The website is a free interactive online listings guide. Young people can register to be kept up to date of events and activities in Sandwell.

Justyouth.org.uk lets you know what's on in Sandwell, wherever you are, any time you like. The website has been stagnant for a while due to capacity to maintain and develop content but is currently being reviewed with young people to improve and maintain it going forward.

In addition to the website young people use [Facebook](#) and Instagram to participate in youth provision.

#### 4.4 How many young people do we reach?

Physical interaction is measured in reaching individual young people and in total attendances.



With more funding youth services could reach more young people.

Youth work is an educational process that engages with young people in a curriculum that deepens a young person's understanding of themselves, their community and the world in which they live. It develops their confidence and enables them to believe in themselves and make positive choices and it is underpinned by a set of values, the first of which is that young people choose to take part.



Skilled youth workers build relationships that support young people to explore their personal, social and educational development. Youth work enables young people to develop their voice, influence and place within society.

## 5.0 Youth Facilities Review

5.1 **Why do a review?** The Children's Services & Education Scrutiny Board set up a working group consisting of four members of the Board to carry out a review Youth Facilities across Sandwell. Youth services was last reviewed by scrutiny in 2011. The working group agreed a focused approach to look at youth facilities from young people's perspective:

***What youth facilities does Sandwell:***

***Have? Need? Want?***

- What is the current provision?
- Does the current provision meet the needs of young people?
- What do young people want?

### **Scope of the review:**

- to assess the impact of austerity and budget reductions on the youth service and the youth offer in Sandwell over a decade;
- to understand the needs and wants of Sandwell's youth population;
- to identify the current levels of activity and provision on offer to young people across Sandwell;
- to assess whether the level of provision, either directly provided or grant-aided/procured by Sandwell Council is sufficient to meet the needs and wants of young people across the Borough;
- to identify any gaps in current provision and how those gaps might be filled, or any over-sufficiency in provision;
- to explore best practice, technological changes and other ways of working.
- to involve young people in local decision-making.
- to use new approaches to scrutiny activity during evidence gathering.
- to produce a robust and coherent report, informed by young people, to inform a 'sufficiency strategy' for youth provision in Sandwell.

The review was member led with officers supporting, to focus on particular elements of the review, such as;

- Building the evidence base
- Capturing the local picture, through visits and meeting forums
- Considering external factors and examples of good practice

The officer steering group comprised of colleagues from Youth Service, Neighbourhoods, Democratic Services, young people from SHAPE and wider partner organisations including West Midlands Police and local support officers to ensure fit with wider policy, the Vision 2020 and the national & international context.

The review incorporated a range of methods to gather evidence, including engagement, fact-finding and research activities, over a three-month period.

Date	Activity
8 January	Scope and initial outline report
13 January	Online survey set up
20 January	Officer support meeting
21 January	Review Group - Scope meeting
27 January	Children's & Young People Scrutiny Board
3 February	Survey feedback
3 February	Invitations and planning for forums
5 February	Review Group Meeting
10 - 21 February	Members site visits to Youth facilities and Field Research
24 – 28 February	Forums: Coneygre Arts Centre Sandwell Parents of Disabled Children Police Representatives Youth Worker Staff Conference
2-4 March	Review feedback and findings
5 March	Members Question Time with SHAPE
10 March	Visit to the Factory Young People's Centre and meeting with NYA
12 March	Review Group meeting evaluation and recommendations
31 March	Draft report
April	Final Report and Recommendations
	Evaluation & Learning

The scrutiny process enabled young people to participate in democratic process and gave members and officers opportunity to trial different ways of working, as highlighted by the Review of Scrutiny Working Group in its recent [report and recommendations](#)

## 5.2 What did we do? - Evidence Gathering

A wide range of evidence was gathered in a short timeframe to provide a snapshot of the current 'Youth Offer' in Sandwell and the local and national context.

Method	How	Who
<b>Desk top research</b>	Internet research, comparator, CMIS recent reports	DfE, Specialists, other Local Authorities, SMBC
<b>SHAPE survey</b>	Survey feedback report	Young people
<b>Survey #mychillzone</b>	Social Media	Young people, Members, public and partners
<b>Visits</b>	<p><b>Virtual visits</b> The Way, Wolverhampton, Youth Services, Stoke Reading Youth Offer, Reading.</p> <p><b>Members visits:</b> Sandwell youth clubs &amp; facilities The Factory, Birmingham</p>	Members Providers, voluntary organisations, youth workers, Members, parents, young people. Members, NYA, young people.
<b>Forums</b>	<p><b>Meetings on site</b> Art and Drama Club, Coneygre Centre Sandwell Parents of Disabled Children, The Meadows School West Midlands Police, West Bromwich Police Station Youth Worker Staff Conference, Coneygre Centre</p>	Parents, youth workers, young people, volunteers, support workers and police officers.

<b>Question Time Session in the Council Chamber</b>	Working Group Members, Cabinet Member for Best Start in Life, Cabinet Member for Skills and Employment and the representative of the Sandwell Council for Voluntary Organisations were invited to form a panel. Facilitated by Democratic Services Officers.	Young people from the SHAPE programme and youth managers were invited to participate as the audience and to ask questions of the panel about the main themes arising from evidence gathering.
---	--	---

### 5.3 What other Local Authorities do

The Review Group identified four Local Authorities to consider youth provision elsewhere to consider the approach they took and the issues they encountered.

Stoke: Statistical neighbour, has six towns like Sandwell are about to review youth services.

Wolverhampton: Statistical neighbour and have one main youth provision established in 2016, following a review of youth services.

Birmingham: Statistical neighbour, manage 16 youth centres.

Reading: Carried out Youth review 2016, no Council universal provision, focus on targeted and intensive services.

**Stoke City Council** in 2019 considered plans for a £3.3m youth hub to be built in the town of Hanley. Stoke-on-Trent is made up of six towns, young people in [Stoke](#) felt it would alienate those who did not live in Hanley and could lead to more violence by bringing postcode rivalries together in one place. YMCA in Hanley, indicated it might help bring the different towns of Stoke together. Youth workers felt that the money would be better spent on youth clubs in the six towns of Stoke, rather than in the centre.

**City of Wolverhampton Council** – The Way, Youth Zone is in the Centre of Wolverhampton. It first opened its doors in early 2016, in a £5.5m project by Onside Youth Zones Organisation, which is a partnership of the private sector, local authority, young people and the community forms. The Way offers activities for young people every day of the week. It has been reported that the youth zone has had immeasurable impact on Wolverhampton youngsters which helps them keep active, keep off their computers, and stay off the streets. However, feedback from a survey of nearly 12,000 children and young people and their parents and carers in 2019 highlighted the need to support the youth of Wolverhampton to be healthier, be connected and be heard.

In January 2020 Wolverhampton Council launched the [youth engagement strategy #YES](#), £2m Investment over three years to create a youth engagement team to provide better information about and signposting to events and opportunities and set up a funding pot which young people, families, groups and organisations can use to develop new activities for young people. The multi-million pound strategy designed to help Wolverhampton's young people reach their full potential was officially launched at The Way Youth Zone.

**Birmingham City Council** – The Factory Young People’s Centre is a modern, state of the art youth provision, located in Longbridge, South Birmingham and is part of the Birmingham City Council Youth Service. The Centre provides a multitude of activities and opportunities for young people (aged 10-25), from weekly youth club programmes and events to a range of services and support that young people may require.

**Reading Council** - Following a review of Youth Services in 2016 Reading Council ceased all Universal Services and approved spending for targeted and Intensive Services. Reading Borough Council (RBC) works with Voluntary sector partners to provide a full range of universal activities. The targeted youth offer to young people in the town ensured that vulnerable young people key outcomes were met. [Reading Youth](#) provides information about youth services and activities available for young people in Reading.

## 5.4 Workshop to consider the findings

The Work Group reviewed all the evidence in a work shop to focus on the matters that had been clearly identified as priorities for young people, parents, providers and partners in relation to what youth facilities young people have, need and want.

There were strong and clear messages about what young people **want** from the range of evidence gathered. The core officer group provided evidence of what provision, resource and capacity the Council currently **have**, and parents, partners and police gave clarity to what more they **need**.

The Review Group focused on the main themes arising from evidence gathered, however Members identified several more gaps and matters for further investigation, which have been listed in the findings table.

The financial and external pressures on Youth Provision has been captured in the context of the report. The benefits of youth work to young people, families and the community have been referred to throughout this review and the Work Group has highlighted the need for youth service to work closer with partners and the voluntary sector.

## 6.0 Findings

### Summary of findings from the evidence gathered.

*The findings are not in priority order:*

Age range	Currently: 11-19 years There is a need to separate out the age groups: Play provision for a younger age group (8-11years). A range of age appropriate youth activities for middle (11-16) and older (16-19) groups.
Arts and drama	Coneygre Centre is in Tipton. Arts and drama activity is in high demand, parents and children travel from all around the area to use the facility. Young People want more provision like this and need more hours here.
Austerity	The reduction to youth provision has been too great, it has depleted the number of facilities, no investment in has been made for developing facilities or for new equipment (including the youth bus) for a decade.
Communication	External Communication is not reaching people: The mechanisms we use to communicate are not what most young people access. We need to update what we do to reach young people with information about what's on, what good practice is happening and what's on in other facilities across Sandwell. Internal: How the youth service communicates with staff and includes part-time workers. Email addresses for part-time youth workers and regular youth worker conferences would be beneficial.
Crafts and skills	Youth workers identified a gap in provision for young people to develop skills, make something and take it away, and develop interests in hobbies that grow skills and wellbeing in young people.
Disabilities	There are facilities for young people with additional needs, but transport is limited, facilities have reduced and are not easily accessible. Parents highlighted that it is not easy to find out what is happening and where.
Multi agency approach	There is some multiagency and collaborative working between agencies and this needs further consolidation to ensure all services relating to young people, take a holistic approach to ensure that they have the provision that best meets their needs.
Partnership working	Opportunities need to be created to further map the Youth Offer at a town level, including Council, voluntary sector and private provision, and to create forums for dialogue between agencies to identify further gaps and needs. There is a need to explore how local businesses can



	<p>create opportunities and pathways for young people to thrive.</p> <p>It is important for young people to feel a valued part of a multicultural society, that recognises the contribution they have to make and supports them to achieve their aspirations and agencies should work together to facilitate this.</p>
Own space	<p>We need one building for all youth provision in every town, young people want one building in each town which they can take ownership of, for local youth to own and run as their space.</p> <p>Many youth clubs and activities use shared facilities – these spaces can be limited (storage space, use of facilities and access to the building). Problems were highlighted such as the time taken to take equipment out and put it away, not being able to leave work and projects out, access times to buildings etc.</p>
Refugees and asylum seekers	<p>We want to understand how we support young people new to UK. Sandwell Council collects data from young people on their immigration status, any young person can access our youth facilities and young people between the age of 11- 18 who want to access youth provision or may need additional support could be referred from STEPS to the Youth Service Enhanced Youth Support team. EYS could then meet with the young person and provide appropriate support to enable them to have support to access universal youth provision with some 121 support if required.</p>
Residential facilities for youth service	<p>Sandwell Council has residential facilities that the Youth Service struggles to afford to take young people to. We need to make Sandwell Council facilities affordable and available when it comes to residential.</p> <p>A suggestion made was that when Council owned facilities meet their income target, the facilities could be opened up to be used by Sandwell Youth Services for the young people of Sandwell.</p> <p>The Youth Service has operational management responsibility of Coneygre Arts Centre and Malthouse Stables Outdoor Education Centre. These centres both have income targets which contribute to the core budget of the Service.</p>
Resources and Equipment	<p>Some of the equipment being used is old, much needs to be replaced, and each provision needs a resources budget for activities and to replenish equipment. Is a pool</p>

	table what they want or need? Young people want Wi-Fi and technology including games.
Sports and activity	Sandwell has a variety of teams and clubs which provide access for young people to sports and activity such as football, boxing and other team sports. Many are provided by voluntary organisations, we need to find out what is available and develop the team building and pride in their achievements.
Transport	Parents say that they want safer transport for young people to youth facilities. Transport can be an issue, it is difficult for young people to get to a facility on their own. Catching buses costs money and waiting around bus stop is a concern for parents of some vulnerable young people. Generally young people are reliant on parents taking and picking them up.
Use of public buildings	We want to find out why libraries and schools are not used in the evening. Several facilities are considered to be underused as per their potential, these spaces should be reflected in the youth offer. There is a need to do more research about how our facilities are being used and what is the path to maximise utilisation. Use of public space and how the Council uses public buildings should be a topic for future discussion.
Use of technology and Wi-Fi	Young people want access to Wi-Fi, they need it to find information and to have fun. Further investigate the suggestion of an APP for young services which could improve access to information for young people partners and parents and modernise how staff share information.
Voluntary Sector	The evidence gathered does not adequately reflect the wider voluntary sector youth facilities and how young people across the Borough are able to access services regardless of who the provider is. There is more work needed to map out voluntary sector provision and consider funding opportunities.
Youth buses	Youth workers and the older group of young people want to get the Youth Bus back on the road. The double decker youth bus has been off the road for four months for repairs, because of its age spare parts have to be made for it. The youth bus has been used as a chill out space and used primarily by older young people and detached workers. It is a safe, warm and dry space. There is a smaller bus available, but the double decker is special with activities and an upper floor of gaming, dancing and disco! There may be a need to replace the bus due to the high demands on the youth bus and the fact it is 20 years



	old and is prone to breakdown during the winter months. To replace the bus and fully kit it out would require an investment of up to £200,000.
Youth Symposium	We want to bring together partners and organisations to discuss Youth Facilities.

## 5.6 What did we find out?

### Headlines - What young people want and need:



**Dry** – A place of our own, safe, flexible and dry.



**Wi-Fi** – connection to Wi-Fi to communicate with friends and play games.

### Main messages from providers and partners:



**Facilities** – shared facilities, smaller space, storage and reduced capacity over last decade. Cost of space hire and residential facilities.



**Upgrade** – facilities and equipment not replaced, also need to modernise spaces and add Wi-Fi.



**Capacity** – need more youth workers to open more evenings.



**Age range and access** – Need to engage young people earlier and enable access for all.

### Main messages from parents



**Communication and information** - Parents and Young people want to know what is available,



**Happy and confident** - Parents recognise that young people grow in confidence and meet new friends.

## 7.0 Conclusions

### Evaluation of the findings

The key themes highlighted in our findings were raised across all forums and in the feedback from surveys. The common themes reflect matters raised about Council facilities and some voluntary provision and partnership working. We found that there was more work to do to map out voluntary sector and wider provision.

A wide range of evidence was considered, and there will be more work to look at provision, but based on evidence gathered in this review, the Work Group were minded to say that the **current provision is not sufficient to meet the needs of young people.**

There was consensus from those consulted that **local youth facilities should be retained in each Town**, and that each facility needed to be upgraded and modernised, also that **current provision should be extended** to more evenings and holiday periods.

The Work Group found that there were good facilities in some towns and good practice, but that the **lack of youth worker capacity** meant that some facilities could not meet demand, specifically the Coneygre and Malthouse youth facilities. It was also found that there were **untapped funding resources** and that more could be done to focus on funding opportunities.

In other youth clubs based in shared facilities, there were **issues about access**, having sports facilities hired out during youth club times and the storage of equipment issues all of which had a detrimental effect on the youth work and impacted on the attendance.

Another factor raised in all forums was the need to **reach young people earlier** and the need to separate out the age groups, to **allow each age group to operate an age appropriate activity.**

The lack of consistency across the youth facilities in each of the Towns was an underlying issue, but the main theme from youth was that there was not enough **local youth provision.** Many travelled to Art and Sport provision but did not know about other provision close to where they live. More work may be needed to **map out youth facilities** and if they meet the needs of the local community.

Another key theme arising was the lack of **communication and promotion** of what was available and where, and also the need to review mechanisms used to communicate information.

The Work Group looked at other Local Authority provision and considered a wide range of advice and information relating to **good youth provision** and the **impact of youth work** on young people's futures, Health and Wellbeing and the impact of youth work on violent crime and communities. All of these factors relate directly to the Sandwell Vision and to the Sandwell Plan: Big Plans for a Great Place.

## OUR STRATEGIC OUTCOMES



### THE SIX OUTCOMES:

- 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

Realising our vision in Big Plans for a Great Place is a huge undertaking and will mean breaking the cycle of poverty, improving support and outcomes in a child's early years, increasing skills and education attainment, reducing health inequalities, creating an environment for more inclusive economic growth and ensuring all residents are able of benefiting from new opportunities.

### Being a young person in Sandwell

When young people were asked if there is anything else they would like to say about being a young person in Sandwell, the most popular response was that it was challenging and difficult for a number of reasons such as school and not being listened to, lots of homework and exams, bullying and lack of support for young people particularly around mental health.

Comments were made that Sandwell is boring and there were no opportunities or nothing to do for young people and would be good to offer 'cheaper or free facilities' and ensure young people's voices are heard. Statements were made by young people saying, 'they felt scared due to mean people' and references

were also made to knife crime. Although most of comments made were negative, a few respondents did make positive statements saying they were 'happy', 'it's good'.

Taking all the evidence gathered into consideration and listening to the feedback from young people the Work Group concluded that the following priorities need to be addressed first to inform 6 recommendations:

<b>What</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>Why</b>
<b>Communication Plan</b>	R1	Young people, parents and youth workers told us that they did not know what was available and where. The way we communicate was not how young people want information to be shared.
<b>Wi-Fi and Dry</b>	R2	Dry – A place of our own, safe and dry. Wi-Fi – connection to communicate with friends and play games. Facilities and better use of what we have. Upgrade Equipment.
<b>Transport</b>	R3	Safe travel to facilities was raised by young people and parents, especially for vulnerable young people.
<b>Funding</b>	R4	Access to funding pots and future funding was raised to expand current provision. There is also a need to strengthen the current Youth Service offer with revenue investment.
<b>Sufficiency of Youth Offer</b>	R5	The demand for youth facilities was unmet, the need to work in a multi-agency approach was Identified.
<b>Capacity</b>	R6	If we want to do more youth work, more work with partners we will need more youth workers. If we want to extend the age range to accommodate young people earlier, we will need additional capacity.
<b>Democratic</b>	R7	SHAPE participation in the review and specifically in the Question Time evidence gathering session was innovative and successful and should be embedded in the democratic processes for future scrutiny work.

## 8.0 Recommendations

The panel recommends that;

1. **A Partnership Framework (to include a Communications Plan and Multi-agency approach)** is developed with young people, for young people and is specifically targeted to promote current activities and future opportunities using the experts within the council to provide a joined-up plan that compliments services across the local authority.

This should consider how we currently communicate, what we currently communicate and the most effective platforms to use across a range of media.

A **Youth Symposium** should be held in early 2021 for all partners in the borough to help build a clear picture of what is available, build upon key themes arising from the Scrutiny Review, the multi-agency approach and develop closer partnership working for a joined-up offer for Sandwell. The youth symposium should draw together a joined-up approval to youth work and young people in Sandwell.

2. Young people should be afforded **safe, flexible, space of their own, with 'Wi-fi & Dry' as the basic offer in Sandwell**. The council should take a strategic approach and consider modelling 'space options' across the Borough's 6 towns, these could test:

- a) Use of libraries within extended opening times – rethinking their use in the community
- b) Mobile provision (through a bus or support vehicle).
- c) Pop up shops and underused town centre units.
- d) Leisure & Activity Centres.
- e) Other council properties and schools.
- f) New build, where no existing options are deemed suitable.

3. The council explores the option of providing **free or concessionary public transport for young people to enable better access to local youth activities, opening up Sandwell and all it offers**. Targeted provision should be considered in relation to vulnerable young people and those with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

4. The council should **take a more strategic approach to funding** and explore existing funding pots through a better use of regional partnerships and directories. Better alignment could be made to **complimentary activity within the voluntary sector** (such as SVCO's

community grants) and **to the corporate social responsibility objectives** of local businesses.

5. The Council should **develop a renewed 'Youth Offer'** which clearly identifies the very positive activities that are currently on offer and addresses those gaps which would enable a more bespoke approach. The **National Youth Agency's Standard Quality Mark Framework** should be used to measure the capacity, quality and sufficiency of youth facilities in Sandwell.
6. A renewed youth offer would aim to close the gaps in provision and ensure sufficiency of youth facilities, but in order to do would require an increase in capacity and therefore the resources required to deliver the provision would need to be reviewed.
7. Following the success of the **Question Time session** held during the review, it is recommended that quarterly Question Time sessions be scheduled into the Scrutiny Work Programme, with Shape forum the Cabinet Member / Champion for Children and Young People.

## **9.0 Evaluation of the Scrutiny Process**

An evaluation of this review will inform the development of the scrutiny function in Sandwell. The Working Group will refer any matters outside the review remit to other scrutiny work streams, which will help to shape the scrutiny work programme for 2020-21.

The review enabled members to:

- lead on the review and work closely with core officers;
- use technology and social media channels to gather evidence and inform the public;
- engage with service users and parents through a schedule of site visits and forums across the Borough and the needs of the service.
- be the public voice, question and challenge services;
- make recommendations for service improvement to the Cabinet Decision Makers.

## **10.0 Comments from the Working Group**

The Work Group would like to thank all young people and members of the public and partners who participated and contributed to the consultation process and forums to gather evidence for the review.



The Work Group valued the contribution of members of the SHAPE youth forum, young people have participated at all stages of evidence gathering and held a question time session to challenge the work group as part of the democratic scrutiny process.

- The evidence gathered presents a snapshot of what young people ‘Have Need and Want’ in relation to youth facilities in Sandwell in Spring 2020.
- The review findings and recommendations are the catalyst to start a larger piece of work to develop a sustainability strategy and multiagency and collaborative approach to youth facilities in the future.
- The Work Group highlighted some quick wins that the Council has already addressed and it has made recommendations for change which focus on longer-term and transformational change that will be considered in a wider forum, which will need strategic planning and resource. Our review was supported by an officer group and the scrutiny team we agreed the focus of the review and agreed which methods to use to get underneath the issues and identify the gaps in provision. We used tools and techniques to reach out and engage with stakeholders, to enable us to listen to the what providers and service users had to say.

Youth facilities in Spring 2020 is a moving picture due to Covid-19 and the need for Youth Facilities to adapt and change is even more important now.

### **Chairs comments**

“There have been numerous advantages of this Youth Facilities Review Group, I have received many complimentary comments and would like to sincerely thank officers for managing this process to meet best practise in local government. Three themes on which I would like to make observation are;

- **Quality:** The quality of research, engagement with stakeholders and documents was excellent. The involvement of officers, councillors, young people and partners was clear, with defined roles and responsibilities.
- **Relationships:** The positive tone of engagement with young people, parents and partners sets a framework for ongoing productive relationships between the council and community.
- **Young people focus:** Throughout the review process, best-practice was followed and due to the thoughtful involvement from councillors and officers, we have produced a set of serious recommendations about meeting the needs of young people and this will result in real enhanced services.”

**Councillor Rajbir Singh**  
**Chair Children's and Education Scrutiny Committee.**  
**Councillor for Bristnall ward.**



## **Contributors:**

**Working Group:** Councillors Jenny Chidley, Rajbir Singh, Richard McVittie and Liam Preece.

**Childrens Services & Education Scrutiny Board Members:** Councillors Lorraine Ashman, Kerrie Carmichael, Elaine Costigan, Kay Millar, Sue Phillips, Ann Shackleton and Zahir Hussain,

Report author: Deb Breedon, Democratic Services SMBC  
Review facilitators: James Sandy and Alexander Goddar, Democratic Services SMBC

Core Officer Group: Lesley Hagger, Executive Director Children's Services  
Tariq Kari, Youth Service  
Dawn Maleki, Youth Service  
Neesha Patel,  
Manny Sehmbi,

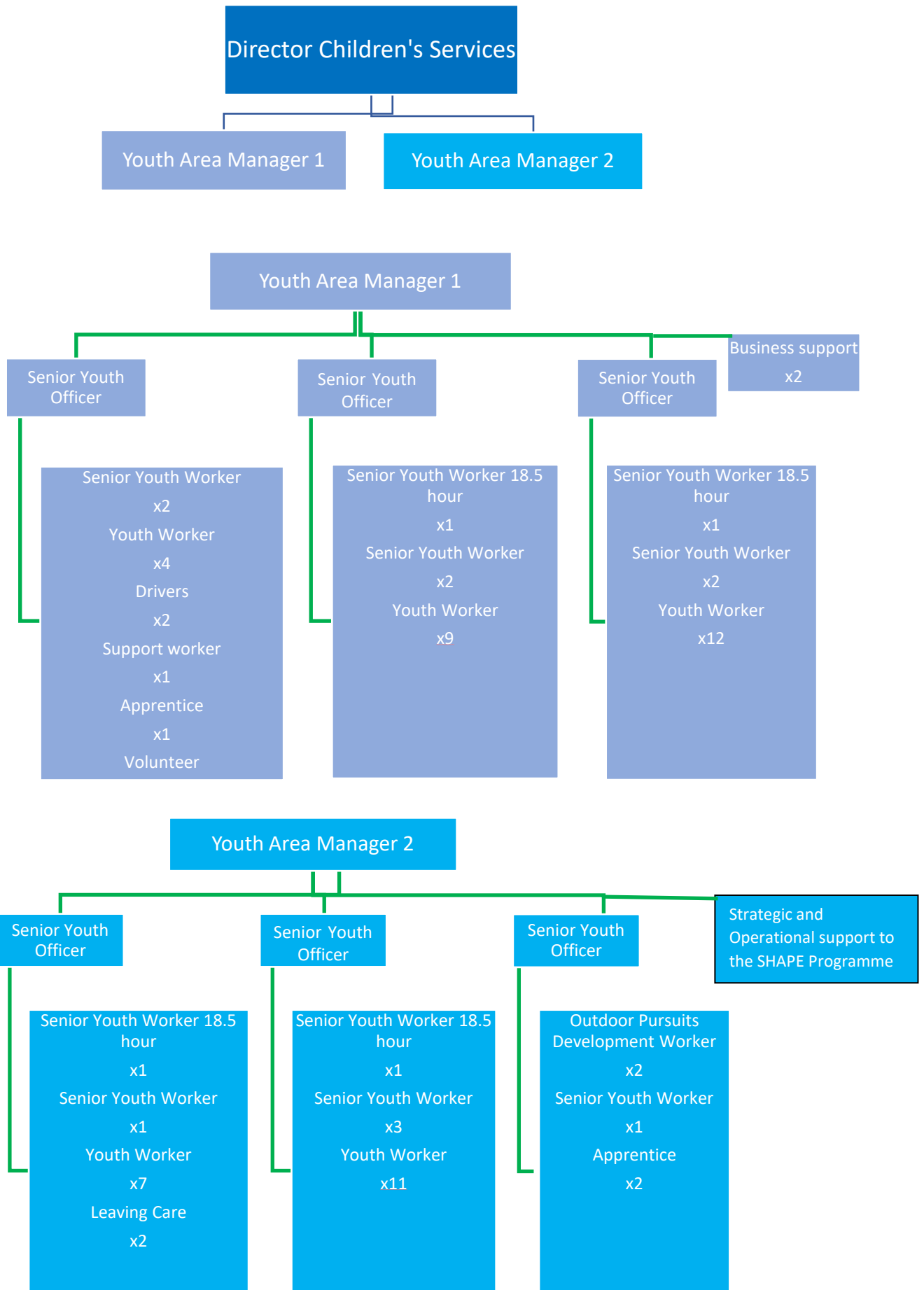
Youth Workers  
Shape Youth Forum

All youth workers

Jessica Mansell  
Daniel Mansell  
Mahmoud Suraj  
Mohammed All Hasan  
Suhana Khanum  
Jack Dunn  
Jack Murphy  
Josh Jordan  
Rahaf Mansour  
Noah Livingston  
Trinity Livingston  
Jessica Hawthorn  
Faiza Ramzan  
Adam Shaikh  
Steve Nimo  
Paris Gayle

## **Organisations**

West Midlands Police  
The Factory Birmingham  
Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)



Feedback Table			Appendix 2
Feedback from Youth Services Review Survey #mychillzone			Feedback from SHAPE survey relating to Youth Facilities
Oldbury			Oldbury
Have	Need	Want	
None	Somewhere for young people to go	Something for young people to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The parks referred to were Perrys Park, Warley Woods, Barnford Park and Hurst Green. However other parks in nearby towns such as Lightwoods Park, West Smethwick Park, Haden Hill, Britannia Park and Sandwell Valley.</li> <li>• Youth Clubs – Many young people had never been to a youth club, others went to Kings Community Church, brownies, girl guides, Christ Church youth club.</li> <li>• Leisure Centres – Langley Leisure Centre, Portway Leisure Centre. Other towns Haden Hill Leisure Centre, Thimblemill Leisure Centre, Harry Mitchell Centre, Hadley Stadium. Out of Sandwell - The Crystal Leisure Centre.</li> <li>• Food Outlets – McDonalds, KFC, Subway, chip shops, Pizza Pan, Saphari, Delightful Desserts, Greggs. Others away from Oldbury include Nandos, Five Guys, Starbucks, Big Johns, Pizza Hut, Dominos</li> </ul>
Not sure – Have facilities for younger children	More after school activities and activities during school holidays that are suitable for older children.	Something for older children during school holidays.	
Don't know	Youth club. Langley youth club in langley park was great. Now it is shut, and park gates are locked we chill on the high street which is not ideal. Would like to see partnership with local restaurants to do cooking classes and fund raising for Langley.	Cooking lessons, annual local sport events for residents to raise money for the town. More life skills workshops.	
No regular ones that I have seen advertised	West Bromwich Albion (WBA) kicks - (only mini kicks at the moment).	WBA Kicks Barnford Park sessions during the Summer holidays (like the ones run a couple of years ago)	

			<p>and Burger King. Out of Sandwell include Yo Sushi and Wagamamas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town Centre – Oldbury High Street, Retail Park but more responses for West Bromwich Town Centre and Ikea at Wednesbury Retail Park. However, the majority claimed they visited Bullring and Merryhill shopping centres, a few said Harborne high street and Halesowen</li> <li>• Home environment – Own home, Family, friends, relative’s homes</li> <li>• Out of Sandwell – Birmingham, Kings Norton, Bournville, Cotteridge, Redditch, Solihull, Sutton Coldfield, Halesowen, Dudley, West Bromwich Albion Stadium</li> <li>• Entertainment – Cinema, Starbucks, Star City, Odeon, Bowling, shops, swimming pool, restaurants, cricket club, concerts, arcades, flipout, dessert shops, ice skating, mini golf, shopping. One references was made that there needs to be more under 18s entertainment venues</li> <li>• Other – More under 18s, under 16s, more malls, rugby and cricket clubs</li> </ul>
--	--	--	---

Feedback from Youth Services Review Survey #mychillzone			Feedback from SHAPE survey relating to Youth Facilities
Rowley Regis			Rowley Regis
Have	Need	Want	
Youth club at Brickhouse and the youth bus	A bigger youth centre with wi-fi and a tuck shop.	Somewhere to go that is safe and clean and I can play my music.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The parks referred to were Haden Hill, Britannia Park. Other parks referred to were Netherbrook park and Baremore park.</li> <li>• Youth Clubs – Stanley’s youth club, Brickhouse youth club</li> <li>• Leisure Centres – Haden Hill Leisure Centre</li> <li>• Food Outlets – McDonalds, KFC, Ginos, Dixys, Nandos, Eat Central</li> <li>• Town Centre – Blackheath, Merry Hill, Walsall, Birmingham City Centre</li> <li>• Home environment – Own home, Family, friends, relative’s homes</li> <li>• Out of Sandwell – Walsall, Langley, Dewsbury, London, Quinton</li> <li>• Entertainment – Under 18s club, parks, leisure centres, Cinema, Merryhill</li> <li>• Other – Pub, Merryhill</li> </ul>
<p>Councillor comments – Activities for youth in Rowley Regis.</p> <p>At Youth Rowley, Go Play Rowley Regis, Beam Sandwell, JUST YOUTH - Detached Youth Work, Oakham – Tividale, Rowley Youth Club</p>			

Feedback from Youth Services Review Survey			Feedback from SHAPE survey relating to Youth Facilities
Smethwick			Smethwick
Have	Need	Want	
Lightwoods Park, Victoria Park and Warley Woods	More youth exercise machines to keep fit. More outdoor toys for the youth to enjoy and play with friends/family.	More youth exercise machines to keep fit. More outdoor toys for the youth to enjoy and play with friends/family.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The parks referred to were Victoria Park and West Smethwick Park and others were other areas of Sandwell such as Lightwoods Park &amp; Warley Woods</li> <li>• Youth Clubs – Admiral Club, Halesowen or Oldbury. A few responses said they don't go</li> <li>• Leisure Centres – For swimming they attend Langley Leisure Centre and Thimblemill Leisure Centre. A few mentioned Crystal Leisure Centre in Stourbridge</li> <li>• Food Outlets – McDonalds, KFC, Starbucks, Nandos, Pizza Hut, Delightful desserts, Toby Carvery, Chip shop, Mr Singhs, Chicken.com</li> <li>• Town Centre – Smethwick Linden Road and the other comments were Birmingham city centre, Merry Hill, Bullring, Dudley, West Bromwich town centre</li> <li>• Home environment – Own home, Family, friends, relative's homes</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out of Sandwell – Leicester for family, Merryhill, Quinton, Dudley, Stourbridge</li> <li>• Entertainment – Star City, cinemas, reel cinema, Starbucks, inflation, rockup, Broadway plaza, football clubs</li> <li>• Other – Gurdwara, Arkham Asylum, Merryhill</li> </ul>
--	--	--	--

**Councillor visit feedback**

Several youth facilities listed were no longer available. We need to update information about what we have.

Visit to African French Speaking Community Support highlighted:

- The netball club is the only activity held since June 2019 for girls aged 12 to 24. The initiative is funded by Sports England for 2 years. They would like to do more but do not have the funding
- This is one of the only activities in the area that young girls can get involved in which does not impact on cultural sensitivities. Especially for girls from BAME communities where some parents are not allowing girls to participate in activities after school where boys are present.
- Not many opportunities for youth activities in the area. Relates to issues where young people are getting drawn into mischief and crime and there are gang related issues aligned to this.
- The type of activity that would attract youth include Music, Dance and Sports.
- There is a lack of opportunities for young people in the area to go on trips outside of school. Many children do not ever get to go away and some provision to take young people on trips is needed.
- Partnership working between organisations in the area is non-existent and information sharing on initiatives and activities isn't happening
- Accessibility - Referral not required; people can just turn up on the day. Although it's difficult to access the building during activities times as it's out of hours and reception staff are not on-site.
- Staff - Very welcoming and approachable. Working very well with participants.
- Space - The only space available for the session was a sports hall which was adequate for the netball session.



- Atmosphere - Very positive atmosphere and participants were getting on and having a lot of fun.
- Activities - The provision is only funded to hold one netball session a week.
- Online presence - Details are available on social media and are promoted on-line

Smethwick Windmill Youth Club - Tuesday & Thursday - 6.30pm - 8.30pm

During the visit the member spoke to 3 youth workers and 5 participants of the session. Feedback included:

- Accessibility issues – due to the restrictions in the building access was not easy. An intercom system was in place but was not user friendly. Both staff and participants recognised this is a major barrier. It was creating a closed environment
- The space was rented from the centre therefore there were issues around storage space and not been having whole control of what the areas could be used and for equipment storage.
- Participants recognised the club keeps them away from involvement in crime and trouble on the streets, including involvement in drugs and gangs. The participants praised the service and the youth workers.
- There was acknowledgment that more needed to be done to engage young people through arts, dance, music, sports, cricket, football and trips, more games, pool tables and swimming.
- Potential tournaments and working with other youth clubs
- The youth bus initiative was talked about, but young people felt this wasn't a solution to providing a safe and inclusive place for young people to engage in.
- Funding for trips and opportunities to do something different was suggested
- Accessibility – they identified issues with accessing the building and it not been user friendly. Referrals to the service are not needed.
- Staff - Very enthusiastic and engaged with participants very well.
- Space - Really good-sized room however there wasn't many activities/recourses visible for the participants. Also, there was the option of using a sports hall on site.
- Atmosphere - Very relaxed atmosphere and everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves and getting on
- Activities - Mainly socialising with the options of games and sports activities.
- Online presence - All promotion is done online.

Feedback from Youth Services Review Survey #mychillzone			Feedback from SHAPE survey relating to Youth Facilities
Tipton			Tipton
Have	Need	Want	
Youth club at Malthouse and youth bus on Tibby	A dedicated youth centre or youth cafe, where we can do what we want, have access to Wi-Fi and socialise with friends.	Youth Centre that is open 5 evenings a week and on Saturdays.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The parks referred to were Victoria Park and Jubilee Park. Other Sandwell parks visited were Brunswick Park, Langley park and out of Sandwell include Cannon Hill park</li> <li>• Youth Clubs – No youth clubs were stated.</li> <li>• Leisure Centres – Tipton Sports Academy. Other centres include Haden Hill Leisure Centres and Wednesbury Leisure Centre</li> <li>• Food Outlets – McDonalds, Nandos, Bella Italia, KFRC, Night Garden, Jade, Star Pizza</li> <li>• Town Centre – those mentioned in Sandwell include Wednesbury Retail Park and West Bromwich. Out of Sandwell Birmingham was mentioned.</li> <li>• Home environment – Own home, Family, friends, relative’s homes</li> <li>• Out of Sandwell – West Bromwich for shopping, Dudley Castlegate, Birmingham</li> <li>• Entertainment – Under 18s parties, cinema, dance, Castlegate Showcase</li> </ul>
None	Clubs, sports, supervision and advice	I don’t know	
Unsure	Happy Programme	Anything to help get kids off streets	
None	Clubs and access to school facilities	As above	

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other – Merryhill</li> </ul>
<b>Feedback from Youth Services Review Survey #mychillzone</b>			<b>Feedback from SHAPE survey relating to Youth Facilities</b>
Wednesbury			Wednesbury
Have	Need	Want	
No comments received			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None received</li> </ul>
<p><b>Wednesbury North Blast youth club (building lives around sound truth)</b>            The young people need more equipment and need more social interaction. Getting them involved in joining teams etc football maybe taking them to a game.</p> <p>They feel let down sometimes and need more support and advise around knife crime meeting with the local police team why are they never coming to meet them at the youth club? They said they need inspiring.</p>			
<b>Feedback from Youth Services Review Survey #mychillzone</b>			<b>Feedback SHAPE survey - Youth Facilities</b>
West Bromwich			West Bromwich
Have	Need	Want	
Park Basketball Area	Youth Group for teenagers including mentors	Social Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The parks referred to were Hill top park, Dartmouth and Sandwell Valley Youth Clubs – 1 person stated they attend a youth club but didn't state which one</li> <li>• Leisure Centres – Meet friends in West Bromwich Leisure Centre</li> <li>• Food Outlets – McDonalds</li> <li>• Town Centre – New Square</li> </ul>
Lyng Community Association clubs is	Places to go on a weekend, during the day and evening.	Drop in youth centres, places to play sports, music clubs	

nearest that I know about			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home environment – Own home, Family, friends, relative’s homes</li> <li>• Out of Sandwell – None mentioned</li> <li>• Entertainment – None specifically mentioned</li> <li>• Other – None mentioned</li> </ul>
<p>There were no Youth Clubs in Hateley Heath Ward. SMBC GoPlay service currently contracted by Hateley Cross Big Local to provide research data with recommendations for a Young Voices legacy project in the Ward area. Was not able to visit the school workshops, gaining access to schools proved difficult.</p>			
<p>Tanhouse Youth Club, Great Barr (Tuesdays and Thursdays) has always been successful. Recent events highlighted at tasking in the area had an impact on numbers attending the Youth Club. Promotional work to engage new young people into the club was taking place, youth workers from Tanhouse were going out on outreach work in the area and encouraging young people to use the Tanhouse facility. At this stage I don’t feel we need additional youth work, we just need to promote what we have and encourage young people to use it.</p>			
<p>Additional Comments SEN provision across Sandwell</p>			
<p>Meadows School</p> <p>A visit to Meadows school resulted in a number of comments and suggestions made by parents who have children that attend the Meadows School. One parent was very proactive in involving their children in groups/clubs. These are current activities and ideas put forward by the parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good Shephard Church has a community cinema and is well attended with 35 children.</li> <li>• Sneed Water Centre has paddle boarding, raft building, and canoeing. They supply wet suits and toilets are available.</li> <li>• Indoor skate park in Bentley, Wolverhampton. Cost £45 for family. Consider reducing cost.</li> <li>• Fennox BMX skate park in Perry Bar.</li> <li>• Swanpool in Dartmouth Park. The boating swans cost approx. £10 for 20 minutes, perhaps a more reasonable charge of £5 for 30 mins could be introduced. Also, is it possible to introduce paddle boarding/canoeing.</li> </ul>			

- Portway Lifestyle Centre offer a family pass. The children attend skating on a Friday night 6.00pm-7.30pm. perhaps more child friendly activities here? There is a small pool that perhaps could be used.
- The Fort in Dartmouth Park was not being used, so this would be perfect for Sandwell to utilise the building with a children's centre/youth zone.
- Dartmouth Park could offer the Tennis Courts for free?
- Link with the Bicycle shop at Dartmouth Park, potential for a Bikeability course/Sandwell 'Doctor Bike'.
- Dartmouth Park climbing rope facility is not being utilised. Ideal for Sandwell Youth workers to facilitate an activity.
- Consider a multi-facility for Tenpin Bowling/Ice Skating in West Bromwich/Sandwell.
- Create an outdoor/indoor Skate/Scooter/BMX ramp at Sandwell Valley/Lion Farm Playing fields/Sandwell,
- Young people attend a breakdance/graffiti artist session run by David at Breakmission ([www.breakmissioncommunity.com](http://www.breakmissioncommunity.com)). Cost is £3 per session with reductions for more than one child.
- Young people attend a forest club where they sing at the GAP in West Bromwich.
- Young people attend Go Play sessions and asked for more sessions.

#### Additional Comments – SHAPE Survey / forum visits

SHAPE survey responses: 78 general responses were received

- The parks referred to were Warley Woods, Lightwoods Park, Haden hill Park, Cradley Heath Park, Netherbrook Primary School Park, Perrys Park, Hurst Green Park, Highfields. Out of Sandwell the following parks were mentioned - Baremore Park, The Dell park, Netherton park, Queens Park, Clent Hills, Woodgate Valley, Howley park, Olive Hill Park, Grove Park
- Youth Clubs – Most responses were left blank or a 'no' which means they don't attend a youth club. Those who did respond stated Five Star community club, 1st Netherton Scouts troop, boys brigade, CAMHS. One person stated the youth club they attended had closed down.
- Leisure Centres – Haden Hill Leisure Centre, Langley, West Bromwich Leisure Centre. Other centres visited include crystal, Halesowen, Harborne, Windley

## Appendix 3

### Six Towns of Sandwell

Sandwell town profiles and infographic summaries are available through the links below.

<https://www.sandwelltrends.info/sandwell-town-profiles/>

Town	Population	Children (under 16)
<b>Oldbury</b> Bristnall, Langley, Old Warley Oldbury	3 <sup>rd</sup> highest 52,285 residents 11,479 under 16's 33,499 16-64	26% in poverty  29% first language is not English
<b>Rowley Regis</b> Blackheath, Cradley Heath and Old Hill, Rowley Tividale	4 <sup>th</sup> Highest 51,255 residents 10,859 Under 16's 31,524 16-64	28% in poverty  14% first language not English
<b>Smethwick</b> Abbey, Smethwick, Soho & Victoria St Paul's	2 <sup>nd</sup> Highest 60,033 residents 15,680 Under 16's 37,840 16-64	32% in poverty  53% first language not English
<b>Tipton</b> Tipton Green, Princes End Great Bridge	5 <sup>th</sup> Highest 41,080 residents 9,386 Under 16's 26,065 16-65	35% in poverty  24% first language not English
<b>Wednesbury</b> Friar Park, Wednesbury North Wednesbury South	Lowest 39,160 residents 8,582 Under 16's 24,223 16-64	32% in poverty  24% first language not English
<b>West Bromwich</b> Great Barr with Yew Tree, Greets Green and Lyng, Charlemont with Grove Vale, Hateley Heath, Newton West Bromwich Central	Highest 80,647 residents 17,263 Under 16's 49,999 16-64	28% in poverty  38% first language not English

**Voluntary sector funding****Appendix 4**

Breakdown of the Youth Funding for 2018/19 and 2019/20 – this is for both internal and external funding awards.

<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION</b>	<b>ACTIVITY / PROJECT DETAILS</b>	<b>TOWN</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>2018-2019</b>			
We Are Bearwood	Skate Board School at Lightwoods Park	Smethwick	£600
Positive Activities Innovative Development	Sports Summer Project	Smethwick	£2,237.94
Positive Activities Innovative Development	Sports Summer Project	Smethwick	£1,959.94
Community Connect Foundation	Duke of Edinburgh Award	Smethwick	£1,870
Krunch	NA	Oldbury	£2,372.40
Stanley's Youth Club	Stanley's Youth Club Musician Sessions	Rowley Regis	£1,500.00
Oakham Evangelical Church	Equipment for Youth Club	Rowley Regis	£574.39
Stanleys Youth Club	Trip	Rowley Regis	£1,396.00
Rowley COG	Rowley Choices	Rowley Regis	£2,788.90
RSA Academy	CSE Workshop	Tipton	£780.00
Complete Kidz CIC	Youth Tipton Summer Activities	Tipton	£3,868.40
Hill Top Youth Club		Wednesbury	£ 2,521.45
Youth Services	Blast application	Wednesbury	£ 1,285.60
Wodensborough Community Amateur Boxing Club	Boxmax - boxing equipment	Wednesbury	£1,719.00
(617) Sandwell Air Scouts	Contribution towards running costs	Wednesbury	£1,250
Childrens	Teamworx	West Bromwich	£2,500.00
Youth Services	Hateley Heath Project	West Bromwich	£514.47



Moose Marial Arts Academy	Karate Wado-Ryu	West Bromwich	£1,739.69
Friends of Yew Tree and Tamebridge	Christmas Pantomine	West Bromwich	£1,134
Latifah Fultali Complex	Homework Club	West Bromwich	£4,838
<b>2019-2020</b>			
Paraochial Church Council of St Hilda, Warley Woods	ST Hildas Youth Group	Smethwick	£1,800.00
Tividale Academy	Girls Football Development	Oldbury	£3,832.37
Old Hill Cricket Club	Cricket Equipment	Rowley Regis	£2,145.00
Shell Corner Youth Company	Photo Art	Rowley Regis	£1,287.11
Tipton Christian Community Church	Teenscene	Tipton	£1,750.00
Time Step Dance	Time to Cheer	Tipton	£1,300.00
Jubilee Jaguars	Sports Club running sessions	Tipton	£1,145.00
SMBC Youth Services	Hill Top Youth Club - projects delivered by SMBC Youth Services (non grant)	Wednesbury	£1,173.22
SMBC Youth Services	Hill Top Youth Club - projects delivered by SMBC Youth Services (non grant)	Wednesbury	£4,477.95
Creative Academies (based at YMCA)	Just Play - project for outdoor youth activities	Wednesbury	£4,862.64
Friends of Wednesbury Library	Knit and Natter presents Father Christmas at Hilltop Library	Wednesbury	£182.30
SMBC Youth Services	Hateley Heath Youth Project - projects delivered by SMBC Youth Services (non grant)	West Bromwich	£1,009.42
Yemeni Community Centre	Youth project	West Bromwich	£2,995.93
481 Royal Air Cadets (West Bromwich)	Funding contribution towards equipment for Duke of Edinburgh	West Bromwich	£2,441.70

## Sandwell Vision Ambitions

	1. Sandwell is a community where our families have high aspirations and where we pride ourselves on equality of opportunity and on our adaptability and resilience.
	2. Sandwell is a place where we live healthy lives and live them for longer, and where those of us who are vulnerable feel respected and cared for.
	3. Our workforce and young people are skilled and talented, geared up to respond to changing business needs and to win rewarding jobs in a growing economy.
	4. Our children benefit from the best start in life and a high quality education throughout their school careers with outstanding support from their teachers and families.
	5. Our communities are built on mutual respect and taking care of each other, supported by all the agencies that ensure we feel safe and protected in our homes and local neighbourhoods.
	6. We have excellent and affordable public transport that connects us to all local centres and to jobs in Birmingham, Wolverhampton, the airport and the wider West Midlands.
	7. We now have many new homes to meet a full range of housing needs in attractive neighbourhoods and close to key transport routes.
	8. Our distinctive towns and neighbourhoods are successful centres of community life, leisure and entertainment where people increasingly choose to bring up their families.
	9. Sandwell has become a location of choice for industries of the future where the local economy and high performing companies continue to grow.
	10. Sandwell now has a national reputation for getting things done, where all local partners are focused on what really matters in people's lives and communities.

This page is intentionally left blank

## Update on Recommendations

	Recommendations	Comment
1	<p><b>A Partnership Framework (to include a Communications Plan and Multi-agency approach)</b> is developed with young people, for young people and is specifically targeted to promote current activities and future opportunities using the experts within the council to provide a joined-up plan that compliments services across the local authority.</p> <p>This should consider how we currently communicate, what we currently communicate and the most effective platforms to use across a range of media.</p> <p>A <b>Youth Symposium</b> should be held in early 2021 for all partners in the borough to help build a clear picture of what is available, build upon key themes arising from the Scrutiny Review, the multi-agency approach and develop closer partnership working for a joined-up offer for Sandwell. The</p>	<p>Working with the Shape programme and Public Health, investment was secured in 2020 for an apprentice role to lead the work on communications and marketing both for the Shape Programme and for Just Youth. This has led to a range of improvements to the website and an increased usage of social media platforms resulting in increased traffic on the website and engagement with social media channels.</p> <p>The Black Country &amp; West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group has provided funding to support ongoing development of the website with internal and external partners and promotion of this in community venues, as part of their ongoing commitment to the delivery of the Children &amp; Young People’s Engagement Strategy and the Shape Programme.</p> <p>The Children &amp; Young People’s Engagement Strategy has been developed with young people and stakeholders and was launched in April 2021. This brought together young people, stakeholders and enabled some key partners to showcase their youth offer. However, to do this justice and deliver a meaningful Youth Symposium a face to face event</p>

	<p>youth symposium should draw together a joined-up approval to youth work and young people in Sandwell.</p>	<p>is required to explore what a co-ordinated and renewed youth offer would look like.</p> <p>Alongside the Strategy, a communications plan has been developed to ensure key messages targeted at young people are shared through existing social media channels. To develop this further young people have been trained as Digital Leaders and will be looking to lead the development of content on both the website and social media, including looking at TikTok.</p>
2	<p>Young people should be afforded safe, flexible, space of their own, with 'Wi-fi &amp; Dry' as the basic offer in Sandwell. The council should take a strategic approach and consider modelling 'space options' across the Borough's 6 towns, these could test:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Use of libraries within extended opening times – rethinking their use in the community</li> <li>ii. Mobile provision (through a bus or support vehicle).</li> <li>iii. Pop up shops and underused town centre units.</li> <li>iv. Leisure &amp; Activity Centres.</li> <li>v. Other council properties and schools.</li> <li>vi. New build, where no existing options are deemed suitable.</li> </ul>	<p>In terms of mobile youth provision, the Service has 2 youth buses (double decker and single decker). This provision has not been operational during Covid due to social distancing restrictions but has been much sought after by young people. The Council is currently pursuing funding to purchase a new electric double decker youth bus which will require an investment in infrastructure.</p> <p>.</p> <p>The Town's Fund programme has prioritised a number of projects that will provide young people with places to go including a new skate park and community hub in Britannia Park. In Smethwick additional multi use classrooms are to be added at the Ron Davis Centre and improvements made to outdoor sports facilities in Lewisham Park. Additionally, plans for West Bromwich include improved facilities at West Bromwich Town Hall and Library including the development of a Cultural Quarter.</p>

After a successful pilot of sports based youth activity at Tipton Sports Academy, The Service is exploring the use of other Leisure Centre Facilities in Oldbury and West Bromwich, however these come with a cost that the Service is currently not budgeted for.

Not with-standing the restrictions imposed by Covid 19, the Service has been able to explore some alternative models of delivery where we have gaps in provision across the 6 towns. In addition to provision currently open in Tipton, West Bromwich and Smethwick (see Appendix 3 for current youth provision list), we are currently exploring options for open access youth provision within libraries particularly in West Bromwich, Oldbury and Rowley Regis. We have re-located our SEND youth club from the Meadows School to Wednesbury Museum & Art Gallery, our detached youth work team in Lightswood Park is exploring the use of Lightswood House to facilitate a young Friends of the Park group, and we are exploring other museum facilities which may be suitable for young people's provision. In Wednesbury we are also exploring the option of developing open access provision with the voluntary sector at Wednesbury 2000.

During the Covid19 period, the value and importance of detached Youth Work has been even more pronounced and the relationship between this work, and access to 'Wifi and Dry' spaces even more important. Whilst the Service is

		<p>exploring many options for creating accessible youth spaces, the challenges still remain around multi use shared spaces and young people having some ownership and ability to make the space their own.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>The council explores the option of providing free or concessionary public transport for young people to enable better access to local youth activities, opening up Sandwell and all it offers. Targeted provision should be considered in relation to vulnerable young people and those with Special Educational Needs (SEN).</p>	<p>Although there are some concessionary travel discount schemes for young people up to age 18 to support them with subsidised travel to education or work, none of these extend to leisure time use. This is a wider issue that needs to be championed with the West Midlands Combined Authority.</p> <p>However, the development of the Metro site in Tipton, as part of the Strategic Transport Plan, is immediately adjacent to Coneygre Youth Centre. This will provide an opportunity for the council to develop the Coneygre Youth Centre as a 'hub' because young people will be able to get to it more easily, although there is still a cost attached. It may be possible to consider a scheme that would compensate the cost of travel to Coneygre and Malthouse.</p> <p>Additionally, the Strategic Transport Plan prioritizes cycle routes, which will come through Sandwell and funding is identified from the Town's Fund to further develop infrastructure across West Bromwich, Smethwick and Rowley Regis to support cycling.</p>



4	<p>The council should take a more strategic approach to funding and explore existing funding pots through a better use of regional partnerships and directories. Better alignment could be made to complimentary activity within the voluntary sector (such as SVCO's community grants) and to the corporate social responsibility objectives of local businesses</p>	<p>The Service has been successful in getting funding for additional targeted work in West Bromwich through the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and the Safer Streets Fund (SSF). VRU funding is targeted at addressing under 25's youth violence through detached youth work, mentoring and diversionary activity. The SSF is part of a more collaborative bid across the Council and with partners addressing issues of harassment and violence against women and girls.</p> <p>Additionally, the Government's Holiday Activity &amp; Food programme has enabled holiday activity programmes for young people to be delivered during key school holiday periods.</p> <p>As part of the Government's Spending Review, a commitment has been made to the Youth Investment Fund over the next 3 years. This will provide capital and some revenue funding for youth provision in left behind areas, these are yet to be announced.</p> <p>The Children and Young People's Strategic Commissioning Partnership has facilitated a collaborative approach to funding bids, ensuring that partners work together when drafting and submitting bids for funding, a good example of this is the recent bid for Family Hubs funding that bought together the Council, CCG and Sandwell Children's Trust.</p>
---	---	--

5	<p>The Council should develop a renewed 'Youth Offer' which clearly identifies the very positive activities that are currently on offer and addresses those gaps which would enable a more bespoke approach. The National Youth Agency's Standard Quality Mark Framework should be used to measure the capacity, quality and sufficiency of youth facilities in Sandwell.</p>	<p>During the Covid19 lockdown, the youth offer has been via detached youth work and online support, including a weekly agony aunt session on facebook. As Covid restrictions have eased some face to face open access youth provision has re-opened. In addition, we have continued to provide support to vulnerable young people through our Enhanced Youth Support team.</p> <p>Due to Covid19 it has not been possible to progress the NYASQMF. However, whilst plans are in place to progress this between April 2022-March 2023, we have progressed work on a theory of change model for the Service. This model sets out the areas of focus for the Youth Service and what support young people can expect.</p> <p>During Covid we have also invested in training and development for youth workers with 14 achieving a level 2 and 8 achieving a level 3 Award in Youth Work Practise.</p>
6	<p>A renewed youth offer would aim to close the gaps in provision and ensure sufficiency of youth facilities, but in order to do this would require an increase in capacity and therefore the resources required to deliver the provision would need to be reviewed.</p>	<p>The Council's Corporate Plan and the budget setting process will consider this recommendation alongside other priorities for the council's budget, aligned to the Corporate Plan.</p> <p>In the absence of any national statutory benchmark or guidance on what a sufficient youth service would offer, the National Youth Agency suggest each Local Authority (including any voluntary and Community sector provision)</p>

		<p>would provide at least two, full-time equivalent professionals who are JNC qualified youth workers be located in a secondary school catchment area, along with an equivalent team of at least four youth support workers, and trained volunteers, to ensure minimum access to quality youth services. Sandwell Youth Service currently employs 27 number of FTE and 7 of these are JNC qualified. It is difficult to assess what is currently available in the voluntary and community sector as this data is not captured.</p>
7	<p>Following the success of the Question Time session held during the review, it is recommended that quarterly Question Time sessions be scheduled into the Scrutiny Work Programme, with Shape forum the Cabinet Member / Champion for Children and Young People.</p>	<p>It had been hoped that this would be possible from autumn 2020, however, the ongoing Covid19 restrictions mean that a physical meeting is not possible at the current time. Contact with young people throughout this period has demonstrated that very few have access to the Teams environment and many are uncomfortable meeting in this way.</p> <p>With face to face meetings only resuming in September 2021, there is much work to be done in re-establishing the forum and getting everyone at a level of confidence to re-engage. It is proposed that the Question Time events are re-established to start in the 2022 summer term and then take place on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>Also, Scrutiny alongside the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Education and the Cabinet Advisor for Young</p>

		People & Skills need to consider the outcomes they want and the scope of the Question Time sessions.
--	--	--

Provision	Address	Days	Times	Youth Officer	Phone Number
<b>Detached Teams</b>					
Oldbury	Lion Farm Estate	Tuesday & Thursday	3.30pm - 5.30pm	Shafaq Hussain	07977 430626
Oldbury	Burntree / Tividale	Wednesday & Thursday	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Shafaq Hussain	07977 430626
Rowley	Britannia Park / Blackheath	Monday & Thursday	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Nicola Palmer	07989 138518
Rowley	Cradley Heath Town Centre	Tuesday & Wednesday	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Nicola Palmer	07989 138518
Smethwick	West Smethwick	Monday & Thursday	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Shafaq Hussain	07977 430626
Smethwick	Lightwoods Park	Tuesday & Wednesday	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Shafaq Hussain	07977 430626
Smethwick	Galton Village	Wednesday & Thursday	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Shafaq Hussain	07977 430626
Tipton	Tibbington Estate	Monday & Tuesday	5.30pm - 7.30pm	Russell Allen	07813 319384
Tipton	Victoria Park	Wednesday & Thursday	5.30pm - 7.30pm	Russell Allen	07813 319384
Wednesbury	Bilston Road	Monday & Wednesday	5.00pm - 7.00pm	Steve Walker	07813 319454
Wednesbury	Myvod Road / Brunswick Park	Monday & Wednesday	5.00pm - 7.00pm	Steve Walker	07813 319454
West Bromwich	Stone Cross	Wednesday & Thursday	5.00pm - 7.00pm	Steve Walker	07813 319454
West Bromwich	Gads Lane	Monday & Wednesday	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Steve Walker	07813 319454
<b>Targeted Work</b>					
<i>Funded by the Violence Reduction Unit</i>					
West Bromwich	Town Centre	Monday & Thursday	11.30am - 1.30pm	Steve Walker	07813 319454
West Bromwich	Town Centre	Monday & Wednesday	2.00pm - 4.00pm	Steve Walker	07813 319454
West Bromwich	Town Centre	Tuesday & Friday	1.00pm - 3.00pm	Steve Walker	07813 319454
<i>Young Womens Project funded by Safer Streets</i>					
West Bromwich	Town Centre	Monday, Wednesday & Thursday	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Kelly Crofts	07973 550789
West Bromwich	Town Centre	Thursday	2.00pm - 4.00pm	Kelly Crofts	07973 550789
West Bromwich	Sandwell College	Friday	11.00am - 2.00pm	Kelly Crofts	07973 550789
<b>Open Access Youth Provisions</b>					
Oldbury	~ currently exploring venues ~	Monday & Thursday	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Shafaq Hussain	07977 430626
Rowley	~ currently exploring venues ~	Tuesday & Thursday	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Nicola Palmer	07989 138518
Smethwick - Windmill Youth Club	Windmill Centre, Messenger Road, Smethwick, B66 3DX	Tuesday & Thursday	6.30pm - 8.30pm	Shafaq Hussain	07813 300964
Tipton - Coneygre Arts Music	Coneygre Arts Centre, Sedgley Road East, Tipton, DY4 8UH	Monday to Thursday	5.00pm - 8.00pm	Russell Allen	07813 319384
Wednesbury	~ currently exploring venues ~	Monday & Wednesday	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Steve Walker	07813 319454
West Bromwich - Lodge Road	Lodge Road Community Centre, Lodge Road, West Bromwich, B70 8PJ	Tuesday & Thursday	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Steve Walker	07813 319454
West Bromwich - Tanhouse Youth Club	Tanhouse Community Centre, Hamstead Road, Great Barr, Birmingham, B43 5EL	Tuesday & Thursday	7.00pm - 9.00pm	Steve Walker	07813 319454
<b>Enhanced Youth Support (Referral Only)</b>					
Young Women's Group - Monday Referrals (one-to-one) via Kelly Crofts	Malthouse Outdoor Activity Centre, Hurst Lane Tipton DY4 9AB	Monday	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Kelly Crofts	07973 550789
<b>Inclusive Services (Referral and Term-Time only)</b>					
Marvel	Wednesbury Museum, Holyhead Road, Wednesbury, WS10 7DF	Monday & Thursday	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Kelly Crofts	07973 550789
<b>Malthouse Outdoor Activity Centre</b>					
Malthouse Outdoor Activity Centre	Hurst Lane, Tipton, DY4 9AB			Ian Clews	07810 850981

This page is intentionally left blank

# Sandwell Young People's Survey 2020



## Sandwell Young People's Survey on the Effect and Impact of Coronavirus



**Shafaq Hussain**  
July 2020



<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
Contents	1
Foreword – Lesley Hagger	2
Acknowledgments	2
<b>Main Report</b>	
Purpose	3
Methodology	3-4
Findings – Participants Profile	4-6
Short Timescales and Limitations	6-7
Key Findings	8-17
Conclusions and Recommendations	18-20
Appendix 1 – Copy of Young People’s Services Questionnaire	21-25



## **Foreword**

The focus for the media and politicians during lockdown has justifiably been on the delivery of emergency and other vital services in response to the coronavirus pandemic, and the impact on jobs, the economy and other areas of adult life. We have heard little about how children and young people have experienced this unprecedented period.

Through a variety of partnership meetings across Sandwell there have been recent discussions about the impact of lockdown on children and young people, using professional experience and expertise to predict and mitigate the impact. But those conversations and plans are much better when they are informed by the voices of children and young people themselves. That's why this report is so important – to everyone working with children, young people and their families. Hearing about their experiences, what is important to them, their fears and hopes, are crucial to take into account in recovery planning. I hope that this report will be widely used by all relevant partner agencies in Sandwell so that the future of our children and young people can be at the heart of our plans.

Lesley Hagger

Executive Director of Children's Services, Sandwell Council

## **Acknowledgements**

We are grateful to all the participants who volunteered their time to take part in this survey and who shared their feelings and experience on the current situation and impact of Covid 19.

We would like to thank all Sandwell Council Departments and particularly colleagues in Young People's Service for providing the support and resources through the detached youth work teams to enable a large number of surveys to be completed. We are particularly grateful to Research Sandwell and in particular Christine Wright for supporting us through the process of organising the online snap survey and for her guidance and support in data analysis and making suggestions on the format of the final report.

We are also grateful for all our partner organisations including SCVO, the voluntary sector, schools and local Neighbourhood partnership organisations who have promoted and helped us to reach young people from across Sandwell.

Finally, sincere thanks to the Windmill Youth Club team who initiated the idea for the survey and for Youth Service staff, in particular Helen Douglass, Philip Morris and Almaas Begum for helping to drive this forward and for producing the report.

**Shafaq Hussain**

**Report Author (Senior Youth Officer, Smethwick & Oldbury)**

**Sandwell Young People's Service**

## Purpose

The questionnaire was initiated by the Windmill Youth Club team in Smethwick who were concerned about their members who they had not seen or heard from during the lockdown period and wanted to know as one youth worker stated, “if they were OK and how they are coping”.

This concept was expanded to cover some broader areas, aiming to encompass the whole of Sandwell’s young people with a view to finding out how Coronavirus and lockdown actions were affecting them. Young People’s Service’s committed throughout the lockdown period to provide support to young people through detached youth work, thus enabling the survey to be completed with those young people that were still out in public spaces despite the lockdown restrictions in place. This work was supported by our partners such as the Police, local ASB and Environment teams who wanted help to engage with young people who were ‘hanging out’ in large numbers, some were putting themselves and others at risk and others were vulnerable, ‘bored’, very isolated and needed ‘befriending’.

The detached youth workers used the survey as an opportunity to reach out to new young people and as one worker summed this up, “the survey got us to approach and break ice with new young people”. The youth workers used the engagement time to remind young people of social distancing rules, providing clarity on Government rules and what they could and couldn’t do. The other areas covered were how to cope and keep themselves safe, signposting to useful services and websites and to abide to the Government rules before enforcement agencies would fine them or act against them or their parents. Workers were also able to identify individual young people and families that were struggling during lockdown and getting the relevant services or agencies to provide them with the support needed.

The main purpose of the Sandwell Young People’s Survey was to capture the experience of young people during lockdown and, how it was affecting them and what the impact of Coronavirus was on their lives. The survey was particularly interested in what young people were doing, how they were coping and what can be done to provide reassurance that they would be supported following lockdown and ensure they were included in Sandwell Council and partner plans and programmes in the future.

## Methodology:

- A survey was developed by the Youth Service to be incorporated in our detached youth workers brief which was carried out during June 2020, an online version was set up by Research Sandwell.
- The survey was promoted through the Council’s and partners social media platforms, shared by colleagues across the Council and disseminated with voluntary sector organisations/ networks and through schools via the Director’s letter to Head Teachers.
- The survey was widely used by Young People’s Service through detached youth work where paper-based copies of the questionnaire were then distributed, one to one and small group facilitation was undertaken to support young people in filling in the forms.
- The survey was developed to be smartphone compatible to increase easy access, for young people, achieve a greater response and work around COVID-19 outbreak and lockdown. The informal testing period also fed back that young people were likely to be more responsive if the survey was available on mobile devices in addition to laptop or computers.
- A brief introduction, setting out the aims of the survey was provided at the beginning of the questionnaire stating the value of listening to young people, how the Coronavirus has affected and impacted on the young people and a parent’s consent required for those under 18 as this survey

was going to be used by Sandwell Council to plan services and promote and publicise young people's voice.

- Data from completed paper questionnaires was entered by Youth Service staff and merged with the online survey results. Analysis and data tables were produced by Research Sandwell.

*A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix 1.*

## Findings

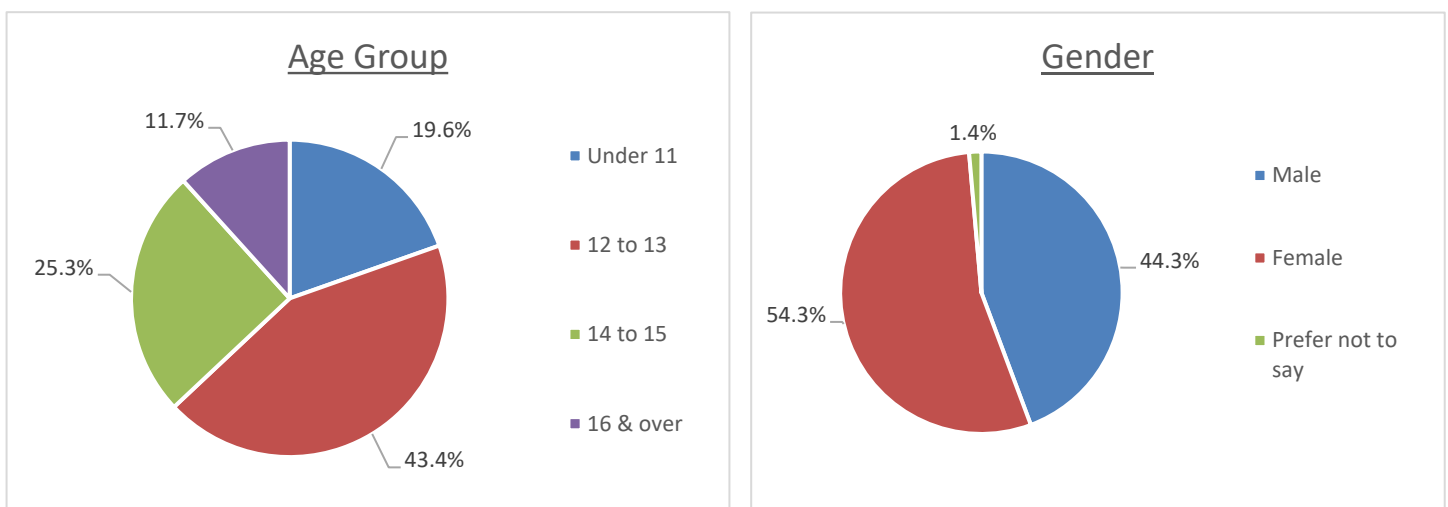
### Participants Profile

Figure 1. Shows the number of participants taking part in the survey

Do you agree to take part in this survey being carried out on behalf of Sandwell Council?	Participants Base 535	Percentage 100%
I am happy to take part in this survey on behalf of Sandwell Council	509	95.1%
I do not want to take part in this survey	26	4.9%

- Whilst 535 people clicked through to the survey, only 509 gave consent and completed the survey.
- 95.1% of the participants (509 individuals) were happy to give consent and take part in completing the survey.
- 4.9% of the participants (26 individuals) did not want to take part in the survey, this may be due to suspicion over confidentiality or simply time constraints.

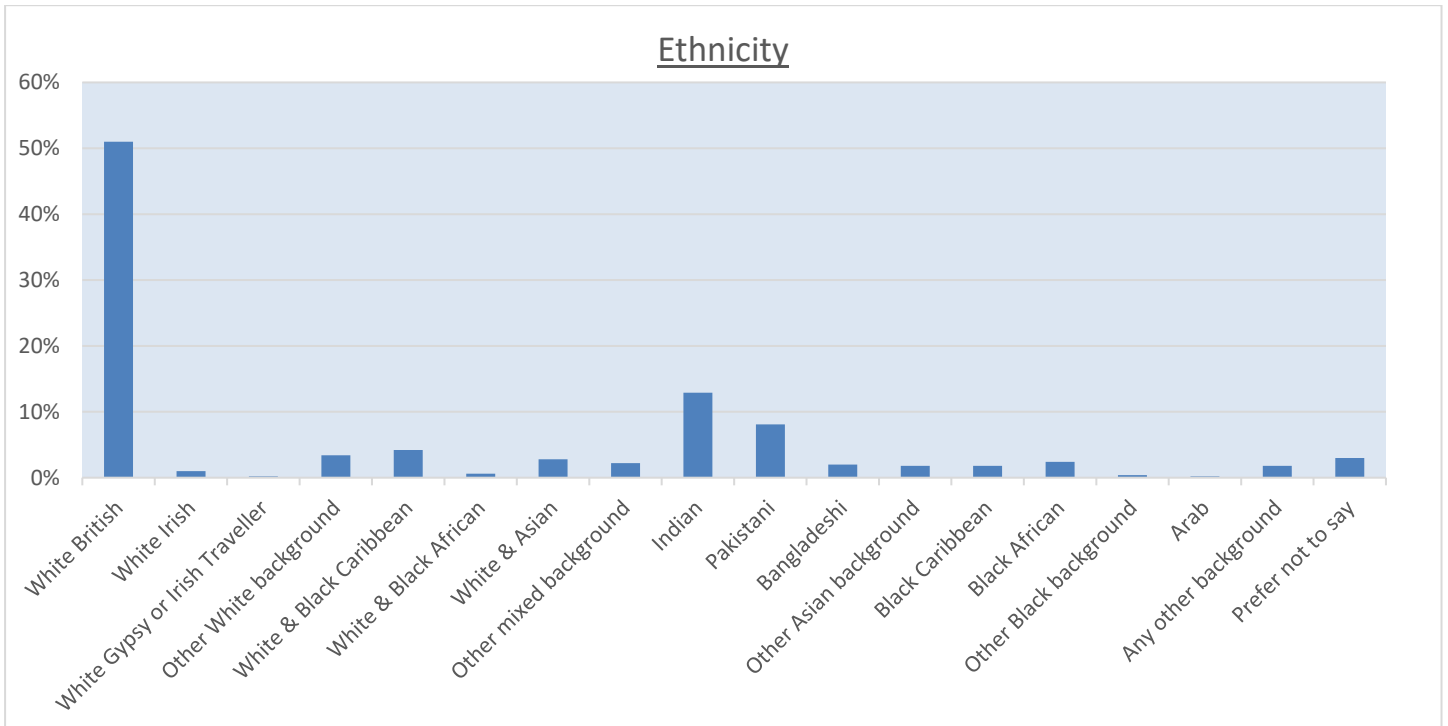
Figures 2 and 3 Show the participants age and gender breakdown



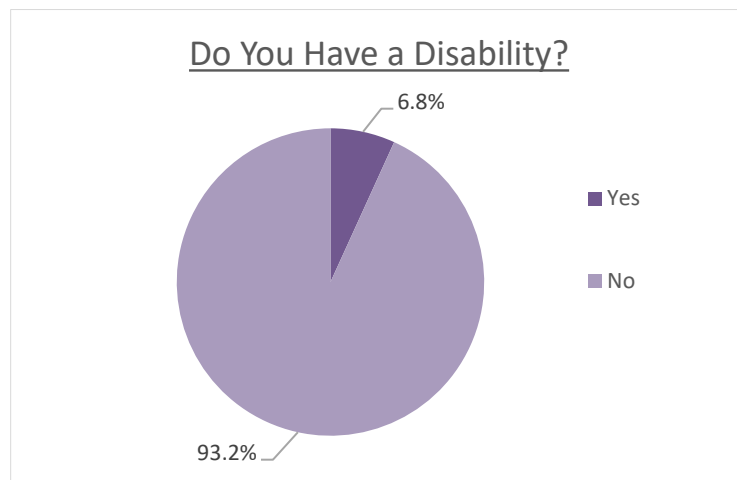
The actual breakdown of respondents by age sits well with the intended age population targeted for the completion of the survey.

- There was a slight bias towards female respondents in this survey with 54.3% being female and 44.3% being male. 1.4% of people preferred not to say.
- Across the age groups, the largest number of respondents were between the age of 12 to 13 (43.4%) and a relatively high number of respondents between the age of 14 to 15 (25.3%).
- 19.6% of participants were aged under 11, and the proportion of respondents aged 16 and over was 11.7%.
- The majority of respondents were under the age of 24 – with only four participants over the age of 30.

Figure 4 and 5 gives the Ethnicity and Disability breakdown.

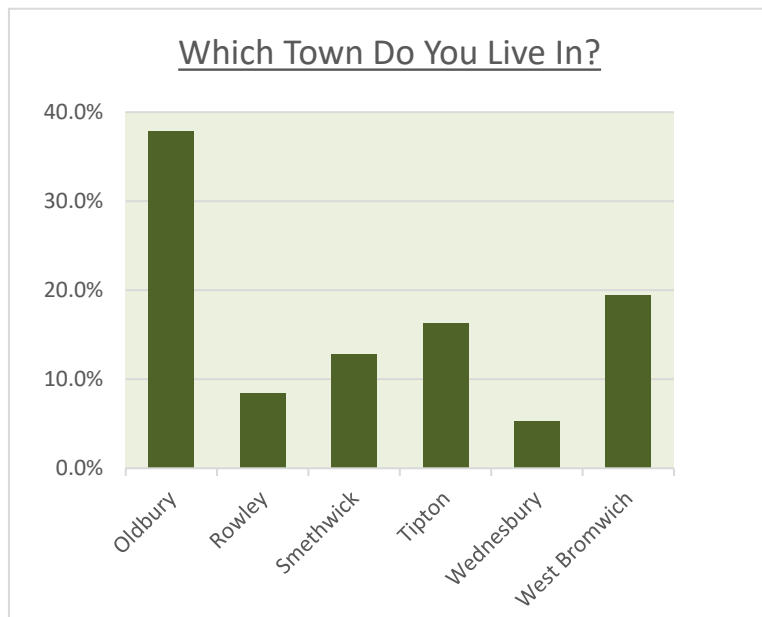
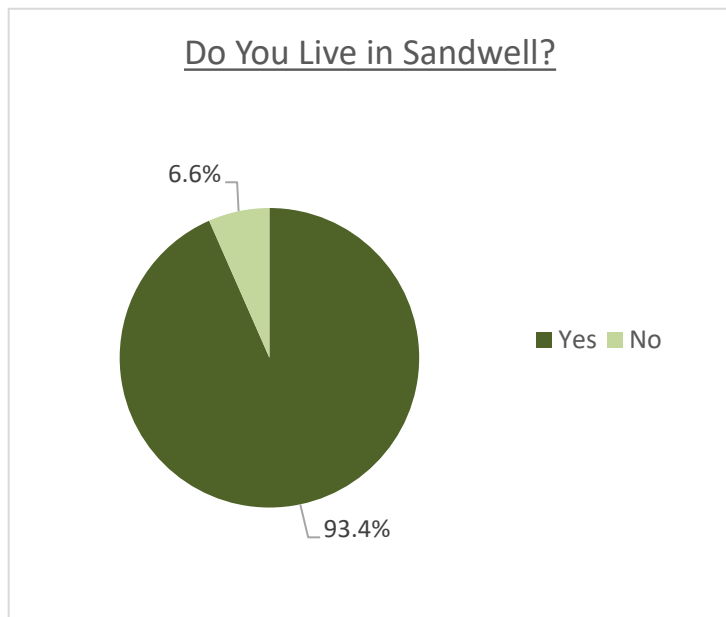


- White groups make up 55.6% of respondents (notably 3.4% of respondents are from “other” white groups). 24.8% are from Asian groups (mainly Indian & Pakistani) and 4.6% have a black background. 3% of respondents preferred not to disclose.



93.2% of participants stated that they do not have a disability, whilst 6.8% do have a disability.

Figures 6 and 7 show where respondents live.



- Overall, 93.4% of respondents live within Sandwell, and 6.6% live outside the Borough.
- All six towns within Sandwell were represented in the survey - over a third of respondents (37.9%) live in Oldbury. The lowest proportions of respondents are from Wednesbury and Rowley.
- The greater numbers from Oldbury can be explained with Ormiston School taking a lead role in encouraging their pupils to fill in the questionnaire. This was mostly online activity. The lower numbers in Wednesbury could be attributed to the fact that Young People’s Services had minimal youth work being undertaken here due to demand and partner intelligence for need in other towns.
- The rest of the numbers from different town were reflective of paper filled questionnaire and were representative of areas where Young People’s Service detached teams were operating.

### Short Timescale and Limitations

It was acknowledged from the outset that due to Covid 19; the lockdown restrictions, social distancing families enforcing their own safety self-isolation rules and Government firm messages of no socialisation; meant young people were on the main restricted. We were aware of the significant youth population who were likely to be hard to reach at this time, who normally would have been encouraged to participate through schools, colleges, PRU, wider youth service provision and training providers. Sandwell Young People’s own service offer was restricted and operating mainly through our detached youth work offer and online offer. There was no centre based provision, no activity centres such as Coneygre or Malthouse operating. The detached youth work offer was also operating in limitations due to staff either shielding, self-isolating or taking precautions to look after their own family members or having some underlying issues themselves.

As we know, the residents who take part in a survey are only a sample of the total "population" of residents in an area, so we cannot be certain that the figures obtained are exactly those that would have been reached if everyone had responded (the "true" values). We can, however, predict the variation between the sample results and the "true" values from knowledge of the size of the samples on which the results to each question is based, and the number of times a particular answer is given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is usually chosen to be 95% - that is, the chances are 95 in 100 that the "true" value will fall within a specified range.

In the case of this survey, with a sample size of 509, where 30% give a particular answer, the chances are, 19 in 20 that the "true" value (i.e. the one which would have been obtained if the whole population had been interviewed) will fall within the range of +/- 4 percentage points from the survey result (i.e. between 26% and 34%). This means that this survey can be considered relatively robust.

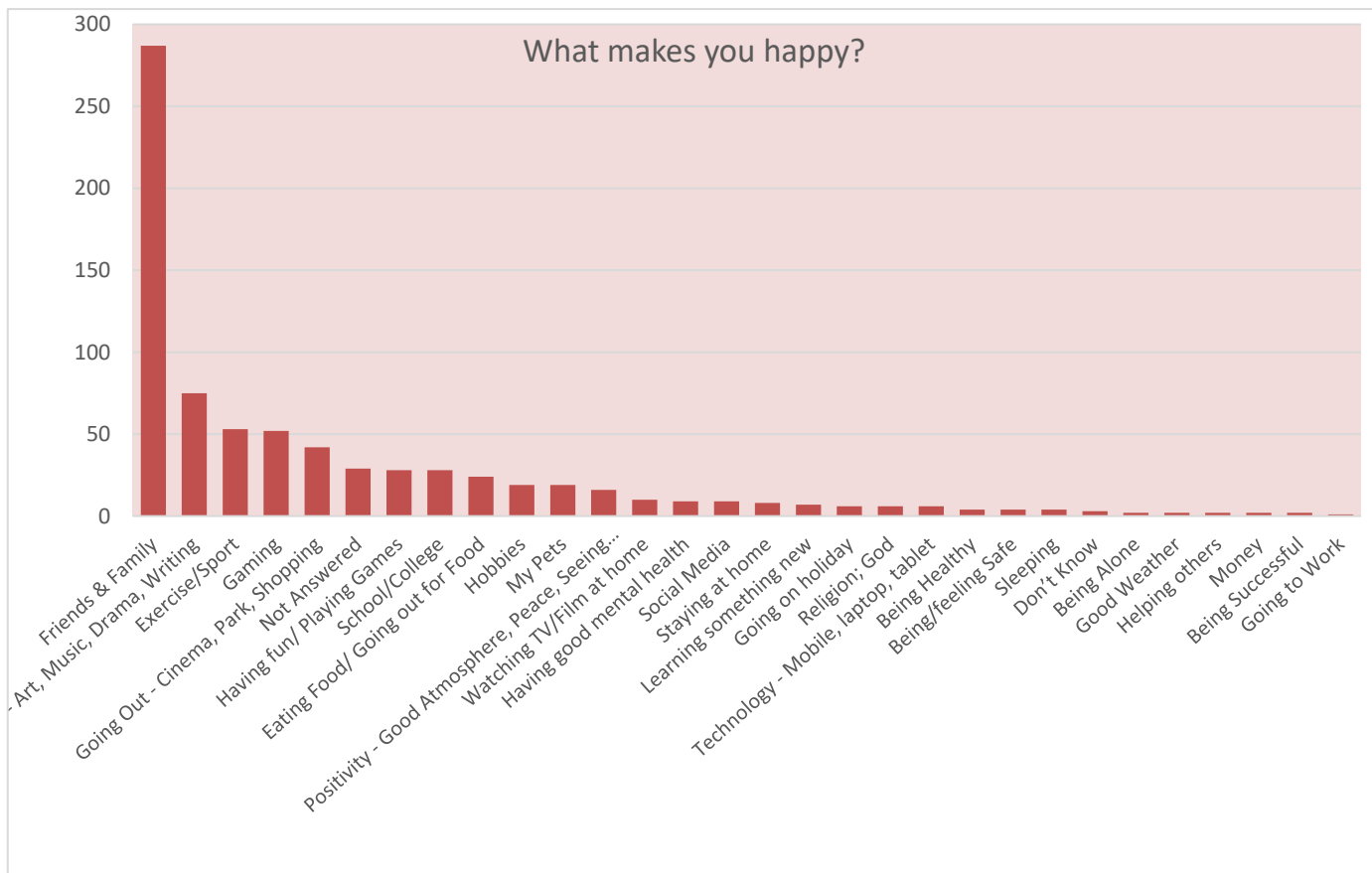
The research timescales were limited due to short time scales being set by Young People's Service. We wanted to capture a snapshot of how young people were feeling and coping through lockdown as quickly as possible to enable us to shape our responses both during and post the lockdown in providing support to young people.

However, we engaged well with respondents, were receptive and open to people exploring their reflection on life, the new experiences of many and thoughts on their future aspirations. We gave time to participants to raise any current issues and had to enforce restrictions on the subject matter to discuss, ensuring young people stayed focussed on the pandemic and associated issues.

## Key Findings

The participants were asked what makes them happy and who makes them feel awesome and why. The overwhelming response and reason for them to be happy was being with family and friends. Figure 1 shows the different variety of things and activities participants do that makes them happy.

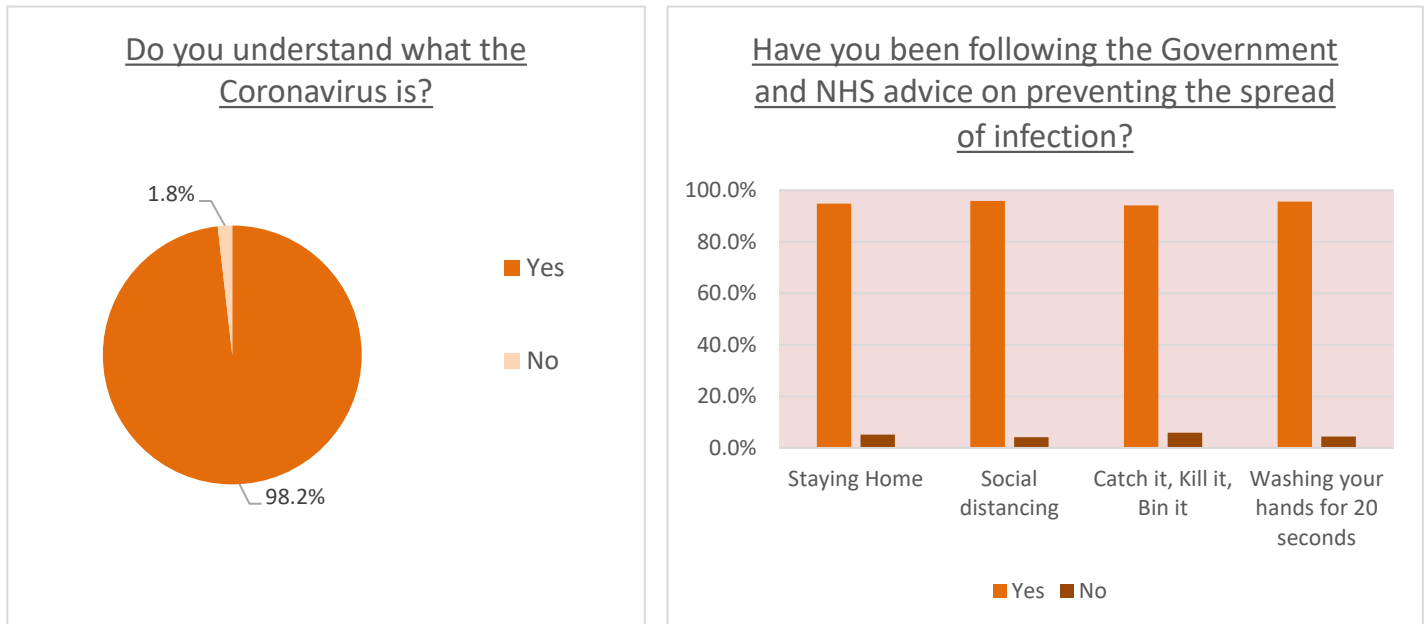
Figure 8 Participants response on what makes them happy



- Family and friends were the biggest factor in what makes participants happy.
- The participants also highlighted being creative, art, music, drama and writing.
- The other main areas were sport, exercise, gaming and going out.
- Some individual comments were captured to give some background and highlight the thoughts of the participants.
  - 'My family because they always praise me for doing good things and because they love me, and I love them, and my friends because they laugh at most of my jokes and I laugh at theirs and we had great fun.'
  - 'MY MOM, SHE IS ALWAYS THERE FOR ME.'
  - 'When I'm told I'm doing something good because sometimes teachers don't realise we have stressful homes and sometimes a little bit of praise for trying Even if we get it wrong Can change our day'
  - 'When I cheer somebody up or stand up for somebody because it makes them happy and makes me feel awesome.'
  - 'Hard work paying off, being surrounded by loved ones and family and knowing others are happy e.g. on the news.'

- 'What makes me feel happy is to not be stressed over schoolwork and knowing that all my family are.'
- well and safe during this pandemic. Also seeing everyone happy.'
- 'The idea of everyone getting better and the number of cases of Covid 19 decreases. Also, the idea of black people gets treated the same and all the racism in the world stops. In addition, the idea of the world being a welcoming place for all.'
- 'Being with family and friends. Having fun!'

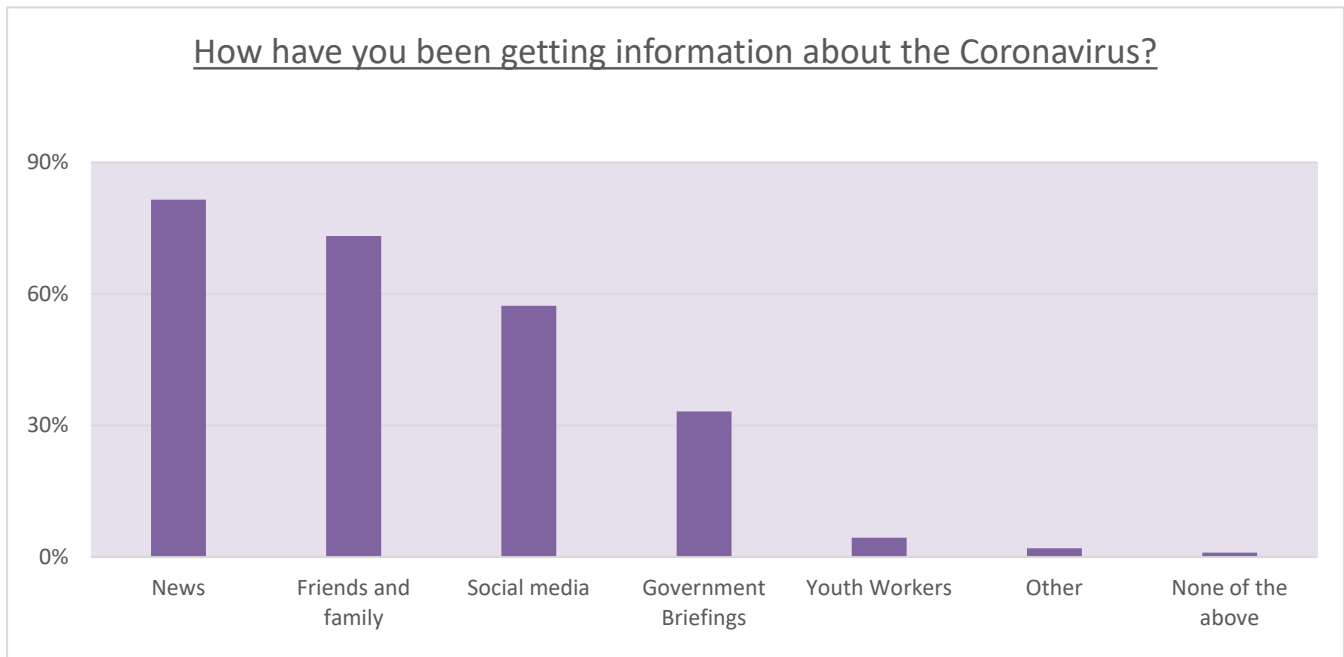
Figure: 9 and 10 show the level of Coronavirus understanding and following Government advice



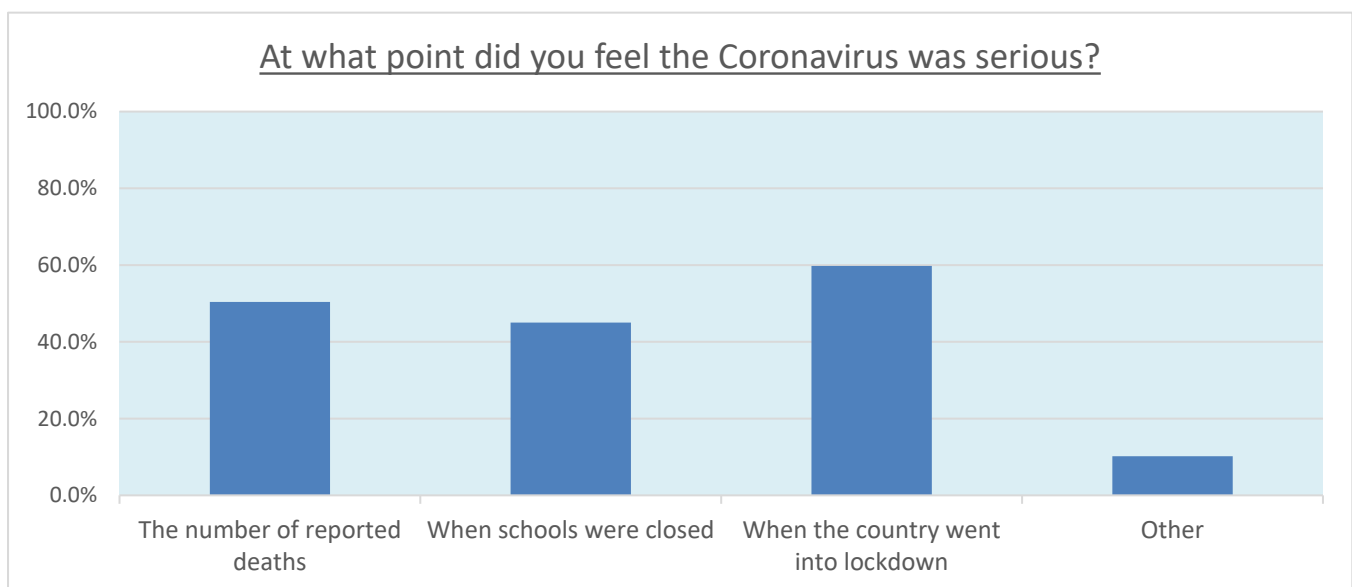
- 98.2% of respondents confirmed they understood what the Coronavirus is. Between 94% and 96% of respondents confirmed they have been following some or all of the Government and NHS guidelines to prevent the spread of infection.
- 5% of individuals confirmed they are not staying at home or social distancing which raises issues of concern. 4% of individuals have not been using rules regarding hand washing, this may be due to a lack of knowledge and / or guidance.



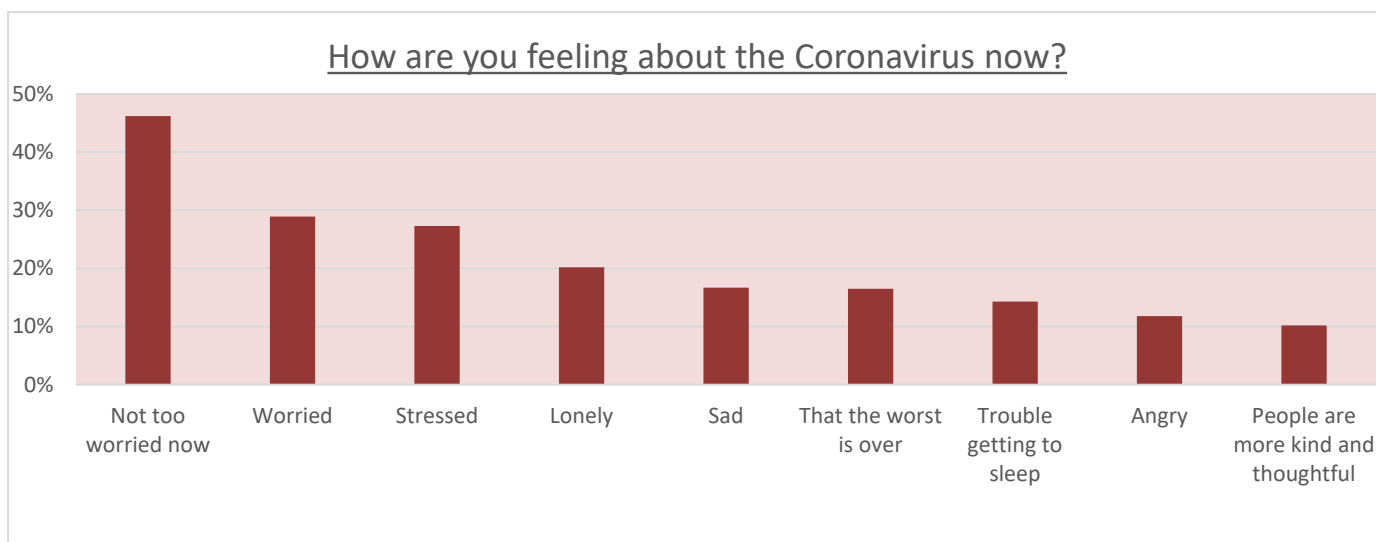
Figures 11,12 and 13 show how participants access information, how serious coronavirus is for them and how they are feeling now.



- 82% of participants said they have been getting their information from the news followed by 73% from friends and family which confirms that there is communication at home. 57% of respondents have been getting their information from social media.
- 4% of individuals have confirmed they have been getting information from Youth Workers.



- 60% of individuals confirmed they realised the seriousness of Coronavirus when the country went into lockdown, 50% thought the number of deaths had a big impact on them and schools closing was definitely an eye opener for 45% of respondents.



- 46% of individuals said they are not too worried about the Coronavirus in the current situation.
- 29% stated they were still worried about the Coronavirus
- 20% of individuals felt they were lonely
- 27% of individuals confirmed they are feeling stressed.
- 43% of respondents confirmed they are feeling angry, sad or have trouble getting to sleep.

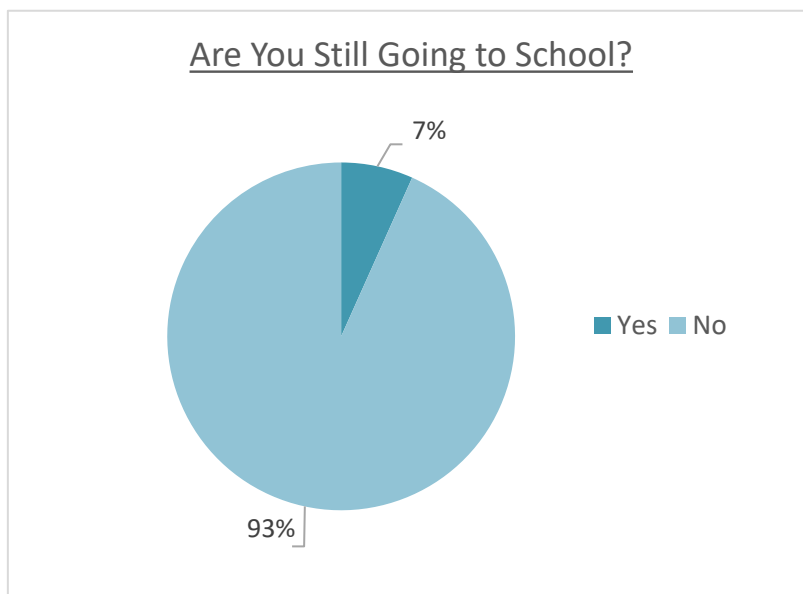
Some of the respondents were happy to share the source of how they were getting the information about Coronavirus which is captured below:

- "My mom is a NHS worker"
- "My Dad"
- "Geography teacher"
- "My church"
- "Sandwell Shielding Service"
- "Youtube"
- "A neighbour"
- "School"

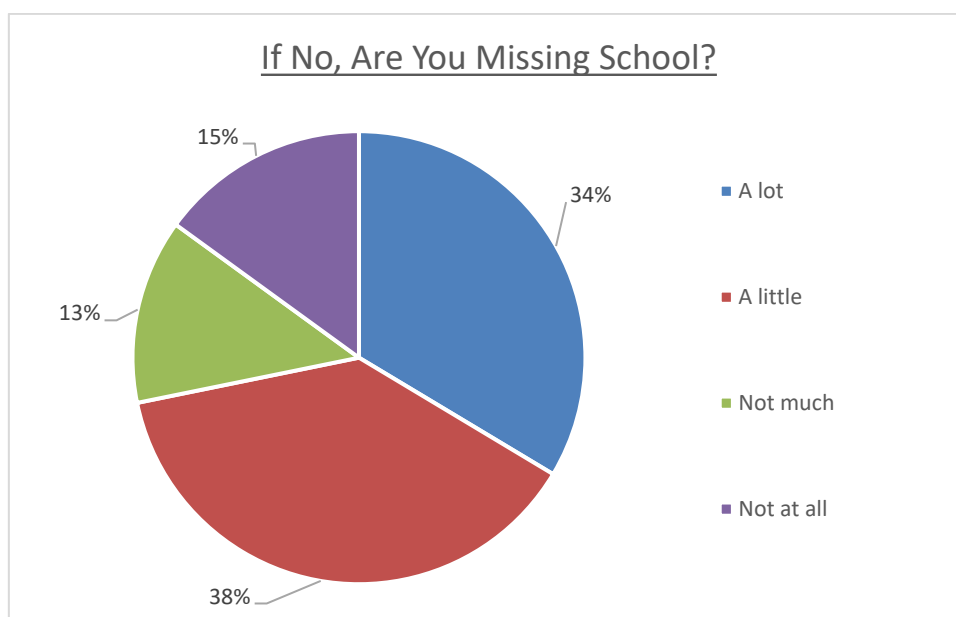
Others pointed out how they felt and the seriousness of the situation and this is captured in the quotes below:

- "I feel like it is serious but at the same time it still feels like a dream or some sort of weird lie"
- "When the number of reported deaths suddenly increased rapidly"
- "When they cancelled my exams"
- "People panic buying worried me"
- "When my dad is classified as a vulnerable citizen"

Figures 14 and 15 show the participants position in terms of schooling and their views on missing school.

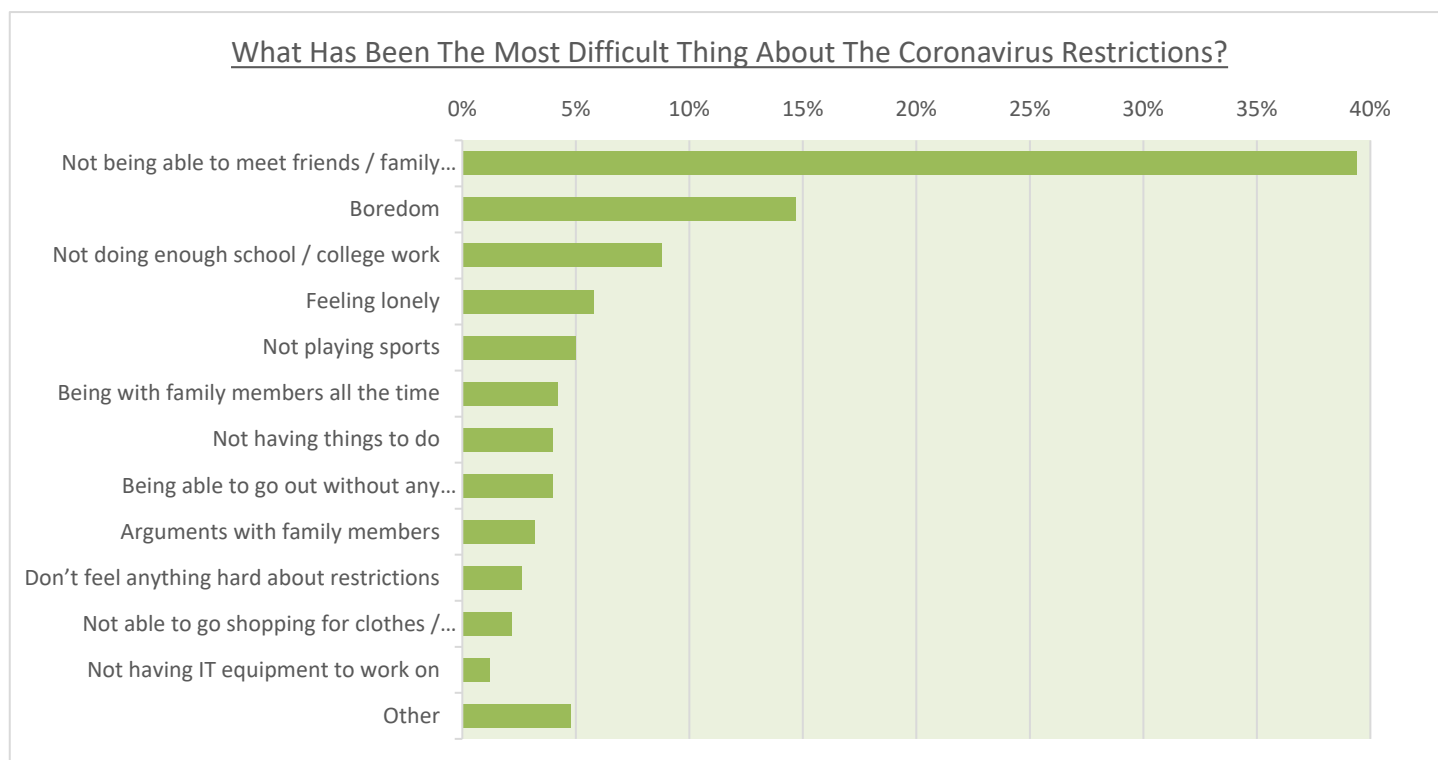


- 93% of respondents confirmed they are not going to school whilst 7% confirmed they are still attending school.



- When we asked respondents if they are missing school, 33.6% of individuals confirmed they are missing school a lot whilst 38.2% of individuals said they are missing school a little. 15% of respondents confirmed they are not missing school at all.

Figure 16 shows the participants response on the most difficult aspect of Coronavirus Restrictions.



- 39% of individuals said that not being able to meet family/friends has had a big impact on them.
- 15% of respondents stated that boredom was a big factor.
- 9% confirmed they are not getting enough school / college work.
- 6% stated they felt lonely.

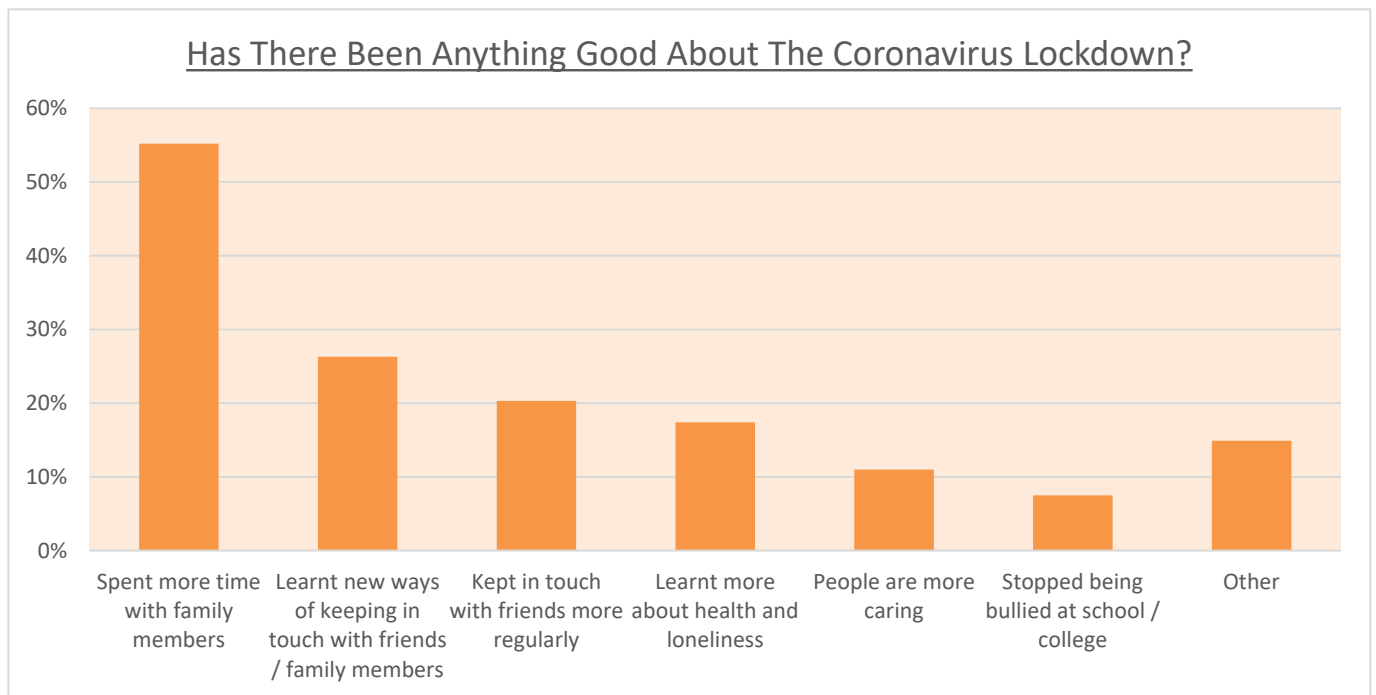
The detached youth workers who were effectively our ‘researchers’ fed back that this question was more thought provoking and was bringing out the effects and impact of coronavirus on the lives of young people. The participants were able to articulate with confidence on how they were feeling, anger, boredom, real life situations.

One youth worker shared his experience on how it was difficult to capture everything on paper and felt there was lots of information, feelings, experience and real situations young people were sharing but was lost trying to transfer this onto the questionnaire and commented “our frustration was, we covered so many issues and effects of covid-19 with the group of young people but the end result was only one survey was completed”.

We have captured some views directly from the participants on the restrictions and how it was affecting them:

- “I miss being just able to go out in general.”
- “Not being able to go to my nan and grandad’s funeral.”
- “School”
- “Feeling lonely, not doing enough school work.”
- “Boredom, not able to shop, arguments with family members, sister.”
- “Not meeting friends and family, playing sports, not being able to go out.”
- “All of the homework and not being able to meet friends and family.”

Figure 17 shows the participants response on anything that was good about the lockdown.



- 55% participants stated it was good because they have had more time to spend with family members.
- 46% stated they are keeping in touch with friends/family more regularly or finding new ways to communicate.
- 17% of respondents confirmed they are learning more about health and loneliness and 11% of individuals have felt that people are more caring during the lockdown. 7.5% of individuals stated bullying had stopped.

**Respondents were also asked what new skills they had learnt whilst staying at home:**

- 42% confirmed they have learnt responsibility and how to manage themselves independently.
- 39% of people have learnt gaming skills.
- 32% of people have learnt painting/drawing/sewing.
- 28% have learnt basic self-defence, exercise and dance.
- 27% who have been reading and 24% of participants have learnt about the importance of hygiene/ first aid.

Some of the participants views on the good things they have experienced due to coronavirus were captured to give some indication of their thoughts. These are listed below:

- “Nothing”
- “I got rid of fake friends”
- “Have had time to play chess and learn a new language”
- “Having more deeper talks with friends about life and stuff, we're all a lot closer now”
- “Learning a new language”
- “Knowing that it is possible to stop pollution, for it was visible when there were no cars around”
- “Doing online school for more educational experiences”
- “I have felt more relaxed as I don't need to stress about school as much”
- “More independence and a feeling of responsibility”
- “No school”

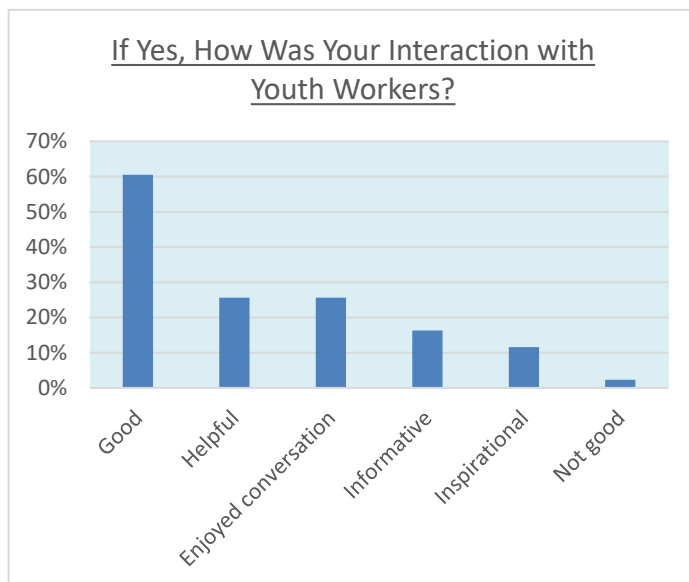
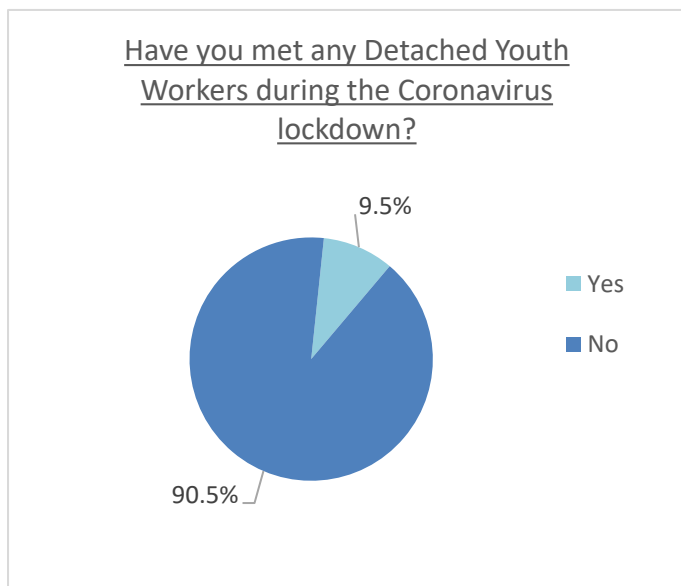
Figure 18 shows how much young people missed going to youth sessions, detached sessions and youth bus sessions.

When asked how much they missed going to a Youth Club / Detached Youth Session / Youth Bus:



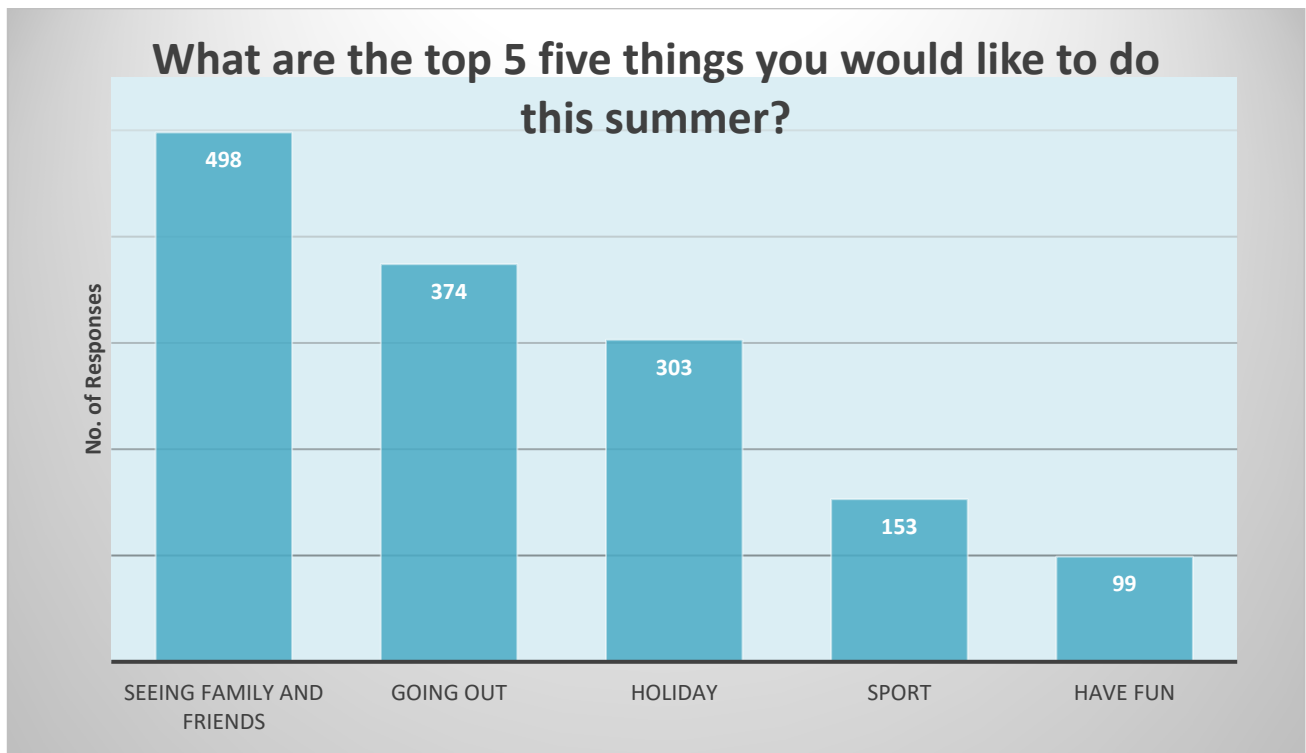
- 17% participants stated they missed going to youth club / detached session / Youth Bus a lot.

Figures 19 and 20 show how many participants had met a youth worker during lockdown and how that interaction was.



- 90.5% respondents confirmed they have not met Detached Youth Workers (DYW) during the Coronavirus lockdown, whilst 9.5% said they had.
- 61% of participants said they had a good interaction with Detached Youth Workers when they met them.
- 26% of individual confirmed they were helpful, and a similar proportion enjoyed their conversation with them.
- 16% of participants confirmed DYW were informative.
- 12% said DYW were inspirational to them.

Figure 21 demonstrates the 5 main things participants want to do in the summer. Most of these have emerged throughout the Survey.

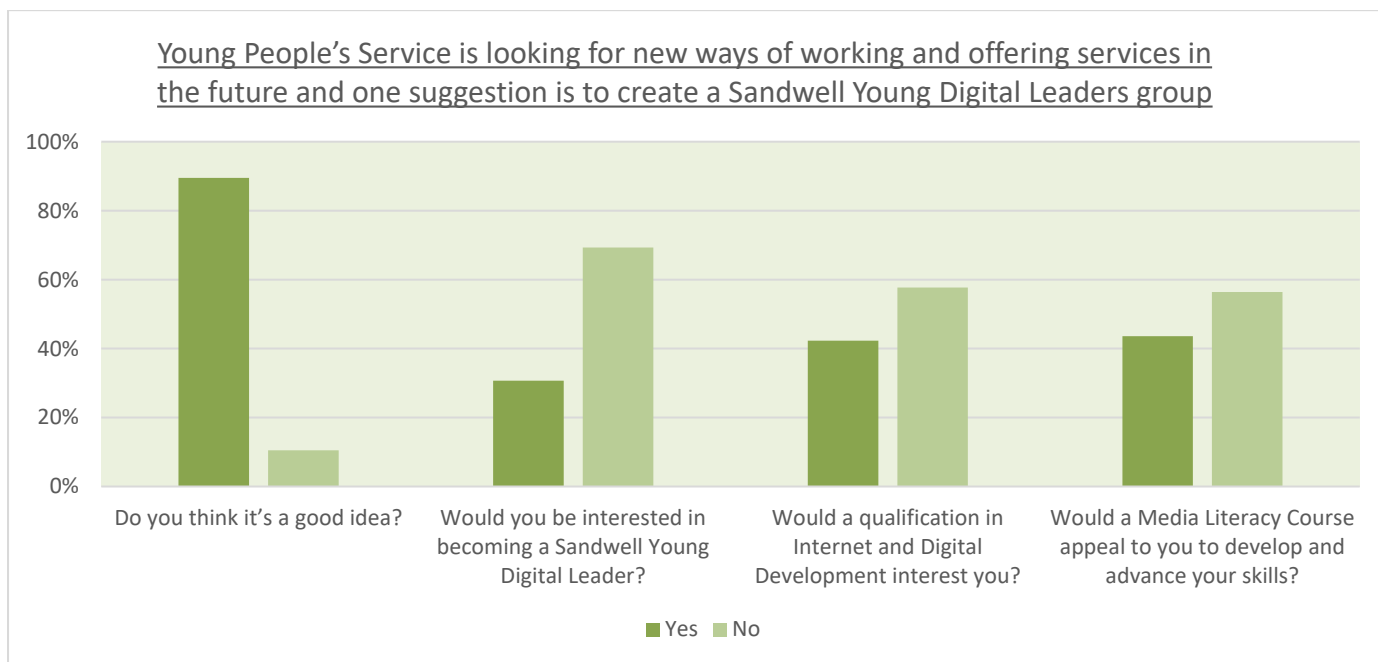


The value of family and friends is the top priority for participants who they want to spend time with during the summer.

The other four priorities are associated with wellbeing and as one participant stated 'coming out of the bubble' for our mental health. The priority four are listed as

- Wanting to be active through going out
- Playing sports,
- Wanting to go on holiday
- Having fun

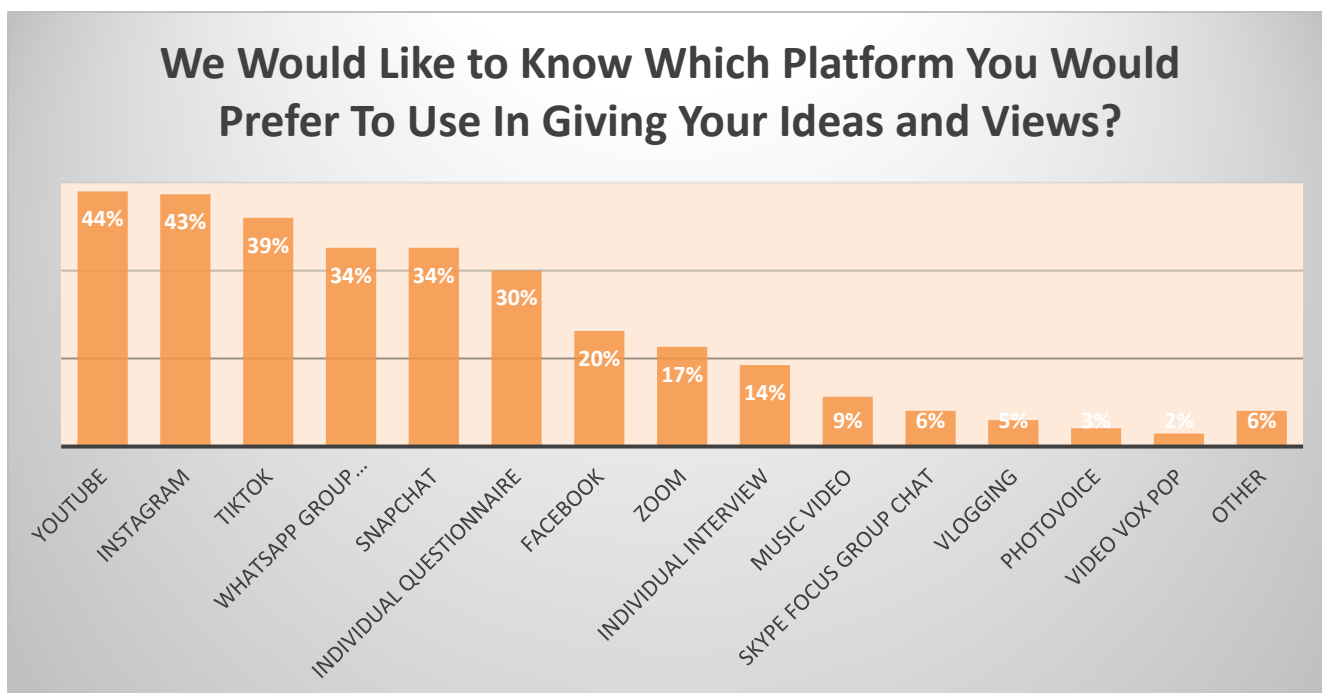
Figure 22 shows the next question considered the idea of a young digital leader’s group:



- 90% of participants confirmed that a young digital leader’s group was a good idea.
- 31% confirmed that they would be an interested in becoming a young digital leader.
- 42% confirmed they would be interested in a qualification in digital skills.
- 44% said a Media literacy course would appeal to them to advance their skills.

Finally, respondents were asked which platform they would prefer to use in giving their ideas and views:

Figure 23.



- The most preferred social media platforms for young people are YouTube (44%) and Instagram (43%)
- 39% of individuals preferred TikTok and 34% of respondents said both WhatsApp or Snapchat



## Conclusions and Recommendations

Page 93

Findings	Conclusion	Recommendation
<b>1. Social Media</b>	The survey demonstrates social media and the use of online surveys are both strong platforms for engaging with young people.	However, the Council and partners need to use social media more effectively in supporting young people. Too often Facebook and Twitter are used instead of more popular platforms among young people, such as You Tube, Instagram, TikTok, Whatsapp and Snapchat.
<b>2. More Engagement with Young People</b>	As this research demonstrated, some young people were uncomfortable and hesitant to take part as they were not used to being questioned or asked for their opinions and having their views 'valued'.	<p>There needs to be more opportunities for young people to engage meaningfully in decision making processes, where they can see their value and influence in shaping and making changes to services.</p> <p>It may be worthwhile doing a follow up survey in the autumn with young people as they return to full time education, to see how they are feeling and what their support needs are during this transition period.</p>
<b>3. Digital Leaders</b>	It is evident from the feedback that young people want a digital leaders programme to help shape communications and engagement going forward.	To establish a digital leader's group for young people to shape digital communication strategies and how services engage with them.
<b>4. Value of Family and Friends</b>	There was overwhelming evidence that friends and family are very important support networks for the participants.	Organisations and services should take account of how young people value family and friends and how services work holistically with the individual and their support networks.
<b>5. Countering Loneliness</b>	The survey has acknowledged, captured and highlighted the real effect of the pandemic on young people, with many feeling 'worried', 'stressed' and around 20% stating	The recommendation is for partners who have lead responsibility around loneliness, mental health and wellbeing to lead further work around tackling this problem and a working

Findings	Conclusion	Recommendation
	loneliness has been a major issue for them during the lockdown. Others stated missing friends and family as a contributory factor to their loneliness and not being able to “go out without restrictions”, was making people lonely. However, a positive to come out of the pandemic has been the opportunity for some young people to become more resilient and learn skills to help them to develop their independence	group initiated to discuss ways partners can work more effectively together to tackle this issue and support young people.  Another recommendation is to build on resilience and independence within both the schools PHSE and youth service curriculum but also in other settings, where young people may be able to enhance these skills.
<b>6. Home Schooling</b>	Over ⅔ of respondents stated that they were missing school and the pandemic has highlighted the detrimental effect on the ‘poor’ or less able families who are struggling with home schooling and creating a class of young people who may never reach and ‘permanently’ exclude themselves from education.	The recommendation is for school leaders to acknowledge that for some young people the education gap will be wider than for others as a result of the pandemic and the lack of home schooling and access to resources and therefore a more concerted effort will need to support these young people to catch up.  A partnership approach will also need to look at wrap around support for young people outside of school to ensure the needs of young people and families are identified and addressed.
<b>7. Summer/Future Youth Programmes</b>	The survey has demonstrated that young people have missed out on social interaction during the pandemic, which has led them to feeling isolated, bored and affected their mental health and wellbeing.  The evidence also suggests that young people have also taken the opportunity to explore new activities and developed new skills during this time.	Partners need to look at providing a joint up offer of support during the summer and beyond to ensure access to services. This should include fun, enjoyable, sports, arts, youth and play activities with support on ways to cope with Coronavirus and its effect and impact on people’s lives.  The Council and partners should look at how they embed this new-found passion for the arts, culture and sports in future youth programmes and strategies.

Findings	Conclusion	Recommendation
	It is also evident from this research that young people are not aware of what services are available to them.	Services need to improve how they market and promote themselves to young people using existing and new mechanisms to enable this to happen.
<b>8. Youth Provision</b>	The findings show that those young people that were regularly engaging with youth workers prior to the pandemic have missed their youth provision a lot. The majority of young people that have had an interaction with youth workers during the pandemic have found this to be a positive experience, finding it helpful, informative and in some cases inspirational.	<p>The Council needs to continue investing in detached youth work to reach those young people who choose not to engage in other youth work settings.</p> <p>Often youth workers may be the only significant other ‘trusted’ adult in a young person’s life and the positive relationship between young person and youth worker should be utilised to provide support and address issues and concerns at the earliest opportunity, to avoid escalation of need.</p> <p>It is evident that those young people that access youth provision value this and the relationship they have with workers. Further work needs to be done around promoting and marketing the youth offer, identifying gaps and maximising resources to provide the right provision in the right locations in collaboration with young people.</p>



**Sandwell Young People’s Survey on the Effect and Impact of Coronavirus**

Sandwell’s Young People’s Service always aims to listen to young people and is kindly requesting young people of Sandwell to take part in this questionnaire. We want to know how the Coronavirus has affected and impacted on you.

For those who are under 18 years of age, we will need your parent’s consent as this survey is going to be used by Sandwell Council to devise; plans and services for young people, publicity, promote what you are saying and how we can help and support young people in the future.

**About Yourself**

Name ..... Age ..... Gender .....

Ethnicity ..... Do you have a disability?  Yes  No

Which area of Sandwell do you live in? .....

**1. What makes you feel happy?**

.....  
 .....

**2. Who makes you feel awesome and why?**

.....  
 .....

**3. Do you understand what the Coronavirus is?**  Yes  No

**4. Have you been following the Government and NHS advice on preventing the spread of infection?**

- |                                   |                              |                             |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Staying Home                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Social distancing                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Catch it, Kill it, Bin it         | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Washing your hands for 20 seconds | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

**5. How have you been getting information about the Coronavirus?**

- Friends and family
- News
- Social media
- Government Briefings
- Youth Workers
- Other ..... (please specify who or what)
- None

**6. At what point did you feel the Coronavirus was serious?**

- The number of reported deaths
- When schools were closed
- When the country went into lockdown
- Other ..... (please specify who or what)

**7. How are you feeling about the Coronavirus now?**

- Worried
- Not too worried now
- Sad
- Stressed
- Angry
- That people are more kind and thoughtful
- Lonely
- Trouble getting to sleep
- That the worst is over

**8. Are you still going to school?** Yes  No

**If no, are you missing school?**

- A lot
- A little
- Not much
- Not at all

**9. What has been the most difficult thing about the Coronavirus restrictions?**

- Being able to go out without any restrictions
- Not being able to meet friends / family members
- Boredom
- Not having things to do
- Arguments with family members
- Not having IT equipment to work on
- Playing sports
- Feeling lonely
- Not doing enough school / college work
- Not able to go shopping for clothes / personal items
- Being with family members all the time
- Don't feel anything hard about restrictions
- Other ..... (please specify who or what)

**10. Has there been anything good about the Coronavirus lockdown?**

- Learnt new ways of keeping in touch with friends and family members
- Spent more time with family members
- Kept in touch with friends more regularly

- Stopped being bullied at school / college
- People are more caring
- Learnt more about health and loneliness
- Other ..... (please specify who or what)

**11. What new skill/s have you learnt whilst staying at home?** *(Please circle any of the following which apply to you)*

- Painting / Drawing / Sewing
- Basic Self-defence / Exercise / Dance
- Responsibility / Managing yourself independently e.g. cooking, laundry, washing dishes
- Resilience / Adaptability
- Basic Etiquettes
- Reading books
- Decision-making / Critical thinking / Problem solving
- Managing money / Basic budgeting
- Gardening / Helping a neighbour
- Writing a letter / Communication
- Importance of health and hygiene / First aid
- Organisation / Time management
- Simple DIY / Decorating
- Digital Media / Making a video / Photography
- Gaming
- Safety skills i.e. ICE / How to make an emergency call
- Job search and interview skills
- Reading and understanding medicine labels and dosages
- Being a wise consumer / comparison shopping
- Other ..... (please specify who or what)

**12. How much do you miss going to a youth club?**

- A lot
- Not much
- I don't miss it at all
- I don't go to a youth club

**13. Have you met any Detached Youth Workers during the Coronavirus lockdown?**

- Yes                       No

**If yes, how was your interaction with Youth Workers?**

- Good
- Not good
- Helpful
- Inspirational
- Informative
- Enjoyed conversation

**14. What are the top 5 things you would like to do this summer?**

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....

*Young People’s Service is looking for new ways of working and offering services in the future and one suggestion is to create a Sandwell Young Digital Leaders group.*

**15. The group will lead with ideas and share their digital skills and experiences to help develop an online interactive site for young people to use. The site will be safe, informative, a place to provide fun activities for young people to join and become an online socialisation hub in Sandwell**

- a) Do you think it’s a good idea?  Yes  No
- b) Would you be interested in becoming a Sandwell Young Digital Leader?  Yes  No
- c) Would a qualification in Internet and Digital Development interest you?  Yes  No
- d) Would a Media Literacy Course appeal to you to develop and advance your skills?  Yes  No
- e) What is your current favourite site? (optional)  
.....

**16. Sandwell Young People’s Service is seeking ideas on how best to find out your views, suggestions and needs in the future. We would like to know which platform you would prefer to use in giving your ideas and views? Please put a cross to select the options below**

*(It could be one or more of the following)*

- Individual Interview (answering set of questions through a conversation with a Youth Worker)
- Individual Questionnaire (you work on our own or with family / friends)
- WhatsApp group questionnaire
- Facebook
- Instagram
- TikTok
- Snapchat
- Zoom
- Photovoice – use your own phone or camera that can be provided to you to capture stories using written / verbal captions
- Skype focus group chat
- Vlogging
- YouTube
- Video Vox Pop - recorded video of your views
- Music video
- Other ..... (please specify who or what)

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your views will help us to plan how we will interact and deliver services to you in the future.**

**Please see next page for Parental Consent Form.**

**Parental Consent Form for Under 18 Years of Age**

I ..... (Parent / Guardian) of .....  
give consent to Sandwell Young People’s Service to use the information in this questionnaire to plan future services and publicise young people’s views and needs. This will also be used by Young People’s Service to find out ways young people want the service to interact with them in the future.

Signed: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Contact No. : .....

Email address: .....

**Further Information**

If you have any queries or require further information about this questionnaire please contact Shafaq Hussain, Senior Youth Officer on 07977 430626 or [shafaq\\_hussain@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:shafaq_hussain@sandwell.gov.uk). You can also send the completed questionnaire to [youngpeople\\_services@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:youngpeople_services@sandwell.gov.uk) or by post to the following address:

Young People’s Services  
Sandwell MBC  
Coneygre Arts Centre  
Sedgley Road East  
Tipton  
West Midlands  
DY4 8UH



## Report to Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board

**Monday 14 February 2022**

<b>Subject:</b>	Update on the Performance of Sandwell Children's Trust
<b>Director:</b>	Director of Children and Education, Michael Jarrett
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Michael Jarrett, Director of Children and Education <a href="mailto:Michael_Jarrett@sandwell.gov.uk">Michael_Jarrett@sandwell.gov.uk</a>  Mandip S. Chahal, Senior Commissioning Manager for Statutory Services <a href="mailto:Mandip1_chahal@sandwell.gov.uk">Mandip1_chahal@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

### 1 Recommendations


- 1.1 Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board considers and comments on Sandwell Children's Trust (SCT) performance update.

### 2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Sandwell Children's Trust is required to report to the Scrutiny Board twice each year as part of the obligations set out in the contract between the Council and the Trust.
- 2.2 The purpose of the item is to provide an update for consideration and discussion regarding Sandwell Children's Trust.



### 3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p><b>Best start in life for children and young people</b></p> <p>Ensuring that children have the Best Start in Life is a key driver for Sandwell Children’s Trust; ensuring that children are safeguarded, protected and, when unable to live with their parents, are effectively cared for.</p> <p>SCT works with families, foster carers, schools, statutory and voluntary providers to support the achievements of vulnerable children and those in the care of the council.</p> <p>SCT works to ensure that children in the care of the Council receive the support and opportunities that any parent would give their child.</p>
---	--

## 4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 The contract with SCT is underpinned by comprehensive governance arrangements. The contract requires that the Director of Children and Education, together with council senior officers from finance and legal services, and the Chief Executive of the Trust meet on at least a monthly basis to consider performance and operational matters, this occurs at the Operational Partnership Board meeting. In addition, each quarter, the Lead Member for Children’s Services and the Chief Executive meet with the Chair of the SCT Board and the Chief Executive of SCT, at a Strategic Partnership Board.
- 4.2 The contract with the Trust specifies that representatives of the Trust should attend Council meetings when reasonably requested, specifically referencing attendance twice a year at the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board and at the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board as requested.
- 4.3 The contract requires SCT to provide regular performance updates for consideration by the Operational Partnership Board, the Strategic Partnership Board and then by the Cabinet.



- 4.4 On behalf of the Council, the Sandwell Childrens Trust developed an improvement plan in response to the Ofsted inspection findings published in January 2018. The plan was presented to Cabinet in September 2018 and covered a 3-year period and was refreshed in September 2021.
- 4.5 The delivery of the improvement plan continues to be overseen by an Improvement Board, independently chaired by a DfE appointed consultant, and progress monitored as part of the Council’s contractual monitoring processes.
- 4.6 Since April 2018 the Trust has received several monitoring visits from Ofsted as well as two assurance visits, the most recent of which was in November 2021.

## 5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 At its meeting on 19 October 2016, Cabinet was advised of the Government’s Statutory Direction (under Section 479A of the Education Act 1996) to set up a new arrangement in the form of a children’s trust to deliver children’s social care services. As a result, Sandwell Children’s Trust began operating on 1 April 2018. The Service Delivery Agreement includes a contractual requirement to attend Children and Education Services Scrutiny Panel twice yearly. Any alternative to the current arrangement must be agreed by both the Council and the Trust and go through a formal contract variation process.

## 6 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	Sandwell Children’s Trust will receive approx. £68m in 2021/22 to deliver the Council’s statutory responsibilities for children’s social care, and to provide targeted early help services.  The Contract Sum amount that SCT receives is agreed annually in line with mechanisms set out in the Service Delivery Contract.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	The Service Delivery Contract between the Council and SCT is performance managed via a monthly Operational Partnership Board, a quarterly Strategic Partnership Board, and SCT is required to attend up to two Children’s Scrutiny Board meetings



	and one Budget Scrutiny meeting each year. There is a partnership Improvement Board independently chaired by a DfE appointed consultant. Additionally, the Trust is required to submit its Annual Review to the Council.
<b>Risk:</b>	The Council's strategic risk register identifies a red risk relevant to this report, regarding improvements required in children's social care services. This risk is regularly monitored and reported to the Council's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.
<b>Equality:</b>	An Equality Impact Assessment screening is not required for this report. However, the improvement in children's services will have a positive effect on the lives of vulnerable children, young people and families in Sandwell, including those with protected characteristics.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	SCT continues to support children and families in Sandwell and as the quality of service that they deliver improves so does the impact they have on improving the health and wellbeing of children and families.
<b>Social Value</b>	SCT supports children to achieve, feel safe, be supported and access opportunities. SCT supports care leavers to access education, employment and training. Having strong governance and oversight supports SCT to achieve service improvement and better support children and families in Sandwell.

## 7. Appendices

None

## 8. Background Papers

[Ofsted Monitoring Visit Report Published 14 January 2022](#)

[Ofsted Inspection Report – Fostering Service Published 8 Sept 2021](#)



## Report to the Children’s Services and Education Scrutiny Board

**Monday 14 February 2022**

<b>Subject:</b>	Response from the Cabinet in respect of the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transport Model
<b>Directors:</b>	Director – Law and Governance, Surjit Tour Director – Children and Education, Michael Jarrett
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Senior Democratic Services Officer, Matt Powis Group Head for Education Support Services, Sue Moore


### 1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Board considers the response from the Cabinet in respect of the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

### 2 Reasons for Recommendations

In accordance with the Council’s Constitution and the Localism Act 2011, the Cabinet were requested to respond to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Board within two months, setting out any approved recommendations accordingly. The Cabinet considered the Review’s findings and recommendations on 20 October 2021.

### 3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	Best start in life for children and young people – providing transport to Sandwell’s children and young people with SEND so that they can access education is a vital component of this objective.
---	--



## 4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 The Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board formed a cross-party working group to investigate special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) transport models. It was agreed that the Working Group's membership included Members of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board and parent governor representatives.
- 4.2 The Board had due regard to the role of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee which carried out a separate investigation into tendering arrangements relating to SEND Transport. Therefore, the Working Group focused on the duty of the Council to provide a SEND transport model.
- 4.3 Over a number of weeks, the Working Group carried out a range of research and interviewed witnesses in accordance with their terms of reference. As a result, a number of recommendations were identified which were approved by the Board on 27 September 2021.
- 4.4 The Cabinet considered each proposal presented by the Board at its meeting on 20 October 2021 and resolved to respond to each recommendation within two months. Each recommendation and subsequent Cabinet response is set out in Appendix 1 for the Board to consider.

## 5 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	The main implications for the Council's resources relates to financing of SEND Transport.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	The Council has a statutory duty (Education Act 1996) in relation to SEND Transport.
<b>Risk:</b>	The Scrutiny Board acknowledged the need to properly assess risk, especially of potential future models of SEND Transport delivery. There was a recommendation that a comprehensive feasibility study be completed for long-term transport options.
<b>Equality:</b>	Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) have protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	SEND Transport contributes to the health and wellbeing of those residents who use it.





<b>Social Value</b>	The recommendations include proposals that the Scrutiny Board feels would increase opportunities for local businesses.
---------------------	--

## 6 Appendices

Recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transport Models – Cabinet Report – 20 October 2021

## 7. Background Papers

There are no background papers.



This page is intentionally left blank



## Appendix 1

Scrutiny Review Recommendations	The Cabinet Response
That the administration of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transport be reviewed to ensure consistency of approach and that resourcing is adequate in light of increasing demand on the service.	As the new procurement process is worked the service will continue to be reviewed to ensure consistency, transparency and robustness of service delivery and that there is a sustainable structure in place to support future demands.
That the Parent Group for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities be communicated and consulted with on any changes to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transport service and, where possible, the views of affected children and young people are also sought.	Regular meetings with Parent Carers Voices United (SEND Parent Carer Forum) are in place and it has been agreed that a member of the Travel Assistance Service office will attend the forum.
That Education Health Care Plan assessments are carried out without delay to ensure early identification of recommended provision, including Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transport requirements.	Not all children who have an EHCP are eligible for transport as detailed in the Home to School and Adult Learner Policy. In terms of EHC assessments once the LA has received a report from the Community Assessment Meeting (CAM) that a statutory assessment may be needed it will take that report to the next Assessment and Moderation Panel (AMP). At the AMP a decision will be made as to whether to accept the recommendation of the CAM to proceed with a statutory assessment. The process is the same if the LA has received a request directly from a parent or young person.

Scrutiny Review Recommendations	The Cabinet Response
	<p>Parents/Carers will be informed of the LA's decision within 6 weeks of receipt of the CAM report or the parent/young person request.</p> <p>If the decision at AMP is to proceed with a statutory assessment then the LA will begin the process of gathering information and advice which will inform its decision as to whether to issue an Education, Health and Care Plan. The assessment process will take about 10 weeks. Local Authorities then have a statutory duty to finalise and issue the EHCP within 20 weeks of the start of the process.</p>
<p>That child to adult ratios for minibuses be re-evaluated to ensure that they are appropriate and reflect assessed risks and needs on a case by case basis.</p>	<p>This will form be reviewed as part of the new procurement exercise to ensure that the needs of the child are meet</p>
<p>That the Independent Travel Training Programme be continued and increased.</p>	<p>Both SEN and the Travel Assistance Service will continue to promote the Travel Training Programme to parents/cares and schools to encourage take up and help provide life skills</p>
<p>That awareness campaigns relating to Personal Budgets and the Independent Travel Training Programme be refreshed to ensure all families are aware of the options available.</p>	<p>SEN will continue to promote both Personal Budgets and the Independent Travel Training Programme as part of the initial EHCP assessments and at the annual review.</p>
<p>That Early Years provision in each town be reviewed, which may help reduce transport costs.</p>	<p>The Early Years Transformation Academy (EYTA) is an intensive year long Leadership and Management programme set up by the Early Intervention</p>

**Scrutiny Review Recommendations****The Cabinet Response**

Foundation (EIF) funded through the DfE to provide strategic vision in Systems Change Management using the theory of change model. The team was made up of a Public Health commissioner, Health Commissioner, Early Years lead for Public health, Health Visiting Lead, Children Centre Commissioner, Quality Early Years Manager, Inclusion Support Early Years Manager and Midwifery Lead. The team mapped the services and provision across the pre-conception to end of reception years, undertook 150 parent interviews with Sandwell families to understand what it is like being a family with young children living in Sandwell and completed the data analysis Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 0-5 Years. The key findings/actions taken from this piece of work were:

1. Speech, language and communication was a key feature of the needs of young children and a barrier to learning and good outcomes in adulthood.
2. There was a gap for children after the age of 12 months up to 2.5 years from universal services such as Health Visitors.
3. A Speech, Language and Communication Pathway was developed using existing pathways.

Scrutiny Review Recommendations	The Cabinet Response
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Additional funding was secured from Health for a consultant model for SALT - dedicated Speech and Language Therapist.</li> <li>5. Wellcomm screening is available from 18months through Children Centres and day-care settings.</li> <li>6. Re-visit developmental check on or before 18mths by a Health Visitor Team showing emerging delay in development.</li> </ol> <p>In addition, there is involvement with the Black Country Outcomes project which is focussing on SLCN for all children. All of the above work will support future mapping of need across the borough and inform place planning.</p>
<p>That time lengths of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transport journeys be reviewed to ensure that children are not needing to travel for more than 50 minutes in normal circumstances.</p>	<p>All contracts will continue to be regularly monitored to ensure that no journey time exceeds 50 mins. All tenders will be evaluated to ensure that journey times are kept to a minimum prior to awarding new contracts.</p>
<p>That place provision be reviewed and strategically located throughout the borough to minimise journey times for children using Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transport.</p>	<p>Place provision is reviewed and where ever possible provision is strategically located in the borough. Projections for mainstream schools are produced by our Data Intelligence team to support the sufficiency analysis for new places. We predict that the number of children and young people with EHC plans within Sandwell schools will increase by an average of 5.3%</p>

Scrutiny Review Recommendations	The Cabinet Response
	<p>each year over the next 5 years and the general population number of pupils will increase by 1.4%. This prediction estimates that there could be an additional 500 – 630 statutory school aged pupils with an EHC Plans within 5 years. This as well as other data is considered when planning provision.</p>
<p>That the following be considered in relation to the contracting of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transport for February 2022:-</p> <p>(a) providers should ensure drivers and Passenger Assistants are trained, and accredited where appropriate, in First Aid, non-verbal communication, use of safety harnesses and manual handling. In addition there should be Advanced Passenger Assistants who are specifically trained to provide emergency medication on transport, including but not limited to administering pre-loaded EpiPens or pre-loaded buccal midazolam devices;</p> <p>(b) a market position statement be prepared, encouraging competition from a wide range of suppliers;</p> <p>(c) small and medium enterprises should be afforded opportunities to tender for the contracts;</p> <p>(d) that local/mainstream schools should be the first consideration if they can address the needs of</p>	<p>All new contracts (New framework) from September with require all drivers and all passengers assistants to have a first aid accreditation. Where a child requires specialist support during the journey we will continue to enable their carer and/or nurse to travel with them on their own (single occupancy vehicle)</p> <p>The new framework will build in greater financial and service resilience for the council by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increasing the total number of Lots awarded</li> <li>• limiting the total amount of work a single operator can be awarded</li> <li>• reserving the right not to accept the lowest tenderer for a respective Lot to ensure the most</li> </ul>

Scrutiny Review Recommendations	The Cabinet Response
<p>pupils, whilst recognising that some parents may prefer alternative places;</p> <p>(e) some harmonisation of provision should be considered to balance effective management of contracts whilst retaining a diversified group of providers;</p> <p>(f) the model for provision should avoid the increased risk associated with awarding contracts to a small number of providers.</p>	<p>economic advantageous award of contract is made</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adopting an appropriate evaluation matrix to manage the equitable award of contracts to individual operators</li> <li>• selecting a wide range of operators to minimise the risk of service disruption through the failure of a single operator</li> <li>• securing satisfactory evidence of the ongoing financial resilience of the operators admitted to the Framework</li> <li>• ensuring adequate contingency plans are in place to ensure continuity of service</li> <li>• this will help to provide opportunities for existing and new SME operators</li> </ul>
<p>That a trial scheme for providing Passenger Assistants in-house, or in partnership with schools, be undertaken as part of the contracting of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transport and that a full analysis is carried out on the trial scheme to determine its effectiveness.</p>	<p>A pilot scheme to be developed to consider;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• role and responsibilities of the passenger assistant</li> <li>• uptake of the role</li> <li>• the cost to the Council</li> <li>• Impact on children and their families</li> <li>• Impact for operators</li> <li>• how other Council who directly employ passenger assistants operate</li> </ul>

Scrutiny Review Recommendations	The Cabinet Response
<p>That the feasibility of taking Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transport provision in-house be assessed, this should include risks, costs, benefits, potential timescales and suitable performance indicators, and it should include the following options:</p> <p>(a) full Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transport service in-house;</p> <p>(b) combined provision with existing Adult Social Care Transport;</p> <p>(c) only Passenger Assistants service provided in-house.</p>	<p>This will be considered as part of a wider review of transport services in the Council and will consider;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost</li> <li>• Capacity</li> <li>• Quality of provision</li> <li>• Flexibility of service to meet demand</li> <li>• Continued service improvement</li> <li>• Alternative delivery models</li> <li>• Ability to maintain a sustainable service</li> <li>• Mitigation of risk</li> </ul>
<p>That, however the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transport service is provided in future, Passenger Assistants:-</p> <p>(a) must be trained, and accredited where appropriate, in First Aid, communication with non-verbal children; and</p> <p>(b) during their induction and onboarding a clear and strong emphasis should be placed on relationship building between the Passenger Assistant, the family, the school and the transport provider;</p> <p>(c) also include Advanced Passenger Assistants who are specifically trained to provide emergency medication on transport, including but not limited to administering pre-loaded EpiPens or pre-loaded buccal midazolam devices;</p>	<p>Covered in previous responses</p> <p>The Travel Assistance Service will continue to promote and encourage the building of relationships between the child, their family, driver and passenger assistant to foster trust and ensure the journey is always a good experience .</p>

**Scrutiny Review Recommendations**

That how children with Autism Spectrum Disorders can receive earlier diagnoses be reviewed with partners, to help improve outcomes, including around transport needs, for that group.

**The Cabinet Response**

Sandwell has a multi-agency assessment pathway for Autism Spectrum Disorder. The Multi Agency Assessment (MAA) pathway investigates whether a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder would be appropriate for a child or young person. The MAA is completed by three different agencies which will include a Consultant Paediatrician or Consultant Psychiatrist, a Speech and Language Therapist and a Specialist Advisory Teacher, it can also include an Occupational Therapist.

Sandwell' autism diagnostic pathway is a partnership between Children's Therapies, Inclusion Support's Complex Communication and Autism Team and Early Years Team, The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and Child Health – Paediatrics. Assessments are carried out with regard to the diagnostic criteria set out in the ICD 10/11. Best Practice guidelines are set out in the NICE Guidance- Autism spectrum disorder in under 19s: recognition, referral and diagnosis (CG128).

The assessment period is around 30 weeks; Sandwell does not have a 'waiting list', children and young people are under assessment from the point that the referral is processed following the completion of the required NHS checks. In the academic year 2020-21,

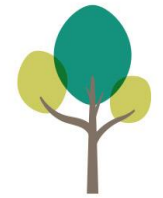


Scrutiny Review Recommendations	The Cabinet Response
	<p>over 240 diagnostic assessments were completed. In the period July 2018- July 2021 there has been a 64% overall increase in Sandwell of the number of autistic children and young people. Our mainstream primary schools have seen a 112% increase.</p> <p>The MAA Pathway is held under review by the ASD Steering Group who monitor number of referrals and completion times. The Steering Group works to improve access to the pathway with information for parents and professionals. Information on the Local Offer is currently being revised and amended by the Steering Group. It is important to note that multi-agency partners do not have additional resources to provide this pathway.</p> <p>The MAA pathway is separate to the identification of transport needs. Transport needs will be considered in line with the Sandwell Home to School and Adult Learner Transport Policy.</p>
<p>That research relating to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities is considered whenever it is available to identify potential areas of improvement in Sandwell’s service provision.</p>	<p>The SEND strategy 2021-2024 details the Sandwell vision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities</p> <p>The priority area’ for development are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Quality Assurance of Statutory responsibilities:</li> <li>2. Workforce Development</li> </ol>

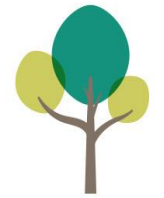
Scrutiny Review Recommendations	The Cabinet Response
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1211 245 1592 284">3. Improving Provision</li><li data-bbox="1211 288 1850 327">4. Improving Progress and Attainment</li></ol> <p data-bbox="1167 373 2051 662">The SEND Strategic Board is responsible for the governance and commissioning of services to support children and young people with SEND across the Sandwell Local Area and will be key to the delivery of this strategy. As a multi-agency group the latest evidence and research is constantly reviewed to inform and ensure improvements are continual.</p>

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

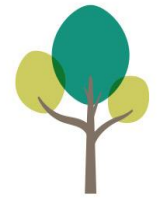
	Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
1	<p><b>Information Governance Records Retention</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Maria Price</p> <p>Director of Law and Governance – Surjit Tour</p>	<p>Leader (Cllr Carmichael)</p>	<p>23 February 2022</p>		<p>The Corporate Retention Policy</p> <p>Email Retention Policy</p> <p>Information Rights Policy</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><b>Sandwell Health Inequalities Programme: Grant funding for Sandwell Consortium CIC to deliver interventions to address health inequalities</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Anna Blennerhassett &amp; Suni Patel</p> <p>Director: Lisa McNally – Director of Public Health</p>	<p>Leader (Cllr Carmichael)</p>	<p>23 February 2022</p>		



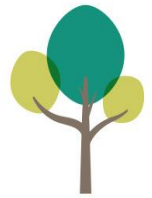
	Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
3	<p><b>Sandwell and Community Caring Trust Contract</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Christine Guest</p> <p>Director: Rashpal Bishop – Director of Adult Social Care</p>	<p>Adults, Social Care and Health (Cllr Hartwell)</p>	<p>23 February 2022 (private item)</p>		
4	<p><b>Small Sided Spaces Project</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Gemma Ryan/Rob Marlow</p> <p>Director: Alice Davey – Director of Borough Economy</p>	<p>Culture and Tourism (Cllr Millard)</p>	<p>23 February 2022</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Cabinet Report</p> <p>Appendix re: Scheme background and process</p>



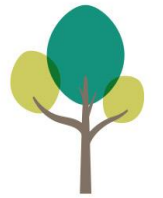
	Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
5	<p><b>Direct Award of Microsoft Server Cloud Enrolment (SCE) License renewal using KCS framework agreement</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Richard Griffiths</p> <p>Director: Neil Cox – Director of Business Strategy and Change</p>	Finance and Resources (Cllr Crompton)	23 February 2022		



	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><b>General Fund and HRA Budget, Capital Programme and Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Simone Hines</p> <p>Director: Simone Hines – Director of Finance</p>	Finance and Resources (Cllr Crompton)	23 February 2022		
7	<p><b>Communications and Corporate Affairs Team</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Clair Norton</p> <p>Director: Neil Cox</p>	Finance and Resources (Cllr Crompton)	23 February 2022		



	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><b>Direct Award of Contract for eCapture and Webcapture Services</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Ian Dunn</p> <p>Director: Simone Hines – Director of Finance</p>	Finance and Resources (Cllr Crompton)	23 February 2022		





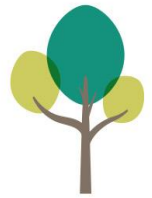
	Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
9	<p><b>Contract for the provision of a Revenues and Benefits application, a corporate document management solution and scanning and indexing services</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Sue Knowles</p> <p>Director: Simone Hines – Director of Finance</p>	Finance and Resources (Cllr Crompton)	23 February 2022		



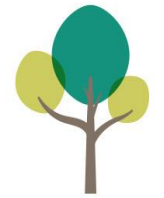
	Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
10	<p><b>Use of commuted sums to deliver affordable housing for young people</b></p> <p>Contact: Nigel Collumbell</p> <p>Director – Gillian Douglas – Director of Housing and Communities</p>	Housing (Cllr Ahmed)	23 February 2022		
11	<p><b>Provision of 15 new council homes at Hawes Lane, Rowley Regis</b></p> <p>Contact: Alan Martin</p> <p>Director: Tony McGovern – Director of Regeneration and Growth/Gillian Douglas – Director of Housing and Communities</p>	Housing (Cllr Ahmed)	23 February 2022		



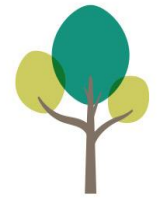
	Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
12	<p><b>Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund – Wave 1</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: J Rawlins</p> <p>Director: Gillian Douglas – Director – Housing and Communities</p>	Housing (Cllr Ahmed)	23 February 2022		
13	<p><b>Adoption of revised Council Tenancy Conditions</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Neville Rowe</p> <p>Director: Gillian Douglas – Director of Housing</p>	Housing (Cllr Ahmed)	23 February 2022	Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board 9/12/2021	Report setting out the proposed changes to the Council's Tenancy Conditions



	Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
14	<p><b>Statement of Community Involvement Update</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Zoe Wilson</p> <p>Director: Tony McGovern – Director of Regeneration and Growth</p>	<p>Regeneration and Growth (Cllr I Padda)</p>	<p>23 February 2022</p>		



	Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
15	<p><b>Appropriation of Grafton Lodge, Grafton Road, Oldbury from General Fund into Housing Revenue Account</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Lee Constable</p> <p>Director: Tony McGovern, Director – Regeneration and Growth</p>	Regeneration and Growth (Cllr I Padda)	23 February 2022		



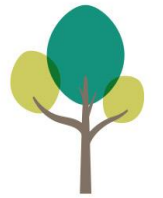
	Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
16	<p><b>Acquisition of Kings Square Shopping Centre</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Chris Hilton</p> <p>Director: Tony McGovern – Director of Regeneration and Growth</p>	<p>Regeneration and Growth (Cllr I Padda)</p>	<p>23 February 2022</p>		
17	<p><b>Temporary Accommodation Elm Tree Primary Academy at Connor Education Centre, West Bromwich</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Martyn Roberts</p> <p>Director: Michael Jarrett, Director of Children and Education</p>	<p>Children and Education (Cllr Simms)</p>	<p>23 March 2022</p>		



Title/Subject		Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
18	<p><b>School Organisation Plan 2021/22</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Martyn Roberts</p> <p>Director: Michael Jarrett – Director of Children and Education/Simone Hines – Director of Finance</p>	Children and Education (Cllr Simms)	23 March 2022	Tbc	<p>Report</p> <p>Appendices</p> <p>School Organisation Plan 2021/22</p>
19	<p><b>Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy – Proposed Expansion</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Martyn Roberts</p> <p>Director: Michael Jarrett – Director of Children and Education</p>	Children and Education (Cllr Simms)	23 March 2022		

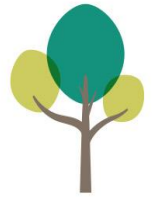


	Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
20	<p><b>Children’s Social Care – Social Workers’ Pay</b></p> <p>Contact: Michael Jarrett</p> <p>Director of Children and Education, Michael Jarrett</p>	Children and Education (Cllr Simms)	23 March 2022		Report
21	<p><b>Domestic Abuse Strategy</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Maryrose Lappin</p> <p>Director: Alice Davey – Director of Borough Economy</p>	Community Safety (Cllr Piper)	23 March 2022		





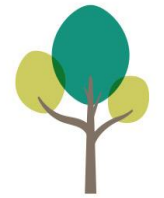
	Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
22	<p><b>City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement and Local Transport Capital Programme 2022/23</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Andy Miller</p> <p>Director: Tony McGovern – Director of Regeneration and Growth</p>	Environment (Cllr Bostan)	23 March 2022		
23	<p><b>Corporate Climate Change Action Plan</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Jo Miskin</p> <p>Director: Tony McGovern – Director of Regeneration and Growth</p>	Environment (Cllr Bostan)	23 March 2022		



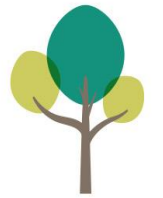
	Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
24	<p><b>Revenues and Benefits Policy Framework 2022/23</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Ian Dunn</p> <p>Director: Simone Hines – Director of Finance</p>	Finance and Resources (Cllr Crompton)	23 March 2022		



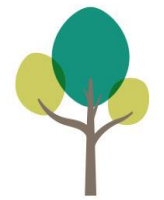
	Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
25	<p><b>Memorandum of Understanding between SMBC and Chance Heritage Trust re Heritage related regeneration in the Borough</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Tony McGovern</p> <p>Director: Tony McGovern – Director of Regeneration and Growth</p>	Regeneration and Growth (Cllr I Padda)	23 March 2022		



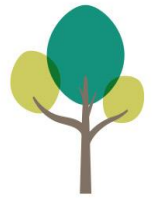
Title/Subject		Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
26	<p><b>Friar Park Residential Development</b></p> <p>Contact Officer – Chris Hilton</p> <p>Director: Tony McGovern – Director of Regeneration and Growth</p>	Regeneration and Growth (Cllr I Padda)	23 March 2022		<p>Site Appraisals and MasterPlan</p> <p>Funding approval for support</p> <p>Approval for informal public consultation</p>
27	<p><b>2022-23 Asset Management and Maintenance investment Programme</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: J. Rawlins</p> <p>Director: Gillian Douglas – Director – Housing and Communities</p>	Housing (Cllr Ahmed)	13 April 2022		Report



	Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
28	<p><b>Refurbishment of Thorne Close</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: J Rawlins</p> <p>Director: Gillian Douglas – Director – Housing and Communities</p>	<p>Housing (Cllr Ahmed)</p>	<p>13 April 2022</p>		<p>Report</p>
29	<p><b>Adult Social Care Contributions Policy - Review Proposals</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Kay Murphy</p> <p>Director of Finance – Simone Hines Director of Adult Social Care - Rashpal Bishop</p>	<p>Finance and Resources (Cllr Crompton)</p> <p>Adults, Social Care and Health (Cllr Hartwell)</p>	<p>18 May 2022</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Joint report by</p> <p>Director of Finance and Director of Adult Social Care</p> <p>Appendices</p>

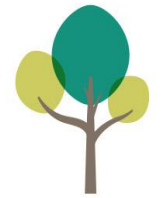


	Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
30	<p><b>Street Naming, Renaming and Property Numbering Policy</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Robin Weare/Barry Ridgway</p> <p>Director: Alice Davey – Director of Borough Economy</p>	Environment (Cllr Bostan)	June 2022		

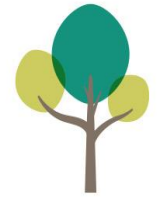


**Annual Programme Reminder (these items are not added automatically)**

Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
Review of Fees and Charges		January		
Determination of Admission Priorities for Sandwell's Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools		January/February		
Schools Funding		December/January		
Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring		February		
Council Finances		February		
Financial Regulations		February		
Business Plans		February		
Highways Asset Management Plan		March		

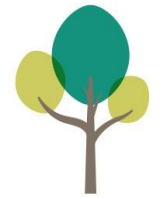


Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
Local Transport Settlement		March		
Revenues and Benefits Policy framework 2022/23		March		
Schools Capital Programme		April to June		
Financial Outturn		May		
Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules		July		
Review of Fees and Charges Sandwell Residential Education Services Centre Charges		May – July		
Childcare Sufficiency Report		July - September		



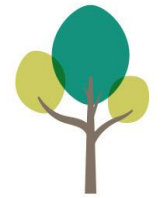


Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Pre-decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring		August		
Model Schools Pay Policy		October/November		
Winter Service Operational Plan		October/November		
Road Safety Plan		November		
Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring		November		
Council Tax Base Calculation		December		
Business Rates Retention Estimates		December		
Council Tax Reduction Scheme		December		







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


Title/Subject	Cabinet Portfolio Area	Decision Date	Reason for Exemption	List of documents to be considered
<p><b>Sandwell and Community Caring Trust Contract</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Christine Guest</p> <p>Director: Rashpal Bishop – Director of Adult Social Care</p>	<p>Adults, Social Care and Health (Cllr Hartwell)</p>	<p>23 February 2022</p>	<p>Commercial sensitivity</p>	



## Work Programme 2021/22 Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board

Meeting Date	Item	Links with Strategic Aims	Notes
23 August 2021	<p>Sandwell Children's Trust Annual Review</p> <p>Regional Adoption Agency Monitoring Annual Report</p> <p>The impact of the lockdown on Children and Families - Review Scoping</p>		<p>Lesley Hagger (Executive Director for Children's Services)</p> <p>Emma Taylor (CEO of SCT)</p>
29 November 2021	<p>Elective Home Education (EHE)</p> <p>Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF)</p>	 	<p>Melanie Barnett (Interim Operational Director Children and Education)</p> <p>Sue Moore (Group Head for Education Support Services)</p> <p>Samantha Harman (Play Services Manager)</p>
14 February 2022	Youth Facilities Review – Update		Tariq Karim (Area Manager Youth Service)



	Sandwell Children's Trust Annual Review		Emma Taylor (CEO of SCT)  Michael Jarrett (Executive Director for Children's Services)
21 March 2022	TBC		

### Items to be scheduled

- Report on outcome of trial of 16+ provision at the Westminster School and The Meadows.
- SEND – Support, and access to – Feedback from SEND Operational Board and Parent and Carers Board
- Discussion with Cabinet Member for Connected and Accessible Sandwell on options for the replacement of the Youth Bus.

### Scrutiny Review

#### The Impact of the lockdown on children and families

The review will look at educational attainment and narrowing the gap, the wider impact on families (increase in FSM) and support and opportunities to address.

