

# Agenda Cabinet

**Wednesday, 7 December 2022 at 3.30 pm  
at Council Chamber, Sandwell Council House, Freeth 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**

**2 Declarations of Interest**

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

**3 Minutes (Pages 9 - 72)**

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2022.

**4 Additional Items of Business**

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

**5 Adult Social Care Direct Payments Policy (Pages 73 - 110)**

**Finance and Resources**



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|    | To approve the Director of Adult Social Care and the Director of Finance to implement the proposed Direct Payments Policy and ensure it is embedded in future practice by all relevant staff members.   | <b>Adults,<br/>Social Care<br/>and Health</b> |
| 6  | <b>The review of council tenant rents and housing related property charges</b> (Pages 111 - 150)<br><br>To approve the Director of Housing to adjust council rents and housing related charges with effect from 3 April 2023.   | <b>Housing</b>                                |
| 7  | <b>Asset transfer of Greets Green Resource Centre and adjoining land to the Confederation of Bangladeshi Organisations (CBO) Ltd</b> (Pages 151 - 174)<br><br>To approve the asset transfer of the Greets Green Resource Centre, including the surrounding land, to the Confederation of Bangladeshi Organisations (CBO) Ltd. | <b>Regeneration<br/>&amp; Growth</b>          |
| 8  | <b>Chance Heritage Trust - Memorandum of Understanding</b> (Pages 175 - 186)<br><br>To approve the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the Chance Heritage Trust relating to the heritage – led regeneration of the chance glassworks site.  | <b>Regeneration<br/>&amp; Growth</b>          |
| 9  | <b>Empty Property Strategy 2023-2028</b> (Pages 187 - 220)<br><br>To approve the Empty Property Strategy 2023 - 2028, including the introduction of empty property loans and the use of Planning Act enforcement powers by the Empty Property Officer.  | <b>Housing</b>                                |
| 10 | <b>On Street Residential Charging Scheme - Authorisation to enter into a contract with a Chargepoint Operator</b> (Pages 221 - 280)<br><br>To approve the s.151 officer to sign and enter into contract with Gamma Energy Ltd., the successful bidder for the installation of Electric Vehicle (EV)                           | <b>Regeneration<br/>&amp; Growth</b>          |

chargepoints across the Black Country

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| 11 | <b>Grant funding for advice services 2023/24 - 2025/26</b> (Pages 281 - 296)<br><br>To approve grants to voluntary organisations with effect from April 2023 until March 2026.  | <b>Adults,<br/>Social Care &amp;<br/>Health</b><br><br><b>Children &amp;<br/>Education</b><br><br><b>Communities</b><br><br><b>Housing<br/>Leader</b> |
| 12 | <b>Improvement Plan Progress</b> (Pages 297 - 450)<br><br>To receive updates on the progress against the Improvement Plan up to 3 November 2022.  | <b>Regeneration<br/>&amp; Growth</b>  |
| 13 | <b>Sandwell Local Plan - Approval to carry out consultation on Issues &amp; Options and open a Call for Sites exercise</b> (Pages 451 - 536)<br><br>To approve the Sandwell Development Plan Issues and Options document for public consultation for six weeks commencing in February 2023.                             | <b>Adults,<br/>Social Care<br/>&amp; Health</b>   |
| 14 | <b>Re-Commissioning of the Pre-&amp; Post Dementia Diagnostic Support Service</b> (Pages 537 - 552)<br><br>To approve the allocation of funding of Better Care Fund (BCF) investment in a two plus one-year contract for a Community Dementia Support Service for Sandwell.   | <b>Children &amp;<br/>Education</b>   |
| 15 | <b>Uplands Manor Primary School Making significant changes (prescribed alternations) consultation outcomes</b> (Pages 553 - 558)<br><br>To seek approval to make significant alternation to provide 20 Focus Provision places at Upland Manor Primary School, Smethwick following the four-week statutory consultation. | <b>Finance &amp;<br/>Resources</b>  |
| 16 | <b>Q2 Budget Monitoring 2022/23</b> (Pages 559 - 586)<br><br>To receive the financial monitoring position as at 30  |   |

September 2022 and refer the report to the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board for consideration and comment.

17 **Performance Management Framework - Q2 Monitoring** (Pages 587 - 708) **Finance & Resources**

To consider progress on the further development of the Corporate Performance Management Framework and approve the Q2 monitoring reports.

18 **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

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

19 **Update on Streamlining Black Country Ways Of Working - Black Country Consortium Ltd** (Pages 709 - 720) **Leader**

To consider proposals in relation to Black Country ways of working.

**Kim Bromley-Derry CBE DL**  
**Managing Director Commissioner**

Sandwell Council House  
Freeth Street  
Oldbury  
West Midlands

**Distribution**

Councillor Carmichael (Chair)  
Councillors Ahmed, Hackett, Hartwell, Hughes, Millard, Padda, Piper and Rollins

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## Minutes of Cabinet

**Wednesday 16 November 2022 at 3.30pm  
at Council Chamber, Sandwell Council House**

**Present:** Councillor Carmichael (Chair);  
Councillors Ahmed, Hackett, Hartwell, Hughes, Millard,  
Padda, Piper and Rollins.

**In attendance:** Councillors Anandou, Fenton, E M Giles, Kalari, Kaur,  
Moore, Singh and Taylor.

**Also present:** Kim Bromley-Derry (Managing Director Commissioner),  
Simone Hines (Director of Finance), Surjit Tour  
(Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring  
Officer), Tony McGovern (Director of Regeneration and  
Growth), Elaine Newsome (Service Manager –  
Democracy), Gillian Douglas (Director of Housing),  
Anthony Lloyd (Democratic Services Officer) and Suky  
Suthi-Nagra (Democratic Services Manager).

189/22      **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received by Councillors  
Shackleton and Simms.

190/22      **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.

191/22 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2022 were approved as a correct record.

192/22 **Additional Items of Business**

There were no additional items of business to consider.

193/22 **Brandhall – Options, referral of decision back to Cabinet following Budget and Corporate Management Scrutiny Board.**

Approval was sought to determine Cabinet's decision regarding Brandhall in respect of the recommendations received from the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board on 8 August 2022. It was highlighted that the report addressed several of the concerns raised by the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board and that sufficient evidence was available as to why the Capemore site was discounted.

On behalf of the Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board, the Vice-Chair of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board stated that point 3 of Scrutiny's recommendations, in relation to how views of the residents were weighted, was not fully addressed in the report. The Cabinet Member was asked to review this further.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth explained that there was no requirement in legislation nor an adopted process for Cabinet to demonstrate how the views of residents were weighted. The views of residents was an important factor in the decision making process and any concerns raised were taken into account. This was balanced against other factors such as housing needs and the need to provide new educational facilities, alongside the benefits of a properly accessible and maintained public park. As a result, the decision to move with an option containing few homes and a larger park than originally planned was decided.



In considering the recommendations of the Scrutiny Board, it was moved seconded and agreed that the views of the Board be noted and that the Cabinet decision taken on 20 July 2022 be implemented.

### **Reason for Decision**

In accordance with the Council's Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the Budget and Corporate Management Scrutiny Board at their meeting on 8 August 2022, referenced the decision in relation to the Brandhall - Options back to Cabinet for reconsideration. Cabinet were required to consider amending the original decision or not, before adopting a final decision.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

In accordance with Scrutiny Procedure Rules, Cabinet must consider whether to amend its original decision before confirming a final decision.

**Agreed** that in considering the recommendations from the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board on 8 August 2022, Cabinet take no further action and implement the Cabinet decision as determined on 20 July 2022 (see Minute No. 147/22).

## 221/22 **Draft General Fund Budget 2023/24 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy**

Approval of the Draft General Fund Budget 2023/24 and Medium Term Financial Strategy was sought.

The Budget setting process had been impacted by the current economic and political climate. A more detailed position in relation to the actual funding of the Council would be known in December 2022.

The initial budget deficit for 2023/24 set out in the previous Medium-Term Financial Strategy was estimated to be in the region of £14m, but a number of spend pressures had emerged as part of the budget process, largely due to demand and inflationary pressures, that exceeded the assumptions initially made in the previous forecasts. Service

spend pressures and growth items total £17.7m. A risk had been identified in the deliverability of some of the savings.

In response to questions regarding the possibility of further cuts to local government, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources stated that the report presented to Cabinet was a draft report and would likely undergo changes prior to the final budget report in February 2023. An upcoming Autumn Statement would provide further information on the potential changes to local authority funding. The final funding for Sandwell would not be known until the settlement was received in December. Budget assumptions were in line with neighbours and further amendments would be made as information became available.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

The Local Government Finance Act 1972 required the Council to set a balanced, risk assessed budget each year and approve a Council Tax precept by 11 March.

### **Alternative options considered**

Cabinet could request that alternative savings options be proposed and agreed, although there was limited time to do this and still be able to carry out the appropriate consultation on alternative savings.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that the draft budget position for 2023/24 be considered and the savings required to ensure a balanced budget can be achieved;
- (2) that the savings identified in Appendix B be approved in principle for consultation and an Equality Impact Assessment where required;
- (3) that a further report be submitted to Cabinet in February 2023 setting out the results of the consultation referred to in Resolution (1) above for Cabinet to consider prior to final budget proposals being approved;

- (4) that the draft budget and savings options be referred to the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board for consideration on 29 November;
- (5) that the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, as set out at Appendix D be approved.

195/22      **Extension of contract for a non-executive director of Sandwell Children’s Trust board**

Approval was sought to agree the extension of contract for a non-executive director of Sandwell Children’s Trust Board.

The Vice-Chair of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board questioned why it had become necessary to retain the current non-executive as opposed to advertising the position.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Education explained that the Sandwell Children’s Trust Board had three Independent Non-Executive Directors (NED) positions which were initially appointed, for 3, 4 & 5 years respectively, in the first year of the Trust (as per the Articles of Association). They were appointed in this manner to avoid the NED positions terms of office coming to an end at the same time.

As the first two Independent NED positions had been renewed during the pandemic, and in the interests of treating everyone the same to avoid any legal challenge, it was proposed to also extend the term for the third Independent NED.

The non-executive director had extensive experience in children’s social care practice and had been a qualified social worker for over 40 years. They were also the Strategic Director of People in Wolverhampton when the Ofsted rating improved from “requires improvement” to “Good”.

### **Reason for Decision**

The board wishes to secure the continuity of the current non-executive director. The Council has written to the Secretary of State requesting consent to extend this appointment for a period of up to two years from 1 November 2022. The Department for Education officials had confirmed by email that the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families has approved the recommendation.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

The alternative option would be for Sandwell Children's Trust to begin a recruitment process for a new non-executive director. This would take some time to complete and following which any new NED would need some time to familiarise themselves with the Trust's operations, it could impact up on the improvement journey.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that the completed sequence of events that are contractually required to extend the contract of a non-executive director of Sandwell Children's Trust Board be considered;
- (2) that the response from the Secretary of State for Education be considered;
- (3) that approval be given to the extension of contract of Linda Sanders as a non-executive director of Sandwell Children's Trust for the period of up to two years from 1 November 2022.

## **196/22 UK Shared Prosperity Fund**

Approval was sought to accept Sandwell's allocation of UKSPF funding, as a result of the Investment Plan submission to the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities and to enter into the necessary grant funding agreements.

UKSPF was a central pillar of the UK Government's Levelling Up agenda. Its primary goal was to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK, with three key investment priorities:

- Community & Place
- Supporting Local Business
- People & Skills (including adult numeracy programme, Multiply).

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) was the lead authority and accountable body for UKSPF across the region, with responsibility for developing its investment plan, and for administering the funding. The WMCA had committed to lead a strategic and joined-up approach, working with local authorities to identify local and regional investment priorities that support 'Levelling Up' ambitions.

It was stated that the £88m in funding was comparable to previous EU funding

The investment plan was based on the WMCA retaining 50% of the funding allocation to assist the local business development. This would be in partnership with local authorities in the region. The remaining 50% will be allocated to Local Authorities directly.

The Chair of the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities, questioned how many jobs would be created by the Sandwell Valley Education and Community Engagement Outreach Programme. Clarification was also sought on where the job opportunities would be located and what the average salary would be.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth highlighted that officers were currently working to establish external partnerships with education providers, with the objective of ensuring pathways from training to employment in grounds maintenance, green spaces jobs, and arboriculture and countryside maintenance. Priorities would be to target these opportunities for training and pathways to employment in Sandwell, including Sandwell Council. The number of job creations over the three year

scheme could not be confirmed; this was currently being scoped with partners. The scheme would create 4 additional roles over the next three years, and at least five additional apprentices (including two that were targeted at care experienced young people) as part of the three year project. This number does not include the pathways to employment that would be created following the full implementation of the scheme.

Further questions were asked regarding how much funding the European Support Fund provided to Sandwell's voluntary organisations to deliver employment Support Provisions. It was confirmed that voluntary and community support (VCS) organisations in Sandwell received approximately £750,000 of funding per year from the European Social Fund (ESF). In 2022/23, the Council had profiled expenditure of £50,000 as the majority of ESF provision was continuing until March 2023. In 2023/24 there was £300,000 profiled expenditure to the Voluntary sector for community engagement activities. The VCS split for 2024/5 had not yet been determined but it was anticipated that there would be an increase in the allocation to VCS organisations from 2024/25 to deliver employment support based on the pre-determined expenditure profiles being weighted to the final year of delivery.

The Chair of the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities, in reference to the appendix, asked which pipeline projects were associated with the £1.6m allocated to improvements to town centre and high streets. Clarity was also sought in relation to which pipeline projects were associated with the £1m for community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth responded that the appendix included the standard example on pages 2 to 6. It was the standard example that shows £1.6m allocated to improvements to Town Centres and High Street and £1m for Community and Neighbourhood Infrastructure Projects. The Sandwell specific allocations started on page 7 of the appendices and showed Sandwell allocations in line paragraph 4.18 of the report. The Cabinet Member highlighted how this could have created some

confusion and confirmed there was no spend profiled within the Town Centres and High Street or Community and Neighbourhood Infrastructure Projects interventions under Sandwell's UKSPF proposals.

### **Reasons for Decision**

The funding period for UKSPF commenced financial year 22/23 and concludes financial year 24/25. Upon confirmation that the WMCA UKSPF Investment Plan has been approved, Local Authorities will need to mobilise quickly to achieve the UKSPF spend profile for 22/23.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

There were no alternative options to consider.

#### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that the Directors of Regeneration & Growth; Borough Economy; and Children & Education, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and the Cabinet Members for Finance & Resources, Children & Education and Regeneration and Growth, be authorised to accept Sandwell's allocation of UKSPF funding, as a result of the Investment Plan submission to the Department of Levelling Up Housing & Communities (DLUHC) and enter into the necessary grant funding agreements;
- (2) that the Directors of Regeneration & Growth; Borough Economy; and Children & Education in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Cabinet Members, be authorised to carry out commissioning of UKSPF funding, including any procurement activity as required;
- (3) that the Directors of Regeneration & Growth; Borough Economy; and Children & Education in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Cabinet Members for Finance & Resources, Children & Education and Regeneration and Growth, be authorised to implement the final

arrangements for the 4% administration allocation.

197/22 **Contract for Supply, Installation and Maintenance of Traffic Signals and Associated Equipment**

Approval was sought to authorise the Director of Borough Economy to award a contract for the provision of the supply, installation and maintenance of Traffic Signals and associated equipment for the period 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2026.

As the Local Highway Authority, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) had a statutory duty to ensure the Highway Network is maintained in a safe and useable manner. As the Local Traffic Authority SMBC also had a statutory duty to ensure as far as reasonably practicable, with regard to policy objectives and obligations, the expeditious movement of traffic on the Authority's road network. To meet this duty, SMBC required a suitably qualified and experienced contractor to supply, install & maintain traffic signals and associated systems and equipment across the Borough of Sandwell.

Clarification was sought by the Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board in relation to an extension to the contract when there was no basis to do so. Questions were asked on why this report had not been brought to Cabinet sooner.

The Cabinet Member for Environment responded that Director approval had been granted to extend the existing contract for 2 months from 1 November 2022 until 31 December 2022 to ensure continuity of service. Cabinet approval was being sought to authorise the award of a new contract for the period 1 January 2023 to December 2026 at a value of £2m following the conclusion of the compliant tender process.

It was also confirmed that the delay with the procurement process was partly due to resource constraints but also due to the cancellation of the Cabinet meeting in October. A



workforce plan had been approved and was being implemented with the objective that resource issues would diminish.

### **Reasons for decision**

The Council has a requirement to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced Contractor for the Supply, Installation & Maintenance of Traffic Signals and Associated Systems and Equipment within the Borough of Sandwell. The current extended contract expired on 31 October 2022.

### **Alternative options considered**

There are no recommended affordable alternatives to obtain material to maintain our Highway Network.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given to authorise the Director of Borough Economy to award a contract for the provision of the Supply, Installation and Maintenance of Traffic Signals and Associated Equipment for the period 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2026 at an anticipated value of £2,000,000 following the conclusion of the compliant tender process;
- (2) that in connection with Resolution (1) above, the Director, Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to enter into appropriate contracts.

198/22

### **Schools' Model Pay Policies 2022/23**

Approval was sought for the September 2022 Pay Award be agreed and applied to local authority Community Schools. Approval was also sought for the Unattached Teachers' Pay Policy 2022/23 and the Model Schools' Pay Policy 2022/23 to be implemented by the Council with effect from 1 September 2022.

### **Reasons for Decision**

The Department for Education issues the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (the Document) to local authorities on an annual basis. It places a statutory duty on organisations employing teachers to have a pay policy in place by 1 September each year which sets out the basis on which the employer will determine teachers' pay, the date by which it will determine the teacher's annual pay review and to establish procedures for addressing teachers' grievances in relation to their pay.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

There are no alternative courses of action available that would otherwise satisfy these requirements.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that the September 2022 Pay Award be agreed as set out below and is applied to local authority Community Schools:
  - A five per cent increase on all pay ranges and allowances and advisory points, with higher increases for early career teachers as part of the process to move starting pay to £30,000 by 2023. The highest increase is 8.9 per cent on the bottom point of the Main Pay Range in England (equating to a starting salary of £28,000).
  - All pay uplifts will be back dated to 1 September 2022.
- (2) that the Unattached Teachers' Pay Policy 2022/23, as at Appendix 1, as now submitted, be approved and implemented by the Council with effect from 1 September 2022;
- (3) that the Model Schools' Pay Policy 2022/23, as at Appendix 2, as now submitted, be approved and recommended to the Governing Bodies of Schools in Sandwell for adoption and

implementation with effect from 1 September 2022.

199/22 **Adult Social Care Contributions Policy – outcomes of consultation**

Approval was sought to amend the Sandwell Contributions Policy with effect from 1 January 2023.

The Vice-Chair of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board asked for clarification on why the consultation responses were low and if any further steps could be taken going forward to improve this.

In response, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources clarified that financial contributions were a fairly complex area to explain and get people interested in. A wide range of media was used to try and communicate the message including the use of partner and voluntary organisations.

A further question was received from the Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board. Details were requested on whether the Welfare Rights team had been working with users to maximise their benefits.

It was confirmed that during the financial assessment, the contributions staff checked benefit information with the client. Where it was felt that additional benefit entitlement exists, with the client's agreement, they refer the client to Welfare Rights so that support could be given.

**Reasons for recommendations**

The Director of Adult Social Care and the Director of Finance were authorised by Cabinet on 18 May 2022 to implement a range of changes in policy and practice, and to enter consultation with users of services on further key policy changes and three proposed contribution models. The key policy changes and three models aim to generate additional income which will assist the Council to ensure that it can continue to provide services to the most vulnerable within cash limited resources. The policy changes also reflect

recent case law and Local Government Ombudsman findings to be fairer and comply with equalities expectations.

### **Alternative options considered**

The Council must have a Contributions Policy as it has discretion over aspects of both Residential and Non-Residential Contributions.

#### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given to amend the Sandwell Contributions Policy as shown in Appendix C, as now submitted, with effect from 1 January 2023 to reflect the following changes which are recommended by the Director of Adult Social Care and the Director of Finance after public consultation (as detailed in Appendix A):
  - the Joint financial assessment of couples: end the practice of offering a joint assessment of couples, as the Care Act no longer permits this, by reassessing all existing cases for January 2023 and applying transitional protection to minimise the impact as appropriate;
  - Short-term (respite) care charges: move to basing contributions to the cost of respite care on a financially assessed contribution based on residential regulations with effect from 1st January 2023, in order to mitigate the impact of this change for people with disabilities where respite costs can be very high, the contribution will be based on the actual cost of care up to a maximum of the Council's guideline rate for nursing care for older people (currently £687.36 per week);
  - the New contributions model and adopt Model 2 as the method for calculating non-residential contributions, (as detailed in Appendix A), which reduces the existing "Sandwell Allowance" which people are

allowed to retain from 53% of their disposable income to 20%, and increases council income by an estimated £830,000 compared with what current income is expected to be, and by an estimated £1,609,000 compared with the expected income budget for 2023/24 which, based on current income trends, is set at a more prudent level. There are, however, some risks associated with these figures, as detailed in section 6 below and it is not recommended that the full potential income figure is incorporated into financial plans, at least initially;

- the Disability Related Expenditure (DRE): amending the method of allowing people's DRE costs to allow the full sum of any such costs against income, up to the total of their disability benefits (currently we only make allowance for DRE costs that exceed the 53% Sandwell Allowance). In addition, to introduce a lump sum banded DRE allowance to be offset against assessed income for any non-residential client who receives a standard or higher rate of DWP disability benefit (although if they have higher expenses, they can still claim for those). The allowance for higher rate of DWP disability benefit has been increased to £10 (it was £9 in the consultation) to reflect the increases in costs people are already facing;
- Transitional protection: introducing a process that will limit changes in a person's contributions solely attributable to changes in policy (such as those outlined in this paper) to a maximum sum of £30 a week for a period of up to three years, if that person faces a significantly adverse impact. The calculation will take account of

inflationary changes to people's income and allowances, but not other changes;

200/22 **Council new build homes on land at Stanhope Road, Smethwick**

Approval was sought for the necessary steps for the delivery of the proposed Council new build homes on land at Stanhope Road, Smethwick project. The new homes would provide high quality housing stock to replace Council Housing lost to the right to buy scheme.

**Reasons for recommendations**

On 26 June 2019, the Cabinet report "Funding for remediation works at King Street and Mounts Road, Wednesbury, and Stanhope Road, Smethwick" approved the submission of a funding bid to the LEP and the development of approximately 7317.0 m<sup>2</sup> of land at Stanhope Road, Smethwick with new Council housing for affordable rent (minute number 69/19 refers). This scheme now has planning permission and it is proposed to develop this site with 33 homes, as part of the new strategic approach to provide more and better housing in the borough.

**Alternative options considered**

**Option A – Dispose of the Site on the Open Market**

The site would be suitable for private sector residential development. As the development would be in excess of 15 units, then it would be subject to planning policy HOU3 where consideration must be given to the provision of up to 25% affordable housing on site.

However, if this option is pursued it could result in the disposal of the land for market sale units only. Owing to very difficult ground conditions (the levels and the ground remediation) costs are relatively high and with current market conditions and inflationary costs the site is unlikely to provide commercial developers with the profit margins they require. Planning policy HOU3 where consideration must be given to the provision of up to 25% affordable housing on site is very likely to be challenged on viability grounds but it is likely that developers will overlook this site in favour of more viable options.

This option would also offer nil contribution to the Council's new build programme.

**Option B – Work in partnership with a Registered Provider Partner** with the assistance of Homes England to build new affordable homes for rent.

Indications are that Homes England funding may be available through various Homes England Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programmes which could provide grant funding for a Registered Provider Partner to deliver affordable rented homes. This would give the Council nomination rights to the new properties but would not increase the Council owned housing stock or replace properties lost through RTB and would result in the disposal of a council owned asset (land) that could be used for this purpose.

As with option A above the high build costs and viability issues may render this site less attractive to Registered Providers.

**Option C – Leave the site undeveloped.**

An option to consider would be not to build out the site and to leave it as it is. There are ongoing maintenance costs to the Council around litter picking and grounds maintenance. These are difficult to quantify as they are carried out as part of larger services, although we anticipate costs would be significantly reduced if the site were developed for housing. This would also result in an under-utilised Council asset.

This option would offer nil contribution to the Council's new build programme.

**Agreed:-**

- (1) that the Director of Finance be authorised to allocate adequate resources from the Council's Housing Revenue Account to deliver the scheme as previously approved at (2) below, subject to being satisfied that the proposal provides value for money and enable the agreed Homes England delivery programme to be met utilising grant funding offered under the extended Homes England Strategic Partnership 1 Programme

2016 to 2021 and the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Land Property Investment Fund (LPIF) Sandwell Housing Gap Project.

(2) that approval be given to authorise the necessary steps for the delivery of the proposed project, including:

a) that subject to receiving the necessary Strategic Investment Unit appraisal approval mark of 65 or above for the site at Stanhope Road, the Director of Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Director of Finance and the Director of Housing be authorised to accept the Financial closure offer for the construction of Council new build properties, in accordance with any statutory regulations and the Council's the Director – Law and Governance be authorised to enter into or execute under seal any documentation in relation to award of the contract for the development of the site at Stanhope Road and/or development/partnership agreement, any consents or applications required for Planning or Highways appertaining to the delivery of the schemes and any other agreements with the procured contractor(s), as may be deemed necessary to facilitate development of the site with housing a scheme on terms and conditions to be agreed and implemented by the Director of Regeneration and Growth;

b) to enter into or execute under seal any financial agreement in relation to the Homes England grant and the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Land Property Investment Fund (LPIF) Sandwell Housing Gap Project on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director of Finance;



- c) the Director of Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Director of Housing and the Director of Finance be authorised to accept a fixed cost price from Speller Metcalf at RIBA stage 4 of up to 10% above the approved estimated costs as a contingency to mitigate uncertain market conditions and inflationary cost uplifts.
- d) to appropriate approximately 7317.0 m<sup>2</sup> of land at Stanhope Road Smethwick from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account for housing purposes and the Director of Finance be authorised to adjust the accounts accordingly.
- e) Subject to the practical completion of each property, the Director of Housing be authorised to manage and let the properties built in accordance with the Council's housing allocation policy.

201/22      **Highway Infrastructure Funding to mitigate the decline in Highway Infrastructure Condition**

Approval was sought to increase the Capital Programme for Borough Economy to fully fund the programme of work needed to stabilise the condition of highway infrastructure and mitigate the effects of the next severe winter whilst also taking into account inflation.

The Vice-Chair of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board sought clarification from the Cabinet Member of Environment for the reasons for the increase in construction prices.

It was noted that Economic commentators report that inflation was influenced by international trends in energy prices, oil prices, fuel prices, supply chain problems and a strong labour market. These were a consequence of post pandemic supply and demand imbalances made significantly worse by the war in Ukraine.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

Capital requirement of £3,146,520 in 2022/23 is required to fully fund the programme of work needed to stabilise the condition of highway infrastructure and mitigate the effects of the next severe winter taking into account inflation in 2022/23.

### **Alternative options considered**

Provide no Council Capital to close the funding gap from 2022/23. An alternative would be to limit the repair of high-risk infrastructure to a value that matches the £4.741m CRSTS maintenance block grant. There would consequently be no Council capital provision available to fund the gap in the cost of replacement of high-risk life expired highway infrastructure. The programme of urgent work for 2022/23 would not be completed and a similar urgent programme for 2023/24 would only 40% completed. This is not recommended because the red risk backlog is escalating.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that the Capital Programme for Borough Economy is increased by £3,146,520 for 2022/23 to fully fund the programme of work needed to stabilise the condition of highway infrastructure and mitigate the effects of the next severe winter taking into account inflation in 2022/23;
- (2) that a surplus of £1,000,000 of capital funding currently allocated to Friar Park from the Regeneration and Growth Capital Project Support Reserve be transferred to Borough Economy to offset the capital requirement as set out in Resolution (1) above;
- (3) that the residual capital requirement for 2022/23, after the use of Friar Park Capital, of £2,146,520 is funded from Corporate Main Programme resources with any prudential borrowing finance charges addressed within the Medium Term Financial Plan;

- (4) that the Capital Programme for Borough Economy is increased by £5,435,880 for 2023/24 to stabilise the red risk condition of highway infrastructure, taking into account inflation and to mitigate the effects of the next severe winter in accordance with the Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Policy, Strategy and Plan;
- (5) that the capital requirement for 2023/24 of £5,435,880 is funded from Corporate Main Programme resources with any prudential borrowing finance charges addressed within the Medium Term Financial Plan;
- (6) that a further report to update Cabinet is submitted in September 2023 after the Highway Infrastructure condition is reviewed in summer 2023 to identify future budget requirements from 2024/25 onwards for the risk assessed replacement of red risk Highway Infrastructure when the inflation outlook has stabilised and when the effects of the 2022/23 winter have been determined.

202/22      **Sandwell Residential Education Centres: Charges for the period 1 August 2023-31 July 2024**

Approval was sought to authorise the Director of Children and Education to implement term-time changes for Sandwell Residential Education Centres for the period 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2024.

The proposed charges were an increase of 7% to 2022-23 charges on all of Sandwell's residential centres. This was below the consumer price index as of June 2022, rounded to the nearest pound. Despite cuts to funding from central government, Sandwell's centres remained open.

The centres were open to Sandwell maintained schools, Sandwell academy schools, and non-Sandwell schools and groups. The business plan aimed to retain Sandwell children participation of 15,000 term-time bed nights, or 4,750

residential pupil visits, per year. The proportion of non-Sandwell schools using the centres had risen in recent years, bringing in more income; but there was capacity to accommodate more Sandwell schools and children.

The proposed charges indicated the “commercial” charge to non-Sandwell schools. Sandwell maintained schools received a 30% discount, and Sandwell academy schools a 20% discount. These discounts for Sandwell children are financed by the residential education service’s other income streams, including weekend, school holiday, and day visit educational courses and commercial events

### **Reasons for Decision**

The recommendations would enable the centres to continue to generate sufficient income to operate an efficient high-quality service, with heavily subsidised places for Sandwell children, in support of Vision 2030; and continue to make access to the centres more affordable at certain times of the year in anticipation of rising inflation.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

Increasing charges above inflation risks less uptake of places, reduced overall income, and poorer social value. Keeping charges at 2022-23 levels risks a shortfall in income and difficulties in balancing the budget when expenditure has risen considerably with inflation.

**Agreed** that the Director of Children and Education be authorised to implement term-time charges for Sandwell Residential Education Centres for the period 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2024 as shown in Appendix A, as now submitted.

## 203/22 **Former Car Park, Lower High Street, Cradley Heath**

Approval was sort to authorise the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer to dispose of the freehold interest of land situated on the south side of Lower High Street, Cradley Heath.

The land at Lower High Street, Cradley Heath, formerly in use as a public car park, would be transferred to Sandwell College, for the sum of £1, in order to facilitate the development of a Satellite Education Hub, financed through a £9m grant from the Government's Towns Fund. The cost to remedy the site was identified as being in excess of the land value and therefore, disposal for £1 was advised.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

To enable the freehold transfer of council-owned land at Lower High Street, Cradley Heath, formerly in use as a public car park, to Sandwell College, for the sum of £1 (one pound), in order to facilitate the development of a Satellite Education Hub, financed through a £9m grant from the Government's Towns Fund. The cost to remedy the site for the proposed scheme is in excess of the agreed land use value and therefore to bring forward the development, the recommendation is to dispose of the site for £1.

### **Alternative options considered**

The first option the Council could consider is the disposal of the freehold of the land on the open market to generate a capital receipt. However, this option would miss an opportunity to unlock an important regeneration opportunity to deliver a much-needed education, training and skills facility in Cradley Heath and so contribute to meeting the aims of the Council's Corporate Plan.

Planning policy guidance directs the development of educational facilities such as this one into town centre locations. No site that meets the criteria around size, location, Council ownership and immediate availability free from occupation, lease or other legal encumbrance is available in Cradley Heath town centre. This second option is therefore closed. Sandwell College specifically require a site that is within easy reach of Cradley Heath train station, to offer accessibility to potential users across the south-west of the borough who are not currently within easy reach either of Sandwell College campuses in West Bromwich town centre or of other FE providers in Dudley or Halesowen.

As a third option, an exercise was undertaken early in 2021, when a former bank premises in Old Hill town centre became available. At the time, the building was privately-owned and

the process of acquisition had not begun. It had not been surveyed but was considered incapable of conversion to meet current requirements for educational use, while neither the building nor the site it occupies were of sufficient size to meet the College's needs; finally, its position in Old Hill town centre was considered too remote from rail connections to be of value to potential users.

The fourth and final option considered was the option of doing nothing. This alternative would fail to meet any of the objectives set out in this report. It would fail to deliver the Satellite Education Hub, fail to bring a much-needed £9m investment into the borough and fail to secure a much-needed uplift in education, training and skills amongst the people of Rowley Regis.

**Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given to authorise the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer to dispose of the freehold interest in approximately 0.2 hectares (0.5 acres) of land situated on the south side of Lower High Street, Cradley Heath, shown for identification purposes edged black on Plan No SAM/30500/003 attached, to Sandwell College, for the purpose of constructing a Satellite Education, Training and Skills Hub, for the sum of £1 (one pound), on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director - Regeneration and Growth;
- (2) that the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to enter into or execute under seal, if necessary any other related documentation in connection with the disposal of the site on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director - Regeneration and Growth.

## **Regeneration Project Pipeline Bi-Annual Performance Report March 2022 - October 2022**

Approval was sought to make a number of amendments to the project pipeline and for the updated pipeline to be published on the council website.

The pipeline was a five-year investment pipeline within the period 2022 to 2027. It set out the infrastructure priorities for Sandwell Council and therefore was also used to establish where resources would be focused. The pipeline report would be monitored by Cabinet every 6 months.

The Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board requested that consideration be given to present a RAG rating against each project as part of future updates.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and growth stated that there was a total of 66 projects on the pipeline. RAG ratings could be provided on projects that were being led by the Council. RAG reports on non-council led projects, where possible, could also be provided.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

On the 23 March 2022, Cabinet approved the Regeneration Strategy, Regeneration Project Pipeline and the Inclusive Recovery Action Plan for Business. When taken together set out the corporate regeneration priorities for the period 2022 to 2027. The pipeline is a live document, monitored via a report submitted to Cabinet every 6 months. The report highlights progress on each project with a focus on those projects being led by the Council.

### **Alternative options considered**

This was a bi-annual report on performance as requested by Cabinet on the 23 March 2022. In accordance with the Cabinet decision, Cabinet are to approve amendments or additions to projects on the pipeline.

**Agreed:-**

- (1) that the progress made on projects within the Regeneration Project Pipeline Performance Report be considered;
- (2) that the amendments to the Regeneration Project Pipeline as set out below be approved:-
  - (a) Levelling Up Fund Projects across Tipton, Smethwick, West Bromwich, and Rowley Regis be added to the pipeline, should they be approved by DLUHC.
  - (b) George Betts Academy be added to the pipeline at Concept Stage.
  - (c) Should the Sandwell Investment Zone be accepted, sites which are not already captured on the Regeneration Project Pipeline, be included.
  - (d) The Midland Metropolitan University Hospital (MMUH)
- (3) that the update with regard to the Inclusive Recovery Plan for Business be considered;
- (4) that the Director of Regeneration & Growth be authorised to implement the Cabinet approved amendments to the Regeneration Project Pipeline and for this to be published on the council website.

205/22 **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2022 - Update**

Approval of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2022 was sought. Approval was also sought in order to utilise the Local Government Association Equality Framework to develop the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.



### **Reasons for recommendations**

The council must comply with its legal duties and obligations arising under the Equality Act 2010. Obligations require the council to set out its objectives in discharging its public sector equality duties. Adopting the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2022 makes clear the council's commitment to promote equality and challenge discrimination and intolerances in all its forms.

### **Alternative options considered**

There are no alternative options. The council is obliged to have a policy in line with section 149 of the Equality Act. The council is not legally obliged to adopt the LGA Equality Framework, however it is considered best practice to do so as identified during the benchmarking process. For the council to deliver its EDI ambitions, it would need to implement something similar.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2022, as set out in Appendix 1, as now submitted, be approved;
- (2) that the Local Government Association Equality Framework, as set out in Appendix 2, as now submitted, be utilised to develop the council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy.

206/22

### **The Local Plan in Sandwell: Update, next steps, and amendment to the Local Development Scheme (LDS)**

Approval was sought for the preparation of a single-tier Local Plan covering the whole of Sandwell.

The Local Plan is a legally required, key document that guides the Council's Planning decision making progress. Having a Local Plan was a requirement for each Local Authority. Due to the halting of the Black Country Plan, it highlighted that there was an urgent need for Sandwell to prepare its own local plan to ensure the legal obligations are followed.

In response to a question by the Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth highlighted that as no binding agreement exists in relation to the Black Country Plan, the basis for any claim for financial losses was unclear

A further question was asked on whether the creation of the Local Plan would be based on more up-to-date and accurate information.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth confirmed that the two principal areas of forecast need that informs the preparation of the Local Plan was employment land and housing. The economic modelling was updated shortly before the decision to half the Black Country Plan and would therefore still be used for the Sandwell Local Plan.

In regard to housing need, it was explained that this was derived using the Government's standard method for forecasting growth in the number of households. Sandwell, along with every other Local Planning Authority (LPA) in England, was required to use this method by the Dept. of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC). Using the standard method, it was almost three times higher than the available land supply. Whilst, the Government had indicated that there would be changes to the standard method as part of a future review of the Planning System, it was unlikely that these changes would alter the forecast need in Sandwell to a degree that would lead to Sandwell having no, or very little, 'un-met' need. To do so would require the forecast to drop by around 66%.

The most recent statements from ministers had indicated that LPAs should continue to prepare Local Plans under the current regulations and in the case of housing need, continue to use the current standard method for forecasting growth in the number of households. Therefore unless Government advises otherwise, the new Local Plan would need to be prepared on that basis.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth moved an amendment to recommendation at 1.3 as follows:

To authorise the fixed term appointment of a Sandwell Plan Programme Manager and to appoint to the post outside of standard HR procedures given the urgent need to recruit. Cabinet is further recommended to authorise the creation of a Senior Planning Officer post as set out in the resources section of this report.

The recommendations, as amended, were approved.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

At the meeting of the Association of Black Country Authorities on 19 October, the decision was taken to formally halt the Black Country Plan (the BCP) and for the four authorities to proceed with the preparation of individual Local Plans as soon as is practical. It is a statutory requirement of every Local Planning Authority to have an up-to-date Local Plan. Government has previously expressed a desire to see full Local Plan coverage across the England by December 2023 or as soon as is practical after that date.

### **Alternative options considered**

The preparation of a Local Plan and the regular updating of the Local Development Scheme are statutory requirements under planning legislation. Options relating to the form and content of the Local Plan are set out in the body of the report.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that the recent developments in relation to the Black Country Plan and the background to them be considered;
- (2) that the preparation of a single-tier Local Plan covering the whole of Sandwell which will on adoption replace the following be approved;
  - Black Country Core Strategy (2011)
  - Sandwell Site Allocations & Delivery Development Plan Document (2012)
  - Smethwick Area Action Plan (2008)
  - Tipton Area Action Plan (2008)
  - West Bromwich Area Action Plan (2012)

- (3) that approval be given to an update of the Sandwell Local Development Scheme and updated timeline set out in Appendices A & B as now submitted;
- (4) that the fixed term appointment of a Sandwell Plan Programme Manager be approved and the Director – Regeneration & Growth be authorised to appoint to the post outside of standard HR procedures given the urgent need to recruit;
- (5) that approval be given to the creation of a Senior Planning Officer post.

## 207/22 **Highway Surface Treatment Contract**

Approval was sought for Sandwell MBC to work in collaboration with Dudley MBC, with Dudley MBC acting as the lead authority for the provision of highway surface treatments contract. Specialist contractors would be used to maintain the highway network in safe and usable condition.

The Vice-Chair of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board questioned what contingency plans were in place for an over-spend in the price prediction.

The Cabinet Member for Environment responded that the contract includes provision for annual indexation to allow price changes in line with Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) data. Expenditure would be managed within the £10m total contract value over the full four-year period by adjusting annual programmes of work to ensure that they would remain affordable with a backstop of retendering prior the expiry of the full four years if this would deliver better value for money.

The Chair of the Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board sought clarification on why the procurement had commenced after the contract had already ended. It was highlighted that commencement of procurement had been

timed to ensure availability of contractor resource for the start of the preventive treatment programmes in January.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

Road users and the wider community place a high value on keeping all road users moving safely around Sandwell on well-maintained roads and footpaths. Failure to do so can result in adverse economic and social impacts, public dissatisfaction and significant reputational damage. The Council has a statutory duty under section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 to maintain highways that are maintainable at the public expense.

### **Alternative options considered**

There are no recommended affordable alternatives to enable effective and efficient highway surfacing and associated works.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given to Sandwell MBC working in collaboration with Dudley MBC, with Dudley MBC acting as the lead Authority for the provision of highway surface treatments contract;
- (2) that the Director of Borough Economy be authorised to award contracts for the provision of highway surface treatments in support of Sandwell's annual planned highway maintenance programme, following a compliant competitive tender process in collaboration with Dudley, Wolverhampton and Walsall Councils, with Dudley MBC acting as the lead authority;
- (3) that the Director of Law and Governance – Monitoring Officer be authorised to execute any documentation necessary to enable the above;
- (4) that any necessary exemptions be made to the Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules to enable the course of action referred to in Resolution (2) above to proceed.

Approval was sought of Variation 002 of the Enhanced Partnership Scheme in conjunction with Transport for West Midlands, West Midlands Combined Authority and the other six local authorities in the West Midlands metropolitan area.

**Reasons for recommendations**

Variation 002 widens the geographical scope of the existing EP Scheme to cover the entire West Midlands metropolitan area, i.e. the cities of Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton and the boroughs of Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull and Walsall. This will enable it to cover all future bus improvements schemes through subsequent variations as required.

**Alternative options considered**

Cabinet could choose to reject the proposed variation. However, failure to approve the EP Scheme variation would jeopardise future investment in the bus network, as the West Midlands Bus Service Improvement Plan (and associated funding) is predicated on there being an EP Plan and Scheme in place between TfWM, operators and local authorities.

**Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given to Variation 002 of the Enhanced Partnership Scheme in conjunction with Transport for West Midlands, West Midlands Combined Authority and the other six local authorities in the West Midlands metropolitan area, subject to compliance with the relevant statutory objection and consultation processes for varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme contained at Appendix A, as now submitted;
- (2) that the Director Regeneration & Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Growth, and to the Director Borough Economy in consultation with the

Cabinet Member for Environment, be authorised to approve any subsequent variation to the West Midlands Enhanced Partnership Scheme.

## 209/22 **Review of Garden Waste Collection**

Approval was sought to authorise the Director of Borough Economy to instruct Serco to establish a subscribed chargeable garden waste collection scheme, targeting implementation for the 2023 season.

The Cabinet Member for Environment highlighted that the proposals set out changes to the Council's green waste collection which would, in turn, make it more affordable, fair and sustainable for the years to come. Charging for green waste collection would save Sandwell in excess of £2m a year. Many of other local authorities charged for garden waste and therefore, the proposals would bring the Council in line with a tried and tested way of delivering the service whilst also recovering the cost from the residents who use it. Many of the Garden waste bins in Sandwell were empty or half full on collection day. As a result, it was deemed that the number of crews required could be reduced to 4 from 8. These 4 additional crews could be then redeployed to waste collection services. The Council would support residents who want to compost at home as well as offer the free service at recycling centres.

The Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board raised a number of issues as follows:-

- The estimated income to be generated seemed extremely optimistic. It was asked if a further breakdown could be provided
- An estimate for the potential increase in fly-tipping was requested.
- Clarification was sought on whether the Council would be removing waste bins from properties who did not subscribe in year 1.
- A question was asked if the Council would review the removal the appointment system at Shidas Lane if the decision was approved?

- Was the Council confident that Serco was capable of running a subscription service.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Environment confirmed the following: -

- Many similar schemes in other Local Authorities were currently on-going. An estimate of 35% of households in Sandwell was subscribing to the service was calculated.
- There was always a possibility that changes to waste services could increase fly-tipping. This would be monitored.
- Garden waste bins would not be removed from properties who do not subscribe in year 1
- The appointment system would remain under review.
- Serco already successfully ran subscription services in other authorities and the proposals were in line with effective systems in place elsewhere.

In response to further questions, it was highlighted that a sticker system would be used to prevent Serco from accidentally collecting bins that were not paid for.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

The introduction of a subscribed garden waste collection service removes any disproportionality associated with a universal free service that a significant number of residents are currently not accessing. Charging for the service would mean garden waste is only collected from households actively subscribing and using the service, reducing the number of unnecessary journeys made by waste collection vehicles. Modelling indicates that – based on the recommended Option 3 – the collection fleet could be reduced from 8 vehicles to 4. This will reduce carbon emissions and save an estimated £800,000 per year.



## Alternative options considered

	Option	Risk and Opportunity
1	<p><u>Continue with current free of charge service</u></p> <p>This is the do-nothing option for which the tonnage collected would be at a similar level to current at circa 12,500 tonnes from 120,000 properties.</p> <p>Costs for providing the service are included in the Waste Services Contract with Serco, which includes collection treatment and processing.</p> <p><b>Not recommended</b></p>	<p>Maintains current tonnages of garden waste and would not impact on recycling performance.</p> <p>Maintains the current inefficiency of large diesel vehicles regularly collecting small amounts of garden waste from households.</p> <p>Disproportionality where residents are subsidising a service they may not need or want.</p> <p>No savings delivered</p>
2	<p><u>Continue with current free of charge service but change collection frequency to 4-weekly</u></p> <p>This involves continuation of a free service with a reduction in collection frequency from fortnightly to 4-weekly (40 weeks – March to November).</p> <p>Costs for providing the service are included in the Waste Services Contract with Serco, which includes collection treatment and processing.</p> <p><b>Not recommended</b></p>	<p>Maintains a free of charge collection service.</p> <p>Disproportionality where residents are subsidising a service they may not need or want.</p> <p>Defra consultation suggests minimum fortnightly collection.</p> <p>May introduce undesired behaviour in residents, compressing contents to fit a 4 weekly service.</p> <p>Savings from reduction in fleet / potential to reduce Serco's unitary charge.</p> <p>No income from service</p>

3	<p><u>Introduce a subscribed paid service</u></p> <p>Charged garden waste service with an annual subscription fee for each subscriber. Suggested fees are £35 per subscription.</p> <p>Subscribers would be issued with issued with a sticker containing a barcode or bin chip. Each subscriber would also have their green garden waste bin lid changed to a brown lid for ease of differentiation from non-paying customers.</p> <p>Additional bins will be provided at the same subscription rate of £35 as an additional subscription.</p> <p>Scheme administration to be with Contractor with joint promotion between Council and Contractor.</p> <p>Proposed months of delivery of service April to December (currently March to end of Nov).</p> <p>Standard bin size 240L with options for smaller bin sizes and biodegradable reusable sacks (180L) to address mobility and access issues.</p> <p><b>Recommended choice</b></p>	<p>Removes disproportionality providing service only to those who want it and are prepared to pay for it.</p> <p>Gross income generated from subscription fees of circa £1.5m. Residents also do not need to be supplied or purchase a bin.</p> <p>Potential for reduced recycling performance due to opting out of service. May result in increased residual tonnages from garden waste added to residual bin.</p> <p>Opportunity for residents to access future potential reward scheme</p> <p>Likely to increase use of and tonnage collected at Shidas Lane HRC</p> <p>Encourages waste minimization through home composting.</p> <p>Introduces process of retrieving unwanted bins.</p> <p>Growth of new customers.</p> <p>Sacks address accessibility issues for crews e.g. steps</p>
4.	<p><u>Place all garden waste properties on monthly frequency and offer premium fortnightly subscribed service.</u></p> <p>This option involves moving all properties onto a 4-weekly free of charge collection</p>	<p>Continues free of charge collection service but on 4-weekly collection frequency. Premium service offering fortnightly collection and access to reward scheme.</p>

<p>frequency (as option 2) and offering a 2-weekly 'premium' collection service which would include an annual subscription fee for each subscriber (as option 3). Suggested fees are £35 per premium subscription.</p> <p>Subscribers would be issued with a sticker containing a barcode (or bin chip). Each subscriber would also have their green garden waste bin lid changed to a brown lid for ease of differentiation from non-paying customers.</p> <p>Additional bins will be provided to premium service subscribers only and at the same subscription rate of £35.</p> <p>Scheme administration to be through Serco with joint promotion between Council and Contractor.</p> <p>Proposed months of delivery of premium service April to January (currently March to end of Nov) to consider Christmas tree collections. Future option to introduce for subscribers a choice of bin size in addition to standard 240L containers. To smaller bin (180L) at same subscription fee.</p> <p>A variation would be to include a fee for reusable or biodegradable sacks at a minimum charge.</p> <p><b>Not recommended</b></p>	<p>Confusing "mixed" scheme. Research has indicated no other councils operating such a service.</p> <p>Gross income generated from subscription fees will be substantially less. Most residents will likely try to manage with 4-weekly free option.</p> <p>Fleet savings will also be substantially reduced.</p> <p>Container costs reduced by changing bin lid only for paid subscribers. Option to fit chip on bins to track tonnages.</p> <p>Ameliorates potential for reduced recycling performance and garden waste added to residual bin due to all properties receiving a garden waste collection.</p> <p>Eliminates having to collect unwanted garden waste bins re option 3.</p> <p>Encourages waste minimization through home composting.</p> <p>Opportunity to encourage customers to switch to premium service.</p> <p>Likely to attract less negative publicity as garden waste service is provided to all properties.</p> <p>May introduce undesired behaviour in residents compressing contents to fit 4 weekly service</p>
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		Sacks address accessibility issues for crews e.g., steps.
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**Agreed:-**

- (1) that the Director of Borough Economy be authorised to instruct Serco to establish a subscribed chargeable garden waste collection scheme, targeting implementation for the 2023 season.
- (2) that a Contract Variation in accordance with Part 4 Schedule 21 (Change Protocol) be initiated to effect the necessary change and adjustment to the Unitary Charge;

(3) that the Council be recommended to approve the fee for the collection of Garden Waste of £35 for 2023 (or part);

- (4) that the Director of Borough Economy be authorised to make operational arrangements for the implementation of garden waste subscription sales.

210/22      **Investment Programme – Street Lighting**

Approval was sought to authorise the Director of Borough Economy to award the necessary street lighting contract. Approval was also sought for authorisation to fund the schemes via Prudential Borrowing.

**Reasons for recommendations**

As a responsible local Highway Authority, Sandwell MBC provides and maintains more than 30,900 streetlights on the adopted highway. Of the 30,900 Council streetlight assets some 23,020 have been modernised through a previous

SOX lantern replacement programme, delivering the associated efficiencies and carbon reduction benefits. Significant reductions in energy consumption, carbon, associated energy costs can be delivered by converting Sandwell's remaining SON lanterns to LED with a central management system (CMS). The reduced energy costs are estimated at £332,619 per year as well as mitigating the exposure to future energy price increases

### **Alternative options considered**

The alternative option would be to use capital funding provided through the Council's capital programme. This option would fully fund the cyclical replacement of red risk lighting columns from 2024/25 onwards including an allowance to mitigate inflation. However, there are no available capital resources to fund this project. The project is suitable for Prudential Borrowing as it releases savings to fund the borrowing costs as well as ongoing energy savings to reinvest in the service.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that the Capital Programme for Borough Economy is increased by £1,695,425 for 2022/23 to undertake the spend to save to fund Street Lighting Investment Programme and cyclical replacement of streetlighting columns;
- (2) that the Capital Programme for 2023/24 for Borough Economy is increased by £1,695,425 for 2023/24 to undertake the spend to save to fund Street Lighting Investment Programme and cyclical replacement of streetlighting columns;
- (3) that in connection with Resolution (1) and (2) above, the schemes are funded by Prudential Borrowing;
- (4) that the ongoing capital pressure of £275,750 per year from 2024/25 onwards is added to the Council's capital programme;

- (5) that investment of the net budget saving from energy reduction, after prudential borrowing charges is reinvested to partially fund ongoing Highway Maintenance inflation pressures;
- (6) that the Director of Borough Economy is authorised to award the necessary street lighting contract, following a compliant competitive tender process;
- (7) that any necessary exemptions be made to the Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules to enable the course of action referred to in Resolution (6) to proceed;
- (8) that the Director of Law and Governance – Monitoring Officer is authorised to execute any documentation necessary to enable these recommendations;
- (9) that the recommendations are approved, subject to a satisfactory financial appraisal being completed by Strategic Finance.

## 211/22 **Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme Funding**

Approval was sought to accept Family Hubs and Start for life funding from central government for the period 2022-25. Approval was also sought for the Director of Children and Education and the Director of Public Health to be authorised to formulate plans for the expenditure of the Family Hubs and Start for Life programme funding in conjunction with the Director of Finance.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

Sandwell is one of 75 local authorities that are eligible to receive the Family Hubs and Start for Life funding which has been made available from central government for the three financial years from 2022-25.

### **Alternative Options**

The local authority could decide not to be part of this programme but that would mean turning down a substantial sum of money for the borough. This option has been duly discounted.

#### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given to accept the Family Hubs and Start for Life funding from central government for the period 2022-25;
- (2) that the Director of Children and Education and the Director of Public Health be authorised to formulate plans for the expenditure of the Family Hubs and Start for Life programme funding working in conjunction with the Director of Finance and in line with the associated Family Hubs and Start for Life programme guide from central government;
- (3) that the necessary virements are approved to enable the 2022/23 allocation of £1,041,000 to be spent in accordance with grant conditions

## 212/22 **Sandwell Drug & Alcohol Strategy**

Approval of the Sandwell Drug & Alcohol Strategy and its wider distribution and promotion was sought.

Drug and alcohol misuse was identified as a main concern for the wellbeing of Sandwell's safety and future success. Overall, a reduction in people admitted to hospital due to either drugs or alcohol had occurred however, Alcohol related deaths had increased.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

In December 2021, Government released a new National Drug Strategy 'From Harm to Hope: A ten-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives'. The Strategy comes with a set of requirements for local areas to help towards achieving the

national strategy ambitions. To support delivery of the national Drug Strategy ambitions, the Government requires all local areas to have in place a local drugs strategy delivery plan informed by a local joint needs assessment reviewing local drug data and evidence.

### **Alternative options considered**

The alternative would be for Sandwell Drug & Alcohol Partnership, including work as a member of the new regional Combating Drugs Partnership, to continue without a supporting Strategy. This option would compromise local compliance with, and fulfilment of national OHID requirements (Office for Health Improvement & Disparities).

**Agreed** that approval be given to the Sandwell Drug & Alcohol Strategy and its wider distribution and promotion.

## 213/22 **Adult Social Care Deferred Payment Agreements Policy**

Approval was sought of the proposed Deferred Payments Agreements Policy for implementation.

An admin fee of £125 would be introduced alongside interest charges as permitted in the care act to ensure that finances are covered. This would take the total charge to £715 including legal costs.

The Vice-Chair of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board asked how it was fair that some resident had to sell their home to pay for care, whereas someone living in social housing would not have to contribute in the same way.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources highlighted that the rules for financial assessment was set out in the Care Act 2014 and the Care and Support (Charging and Assessment of Resources) Regulations 2014. The question raised was a national issue and not something that the Council could address.



The Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board questioned whether or not the Council was currently helping users maximise their benefits. It was confirmed that the contributions team worked with Welfare Right to maximise Adult Social Care Client's benefits. Some benefits would not be available to people who already owned a property.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

The Director of Adult Social Care and the Director of Finance have commissioned work to check the compliance of the council's current Deferred Payment Agreements (DPA) practice against the Care Act (2014). Although much of the existing Deferred Payment practice is governed by legislation, there are areas of local discretion and clarification. A policy had been produced which sets out the council's decisions on such areas, as well as taking account of any recent case law and Local Government Ombudsman findings.

### **Alternative options considered**

The Care Act 2014 established a universal deferred payments scheme and therefore the Council is legally required to offer a scheme. The policy underpins that scheme.

#### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given to the proposed Deferred Payments Agreements Policy, as set out in Appendix A, as now submitted, for implementation;
- (2) that approval be given to charging of interest at the rate specified in government regulation, which from 1 July 2022 is 1.55% with rates reviewed every six months by the government;
- (3) that approval be given to the charging of administration fees based on actual costs on the deferred payments amounts, and authorise the Director of Finance to update the fees each year to reflect the actual cost to the council of providing the service, for the financial year

2022/23, the existing charges are £590 legal costs and valuation fees; from 1 December, and a new administration fee of £125 is proposed which takes the total charge to £715;

- (4) that the Director of Finance be authorised to amend the scheme in line with changes made by statutory provisions (such as, for example, the change in the upper capital threshold limit proposed in the government's Care Cap proposals).

## 214/22 **Highway Winter Service Operational Plan 2022-23**

Approval of the Highway Winter Service Operational Plan 2022-23 was sought.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

Road users and the wider community place a high value on keeping traffic moving safely in snow and freezing winter weather. Failure to do so can result in adverse economic and social impacts, public dissatisfaction and significant reputational damage. The Council has a statutory duty 'to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice'. The duty is not absolute, but decisions must be taken on reasonable grounds with due care and regard to relevant considerations set out in best practice guidance.

### **Alternative options considered**

There is no recommended affordable alternative to mitigate the safety risks addressed by the Winter Service Operational Plan 2022-23.

**Agreed** that the Highway Winter Service Operational Plan 2022-23 be approved.

## **Land at Grove Lane, Smethwick – Compulsory Purchase Order**

Approval was sought to authorise the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer to make a Compulsory Purchase Order under Section 226 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act.

The Land at Grove Lane, Smethwick had been identified for regeneration as part of the Smethwick Town Deal project. A total of £4.35m had been allocated to the project from Government funding. The Council had little success in acquiring the land through purchase agreements and therefore, a compulsory purchase order was the only option left in order to obtain the site for development.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

The site, which is currently derelict former industrial land, lies between Cranford Street and the canal arm adjacent to the new Midland Metropolitan University Hospital. The site of 1.67 ha has been identified for potential residential use since 2008 when it was included in the Smethwick Area Action Plan, now incorporated into the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD. The Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor Framework and Grove Lane Masterplan were prepared during 2021 and concentrated on identifying sites and opportunities for development within the regeneration corridor between Smethwick and Birmingham City Hospital. Following public consultation, both documents, were approved at Cabinet in February 2022. Their approval further emphasised the vision for comprehensive redevelopment in this area for housing purposes.

### **Alternative options considered**

Option 1: Not progress with the CPO and not deliver the Towns Fund project leading to clawback of £4.35m to DLUHC. Reputation of the council at risk.

Option 2: Identify another site that could achieve the Town Fund project and submit another change request. There are no other sites in the area that could be considered at this stage given the timescales for the funding to be spent.

**Agreed:-**

- (1) that the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to:
  - (a) make a Compulsory Purchase Order under Section 226 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 99 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Acquisition of Land Act 1981, and Section 13 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to be known as The Borough Council of Sandwell (Cranford Street, Smethwick) Compulsory Purchase Order, in respect of approximately 1.67 hectares of land bounded by land to the south of Cranford Street as shown edged red on the attached Drawing SAM/12980/005 or such lesser land as may be deemed necessary and also including the air space above an area lying to the north and south of the development during the construction as shown on Drawing SAM/12980/005;
  - (b) to use the Council's Compulsory Purchase powers to acquire land and property required for the Grove Lane Towns Fund project at Cranford Street, Smethwick;
  - (c) to take all necessary action to secure the making, confirmation and implementation of the Compulsory Purchase Order; and, if objections are received to the Compulsory Purchase Order, to make arrangements for public inquiries, including instructing external Counsel and Consultants to assist in the preparing of evidence and the presentation of the Council's case at any public Inquiry;
  - (d) in the event of the Compulsory Purchase Order being unopposed, and the Council thereby being granted powers to do so by the

- Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, to confirm the above order and serve all necessary notices to implement the Compulsory Purchase Order, including the issuing of sheriff warrants;
- (e) to prepare and seal the necessary documents in connection with the CPO and submit the CPO to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities to confirm;
  - (f) to enter into any licences, undertakings or other agreements to facilitate the Compulsory Purchase Order, on terms to be agreed by the Director of Regeneration & Growth;
  - (g) in the event of the Compulsory Purchase Order being confirmed by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, to serve all necessary notices to implement the powers of compulsory acquisition, including the making of General Vesting Declarations; notices to treat; notices of entry; and to take all other requisite steps to obtain possession of the properties; and, where possession has not been given, to obtain a Sheriff's Warrant for possession of any lands;
  - (h) to acquire the necessary interests in the land and property included in the confirmed Compulsory Purchase Order, on terms to be agreed by the Director of Regeneration & Growth, or as ordered by the Lands Tribunal;
  - (i) to enter into, or execute under seal, any documentation in relation to award of the contract and/or development/partnership agreement, licence, undertaking, framework joining agreement and any other agreements

with the procured contractor/s as may be deemed necessary to facilitate development of the site, on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director of Regeneration and Growth;

(j) in the event of the council being successful with the submission to the Levelling Up Fund, or securing other appropriate funding source(s), to prepare a Compulsory Purchase Order for the area around Grove Street, Halberton Street and land north of Cranford Street, as set out on plans SAM/12980/004 & SAM/21160/001 attached to this report, and the Director of Regeneration & Growth present a more detailed report to Cabinet at a later date;

- (2) that the Director of Regeneration & Growth be authorised to make minor amendments to the (Cranford Street, Smethwick) Compulsory Purchase Order and, more particularly, marked "Map referred to in Borough Council of Sandwell (Cranford Street, Smethwick) Compulsory Purchase Order" prior to it being made and submitted for confirmation;
- (3) that the Service Manager – Strategic Assets & Land be authorised to enter into negotiations and to acquire land and property within the proposed Order lands, on terms to be agreed by the Director of Regeneration & Growth, in advance of confirmation of the Compulsory Purchase Order by the Secretary of State, and subject to the availability of finances;
- (4) that the Director – Finance be authorised:
  - (a) to allocate adequate investment from the Smethwick Towns Fund to fund acquisition of site, demolition of buildings and remediation of land, in order to facilitate a clear site for redevelopment, which is

approximately 1.67 hectares of land off Cranford Street, and to cover the CPO administration and execution costs.

- (b) (subject to 4(a) above) to grant funding (when secured) from the Town Fund Grove Lane Programme (administered by Sandwell Council), and to allocate adequate resources to fund the first phase of the development.

216/22      **Council new build homes on land at Garratts, Smethwick**

Approval was sought to appropriate land at Garratts Lane, Cradley Heath from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account for housing purposes with the accounts being adjusted accordingly and to develop the site with new council housing, subject to planning permission.

**Reasons for recommendations**

The Council is able to develop this site with circa 20 homes, subject to planning permission, as part of the new strategic approach to provide more and better housing in the borough.

**Alternative options considered**

**Option A – Dispose of the Site on the Open Market**

The site would not be suitable for private sector residential development in isolation as the Council's access to the site is not deemed suitable to serve a housing development and would not obtain planning permission.

This option would also offer nil contribution to the Council's new build programme.

**Option B – Work in partnership with a Registered**

Provider Partner with the assistance of Homes England to build new affordable homes for rent. The site would not be suitable for residential development in isolation as the Council's access to the site is not deemed suitable to serve a housing development and would not obtain planning permission.

This option would also offer nil contribution to the Council's new build programme.

**Option C – Leave the site undeveloped.**

An option to consider would be not to build out the site and to leave it as it is. There are ongoing maintenance costs to the Council around litter picking and grounds maintenance. These are difficult to quantify as they are carried out as part of larger services, although we anticipate costs would be significantly reduced if the site were developed for housing. This option would offer nil contribution to the Council's new build programme and result in an under-utilised Council asset.

**Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given to appropriate approximately 4770.3 m<sup>2</sup> (0.48 hectares) of land at Garratts Lane, Cradley Heath from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account for housing purposes with the accounts being adjusted accordingly and to develop the site with new council housing for affordable rent, subject to planning permission, as shown for identification purposes only at Appendix 1, as now submitted;
- (2) that approval be given to acquire the access land, as shown for identification purposes only at Appendix 3, as now submitted, from Green Square Accord on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director of Regeneration and Growth;
- (3) that approval be given to make a direct award to Green Square Accord (or their subsidiary within the group structure) and an exemption be made to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules;
- (4) that the Director of Finance be authorised to allocate adequate resources from the Council's Housing Revenue Account, subject to being satisfied that the proposal provides value for



money, to deliver the scheme and to utilise grant funding offered by Homes England, under the extended Homes England Strategic Partnership 1 Programme 2016 to 2021 to assist with the delivery of the project;

- (5) that in connection with Resolution (3) and (4) above, approval be given to authorise the necessary steps for the delivery of the proposed project, including:
- a) that subject to receiving the necessary Strategic Investment Unit appraisal approval mark of 65 or above for this site, the Director of Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Director of Finance and the Director of Housing be authorised to accept the Financial closure offer for the construction of Council new build properties, in accordance with any statutory regulations and the Council's the Director – Monitoring Officer be authorised to enter into or execute under seal any documentation in relation to award of the contract for the development of this site and/or development/partnership agreement, any consents or applications required for Planning or Highways appertaining to the delivery of the schemes and any other agreements with the procured contractor(s), as may be deemed necessary to facilitate development of the site with housing a scheme on terms and conditions to be agreed and implemented by the Director of Regeneration and Growth;
  - b) the Director of Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Director of Finance and the Director of Housing be authorised to make a direct award to Green Square Accord (or their

subsidiary within the group structure) and enter into a Design and Build agreement to develop and deliver a new housing scheme on behalf of the council.

- c) to enter into or execute under seal any financial agreement in relation to the Homes England grant on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director of Finance;
- d) that any necessary exemptions are made to the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules to enable the course of action referred to b above to proceed;
- e) Subject to the practical completion of each property, the Director of Housing be authorised to manage and let the properties built in accordance with the Council's housing allocation policy.

## 217/22      **New Archives Centre**

Approval was sought to identify land to the rear of Smethwick Council House as the preferred site for a new Archives Centre.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

Currently archives storage was at capacity, and the material is housed in three separate sites, which makes managing the collection and providing access difficult. Much of the storage does not meet the required standards (BS 4971) set out by The National Archives (TNA). The archives were stored in the basements of Smethwick library and West Bromwich town hall (neither of which met the standard) and in the relatively new Dudley archives – (which does, but costs the service £13k per annum). The Archives Service had its application for mandatory accreditation by the TNA rejected in July 2018, because storage did not meet minimum standards. The service should have reapplied by 2021 but TNA recognise that the standard cannot be met and agreed

to a delay in applying for accredited status. We cannot however, delay indefinitely.

### Alternative options considered

Option	Reason for rejection
Do nothing	Sandwell could lose its place of deposit status and be required to pay another local authority to house its public records
Conversion of existing storage at Smethwick Library	Too small and costly
Rental of additional space at Dudley Archives	Not sustainable – Dudley will want the space back as their archives grow and has revenue implications as well as costs and travel for Sandwell residents with a disconnect from local services
Utilise SMBC owned industrial units	All those available are either too small or not accessible enough
Lease or purchase private sector industrial units	All those available are not accessible enough and not cost effective
Use unoccupied space at Operations and Development centre (Roway Lane)	Too small and not accessible enough
Smethwick Swimming Centre (Thimblemill Baths)	Restrictions due to layout and listed status

### Agreed:-

- (1) that approval be given to identify land to the rear of Smethwick Council House as the preferred site for a new Archives Centre;
- (2) that the Director – Borough Economy be authorised to proceed with feasibility, design, specification and the development a funding strategy for a new Archives Centre at the preferred site;

(3) that the Director of Borough Economy, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, be authorised to:

- Prepare any necessary tendering documentation;
- Procure, in accordance with the public procurement rules, the Council's procurement and financial regulations a contractor(s) to carry out further feasibility, draft design and specification and support a funding strategy; to award a contract and to enter into or execute under seal any financial agreement(s) as may be deemed necessary in relation to the project

## 218/22 **Gas Safety Inspections 2022 - 2025**

Approval was sought to award contracts for the delivery of Gas Safety inspection with West Bromwich, Oldbury and Smethwick to Phoenix Gas Services Limited.

Due to the termination of two separate gas safety inspection contracts, it was highlighted that the Council was left in a vulnerable position of not having adequate resources available to provide its statutory requirement of undertaking annual gas safety inspections to Council properties.

The Vice-Chair of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board questioned if we could clarify if the awarded contractors had any female workers. The Director of Housing explained that whilst young women had begun to enter the trade, it was still very much a male dominated profession. If any tenant had preference for a female gas inspector, although it would not be guaranteed, it would be considered.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

The Council is obliged by statute to undertake annual gas safety inspections and servicing to its properties as a landlord. Subsequent to the withdrawal of two incumbent

contractors, approval was sought to award the contract for the provision of annual gas safety inspections within West Bromwich, Oldbury and Smethwick.

### **Alternative options considered**

There are no other options available, this contract is required in order for Sandwell MBC to be able to maintain its current housing stock and fulfil its landlord obligations.

#### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given to award contracts for the delivery of Gas Safety Inspections within West Bromwich, Oldbury and Smethwick to Phoenix Gas Services Limited, for the sum of approximately £1,700,000 and for a period of 2 years and 9 months, from 1 November 2022 to 31 July 2025;
- (2) that the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to enter into appropriate contracts for Gas Safety Inspections with Phoenix Gas Services Limited;
- (3) that approval be given to vary an existing contract currently in place for the delivery of Gas Safety Inspections within Tipton and Wednesbury to also include Rowley Regis to a value of approximately £690,000.

#### **219/22 Action Taken on Matters of Urgency - New Burdens: Market Sustainability and Cost of Care**

Details of the urgent action taken by the Leader of the Council was noted.

#### **Reasons for recommendations**

Each local authority has been asked to complete a Cost of Care exercise for 65+ residential and nursing homes and for Domiciliary Care (otherwise known as Home Care) for people 18+ by 14 October 2022 to better understand the

sustainability of fee rates. In addition, the Government requires Councils to complete a provisional Market Sustainability Plan (MSP) to establish how they will close the gap, if one exists, between current fee rates and the findings of the Cost of Care exercise.

### **Alternative options considered**

The Council does not have to submit the outcome of the provisional Market Sustainability Plan or Cost of Care exercise to the DHSC, however to not do so would mean that it will have to pay back the grant of £1.25 million that it has received, of which £456,315 has already been spent.

**Agreed** that the following details of the urgent action taken by the Leader of the Council be noted:-

- (1) to approve the submission to the Department of Health and Social Care documents relating to the outcome of the Cost of Care exercise for 18+ Domiciliary Care and 65+ Residential and Nursing sectors consisting of:
  - Cost of Care Table,
  - Spend Report,
  - Cost of Care Report and
  - Market Sustainability Plan (provisional and final);
- (2) to authorise the Director of Adult Social Care authority to make necessary changes to the Cost of Care documents before final submission, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health, given the strict deadlines set by the Government.
- (3) to approve publication on the Council's website of the process undertaken by the Council in relation to the Cost of Care exercise and the resultant Market Sustainability Plan in line with the requirements laid down by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC);

- (4) to note the potential impact and pressure on the Council's budget should the Government not make sufficient additional funding available to the Council to meet the financial burdens associated with sustainable rates as a result of the Cost of Care exercise for the 18+ Domiciliary Care and 65+ Residential and Nursing care homes sectors;
- (5) to endorse the position that the Council takes into account the outcome of the Cost of Care exercise and available Government funding together with sound judgement, evidence and a negotiation process when setting a Fair Cost of Care and assessing market sustainability and the delivery of legislative duties under Section 5 of the Care Act;
- (6) to endorse the position that further progress towards reaching the median cost over three years will not begin until government funding is confirmed and will be phased in line with the additional government funding received;
- (7) to approve the remaining 2022/23 allocation of the Cost of Care Grant be used to further uplift the Domiciliary Care, Extra Care, Promoting Independence and Rapid Response/ Wrap Around services hourly rate from £16.00 per hour to £16.92 per hour in recognition of significant market pressures being faced, and for this to be backdated to 1 September 2022 and to be in place until 31 March 2023;
- (8) that the Director of Adult Social Care be delegated to determine how any surplus Cost of Care grant mentioned in 1.7 is spent in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health;
- (9) note the general inequity in treatment and likely risk of destabilisation within markets

deemed out of scope by the Cost of Care exercise;

(10) to approve the completion of further market analysis for out of scope markets (Supported Living, Complex Residential and Nursing Care and Day Care, and) to mitigate risk noted in (9) above;

(11) to note the inequity in the hourly rate for Direct Payments falling a year behind the Council's Domiciliary Care rate and to agree to a further paper being brought to Cabinet to address this.

## 220/22 **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

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

## 221/22 **Corporate Asset Management Strategy (CAMS)**

Approval of the Corporate Asset Management Strategy (CAMS) was sought.

The CAMS document set out the framework in which the Council's Land and Assets would be managed; It was intended to respond to the corporate plan that was underway. Not only did the plan help each of the Council's service areas deliver their plans, but it also responded to financial constraints and needs of the Council.

The key aspects of the plan was highlighted to Cabinet:-

- Disposing of surplus assets



- Further rationalisation of the office portfolio - More efficient use of office space whilst ensuring that services are provided to the public.
- Establishment of community hubs - this strategy will support work undertaken to consider establishing community hub across the borough.
- Sets directions in carbon reduction, information management, undertaking asset valuations and community transformations

The Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board sought further clarification on why West Bromwich had been left without a designated Neighbourhood office. A further question was also asked on why no consultation with ward members had taken place regarding the sites listed in the report appendices.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth confirmed that the Council's customer strategy was currently under review with a view to formalise what services would be offered at a local level by the start of 2023. The Council had taken the opportunity to exit the Court House in West Bromwich at lease end given the extreme budget pressure faced by the Council. Interim measures were put in place for face to face enquiries to be received at West Bromwich Library.

It was reported that once renovations had been complete, West Bromwich Town Hall would be the designated local hub for West Bromwich. It was suggested that further reports containing the costs of retaining assets would be brought to Cabinet to determine the best individual use for each asset; no disposals would be made before coming back to Cabinet.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

To support the efficient management and use of Council assets.

### **Alternative options considered**

Non-delivery of the CAMS would be contrary to the Council's Improvement Plan. If the CAMS did not contain proposals for rationalisation of the office and community estates then it will

become impossible for the Council to maintain its estate safely and efficiently with the available budget.

**Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given to the Corporate Asset Management Strategy (CAMS) attached at Appendix A, as now submitted;
- (2) that the Local Hub indicative locations as set out below, be approved and authorise Directors to undertake due diligence and prepare detailed proposals for the development of community hubs including timescales, digital offer, buildings that will become surplus and other financial implications, and also to prepare a report on the implications for library services and for heritage assets;
  - Carnegie Library Tipton
  - Oldbury Council House / One-stop shop
  - West Bromwich Central Library / Town Hall
  - Wednesbury Town Hall & Art Gallery
  - Blackheath Library Rowley Regis
  - Town Hall Smethwick
- (3) that all community buildings that become surplus should be offered as opportunities for Community Asset Transfers;
- (4) that it be acknowledged that the assets contained in the Surplus Assets list at Appendix B are surplus to the Council's operational requirements;
- (5) that the procurement of a firm of property consultants (using CCS Framework RM6168) be approved to undertake a review of the Council's surplus property assets with a view to identifying assets for disposal or development;
- (6) that the Director of Regeneration & Growth, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, and the

Monitoring Officer, be authorised to oversee the procurement and to appoint the selected consultant;

- (7) that subject to approval by Cabinet on any disposal of surplus assets, the Director of Regeneration & Growth, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer, be authorised to oversee the review and to progress the disposal of surplus assets in a manner and on terms recommended by the review;
- (8) that a budget of £100k is allocated from the Invest to Save reserve for this work;
- (9) that it be acknowledged that the need to reduce the Council's office portfolio further, reflecting working patterns post Covid and authorise officers to undertake a detailed options analysis with a target of reducing the operational office portfolio by at least 50%.

222/22

### **Delivery Issues Relating to the Strategic Regeneration Masterplans for West Bromwich and for Grove Lane Smethwick**

Approval was sought, subject to more detailed due diligence, for the procurement of a joint venture development partner is the preferred route to delivery the West Bromwich Town Centre and Grove Lane Masterplans.

#### **Reasons for recommendations**

To ensure the effective delivery of the West Bromwich Town Centre Masterplan in a way that enables high design standards and a holistic approach to regeneration to be achieved

#### **Alternative options considered**

Adopt the masterplans and rely on the private sector to deliver.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval in principle, subject to more detailed due diligence, that the procurement of a joint venture development partner is the preferred route to delivering the West Bromwich Town Centre and Grove Lane Masterplans;
- (2) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth be authorised to procurement a professional team (lawyers and property consultants) to carry out the workstreams set out below:
  - Provide detailed legal advice setting out the advantages, risks and proposed mitigations of the preferred option.
  - Provide advice on setting up a joint venture company
  - Provide a business case including a financial model showing the likely returns. Phasing. Likely gap-funding requirement and options to address this.
  - Provide an analysis showing how the Council might act as bank, lending to JV Co. Set out pros and cons of this.
  - Advise on the attractiveness of the opportunity in the market, and how to present the opportunity to maximize interest.
  - Prepare a development partner procurement strategy, including:
    - Advice re the best Framework to use.
    - How the opportunity would be promoted. Advertising, press, social media, launch events.

- Advice on the form of contract, highlighting key issues.
  - A timetable for procurement.
  - A stakeholder engagement strategy, and a framework for consultation and decision-making.
- Presentations on the above, as necessary, to Members and / or senior officers.
  - Preparation of a Brief, scoring matrix and other necessary documentation.
  - Collation of documentation as necessary to furnish a data room.
  - Managing all aspects of the developer selection process.
  - Assessment of bids, including:
    - Advice on developer appraisals, cost plans, proposed phasing. Credibility of each bid.
    - Advice on design standards and fit with the masterplan.
- (3) authorises the Director of Regeneration & Growth to oversee the procurement of the professional team, approve the selection and enter into appointment contracts as necessary.
- (4) requests a further report before March 2023 covering the following:
- 4.1 Detailed legal advice setting out the advantages, risks and proposed mitigations of the preferred option.
  - 4.2 A business case including a financial model showing the likely returns.
  - 4.3 A development partner procurement strategy, including:

- 4.3.1 A timetable for procurement
- 4.3.2 A draft developer briefing document for approval
- 4.3.3 A stakeholder engagement strategy, and a framework for consultation and decision-making.
- 4.3.4 A request for approval to commence a development partner procurement process.

Meeting ended at 5.56pm

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

## Report to Cabinet

7 December 2022

<b>Subject:</b>	Adult Social Care Direct Payments Policy
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Finance and Resources - Cllr Piper Adults, Social Care and Health - Cllr Hartwell
<b>Director:</b>	Director of Finance – Simone Hines Director of Adult Social Care - Rashpal Bishop
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Service Manager (Business Management) - Kay Murphy, Kay_Murphy@sandwell.gov.uk

### 1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Director of Adult Social Care and the Director of Finance be authorised to implement the proposed Direct Payments Policy and ensure it is embedded in future practice by all relevant staff members.




### 2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The Director of Adult Social Care and the Director of Finance have commissioned work to check the compliance of the Council's current Direct Payments practice against the Care Act 2014.
- 2.2 Although much of our existing Direct Payments practice is governed by legislation, there are areas of local discretion and clarification, and this paper proposes establishing a policy which sets out the council's decisions on such areas, as well as taking account of recent case law and Local Government Ombudsman findings. In addition, specific legal advice has been obtained to ensure that the changes proposed fall within the discretionary powers of the council.



2.3 The proposed policy does not impact on the financial elements of Direct Payments: it provides more detailed guidance on the operation of the national scheme, so it is not considered that public consultation is required.

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

	<p>People live well and age well - clarifying some elements of current policy makes it easier for users of service and residents to understand how we make decisions regarding our provision of Direct Payments and associated governance</p>
	<p>Strong resilient communities - ensuring residents understand our policy and principles will contribute towards creating stronger and more resilient communities</p>
	<p>A strong and inclusive economy – ensuring people have sufficient funds to meet all reasonable needs through a Direct Payment is essential for an equitable economy</p>

### 4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 The Care Act repealed all previous national direct payment regulations and guidance such as the Direct Payment Regulations 2009, which were replaced by new statutory guidance in the Care and Support Statutory (CASS) Guidance published in October 2014 and the Care and Support (Direct Payments) Regulations 2014.
- 4.2 Direct payments were originally introduced nationally in the 1990's and the Care Act consolidated their use to “provide the platform with which to deliver a modern care and support system” along with personal budgets and personalised care and support planning.
- 4.3 People assessed as needing care and support are to be encouraged to take ownership of their care and support planning and be free to choose how their needs are met, whether through council or third-party provision, by direct payments, or by a combination of these ways.
- 4.4 This paper proposes adopting a new Direct Payments Policy to govern those areas of the law where the council has discretion or where it is considered we need to clarify how we deal with specific issues which have arisen in the decades of operating a DP scheme.





- 4.5 These changes focus on the offer of direct payments and their governance. Direct payments are the key mechanism for delivering personalised care and support, and so are our preferred method of delivering services where people can manage them. They provide independence, choice, and control by enabling people to arrange and purchase their own care and support to meet their eligible needs.
- 4.6 At the same time, we have a duty to use public funds wisely and ensure that they are used in accordance with law and regulation (including employment and tax). That requires us to operate effective monitoring processes that ensure that a direct payment is meeting a person's assessed needs without restricting choice, stifling innovation, or placing undue burdens on people to provide information to us.
- 4.7 Setting out a policy provides clarity about the council's expectations in offering a direct payment and underpins current work to simplify processes for both DP recipients and staff. This includes the imminent introduction of a "pre-paid card" which will transform the operational and reporting requirements currently placed on DP recipients.
- 4.8 The government's recent announcement of proposals for Adult Social Care Act funding reform do appear likely to extend the use of Direct Payments to cover long-term residential care from October 2023, currently not permitted. However, this does not in itself impact on the policy elements included in this report. Once final details of the reforms are published, a separate report to Cabinet will be required – possibly associated with public consultation – to implement all of the elements, which will impact on a number of policy and practice guidance documents including those for Direct Payments.
- 4.9 If approved by Cabinet, the policy will be implemented through both public information and internal practice guidance in January 2023. However, whilst the policy should apply to all clients from the approval date, there may be some existing clients whose direct payment arrangements are not compliant with the policy – for example, where close relatives are being employed.
- 4.10 In these circumstances, there will need to be a period of transition, as legal advice is that a strict application of the new policy on day one could be seen as unreasonable. It is proposed, therefore, that following implementation of the policy, the Council undertakes a review of existing



cases to identify those which are non-compliant with the new policy. At this point, we will;

- a) work with the client and their families to assure ourselves that the arrangements are a reasonable use of the Council's discretion; and/or;
- b) work with the client and their families to identify what change(s) are required to make the arrangements compliant with the Council's policy.

4.11 There is no legal requirement for the Council to consult on these changes, given that the policy is based on (and is in line with) the statutory framework. As there is no existing written policy reflecting the current position from which the Council is diverging, legal advice is that there is no need to consult.

4.12 The key elements of the proposed policy are summarised below, with the proposed policy attached as **Appendix A**.

## 5 Summary of main proposals

5.1 The right to have a Direct Payment: the council's preference for DPs as a delivery mechanism must be balanced by the need to ensure that making direct payments is an appropriate way to meet the needs in question.

5.2 Offering a Direct Payment: encouraging DP take-up; the use of nominated and authorised people to assist a person to take on a DP.

5.3 Direct Payments for people with capacity: The Care Act conditions to be met for a person assessed as having the mental capacity to manage it; the use of a nominated person where required or (exceptionally) the use of a third party agency to manage the DP on behalf of the person where they have capacity but cannot deal with the management.

5.4 Direct payments for adults lacking capacity to consent: not providing Direct Payments to a person assessed as lacking capacity to request them, unless they have an authorised person who can manage on their behalf and who meets capacity and suitability tests set out in the Care Act.



- 5.5 Suitability for a Direct Payment: assessing the suitability of the person or their nominee/authorised person to effectively manage a direct payment to meet their needs.
- 5.6 Safeguarding: ensuring that Care Act requirements for safeguarding and managing risk are embedded in the DP process.
- 5.7 Conditions of a Direct Payment: setting out the key expectation of anyone who receives a direct payment in terms of planning and practice.
- 5.8 Restrictions on paying family members: setting out when this is acceptable, by clarifying the Care Act requirement that such payments can only be made if the local authority considers it is necessary to do so to meet the needs of the adult: providing guidance to ensure the best interests of the cared-for person are paramount.
- 5.9 Employment duties: setting out the duties a person who employs staff to deliver their care must adhere to, and when a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check may be required in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- 5.10 Recovering Direct Payments: being clear where we may recover unused funds and/or adjust future payments.
- 5.11 Suspending or terminating Direct Payments: setting out the circumstances where we may (or are required to) suspend or withdraw a DP and provide care and support by alternative methods.
- 5.12 Wrongful use of a Direct Payment: setting out the actions we will take in the event of improper use of a DP.

## 6 Alternative Options

- 6.1 The Council should have a Direct Payments Policy to cover areas of discretion, or to clarify our decisions where issues have arisen in the past.
- 6.2 It would be possible to carry on without a policy, but this risks the Council being challenged on areas where the Care Act does not set out a clear framework, and it is considered prudent, therefore, to ensure that people understand what our policy is.



## 7. Implications

<p><b>Resources:</b></p>	<p>There are no specific financial issues arising from this report.</p> <p>In terms of staffing, the requirements outlined above will require more review in relevant cases to ensure compliance. There will be an impact on social care practitioner time, for example in assessing a person's ability to manage finance, which they may not have experience in doing. There may also be an increase in appeals.</p> <p>These staffing implications will be managed by the provision of more detailed guidance, a toolkit and criteria to ensure consistency of application. This will be accompanied by associated training to manage the risks to a more acceptable level.</p>
<p><b>Legal and Governance:</b></p>	<p>The discretionary elements of the Care Act 2014 and subsequent regulation provides the basis for this policy.</p>
<p><b>Risk:</b></p>	<p>There are risks associated with this report arising from the introduction of a policy that sets out to ensure our practice is consistent. In some cases, this may mean that we decide we should not offer a direct payment, or that we suspend or terminate one that we assess is not being managed effectively.</p> <p>This may lead to outcomes such as increases in appeals or challenge, or refusal to accept the care and support service the person has been assessed to require. However, specific legal advice has been obtained to confirm that the changes made fall within the council's discretionary powers.</p> <p>Legal advice is that the introduction of the new policy is unlikely to carry significant risk of legal challenge; it is the changes that could be made to a particular client's specific arrangements as a consequence that could bring challenge in an attempt to resist any changes the Council proposes. This could be either based on a legitimate expectation argument, or on a human rights basis in relation to employing close relatives and the right to a family life. However, in both cases, the Council could potentially justify any changes on,</p>



	<p>for example, the grounds of safeguarding if a challenge is made.</p> <p>The risks have been assessed, and sufficient actions have been identified to ensure that the risks are mitigated to an acceptable level and are being addressed in an improvement plan which aims to deliver change within the current calendar year. None of the risks are “red” in terms of being high impact or highly likely.</p>
<b>Equality:</b>	Overall, the proposed policy is not considered to have any impact on any type of equality characteristic. The EIA completed for this report contains more analysis and detail.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	There are no specific health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.
<b>Social Value:</b>	There are no specific social value implications arising from this report
<b>Climate Change:</b>	There are no specific climate change implications arising from this report

## 8. Appendices

**Appendix A** – the proposed Direct Payments Policy

## 9. Background Papers

- The Care Act 2014
- The Care and Support Statutory (CASS) Guidance October 2014
- The Care and Support (Direct Payments) Regulations 2014
- The Mental Health Act 1983
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006



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# ADULT SOCIAL CARE DIRECT PAYMENTS POLICY



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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Why do we have this Policy?

Much of what Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (the “**Council**”) does is set out in law, but in some areas, including direct payments, the law gives us an element of discretion over what we can do in certain circumstances. Where we have discretion, we are required to have a policy, and this document is our policy for direct payments.

This policy addresses areas of legal discretion with full guidance on the relevant regulatory framework being summarised in a separate **practice guidance document** for staff, and **factsheet** for service users, carers, and the public. **[Add links]**. This document has been created and approved by the Council and can be amended and/or changed in accordance with the Council’s democratic procedures.

The law says that where we have discretion, we must consider each case separately; we cannot set rules that say (for example) we will never fund certain costs. That would “fetter our discretion” which means it would stop us applying our judgement in individual cases which is unlawful. Nothing in this policy is intended to “fetter the discretion” of the Council, and any references in any of our adult social care documents to “the policy” or “this policy” or similar should be treated as a reference to the relevant part of this document.

This policy aims to balance these requirements and to be clear and transparent on how the Council manages direct payments, so that staff, service users, carers and the public can understand the purpose of our local policy and how we make decisions in respect of our direct payment scheme.

## 1.2 What Legislation is relevant to this Policy?

This policy is based on the following statutory documents:

- The Care Act 2014;
- The Care and Support (Direct Payments) Regulations 2014 (the “Regulations”);
- The Care and Support Statutory (CASS) Guidance October 2014;
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (in respect of DBS checks);
- The Mental Health Act 1983 (to the extent that it relates to aftercare services commissioned under section 117(2c) which can be delivered via a direct payment).

## 2. Offering a Direct Payment

### 2.1 What is a Direct Payment?

A direct payment is a monetary payment made to individuals who request to receive one to meet some or all of their eligible care and support needs. It is available for people eligible for support to meet their needs, and for carers.

Direct payments are a key mechanism for delivering personalised care and support, and are an effective way of delivering services where people are able to manage them or there is a suitable individual who can manage the direct payment on the person’s behalf. Direct payments provide independence, choice, and control by enabling people to arrange and purchase their own care and support to meet their eligible needs.

Although information about direct payments should be readily available to all from an early stage, the key stage for information sharing is during care and support planning (or support planning where the direct payment is being considered for a carer). The person must be genuinely involved and influential

throughout the planning process, and there should be a default assumption that the person, with support if necessary, will play a strong pro-active role in planning if they choose to.

Managing a direct payment involves being clear about the uses it will be put to in order to meet needs or outcomes; properly accounting for the use of public money; acting as an employer, or managing the relationship with an external provider; getting cover for absent staff; ensuring insurance and contingency arrangements are in place etc.

Once the Council has prepared a personal budget setting out (a) the costs of the person's care and support and (b) the amount that the Council will make available, the option of a direct payment must be clearly explained to the person in a way that works best for them, so that they can make an informed decision about the level of choice and control they want in respect of their care arrangements and whether a direct payment is right for them.

A direct payment can be paid to the person who is assessed as needing care and support, someone they choose (called a nominated person) or, if they lack capacity to make decisions about requesting a direct payment, the Council can agree to someone else managing this on their behalf (called an authorised person).

The final decision as to whether a direct payment should be offered depends on the whether the person requesting the direct payment and/or their nominated and/or authorised person meets the conditions set out in the Care Act 2014.

Carers' Direct Payments are one-off sums, so only the indicated requirements and conditions in this document apply.

## 2.2 The Right to have a Direct Payment

The Care Act sets out that a person has a right to ask for a direct payment to deliver the care to meet their needs required in their personal budget. Subject to the conditions set out below, the Council must provide one to the person or to their nominated person. Having a direct payment is a choice for the person concerned, and the Council cannot and will not require anyone to have one.

These “conditions to be satisfied” exist to protect both the person and the Council; even if the person wants a direct payment, it may not be suitable for them, and the Council will work with the individual to understand whether the conditions in the next section are met; whether they wish to receive a direct payment and if they do, how the direct payment will operate based on their individual circumstances.

As a part of this joint work, the Council will need to ensure that;

- It is satisfied that making direct payments to the person or their nominee is an “appropriate way to meet the needs in question”
- it meets its duty to use public funds equitably and economically

These will be achieved by working with the individual to draw up costed options so that the Council’s managers can make a decision as to which is the “best value option” in terms of possible care for the individual, with the full involvement of the person in that process.

The Care Act 2014 is clear that a Council *can* make choices on what services they fund taking account of the costs, *providing* this is done on a case by case basis (taking all relevant considerations into account which includes the views of the individual and / or their representative) and is not a blanket policy. This does not mean choosing the cheapest option; but the one which delivers the outcomes desired for the best value.

In many cases this will be a direct payment as there can be lower overheads when the person themselves is managing their care compared with an external provider. However, that may not always be the case. The Council's decision on whether to agree to a request for a direct payment must balance the two key considerations; the individual's choice with the Council's duty to ensure that making direct payments is an appropriate way to meet the needs in question.

### **2.3 Conditions to be satisfied before making a Direct Payments – Adults with Capacity to request Direct Payments**

A direct payment must be used to meet the needs and outcomes that have been agreed with the social care practitioner, but can be used in a way, which gives the person choice and control over who provides their support, when and how it is provided.

A person who is assessed by the social care practitioner as having capacity to make a request for direct payments to cover some or all of their needs, must meet the conditions set out in the Care Act 2014 in order for a direct payment to be made. A person with capacity may nominate a third party to assist them with managing the direct payment (i.e. the nominated person) – usually a family member or close friend.

When a person asks us for a direct payment, the Council must agree to provide one if they or their nominated person meets all of the following conditions as set out in the Care Act 2014:

- they have the capacity to make the request and, where they have nominated a person to make the payments to, that person agrees to receive the payments;

- the Council is not prohibited by section 33 of the Care Act 2014 or the Regulations from meeting the person's needs by making direct payments to the person or nominated person (this section refers to certain categories of persons subject to drug or alcohol treatment requirements);
- the social care practitioner is satisfied that the person (or their nominated person) has the capability to manage direct payment either by themselves, or with whatever help the practitioner thinks the person (or nominated person) will be able to access;
- the social care practitioner is satisfied that making direct payments to the person (or nominated person) is an appropriate way to meet the person's needs.

If the Council decides not to provide a direct payment on the basis that one or more of the conditions is not met, this decision can be challenged through the Council's **Reviews, appeals and complaints** process (*click to follow link*).

**Managed accounts:** in exceptional cases, a person may be assessed as having the capacity to understand the issues involved in managing a direct payment, (including employing a personal assistant or an agency), but is unable to manage these issues on a day to day basis, and has no third party who can assist. In such cases, the Council may provide a *managed account*.

This is where a third-party contractor is funded by the Council to manage the person's direct payment funds on their behalf. The third-party contractor is responsible for all managing and accounting for the direct payment that a person would be responsible for, including audit and reporting. However, they will not deal with the management and employment of staff or providers; this will remain the responsibility of the individual.

## 2.4 Conditions to be satisfied before making a Direct Payment – Adults Lacking Capacity

In cases where a person in need of care and support has been assessed as *lacking capacity* to request a direct payment, the Council will not grant a direct payment to them unless they have an authorised person who meets all of the conditions set out in the Care Act 2014. When assessing whether the person lacks capacity to request a direct payment, the social care practitioner might ask them about the following relevant information –

- what is a direct payment?
- how a direct payment is used to pay for care and support services in accordance with the persons' care and support plan;
- a direct payment is an allocated sum of money;
- the person will be responsible for managing the direct payment etc (non-exhaustive).

The Care Act 2014 provides that a person will be an *authorised person* if –

- they are authorised under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 to make decisions about the adult's needs for care and support, e.g. if they have a lasting power of attorney for health and welfare; *or*
- if they are not authorised under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, a person who is authorised under that Act agrees with the Council that the person is suitable; *or*
- if they are not authorised under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and there is no person who is authorised under that Act, the Council considers the person to be suitable.

The authorised person must satisfy all of the following conditions under the Care Act 2014:

- if they are not authorised under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (i.e. they do not hold a lasting power of attorney) but there is at least one person who is so authorised, the person who is authorised supports the person's request;
- the Council is not prohibited by regulations under section 33 of the Care Act 2014 from meeting the adult's needs by making direct payments;
- the social care practitioner is satisfied that the authorised person will act in the adult's best interests in arranging for the provision of care and support for which the direct payments would be used;
- the social care practitioner is satisfied that the authorised person is capable of managing direct payments by themselves, or with whatever help the council thinks the authorised person will be able to access; and
- the social care practitioner is satisfied that making direct payment to the authorised person is an appropriate way to meet the adult's needs in question.

If the Council decides not to provide a direct payment on the basis that one or more of the conditions is not met, this decision can be challenged through the Council's **Reviews, appeals and complaints** process (*click to follow link*).

## 2.5 Conditions to be attached to a Direct Payment

It is a condition of the Council's direct payment policy and scheme that any person (or their nominated person or authorised person) requesting or receiving a direct payment (apart from carers' direct payment which are one-off payments) must comply with the following conditions –

- must complete and sign the direct payment agreement (see [\[add link\]](#)), which sets out the conditions under which direct payments are able to be made by the Council, including important information regarding the



responsibilities of the council, of the person and/or their nominated/authorised person;

- an authorised or nominated person must sign the direct payment agreement to manage the payments on behalf of the person. In doing so, they are agreeing to act as a suitable person on behalf of the individual and fulfil their duties and responsibilities. They also take on legal responsibility for managing the direct payment and employing and managing any paid staff in accordance with the direct payment scheme;
- must use the direct payment to purchase care and support as detailed in the person's care and support plan. Any arrangements must adhere to the conditions in this policy and the direct payment agreement to ensure they are legal, safe, and that public money is properly accounted for;
- Any authorised/nominated person must be involved in the care and support planning process by the social care practitioner, and be party to all the information and advice that the direct payment recipient would receive;
- Where people who are acting in the capacity of nominated or authorised person for the purpose of the direct payment, the Council would not normally pay them for providing any services using direct payment funds. Such an arrangement would not be appropriate where there is a risk that the direct payment may be abused, or there are other sensitivities such as potential safeguarding issues.
- if employing any staff (including relatives), they must adhere to employment law and obligations and to use employee contracts that meet council standards **[add links to Mark Bates guidance]**. This will include the responsibilities and obligations to pay tax, national insurance, minimum wage requirements, sick pay and annual leave; to register as an employer with HMRC and ensure all checks are made of their potential

employee including checks for DBS and their right to work in the UK; and to follow all relevant legislation including national Health and Safety guidance [\[add link\]](#);

- must maintain a reserve for payments not yet made;
- the Council expect cash withdrawals from the direct payment fund to be strictly limited as they are difficult to account for – any cash withdrawals that are made require a higher level of audit and documentation;
- the Council may prohibit a named individual from providing care or support to a direct payment recipient where they do not believe it is an appropriate way of meeting the person's needs, considering all the circumstances and the individual's views;
- must provide such documentation as the Council may reasonably specify in order to allow effective monitoring of the use of the direct payment in delivering the care and support plan agreed for the person;
- must not use the direct payment to pay for the services of a *self-employed* personal assistant or administrator, unless the Council agrees that there are no alternative options – this decision must be made by a Service Manager. There are certain conditions that must be met for someone to be classed as working in a self-employed capacity and a personal assistant or administrator may not meet these conditions. Only HM Revenue and Customs can decide a worker's status, and if HMRC decide (after the self-employed person has started working for the cared-for person)) that they are not self-employed, the cared-for person will be liable for the full tax and national insurance bill, and may also be fined. Direct Payment monies cannot be used to pay either the costs or the fines. If the client still chooses to arrange support from a self-employed personal assistant or administrator, we recommend they ensure they are registered as self-employed and have a Unique Tax reference number (UTR). The

self-employed person must also provide an invoice for their services rather than complete a timesheet.

### **3. Restrictions on Paying Close Family Members**

The Care Act 2014 and the Regulations state that a direct payment must not be used to pay a specified person (a “**Close Family Member**”) *unless* the Council considers it *necessary to do so* to:

- a) meet the care needs of the person; or
- b) to provide administrative and management support or services for the purposes of enabling a person to whom the direct payments are made to:
  - i. comply with the legal obligations arising from the making of and use of the direct payment; or
  - ii. monitor the receipt and expenditure of the direct payment.

The Care and Support Statutory Guidance provides the following example as to when a direct payment paid to a family member may be necessary;

*James has severe learning difficulties as well as various physical disabilities. He has serious trust issues and a unique way of communicating that only his family, through years of care as a child, can understand. The local authority agrees that using a direct payment to pay for care from his parents is necessary as it is the best way to meet James’s needs and outcomes.*

#### **3.1 Who is a Close Family Member?**

The Regulations define a Close Family Member as:–

- a) the cared-for person’s spouse (husband or wife) or civil partner;

- b) a person who lives with the adult as if their spouse or civil partner (whether unmarried or part of a same sex couple);
- c) a person living in the same household as the adult who is the adult's;
  - i. parent or parent in-law;
  - ii. son or daughter;
  - iii. son-in-law or daughter-in-law;
  - iv. stepson or stepdaughter;
  - v. brother or sister;
  - vi. aunt or uncle;
  - vii. grandparent
- d) the spouse or civil partner of any person set out at paragraph (c) *living in the same household as the adult*;
- e) a person who lives with any person set out at paragraph (c) as if that person's spouse or civil partner (whether unmarried or part of a same sex couple).

### **3.2 How the Council decides if it is necessary to pay a Close Family Member for care**

This section sets out the considerations that the Council will make when deciding whether it is **necessary** to pay a Close Family Member for providing care from a Direct Payment.

It is only in exceptional circumstances that a Direct Payment can be made to close family members. In these cases, there must be clear and specific reasons why only that family member can offer support. Unless the Council is satisfied that it is necessary to meet a person's needs, it may not allow funds to be spent in this way.

The social care practitioner will assess the following as a part of the decision-making:

- what alternatives have been explored;
- why employment of the close relative is deemed to be necessary;
- whether the use of a Close Family Member promotes the *wellbeing* of the person, or whether it might lead to a *conflict of interest*? Specifically;
  - can a balance be achieved between the person's wellbeing and that of any Close Family Member involved in caring for the person?
  - will using a Close Family Member allow the person to preserve their independence in making decisions, and ensure that they have control, not the Close Family Member?
  - how can any conflict of interest between the Close Family Member and the person (in terms of what care is delivered and what the person's priorities are) be avoided?
  - does the person understand that if they receive a direct payment, their Close Family Member would be their employee and the bottom line is that they may have to take appropriate disciplinary action, and ultimately could have to terminate the contract of employment?
  - how will the person be enabled to agree to the arrangement without undue pressure?
- If there is an *appropriate person* to support the person during assessment, care planning, and care delivery, or whether an *independent advocate* is required. Specifically;
  - If the social care practitioner determines that a person has difficulties in using or weighing up information as part of the process of being involved in their care and support, then they should be supported to do so by an appropriate person or independent advocate

- It should be noted that the appropriate person "cannot be someone who is already providing the person with care or treatment in a professional capacity or on a paid basis (regardless of who employs or pays for them)".
- if the person *lacks capacity*;
  - how have they expressed their views on whether they want their Close Family Member to provide services under the direct payment?
  - is it in the person's best interests for the Close Family Member –to be employed to provide services under the direct payment? (As a best interest decision, this will require a Service Manager's sign off as set out below);
- in terms of *other potential conflicts*;
  - what arrangements will be required to ensure segregation of duties in terms of the delivery of care?
  - are any of the Close Family Members an "authorised person", a guardian or have financial or welfare power of attorney for person? If so, they cannot be paid via the direct payment for providing care;
  - how will the risk be managed of those delivering care not meeting employment laws and practice, e.g. by working excessive hours or supporting more than one person?
  - any wider consideration specific to the individual including any relevant considerations under human rights legislation.

*In summary, therefore* if a close family member is being considered as a care provider for their relative **or** the cared-for person *lacks capacity*, then the social worker must summarise their response to these issues and submit it as a report to the Service Manager.

The Service Manager must then decide if they agree it is **necessary** and in the best interests of the cared-for person to employ a Close Family Member to meet their needs and that and that use of another service or another personal

assistant is not appropriate. Every case will be considered on its own merits, with the well-being of the cared-for person as the priority. Examples could include:

- the person's care needs are intermittent and unpredictable to an extent that recruiting someone else to meet their needs is not possible;
- significant effort has been made to find alternative means which has been unsuccessful, and this is the only way for the person to receive their support;
- it is the only way of meeting the person's needs due to a sudden breakdown of other service arrangements.

The Council will take individual circumstances into account on a case-by-case basis and will consider the views of the person and/or their representatives as part of those considerations. Ultimately, it is the Council's decision as to whether paying a Close Family Member to provide services is necessary. Any decision made by the Council can be challenged through the **Reviews, appeals and complaints** process (*click to follow link*).

If the arrangement is agreed, the social care practitioner must;

- decide and agree the circumstances and payment amount with the cared-for person, the Close Family Member and any other person (for example, an advocate), with the Council taking steps to ensure all parties agree;
- ensure the decision is recorded in the person's care and support plan;
- ensure there is an agreement in place between all parties about what steps to take in case of a dispute regarding the paid delivery of care by a Close Family Member from Direct Payment funds.

### **3.3 How the Council decides if it is necessary to pay a Close Family Member for management and/or administration**

The Care Act allows for Close Family Members living in the same household as a person receiving a Direct Payment to be paid from the DP to provide management and/or administrative support *in cases where the local authority determines this to be necessary*.

For the Council to decide whether it is necessary to pay a Close Family Member for such support, there are fewer considerations. The social care practitioner will need to ensure that:

- They are satisfied that it is necessary to make the payment to the family member to provide this service and that the direct payment will only be used for administration and management of the payment;
- arrangements are in place to ensure segregation of duties in terms of the management of the direct payment;
- the cared-for person understands that if the DP is managed by their Close Family Member, that relative would have control over the funding provided by the direct payment and the care arrangements then delivered;
- they have assessed that using a Close Family Member will allow the person to preserve their independence in making decisions, and will ensure that they have control, not the Close Family Member.

The circumstances and payment amount should be decided and agreed with the person requiring care and support, the Close Family Member, the Council and any other person (for example, an advocate), with the Council taking steps to ensure all parties agree. The Council will also ensure there is an agreement in place between all parties about what steps to take in case of a dispute regarding the management of the payment by a Close Family Member.

These decisions must be recorded in the person's care and support plan.



The Council will take individual circumstances into account on a case-by-case basis and will consider the views of the person and/or their representatives as part of those considerations. Ultimately, it is the Council's decision as to whether paying a Close Family Member to provide services is necessary. Any decision made by the Council can be challenged through the **Reviews, appeals and complaints** process (*click to follow link*).

### **3.4 Using family for care and support who do not live in the same household**

If a family member does not meet the definition of a close family member as set out in section 3.1 above, the Care Act and Direct Payment regulations place no restrictions on their employment, and the decision as to appropriateness is made by the social worker.

Whilst Care Act Guidance makes clear that there should be “no unreasonable restriction placed on the use of the payment”, the Council – based on experience in the past - considers it reasonable to include some checks in such circumstances. These are in place to ensure that any arrangement involving family members is in the best interests of the cared-for person, and that there is no conflict of interest.

Social care practitioners should promote the good practice option for any family member who wishes to provide care – whether they are living in the same household or not - that they take up a role as a formal regulated care worker for an agency.

This has the added advantage for both the cared-for person and the relative providing it that the service would be delivered to CQC standards, with all the

associated governance, quality standards, DBS checks and ongoing training required of a registered provider.

The Council requires the social care practitioner to determine;

- If the person receiving the Direct Payment does not have capacity, how have they expressed their views on whether they want their relative to provide services under the direct payment?
- Does the DP recipient understand that if they receive a DP, their relative would then be their employee and the bottom line is that they may have to discipline them, and ultimately could have to terminate the contract of employment?

The social care practitioner will need to determine on the basis of this whether it is in the cared-for person's best interests for the relative to be employed for care and support, and will need their Area Manager's sign-off to their decision.

The decisions and outcomes must be recorded in the care and support plan and include the amount of the payments, their frequency and the activities that are covered.

#### **4. Other requirements**

##### **4.1 DBS Checks**

In accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, a Disclosure and Barring (DBS) check is a mandatory requirement where people are providing some form of support (e.g. a personal assistant) for a person receiving a Direct Payment, *except where* they are providing those services in the course of a:

- family relationship; *or*
- a personal relationship

Where the check is mandated, there is no discretion; it **must** be obtained.

The *family relationship* described above is defined as a relationship between two persons who (a) live in the same household, and (b) treat each other as though they were members of the same family)

The *personal relationship* described above is defined as any person who is providing services under the direct payment in the course of a personal relationship (i.e. a relationship between or among friends) and for no commercial consideration.

Where direct payments are paid to and managed by an authorised person, it is the responsibility of the authorised person to obtain the above DBS checks providing that the authorised person is –

- a body corporate;
- an unincorporated body of persons;
- an individual who is not a Close Family Member; or
- an individual who is not a friend of the adult who is involved in the provision of care.

As it is not possible for an individual to obtain a DBS check against another individual, the individual or the authorised person can approach the council's managed service provider Ideal for All who can assist with obtaining these checks.

## **4.2 Safeguarding**

People receiving a direct payment are entitled to make their own decisions and to take risks in the same way that any other person in the community are entitled

to. Where appropriate, safeguards will be put in place to prevent any potential abuse and to support the person in making decisions and managing any associated risk as a result of that decision.

The Council will support adults receiving a direct payment so that together we can minimise the risk of abuse from anyone they employ, because these people are not employees of the Council and are not monitored by them

Adults directly employing a personal assistant or a person to manage or administer a direct payment can be placed at greater risk of abuse, depending on how rigorous the pre-employment checks carried out during recruitment were.

Safeguarding is everybody's business, and so it is essential that staff working for the Council, partnership organisations, agencies, third-party providers and members of the public remain alert and vigilant to the potential for abuse and can easily find the way that they can report safeguarding concerns [[link to Safeguarding reporting](#)].

If the Council considers that any member of staff and / or provider of care and support is placing a cared-for person at risk, the direct payment may be suspended and alternative provision provided, whilst a safeguarding investigation is undertaken.

### **4.3 Employment Duties**

It is the responsibility of social care practitioners to ensure that people receiving a direct payment (or their authorised/nominated person) understand, before they agree to take on the payment, that they will have significant responsibilities

for the day-to-day management of their direct payment – particularly if they decide to employ suitably qualified workers to provide personal assistance in accordance with their care and support plan.

All potential direct payment recipients who are considering becoming an employer will be signposted to appropriate independent support services, funded by the Council, who can provide advice and support on a wide range of recruitment, employment and appropriate liability and other insurances.

Becoming an employer carries certain responsibilities and obligations in particular in relation to paying tax, national insurance, minimum wage requirements, sick pay and annual leave. In order to ensure the management of risk associated with these obligations, the Council offers free of charge;

- a payroll service to people employing Personal Assistants via a direct payment;
- an employment support service which provides information and advice about legal obligations and responsibilities as an employer;
- employers' liability insurance to mitigate the risk to the direct payment recipient and the council if they fail to effectively insure risk;
- a recruitment support service for people who need but have not already identified a personal assistant, providing advice, information and support to enable them to recruit one or more personal assistants.

The person receiving the direct payment (or their authorised/nominated person) will be expected by the Council to ensure that they have made provisions for cover in emergency situations or when their personal assistant is not able to support them, such as annual leave or sickness. In the event of an emergency the Council will endeavour to provide some form of support until the situation is resolved.

#### **4.4 Review and audit of Direct Payments**

Except for Carer's Direct Payments (which are one-off sums), the Council is required to conduct a care review to ascertain whether a direct payment is an appropriate way to meet the person's needs. This will be conducted by a social care practitioner within the first six months of the direct payment being made and on an annual basis thereafter or sooner, if required (for example, where the person's needs have changed). The purpose – as with any care review – is to ensure that the person's care and support needs are being met.

In addition to the social care reviews, Direct Payment staff will conduct what Sandwell call "financial audits", which focus on the Direct Payment account and use of funds. The initial audit will be at around 6 months after the first payment, then again after about one year. Further financial audits will normally take place annually, but this frequency will vary according to the outcomes of previous care reviews by the social care practitioner – DPs which are considered higher risk may be audited more frequently.

The regulations (and the Council's practice guidance) sets out in more details the requirements of such care reviews.

#### **4.5 Recovering Direct Payments**

Direct payments are paid four weeks in advance and a person in receipt of a direct payment should not normally have more than a maximum of six weeks' funding in reserve, if they are paying for the level of care set out in their care and support plan.

In the event that the Council makes an overpayment (e.g. paying more than four weeks' funding when only four weeks is due), the Council expects the person in

receipt of the direct payment recipient to alert the Council immediately. The Council may seek to recover the overpayment via a lump sum or by making a reduction to future funding.

Where money in a direct payment account is unaccounted for by any item in a care and support plan or there is a surplus in excess of six weeks' funding in reserve, the Council may seek to recover these sums.

In most cases, unaccounted for and/or surplus funds will be identified by the direct payment practitioner during the financial audit, and they will advise the social care practitioner worker of the proposed recovery so that they may conduct a review.

Following this review by the social care practitioner and any recovery of unaccounted/unspent funds, the direct payment may be changed to ensure that it still meets the needs of the person whilst preventing surpluses accumulating – for example, a direct payment may be reduced where the recipient's needs have changed and they require less care and support to meet their needs.

Where a person in receipt of a direct payment dies, the Council will consider how to recover any unspent monies. Before seeking recovery of the unspent monies, the Council will consider if the person has incurred any liabilities that should legitimately be paid for using the direct payment (for example, services for which payment had not been made at the time of death, or employment obligations in respect of personal assistance).

#### **4.6 Suspension and Termination of Direct Payments**

Generally, direct payments should only be terminated as a last resort, or where there is clear and serious contradiction of the conditions set out in the Care Act

2014 (see pages 3 and 4) and / or the Regulations or the Council's direct payment agreement.

If the Council decides to suspend or terminate a direct payment, it will ensure there is no gap in the provision of care and support. The social worker will conduct a review of the care and support plan to ensure it is appropriate to meet the person's needs.

There are a number of circumstances which may result in a direct payment being terminated for example, where the person receiving the direct payment no longer wishes to receive the payment.

In accordance with the Care Act 2014 and the Regulations, the Council **must** terminate a direct payment where any of the conditions set out on page 3 of this Policy (direct payments for people with capacity) or page 4 of this Policy (direct payments for adults lacking capacity to consent) are no longer met.

The Council **may** (i.e. it has a discretion to) terminate a direct payment where -

- the direct payment is not being used to meet the adult's needs as set out in their care and support plan (including wrongful use of direct payment funds as set out below);
- the direct payment is used to pay a Close Family Member (as defined on page 6) and the Council has not agreed that it is necessary to make any such payment;
- an authorised person has failed to notify the Council that the adult has capacity to request the making of direct payments;
- the individual or the authorised person has failed to obtain a DBS check(s) in accordance with this policy;



- that a member of staff and/or provider of care and support is placing the person at risk;
- that the person (or their authorised or nominated person) no longer has the capability to manage the direct payment;
- that the care being delivered via a direct payment is no longer appropriate;
- that there is evidence of a material or significant breach of the direct payment agreement or this policy – for example, the person has failed to pay their non-residential contributions

Reasonable steps will always be taken to address any situations where it may necessary to terminate a direct payment. Effective, proportionate monitoring through both the care review and financial audit processes will help identify any potential issues before a termination is deemed necessary.

The Council reserves the right to suspend a direct payment in situations where the Council may terminate a direct payment (as set out above). During any suspension, alternative provision must be provided whilst the matter is investigated and/or where a safeguarding investigation is being undertaken. Following a period of suspension, the Council reserves the right to terminate the direct payment if it considers it appropriate to do so taking into account the factors set out above.

The Council may also suspend a direct payment where for example, the person does not require assistance for a short period because their condition improves, and they do not require the care and support that the direct payments have intended to secure.

#### **4.6 Wrongful use of a Direct Payment**

In the event that fraud, abuse, or misuse of a direct payment is reasonably suspected, the Council will refer the matter to the Council's internal audit team

for investigation, whilst offering support to the individual to reduce the risk of further loss occurring.

Any potential criminal activity will be referred to the police for further investigation, and the Council reserves the right to prosecute where fraud is suspected to have taken place. The Council will not be responsible for any losses incurred by the individual and will not reimburse the individual unless or until they have been cleared of any involvement in the loss.

In cases of misuse or fraud relating to the use of a direct payment, the Council will take action to recover all or part of the monies where appropriate from the person or from their nominated or authorised person where they have been responsible for managing the direct payment on the individual's behalf. In such cases, the Council reserves the right to refuse a direct payment in the future for that person.

## **5. Reviews, appeals and complaints**

Anyone who uses our services (or their representative) has the right to challenge the Council's decision in relation to –

- whether we agree to give a person a Direct Payment or not;
- how we decided to apply any discretion the Council has
- If our decisions were in line with this policy.

Concerns are dealt via the Council's Review and Appeals procedures **[add link to Contributions Policy]**; the initial stage is a review by the Council. If the person concerned remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the review, they can attend an appeals panel to raise their concerns.

Where a person is still not satisfied with the outcome of the appeals panel hearing they will be advised of the right to contact their Councillor, MP or the Local Government Ombudsman. At this stage, the Council's processes will have been exhausted and there is no further action which the Council can take.

If the person who uses our services (or their representative) is unhappy about the way we set up or managed their direct payment, the Council's complaints procedure applies. This includes issues such as how staff behaved or their attitude, disagreement with the level or quality of service, or the time taken to undertake an assessment. Full details of these procedures can be found in our guidance and on our website [\[add link\]](#).

## **6. Feedback**

We welcome feedback from people who use services on the Direct Payments Policy and will use it to conduct future reviews. Contact details can be found in our guidance documents and on our website at [\[add link\]](#).

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## Report to Cabinet

7 December 2022

<b>Subject:</b>	The review of council tenant rents and housing related property charges
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cabinet Member for Housing Councilor Charn Singh Padda
<b>Director:</b>	Gillian Douglas Director for Housing
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes To be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards of the Borough.
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Nigel Collumbell Service Manager Housing Management

### 1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval is given to authorise the Director of Housing to adjust council rents and housing related charges with effect from 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2023 as follows:
- (a) Increase rental charges by 5%, which is 2% below the government's social rental cap of 7%.
  - (b) Increase housing service charges by the consumer price index (CPI) + 1%, equivalent to a 11.1% increase.
  - (c) That subject to consultation with the residents of the site, to increase rent at the traveller's pitch in Hills View, Tipton by 5%
  - (d) That rental charges for garage sites be increased by 5% in line with other council fees and charges.
  - (e) That properties managed by Riverside under the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) agreement receive a 5% rental increase and a 11.1% increase in




service charges, which need to match the councils rent and service charge increases.

- (f) That properties that sit outside the Housing Revenue Account (including service tenants for Parks, Sandwell Valley and Caretaking) receive a 11.1% increase in rental charges and service charges, which is equivalent to CPI plus 1%.
  - (g) That the leaseholder annual fee be increase by 11.1%, CPI + 1% in 2023/24 from £104.10 to £115.66.
- 1.2 That the Director of Housing be authorised to establish a hardship fund for HRA tenants (to support them in their tenancy) and to allocate £100k of HRA reserves, to be reviewed annually.


## 2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Each year council tenants, leaseholders and other residents are notified of the rent and other related housing charges to be set from the following April. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to review these charges for the new financial year.
- 2.2 During these exceptional times, the council has to achieve the right balance between supporting tenants in hardship and protecting the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to ensure we can continue to provide affordable social housing for our residents.
- 2.3 This matter was reported to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board in September. Members of that Board were understanding and supportive of increases to rent and service charges, whilst acknowledging the current difficulties posed by the national financial situation.

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

	<p>Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods</p> <p>Rental income is a key component of the financial wellbeing of the Housing Revenue Account. Funds support the council's ambition to build more new and affordable council homes.</p>
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	Rental income contributes to the maintenance and repairs of existing housing stock.
	<p>A strong and inclusive economy</p> <p>Funds from rental and housing related charges will maintain / increase the capacity to build more affordable housing.</p> <p>Implementing a rental increase below the rate of inflation has a significant impact on our ability to deliver on new build schemes and maintain the quality of our existing housing stock.</p> <p>We will have fewer financial resources to deliver proposals within the 30year business plan. Every 1% 'lost' from rental income equates to a reduction in next year's rental income, estimated at £1.182m or £35.46m over the 30 years.</p>

## 4 Context and Key Issues

### Background

- 4.1 In line with the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016, Sandwell Council reduced housing rents by 1% per year for four years, between 2016/2017 and 2019/2020.
- 4.2 From 2020 Sandwell Council has had control over its own rent setting in line with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Rents Standard, and Policy Statement on Rents for Social Housing.
- 4.3 In 2019, the government set a rent policy for social housing that would permit rents to increase by up to CPI plus 1 percentage point ('CPI+1%') per annum, and made clear its intention to leave this policy in place until 2025.



- 4.4 However, we are living through exceptional times. When the current rent policy was set in 2019, inflation was forecast to be around 2% in 2022 and 2023. CPI is now 10.1% (as at September 2022), this would permit social landlords to increase rents by 11.1% (CPI+1%).
- 4.5 There is a recognition that the council need to achieve the right balance between protecting our tenants, protecting tax payers (by limiting the welfare costs associated with housing rents) and ensuring the council can deliver on its commitments to build new social homes, maintain our existing housing stock to a good standard and cover operational costs.
- 4.6 Following government consultation where views were sought on a 3%, 5% or 7% rental cap, a rental ceiling of 7% was announced by government for social rents from April 2023.
- 4.7 Following consultation, the government has temporarily amended the CPI+1% policy for 2023/24 in order to provide a backstop of protection for social housing tenants from significant nominal-terms rent increases.
- 4.8 The governments introduction of a 7% rental ceiling acts as an upper limit on the maximum permitted annual rent increase a Registered Provider is allowed to implement. The council are permitted to increase rents by 7% or CPI+1%, whichever is the lower; however we are seeking approval to increase rents by the lower rate of 5%.

## Rents

- 4.9 The Council applies two types of rents on its housing stock these being Social Housing Rents (Formula) and Affordable Rent.
- 4.9.1 Formula rents take account of various attributes such as condition of property, local earnings, number of bedrooms and postcode based; this ensures similar rents are charged for similar properties. The rent for new tenants in existing stock are set on a Sandwell Social rent formula basis and it is proposed that this policy continues.





4.9.2 Affordable Rents are set at 80% of the market rent, inclusive of service charges. Affordable rent is charged on new builds under the affordable homes programme and any additional stock such as appropriated stock from the general fund and buy backs etc. The proposal is to set affordable rents at 5% in line with other rental increases.

4.10 Rents are charged for the following council properties and buildings:

- Council tenant properties
- Properties managed by Riverside under the PFI
- Travellers Pitch – Travellers at Hillside View, Tipton
- There are a small number of properties that sit outside of the HRA and their income contributes to the General Fund

4.11 Appendix 1 sets out the proposed typical rent levels at 52 weeks for the main property types and sizes

4.12 It is estimated that 70.2% of our customers are full or partial benefits. This represents a mix of customers on Housing Benefits and Universal Credit.

Table 4.12.1 shows that 29.8% of our customers pay their rent in full.

Table 4.12.1 Customers in Receipt of Housing related benefits for Rents and Service Charges

Overall Summary	No. Customers	% Customers
Total properties	26,827	
Customers on benefits (UC/HB)	18,829	70.2%
Customers on full benefits (UC/HB)	12,792	47.7%
Customers on partial benefits	6,037	22.5%
Customers that pay full rent	7,998	29.8%

4.13 Customers who pay all of their rent and those on partial housing benefits will be impacted by a rental increase, however 47.7% of our customers will be unaffected.



4.14 To demonstrate the impact a 5% rental increase would have, the extract below shows the financial impact for customers living in a 3-bedroom property in receipt of housing benefits for 20%,50% or 70% of their rent. For example, a customer living in a 3-bed house in receipt of 70% benefits would see a rental increase of £1.39 per week. Please see appendix 2 for full details of all property types.

Table 4.14.1

Example 1 - Customers on 20% Housing Benefits - Impact of a 5% increase in rent (pays 80% of rent)

Bedrooms	Bungalow	Flat High Rise	Flat Low Rise/Medium Rise	House	Average
3	£3.91	£3.20	£3.44	£3.70	£3.68

Example 2 - Customers on 50% Housing Benefits - Impact of a 5% increase in rent (pay 50% rent)

Bedrooms	Bungalow	Flat High Rise	Flat Low Rise/Medium Rise	House	Average
3	£2.44	£2.00	£2.15	£2.31	£2.30

Example 3 - Customers on 70% Housing Benefits - Impact of a 5% increase in rent (pays 30% of rent)

Bedrooms	Bungalow	Flat High Rise	Flat Low Rise/Medium Rise	House	Average
3	£1.47	£1.20	£1.29	£1.39	£1.38

Example 4 - Customers not in receipt of any benefits - Impact of a 5% increase in rents (customers paying full rent)

Bedrooms	Bungalow	Flat High Rise	Flat Low Rise/Medium Rise	House	Average
3	£4.89	£4.01	£4.30	£4.62	£4.60



- 4.15 The Housing Money Advice Service have implemented positive initiatives to support tenants that contribute towards their rental payment. The Welfare Rights Team assist the residents of Sandwell to claim the benefits that they are entitled to through benefit maximisation, representing clients where claims have failed.
- 4.16 Additional funds have been sought through charities such as Warmer Homes and South Staffordshire Water, and The Housing Support Fund has been used to support households facing hardship.
- 4.17 A pre-warrant panel with representation from Children's Services supports families in hardship to work collaboratively to deliver the best outcome for families. Appendix 5 details all the mitigations in place to reduce risks and support households facing hardship.
- 4.18 The Council needs to get the right balance between protecting its tenants from rental increases and minimising lost income in order to achieve proposals within the 30-year business plan.
- 4.19 The governments rental cap has put pressure on the HRA and ambitious proposals set out in the councils 30-year business plan to build more affordable social housing. Every 1% 'lost' from rental income equates to a reduction in next year's rental income estimated at £1.182m or £35.46m over 30 years.
- 4.20 The rental income is vital to the financial well-being of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). Rental income offsets operational costs and financial charges, and the surplus is used to invest in capital improvements; in particular to fund the council's affordable homes new build scheme.
- 4.21 The additional income generated from a 5% increase of £5.91 million will contribute to the upkeep of our existing stock as well as enabling us to build more high-quality housing to meet the needs of our residents. A rental increase lower than the governments rental cap would have a detrimental impact on the council's ability to continue to improve and increase our social housing stock.



- 4.22 As at 31 March 2022 there are 982 properties in Wednesbury currently managed by Riverside under the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) agreement. It is proposed that PFI property rents are increased by 5% and service charges are increased by 11.1%. This is in line with properties managed by the council.
- 4.23 There are a small number of properties that sit outside the Housing Revenue Account and their rental income contributes to the council's general fund finances. This includes service tenants for Parks, Sandwell Valley and Caretaking. It is proposed that rent and service charges on these properties are increased by 11.1% (CPI +1%) from April 2023. These properties are heavily discounted.

### Service Charges

- 4.24 A decision was made to freeze service charges for council tenants during 21/22. This was following the COVID pandemic as there was an interruption to some services provided.
- 4.25 Service charges were increase by CPI+1% in 2022/23 which was a 4.1% increase
- 4.26 Analysis undertaken by Savills has highlighted a low level of service charges in Sandwell (based on 2020/21 outturn) when benchmarking against other authorities.
- 4.27 Sandwell charge an average £100 in service charges per property per annum (average over total stock). Other local authorities across the West Midlands charge an average of £205 per property (based on data from 14 local authorities). A peer group of 17 local authorities charge an average of £215 per property. The service charge freeze has had a detrimental impact on Sandwell's lower comparable service charges.
- 4.28 Service charges are outside of the government's legislative changes. The principle continues to be to recover the cost of service provision. Sandwell needs to generate additional income to support the ambitious capital build programme.
- 4.29 Service charges are charged to tenants living in flatted accommodation, and other properties having communal areas which require services such as:



- Cleaning, for internal and external cleaning of high and low-rise flatted accommodation
- Security, for CCTV, Concierge and Door Entry
- Aerials, for a digital aerial service
- Heating and other charges relating specifically to some blocks, an estimated charge is set to recover costs but there may be retrospective adjustments between years to reflect actual costs

4.30 Although service charges are annually reviewed and included in the rent review report to Cabinet, traditionally they have only been uplifted annually by inflation. The income generated from service charges contributes significantly to the HRA; however, the costs of service provision is subsidised by rental income as some charges do not cover actual costs. As these charges have not been reviewed for a considerable number of years a root and branch review will ensure the Council applies charges efficiently which in turn will mitigate the heavy burden on the HRA.

4.31 A commitment was made in the Rent Review Cabinet Report in December 2021 to review all services charges to ensure charges applied cover the full cost of service delivery. This work has commenced, however due to the complexities involved the review will continue into 2023/24.

4.32 Cleaning charges relate to internal cleaning within blocks and other shared facilities, and the external cleaning of paths and gardens. There are higher costs associated with high rise blocks as they will receive more frequent inspections and cleaning.

4.33 Security charges are applicable in high- and low-rise blocks. Most properties receive a secure door entry service with a fob key and intercom / buzzer link. Full provision includes a door entry service with additional CCTV at the entrance and around the block, with a direct link to the control room at Roway Lane, which is monitored 24/7. The block expansion project will increase this facility and ensure all residents in high-rise blocks benefit from the safety and security provided by a monitored CCTV system. Phase one of this project is already underway.



- 4.34 Aerial service charge relates to a digital aerial service provided to 10,125 tenants. There is a contract to maintain and repair this service. The service charge contributes to a replacement fund for when these are renewed or replaced.
- 4.35 Other service charges for specific schemes include furniture costs, warden services and lifts. It is proposed that these charges increase by CPI + 1% in line with other service charges.
- 4.36 Leaseholders are also charged service charges, in addition to services mentioned above there is a recharge for the management and administration functions.
- 4.37 The proposal is to increase service charges by CPI+1%. Appendix 3 shows how this will impact current charges. Customers who are in receipt of benefits (Housing Benefits or Universal Credit) will largely not be affected by this uplift.

### Garages

- 4.38 Garages are within the council's general fund property portfolio. As of October 2022, 62.5% of garages were rented by private home owners or by tenants as a second garage.
- 4.39 Increased revenue from garage rental would support the general fund. Garages rented by customers that are not tenants or leaseholders will be charged a higher rate as VAT is applied.
- 4.40 A large proportion of garage tenants use this facility as a much cheaper alternative to storage costs. It is recommended that the weekly garage rental is increased by 5%, in line with the council's fees and charges. This will increase garage rentals from £11 to £11.55 per week.

### Leaseholder Management fee

- 4.41 Leaseholders are charged a management fee to cover the resource costs of running the services. This includes employee costs, training, ICT costs, postage, printing. The charge is currently £104.10 per annum



4.42 It is proposed that the leaseholder annual fee be increase by 11.1% (CPI + 1%) in 2023/24 to £115.66. The council's leaseholder charges are lower than neighbouring authorities; as a comparable, Dudley charged £140 during 2022/23 with proposals to increase during 2023/24.

## 5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 It has been recommended from April 2023 to increase rents by 5% for tenants within the Riverside managed PFI estate of Wednesbury. The council does have the discretion to set PFI rent. It would be seen to be very unfair for other council tenants in neighbouring areas to have council rent increased and not have the same with the PFI estate in Wednesbury
- 5.2 The Department of Levelling up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) policy allows social landlords to increase their annual rents by 7% which is in line with the recent government rental cap. It is recommended that rents are increase rents by 5%, 2% lower than the cap to support tenants with the cost of living.
- 5.3 Increasing rents below the rate of inflation creates financial pressures for the council to deliver key services. The provision of good quality Housing and Neighbourhoods are key to improving lives and life chances for our residents. Reducing the level of income to the HRA will seriously impact our 30-year business plans and will mean less funding for new homes provision.
- 5.4 An alternative would be to increase rents by 3%. The budgetary pressures from this would impact our ability to deliver key services and may result in reduced services where costs can't be met through operational budgets. Appendix 4 shows the rental impact on budgets.



## 6 Implications

<p><b>Resources:</b></p>	<p>Rent income is a key component of the HRA finances. As a ringfenced account, all costs must be met from this revenue source. This includes all day to day running costs and any financing costs associated with capital investment.</p> <p>In order to continue the investment in the Housing stock, rent increases are inevitably required. With increases in CPI and Building Cost Indices (BCI) following the COVID-19 pandemic, more pressure is being put on HRA finances to continue to deliver services to tenants and continue improvements to the stock to ensure high quality homes and services are provided to tenants.</p> <p>Proposals within the 30-year business plan to build more affordable social housing stock cannot be met unless we maximise our rental income.</p> <p>Included within this report are increases to garage rents. It will also generate an additional income to the general fund of approx. £51.7K. The income generated will support budget reductions and is not part of an investment strategy.</p>
<p><b>Legal and Governance:</b></p>	<p>The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 sets out the obligations for annual reviews of rent and service charges and to ensure that there is a balanced budget for the ring-fenced HRA.</p> <p>The Council has power under Section 24 of the Housing Act 1985 to make reasonable charges for the tenancy or occupation of its flats and houses. The Council is required to review from time to time that the rents and service charges that it charges for the tenancy or occupation of its dwellings are fair and reasonable. The review of rents is now subject to further restrictions arising from the provisions of the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016.</p>





	<p>The Council may amend the rent for its tenants by giving at least 28 days' notice. The notice period arises from Section 102 (1)(b) of the Housing Act 1985 and in the terms of the Council's standard tenancy agreement.</p>
<b>Risk:</b>	<p>The corporate risk management strategy has been complied with, identify and assess the risks associated with the decisions being sought. This has concluded that there are no significant risks. For all risks identified, there are measures in place to mitigate these to acceptable levels.</p> <p>There is a risk that by increasing housing rents by 5%, customers may fall into financial hardship and the council will see an increase in the level of arrears. The Income and Money Advice Team have mitigations in place to manage risk and support tenants.</p> <p>There is a business risk that housing strategies within the 30-year business plan cannot be met with a rental increase lower than the rate of inflation</p> <p>Every 1% 'lost' from rental income equates to a reduction in next year's rental income, estimated at £1.182m or £35.46m over the 30 years.</p> <p>The recommendations from this report if approved, will assist in the mitigation of a number of risks which are noted in the Housing directorate risk register and currently assessed as red or amber.</p>
<b>Equality:</b>	<p>There are no significant equality issues arising from this report.</p> <p>The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public local authorities to have due regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>eliminate unlawful discrimination,</b> harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>advance equality of opportunity</b> between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and</li> <li>• <b>foster good relations</b> between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.</li> </ul> <p>The Income Management Service takes decisions on customer rent accounts in line with the responsibilities outlined above within the Public Sector Equality Duty. This ensures that all our customers are treated fairly and equally regardless of the personal circumstance.</p> <p>With service charges, there is a difficult and sensitive balance between charges and recovering costs and maintaining and improving services. The increases have been considered fair; it is appreciated that full cost recovery in some instances is not possible since it would cause too onerous, and create significant rises to tenants' current charges.</p>
<p><b>Health and Wellbeing and Social value</b></p>	<p>There are no direct implications from this report but rent and service charge income will continue to be used to protect residents such as through the funding of support for the anti-social behaviour service, cleaning of estates, fire protection measures and CCTV.</p>
<p><b>Climate Change</b></p>	<p>The requirement to retro-fit properties to achieve net zero targets for our housing stock will require significant investment which the HRA currently doesn't have capacity to deliver. Any rent increases below the current levels of inflation will increase further the budget pressures on the HRA in future years putting at risk our ability to deliver on these targets.</p>



## 7. Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Impact of Rental Increase on Average Weekly Rents
- Appendix 2 – Impact of Rental Increase on Customers on Partial Housing Benefits
  
- Appendix 3 – Rental from Service charges and Impact on weekly charges
- Appendix 4 – Rental Increase and the Impact on Budgets
  
- Appendix 5 - Briefing Note - Hardship Interventions to Supporting Tenants in Rent Arrears

## 8. Background Papers

Government rental cap - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/rent-cap-on-social-housing-to-protect-millions-of-tenants-from-rising-cost-of-living>



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Appendix 1 – Impact of rental increased on average weekly rents - varying property types and size

Current Rent - Oct 22

Bedrooms	Bungalow	Flat High Rise	Flat Low Rise/Medium Rise	House	Average
0	£65.09	£56.75	£61.14	£0.00	£59.85
1	£77.77	£66.12	£71.77	£75.85	£72.32
2	£95.14	£72.87	£79.58	£86.10	£80.52
3	£97.72	£80.12	£85.93	£92.46	£92.10
4	£111.32	£0.00	£0.00	£103.33	£103.36
5	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£112.65	£112.65
6	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£113.31	£113.31
8	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£120.31	£120.31
Average	£79.96	£71.59	£74.87	£91.63	£83.67

Average of Rent - 5% Increase

Bedrooms	Bungalow	Flat High Rise	Flat Low Rise/Medium Rise	House	Average
0	£68.34	£59.59	£64.20	£0.00	£62.85
1	£81.66	£69.42	£75.36	£79.64	£75.94
2	£99.90	£76.51	£83.56	£90.41	£84.54
3	£102.60	£84.13	£90.23	£97.09	£96.70
4	£116.88	£0.00	£0.00	£108.50	£108.52
5	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£118.28	£118.28
6	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£118.98	£118.98
8	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£126.32	£126.32
Average	£83.96	£75.16	£78.61	£96.21	£87.85

Average of Rent - 7% Increase

Bedrooms	Bungalow	Flat High Rise	Flat Low Rise/Medium Rise	House	Average
0	£69.64	£60.73	£65.42	£0.00	£64.04
1	£83.21	£70.75	£76.80	£81.16	£77.39
2	£101.80	£77.97	£85.15	£92.13	£86.15

Appendix 1 – Impact of rental increased on average weekly rents - varying property types and size

3	£104.56	£85.73	£91.95	£98.94	£98.55
4	£119.11	£0.00	£0.00	£110.56	£110.59
5	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£120.53	£120.53
6	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£121.24	£121.24
8	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£128.73	£128.73
Average	£85.56	£76.60	£80.11	£98.04	£89.52

Impact of 5% increase on weekly Rent

Bedrooms	Bungalow	Flat High Rise	Flat Low Rise/Medium Rise	House	Average
0	£3.25	£2.84	£3.06	£0.00	£2.99
1	£3.89	£3.31	£3.59	£3.79	£3.62
2	£4.76	£3.64	£3.98	£4.31	£4.03
3	£4.89	£4.01	£4.30	£4.62	£4.60
4	£5.57	£0.00	£0.00	£5.17	£5.17
5	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£5.63	£5.63
6	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£5.67	£5.67
8	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£6.02	£6.02
Average	£4.00	£3.58	£3.74	£4.58	£4.18

Impact of 7% increase on weekly Rent

Bedrooms	Bungalow	Flat High Rise	Flat Low Rise/Medium Rise	House	Average
0	£4.56	£3.97	£4.28	£0.00	£4.19
1	£5.44	£4.63	£5.02	£5.31	£5.06
2	£6.66	£5.10	£5.57	£6.03	£5.64
3	£6.84	£5.61	£6.02	£6.47	£6.45
4	£7.79	£0.00	£0.00	£7.23	£7.23
5	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£7.89	£7.89
6	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£7.93	£7.93
8	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£8.42	£8.42
Average	£5.60	£5.01	£5.24	£6.41	£5.86

Variance in weekly rent from 5% to 7%

Appendix 1 – Impact of rental increased on average weekly rents - varying property types and size

Bedrooms	Bungalow	Flat High Rise	Flat Low Rise/Medium Rise	House	Average
0	£1.30	£1.14	£1.22	£0.00	£1.20
1	£1.56	£1.32	£1.44	£1.52	£1.45
2	£1.90	£1.46	£1.59	£1.72	£1.61
3	£1.95	£1.60	£1.72	£1.85	£1.84
4	£2.23	£0.00	£0.00	£2.07	£2.07
5	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£2.25	£2.25
6	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£2.27	£2.27
8	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£2.41	£2.41
Average	£1.60	£1.43	£1.50	£1.83	£1.67

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## Appendix 2 – Impact of Rental Increases for Customers on Partial Benefits

### Impact of a 5% Increase

Example 1 - Customers on 20% Housing Benefits - Impact of a 5% increase in rent (pays 80% of rent)

Bedrooms	Bungalow	Flat High Rise	Flat Low Rise/Medium Rise	House	Grand Total
0	£2.60	£2.27	£2.45	£0.00	£2.39
1	£3.11	£2.64	£2.87	£3.03	£2.89
2	£3.81	£2.91	£3.18	£3.44	£3.22
3	£3.91	£3.20	£3.44	£3.70	£3.68
4	£4.45	£0.00	£0.00	£4.13	£4.13
5	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£4.51	£4.51
6	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£4.53	£4.53
8	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£4.81	£4.81
Grand Total	£3.20	£2.86	£2.99	£3.67	£3.35

Example 2 - Customers on 50% Housing Benefits - Impact of a 5% increase in rent (pay 50% rent)

Bedrooms	Bungalow	Flat High Rise	Flat Low Rise/Medium Rise	House	Grand Total
0	£1.63	£1.42	£1.53	£0.00	£1.50
1	£1.94	£1.65	£1.79	£1.90	£1.81
2	£2.38	£1.82	£1.99	£2.15	£2.01
3	£2.44	£2.00	£2.15	£2.31	£2.30
4	£2.78	£0.00	£0.00	£2.58	£2.58
5	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£2.82	£2.82
6	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£2.83	£2.83
8	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£3.01	£3.01
Grand Total	£2.00	£1.79	£1.87	£2.29	£2.09

Example 3 - Customers on 70% Housing Benefits - Impact of a 5% increase in rent (pays 30% of rent)

Bedrooms	Bungalow	Flat High Rise	Flat Low Rise/Medium Rise	House	Grand Total
0	£0.98	£0.85	£0.92	£0.00	£0.90
1	£1.17	£0.99	£1.08	£1.14	£1.08
2	£1.43	£1.09	£1.19	£1.29	£1.21
3	£1.47	£1.20	£1.29	£1.39	£1.38
4	£1.67	£0.00	£0.00	£1.55	£1.55
5	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£1.69	£1.69

## Appendix 2 – Impact of Rental Increases for Customers on Partial Benefits

6	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£1.70	£1.70
8	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£1.80	£1.80
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>£1.20</b>	<b>£1.07</b>	<b>£1.12</b>	<b>£1.37</b>	<b>£1.25</b>

### Impact of a 7% Increase

Example 4 - Customers on 20% Housing Benefits - Impact of a 7% increase in rent (pays 80% of rent)

Bedrooms	Bungalow	Flat High Rise	Flat Low Rise/Medium Rise	House	Grand Total
0	£3.64	£3.18	£3.42	£0.00	£3.35
1	£4.36	£3.70	£4.02	£4.25	£4.05
2	£5.33	£4.08	£4.46	£4.82	£4.51
3	£5.47	£4.49	£4.81	£5.18	£5.16
4	£6.23	£0.00	£0.00	£5.79	£5.79
5	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£6.31	£6.31
6	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£6.35	£6.35
8	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£6.74	£6.74
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>£4.48</b>	<b>£4.01</b>	<b>£4.19</b>	<b>£5.13</b>	<b>£4.69</b>

Example 5 - Customers on 50% Housing Benefits - Impact of a 7% increase in rent (pay 50% rent)

Bedrooms	Bungalow	Flat High Rise	Flat Low Rise/Medium Rise	House	Grand Total
0	£2.28	£1.99	£2.14	£0.00	£2.09
1	£2.72	£2.31	£2.51	£2.65	£2.53
2	£3.33	£2.55	£2.79	£3.01	£2.82
3	£3.42	£2.80	£3.01	£3.24	£3.22
4	£3.90	£0.00	£0.00	£3.62	£3.62
5	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£3.94	£3.94
6	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£3.97	£3.97
8	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£4.21	£4.21
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>£2.80</b>	<b>£2.51</b>	<b>£2.62</b>	<b>£3.21</b>	<b>£2.93</b>

Example 6 - Customers on 70% Housing Benefits - Impact of a 7% increase in rent (pays 30% of rent)

## Appendix 2 – Impact of Rental Increases for Customers on Partial Benefits

Bedrooms	Bungalow	Flat High Rise	Flat Low Rise/Medium Rise	House	Grand Total
0	£1.37	£1.19	£1.28	£0.00	£1.26
1	£1.63	£1.39	£1.51	£1.59	£1.52
2	£2.00	£1.53	£1.67	£1.81	£1.69
3	£2.05	£1.68	£1.80	£1.94	£1.93
4	£2.34	£0.00	£0.00	£2.17	£2.17
5	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£2.37	£2.37
6	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£2.38	£2.38
8	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£2.53	£2.53
Grand Total	£1.68	£1.50	£1.57	£1.92	£1.76

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## Appendix 3 Services Charges – Income and charges

### Income from Service Charges – Impact of Increases

		<b>Additional Income</b>	<b>Additional Income</b>	<b>Additional Income</b>
<b><u>Charge Description</u></b>	<b><u>Annual Income 2021/22</u></b>	<b><u>Increase 10 %</u></b>	<b><u>11% Increase</u></b>	<b><u>12% Increase</u></b>
Communal Cleaning	£1,229,695	£122,969.52	£135,266.47	£147,563.42
Security - CCTV/Concierge/Door entry	£1,099,206	£109,920.59	£120,912.64	£131,904.70
Aerial	£222,821	£22,282.08	£24,510.29	£26,738.50
Heating	£101,098	£10,109.82	£11,120.81	£12,131.79
Gap Service	£44,834	£4,483.44	£4,931.78	£5,380.13
Furniture	£38,494	£3,849.41	£4,234.35	£4,619.29
Willow Gardens	£36,420	£3,642.04	£4,006.25	£4,370.45
Communal Facility	£15,682	£1,568.19	£1,725.01	£1,881.83
Water (Walker Grange)	£7,322	£732.16	£805.38	£878.59
Supporting People Warden	£6,842	£684.22	£752.64	£821.06
Lift Maintenance	£6,398	£639.83	£703.81	£767.79
Warden	£3,366	£336.60	£370.26	£403.92
Grounds Maintenance	£1,985	£198.54	£218.39	£238.24
	<b>£2,814,164</b>	<b>£281,416.42</b>	<b>£309,558.06</b>	<b>£337,699.71</b>

## Appendix 3 Services Charges – Income and charges

### Average Weekly Charges – Impact of increases on weekly charges

Average Charges	Details	£	10% Increase	10% Inc. Difference	11% Inc. per week	11% Inc. difference	12% Increase	12% Inc. Difference
Cleaning	High rise flats	9.57	£10.53	£0.96	£10.62	£1.05	£10.72	£1.15
Cleaning	Low rise flat	4.06	£4.47	£0.41	£4.51	£0.45	£4.55	£0.49
Cleaning	Supported Accommodation	15.96	£17.56	£1.60	£17.72	£1.76	£17.88	£1.92
Communal cleaning	Medium rise	0.66	£0.73	£0.07	£0.73	£0.07	£0.74	£0.08
Aerial	Charge	0.44	£0.48	£0.04	£0.49	£0.05	£0.49	£0.05
Furniture		7.65	£8.41	£0.76	£8.49	£0.84	£8.57	£0.92
Lift	Scribbans Place	7.15	£7.87	£0.72	£7.94	£0.79	£8.01	£0.86
Water	Walker Grange	3.66	£4.03	£0.37	£4.06	£0.40	£4.10	£0.44
Security - CCTV		3.84	£4.22	£0.38	£4.26	£0.42	£4.30	£0.46
Security - Concierge & CCTV		8.92	£9.81	£0.89	£9.90	£0.98	£9.99	£1.07
Security - Door entry and CCTV		5.61	£6.17	£0.56	£6.23	£0.62	£6.28	£0.67
Security - security door		1.77	£1.95	£0.18	£1.96	£0.19	£1.98	£0.21
Warden	Walker Grange	0.85	£0.94	£0.09	£0.94	£0.09	£0.95	£0.10

### Appendix 3 Services Charges – Income and charges

<u>Willow gardens</u>								
Furniture		2.83	£3.11	£0.28	£3.14	£0.31	£3.17	£0.34
Guttering		0.14	£0.15	£0.01	£0.16	£0.02	£0.16	£0.02
Management Fee		7.70	£8.47	£0.77	£8.55	£0.85	£8.62	£0.92
Oven / Hob		1.79	£1.97	£0.18	£1.99	£0.20	£2.00	£0.21
Utilities (communal)		8.26	£9.09	£0.83	£9.17	£0.91	£9.25	£0.99
Windows		0.70	£0.77	£0.07	£0.78	£0.08	£0.78	£0.08
Grounds		3.34	£3.67	£0.33	£3.71	£0.37	£3.74	£0.40
Cleaning		8.94	£9.83	£0.89	£9.92	£0.98	£10.01	£1.07
Cleaning materials		0.80	£0.88	£0.08	£0.89	£0.09	£0.90	£0.10
Lift		0.45	£0.50	£0.05	£0.50	£0.05	£0.50	£0.05
<u>Other service charges</u>								
Gap	Gap	29.92	£32.91	£2.99	£33.21	£3.29	£33.51	£3.59
Grounds	Parkside/ scribbans Place	1.08	£1.19	£0.11	£1.20	£0.12	£1.21	£0.13
Grounds	Norma Close	0.56	£0.62	£0.06	£0.62	£0.06	£0.63	£0.07
Heating	Selby House	6.48	£7.13	£0.65	£7.19	£0.71	£7.26	£0.78
Heating	Selby House	6.61	£7.27	£0.66	£7.34	£0.73	£7.40	£0.79
Leaseholder charges	Per annum	104.00	£114.40	£10.40	£115.44	£11.44	£116.48	£12.48

Appendix 3 Services Charges – Income and charges



Appendix 4 – Budgeted Rental Income an Impact of Increasing rents

	Annual Income	Additional Income
Rental Income (2021/22)	£118,208,739	
1% Increase	£119,390,827	£1,182,087
5% Increase	£124,119,176	£5,910,437
7% Increase	£126,483,351	£8,274,612
9% Increase	£128,847,526	£10,638,787

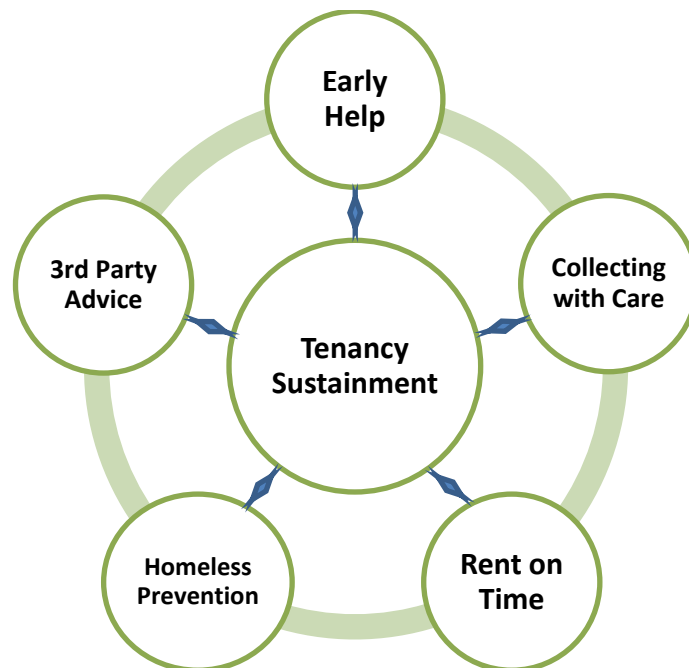
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<b>Subject:</b>	Hardship Interventions to Supporting Tenants in Rent Arrears
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Nigel Collumbell Service Manager Housing Management

## 1 Introduction

Income Management are responsible for the management, recovery and enforcement of housing related debt. The principle of ‘collecting with care’ underpins the recovery processes and enforcement action is taken only when all other avenues have been exhausted.

- 1.1 This briefing note summarises the key areas of support provided by the service to enable a tenant to sustain their tenancy as illustrated in the diagram below.



## 2 Early Help

- 2.1 A key element of sustaining a tenancy from an income perspective is to provide a preventative and early help service. Income Management achieve this through providing proactive advice/support before a tenant falls into arrears and in early notification/intervention when arrears do accrue as outlined below.
- 2.2 A tenancy sustainment risk assessment is completed with all new tenants to enable Income Management to assess what support/advice a new tenant may need to have a successful tenancy. The advice and support will include (not exhaustive):
- Referral to Floating Support
  - Referral to Welfare Rights for income maximisation and budgeting
  - Referral to Citizens Advice for money management and debt advice
  - Assistance to apply for local welfare provision
  - Assistance to claim a discretionary housing payment
  - Help to apply for a grant/financial assistance to purchase white goods, furniture and essential clothing from several different charities and Trusts<sup>1</sup>
  - Referral to and or liaison with children's/adult service
  - Applying for housing costs from a tenant's Universal Credit claim to be paid direct to the council
- 2.3 As soon as a tenant falls into rent arrears they are notified of the outstanding balance via an SMS message. The message includes a link to the council's pay your bills webpage and MyHousing. In a typical week seven hundred SMS messages are sent to tenants who have a low-level arrears balance of below £140.
- 2.4 As part of the arrears recovery process, tenants will receive a letter at key stages outlining the position with their rent account, the action they

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<sup>1</sup> Glasspool – essential living fund, The George and Thomas Henry Trust, Provision House (formerly loaves & fishes)



need to take, and the next steps should the balance remain outstanding. The letter is written in way to encourage a tenant to contact the council and uses the strapline 'we want to help'. The letter provides the contact details for agencies that can help a tenant to manage their tenancy and how a tenant can pay their rent by direct debit.

- 2.5 To ensure that Income Management can reach tenants who do not engage with the service and or respond to contact, the service undertakes regular marketing campaigns which aims to highlight the support and advice available to tenants, the benefits of paying rent via direct debit and how a tenant can use their MyHousing account to manager their rent account.
- 2.6 The campaigns utilise a variety of different communication channels, including posts on social media (face book), e-mail (govdelivery), SMS text messaging, flyers and articles in the Sandwell Herald. The campaigns are created by Income Management and are delivered by the council's Marketing and Communication Team. Recent campaigns have included:
- 'Let Us Help You' – a colourful piece of artwork produced as a flyer/social media post outlining the support the Income Management Team can provide
  - 'It's as easy as 1, 2, 3' – encouraging tenants to pay their rent by direct debit, outlining the benefits and how simple the process is

### **3 Collecting with Care**

- 3.1 When contact is made with a tenant in rent arrears, Income Management will undertake an assessment of the tenant's household circumstances including whether there are any medical or vulnerability issues that impact the tenant's ability to manage their tenancy and or rent payments. The assessment enables the service to provide advice and support based on the household's individual circumstances as well as to make referrals to supporting agencies including those within the voluntary sector.



- 3.2 As part of the above assessment, tenants are encouraged to complete an income and expenditure form. This assists Income Management in making an affordable and sustainable arrangement to pay based on the fair repayment chart and highlights if a tenant would benefit from budgeting, benefit advice and or debt/money management advice.
- 3.3 Tenants who are in receipt of means tested benefits are required to make a payment in line with the minimum deduction from benefit rate. For tenants who are working the fair repayment chart is utilised, this is based on a tenant's disposable income and takes into account that rent arrears may be part of a much wider debt issue as such not all a tenant's disposable income will be taken, only a portion.
- 3.4 Income Management recognise that many tenants will have advice and support needs at differing times throughout their tenancy and that it is important that tenants have easy access to where they can seek support. In addition to the information available to tenants on the council's internet page, the service has also created several bespoke SMS messages that can be sent to a tenant at any time. The messages contain details on where and how to access advice and support. The suite of SMS messages includes:
- Mental health
  - Crisis/suicide support
  - Benefit and Debt advice
  - Universal Credit
  - Energy advice
  - MySandwell and MyHousing portal
- 3.5 It is necessary at times for Income Management to take tenants to court to seek possession of their home due to rent arrears. When this course of action is being considered tenants are advised of their right to obtain independent legal advice and where this can be obtained from. The courts used by Sandwell Council all have duty advisors who can advise the tenant and, in some cases, represent the tenant in court. The court will only ever grant a possession order if they believe it is reasonable and proportionate to do so.



- 3.6 In cases where a tenant contacts Income Management and makes a realistic offer of payment, even if this is the day before the court hearing, the council will obtain a suspended possession order rather than an outright order. This means that the tenant will be able to remain in their home if the terms of the order are maintained. The court will not make an order on payment terms for an amount the tenant cannot afford.
- 3.7 Similar to obtaining a possession order, when it is necessary to apply to the court to evict a tenant, the tenant is advised to seek independent legal advice and that they can make an application to the court to suspend the warrant of eviction. The courts will suspend the warrant where a tenant can demonstrate that they are able to pay their contractual rent and an amount towards the arrears.

## 4 Rent on Time

4.1 The new tenancy conditions include a requirement for tenants to pay their 'rent in advance', this will however be promoted as 'rent on time' and means that tenants will need to build up a credit on their rent account to meet the new condition. Some of the key benefits of rent on time are outlined below:

- Reduces/prevents tenants from falling into arrears
- Acts as a safety blanket for when tenants have a change in circumstances, allowing for more time to resolve issues
- Reduces the negative impact of being in debt, leading to better health and wellbeing for tenants
- Supports tenants who are migrating onto Universal Credit
- Reduces overall debt levels on both current and former accounts
- Reduces bad debt provision
- Promotes a rent first culture
- Maximises income into the housing revenue account (HRA), given that both the Welfare Rights Service and Income Management Service are funded from the HRA any reduction in income poses a risk to their continuation.



4.2 Prior to the new tenancy conditions coming into effect, tenants were encouraged to pay their rent on time and not fall into arrears by ensuring that their payments aligned to their payment frequency. The table below shows the current number of tenants who have built up a credit on their rent account.

Credit Bracket £	Number of tenants in credit	Credit value £
£10.00 - £100	1492	£71,362
£100 - £200	790	£115,904
£200 - £300	413	£102,013
£300 - £400	259	£89,608
£400 - £500	164	£73,731
£500 - £1000	315	£213,258
> £1000	169	£336,996
<b>Total</b>	<b>3602</b>	<b>£1,002,872</b>

4.3 To support rent on time tenants can manage their rent account online via their MyHousing account. The service went live with MyHousing in January 2021. Tenants who sign up for an account have 24/7 access to their rent account. This enables tenants to make payments, set up a direct debit, view and download their rent statement and access advice and support agencies to help them manage and sustain their tenancy.

4.4 To date 4407 tenants have signed up for a MyHousing account. The table below shows the number of new accounts set up since January 2021, broken down across the six towns

Town	Number of New MyHousing Accounts
Oldbury	691
Rowley Regis	849
Smethwick	546
Tipton	777
Wednesbury	736
West Bromwich	808
<b>Total</b>	<b>4407</b>





## 5 Preventing Homelessness

- 5.1 Taking eviction action is a last resort and Income Management work closely with internal teams to prevent tenants from becoming homeless. The service developed the 'Families with rent arrears protocol' which ensures that at every key stage of the arrears process information is shared with Children's Services and operates on three common principles:
- Information sharing
  - Joint decision making
  - Coordinated intervention
- 5.2 The aims of the 'Families with rent arrears protocol' are:
- To safeguard children and families
  - To support employees to take a proactive, preventative approach and identify potential safeguarding issues
  - To ensure the best outcomes for children and families
  - To embed information sharing/partnership working
  - To improve tenancy sustainment and prevent evictions
  - To identify clear expectations/responsibilities of officers within Income Management, Local Housing Teams and Children and Families Service
- 5.3 The service continues to make automated referrals to Housing Solutions and the Welfare Rights Service at key stages within the arrears recovery process as part of the services early help and prevention strategy. The referrals enable both services to engage with the tenant with a view to providing advice and support that would enable the tenant to maintain their rent payments and prevent the tenant from becoming homeless.
- 5.4 Prior to Income Management making an application to court to evict a tenant the case is discussed by a pre-warrant panel. The panel consists of a senior manager, an officer from Income Management, Housing Solutions (homelessness) and the Welfare Rights Service. The purpose of the panel is to review the conduct of the tenant, the support/advice



provided to determine whether it is reasonable and proportionate to apply for an eviction warrant. The panel can make recommendations for additional actions to be undertaken by Income Management or approve the warrant of eviction request.

5.5 The decision to evict a tenant is a last resort and is not taken lightly. The below table shows the number of evictions carried out by Sandwell Council each year since 2020 and how the council compares to other landlords. The evictions for all landlords will be low during 2020 due to the COVID eviction restrictions that were placed on landlords.

Landlord	Stock Size	Evictions in 2020	Evictions in 2021	Evictions in 2022 (at Qtr2)
Sandwell Council	27,000	0	12	3*
Dudley Council	21,500	0	5	3
Birmingham Council	56,828	0	25	43
Stoke Council	18,200	0	25	14
Walsall Housing Group	21,466	1	No data	2
Solihull Housing Group	9,843	1	4	5

\* Includes an eviction due to both abandonment and arrears.

## 6 Third Party Advice

6.1 Income Management work closely with internal and external partners to ensure that tenants have access to free, independent advice on all matters that may impact on their ability to maintain their tenancy. The main agencies that tenants are referred to are:

- Welfare Rights Service
- Sandwell Citizens Advice
- Floating Support Service
- Cranstoun – for support with drug and alcohol addiction
- Community Mental Health Team – for mental health assessment and support
- Sandwell Advice Providers Network – for advice on debt, welfare benefits, housing, immigration, consumer and employment matters
- Brushstrokes Community Project – supporting asylum seekers, refugees and newcomers to settle in the community



- Think Sandwell and Sandwell Consortium – employment support
- Confederation of Bangladeshi Organisations – skills and employment support
- Sandwell Women’s Aid

6.2 The service has made 535 referrals to the Welfare Rights Service between April and 10 October this year. The referrals have realised £869, 594.14 in monetary gains and £228,437.21 in backdated/lump sum payments.

## 7 Next Steps

- 7.1 Income Management are in the initial stages of developing a hardship fund to provide additional financial support to tenants who are experiencing financial hardship. The intention is to have the fund operational by January 2023 with an initial investment of £100k from the HRA.
- 7.2 The fund aims to contribute to the council’s obligations as a responsible social landlord by supporting tenants in sustaining their tenancy. The fund due to being financed by the HRA would be used exclusively for the benefit of council tenants who are in financial difficulty, facing immediate crisis or who would benefit from short-term assistance. It is envisaged that the solution will be provided as part of an overall package of support to enable a tenant to achieve financial independence and therefore continue to live in their home.
- 7.3 The fund will not be a replacement for discretionary housing payments, local welfare provision or the household support fund but another tool available to meet the financial support requirements of a tenant to maintain their tenancy and resolve the immediate financial hardship being faced. It is envisaged that the fund will be utilised primarily by tenants who are working, on a low income but do not have access to the suite of financial support being made available to tenants in receipt of benefits.



- 7.4 The eligibility criteria for the fund which is currently being developed will take into consideration several factors including but not limited to:
- Whether all avenues of support available to a tenant have been exhausted
  - Whether the financial support will alleviate immediately the exceptional pressure being faced by the tenant
  - Whether the tenant is engaging with the council in cases where the tenant has rent arrears or other housing related debts
- 7.5 Income Management are currently developing a pre-tenancy workshop that is due to be rolled out in January 2023 to applicants. The aim of the workshop is to get applicants tenancy ready and resolve any issues that may impact on tenancy sustainment before an applicant becomes a tenant, reducing both rent arrears and homelessness.

**For information.**



## Report to Cabinet

7 December 2022

<b>Subject:</b>	Asset transfer of Greets Green Resource Centre and adjoining land to the Confederation of Bangladeshi Organisations (CBO) Ltd
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth, Cllr Peter Hughes
<b>Director:</b>	Director of Regeneration and Growth Tony McGovern
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Contact Officers:</b>	Stefan Hemming Strategic Lead – Assets and Land (Commercial) <a href="mailto:Stefan_hemming@sandwell.gov.uk">Stefan_hemming@sandwell.gov.uk</a>  Heather Chinner Strategic Policy Officer <a href="mailto:Heather_chinner@sandwell.gov.uk">Heather_chinner@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

### 1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to the asset transfer of the Greets Green Resource Centre, including the surrounding land, to the Confederation of Bangladeshi Organisations (CBO) Ltd on the basis of a full repairing lease for 99 years with a rental of £1 pa for the purpose of running a community centre.
- 1.2 Authorise the Director Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer to enter into or execute under seal if necessary, a formal lease for the Greets Green Resource Centre, West Bromwich and adjacent land relating thereto.



## 2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 CBO have taken on a former housing office on a full repairing lease and transformed it into a multi-use community facility nursery, with an outside play area. More recently they have secured funding to build a nursery on site, meeting a local need and developing an additional income stream. CBO are a trusted partner, working hard to help us to communicate with and support hard to reach communities. They continued to deliver advice throughout the pandemic, hosted pop up vaccine clinics and helped spread positive messages about covid safe behaviour. They provide joined up support including: immigration advice, ESOL, employment support, help to get on-line.
- 2.2 CBO currently lease the premises on a full repairing, rent free basis and the lease expires in 2041. They also hold a coterminous lease of the adjacent land which also expires in 2041. CBO have submitted an application for a single asset transfer of both sites, on the basis of a 99 year full repairing rent free lease.
- 2.3 CBO deliver excellent value for money. For example, in 2021/22 CBO supported 872 residents with generalist advice, securing £1,256,056 confirmed benefit gains and £7,130 one off charitable payments/ household goods. For every £1 of advice funding CBO have delivered £19 into the pockets of residents.





In 2022/23 the council provides the following grants:

- Advice grant: £65,898 per year
- Public Health SHIP: £14,564 per year
- Total £80,462 per year

The grants listed are unrelated to the management of the building. CBO will continue to use the rent saving to deliver services and will also continue to seek external grants to improve the facilities and develop new initiatives to meet local need and diversify their income.



- 2.4 CBO have a long term commitment to Greets Green and the wider area of West Bromwich. Asset transfer is the natural next step for CBO and the council. It will signal our confidence in CBO and our support for their aims and ambitions for the centre, local residents and the wider area.
- 2.5 The application has been considered by the council’s Investing in the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategic Group. The group considered a detailed report about CBO and agreed to support CBO’s application for asset transfer of the premises. A copy of the report is appended for information.
- 3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people CBO run an on site nursery for 2-5 year olds with a focus on ensuring children are “school ready”.</p>
	<p>People live well and age well CBO are funded by public health to deliver the Sandwell Health Improvement Programme. Their advice work (budgeting, benefits, debt) and their employment support helps to tackle poverty and supports improved mental health. They were a very active partner during covid, hosting pop up vaccine clinics and helping us to work with harder to reach communities.</p>
	<p>Strong resilient communities Attracting external funding to support community development activities, e.g. Big Lottery Fund funded programme aimed at improving language skills, community cohesion, health and wellbeing and skills development through volunteering.</p>
	<p>A strong and inclusive economy Attracting other external funding to support community development activities, e.g. Big Lottery Fund funded programme aimed at improving language skills, community cohesion, health and wellbeing and skills development through volunteering. Track record of securing funding for capital projects aligned to local needs, e.g. MUGA and modular nursery building.</p>



## 4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 Over 6,000 people use the Greets Green Resource Centre each year, benefiting from a wide range of activities including advice.

Current project and programmes include;

- Information, Advice & Guidance
- Welfare Rights & Debt – regulated by Financial Conduct Authority (705620)
- Immigration & Nationality – regulated by OISC
- ESOL
- Skills and Employment
- Education & Training
- Services targeting women
- Youth activities
- Health and Wellbeing
- Volunteering
- Community services and development initiatives.
- Nursery provisions – Ofsted registration – 2561533
- Outdoor MUGA – Gym – Play area – Community Garden area

4.2 The proposed asset transfer is supported by the Investing in the Voluntary Sector Strategic Group.

## 5 Alternative Options

5.1 Do nothing – CBO have a 25 year, rent free, full repairing voluntary body lease, expiring in 2041. This would not signal to the wider voluntary and community sector that we value their contribution as partners and want to use asset transfer as a positive tool for enabling the development of enterprising and sustainable organisations with a long term stake in the area.





## 6 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	The current market rental is £19,500pa. CBO have occupied the premises since 2011 on a rent free basis because of the work that they do. The building was a former housing office and CBO have secured external funding of £400,000 to improve the centre and its surrounding area.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 permits a principal Council to dispose of land in any way it wishes, except that it shall not (without the Secretary of State's consent) dispose of land for a consideration less than the best that can reasonably be obtained. The Secretary of State has issued a General Disposal Consent in 2003 (Circular 06/03) which states that specific consent is not required for the disposal of any interest in land which the authority considers will help it to secure the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area. Where applicable, authorities should also have regard to their community strategy. Any disposal must not have an undervalue of more than £2M. Section 5 of the council's policy on Land and Premises for the Voluntary and Community Sector (2012) sets out the council's approach which will usually be through a 99 year lease at a reduced rental.
<b>Risk:</b>	CBO have a strong track record in managing and improving the centre. They have been managing the premises on a full repairing lease since 2011. They have a wide range of experienced people involved on their management board to overcome any risk factors. They have successfully completed a number of capital projects over the years.
<b>Equality:</b>	CBO specialise in supporting BME communities in particular Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Indian, including new migrants
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	Over 6,000 people use the Greets Green Resource Centre each year, benefiting from a wide range of activities.



<b>Social Value</b>	CBO is a voluntary organisation run by and for local people.
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## 7. Appendices

- CBO's application form for an asset transfer lease 17<sup>th</sup> December 2021;
- Investing in the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategic Group report; and
- Location plan.



**REPORT TO INVESTING IN THE VOLUNTARY & COMMUNITY SECTOR  
STRATEGIC GROUP**

**APPLICATION TO GRANT A LEASE AT LESS THAN MARKET RENT**

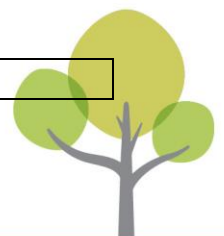
<b>Building / Land Address</b>	Greets Green Resource Centre Harwood Street – West Bromwich – B70 9JF (Whole premises including land around the building)
<b>Applicant Organisation Name and Address</b>	Confederation of Bangladeshi Organisations (CBO) Ltd Greets Green Resource Centre Harwood street – West Bromwich – B70 9JF
<b>Current Leases</b>	Full repairing voluntary body leases
<b>Date Business Case Submitted</b>	17 December 2021
<b>Date of Report to IITVCS Strategic Group</b>	13 April 2022
<b>Report Author(s)</b>	Stefan Hemming, Principle Lead – Corporate Property Kate Ashley, Strategic Lead – Service Improvement Karen Williams, Voluntary Support Sector Manager Matthew Driver, Senior Accountant

**Section 1 – Building Details**

<b>Market Valuation:</b> - Sale - Rent	Rental Value assessed as £19,500 per annum
<b>Condition Survey</b>	N/A
<b>Date Declared Surplus by Land and Asset Management Officer Group</b>	Group already occupy premises by way of two leases:  Lease dated 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2016 referring to Greets Green Resources Centre and Land Adjoining Harwood Street West Bromwich for a term of 25 years with effect from 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2016 at £1 per annum.  Lease dated 17 <sup>th</sup> May 2018 referring to Land at the Junction of Harwood Street and Lambert End, West Bromwich for a term of 23 years from 17 <sup>th</sup> May 2018 at £1 per annum.

**Section 2 – Business Case**

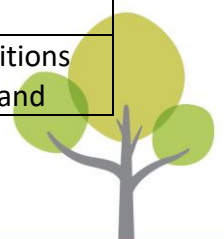
<b>Proposed Rental Value</b>	£19,500
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<b>Length of Lease</b>	99 years – asset transfer
<b>Special Conditions</b>	Full repairing voluntary body lease
<b>Summary of Proposed Service or Use of Building/Land</b>	Community facility within area of high deprivation, focusing on providing services to BAME communities to promote financial stability, community cohesion, health and wellbeing, education and employment. Services include provision of advice and guidance, education and training facilities, nursery provision and outdoor community garden/MUGA/gym area
<b>Legal Status of Organisation</b>	Company Charity Company no; 07705011 Charity no; 1145333
<b>Funding arrangements in place? Y/N</b>	Council funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice grant: <b>£65,898 per year</b></li> <li>• Public Health SHIP: <b>£14,564 per year</b></li> <li>• <b>Total £80,462</b></li> </ul>

**Section 3 – Contribution to Vision 2030 and Corporate Strategic Objectives**

<b>How will the services/activities improve the life of Sandwell residents?</b>	<p>CBO is a member of Sandwell Consortium and Sandwell Advice Providers Network, and already works in partnership with Sandwell Council and other organisations on health promotion, resilience, advice and employment &amp; skills.</p> <p>Activities at GGRC reach 6,000 residents annually, focusing on (but not exclusively) BME communities and new migrants. Location of facilities is within some of the most deprived parts of the borough (IMD 2019).</p> <p>Supporting hard to reach people access financial advice and support, training and skills development, and employment opportunities. In 2020/21 the organisation supported nearly 2,500 people to access over £1.1m in benefits and financial allowances.</p> <p>Attracting other external funding to support community development activities, e.g. Big Lottery Fund funded programme aimed at improving language skills, community cohesion, health and wellbeing and skills development through volunteering. Track record of securing funding for capital projects aligned to local needs, e.g. MUGA and modular nursery building.</p> <p>Nursery provision for 2-5 year olds with focus on ensuring children are “school ready”.</p>
<b>How does this contribute to Vision 2030 and/or the</b>	Proposal will contribute to Sandwell Vision 2030 Ambitions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 8 – supporting early years, education and

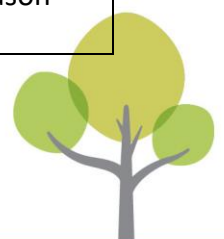


<p><b>Council's Strategic Objectives?</b></p>	<p>skills, health and wellbeing, strengthening communities and investment in towns.</p> <p>Proposal will contribute to the Corporate Strategic Outcomes of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best start in life for children and young people</li> <li>• People live well and age well</li> <li>• Strong, resilient communities</li> <li>• Strong and inclusive economy</li> </ul>
<p><b>How will impact be monitored / evidenced?</b></p>	<p>CBO submit monthly monitoring returns via Sandwell Consortium detailing advice outputs. Their CE, Shabud Ullah, chairs Sandwell Advice Providers Network and is an active member of the advice re-design group. Should the asset transfer be approved an agreed statement will be put in place and a quarterly / annual report will be required.</p>

**Section 4 – Financial Assessment**

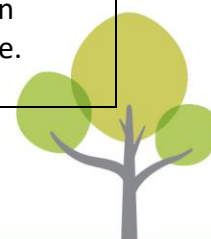
**Please note that finance were asked to comment on the organisations ability to pay the rent. They were not asked to comment on the financial viability of the group. The financial viability of the group is given a weighting of 40% in the scoring matrix completed by officers in Community Partnerships. Healthy finances mean that CBO will be able to continue to run the centre and improve its facilities.**

<p><b>Rent Subsidy Requested</b></p>	<p>100%</p>
<p><b>Analysis of Financial Accounts</b></p>	<p>The financial accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 show that the CBO was in a healthy financial position. The income and expenditure account shows a surplus for the year of £118k. At the end of the year the total funds held by the charity on the balance sheet are £491k of which £182k is cash held in the bank. The association has no long-term liabilities and current liabilities of only £3k. Based on the 2020-21 accounts the association could afford to pay an annual rent of £19,500.</p> <p>The financial accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 show that the CBO made a small loss of £7k for the year but still held total funds of £373k including cash in the bank of £69k. The loss appears to be a one off loss and the result of reduced grant income.</p>
<p><b>Other Considerations</b></p>	<p><i>None</i></p>
<p><b>Conclusion</b></p>	<p>The CBO appears to be in an overall healthy financial position and there does not seem to be a financial reason why they could not afford to pay the rent.</p>



**Section 5 – Recommendation**

<p><b>Recommend Issue of Lease at less than market value?</b></p>	<p>Yes Copy of scoring matrix attached</p>
<p><b>Rationale</b></p>	<p>We have no hesitation in supporting the asset transfer (99 years lease) and recommend a 100% rent subsidy for the term.</p> <p><b>Value for Money</b> Council funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice grant: £65,898 per year</li> <li>• Public Health SHIP: £14,564 per year</li> <li>• Total £80,462</li> </ul> <p>CBO deliver excellent value for money. For example, in 2021/22 CBO supported 872 residents with generalist advice, securing £1,256,056 confirmed benefit gains and £7,130 one off charitable payments/ household goods. For every £1 of advice funding CBO have delivered £19 into the pockets of residents.</p> <p>CBO will use the rent saving to continue to deliver services, (the rent of £19500 represents 24% of the council’s grant - if they were required to pay all or some of the rent this would lead to a reduction in service).</p> <p>CBO will continue to seek external grants to improve the facilities and develop new initiatives to meet local need and diversify their income.</p> <p><b>Track record and viability (building management)</b> CBO have taken on a former housing office on a full repairing lease and transformed it into a multi-use community facility nursery, with an outside play area. More recently they secured funding to build a nursery on site – meeting a local need and developing an additional income stream.</p> <p><b>Strong partnerships</b> CBO are a trusted partner, working hard to help us to communicate with and support hard to reach communities. They continued to deliver advice throughout the pandemic, hosted pop up vaccine clinics and helped spread positive messages about covid safe behaviour. They provide joined up support including: immigration advice, ESOL, employment support, help to get on-line.</p>



	CBO have a long term commitment to Greets Green and the wider area of West Bromwich. Asset transfer is the natural next step for CBO and the council.
<b>IITVCS Strategic Group Decision</b>	



## APPLICATION FORM FOR A LEASE OF PREMISES

**Please complete all boxes**

**DATE**

17<sup>th</sup> December 2021

### 1. Premise Details to which this application applies:

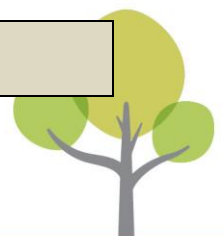
<b>Premise Name and Address</b>	Greets Green Resource Centre Harwood street – West Bromwich – B70 9JF
<b>Whole premise or part?</b>	<i>If part, please specify</i> Whole premises including land around the building

### 2. Organisation Details:

<b>Organisation Name</b>	Confederation of Bangladeshi Organisations (CBO) Ltd		
<b>Address</b>	Greets Green Resource Centre Harwood street – West Bromwich – B70 9JF		
<b>Organisation Contact Name</b>	SHABUD ULLAH		
<b>E-mail</b>	shabud@cbo786.co.uk	<b>Tel No:</b>	0121 500 5441
<b>Legal Status of Organisation</b>	Company Charity		
<b>Company or Charity Number (If applicable)</b>	Company no; 07705011 Charity no; 1145333		
<b>Registered Address (if different from above)</b>			
<b>How long has the organisation been in existence?</b>	CBO was established in 1985		

### 3. Proposed Use of the Premises

**If your organisation currently occupies these premises, please give details of:**





- Current activities run from these premises
- Any changes to these activities
- Any new activities to be run from these premises

*Note: please submit any documents that provide supporting information, such as annual reports, business plans, grant applications, etc.*

In 2011 CBO took over the management of Greets Green Resource Centre (GGRC) a former housing office from Sandwell MBC on a full repairing voluntary body lease. Working in partnership with key stakeholders CBO secured external resources of around £70,000 to refurbish the centre and transformed the building into modern and vibrant community facilities.

Over 6,000 people use the Greets Green Resource Centre each year, benefitting from a wide range of activities including advice (In 2020/21 our advice team dealt with 2469 client cases and secured confirm financial benefit gains of £1.149m for local residents)

Current project and programmes includes;

- Information, Advice & Guidance
- Welfare Rights & Debt – regulated by Financial Conduct Authority (705620)
- Immigration & Nationality – regulated by OISC
- ESOL
- Skills and Employment
- Education & Training
- Women Services
- Young people services
- Health and Wellbeing
- Volunteering
- Community services and development initiatives.
- Nursery provisions – Ofsted registration – 2561533
- Outdoor MUGA – Gym – Play arear – Community Garden area

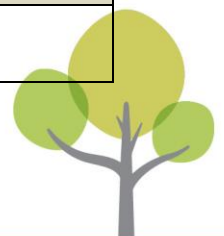
**If your organisation does not currently occupy these premises, please give details of what are you planning to use the building for?**

*Note: please submit any documents that provide supporting information, such as annual reports, business plans, grant applications, etc.*

**Please provide details of:**

- the number of Sandwell residents that you are working with or plan to work with;
- whether you are working/will work in a particular neighbourhood or town; and
- any specific group of residents that will use the building.

All our projects and activities are open to all residents who need them.



CBO is an affiliated organization with company charity status. Established in 1985, CBO has a long and proud history of delivering a range of important services to the communities that our public sector partners find amongst some of the hardest to reach, most vulnerable communities within Sandwell.

We have grown organically and in response to the identifiable needs of our communities over recent years and today we are now a stable and important provider receiving positive recognition from our mainstream peers and local communities in equal measure.

CBO is well known for its excellent track record in providing holistic wraparound services under one roof and we attract people from all over Sandwell. We specialise in targeting BME communities in particular Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Indian including new migrant.

#### 4. Benefits

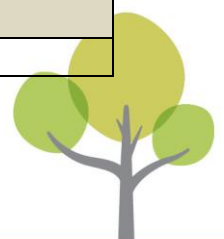
**Please explain how your plans will support [Vision 2030](#)?**

CBO will meet ambition; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8

Our current projects and programmes below will support in meeting the above ambitions;

- Information, Advice & Guidance
- Welfare Rights & Debt – regulated by Financial Conduct Authority (705620)
- Immigration & Nationality – regulated by OISC
- ESOL
- Skills and Employment
- Education & Training
- Women Services
- Young people services
- Health and Wellbeing
- Volunteering
- Community services and development initiatives.
- Nursery provisions – Ofsted registration – 2561533
- Outdoor MUGA – Gym – Play area – Community Garden area

**How will your organisation's activities improve the lives of Sandwell residents?**



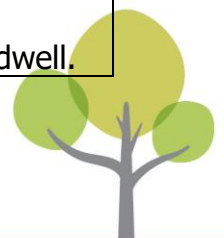
<p>Please find attached copy of our annual report 2021 outlining our key achievements and success stories.</p>
<p><b>Please include details of any other benefits or opportunities that would arise from your proposed move</b></p>
<p>We have been successful in securing large amount of external funding as capital investment and hope to continue to secure more external funding as capital investment.</p>

**5. Risks**

<p><b>What risks to your organisation have you identified from taking on these premises? Please detail and outline how you would deal with these</b></p>
<p><i>Note: Please append any reports or other documents to support how you will manage these risks</i></p> <p>We have been managing the premises on a full repairing lease since 2011. We have wide range of experienced people involved on our management board to overcome any risk factors. We have successfully completed number of capital projects over the years and very proud of our achievements.</p> <p>As well as internal support CBO is well connected with wide voluntary sector and also a member of Sandwell Consortium and when needed able to seek help and support from other colleagues within the sector.</p>

**6. Your Track Record**

<p><b>What are the recent achievements of the organisation? Please provide evidence of quality of work, including any accreditation or awards</b></p>
<p>CBO is a community and voluntary sector organisation based in West Bromwich. It was created in 1985 to address the needs of the fledgling Bangladeshi community which was then the most deprived of the communities in Sandwell.</p>



However, over the years we have grown from strength to strength and over 6000 people receives our help annually and only half of them are Bangladeshi.

CBO is one of the thriving voluntary and community organisation in Sandwell with our annual turnover in 2021 was around £408,200.

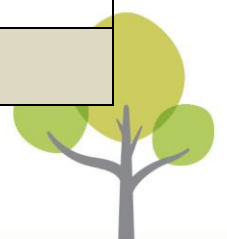
Below are list of our recent success stories in relation capital investment into Greets Greet Resource Centre:

- In 2020 during the pandemic in consultation with the service users CBO was successful in securing external funding of £50,000 from The National Big Lottery Fund to develop an outdoor gym and community garden area at the rear of GGRC which will compliment the existing MUGA and play area.
- In 2018 CBO has been successful in securing external funding of £150,000 from Veolia and Enovert for the development of new modular build nursery. We are very pleased the new capital project was planned, developed and implemented to add to our exiting provision and will help CBO to focus on early years provision and in particular target BME communities.
- In 2013 CBO was approached by local residents to develop the rear open space into a multi games play area. Accordingly CBO successfully secured around £130,000 of external resources from Biffa Award, Veolia and Big Lottery Fund to create an outdoor play area. The project is now completed providing first of a kind, both indoor and outdoor facilities at the heart of one of the most deprived neighbourhoods in Sandwell. The improved facilities will enable CBO to work with diverse client groups including young people.
- In 2011 CBO took over the management of Greets Green Resource Centre (GGRC) a former housing office from Sandwell MBC on a full repairing voluntary body lease. Working in partnership with key stakeholders CBO secured external resources of around £70,000 to refurbish the centre and transformed the building into modern and vibrant community facilities.

**We are pleased to confirm a total of around £400,000 of capital funding have been externally secured and invested in GGRC**

**Are you already working in partnership with any of the following?**

- Sandwell Council



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other voluntary and community organisations (in Sandwell and out of borough)</li> <li>• Other public bodies</li> </ul> <p><b>If so, please set out the details and achievements/impact made</b></p>
<p>CBO is involved in the following partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sandwell Consortium – CBO is one of the founding organisation and director</li> <li>• Sandwell Advice Providers Network – CEO of CBO is the chair of SAPN which is made up of advice providers in Sandwell including Council Welfare Rights, Citizens Advice and other community based advice providers.</li> <li>• Community Health Partnership</li> <li>• Resilient Residents</li> <li>• Advice Re-design</li> <li>• Employment and Skills partnership</li> </ul>
<p><b>Please provide evidence to demonstrate the financial stability of the organisation – where possible, please provide the organisation’s accounts for the last two financial years and the management accounts for the current financial year</b></p>
<p>Please find attached annual accounts for 2021 and 2020</p>

**7. Funding Arrangements:**

Have funds been identified for the following: (please provide details)	
<p><b>Investment in the Building</b> <b>(improvements to the building/ refurbishment)</b></p>	<p>We have already invested around £400,000 of external funding and hope replicate the success with more investment through external funding.</p>
<p><b>Fitting out the building</b></p>	



<b>Rental</b>			
<b>Have funds been identified for the following: (Y/N)</b>			
<b>Removal costs.</b>		<b>Running Costs (utility bills &amp; taxes)</b>	
<b>Refurbishment/Fit out</b>		<b>IT costs and requirements.</b>	
<b>Phones</b>		<b>Other (please specify)</b>	
<b>Staff costs</b>			

**8. Timeframes:**

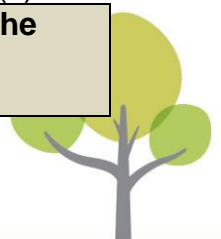
<b>When do you need the premises?</b>	We are currently occupying and have 25 years voluntary body lease. We would like this assets transfer to go ahead as soon as possible so we can plan the next step.
<b>How long do you want to lease the space for?</b>	99 years

**NB: Any longer term than the standard 10 years will be dependent upon your business case.**

**9. Rent subsidy (if you are intending to pay a market rental please do not complete this section)**

In certain circumstances, if an organisation can demonstrate through a robust business case that either it is unable to afford to pay some or all of the full market rental or if the funding that would pay the rent would be better spent on service delivery, the Council will consider renting the property at a lower rental level, to be negotiated (based on factors such as affordability and any other liabilities such as repairs and maintenance that the VCS tenant may be prepared to take on in lieu of rent). This will only apply if the voluntary organisation is providing a service which meets a shared priority and is supported by the relevant Council service area(s).

**Please outline the level of rent subsidy that you are requesting and the case supporting your request.**



Full 100% rent subsidy.

We are a community and charitable organisation and any money saved from the rent will be reinvested into delivering services for the community which will ultimately help towards achieving the council vision 2030 ambitions.

**THIS FORM WHEN COMPLETED SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO: -**

**Stefan Hemming Principal Lead – Commercial Property**

**Sandwell Council House, PO Box 2377, Oldbury.**

**Tel No: 07825 280337**

**Email [stefan\\_hemming@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:stefan_hemming@sandwell.gov.uk)**



**Asset transfer/ Long lease**

**Voluntary sector organisation application for a reduced rent/ rent subsidy**

**Voluntary organisation Confederation of Bangladeshi Organisations CBO**

Company no; [07705011](#) Charity no; [1145333](#)

**Property** Greets Green Resource Centre, Harwood street – West Bromwich – B70 9JF

**Annual Rent** £19,500 pa

**Request** 100% rent subsidy 99 year lease

**Financial assessment**

Finance are asked to assess whether or not the organisation is able to pay the rent, based upon the information contained in their accounts:

Ability to make a contribution to the rent: Yes/ No

“The CBO appears to be in an overall healthy financial position and there does not seem to be a financial reason why they could not afford to pay the rent.”

**Meeting the council’s definition of the vcs:**

Assessment by voluntary sector support team.

Meet the definition: **Yes**/ No

**Assessment by commissioners/ voluntary sector support team:**

In addition, commissioners and the voluntary sector support team will score a range of other factors that have a bearing upon whether we would recommend a reduced rent/ rent subsidy.

Criteria	Weighting	Score (0-4) 4 = good/high HC	Score (0-4) 4 = good/high MS	Moderated score Comments
Financial viability / health of organisation	40%	4 (160)	3 (120)	We have used the revised weighting that reflects the discussion at IIVCS Strategic Group last week. Manny and I met to discuss our scoring and agreed that we didn’t need a moderated score as we our scores were based on our individual knowledge of the group as well the info on the application form. We have agreed that in the case of CBO we have no hesitation in supporting the asset transfer (99 years lease)
Proposed use of funds if organisation is excused some or all of the rent	15%	4 (60)	3 (45)	
Strength & maturity of local partnerships including with the council	10%	4 (40)	3 (30)	





Potential savings to the council	10%	1 (10)	2 (20)	and recommend a 100% rent subsidy for the term.
Contribution to Vision 2030/ the Corporate plan/ the Improvement plan	10%	4 (40)	4 (40)	
Leverage/ external funding secured by organisation	10%	4 (40)	4 (40)	
Benefits linked to supporting the organisation having a long term stake in the area	5%	4 (20)	3 (15)	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>310</b>	

To calculate the weighted score, multiply the score by the % The maximum total weighted score if a group scores 4 on all categories would be 400

- To score 0: does not meet the criteria
- To score 1: slightly meets the criteria
- To score 2: partly meets the criteria
- To score 3: mostly meets the criteria
- To score 4: fully meets the criteria

**Maximum score: 400**  
**CBO score: 370**

**Assessment completed by Heather Chinner 27<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

**Maximum score: 400**  
**CBO score: 310**

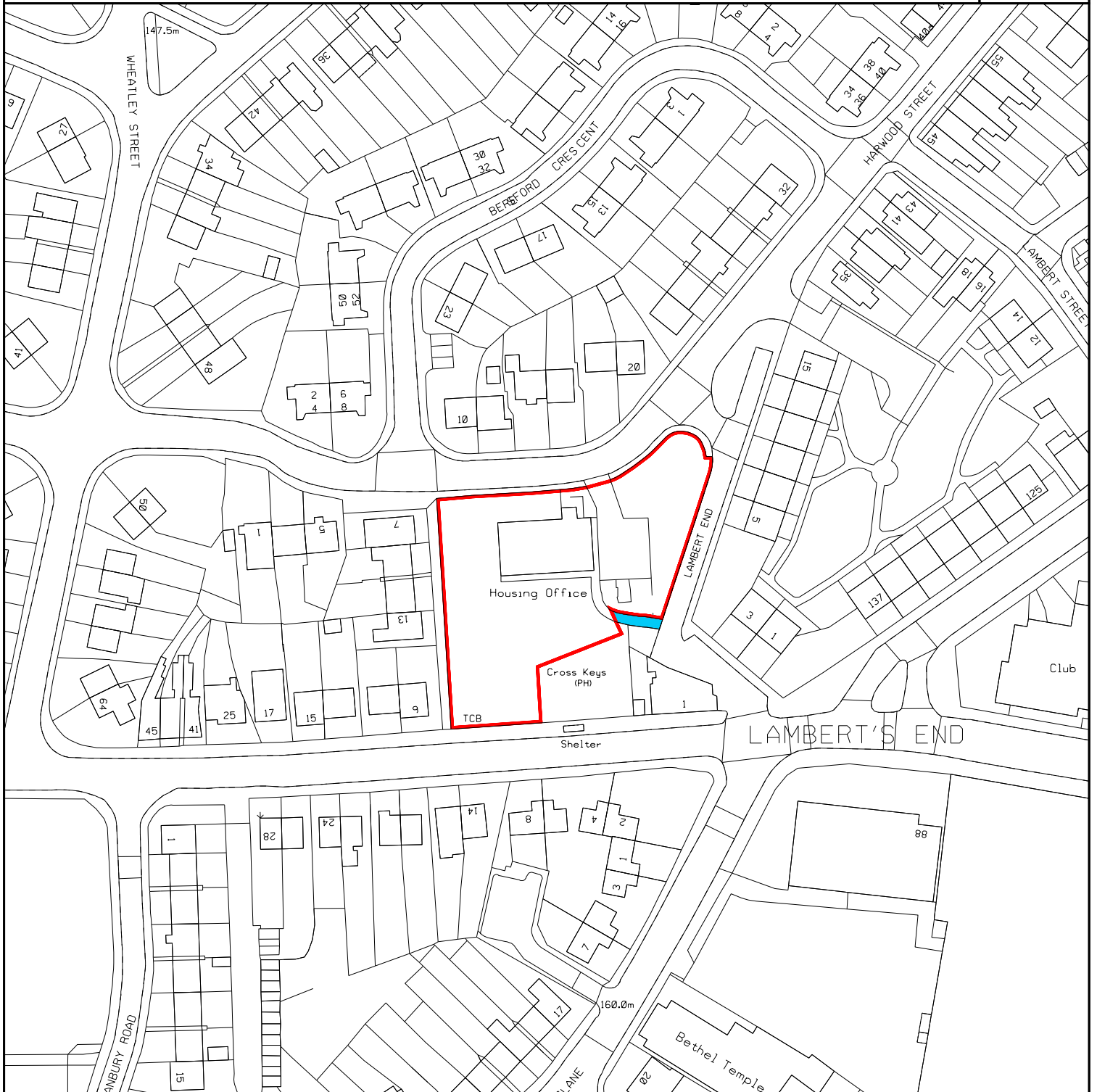
**Assessment completed by Manny Sehmbi<sup>th</sup> July 2022**




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# REGENERATION AND PLANNING

STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT



LEGEND	DESCRIPTION	SANDWELL	TERRIER
	LAND AND PREMISES OFF HARWOOD STREET WEST BROMWICH	S09991SE	196
 <b>Sandwell</b> Metropolitan Borough Council Page 171	AREA	SCALE	CENTROID
	2471.2 M2 2955.6 Y2	1:1250	399560/291263
PLAN NUMBER	DRAWN	DATE	
SAM/22860/010	DM	01-NOV-2022	
THIS MAP IS BASED UPON ORDNANCE SURVEY MATERIAL WITH THE PERMISSION OF ORDNANCE SURVEY ON BEHALF OF THE CONTROLLER OF HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE ©CROWN COPYRIGHT UNAUTHORISED REPRODUCTION INFRINGES CROWN COPYRIGHT AND MAY LEAD TO PROSECUTION OR CIVIL PROCEEDINGS SANDWELL MBC LICENCE NO 100032119 2022			

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## Report to Cabinet

**7 December 2022**

<b>Subject:</b>	Chance Heritage Trust – Memorandum of Understanding
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth, Councillor Peter Hughes
<b>Director:</b>	Director for Regeneration and Growth, Tony McGovern
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Growth & Spatial Planning Service Manager, Tammy Stokes tammy_stokes@sandwell.gov.uk

### 1 Recommendations

- 1.1 Cabinet to endorse the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the Chance Heritage Trust relating to the heritage – led regeneration of the Chance Glassworks site.
- 1.2 That details of the allocation of approved Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership Capacity Funding to support the regeneration of the Chance Glassworks Site be received.




### 2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The objectives of the Chance Heritage Trust (CHT) are closely aligned with the Council's aspirations and policy objectives for the site and its locality. Regeneration of the site would create a boost for the local economy, create jobs and homes, conserve a locally and nationally important cultural asset and enhance the image of the borough through restoration of this high-profile industrial heritage site.






- 2.2 The Memorandum of Understanding sets out how the Council and the CHT will work together to deliver regeneration of the Chance Glassworks site and the Soho Foundry and Mint.
- 2.3 In April 2022, Cabinet approved a report, which delegated authority to the Director of Regeneration and Growth, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth, to submit Sandwell's capacity funding spend proposal for financial year 2022/23 to the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership Board (BCLEP).
- 2.4 Sandwell's capacity fund proposal included an allocation of £144,000 towards the Heritage Regeneration Project Development (Chance Glassworks and Soho Foundry). This was approved at the BCLEP Board in May 2022.
- 2.5 Proposals have been received, subsequently, from the Chance Heritage Trust to spend the £144,000 allocation on Chances Glassworks Site, as set out in brief below:
- Review of the use mix and density, with a view to reducing viability gap
  - Where practicable, further surveys to provide more certainty and to reduce risk e.g. additional air quality and noise measurements
  - Discussions with Historic England (HE) to scope the survey work (desk top and physical), and to establish the significance of underground structures, which form part of the scheduled monument designation
  - Preparation of a first phase delivery plan.
  - Update Outline Business Case to Full Business Case

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

	Best start in life for children and young people Education and enhancing opportunities for young people is a stated objective of the Chance Heritage Trust
	People live well and age well
	Strong resilient communities



	The MOU is a statement of joint intent to deliver objectives that benefit the local community and restore a key component of that community's heritage.
	Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods Provision of housing in a site that has been regenerated to a high standard
	A strong and inclusive economy Facilitating the regeneration of the Chance site would create employment directly and would bring a long-underutilised site back into productive economic use in line with Council policy.
	A connected and accessible Sandwell

#### 4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 Chance Glassworks (off Spon Lane, West Bromwich) is prominently located - adjacent to the elevated section of the M5 motorway.
- 4.2 Soho Foundry is located on a 21-acre site in Smethwick, around 2.5 miles to the west of Birmingham city centre.
- 4.2 These two industrial sites are connected by the Galton Valley – a narrow canal corridor along the Birmingham Canal, from Smethwick Junction to Bromford Stop.
- 4.3 The Galton Valley contains the two parallel canals crossing Smethwick Summit. The original Brindley Canal of 1768-9, known as the 'Old Main Line', was lowered, in 1790, under a scheme (attributed to John Smeaton). In 1829-30, a parallel and deeper canal was cut, -Thomas Telford's 'New Main Line'. The Galton Valley has a great many canal heritage structures, including Telford's Engine Arm Aqueduct and Galton Bridge.
- 4.4 Reflecting its significance to the borough's industrial heritage, **in 1985**, the Council designated the Galton Valley as a conservation area.
- 4.5 Soho Foundry was established in 1795 by some of the most notable figures of the Industrial Revolution, including Matthew Boulton and James Watt, and their sons – Matthew Robinson Boulton and James



Watt Jr. The Foundry was the first purpose-built steam engine manufactory in the world. Watt's invention of the separate condenser is regarded as one of the most important innovations in the history of motive power. Clearly, the site has huge significance in terms of local and national industrial heritage.

- 4.6 The historic foundry buildings at Soho are Grade II\* listed, and are covered by scheduled monument status. However, they have no economic purpose, without which, there is no obvious way in which they are to be maintained, much less, restored.
- 4.7 Chances Glassworks was in constant use for glass manufacture from 1814 until the 1980s, supplying glass for the Crystal Palace, the Westminster Clock Tower ('Big Ben'), and the White House. It played an important part in both world wars (lenses, bomb aimers etc.); and is internationally famous for its pivotal role in the development and supply of lighthouse lenses.
- 4.8 The history of Chances has been said to be the very essence of British glass manufacture in the country, through the 19th and 20th centuries. The works employed thousands of local people, and the Chance family were noted local philanthropists. In terms of the heritage of Smethwick, the Borough and the nation, the site's importance is huge.
- 4.9 Reflecting the above heritage considerations, the Chance Glassworks site is home to several statutorily listed buildings, but most of them are in a serious state of disrepair. The site is a designated Scheduled Monument which Historic England considers to be 'At Risk' It also stands within, and is an important component of, the Galton Valley Conservation Area (which itself is designated to reflect its significance in terms of industrial heritage).
- 4.10 Since glass manufacture has ceased, both sites have been underutilised; and ownership has become fragmented. Notwithstanding their heritage status, the buildings and structures on both sites continue to deteriorate, resulting in poor image and low levels of economic activity.
- 4.11 Chance Heritage Trust (CHT) is a charitable Community Benefit Society which was established to restore and protect heritage buildings, through regeneration - with a particular focus on residential, education and enterprise.





- 4.12 This report recommends that the Cabinet endorse the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding and a copy of which is included at Appendix A.
- 4.13 The Memorandum of Understanding calls for a joint approach, and to “work together to realise the potential of Sandwell’s significant industrial heritage assets to make a positive impact on economic regeneration of the area and to maximise the benefit to the local community through place-making and cultural activities.”
- 4.14 Under this joint approach the Council and CHT agree to work together on these sites to:
- realise the potential of Sandwell’s significant industrial heritage assets;
  - make a positive impact on economic regeneration of the area; and
  - maximise the benefit to the local community through place-making and cultural activities.
- 4.15 This will be achieved through collaboration on activities such as:
- Masterplanning
  - Funding Bids to external bodies
  - Allocation of Grant Funding (from SMBC to CHT) to support Business case Development and other activities (subject to any necessary Grant Agreement)
  - Surveys, and other technical assessments, of heritage assets on these sites
  - Collaboration with Historic England on relevant issues
  - Site Assembly (where appropriate)
  - Use of the Compulsory Purchase Order powers (where appropriate)
  - Collaboration on heritage or other designations (where appropriate) that might assist regeneration
- 4.16 The Memorandum of Understanding is not a legally binding contract, and does not create any legal obligations or liabilities. However, it does provide a written commitment that the Council and CHT will work jointly together to regenerate Sandwell’s industrial heritage assets along the Galton Valley, but, more specifically, the Chance Glassworks and the Soho Foundry and Mint.



4.17 Entering into the Memorandum of Understanding does not interfere with or prejudice the statutory, or other rights and obligations, of the Council or the CHT. It does not supersede any existing Governance arrangements; nor does it have any influence in the Council's function as Local Planning Authority.

## 5 Alternative Options

5.1 Do nothing – the heritage assets would continue to deteriorate, resulting in loss of heritage significance and poor image, and creating potential for reputational damage to the Council.

## 6 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (BC LEP) Capacity Funding for financial year 22/23 was agreed by BC LEP Board in May 2022. The proposals from the CHT meet the requirements for this funding.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	The Memorandum of Understanding is not legally binding and does not supersede any existing Governance requirements.
<b>Risk:</b>	Risk of BC LEP funding claw back if funding is not expended by end of 22/23 financial year. As the document is not legally binding there are no legal risks but reputational risks from not taking steps to support CHT in line with the MOU. No other significant risks identified at this stage.
<b>Equality:</b>	There are no equality issues arising from entering in to the Memorandum of Understanding.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	Retaining and investing in our industrial heritage will help secure the assets for future generations to enjoy.
<b>Social Value</b>	None in relation to the approvals sought in this report.
<b>Climate Change</b>	None in relation to the approvals sought in this report.

## 7. Appendices

Appendix A – Sandwell MBC and Chances Heritage Trust Memorandum of Understanding



## 8. Background Papers

Report to Cabinet - Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership  
Capacity Funding – Sandwell Allocation – 13<sup>th</sup> April 2022



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CHANCE  
HERITAGE  
TRUST

**Memorandum of Understanding**  
**between**  
**Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC)**  
**and**  
**Chance Heritage Trust (CHT)**  
**collectively described below as the Parties**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Parties are committed jointly to work together with other bodies, organisations, agencies, community organisations and the like to ensure that;  
Sandwell's industrial heritage assets have the potential to make a major contribution to learning and skills development, social inclusion, community engagement, economic regeneration and place-making, for the benefit of all Sandwell's diverse communities, creating economic, social and environmental benefits for the future.
- 1.2 1.2 This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is not exhaustive and it is not intended to be legally binding and does not create legal obligations. The parties will have no legal obligations or liability until the parties enter into a legally binding agreement.
- 1.3 For the avoidance of doubt, CHT enters this Memorandum of Understanding in its capacity as a vehicle for regenerating heritage assets in Sandwell. Whilst it has a wider remit the purpose of MOU is to focus on the Galton Valley landscape and specifically, at present, the Chance Glassworks and the Soho Foundry and Mint.
- 1.4 SMBC enters this Memorandum of Understanding in its capacity as lead public body for regeneration in Sandwell. The Chance Glasswork and the Soho Foundry and Mint are both heritage regeneration priorities included in the approved Regeneration Pipeline for Sandwell.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 Sandwell's industrial heritage is unique. From the late 18th century onwards, the area was at the forefront of the Industrial Revolution. This complex industrial landscape of canals, railways, factories, houses and public buildings can tell internationally important stories about how this region led the world in engineering, manufacturing, entrepreneurialism, local government and social reform.

The Chance Brothers Glassworks and Soho Foundry and Mint sites anchor the ends of the Galton Valley Conservation Area and represent two important phases in Sandwell's story.

The two sites lie in industrial Smethwick, one of the most diverse and deprived areas of the UK. The Smethwick Summit – Galton Valley Conservation Area defines a linear industrial landscape in the West Midlands conurbation containing a complex of canals: part of the unique Birmingham Canal Navigations Network, they represent almost the entire period of canal-building from 1768 onwards. During the Industrial Revolution the network served a hinterland of manufacturing and extractive industries, of which these sites are two of the most important survivors.

CHT plan to restore them to a new working life in conjunction with a wide range of partners. CHT is a community-owned and led organisation leading on large-scale, urban regeneration with the community at the heart of our work. The projects CHT work on address many of the issues arising from multiple deprivation and economic regeneration.

### **3. JOINT APPROACH**

3.1 The Parties agree that they shall work together to realise the potential of Sandwell's significant industrial heritage assets to make a positive impact on economic regeneration of the area and to maximise the benefit to the local community through place-making and cultural activities.

3.2 CHT and SMBC will collaborate on a wide range of activities with the aim of regenerating these two heritage assets and this will include but not limited to the following:

- Master-Planning
- Funding Bids to external bodies
- Allocation of Grant Funding (subject to any necessary Grant Agreement) (from SMBC to CHT) to support Business Case Development and other activities
- Surveys and other technical assessment of all heritage assets on these sites
- Collaborate with Historic England on relevant issues
- Site Assembly as appropriate
- Use of the Compulsory Purchase Order powers of the Council if deemed appropriate
- Collaboration on heritage or other appropriate designations that might assist regeneration

Any planning applications will be dealt with by the Council in its role as Local Planning Authority and this function falls outside of this MOU Agreement.

**4. Effect of this Memorandum**

4.1 Nothing in this Memorandum of Understanding shall interfere with or prejudice the statutory or other rights and obligations of the Parties, and the identification by the Parties of the objectives referred to above is not intended to be a representation that the Parties have the specific statutory or other authority to fulfil any of the objectives set out.

**5. Confidentiality**

5.1 The Parties shall observe confidentiality in respect of any elements of this Memorandum of Understanding which may be commercially sensitive. The MOU itself shall be a public document.

**Approved by Cabinet of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council on XXXX**

**Signed on behalf of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council**

Signature .....

Print name.....

Position .....

Date .....

**Signed on behalf of Chance Heritage Trust**

Signature .....

Print name.....

Position .....

Date .....

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## Report to Cabinet

**7 December 2022**

<b>Subject:</b>	Empty Property Strategy 2023-2028
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cabinet Member for Housing Councillor Charn Singh Padda
<b>Director:</b>	Director of Housing Gillian Douglas
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes New Policy and Charges
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Citizen and Consumer Protection (Accommodation) Team Manager, Richard Hawkins, Richard_Hawkins@Sandwell.gov.uk

### 1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to the Empty Property Strategy 2023 - 2028, including the introduction of empty property loans and the use of Planning Act enforcement powers by the Empty Property Officer.

### 2 Reasons for Recommendations







- 2.1 The private sector housing market is a key resource in providing the housing needs of the borough. Family homes are always in high demand, yet there are a large number of them remaining empty and unmanaged, blighting communities and removing good homes from the market. The Council has identified privately owned empty properties as one of its key priority areas in relation to private rented and owner-occupied housing.
- 2.2 Sandwell has had some success in bringing many private empty properties back into use through advice and persuasion as well as some limited enforcement. However; there are a considerable number of empty property owners who are unreceptive to the impact they are causing and are not addressing long-standing dilapidated properties that have



remained empty for many years and that are causing a disproportionately negative impact in communities in the borough.

2.3 The intended purpose of this strategy is to develop more pro-active solutions to empty properties that are unfairly impacting on communities across our borough to utilise a wasted resource.

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

	The Best Start in Life for Children and Young People
	People Live Well and Age Well
	Strong Resilient Communities
	Quality Homes in Thriving Neighbourhoods Empty private sector homes are a wasted resource that when brought back into use will contribute to addressing housing need
	A Strong and Inclusive Economy
	A Connected and Accessible Sandwell

### 4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 Our Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) identified the private sector housing represents 74% of the overall stock within Sandwell. The HNA further identified overall increasing demand for accommodation within the Borough with a 51% shortfall annually on the number of homes needed to meet need.

4.2 Empty and unmanaged homes can blight communities whilst also removing good quality homes from the market. Taking positive actions to reduce the number of empty privately-owned properties is a key priority which will support the objective of delivering quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods.



- 4.3 Sandwell has had some success in bringing private empty properties back into use through advice and persuasion as well as some limited enforcement. However, there are a considerable number of empty property owners who are unreceptive to the impact they are causing and are not addressing long-standing dilapidated properties that have remained empty for many years and that are causing a disproportionately negative impact in communities in the borough.
- 4.4 The intended purpose of this strategy is to develop more pro-active solutions to empty properties that are negatively impacting on communities across our borough and to utilise a wasted resource to meet housing need.
- 4.5 The aim of the strategy is to bring a minimum of 200 empty homes back into use from the private sector over a period of 5 years.
- 4.6 It is important that the council focuses its resources on bringing back the right types of empty housing. Priority will be given to family homes as they are currently viewed as most in demand, and where needs change, so will the focus to seek properties to fit the ever-changing needs of the borough.

## Utilising assistance and enforcement

### Off the Starting Block Loans

- 4.7 The council plans to develop a loan scheme offering some empty home owners financial assistance that will encourage and support renovations to bring properties back into use. The loans will be repayable upon sale or occupation.
- 4.8 The loans will be limited and subject to council discretion on a case-by-case basis against the merits of each individual situation. Loans will be subject to a legally binding agreement to bring the property back into use.
- 4.9 Loans will be aimed at empty owners who perhaps inherited a poorly maintained property and do not have the means to manage a second home. They will be able to enter an agreement with the council to carry



out works and sell or let their property when agreed works are completed. Often buyers cannot get a mortgage on dilapidated properties, restricting who the owner can sell to.

- 4.10 The development of the loan scheme will be part of the wider development of a Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy. The development of the empty homes element of the policy as well as the development of the terms and conditions will form part of the early work of the newly created Empty Property Officer post.
- 4.11 The budget for loans over the five years has been set at £750,000 and will be financed from unallocated capital funds for home improvements held within Housing Directorate budgets.

### Enforcement Powers

- 4.12 Where encouragement and assistance fail, robust and wide-reaching enforcement powers will be used as well as housing standards enforcement and the use of wide-ranging enforcement powers.
- 4.13 Traditional empty property enforcement powers will be used along with new approaches utilising different powers to focus on empty properties with disrepair and untidy appearances as well as broader powers to help bring properties back into use.
- 4.14 The Empty Property Officer will have powers to make owners carry out repairs to remove hazards from empty properties to ensure they are managed and safe to live in. Civil Penalty powers will be used to charge owners for non-compliance with such notices. Revenue from such penalties will be recycled back into housing standards work.
- 4.15 Planning enforcement powers will be shared between the Empty Property Officer and Planning Enforcement Team to enable Empty Property Officers to take their own direct enforcement action against untidy and overgrown empty dwellings.



4.16 The strategy will commence from January 2023 with full mobilisation of the strategy from April 2023 following a current team restructure and recruitment of an Empty Property Officer from January through to April 2023.

## 5 Alternative Options

5.1 We could choose not to have an empty homes strategy and / or continue to provide a reactive service to complaints about empty properties dealing with nuisance and open to access only in addition to applying increased council tax charges.

## 6 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	Financial, staffing, land/building implications The proposals in the strategy will be delivered within existing resources with an expectation of increased income through civil penalties
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	Legal implications including regulations/law under which proposals are required/permitted and constitutional provisions There is no legal requirement to have an empty homes strategy. The enabling legislation to implement the strategy is set out in the draft strategy.
<b>Risk:</b>	Risk implications, including any mitigating measures planned/taken, health and safety, insurance implications Financial risks associated with issuing loans will be mitigated by a review of the Regulatory Reform Order (RRO) 2002.
<b>Equality:</b>	Implications for equality (all aspects and characteristics) including how meeting Equality Duty, equality impact assessments Enforcement action will be monitored to ensure there are no unintended consequences against any protected characteristics
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	Implications of the proposals on health and wellbeing of our communities Empty properties are a blight on our neighbourhood, which can have detrimental impact on communities



<b>Social Value:</b>	Implications for social value and how the proposals are meeting this (for e.g. employment of local traders, young people) There are no social value impact arising from this report
<b>Climate Change:</b>	Utilising empty properties is a less carbon intensive process than constructing new properties to help meet housing demand in Sandwell.

## 7. Appendices

Appendix 1. Draft Empty Property Strategy 2023 - 2028





# Empty Homes Strategy 2023 – 2028

~ Review/Revision 8 ~ 8 November 2022





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## 1. Introduction



### 1.1 The nature and extent of the problem

1.11 Empty properties are a waste of scarce resources, whilst also contributing to urban decline. They are linked with, and contribute to, a range of associated problems such as:

- A reduction in capital value of the empty property, and neighbouring properties,
- An increased rate of deterioration and decline in the fabric of the building,
- An increased vulnerability to vandalism, squatting and anti-social behaviour, and Neighbourhood blight.

1.12 Empty properties are therefore directly detrimental to both public and individual finances, and to the day-to-day conditions in the neighbourhoods in which we live. In bringing empty properties back into use there are benefits to:

- Individuals - prospective purchasers and tenants - by increasing housing availability and choice – addressing housing need and preventing homelessness by making more housing available.
- The community, by improving the local environment.
- Owners and landlords, by improving the condition of the property and turning it into a productive asset.

### 1.2 The National Picture

1.21 There are currently around 124,000 empty dwellings receiving an empty dwelling premium or reduced council tax rate in England, compared to 122,000 in 2020 [1]. This is a year on year increase following a decline in empty properties of this type from 2017 – 2019 [1].

1.22 The number of empties has reduced dramatically since 2013, when councils were given powers to charge a 50% premium on Council Tax bills. The vast majority of councils currently apply a 50% premium on long-term empty homes [2].



### 1.3 The Local Picture



1.31 There are currently 3359 known long-term privately owned empty properties in Sandwell as of March 2022.

1.32 Sandwell has had success in bringing many empty properties back into use through advice and persuasion. However; there are a considerable number of empty property owners who are unreceptive to this that have been empty for many years and that are in a dilapidated condition where the advice and persuasion approach has failed.

1.33 The intended purpose of this strategy is to develop more pro-active solutions to empty properties across our borough to utilise a wasted resource and reduce the impact of empty homes on surrounding communities.

#### Definition of a long-term empty property

1.34 An empty property that has been empty for six months or longer is considered to be a long-term empty. Any property that has been empty for two years or longer may be subject to automatic sanctions, such as elevated council tax charges.

#### Established action - Empty Homes Premium

1.35 Section 11B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 was introduced by Section 12 of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 and allowed for local authorities to charge an additional 50% Council Tax where properties had remained empty for a period of 2 years or more.



Legislation introduced by the Rating (Properties in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 on 1st November 2018 allows for councils to increase the levels of the premium as shown below. This is undertaken by Sandwell Council’s Council Tax Team.

Date of change	Empty period	Additional amount on top of normal empty charge	Total Council Tax charge
1 April 2019	Two or more years	100%	200%
1 April 2020	Five or more years	200%	300%
1 April 2021	Ten or more years	300%	400%

This action is established and in addition to the proactive work that is planned in this strategy.

More information at:

[Sandwell.gov.uk/info/200207/council\\_tax/4270/paying\\_council\\_tax\\_on\\_empty\\_properties](http://Sandwell.gov.uk/info/200207/council_tax/4270/paying_council_tax_on_empty_properties)



## 2 Aims and Objectives of the Empty Property Strategy

### The '200 homes' plan



### Bringing 200 family homes back into use in 5 years

2.1 The Council has identified empty properties as one of its key priority areas in relation to Private Rented and Owner-Occupied housing. The priority to be given to Empty Properties is reflected in the following performance indicators that have been established by the government as a means of assessing and bench marking the progress made by council's in dealing with empty homes.

2.2 Over the course of the strategy the council intends to bring back into use 200 long-term empty domestic properties that can be used for housing families in Sandwell.

2.3 As part of our monitoring of the homes brought back into use, the number of bed spaces from these homes will also be counted.

<b>Year 1 – 20 homes brought back into use.</b>
<b>Year 2 – 30 homes brought back into use.</b>
<b>Year 3 – 50 homes brought back into use.</b>
<b>Year 4 – 50 homes brought back into use.</b>
<b>Year 5 – 50 homes brought back into use.</b>



### Achieving the '200 homes' plan

Identified Need	Action	Outcomes
<p><b>Ensuring resources are in place to achieve targets.</b></p>	<p>Recruitment of an Empty Property Officer, creation of new strategy and financing for loans and enforcement action made available.</p>	<p>A dedicated officer who can engage with empty property owners, assess cases to plan and action the most appropriate interventions.</p>
<p><b>Finding suitable long-term empty homes.</b></p> <p>Identification the empty homes that are right for intervention.</p>	<p>Work with council tax records, on site staff and members of the public reporting empty homes. Identify cases from records and cases from previous intervention.</p>	<p>A database of suitable long-term empty homes that can be effectively targeted to bring back into use.</p>
<p><b>Making empty homes available for families in Sandwell.</b></p> <p>Ensuring a robust strategy to bring empty homes back into use.</p>	<p>Ongoing case work to ensure KPIs are achieved utilising encouragement and enforcement strategies.</p>	<p>Targets</p> <p>22/23 – 20 properties back into use</p> <p>23/24 – 30 properties back into use</p> <p>24/25 – 50 properties back into use</p> <p>25/26 – 50 properties back into use</p> <p>26/27 – 50 properties back into use</p> <p>We will also report on the number of bed spaces made available.</p>



<p><b>Getting the word out.</b></p> <p>Greater knowledge to be made available around empty property powers and council strategy to bring empty homes back into use.</p>	<p>Awareness raising within SMBC.</p> <p>Awareness raising externally.</p>	<p>Increased knowledge and agreed referral procedure with other teams.</p> <p>Engage with planning and Environmental Enforcement on use of their powers.</p> <p>Presentation to other teams in team meetings.</p> <p>Increased knowledge within external agencies.</p> <p>Posters.</p> <p>Work with Communications Team.</p>
<p><b>Ensuring people can reach us.</b></p> <p>Improved options for reporting of empty properties.</p>	<p>Update SMBC and Housing Strategy web site with EPS and simplified contract forms.</p>	<p>High quality information on web site and social media with simple contact forms.</p>
<p><b>Better options for empty property owners.</b></p> <p>More detailed and supportive advice and guidance for empty property owners.</p>	<p>Develop advice / information package for owners</p> <p>Work with Educate and Engage teams to assist landlords to reuse empty properties through CBL.</p>	<p>Investigate and prepare draft quality information package</p> <p>Printing and distribution</p> <p>Lease scheme</p>



<p><b>Using enforcement powers effectively for maximum impact.</b></p> <p>Ensuring that resources are used for their greatest impact.</p>	<p>Triaging cases effectively and utilising powers and enforcement resources to target the most troublesome empty properties that have the least likelihood of resolving without enforcement action being taken.</p> <p>Council tax elevated charged are levied against empty properties that have been empty for two years or longer.</p>	<p>The removal of long-term empty properties back into use where long case histories and well documented impact has been established.</p>
<p><b>Targeting the big issues.</b></p> <p>Progression of long standing empty property cases.</p>	<p>Utilising funding and enforcement powers to offer empty property owners opportunities as well as ensuring compliance through enforcement powers.</p>	<p>Successful homes brought back into use through advice, negotiation, loans and where needed enforcement action pursued utilising Housing Act enforcement powers and civil penalties where appropriate.</p>
	<p>Attendance and active engagement in Regional Empty Property Officers Forum</p>	<p>Sharing best practice</p>
<p><b>Staying relevant and at the forefront.</b></p> <p>Ensuring Sandwell is involved regionally with other authorities to learn and collaborate on new ways to bring empty homes back into use.</p>	<p>Attendance and active engagement in Regional Empty Property Officers Forum</p>	<p>Sharing best practice and collaboration at a regional level.</p>





<p><b>Feedback and communication on empty property work.</b></p> <p>Greater awareness of council achievements.</p>	<p>Maintain, update and continually improve Empty Property database.</p> <p>Ensuring timely and relevant press releases and media/website posts.</p>	<p>Accurate reports for performance monitoring and continuous improvement.</p>
	<p>Quarterly and biannual performance reports</p>	<p>Better reporting of empty property work and achievements made.</p>



### 3 Empty Property Enforcement Powers

#### Ensuring that empty properties are tackled effectively in Sandwell



#### How we use our powers

Empty property power	When we may use this power	Risks associated with this power	Opportunity associated with this power	Outcome
<p><b>Elevated Council Tax Charges</b></p> <p>Removal of financial advantages of leaving homes empty.</p>	<p>Empty properties that are empty for longer than two years.</p> <p>Elevation of council tax is considered on a case by case basis by the council tax team and may be changed by the valuation office.</p>	<p>Some empty property owners are not traceable and so debts build on properties anyway. Other owners are happy to pay the elevated charges.</p>	<p>This is an effective tool that encourages owners to bring properties back into use and where properties remain empty, the cost of managing them through public services can be financially compensated by elevated charges.</p>	<p>Less properties are left empty and where they are, there is a compensation for the extra costs involved in managing their impact.</p>
<p><b>Notification and negotiation</b></p>	<p>This is the first step in any empty property case. The council will engage with the owner to discuss options, notify them of the impact that</p>	<p>The property owner might be non-responsive, or may better manage the property, but not bring the property back into use.</p>	<p>Negotiating with the owner allows the opportunity to get a problem solved at low resource cost and without a greater cost to the owner.</p>	<p>Some properties will be better managed, some may become occupied sooner. Not all owners will be responsive and so cases will be triaged for</p>



	<p>the property is having and work with them to better manage the property and hopefully bring the property back into use.</p>	<p>The council will need to balance the resources it has against the urgency of each case. Properties that are unmanaged and causing the greatest impact will be prioritised.</p> <p>Sometimes a genuine reason can prevent a property becoming occupied that can stall a case for a long time. It is sometimes difficult to be able to explain the situation effectively to third-parties due to GDPR.</p>		<p>more formal action where owners do not cooperate.</p>
<b>Grants and loans</b>	<p>Where the council identifies an empty property owner who seems to be willing to bring a property back into use but has genuine financial issues in doing so may be able to utilise grants and loans provided by the council to assist with bringing the property back into use.</p> <p>Owners would repay the loans from rent or sale of the property.</p>	<p>The owner may utilise the loan and not succeed in making the property fully habitable.</p> <p>Contractors may not complete the work within the required budget.</p>	<p>The money can be recycled to other owners when repaid, creating a cycle of positive intervention that is sustainable and effective.</p>	<p>Owners of empty properties enabled to get works completed to enable letting or selling a property with the money returning to the council to recycle for other owners.</p>
<b>Enforcement against untidy land and buildings</b>	<p>Where domestic empty properties are left to deteriorate with untidy land and buildings, the</p>	<p>The owner may be difficult to trace or may tidy the land and building but leave the property empty.</p>	<p>Many empty property complaints are caused by the appearance of empty homes. The use of this power gives</p>	<p>Better managed empty homes.</p>



	council will take action against owners using planning enforcement powers shared between the Planning Enforcement Team and the Empty Property Team to serve notice and prosecute.		communities a short-term win in seeing an empty building cleaned up, allowing the council to work long-term on getting it brought back into use.	
<p><b>Compulsory purchase orders (CPOs)</b></p> <p>The council purchases the property with or without the consent of the owner in order to bring the property back into use.</p>	Where there is no traceable or cooperative owner and no other viable option to bring the property back into use.	The process is very long and expensive. It can drain general resources and prevent other empty property work.	The property will be brought into council ownership guaranteeing it being brought back into use.	Property will most likely to sold to a developer with a caveat on how and when the property will be renovated and occupied.
<p><b>Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs)</b></p> <p>The council takes control of the empty property for 7 years, renovating and letting it, then returning to the owner after the order period ends.</p>	Where there is known ASB and significant works are required to bring the property back into use where the owner is unable or unwilling to.	The council will not ever own the property and may lose money on the cost of renovation as the lease period is restricted to 7 years. Any profit must be passed back to the owner. There is no guarantee the owner will keep the property occupied after the lease ends. Tenants would need to vacate after the 7 years if the owner wishes.	The property is under council control for 7 years giving a resource for homeless cases. The property will be in a lettable state when it returns to the owner, increasing the chances they will choose to let or sell it.	The property will be renovated to a liveable standard. The council should regain most of the costs from the rent. The property is then in a liveable condition for the owner to sell or let when the order period ends.
<p><b>Housing Act 2004 HHSRS enforcement.</b></p>	If the owner of an empty property is known and there	The owner may carry out the works and still not reoccupy the property or sell it.	Ensuring that the property is in a fit and habitable state, this vastly increases	The empty property will be in a condition that it can be



<p>The council can make the owner of an empty property carry out renovation work to make a property safe to live in within a certain time period. The council can serve penalty notices if the owner fails to carry out the work.</p>	<p>are a number of works that need to be completed to bring the property back into use.</p> <p>This will be considered to be used where considered appropriate and where available resources allow.</p>		<p>the likelihood that the owner will then better manage the property as they have invested time and money into making it safe.</p>	<p>immediately let or sold. This vastly increases the chances that the owner will bring the property back into use.</p>
<p><b>Enforced sales procedures</b></p> <p>This power enables the enforced sale of a property to recoup debt charges.</p>	<p>Where there are debts on the property by way of charges from the council (such as council tax debt).</p> <p>This will be considered to be used where considered appropriate and where available resources allow.</p>	<p>The debts are rarely large enough to be able to justify to a court or judge that an order is the correct avenue to bring an empty property back into use.</p> <p>The property would be sold at auction with the council never owning it so would not be able to control who bought it or what they then chose to do with it, or not do with it.</p>	<p>The sale of the property is likely to spur renovation and occupation by the new owner.</p>	<p>Usually the sale of a property would mean a developer or new occupier who would bring the property back into use and better manage it. It is rare that someone buys a home and does nothing with it.</p>
<p><b>Dangerous structures</b></p> <p>A power to manage structures that have become dangerous.</p>	<p>Where an empty property has become structurally dangerous, a repair or demolish notice can be served and acted upon.</p> <p>This will be considered to be used where considered appropriate and</p>	<p>The powers are limited to making the building safe and may mean removing parts that make the building less likely to be occupied again.</p>	<p>If the building is removed, the land can become more valuable for a developer and removes the issues related to the current empty dwelling.</p>	<p>Either a cleared strip of land or a partly demolished structure. If the latter has happened, a CPO may be considered.</p>



	where available resources allow.			
<p><b>Power of Entry</b></p> <p>Power to enter empty properties</p>	<p>Where needed, the council can gain entry to empty properties for examination or to make the property safe.</p> <p>This will be considered to be used where considered appropriate and where available resources allow.</p>	<p>Such action can upset owners and break down relationships. The council should always seek to work with an empty property owner first.</p>	<p>Examination of the building allows the council to value the property and assess its condition to ensure they make the right decision in how they will work to bring the property back into use.</p>	<p>The council will be in a better position to make an assessment on how best to address the issues and barriers preventing the occupation of the empty property.</p>
<p><b>Unsecured properties</b></p> <p>Securing compromised ground floor openings.</p>	<p>Where an empty property is open to the highway, so that a person could walk into the building from the street without having to climb over gates or fencing, or open a door or window, the council can require the building is secured and take action if the owner fails to do so. It may also be used to fix a dangerous element such as a flood or leak etc.</p> <p>This will be considered to be used where considered appropriate and</p>	<p>The power is more of a management tool than a power to bring empty properties back into use.</p>	<p>The power assists in reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and encourages the owner to take more responsibility of their building.</p>	<p>The empty property will be secured against unauthorised access and/or prevented from being dangerous to the public.</p>



	where available resources allow.			
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## The legislative detail



### 3.1 Compulsory purchase orders (CPOs)

3.11 Under the Housing 1985 Section 17, where there appears to be no chance of a domestic property being brought back into use, a local authority can take action to make compulsory purchase orders (CPOs) on empty properties.

3.12 Before a CPO can be made, the council will first attempt to trace owner/s and work with them to encourage the property to be brought back into use.

3.13 The council will need to show that our reasons for making a CPO justify interfering with the human rights of anyone with an interest in the property.

### 3.2 Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs)

3.21 An Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO) allows councils to take over management of an empty property and use it for housing tenants.

3.22 Councils can make EDMOs on a domestic building where it has been empty for at least six months. There are two types of EDMOs; an interim order and a final order. An interim order lasts for 12 months; however, a final order can be between 7 and 21 years.

### 3.3 Housing Act 2004 HHSRS enforcement

3.31 The Housing Act 2004 Part 1 gives councils the power and responsibility to ensure domestic properties in their borough are safe and suitable to live in. These powers apply to occupied and empty properties. Councils can use these powers to enforce works to make properties habitable and safe to live in. Failure to comply with notices under this legislation can result in the council carrying out works and placing a charge on the property, prosecuting the property owner/s, or serving a civil penalty on the owner/s.





### 3.4 Enforced sales procedures

3.41 Where councils have made a charge against a property, they have the same legal rights as a mortgage lender under the Law and Property Act 1925 to reclaim that debt charge.

3.42 Charges include council tax debt and works in default.

### 3.5 Dangerous structures

3.51 Under the Building Act 1984, sections 77 and 78, the council can order property owners to make their property safe or allow the council to take emergency action to make it safe.

### 3.6 Power of Entry

3.61 The Housing Act 2004 allows councils to seek a warrant (S240) to access a property in order to assess the condition of the building and carry out any necessary action to ensure that the property is safe for occupation under the same act.

3.62 The council will always give at least 24 hours' notice to require access to a property (more if it is not an urgent matter).

### 3.7 Statutory nuisance

3.71 Councils can take action under the Environmental Protection Act, 1990, Section 80 as well as the Building Act 1984, Section 76 where disrepair is affecting others enjoyment of their land or causing a health concern. The council can serve notices to ensure that the owners makes their property safe. We can also carry out works in default to make the building safe.

### 3.8 Unsecured properties

3.81 Under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982, Section 29, where empty properties are left open to access, councils can serve notice to require owners to secure the building within 48 hours. Councils can secure the building and place a charge on the property.

### 3.9 Clearing untidy land and buildings

3.9.1 Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Section 215, where land is in such a condition that it affects the amenity of the area, the authority has the power to serve notice requiring land and buildings to be cleaned, repaired, maintained so as to be fitting with the area. Councils can carry out work and charge the owner or prosecute the owner for non-compliance.



## 4 Strategy for Tackling Nuisance Empty Properties

### Ensuring a clear and consistent approach to tackling empty properties in Sandwell



4.1 The council will take a positive and proactive approach to dealing with empty properties. All complaints will be dealt with as follows:

#### 1. Investigation and engagement

4.2 Officers will trace owners, gather evidence on the length of time the property has been empty, its condition and its impact on the surrounding area.

#### 2. Triage

4.3 Each case will be triaged according to its severity and available resources to take action. Each case will be assessed against an agreed matrix that will weight towards council housing priorities at that time as well as available resources. An example matrix can be viewed in chapter 7. The matrix will be subject to change depending on perceived needs in the housing sector.

#### 3. Engagement

4.4 Officers will contact owners and engage with them to encourage them to renovate and occupy empty properties.

4.5 Council tax rates on long-term empty properties will be raised each year, up to 400% of the full rate for an occupied dwelling.

#### 3. Update

4.6 Officers will keep complainants updated on progress within the confines of the Date Protection Act 2018.

#### 4. Renovation enforcement

4.7 Where encouragement fails, officers will utilise powers to enforce repairs, with cost recovery from the owners where possible for surveying and serving notices as well as for any works in default.



## 5. Occupation enforcement

4.8 Where properties are renovated to a standard for occupation, and owners have failed to bring the property back into use, the council will seek to take action to take control of the dwelling in order to bring the property back into use via an Empty Dwelling Management Order, Compulsory Purchase Order, Enforced Sale or other empty property power available to the council.

4.9 As this is a heavily cost burdensome action, cases will be triaged to ensure that the highest priority cases are tackled first with the resources available to the council. This may result in some properties becoming less of a priority where they are being managed but not occupied.



## 5. Enforcement Policy



### Fairness, consistency and transparency

#### The Regulators Compliance Code

5.1 In compliance with the spirit of the Enforcement Concordat the Regulators Compliance Code and the Environmental Enforcement policy our approach will be fair, equitable and incremental. The primary function of central and local government enforcement work is to protect the public, the environment and various other groups such as consumers. There is a need to carry out enforcement functions in a consistent, practical and equitable manner, which in turn will help to promote a thriving local and national economy.

#### Engagement before enforcement

5.2 Before progressing from one of the following procedures to another, we will ensure that owners are fully advised and given an opportunity and sufficient time to take measures of their own to bring properties back into use.

#### Correct and consistent use of resources

5.3 Where enforcement action is used, the council will firstly fully appraise the situation and utilise a transparent scoring system to prioritise cases with the resources available. Higher scoring cases will be prioritised, as well as properties that are more suitable family homes.



## 6 Grants and low-cost loans

### 'Off the starting block' loans.

**Giving empty property owners a step in the right direction where finance is a barrier to bringing homes back into use.**



6.1 The council plans to offer empty property owners loans in certain circumstances where financial difficulties are preventing them from being able to make their empty property safe to live in again.

6.2 The loans will be limited and subject to council discretion on a case-by-case basis against the merits of each individual situation. Loans will be subject to a legally binding agreement to bring the property back into use.

6.3 Successful applicants will be offered the chance to enter into an agreement with the council to accept a short-term loan with conditions that enables them to get their empty property back into use within an agreed time.

6.4 Loans aimed at empty owners who perhaps inherited a poorly maintained property and do not have the means to manage a second home will be able to enter an agreement with the council to carry out works and sell or let their property at the end. Often buyers cannot get a mortgage on damaged properties, restricting who the owner can sell to.

6.5 Loans will be paid back in agreed segments once the property is occupied. The owner will be required to carry out works within an agreed timeframe.



6.6 The loans are designed to be an ‘off the starting block’ assistance to certain owners who lack the financial strength to carry out key works to get a property occupied.

6.7 The loans will be specifically aimed at properties that are in a reasonable condition, but need works to tip them back into a lettable or sellable condition to ensure that they are occupied in the near future.

6.8 Where loans are not properly used or a property remains empty after works are completed, the council may consider legal action or the use of empty property enforcement powers to ensure that the property becomes occupied. Loans will be placed as a charge against the property and as such properties may be at risk if repayments are not made due to a breach of the agreement.

6.9 Development of the application process of the loans will be carried out by the Empty Property officer in year 1 of the Empty Property Strategy in conjunction with the wider directorate in establishing a joined-up strategy for the delivery of loans for the purposes of improving housing in Sandwell. Loans should be available by year 2 of the strategy.

6.10 The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order 2002 provides local housing authorities with a general permissive power to assist property owners with improving housing conditions. The local housing authority can only exercise these powers if it has adopted a Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy. The Empty Property officer and Operations Manager will work with other services to ensure a robust Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy is put into place to allow loans to be developed and issues as part of this five-year strategy with a view to offer loans by Q4 of the first financial year of the strategy.

6.11 The appointment of an Empty Property Officer by March 2023 will enable the development and implementation of the loans.



## 7 Triage Matrix

### Example Empty Homes Priority Matrix

This Matrix is an example of the type of considerations officers might use to prioritise cases depending on what current priorities and resources the council has at that time.

Categories may change depending on circumstances and priorities, for example, severity of disrepair might be a priority where CPO money is available, however timescale to bring back into use might be the priority in a different area where housing need is higher.

The matrix also allows for affordability calculations when considering formal action that requires financial investment, such as a CPO or EDMO.

<b>Address</b>	
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<b>Environmental Factors – circle score</b>				
<b>Location of Property</b>				
	<b>Unobtrusive</b>	<b>Visible</b>	<b>Highly Visible</b>	<b>Gateway Location</b>
	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Period of Inactivity</b>	<b>6+ Months</b>	<b>18+ Months</b>	<b>5+ Years</b>	<b>10+ Years</b>
	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Vulnerability of Property</b>	<b>Secure &amp; Maintained</b>	<b>Secure &amp; Non-Maintained</b>	<b>Insecure</b>	<b>Serious Anti-Social Behaviour</b>
	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Condition of Property</b>	<b>Clean &amp; Tidy</b>	<b>Attracting Rubbish</b>	<b>Minor Disrepair</b>	<b>Vandalism</b>
	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Housing Need</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Severe</b>
	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>



<b>Score for Property</b>

**Housing Affordability Factors – circle score**

House Type	Detached	Bungalow	Terraced	Semi-Detached
	2	4	6	10
<b>Number of Bedrooms</b>	4+	1	2	3
	2	4	6	10
<b>Estimated Market Value of Property</b>	£300,000 +	£250,00 - £299,999	Under £150,000	£150,000 - £250,000
	2	4	6	10
<b>Estimated Refurbishment Cost</b>	Under £12,000	£12,000 - £34,999	£35,000 - £49,999	£50,000 +
	2	4	6	10

<b>Score for affordability</b>

<b>Total Score for Property</b>





[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/council-taxbase-2021-in-england>

[2] <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-boosts-councils-powers-to-help-bring-empty-homes-back-into-use>

[3] Image at '1.3 The Local Picture' [geograph.org.uk/photo/6815212](http://geograph.org.uk/photo/6815212)



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## Report to Cabinet

**7 December 2022**

<b>Subject:</b>	On Street Residential Charging Scheme – Authorisation to enter into a contract with a Chargepoint Operator
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cabinet Member for Environment Cllr. Peter Hughes
<b>Director:</b>	Tony McGovern Director Regeneration & Growth
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Andy Miller – Strategic Planning & Transportation Manager <a href="mailto:andy_miller@sandwell.gov.uk">andy_miller@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

### 1 Recommendations



- 1.1 That approval be given for the s.151 officer to sign and enter into contract with Gamma Energy Ltd., the successful bidder for the installation of Electric Vehicle (EV) chargepoints across the Black Country with the initial call-off covering the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) On-street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) funded project at a value of £400,574, but call-offs up to a total of £2.5million are possible.
- 1.2 That in connection with 1.1 above, the conditions relating to the grant-funded element and the revenue share implications be received.



## 2 Reasons for Recommendations

2.1 This contract will be used to deliver 37 public dual socket chargepoints (74 sockets) in residential areas where residents do not have access to off-street parking and are therefore not able to charge their vehicles on driveways with a private charge point, as is the norm. The funding will therefore deliver approximately 40% of the 7kW chargepoints required by 2025 in order to support Sandwell’s transition to electric vehicles in the light of the Government’s intended ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles in 2030, as outlined in the Black Country ULEV (Ultra Low Emission Vehicles) Strategy.

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

	<p><b>People Live Well and Age Well</b> As outlined in the Black Country ULEV Strategy, the transition to ULEVs from ICE (internal combustion engine) vehicles will dramatically improve air quality throughout the borough, lessening residents’ exposure to air pollution and consequent lung and cardiovascular conditions. This transition is reliant on the provision of charging infrastructure delivered by the funding streams such as ORCS.</p>
	<p><b>A Connected and Accessible Sandwell</b> The UK government has announced that the sale of all new ICE cars will be banned from 2030. Whilst modal shift away from private car use in an urban context continues to be the primary goal of local, regional and national policy, the private car remains central in providing mobility for Sandwell residents. A supported transition away from ICE cars to ULEVs, ensures that Sandwell residents will continue to have access to a range of modes, including the private car. Infrastructure deployment facilitated by funding streams such as ORCS plays an important role in facilitating this transition.</p>



## 4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 The ORCS project was taken to Cabinet for approval on 24/11/21. The project involves the installation of 74 chargepoints across the Borough, spread across 37 locations on the footway in residential areas which lack off-street parking. Residents request for infrastructure were a key factor in selecting these locations.
- 4.2 Consultation on the sites was conducted from December 2021 until February 2022. The vast majority of the sites received very few objections, and those which were more controversial are having additional engagement in order to try to overcome the concerns raised. There are back-up sites identified in the eventuality that the objections cannot be resolved.
- 4.3 The project supports the council's net zero ambitions and is in line with the West Midlands Combined Authority's WM2041 strategy, and government targets on climate change and transport.
- 4.4 After the initial purchase price, range anxiety due to a lack of charging infrastructure is the most commonly cited reason for not switching to an EV. In order to remedy this, we aim to meet the targets identified in the Black Country ULEV strategy for Sandwell of 175 additional 7kW chargers by 2025. The ORCS project is the first step towards meeting these targets, and the procurement approach gives us a route to deliver the full 2025 target.
- 4.5 This contract will necessitate that the operator takes on the revenue costs for operation and maintenance of the chargepoints, reducing the risk to the council. Individual contracts will allow a degree of variation between local authorities as to how exactly they wish to operate the network within their area.
- 4.6 The concession model offers the best compromise between financial risk and reward, and control over delivery.



4.7 The Oxford City Council Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) gave us access to the largest percentage of the current chargepoint operator market, offering the best chance to secure strong value for money for the council. A full tender would have been too labour intensive and would have carried greater risk without the pre-checks that bidders are subject to prior to being accepted onto the DPS.

4.8 Gamma Energy Ltd. achieved the highest overall score in the mini-competition, and we are therefore obliged to award them the contract.

## 5 Alternative Options

5.1 The decision to progress with this approach was the culmination of months of discussions and independent advice. The concession model was chosen as the best compromise between pursuing a fully operator funded model which would significantly limit our ability to influence locations of chargepoints, and minimise and possible revenue return, and a more hands-on own-and-operate model that would carry significant revenue risk.

5.2 The model gives the local authorities the ability to leverage capital grant funding available to de-risk the delivery and secure an operator who will commit to covering all revenue costs for the contract term.

5.3 Having chosen to seek a concession contract, discussions were carried out to select the best route to market. An open tender process was considered, but the increased resource required, and the greater risk when compared to using an existing framework were unattractive. A large number of available frameworks and Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS) were considered, eventually settling on the Oxford City Council framework owing to the broad range of suppliers with access offering the best chance of a competitive process leading to stronger bids. The DPS also benefits from being new, which means that it incorporates all the latest technical specifications and experience from the last few years of public sector EV chargepoint delivery.



5.4 The successful bidder, Gamma Energy Ltd., scored the highest during our further competition on the DPS, meeting all mandatory requirements and achieving the best overall score across the criteria with a 50:50 price/quality split.

## 6 Implications

<p><b>Resources:</b></p>	<p>Budgets have been created for the delivery of the project, and match funding is allocated within the 2022/23 transport capital programme. We would need to ensure measures are in place to accept the 15% revenue share once it begins to be received in year 4 of the contract.</p> <p>The contract commits the operator to funding all ongoing costs including (but not limited to) maintenance, repairs and replacements as a result of wear and tear, accidental damage or vandalism.</p> <p>All identified sites must be installed and operational before the 31st of March 2023, otherwise we may be open to clawback of the grant funding.</p>
<p><b>Legal and Governance:</b></p>	<p>The council will be entering into a 10-year concession contract with Gamma Energy Ltd. The contract will have optional 3 and 2-year extensions after this term, subject to contract performance and a review of the market at that time.</p> <p>The contract is based upon the call-off contract for the Oxford City Council DPS, which has been reviewed by the Council's Legal Services, with the addition of the clauses defined by the mini-competition covering charges to customers and revenue share to the council.</p> <p>The contract contains KPIs which will be monitored by the contract manager to ensure performance is satisfactory throughout the duration of the contract.</p>



<b>Risk:</b>	<p>The main risk at this stage is failure to deliver the ORCS funded element before the end of this financial year, which is why it is key that we conclude the contractual discussions as soon as possible.</p> <p>This operating model has been designed to insulate the council from as much of the potential revenue risk as possible, by committing the operator to funding all of the operating and maintenance costs over the contract term.</p>
<b>Equality:</b>	<p>There are no equalities implications arising from the signing of the concession contract.</p> <p>There is a complete Equalities Impact Assessment for the ORCS project. This did not raise any equalities issues associated with the installation, operation and use of the chargepoints.</p>
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	<p>Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles create zero exhaust emissions and therefore have the capacity to significantly improve roadside air pollution. Air pollution has been linked to exacerbation of several heart and lung conditions as well as increasing the risk of premature death. In the West Midlands approximate 1,500 deaths are attributed to local air quality each year.</p> <p>In the Black Country this is around 650 attributable deaths, with approximately 140 of those within Sandwell</p>
<b>Social Value:</b>	<p>Installation of chargepoints will generate additional demand for skilled labour, likely focussing on the civil and electrical engineering disciplines. Gamma Energy Ltd. has committed to creating new, local jobs as part of the social value element of the procurement exercise.</p>
<b>Climate Change:</b>	<p>The project supports the council's net zero ambitions and is in line with the West Midlands Combined Authority's WM2041 strategy, and Government targets on climate change and transport.</p>





## 7. Background Papers

Report to Cabinet – 24<sup>th</sup> November 2021  
Black Country ULEV Strategy (2020)



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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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## Report to Cabinet

**7 December 2022**

<b>Subject:</b>	Grant funding for advice services 2023/24 – 2025/26
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cabinet Member for Adults, Social Care & Health (Health inequalities) Cabinet Member for Children & Education (Reducing child poverty) Cabinet Member for Communities (Development of stronger communities, community cohesion & resilience) Cabinet Member for Housing (Welfare rights)
<b>Director:</b>	Director of Housing Gillian Douglas Director of Public Health Lisa McNally Director of Children’s Services and Education Michael Jarrett
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Heather Chinner Heather_chinner@sandwell.gov.uk

### 1 Recommendations

1.1 That approval is given to allocating the following grants to voluntary organisations with effect from April 2023 until March 2026:

Organisation/service	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £
Citizens Advice Sandwell (generalist open door, debt service and phone service)	585,728	585,728	585,728
Citizens Advice Sandwell (homeless prevention project)	70,000	70,000	70,000



Citizens Advice Sandwell (Resilient Residents/ budgeting support)	25,260	25,260	25,260
Sandwell Consortium (generalist open door & advice in children's centres)	240,305	240,305	240,305
Sandwell Consortium (advice in children's centres)	100,265	100,265	100,265
Smethwick Pakistani Muslim Association (generalist open door)	31,458	31,458	31,458
Brushstrokes (immigration advice)	32,719	32,719	32,719
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,085,735</b>	<b>1,085,735</b>	<b>1,085,735</b>

## 2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 This report brings together proposals in relation to advice provision and to budgeting support. It seeks approval to a further 3 year period of grant funding, from April 2023 until March 2026, for voluntary sector advice providers and for the budgeting training provided by Citizens Advice Sandwell to frontline staff. Stable funding will enable providers to retain skilled advisers and to continue to work well together to deliver high quality services that respond flexibly to changes in need. This is particularly important as residents are facing increased hardship as a result of the cost of living crisis and the need for free, high quality, community based benefits, debt and budgeting advice is more important than ever.
- 2.2 It is proposed that the following 3 year grants are approved:

<b>Organisation/service</b>	<b>2023/24 £</b>	<b>2024/25 £</b>	<b>2025/26 £</b>
Citizens Advice Sandwell (generalist open door, debt service and phone service)	585,728	585,728	585,728
Citizens Advice Sandwell (homeless prevention project)	70,000	70,000	70,000
Citizens Advice Sandwell (Resilient Residents/ budgeting training)	25,260	25,260	25,260
Sandwell Consortium (generalist open door & advice in childrens centres)	240,305	240,305	240,305



Sandwell Consortium (advice in children's centres)	100,265	100,265	100,265
Smethwick Pakistani Muslim Association (generalist open door)	31,458	31,458	31,458
Brushstrokes (immigration advice)	32,719	32,719	32,719
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,085,735</b>	<b>1,085,735</b>	<b>1,085,735</b>


This will be funded by the following budgets:

<b>Budget/funding source</b>	<b>2023/24 £</b>	<b>2024/25 £</b>	<b>2025/26 £</b>
Public health grant	896,235	896,235	896,235
Voluntary sector support budget general fund (children's services)	118,000	118,000	118,000
Housing – Flexible Homeless Support Grant	70,000	70,000	70,000
Voluntary sector support budget general fund (housing)	1,500	1,500	1,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,085,735</b>	<b>1,085,735</b>	<b>1,085,735</b>



This compares to funding of £1,115,632 during the period 2020/21 – 2022/23. Savings have been achieved primarily by cancelling the subscription to BetterOff Sandwell (replaced by [Resilient Residents](#)).

Cabinet should note that at this stage there is no clear guidance on the continuation of Public Health Grant beyond 2023/24. The programme would need to be very significantly reappraised should there be a material change to this funding in the future.

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

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people</p> <p>In 2021/22 Sandwell Consortium supported 790 families through the children's centres, helping them to gain £1,122,022 in confirmed benefit gains. 20 of these families were in housing crisis.</p> <p>In addition to targeted support through children's centres all advice providers support families.</p>
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	<p>People live well and age well Poverty has a huge impact on every aspect of life, particularly health and well being Provision of free advice increases household income, helps to deal with problem debt and reduces money worries. Outcomes for residents include improved health and wellbeing.</p>
	<p>Strong resilient communities Tackling poverty through free, high quality advice helps to create and maintain strong and resilient communities</p>

## 4 Context and Key Issues

### 4.1 The integrated advice system

In 2013 a co-design approach was taken, working with voluntary sector advice providers to develop an integrated advice system. Since then there have been a number of modifications linked to changes in both needs and resources. In 2022 the integrated advice system is made up of the following:

- Specialist welfare rights service delivered by the council's welfare rights team (primarily by phone or on-line)
- Specialist debt service delivered by Citizens Advice Sandwell & Walsall
- Specialist immigration advice delivered by Brushstrokes
- Citizens Advice Sandwell & Walsall: open door generalist advice provision in Smethwick, Oldbury, Tipton and Cradley Heath, telephone and web chat advice service. Work is underway to find locations in West Bromwich and Wednesbury
- Targeted services - a mix of open door and flexible outreach in secular settings by local organisations rooted within the community - delivered by members of Sandwell Consortium and SPMA
- Advice provision in children's centres delivered by Sandwell Consortium
- Budgeting support is the responsibility of all advice workers, using [Resilient Residents](#) as a tool. Training in how to approach budgeting is provided by Citizens Advice Sandwell & Walsall and is available to all frontline staff (for example food bank and food pantry volunteers, family support staff in schools)
- Providers are joined together in a strong and effective [Sandwell Advice Providers Network](#). All funded providers have to comply with SAPN service standards and quality is assured through regular audits by the welfare rights team (Appendix 1)





In total the council invests **£2,132,000 pa** on the integrated advice offer available for residents (£1,043,000 on the in-house welfare rights team and £1.089,000 on voluntary sector advice services).

### **The role of specialists:**

**The council's welfare rights team** provide quality assurance of welfare benefits work through audits of the work of each provider at least once a year. They also provide regular briefings for advice workers. VCS advisers are able to deliver benefits advice up to mandatory reconsideration level and are expected to refer appeals to the welfare rights team who are experienced in representing clients.

**Citizens Advice (debt)** provide briefing on debt advice and providers are expected to refer complex debt cases to them.

**Brushstrokes (immigration)** lead on the provision of immigration advice up to OISC level 3. They convene an immigration advisers support network for OISC level 1 qualified advisers.

### **Budgeting support**

Rather than trying to run a specific budgeting support project, the approach has been to make budgeting everyone's business, by training frontline workers to integrate budgeting support into their work. [Resilient Residents](#) brings together on-line information and support on benefits, employment and budgeting all in one place. It is an increasingly important tool in our approach to face to face budgeting support, ensuring that it is the "go-to" site for information about money saving information (water rates, phone charges, energy).

Training in how to approach budgeting in a sensitive and appropriate way is provided by Citizens Advice Sandwell & Walsall. In recent months training has been delivered to Sandwell Childrens Trust staff, the SHAPE youth forum, Citizens Advice staff and is underway for staff in Warm Spaces and Barnardo's staff. Citizens Advice Sandwell are also supporting a Sandwell forum of frontline staff delivering budgeting support to their clients



## Self help

Information is available to enable those residents who are able to help themselves and their families to take action themselves:

Help with debt – [free debt advice on-line](#)

Money saving tips – [budget planners](#)

Wherever possible advice providers are encouraging people to do more so that they can focus services on the most vulnerable.

## Working together effectively to tackle poverty in Sandwell - Building Resilient Residents Group

This interagency group focuses on advice, budgeting and employment support, ensuring that services are well joined up, visible and respond to changing needs. Appendix 2 gives more information. This group has lost some momentum as a result of the pandemic and needs to be strengthened to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the cost of living crisis.

The integrated advice system has been grant funded since 2014/15 to deliver a blend of open door and targeted advice to residents. Stable funding and a collaborative approach has led to skilled advice workers and a focus by providers on planning ahead and delivering service improvements.

## 4.2 Outputs delivered by voluntary sector providers

### Numbers of unique clients supported

Organisation	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 6 months
Citizens Advice	14,657	12,072 including 11,959 phone enquiries	5782 face to face (30%) + 13,683 phone	951 face to face +6,659



			enquiries (70%) <b>19,465</b>	7,610
Sandwell Consortium open door	4,261	2,260	3,053	2,700
Sandwell Consortium children's centres	648	358	790	514
SPMA	675	328	551	453
Brushstrokes (funding began 2020/21)	-	577	951	849
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,241</b>	<b>15,595</b>	<b>24,810</b>	<b>12,126</b>

### Welfare rights advice confirmed gains

Organisation	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22 *	2022/23 6 months
Citizens Advice	£1,813,018	£1,493,994	£2,383,853	£864,106
Sandwell Consortium open door	£4,994,466	£3,399,118	£4,272,101	£1,541,213
Sandwell Consortium children's centres	£1,416,966	£787,779	£1,122,022	£638,204
SPMA	£1,817,332	£2,184,396	£3,411,865	£1,875,537
Brushstrokes (funding began 2020/21)	-	£288,267	£659,804	£242,379
<b>Total</b>	<b>£10,041,782</b>	<b>£8,153,554</b>	<b>£11,849,645</b>	<b>£5,161,439</b>

\*These figures include benefit gains and any one -off charitable grants



All providers are funded to carry out generalist advice. Welfare rights forms an important part of their work.

### Debt outputs April 2021/22

The Citizens Advice debt advice service is jointly funded by Sandwell Council and by the Money and Pensions Service. SPMA are funded by the Henry Smith Charity. Outputs were as follows:

Organisation	Funder	Total level of client debt 2021/22	Estimated amount of debt written off 2021/22	Amount of debt managed/ moved to payment plans 2021/22
Citizens Advice	Sandwell Council	£3,761,760	£276,030	Data not collected routinely - best estimate £51,300
Citizens Advice	Money and Pensions Service	£11,341,211	£976,751	£158,902
SPMA	The Henry Smith Charity	£6,576,432	£3,924,069	
<b>Total</b>		<b>£21,679,403</b>		

### Housing advice – support provided to people in housing crisis

Citizens Advice and Brushstrokes receive specific funding from the council to provide housing advice to residents at risk of homelessness.

Organisation	2019/20 No of clients	2020/21 No of clients	2021/22 No of clients
Citizens Advice	3,291	2,506	1,396



Sandwell Consortium open door	17	21	28
Sandwell Consortium children's centres	34	7	20
Brushstrokes	N/A	121	187
SPMA	31	19	8
Total	<b>3,373</b>	<b>2,674</b>	<b>1,639</b>

### **4.3 Continuous improvement**

Advice providers are all committed to service improvement. In 2021/22 their achievements include:

- maintaining face to face services for the most vulnerable
- continuing to support public health by promoting Covid safe behaviour and vaccine take up
- keeping up to date with the range of financial support available to residents, such as Household Support Fund
- Phase 1 of 'i-act' training for advice workers to enable them to promote positive mental health and wellbeing among their clients.

### **Looking ahead to 2023/24**

In 2023/24 the biggest challenge will be the impact of the cost of living crisis on Sandwell residents:

- cost of living crisis affecting everyone
- more people in crisis
- increasing numbers of people with no recourse to public funds
- digital challenges
- impact of Brexit – EUSS, those with pre-settled status will have limited rights
- fewer places where people can get face to face help
- seeing more complex cases, particularly newcomers with very poor language skills
- short term support likely to continue (rather than longer term changes in benefits etc)
- providers helping residents to access a patchwork of grants and one-off charitable payments



- budgeting support essential

### **Priorities for advice providers will include:**

- ensuring that budgeting support is well integrated into advice and that there are appropriate referrals into employment support
- supporting clients to do more for themselves
- showing clients how to use the internet
- referring clients to Sandwell Language Network
- debt advice – encouraging clients to seek help at an early stage
- improved levels of warm referrals into other services such as Community Offer
- re-starting the training programme for advice workers including re-introducing face to face training and network meetings
- ensuring that data about debt and budgeting is captured on monitoring systems by providing additional training for advisers
- re-starting the programme of regular audits
- rolling out phase 2 of the programme of i-act training for advisers.

### **Challenges facing advice providers:**

- difficulties in recruiting volunteers to replace those who left during the pandemic
- difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff
- increasing demand for services
- more time required to provide the right level of support

## **5 Alternative Options**

5.1 Reduce levels of funding to vcs providers – this is not a viable option when demand for services are increasing because of the cost of living crisis.

5.2 Move to contracts - this is highly likely to cause disruption and uncertainty amongst providers just at a time when we need a stable advice offer for our residents to support them through the cost of living crisis. We need providers to continue to focus their energy and creativity on delivery - meeting residents' needs, rather than competing with each other to secure continued funding.



## 6 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	There are sufficient resources in the identified budgets to fund the proposed grants. No inflation has been included in the proposed grants.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	The recommendation is in line with <a href="#">Sandwell Compact</a> and the <a href="#">VCS Funding Protocol</a> The statutory power to provide grant funding is contained in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 (general power of competence). Grant funding is not subject to the requirements for competition under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
<b>Risk:</b>	Having a range of providers all able to meet the quality standards ensures that risks around capacity and demand are spread across the whole network. The collaborative model of co-designing services ensures that providers work together to find creative ways of responding to changes in the environment facing residents. Recent examples include: maintaining services throughout covid, re-opening face to face services, supporting newcomers (Afghan and Ukrainians), responding to growing demand as a result of the cost of living crisis.
<b>Equality:</b>	The range of services provided ensure that free advice can be accessed by a wide range of communities.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	Poverty has a huge impact on every aspect of life, particularly health and well being Provision of free advice increases household income, helps to deal with problem debt and reduces money worries. Outcomes for residents include improved health and wellbeing.
<b>Social Value</b>	Volunteers are an integral part of service delivery. Many of the advice workers are Sandwell residents. All providers have a long term commitment to the wellbeing of Sandwell residents
<b>Climate Change:</b>	Provision of budgeting support as part of the advice offer will help people to reduce their energy consumption.



## 7. Appendices

Appendix 1 Sandwell Advice Providers Network summary of service standards

## 8. Background Papers

[Sandwell Advice Provider Network Annual Reports](#) 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22.







## **Sandwell Advice Providers Network SUMMARY OF SERVICE STANDARDS Revised November 2021**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of these service standards is to ensure that clients receive a high quality service and that there is consistency across different providers so that, regardless of where they get advice, clients receive a similar service. These standards have been developed and adopted by the Sandwell Advice Providers Network. Only those providers meeting the standards will be able to display the Sandwell Advice Providers Network logo. Sandwell council funds a number of advice providers and compliance with these service standards is a condition of funding.

The expectation will be that the interpretation of standards will be proportionate depending on the level of funding and / or the level of service provided (signposting, referral, advice/ advice and assistance, casework)

### **Accessibility**

- The service should be appropriate to the needs of the local / target community
- Awareness of the service – it should be well marketed and promoted
- Equality of access – issues for clients are understood and addressed
- The provider has target maximum waiting times for walk in appointments
- The provider has target maximum waiting times for appointments
- The provider has clearly documented times and procedures for follow up (review/ action/ chase up etc) during casework or follow up work
- Use of the “Sandwell Advice Provider” brand will be dependent upon full compliance with service standards

### **Seamless Service**

- Where a provider cannot provide the service needed by the client, they must inform the client and direct them to an alternative service provider, where available
- Clients should receive a timely service from an appropriate source either as a result of referral or supported/handholding referral. If it is not possible to make a referral then clear information should be provided to signpost the client to the right service.

### **Well Managed Organisation**

- A clear management structure that identifies the roles and responsibilities of individuals in the delivery of the service.



- Providers ensure availability of resources to provide the service when and where it is needed – making best use of available resources at all times
- Effective financial control
- Sufficient levels of Professional Indemnity Insurance
- Performance management systems to enable the provider to keep clear records to identify (i) the demand and need for its service (ii) the types of enquiries it receives (iii) the level of service provided i.e referral, advice/advice and assistance, casework and the outcomes delivered

### Well Managed People

- Staff (paid or volunteers) possess the skills and knowledge required to meet the clients' needs and are able to develop these.
- Commitment to equal opportunities
- Appropriate access to basic and specialist advice training and continuous development are provided for paid staff and volunteers.
- Appropriate access to customer care training and development are provided for paid staff and volunteers
- Appropriate qualified and experienced support and specialist supervision in advice work is provided to all paid staff and volunteers

### Quality Service and Quality Assurance

- A clear commitment to high quality services and regular review of performance.
- Processes and procedures to ensure clients get advice from the most appropriate source taking account of the knowledge and skills of staff – so that the client feels confident in and gets the appropriate level of advice
- In the case of welfare rights advice, the welfare rights team will assess capability and at least one advice worker assessed as good or excellent will be available at each location
- Training - each year all advice workers must attend a minimum of:
  - 1 welfare rights course (benefit calculation refresher or new adviser training),
  - 1 council tax reduction scheme (benefit calculation refresher or new adviser training),
  - and at least 2 topic based network sessions
  - plus appropriate on-line training.

Training records will form part of the audit process.

- Processes and procedures in place to underpin, monitor and review the delivery of quality services for the client.
- Quality is maintained where part of the service is delivered by someone else.
- There is a clear, transparent customer satisfaction, complaints & compliments process
- Client's feedback is encouraged and there is opportunity to participate in the development of the advice services provided.

### Well Managed Service

- Processes and procedures that ensure an effective and efficient service to their clients



- Client information and case files are well organised
- Records are held on an appropriate case recording software system
- Independent audit/review of quality of work and appropriate follow-up.
- Feedback process for service and performance reviews for staff and volunteers
- Agreement to independent audit by Sandwell Council as the funding body

### Meeting Client Needs

- Clients receive timely and accurate advice and information
- Clients receive advice and information relevant to their needs
- Service is confidential – the provider has a clear confidentiality policy with all exceptions made clear.
- Advice is independent and impartial – conflict of interest policies and procedures are in place
- Client records documenting the needs, advice given and the actions to be taken next and by whom are kept and made available to the client
- Clients are informed where advice given includes action that the organisation may not be able to undertake and the reason.
- Advice is provided at **no cost/ free of charge**
- Clients are informed of any potential costs such as those arising from referrals to other agencies that may charge.
- Clients are kept fully informed about the progress of a case, including changes, actions, actions required by them, outcomes achieved and closure of case
- Clients will receive clear accurate and timely written records of any advice and services
- Clients are entitled to confidentiality, privacy and fair treatment

### Client Consent and Client Records

- Ensure that client consent forms include a privacy notice compliant with the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018
- Obtain clients specific consent to act on their behalf/as an 'advocate' – signed & dated at time of contact
- Obtain clients consent to pass information to other organisations
- Up to date accurate records kept for all client interventions
- A documented process for how client records are stored and maintained including letters and third party correspondence
- Keeping client records for the appropriate period of time after the case is closed

### Helping Clients to meet their own needs and build their Financial Resilience

- Ensure that time is spent discussing with each client how they could be supported to help themselves
- Promote Resilient Residents as a source of information for clients
- Help with budgeting **must** form part of the advice offer
- Provide warm referrals to other support such as ESOL classes, help getting on-line, employment support,

### Engagement in and Commitment to Sandwell Advice Providers Network



- Commitment to attending & supporting
- Commitment to seeking additional funding
- Sharing training and development opportunities
- Sharing learning from practice
- Continuous improvement - joined up improvement plans

### **Quality Standardisation Across Service Providers**

- Opening hours/contact details of other services available across the network
- The same service from all providers advertised through logos
- Common terminology that describes the different levels of service provided

### **Signposting**

This is when a client attends an advice outlet with an enquiry or issue that can be best dealt with by another agency and is given information, for example a leaflet, about that service. The client is not helped in any other way to access the agency

### **Referrals.**

This is when a client attends an advice outlet with an enquiry that could be best dealt with by another organisation, for example, a client comes in with a housing enquiry and is referred to Shelter.

The adviser actively helps the client to access Shelter by phoning or emailing the clients details to Shelter and in some cases by arranging the appointment for the client.

### **Advice/ Advice and Assistance.**

This is where a client is given advice regarding their enquiry, for example, the client wishes to know if they are receiving the correct amount of benefit. This is checked and if correct the client leaves or, if it is discovered that they are entitled to an increase in their benefit entitlement, the adviser assists the client to complete the form for claiming.

### **Casework.**

This is where the adviser takes over the client's case, the client signs a consent form, (not to be confused with the data protection consent form) making the advice agency their agent to act on their behalf. All letters are sent out on letter headed paper with responses being sent back to the advice agency who will keep the client informed of the progress of the case.



## Report to Cabinet

7 December 2022

<b>Subject:</b>	Improvement Plan Progress
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Leader of the Council Cllr Kerrie Carmichael
<b>Director:</b>	Managing Director Kim Bromley-Derry
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Strategic Lead – Service Improvement Kate Ashley <a href="mailto:Kate1_ashley@sandwell.gov.uk">Kate1_ashley@sandwell.gov.uk</a>  Senior Lead Officer – Service Improvement Rebecca Jenkins <a href="mailto:Rebecca_jenkins@sandwell.gov.uk">Rebecca_jenkins@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

### 1. Recommendations

- 1.1. That progress against the Improvement Plan up to 3 November 2022 be received.
- 1.2. To receive the Improvement Plan Risk Register.
- 1.3. To receive changes to the Improvement Plan.
- 1.4. To receive any recommendations or comments made by Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, and Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board in relation to the Improvement Plan progress.
- 1.5. To recommend to Council that this report along with the September progress report and an accompanying letter be submitted to the Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing and Communities to form



the Council's 6 monthly update on progress against the Improvement Plan.







## 2. Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 This report provides a quarterly update on progress against the Improvement Plan agreed by Council on 7 June 2022. The Improvement Plan incorporates all recommendations from the Grant Thornton Governance Review, the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge and the CIPFA Financial Management Review, as well as the Statutory Directions from the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- 2.2 Risk management is embedded within the council's programme management of the Improvement Plan. A risk register has been developed which underpins the council's strategic risk relating to the Improvement Plan (59a 02/22). Cabinet is asked to receive the Improvement Plan Risk Register to provide assurance that risks are being managed effectively and to provide contextual information for future decision making.
- 2.3 The Improvement Plan is intended to be a live document updated to take account of progress and relevant changes. Changes to the Improvement Plan are tracked through programme management mechanisms. Cabinet is asked to receive the changes.
- 2.4 As part of the governance and assurance arrangements for the Improvement Plan, Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board review progress of the Improvement Plan and utilise the plan for work programming purposes. Both Committees are due to consider progress at their meetings in November. Any recommendations or comments they wish to make to Cabinet will be presented during the meeting for Cabinet's consideration.
- 2.5 Under the Statutory Directions, the council is required to report progress against the Improvement Plan to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities every six months. The first report is due for submission by 22 December 2022. It is proposed that this report, along with the quarterly update received by Cabinet in September will form the basis of the report to the Secretary of State along with a covering letter. Council are responsible for approving the report made to the Secretary of State and Cabinet will make a recommendation to Council.



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

3.1 Sandwell Council's Improvement Plan focuses on the governance arrangements of the council and areas of improvement across the organisation. The underpinning objective of the Improvement Plan is to ensure that the council is able to deliver on the aims and priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan. The deliverables set out in this Improvement Plan will achieve long-term sustainable improvements in how the council operates and is able to make effective decisions focused on improving outcomes for residents and experiences of service users. Therefore, this impacts on the council's ability to deliver all the objectives in the Corporate Plan.

	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

## 4 Context and Key Issues



## 4.1 Background

- 4.1.1 A single Improvement Plan was agreed by Council on 7 June 2022 to address recommendations from a Value for Money Review into the council's governance arrangements, a CIPFA financial management review, an LGA Corporate Peer Challenge, and Statutory Directions from the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. The single Improvement Plan replaced the Governance Review Improvement Plan which was approved in January 2022.
- 4.1.2 To ensure that senior officers and members have oversight of delivery against the Improvement Plan, Council approved that progress will be monitored by Leadership Team monthly and reported to Cabinet quarterly. This will continue until all actions have been completed, or changes have been embedded into business as usual.
- 4.1.3 This report is the second quarterly update on progress of the Improvement Plan. The first quarterly update was considered by Cabinet in September 2022.

## 4.2 Improvement Plan Progress

- 4.2.1 Over this quarter, significant progress has been made to deliver the actions within the Improvement Plan. This includes the appointment of a permanent Chief Executive and a decision taken by Council in relation to moving to a 4-yearly election cycle. Both of which were key requirements of the Government's Statutory Directions.
- 4.2.2 A comprehensive monitoring tool has been developed to include both a risk rating for each main action within the Improvement Plan and a progress status rating for all actions. The Improvement Plan Monitoring Tool is included at Appendix 1. The monitoring tool provides quick reference around which actions are on track for delivery, as well as highlighting areas that may require remedial action or additional levels of assurance.
- 4.2.3 Progress against each theme of Improvement Plan is summarised within Appendix 2. This includes an overall status rating, a description of workstream progress, commentary on progress against milestones and achievements. Along with an outline of key achievements this quarter, the theme ratings and a summary of any issues is provided below.





## 4.2.4 Organisational Culture Theme

### 4.2.4.1 Achievements:

- Recruitment of a permanent Chief Executive
- Staff engagement carried out to determine the cultural values and behaviours of the council.
- Multiple training sessions delivered to Officers and Members focusing on Corporate Governance and the Officer and Member relationship. These will continue into next quarter
- Actions to respond to the Employee Engagement Survey embedded in the Improvement Plan and Directorate-level action plans
- Internal communications methods such as Director live events and all staff briefings now more established and being used to share information and reinforce key messages

4.2.4.2 Theme Status Rating Green – Progress is being made across all workstreams. Slippage is being experienced in a couple of areas that are classed as medium risk, one of which is due to the impact of the by-election held in October 2022 and rescheduling of decision making meetings.

4.2.4.3 Organisational Culture Progress Issues - Areas with slippage are:

- **Organisational Development Strategy and Plan** (action being redefined as Workforce Strategy). Action is dependent on the outcomes of the culture listening groups which will conclude in October. Dates reprofiled through change control.
- **Design and deliver Corporate Governance Training for Members:** Effective decision-making training (delay due to change of Council date due to by-election). Training will commence following November Council.

## 4.2.5 Corporate Oversight Theme

### 4.2.5.1 Achievements

- Support provider in place for the Oracle Fusion project and implementation underway



- Monitoring and oversight of the Council's improvement has become more established - second quarterly report prepared and work commenced to embed and sustain key actions into business as usual
- Quarter 1 Performance Management Report delivered, and preparations are well underway for the Q2 report.
- Corporate Transformation Approach agreed

4.2.5.2 Theme Status Rating: Green. Progress is being made across all workstreams.

4.2.5.3 One action has a red risk rating in this theme. This relates to **Performance Management Framework**. All sub-actions have been completed. The Q1 report was presented to Cabinet, Scrutiny and an all-Member Briefing during this quarter. Preparations are on track for Q2 report to be presented to Cabinet in December.

#### 4.2.6 Strategic Direction Theme

##### 4.2.6.1 Achievements

- Approval of the Corporate Parenting Strategy
- Preparations for reporting to Cabinet on the Corporate Asset Management Strategy, Equality Policy, Medium Term Financial Plan and the progress of the Regeneration Strategy and Pipeline.
- Customer Journey Programme established and included within the Improvement Plan to reflect this priority focus
- Residents' Survey and consultation on the budget taken place and insight is being used to inform the Medium-Term Financial Plan and business planning.

4.2.6.2 Theme Status Rating: Red. Progress is being made, however some delays and specific issues have emerged around the EDI agenda, which along with the anticipated decision to adopt the LGA equalities framework review are impacting on the ability to deliver on the actions to the original timescales. There has also been slippage in the delivery of the development of the Commercial Strategy, although work has progressed in this area.



4.2.6.3 In relation to the EDI Agenda, there are 2 actions with a red risk rating (significant slippage/issues), and 3 with an amber risk rating (medium slippage/issues):

- **Review of council EDI decision making process** – this focused on the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Review which has now been completed. Updated EIA forms and guidance have been issued.
- **Approval of EDI strategy** - Slippage is due to the proposal to adopt the LGA Equalities Framework which requires a longer delivery time. Cabinet approved the Equalities policy in November and agreed to the adoption of the LGA Equalities Framework. Timescales for delivering the strategy have been reprofiled through October's change control.
- **Continue to embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) staff networks** – Work is ongoing. Some networks are functioning better than others. Womens' network and a Faith and Belief network are being established.
- **Continue to deliver on Equalities Commission Board priorities** - EDI legacy issues are resurfacing which is impacting on operation of staff networks and delivery on Equalities Commission Board priorities. A report on these matters is due to Leadership Team in the coming weeks, and all these actions will be included within the adoption of the LGA Equalities Framework.
- **Equality Policy approved**- The policy was approved by Cabinet in November 22. There had been a delay due to the by-election.

4.2.6.4 There has been a medium level of slippage in relation to the **Development and Implementation of the Commercial Strategy**. A Leadership Team discussion around the draft strategy took place in early November and will be presented to Cabinet in early 2023. The timescales have been agreed to be reprofiled through October's change control.

## 4.2.7 Decision Making Theme

### 4.2.7.1 Achievements

- Consultation completed, and decision taken in relation to the 4-yearly election cycle
- Key decisions taken around changes to the constitution with final changes due to be considered by Council in December.



- Scrutiny Review completed and agreement from Council to adopt changes.
- Scrutiny and Audit Committees continuing to focus on their improvement

4.2.7.2 Theme Status Rating: Green. All areas progressing with some medium slippage which are predominantly due to delays as a result of the by-election.

4.2.7.3 In relation to the **In-depth review and revision to Corporate Governance Documents** and the **Refresh of decision making-arrangements including the role of Scrutiny** there has been medium slippage caused due to delays associated with the by-election. In November, Council approved the Scheme of Delegations and the Scrutiny Review. Training in effective decision-making will commence from November linked to the Council approvals.

4.2.7.4 Slippage has also been experienced relating to the **revised Financial Regulations**. Preparations are being made to report to December Council. As the key changes to financial regulations were approved in July, the risk and impact of the slippage of the outstanding components is very low. Timescales were agreed to be reprofiled through October's change control.

4.2.7.5 The revision of the **Council Procedure Rules** has experienced significant slippage due to omission from change control in July which would have altered the delivery timetable. The Council Procedure Rules were approved by Council in November.

## 4.2.8 Procurement and Commercial Theme

### 4.2.8.1 Achievements

- Delivery of a new framework for SEND Transport that addresses concerns raised around resilience and value for money.
- Continued focus on contract management (Serco, SCT, SLT) and contract performance embedded in the Performance Management Framework for quarterly reporting.
- Approval of the Street Cleansing Recovery Plan



- Decision made around the future delivery of leisure services and a Local Authority Trading Company (LATC) is in the process of being established
- Work has continued this quarter around Lion Farm and the matter is being progressed through an Expert Determination process.

4.2.8.2 Theme Status Rating: Green. Progress is being made across all workstreams

4.2.8.3 The **Lion Farm Options Agreement** is experiencing medium slippage/issues. This is due to the delivery timescales for the Expert Determination process being decided by a third party. Papers have been submitted to the external party that will conduct the expert determination and the process commenced.

4.2.8.4 The **Corporate Performance Management System** is green risk rated, but is currently experiencing a significant level of slippage. This has not progressed past soft market testing due to project management capacity. A further demonstration with another provider is taking place in November. The size and scale of system will be considered to scope of project, and project management capacity reviewed.

#### 4.2.9 Partnerships and Relationships Theme

##### 4.2.9.1 Achievements

- Delivery of the Early Help and Corporate Parenting Strategies has continued across partners.
- Work has progressed to agree the KPI suite as part of the SCT contract and Cabinet decision was taken not to invoke the contract break clause.
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy has been approved by partners
- Deep-dives are taking place and are informing the priorities of the SHCP Board and Integrated Care Board.
- Attendance and participation with key regional and sub-regional groups (including WMCA, ABCA, and BCLEP) has continued
- Review of VCS Grants is complete and work has commenced to develop the VCS Strategy.



- 4.2.9.2 Theme Status Rating: Amber. Progress is being made across workstreams with some slippage in relation to the SCT KPI review, and work around the transition from children's to adult's services.
- 4.2.9.3 In relation to the **Sandwell Children's Trust KPI Suite** - this is now due to be complete December 2022 for implementation in April 2023. The dates have been reprofiled due to decision not to invoke the contract break clause.
- 4.2.9.4 Slippage has occurred in the review of partnership structures relating to the **Transition from children's to adult's services**. The review and remodelling of the pathway is due to commence in November and timescales agreed to be reprofiled through October's change control

### 4.3 Statutory Recommendations

- 4.3.1 The Value for Money Governance Review made three statutory recommendations that the council has a legal obligation to respond to. These recommendations are incorporated into the single Improvement Plan and are embedded across each of the six themes.
- 4.3.2 To provide an overview of progress against these three specific recommendations, Appendix 3 extracts the key actions that respond to each of the recommendations and they are summarised below.

**4.4 Statutory Recommendation 1** - It is imperative that senior officers and senior members take effective corporate grip of long-standing service issues highlighted by the findings in this report (including SLT, SCT, the waste service, the ERP system, and Lion Farm) and prioritise corporate effort in managing the issues identified and embed the solutions into the Council.

#### *Progress update:*

- Continuing to implement strategies to address the service issues highlighted in the Grant Thornton report.
- SLT – progressing the approach agreed by Cabinet in June 2022 to transfer services to a Local Authority Trading Company.



- SCT – Governance arrangements remain in place. Joint work in place with SCT in relation to corporate parenting and early help. Revised contract will commence in April 2023
- Waste Contract – Contract Monitoring framework progressing well and embedded in PMF reporting. Review of the Contract is complete.
- ERP (Oracle Fusion) – support provider in place and implementation commenced. Project Management and Governance arrangements are in place.
- Lion Farm – expert determination process has commenced. Formal document detailing the respective roles and responsibilities of Council and the developer complete.
- Regeneration Strategy and Pipeline to underpin significant regeneration in Sandwell approved by Cabinet 23 March 2022. First monitoring update due in November.

**4.5 Statutory Recommendation 2** - The Council must ensure that the learning in relation to commercial decisions, procurement and contract management highlighted in this report are understood through the organisation.

*Progress Update*

- The Governance Review of key documents within the council's Constitution is nearing completion. Approval in July to revised Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules, thresholds for decisions and Sale of Land and Buildings Protocol. Approval in November to revised Scheme of Delegations. Refresh of Financial Regulations will be presented to Council in December.
- Corporate Governance Training - Programme of training and development commenced in September 2022 on effective decision-making, good governance, and revised contract procedure rules
- Commercial Strategy in draft and due to be considered by Cabinet in early 2023.
- Corporate Asset Management Strategy due for Cabinet consideration in November.



**4.6 Statutory Recommendation 3** - Senior leadership, both officers and members, must demonstrate that they can continue to work together effectively, that they operate in line with the Council's values, codes, policies and procedures, and that there is zero tolerance to inappropriate behaviours. This includes changing the organisational culture in relation to complaints so that they restore balance and proportionality.

*Progress Update*

- Member Development – New Member induction complete and Member Development Programme is being delivered and regularly reviewed by Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee.
- Officer Development – A consolidated programme of fundamental training for managers on Corporate Governance matters has commenced. A broader Management Development Programme will be rolled out in 2023 following the approval of the Workforce Plan.
- Organisational Culture – Outcomes of the listening exercises to be considered by Leadership Team in November.
- Meeting structures to facilitate Cabinet Member and Leadership Team cross-working in place and meeting needs.

**4.7 Reporting Framework, Governance and Assurance**

4.7.1 To ensure that senior officers and members have oversight of delivery, Council approved the reporting mechanism for the Improvement Plan in June 2022. This set out that progress will be monitored by Leadership Team monthly and reported to Cabinet quarterly until all actions have been completed, or changes have been embedded into business as usual. The diagram included at Appendix 4 sets out the governance framework.

4.7.2 Two quarterly updates on progress of the Governance Improvement Plan were provided to Cabinet in April 2022 and July 2022. The first quarterly update on the Improvement Plan was considered by Cabinet in September 2022. This report forms the second quarterly update to





Cabinet on the Improvement Plan. Leadership Team have reviewed progress against the plan every month.

4.7.3 The Government Directions require reporting on the delivery of the Improvement Plan at six monthly intervals to the Secretary of State from the council and the Commissioners. The next report is due in December 2022 and will be considered by Council in December. Council is responsible for approving the report made to the Secretary of State, and Cabinet will make a recommendation to Council.

4.7.4 Member-led committees, such as the Governance & Constitution Review Committee, Audit & Risk Assurance Committee and Scrutiny Committees, are used for decision making and maintaining oversight of the actions and implementation of the Improvement Plan.

4.7.5 The Governance & Constitution Review Committee and cross-party Working Group have been integral to the development and review of the governance documents, ahead of decisions taken by Council in July and due in November and December this year.

4.7.6 Audit & Risk Assurance Committee received an introduction to the Improvement Plan and the Improvement Plan Risk Register in June 2022 and have received a quarterly progress report and the risk register in September 2022 and November 2022.

4.7.7 Budget & Corporate Scrutiny Management Board has included several elements of the Improvement Plan on their work programme as well as regular reports on overall progress. The first report on overall progress was considered on 22 September 2022. The next progress report will be considered by Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board in November. Following the September report, Budget & Corporate Scrutiny Management Board requested a 'deep dive' focus on the work under the Organisational Culture theme and engagement with the workforce. This is due to take place in early December.



4.7.8 Following consideration of the progress report to Audit & Risk Assurance Committee and Budget & Corporate Scrutiny Management Board, those members will identify areas for further exploration and reporting. Any recommendations or comments from these committees for Cabinet's consideration will be presented to Cabinet

## 4.8 External Reviews

4.8.1 External assurance continues to play a part in our improvement journey. The council has invited Grant Thornton, LGA and CIPA to monitor our progress in addressing the recommendations in their reviews. Grant Thornton and the LGA conducted their follow-up review activities over September and October 2022 and CIPFA will conduct their review in November 2022.

4.8.2 The feedback report from the LGA has been received and is included at appendix 5. The LGA have recognised the significant progress that has been made in a number of key areas to the good governance and management of the council. The LGA also stressed that the council is on a journey that will take time and there is still a long way to go to embed the improvements required.

4.8.3 Key points raised by the LGA in relation to Corporate Oversight and Strategic Direction were that:

- Much greater stability can now be seen both politically and managerially
- Cabinet and Leadership Team are working increasingly well together
- Praise for the Leaders' and Chief Executives' styles and approaches
- Staff feel much better communicated with from the corporate level
- There is an absence of a whole organisation view of the scale of the financial challenge facing the council
- External partners are seeing the council now being much better engaged
- Cabinet is building a track record of taking difficult decisions and are showing a commitment and willingness to face the further tough decisions
- The injection of additional capacity in key areas has helped to drive improvement
- There needs to be a stocktake around the level of available resource, pace and capacity going forward.



#### 4.8.4 Key points raised by the LGA in relation to Governance and Decision-Making were that:

- An inclusive process has taken place to develop the changes to the Constitution
- One of the most noticeable changes in recent months is a much-improved set of relationships between officers and elected Members.
- There is an emerging risk around the organisational responsiveness to the customer and to casework issues brought forward by Elected Members
- Members have valued the training offered through the Member Development Programme
- Scrutiny is going from strength to strength
- Mature engagement between the Leader, Cabinet, Committee Chairs and officers is providing for good planning and work programming across the different committees
- There is a sense of a 'maturing politics' within the council

#### 4.8.5 Key points raised by the LGA in relation to Customer Journey and Organisational Culture were that:

- There is a long way to go in the work on the customer journey and organisational culture
- The customer journey, Equalities Diversity and Inclusion, and organisational culture are major pieces of inter-related work that are fundamental to future success. They require a clear plan and sense of deliverability.

4.8.6 The findings from the Grant Thornton and the CIPFA follow-up reviews are expected to be received shortly. A further update to the Improvement Plan will take place in early 2023 once the council has had the opportunity to reflect on the findings from Grant Thornton, LGA and CIPFA as a result of their follow-up visits, along with the outcomes of the culture listening exercise and any additional recommendations from the Secretary of State.

## 4.9 Resources



4.9.1 In the development of the Improvement Plan, a review of the resources available to deliver the Plan was carried out. Resources to deliver the Improvement Plan have been allocated from within existing commitments in the majority of cases. Council approved funding of approximately £1.768m for one-off funding to progress improvement plan actions.

4.9.2 Recruitment to key positions has taken place including interim corporate transformation capacity to establish programme and project management governance arrangements. Other elements of recruitment are underway. Consultants have been commissioned to support the council's work on organisational culture and resources have been deployed to support the implementation of finance improvements and the Governance review. A summary of the Q2 position on all Council reserves is provided within the Q2 budget monitoring report.

## 4.10 Risk Management

4.10.1 The Improvement Plan Risk Register underpins the council's strategic risk relating to the council's Improvement Plan (59a 02/22) and is currently rated as an overall Amber risk. The risk register is reported monthly to Leadership Team and quarterly to Cabinet and Audit & Risk Assurance Committee.

4.10.2 The current risk register is attached as Appendix 6. The main risks are associated with:

- **Resources** – for delivery of key components of the plan including the performance management framework, asset management system implementation and culture change programme. The financial resources required have been identified and were approved by Council in June.
- **Organisational Culture** – If the organisational culture doesn't change, this will limit the improvements that can be made. A theme within the Improvement Plan focuses on organisational culture. It includes plans for a comprehensive engagement programme with



staff and members to define a collectively owned culture. We will then embed the conditions for this culture to thrive.

- **Communication** – to ensure everyone is aware of their respective roles and responsibilities. Communication is taking place through a range of methods including briefings, live events, and regular messages.
- **Constitutional Changes** – key corporate governance documents are being reviewed and the first set were approved in July with others to follow in November and December. Once approved, these policies provide an important foundation for improvement.
- **Performance Management Framework** – to ensure that we can effectively monitor progress and evidence improvement. Each theme includes an outline of how success will be evidenced. Processes for monitoring progress are in place, and processes for capturing and using evidence of improvement will be developed.
- **Historic Issues** – if there is a continued focus on and resource directed towards historic issues this will hinder improvement. The improvement plan contains actions to bring historic issues to a conclusion and embed lessons learnt.

4.10.2.1 Since the last quarterly report to Cabinet, the risk relating to Investment and Financial Resources (IP6) has reduced from a Red 12 rating to an Amber 8 rating. Appointment of interim corporate transformation capacity has taken place and this is providing capacity to establish programme and project management governance arrangements as well as moving forward key transformational activity.

## 4.11 Changes to the Improvement Plan

4.11.1 The Improvement Plan is intended to be a live document updated to take account of progress and relevant changes.

4.11.2 The Improvement Plan report to Council in June 2022 set out that changes (which may include the addition of new workstreams or



objectives, or the amendment of timescales for delivery of actions) will be tracked through programme management mechanisms and that Cabinet will retain oversight of changes through regular formal reporting.

4.11.3 The list of all changes is provided in Appendix 7. Where new actions have been added to the Improvement Plan, these are displayed within the monitoring tool with green font colour. One of the changes within the plan has been to add a workstream around the Customer Journey. At their meeting on 22 September, Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board commented on its absence from the Improvement Plan despite this being a focus of the Commissioners.

4.11.4 The changes made are summarised below.

- 3 changes made to descriptions of actions
- 42 changes made to action delivery timescales
- 1 new workstream has been added to reflect the priority of customer journey
- 6 main-actions have been added
- 29 sub-actions have been added
- 28 assurance actions have been added to ensure that an approach / action is becoming embedded in the organisation
- 8 actions were agreed as closed. They are summarised below with the rationale.

Change Ref	Action Title	Rationale for closure
81	Continue to adopt star chamber approach for Cabinet Members and Chief Officers as part of budget setting approach	Star Chambers all completed by 28th September. Approach will be used for future budget setting.
82	Ward and Casework Management	Main action to be incorporated within the new workstream focusing on customer experience
83	Deliver Member Development Programme including Finance Training Programme	This has moved into regular business of the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee. Immediate requirements have been met for the



		purposes of the IP. ES&MDC review MDP on a regular basis.
86	Actions to respond to employee survey outcomes to be identified and embedded in improvement plan	Main action to close and new main action (to monitor Employee Engagement Survey Action Plan) will be added to Corporate Oversight- IP workstream.
87	A clear and joint message from Chief Executive and Leader regarding Officer and Elected Member relationship delivered	Comms messages have taken place and training sessions held have reinforced the messages around the relationship. Approach to action has been different to how drafted. Attendance records and engagement with training help demonstrate that message has been delivered.
119	Developing a model for locality working	Closure of main action to incorporate into 'Customer Journey Programme'
131	Refresh existing arrangements for arms-length companies	Workstream closure – only arms-length company is SCT and covered with contract managementt arrangements. These are reported through PMF.

## 5 Alternative Options

- 5.1** The Value for Money Governance Review was undertaken as part of the external auditor's role to provide assurance on the council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. As the report includes statutory recommendations the council has a legal obligation to respond appropriately.
- 5.2** The Directions issued by the Secretary of State are a statutory requirement and the council has a legal obligation to respond appropriately. Failure to do so would likely result in further intervention measures.
- 5.3** Reviewing progress against the Improvement Plan enables senior officers and members have oversight of delivery, and take corrective action, as necessary.
- 5.4** Alternative formats for reporting to the Secretary of State could be adopted, however the proposal to submit a covering letter along with the quarterly reports made to Cabinet makes use of existing reports. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities confirmed that this would be an acceptable format to them.



## 6 Implications

<p><b>Resources:</b></p>	<p>Resources to deliver the Improvement Plan have been allocated from within existing commitments in the majority of cases. Where one-off funding is required to deliver improvements, this will either be funded from the Improvement and Capacity Fund or from earmarked reserves created from 2021/22 underspend position. Allocation of this funding was approved by Council with the Improvement Plan on 7 June 2022.</p> <p>Where funding is required for longer-term change, this will be incorporated into the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.</p> <p>There are no land or building implications associated with the Improvement Plan as a whole.</p>
<p><b>Legal and Governance:</b></p>	<p>On 22 March 2022, The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities issued Directions under Section 15(5) and (6) of the Local Government Act 1999 (the 1999 Act) in order to ensure that the council can comply with the requirements of Part 1 of the 1999 Act. Failure to comply with these Directions may lead to further intervention measures for the council.</p> <p>The regular reporting development and approval of this Improvement Plan will mean that the council has achieved one of the elements within the Directions within the specified timescales.</p> <p>The delivery of the Improvement Plan and achievement of the desired outcomes will meet the remainder of the Directions.</p> <p>Ultimately, the changes made through the Improvement Plan will enable the council to effectively deliver its strategic priorities and ensure it is delivering value for money for Sandwell.</p>





<p><b>Risk:</b></p>	<p>If the Council fails to take appropriate action to meet the requirements set out in the government Direction, or the Commissioners appointed by the Secretary of State do not have sufficient confidence that appropriate actions are being taken to implement and sustain the required improvements, then the council risks not having appropriate arrangements in place to comply with its best value duty under Part 1 of the 1999 Act. This could lead to further government intervention, increased costs and damage to reputation.</p> <p>A risk register will be maintained for the duration of the Improvement Plan which will underpin the council's strategic risk relating to the council's Improvement Plan (59a 02/22). This is reported monthly to Leadership Team, quarterly to Cabinet, and will be regularly reported to Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.</p>
<p><b>Equality:</b></p>	<p>The successful delivery of the Improvement Plan will require the development and review of many of the council's policies and procedures. These changes will build in consideration of the impact on equalities throughout the development and will include an Equality Impact Assessment where appropriate.</p>
<p><b>Health and Wellbeing:</b></p>	<p>The underpinning objective of the Improvement Plan is to ensure the council is able to achieve the strategic priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan. These priorities focus on improving the health and wellbeing of our residents and tackling health inequalities in a multi-faceted way. Therefore, any improvements to the council's governance structures will strengthen the council's ability to deliver services that will improve the health and wellbeing of Sandwell.</p>
<p><b>Social Value</b></p>	<p>Within the Improvement Plan, the council is committed to developing its Social Value Policy in conjunction with the refresh of the Procurement &amp; Contract Procedure Rules. Through strengthening our</p>



	asks of contractors through this Social Value Policy and linking them to the Corporate Plan objectives, the council will be able to maximise its social value return.
<b>Climate Change</b>	The underpinning objective of the Improvement Plan is to ensure the council is able to achieve the strategic priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan. Green in everything we do is one of the Fairer Sandwell principles running throughout the Corporate Plan. Any improvements to the council's governance structures will strengthen the council's ability to embed this principle and further the climate change agenda.

## 7. Appendices

1. Improvement Plan Monitoring Tool October 2022
2. Improvement Plan Theme Progress Summary October 2022
3. Statutory Recommendations Reporting October 2022
4. Improvement Plan Governance Diagram
5. LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Review November 2022
6. Improvement Plan Risk Register October 2022
7. Changes to the Improvement Plan October 2022
8. Improvement Plan Progress Report to Cabinet September 2022
9. Draft Letter to Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

## 8. Background Papers

- [Sandwell Council Improvement Plan](#)
- Approval of Sandwell Council Improvement Plan [Report to Council 7 June 2022](#)
- Quarterly Monitoring Reports to Cabinet:
  - [September 2022](#)
- Improvement Plan Progress Reports:
  - To Audit and and Risk Assurance Committee
    - [November 2022](#)
    - [September 2022](#)
    - [June 2022](#)



- To Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board
  - November 2022 (due for publication)
  - [September 2022](#)



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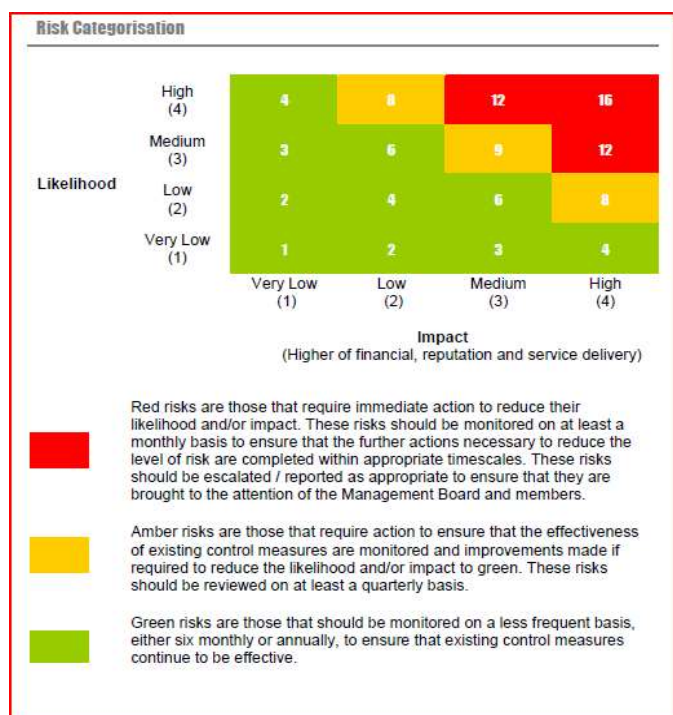


# IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Progress against Plan Status Rating	Definition	Leadership Team Action as a result
On Track	Progress against the action is in line with the delivery date with no or minor (of less than a month) actual/projected slippage that does not impact on any dependencies	Leadership Team note progress and seek assurance that on track
Medium progress	Progress on the action is being made but there is actual/projected slippage of between 1-2 months, or any minor slippage presents a risk to dependencies	Leadership Team watching brief and review impact on dependencies
Significant issues / slippage	Progress on the action is or projected to be behind schedule by more than 2 months, or any slippage (actual or projected) presents a risk to critical milestones	Leadership Team review and remedy
Not due to start	Work on the action is not due to start	N/a
Complete	Action is complete	N/a
Closed	Action is complete and there is evidence that the measures of success have been fulfilled	Evidence to be provided
N/A	Update not required at this time	N/a

## Action Risk Score (Use Corporate Risk Matrix)

Score	Impact - Higher of			Likelihood (the proximity of the risk at the time of assessment)
	Financial	Reputation	Service Delivery	
4 (High)	>20% of budget	National media coverage – permanent impact on reputation	>80% Serious service or programme failure directly affecting vulnerable groups, requiring intervention by Members.	Almost certain It is reasonable to expect that the event will undoubtedly happen or recur, possibly frequently or at least within the next six months A more than 50% chance of the risk occurring
3 (Medium)	11% to 20% of budget	Local media and TV coverage - long term local reputation affected	50%-80% Significant service or project disruption requiring intervention by Corporate Directors / Management Board	Probably / likely The event is more than likely to occur. It will probably happen in the next year but is not a persisting issue. The chance of the event occurring is between a 25% to 50% likelihood
2 (Low)	5% to 10% budget	Local newspaper coverage – reputation affected temporarily	25%-49% Noticeable disruption to outputs requiring intervention by a relevant Director / Service Manager	Possible Little likelihood of the event occurring. It might happen in the next 18 months or recur occasionally. The chance of the event occurring is between a 10% to 24% likelihood.
1 (Very Low)	<5% of budget	Local gossip/ reputation affected internally	<25% Short term service disruption requiring intervention by a unit or project manager or equivalent	Unlikely The event is not expected. There is no expectation that the event will occur, but it is possible that it might do so. The chance of the event occurring is less than 10%.



Theme 1 -Organisational Culture

Static data													October Update Due		
Workstream			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Change Control required
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	October
Establishing Organisational Culture	OC.A1.0	Establish the desired organisational culture for Sandwell Council	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Deputy Leader		Head of HR	May 2022	Dec 2022	Low Risk	Failure to agree desired organisational culture	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Establishing Organisational Culture	OC.A1.1	Phase 1 Engagement: Starting the Conversation	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Deputy Leader		Head of HR	Jun 2022	Jul 2022	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	13 Listening sessions carried out up to the end of September. (Some original dates had to be rescheduled to due to additional public holiday on 19.9.22). Further sessions planned for October. Survey to be issued as part of all Staff briefing taking place 11 October. Drop in sessions planned for front line workers. Rambutan to have all data by end of October. DS 26.9.22	Complete	Phase 1 marked as complete. Phase 1 included the initial scoping of the approach to be taken to determining the desired organisational culture and initial communication and engagement with staff ahead of Phase 2 (detailed engagement). Phase 2 commenced with the listening group exercises.	
Establishing Organisational Culture	OC.A1.2	Phase 2 Engagement: Determining Desired Culture	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Deputy Leader		Head of HR	Aug 2022	Dec 2022	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Listening groups continue as above commentary	On Track- little or no slippage	As above phase 1 complete, final listening groups taking place in October. Survey to be issued in late Oct/Nov. Plan to present the outcomes of the sessions/surveys to LT on 22 November. (DS 17.10)	
Establishing Organisational Culture	OC.A1.3	Approval of document setting out the desired organisational culture	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Deputy Leader		Head of HR	Autumn 2022	Autumn 2022	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Pending completion of phases 1 and 2	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	As per OC.A1.2 the first iteration of the desired organisational culture will go to LT end of November 2022. DS suggest Change Control to January to allow LT time to refine and feedback on first draft. (DS 17.10)	Yes
Establishing Organisational Culture	OC.A2.0	Create the right environment for that organisational culture to thrive	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Deputy Leader					Medium Risk	Lack of engagement to embed desired culture	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Establishing Organisational Culture	OC.A2.1	Organisational Development Strategy and Plan Approved Proposed re-wording to action: Workforce Strategy approved	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Deputy Leader		Head of HR	TBC	End 2022	N/A	N/A	Not due to start	Not due to start	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Redefine as Workforce Strategy. No start date specified yet this is due to complete end of 2022. Need change control as this is dependent on outcomes of OC.A1.0 above (DS 17.10.22). First draft will be complete by December, to be refined incorporating OC.A.1. outcomes January 2023; complete by March 2023 for multi-year strategy period. Change of dates to start Dec 2022 and end March 2023.	Yes
Establishing Organisational Culture	OC.A2.2	Other actions as a result of engagement phases	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Deputy Leader		Head of HR	TBC	TBC	N/A	N/A	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start	
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B1.0	Design and deliver Corporate Governance Training for Officers	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Deputy Leader	Director- Law & Governance				Low Risk	Failure to deliver required training within agreed timescales	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B1.1	Scope of Corporate Governance Training for Officers approved (including comprehensive finance and governance training tailored to those with different levels of financial responsibility)	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader	Director – Business Strategy and Change Director - Finance		May-22	Jun-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Scope of training agreed and being delivered as an ongoing programme linked to constitutional approvals.	Complete	Scope of training agreed and being delivered as an ongoing programme linked to constitutional approvals.	
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B1.2	Revision of Corporate Induction	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Deputy Leader	Director- Law & Governance	Head of HR	Autumn 2022	Feb-23	N/A	N/A	Not due to start	Not due to start	On Track- little or no slippage	Preparatory discussions are taking place	
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B1.3	Effective decision-making training	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader	Director – Business Strategy and Change		Jul-22	Sep-22	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Scheduled to commence late November linked to scheme of delegation approvals. (Slippage due to Council date)	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Guidance around decision making is being issued to Officers in October. Dates for training are being agreed. Training will take place Nov/Dec. Change control to amend delivery date to December 2022.	Yes
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B1.4	Procurement of Delivery Partner (corporate governance training)	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader	Director – Business Strategy and Change		Jun-22	Aug-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	External partner to deliver training in November/December around directorships and trusteeships is in place. Training dates being scheduled for Nov/Dec. (Green - on track - as external partner in place)	Complete	Beth Evans Consulting will be delivering training Nov/Dec. Date to be confirmed. PMO comment: Action marked as complete as procurement took place within timescale. New action proposed to reflect the delivery of training (see OC.B1.7)	

October Update Due															
Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Change Control required
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	October
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B1.5	Delivery of Corporate Governance Training	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Deputy Leader			Autumn 2022	Dec-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	First round of training has taken place. Further training will take place Nov and Dec with regards to constitutional approvals that will be taken to Nov Council. Training focusing on directorships and trusteeships is due to be delivered in November/ December.	On Track- little or no slippage	Range of corporate governance training has been delivered linked to the constitutional approvals. Remaining component is effective decision making. Guidance being issued around decision making (October). Further training around decision making will take place dates to be confirmed (see 1.3 above).	
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B1.6	Annual Refresher of Corporate Governance Training	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Deputy Leader			TBC 2023	TBC 2023	N/A	N/A	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start	Training will be built into workforce strategy	
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B1.7	New action: Delivery of Directorships and Trusteeships Training	Director - Law & Governance	Deputy Leader			Nov-22	Dec-22					New Action Added	Beth Evans Consulting will be delivering training Nov/Dec. Date to be confirmed.	Yes
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B2.0	Develop a clear programme of management development	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Deputy Leader					Low Risk	Lack of engagement from managers with the programme	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B2.1	Management Development Programme- Designed Management and Development Programme Scope, Content and Budget Agreed	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Deputy Leader					N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Procurement and Officer-Member behaviour training commenced as planned. However, design of complete programme unlikely to be achieved and fully signed off ahead of early 2023 due to need to align to new behaviour framework and workforce strategy. Request change to April 2023 for delivery commencement by start of new financial year	On Track- little or no slippage	Specific learning interventions have been delivered as per the training requirements of the IP. These now need to be developed into a broader Management development Programme. Suggest new action is "Management and Development programme scope, content and budget agreed" Change to April 2023 (DS 17.10.22)	Yes
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B2.2	Budget Holder Role Profile Approved	Director - Finance	Deputy Leader				May-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	complete	Complete	complete	
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B2.3	Incorporate training on company roles and responsibilities in senior officer development plan	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader					N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Due to be delivered in November/December (directorships and trusteeships)	Complete	Due diligence work carried out between L&D and Democratic Services/External legal provider to identify current Directors with company roles - none currently are in scope as Company directors, the training is currently for Members only (DS 17.10.22) In future, in the event that any officers are appointed, training will be offered at this point.	
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B2.4	Management Development Programme Delivery	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Deputy Leader			2023	2023	N/A	N/A	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start change control to include firmer start date as April 2023.	Yes
Officer and Member Relationship	OC.C1.0	Continue regular weekly meetings between Cabinet Members and Leadership Team	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council					Low Risk	If formalised meeting structures aren't in place, opportunities may be missed for issues to be discussed. Other regular meetings are taking place.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Officer and Member Relationship	OC.C1.1	Regular meetings of Commissioners, Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer and Chief Whips commence	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			May 2022	May 2022	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Regular meetings with Whips are being diarised. Regular meetings with Group Leaders have been taking place and these have been meeting needs. No issues arising with this approach. Regular meetings being diarised will ensure sustainability and put arrangements on a more formal footing.	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Remaining action is for regular meetings with Whips to be diarised for the rest of the Municipal Year. No issues arising. Categorized Amber as regular meetings with Group Leaders in place. Change Control to change date to November.	Yes
Officer and Member Relationship	OC.C1.2	Meeting structures to support regular dialogue between Senior Leadership (Officer and Member) confirmed for new Municipal Year	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			May 2022	Jun 2022	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Dates are in diaries and arrangements are currently working fine. Further review will be undertaken following the constitutional council at its November meeting.	Complete	In place for Municipal Year and no issues arising.	
Officer and Member Relationship	OC.C2.0	Continue to adopt star chamber approach for Cabinet Members and Chief Officers as part of budget setting approach	Director - Finance	Deputy Leader			2021	Summer 2022	Low Risk	On track	Complete	Star Chambers all completed by 28th September	Complete	Star Chambers all completed by 28th September. PMO note: proposed closure of main action. Added to Change control.	

Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	October Update Due		
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	Change Control required
															October
Officer and Member Relationship	OC.C3.0	Engage LGA to support Officers and Members to develop the relationship going forward including continuation of LGA Cabinet Member mentoring programme	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			May 2022	Dec 2022	Medium Risk	If cultural and behavioural historic issues that have affected the Council's ability to deliver could return if the relationship between Officers and Members is not addressed.	On Track- little or no slippage	4 sessions between Members and Officers with LGA have taken place. 1 more session to take place with Officers (Nov) and there will then be a report produced by LGA, identifying any further actions required.	On Track- little or no slippage	Final session to be held by LGA with Officers on 21st Nov. Following this session, a report will be produced by the LGA.	
Officer and Member Relationship	OC.C4.0	Ward and Casework Management	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader	Director- Law & Governance		May 2022	Oct 2022	Medium Risk	Risk relates to reputational harm where Members are unable to have their case work addressed in a timely manner	N/a	N/A	N/a	Main action around ward and casework management to be incorporated within new workstream focusing on customer experience- noted on change control	
Officer and Member Relationship	OC.C4.1	Process and approach review –completed as part of customer feedback review	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader	Director- Business Strategy & Change			Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Officer and Member Relationship	OC.C4.2	Leadership Team conversation to identify mechanisms to embed and sustain the required approach and process forward and casework (linked to desired organisational culture)	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader	Director- Business Strategy & Change				N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Review of portal now needs to be reviewed in conjunction with C3.0 above as there is an overlap and it needs to be re-focused on the entire customer journey. Awaiting LGA report to identify next steps. Immediate steps around timeliness and quality of responses to be discussed by Lshp Team in conjunction with customer experience. This specific action around embedding and sustaining the required approach and process will be recrafted within a new workstream focusing on the Customer Journey which will be put forward at next month's change control.	Complete	This sub-action is to be closed. Main action around ward and casework management to be incorporated within new workstream focusing on customer journey	Yes
Member Learning and Development	OC.D1.0	Deliver Member Development Programme including Finance Training Programme	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader					Medium Risk	If we do not ensure Members have the required knowledge and skills to undertake their roles, the Council is at risk of not delivering its priorities and is at risk of challenge around decision	N/a	N/A	N/a	N/A	
Member Learning and Development	OC.D1.1	Service Showcase	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader				18-May-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Member Learning and Development	OC.D1.2	New Member Induction	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader			May-22	Jun-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	complete	Complete	complete	
Member Learning and Development	OC.D1.3	Approval of Member Development Programme	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader			Jul-22	Jul-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Member Learning and Development	OC.D1.4	Deliver Member Development Programme	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader			Jul-22	Mar-23	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Ongoing delivery. No issues to raise.	Complete	This has moved into regular business of the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee. They review the MDP. Immediate requirements have been met for the purposes of the IP. ES&MDC review on a regular basis. Evidence base is the minutes of the committee.	Yes
Member Learning and Development	OC.D2.0	Design and deliver Corporate Governance Training for Members	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council	Director- Finance				Medium Risk	If there is insufficient understanding of corporate governance arrangements, this will leave the Council open to reputational and potential legal challenge.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Member Learning and Development	OC.D2.1	Scope of Corporate Governance Training for Members approved	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council	Director- Finance		Mar-22	Jun-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	complete	Complete	complete	
Member Learning and Development	OC.D2.2	Effective decision-making training	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council	Director- Finance		Jul-22	Sep-22	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Being prepared for Nov/Dec linked to Council date slippage to Nov. Centre for Governance and Scrutiny are providing training in Nov.	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Being prepared for Nov/Dec linked to Council date slippage to Nov. Centre for Governance and Scrutiny are providing training in Nov. PMO: Change control proposed for end date of December.	Yes



															October Update Due		
Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Change Control required		
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	October		
Member Learning and Development	OC.D2.3	Procurement of delivery partner (for Corporate Governance Training)	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council	Director- Finance		Jul-22	Sep-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Centre for Governance and Scrutiny are providing training in Nov.	Complete	Centre for Governance and Scrutiny are providing training in Nov.			
Member Learning and Development	OC.D2.4	Delivery of Corporate Governance Training	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council	Director- Finance		Autumn 22	Dec-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Centre for Governance and Scrutiny are providing training in Nov.	On Track- little or no slippage	Centre for Governance and Scrutiny are providing training on 28 Nov.			
Member Learning and Development	OC.D2.5	Annual Refresher and inclusion in new Member induction	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council	Director- Finance		Sep-22	Nov-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Update as per last month.	Not due to start	This action will commence in line with annual refresher of MDP. Change control- Change to Start: March 2023 for delivery following Annual Council: Summer 2023	Yes		
Member Learning and Development	OC.D3.0	<b>Continue forward plan for all Member briefings based on themes of work / areas for development</b>	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council					Low Risk	Risk relates to insufficient forward planning leading to missed opportunities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A			
Member Learning and Development	OC.D3.1	Forward Plan for All Member Briefings in place for new Municipal Year	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			May-22	Jun-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	In place and no issues arising	Complete	Latest briefing took place 18/10. Forward plan in place. No issues arising.			
Member Learning and Development	OC.D3.2	Leadership Team Review of All Member Briefings to ensure they are meeting needs	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Mar-22	Ongoing	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	In place and no issues arising	On Track- little or no slippage	Briefing note will be compiled to report back on the last 12months as a closure report.			
Member Learning and Development	OC.D4.0	<b>Induction training for Leader and Cabinet Members on appropriate processes relating to the employment of Chief Officers, and in particular Statutory Officers</b>	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Jun-22	Jul-22	Low Risk	If there is insufficient knowledge and training for Chief Officers Terms and Conditions Committee, then recruitment and selection may result in an unsuitable appointment.	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Due to availability in August, training will likely be delivered in September.	Significant issues / actual/projected slippage- more than 2 months	HR have confirmed training will be delivered ahead of interviews for CEX (on the specific processes relating to that appointment).			
Internal Communications	OC.E1.0	<b>A clear and joint message from Chief Executive and Leader regarding Officer and Elected Member relationship delivered</b>	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council	Head of Communications		Dec-22	Dec-22	Low Risk	Failure to successfully complete the action.	Complete	Comms messages have taken place and training sessions held have reinforced the messages around the relationship. Approach to action has been different to how drafted. Attendance records and engagement with training help demonstrate that progress has been achieved.	Complete	Comms messages have taken place and training sessions held have reinforced the messages around the relationship. Approach to action has been different to how drafted. Attendance records and engagement with training help demonstrate that progress has been achieved.			
Internal Communications	OC.E2.0	<b>Deliver the communications strategy to assist with more effective internal communications</b>	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Leader of the Council			Feb-22	Ongoing	Low Risk	Failure to deliver against strategy	On Track- little or no slippage	NC 28/9/22: Presentation to Leadership Team on 20/9 around co-ordinating corporate affairs messaging, social media strategy and development of a corporate narrative. All proposals agreed and progressing	On Track- little or no slippage	Continuation of internal comms channels. Director Live Events have taken place over Autumn. All Staff briefing taking place in November	Yes		
Internal Communications	OC.E2.1	Add new action: Internal comms channels used to deliver comms messages on an ongoing basis including: - All staff briefing - Team Talk Leadership Updates - Member bulletin - Director live events - Bostin People e-bulletin (New)	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Leader of the Council			Ongoing	Monthly updates through IP					New Action Added				
Internal Communications	OC.E2.2	Add new action: Chief Executive's 100 day Comms Plan launched	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Leader of the Council			Spring 2023 TBC	TBC					New Action Added				
Internal Communications	OC.E2.3	Add new action: Develop proposal for all staff conference	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Leader of the Council			TBC Aligned to CEX 100 day plan	TBC					New Action Added				
Internal Communications	OC.E2.4	Add new action: Formal Employee Recognition Scheme - approach and resources identified	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Leader of the Council			TBC Aligned to CEX 100 day plan	TBC					New Action Added				
Internal Communications	OC.E2.5	Add new action: Continuous feedback on effectiveness of internal comms	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Leader of the Council			Ongoing	Quarterly Reporting					New Action Added				
Employee Engagement	OC.F1.0	<b>Actions to respond to employee survey outcomes to be identified and embedded in improvement plan</b>	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Deputy Leader			May-22	Aug-22	Medium Risk	Lack of engagement from individual directorates in identifying required actions	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	NC 28/9/22: Directorate actions and responses to survey in the process of being collated. Further discussion to be scheduled at LT on 18/10, at which point it should be agreed the range of actions needing to be included in the Improvement Plan	Complete	Leadership Team considered action plan in response to Employee Engagement Survey 18/10. Series of actions to respond already included within Organisational Culture Theme. EES specific action plan in place containing corporate actions and Directorate-specific actions. Actions around staff conference and formal employee recognition scheme have been added to OC.E2 above. EES Action plan will be monitored twice a year. New action added (Corporate Oversight: CO.B3) to ensure monitoring is taking place.	Yes		
Chief Executive Recruitment	OC.F2.0	<b>Recruitment of Chief Executive</b>	Commissioner	Leader of the Council				By Sept 2023	Medium Risk	Failure to recruit a suitable candidate leading to prolonged intervention	N/A		N/A				



Theme 2- Corporate Oversight

Theme 2- Corporate Oversight													October Update Due		
Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Change Control required
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)September 22	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)October 22	October
ERP	CO.A1.0	Implement Oracle Fusion	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader	Director- Business Strategy & Change Director- Law		Dec-21	TBC (once Date is know this can be added to the IP monitoring tool)	Medium Risk	Implementation date depends on Support Implementor contract and mobilisation. Likely to be at least 12 month implementation from mobilisation of new SI contract.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
ERP	CO.A1.1	Cabinet approval for action plan to continue implementation of Oracle Fusion	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader	Director- Business Strategy & Change Director- Law			Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
ERP	CO.A1.2	Terminate implementation partner contract with InoApps	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader	Director- Business Strategy & Change Director- Law			Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
ERP	CO.A1.3	Implement robust project management arrangements	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader	Director- Business Strategy & Change Director- Law			Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
ERP	CO.A1.4	Review operational team to ensure there are appropriate resources in place during implementation phase	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader	Director- Business Strategy & Change Director- Law			Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
ERP	CO.A1.5	Project management training for all of project team, including Project Sponsors	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader	Director- Business Strategy & Change Director- Law		Jul-22		N/A	N/A	Complete	Key project members have received training. Ongoing training to be arranged as needed in the future.	Complete	Complete	
ERP	CO.A1.6	Procure new support provider to deliver Oracle Fusion	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader	Director- Business Strategy & Change Director- Law		Aug-22		N/A	N/A	Complete	Procurement complete and contract awarded	Complete	Complete	
ERP	CO.A1.7	Support provider in place and delivery commences	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader	Director- Business Strategy & Change Director- Law		Jul-22	TBC (once Date is know this can be added to the IP monitoring tool)	N/A	N/A	Complete	As above	Complete	Complete	
ERP	CO.A1.8	New actions will be added here to reflect implementation phase													Y
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B1.0	Single Improvement Plan Phase 1	Leadership Team	Leader of the Council			Mar-22	Jun-22	Low Risk	IP approved by Council in June. Remaining risks relate to effective progress monitoring of the IP and submissions to SoS.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B1.1	Council approval of Improvement Plan	Leadership team	Leader of the Council		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement		Jun-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B1.2	Commissioners Report prepared	Commissioners	Leader of the Council		Chief Of Staff: Commissioner Team		by 22 June 2022	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B1.3	Commissioners Report to Secretary of State	Commissioners	Leader of the Council		Chief Of Staff: Commissioner Team		by 22 June 2022	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B1.4	New Action Added: Ongoing Monitoring of Improvement Plan (Monthly Monitoring by Leadership Team, Quarterly Monitoring by Cabinet, ARAC regular review of IP and IP Risk Register, Scrutiny regular review of IP)	Leadership Team	Leader of the Council		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement	Ongoing	Monthly assurance					New Action Added		Y
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B1.5	New Action Added: 6 monthly report to Secretary of State	Leadership Team	Council		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement	22-Dec	June each year throughout intervention					New Action Added		Y
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B1.6	New main action: Employee Engagement Survey Action Plan monitored and reviewed by Leadership Team	Director – Business Strategy and Change	Deputy Leader			Jan-23	Jan July each year					New Action Added		Yes

Static data		Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	October Update Due		Change Control required	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	October
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B2.0	Single Improvement Plan Phase 2	Leadership team	Leader of the Council			Jun-22	Jan-23	Low Risk	Risk relates to timely development and approval, and learning lessons from Phase 1 plan	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	yes
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B2.1	Council approval of Improvement Plan Phase 2	Leadership team	Leader of the Council		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement			N/A	N/A	Not due to start	Will commence following receipt of SoS reply, and feedback from Autumn External Reviews. Dates to be populated thereafter.	Not due to start	Will commence following receipt of SoS reply, and feedback from Autumn External Reviews. Start December 2022 and end March 2023	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B3.0	Continuous Improvement Plan	Director- Business Strategy & Change	Leader of the Council			Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Low Risk	Risk relates to timely development and approval linked to organisational culture theme	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B3.1	Develop a Continuous Improvement Plan	Director- Business Strategy & Change	Leader of the Council			Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	N/A	N/A	Not due to start	Not due to start	On Track- little or no slippage	Initial scoping of work is taking place.	
Performance Management	CO.C1.0	Performance Management Framework (PMF)	Director- Business Strategy & Change	Deputy Leader			Sep-22	Ongoing	High Risk	Risks relate to capacity to embed PMF. Council approval of resources in June. Recruitment underway.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Performance Management	CO.C1.1	Council approval of PMF	Director- Business Strategy & Change	Deputy Leader		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement		Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Performance Management	CO.C1.2	Q1 performance report	Director- Business Strategy & Change	Deputy Leader		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement		Aug-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	RI 29/09/22: Q1 Perf Report made to Lhp Team in line with timescale. Q1 Performance report received by Cabinet on 28/09. Due for scrutiny consideration 13/10. Preparations being made for Q2 report to Cabinet in December. New actions required within this workstream to focus on sustaining approach.	Complete	RI 17.10.22: Q1 report considered by Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board 13/10/22. All Member briefing on Q1 report held 18/10/22. Preparations underway for Q2 report to Cabinet in December. New action required to capture ongoing quarterly reporting.	
Performance Management	CO.C1.3	New Action Added: Quarterly Performance Reports made to Cabinet	Director- Business Strategy & Change	Deputy Leader		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement	Ongoing action	Quarterly monitoring to ensure approach embedded					New Action Added	New action added	Yes
Performance Management	CO.C1.4	New Action Added: Review Corporate KPIs for organisational health to reflect workforce strategy	Director- Business Strategy & Change	Deputy Leader		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement	January 2023	Apr-23					New Action Added	New action added	Yes
Performance Management	CO.C1.5	New Action Added: Review Corporate KPIs for customer experience to reflect customer experience programme	Director- Business Strategy & Change	Deputy Leader		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement	January 2023	Apr-23					New Action Added	New action added	Yes
Performance Management	CO.C2.0	Budget Monitoring	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Mar-22	Ongoing	Low Risk	Risk of untimely monitoring or lack of corporate oversight of the budget position impacting on effective decision making	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Performance Management	CO.C2.1	Report format agreed by Leadership Team	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Performance Management	CO.C2.2	Q1 budget report to Leadership Team, Cabinet and Scrutiny	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader				Aug-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Qtr 1 report approved by Cabinet on 28th September	Complete	Complete	
Performance Management	CO.C2.3	Monthly budget monitoring	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader				Ongoing	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Performance Management	CO.C2.4	New Assurance action Added: Quarterly Budget Monitoring Reports made to Leadership Team, Cabinet and Scrutiny	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Ongoing action	Quarterly monitoring to ensure approach embedded					New Action Added		y
Performance Management	CO.C2.5	New assurance action added: Where budget pressures identified, assurance provided that action has/is being taken (monthly summary comment from S151 Officer / raise issues)	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Ongoing action	Monthly monitoring					New Action Added		y
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D1.0	Restructuring	Leadership Team	Deputy Leader			Dec-20	Dec-22	Medium Risk	Without appropriate oversight there is a risk that this work will not be delivered in the required timeframe and will not be co-ordinated appropriately.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	

Static data		Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	October Update Due		Change Control required	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	October
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D1.1	Directorate Level restructuring	Director- Business Strategy & Change	Deputy Leader		Head of HR		22-Dec	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	28/9/22 NC: Work currently focused on creating consistency at Service Manager level and redesignating roles as Assistant Director positions. Roles in 2 directorates currently going through job evaluation to determine if this achievable.	On Track- little or no slippage	19/10/22 Awaiting outcomes from JE for roles in 2 directorates. Spans and layers work is in early stages linked to LGA guidance.	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D1.2	New action: Review of spans and layers across Council's managerial structures in line with LGA Guidance (likely to be incorporated within Target Operating Model Programme in due course)	Director- Business Strategy & Change	Deputy Leader		AD - Transf Head of HR	TBC	TBC					New Action Added		Yes
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D.2.0	Embedding Finance Business Partner role	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Jan-22	Aug-22	Low Risk	Risk relating to missed opportunities and inefficiency	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D2.1	Restructure of financial services section to provide a greater focus on business partnering completed	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader				Jun-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D2.2	Expectations on financial services section established	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader				Jun-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D2.3	Workforce development plan implemented for financial services section	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader	Finance Improvement Manager	Finance Improvement Manager		Sep-22	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Will be in place by the end of October. Slight slippage due to delay in interim resources starting.	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	CR 28.10.22: Some immediate external training has been progressed and undertaken on budget preparation and planning, and further targeted training courses arranged on specific technical areas for some staff. A training matrix is being developed to capture further training requirements going forwards.	Yes
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D2.4	KPIs and standards developed for financial services section	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader	Finance Improvement Manager	Finance Improvement Manager		Aug-22	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Will be in place by the end of October. Slight slippage due to delay in interim resources starting.	Complete	Agreed timetable for distribution of monitoring reports, new standard format for reports to budget holders from month 7 as per AD Finance email to leadership team on 20.10.22	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D2.5	New Assurance Action: Performance against KPIs for financial services section	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader	Finance Improvement Manager	Finance Improvement Manager	Ongoing	Quarterly					Assurance Action		Yes
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D3.0	Reduction of financial transactional activity	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Jan-22	Mar-23	Low Risk	On track. External support procured	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D3.1	Business process re-engineering resources approved	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D3.2	Review of internal charges	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader				Oct-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D3.3	Review of corporate debt recovery processes completed	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader				Oct-22	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Review underway but significant piece of work covering multiple teams so completion date now December 2022.	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Review underway but significant piece of work covering multiple teams so completion date now December 2022.	Yes
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D3.4	Programme of end to end process reviews	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			May-22	Mar-23	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Transformation Programme being developed by Transformation AD.	On Track- little or no slippage	C Co in place to support finance transactional processes. Series of back office process reviews are being progressed through the Fusion Programme. Approach to transformation being considered by LT 03/11/22 as per updates elsewhere	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D3.5	Implementation of Recommendations from CIPFa in relation to internal charges	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Aug-22	Oct-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage		Not due to start	Simone to review. RJ drafted following conversation with CR. Awaiting report and recommendations from CIPFa. Following receipt, a plan will be made for implementing improvements to internal charges. Change start date to Oct to reflect expected receipt of CIPFa report and end date to TBC.	Yes
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D4.0	Resolve issues relating to the completion and sign off of final accounts.	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Jan-22	May-22	Medium Risk	Some progress made	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D.4.1	External review of 2020/21 Statement of Accounts	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	

														October Update Due	
Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Change Control required
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	October
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D4.2	New suite of working papers to support the 2021/22 year-end process agreed	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D.4.2	Additional resources in place for 2021/22 year-end process	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D4.3	Training for key members of the Finance Team complete	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D4.4	<span style="color: red;">Simone to review</span> New assurance Action: GT sign-off of 2020/21 Accounts (assurance that previous issues raised have been resolved)	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			TBC one-off monitoring	TBC	N/A	N/A	Not due to start	not due to start	New Action Added		Yes
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D4.5	<span style="color: red;">Simone to review</span> New assurance Action: Preparation of Draft Accounts for 2021/2022 (assurance that approach to completion and sign-off of final accounts is becoming embedded)	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			TBC one-off monitoring	TBC	N/A	N/A	Not due to start	not due to start	New Action Added		Yes
Programme and Project Management	CO.E1.0	Programme and Project Management	Director- Business Strategy & Change	Deputy Leader			Dec-21	Late 2022	Medium Risk	Failure to embed consistent approach which provides appropriate oversight of all key projects and consistent approach to their management	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Programme and Project Management	CO.E1.1	Agree a Corporate approach to Project Management, including re	Director- Business Strategy & Change	Deputy Leader				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Programme and Project Management	CO.E1.2	Suite of Programme and Project Documentation Agreed	Director- Business Strategy & Change	Deputy Leader				May-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Programme and Project Management	CO.E1.3	Corporate Transformation PMO established	Director- Business Strategy & Change	Deputy Leader		AD-Transformation		Late 2022	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	NC 28/9/22 - Presentation to LT on 27/9/22 outlining the design principles for corporate PMO, agreement to proceed on this basis and present approach in 4 weeks	On Track- little or no slippage	24/10/22: LT approved governance and framework. In Nov, LT will consider how we manage pipeline of business change projects, governance to manage approval and progress of projects, project and programme mgmt methodology, business analysis methodology, business change methodology, setting up PMO, managing benefits lifecycle.	
Programme and Project Management	CO.E1.4	Programme and Project Management System Implementation	Director- Business Strategy & Change	Deputy Leader		AD-Transformation		Late 2022	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	NC 28/9/22 - no additional update to provide	Medium Progress- actual/projected slippage of 1-2 months	24/10/22: Verto system that is being looked at in Regeneration and Growth & ASC Commissioning is likely to be suitable for Transformation Programme needs. Further exploration needed with a view to a pilot. End Date to be adjusted to Feb 2023 for implementation.	Yes
Customer Journey	CO.F5.0	Add new Main Action: Customer Journey Programme	Director - Business Strategy and Change	Deputy Leader		Transformation Programme Manager							New Action Added		yes
Customer Journey	CO.F5.1	Add new action: Structure and Governance for Customer Experience Programme approved	Director - Business Strategy and Change	Deputy Leader		Transformation Programme Manager	22-Sep	Oct-22					New Action Added	Action added retrospectively and is complete. Governance and Structure agreed by Leadership Team 18/10	
Customer Journey	CO.F5.2	Add new action: Workstream Plans agreed (timeline, cost and resource) for 5 workstreams (fix the backlog, fix the OSS, customer experience strategy, contact centre/community hubs approach, technology)	Director - Business Strat	Deputy Leader		Transformation Programme Manager		TBC					New Action Added		
Customer Journey	CO.F5.3	Add new action: Programme board in place and regular meetings scheduled (first programme board to involve ToR, scope of workstreams, nominations for resources for each workstream, and high level milestones)	Director - Business Strat	Deputy Leader		Transformation Programme Manager	Nov-22	Nov-22					New Action Added		

Theme 3 -Strategic Direction

Theme 3 -Strategic Direction										October Update Due					
Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Change Control required
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	October
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A1.0	<b>Regen Pipeline Development and Delivery</b>	<b>Director-Regeneration &amp; Growth</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth</b>			<b>Autumn 2021</b>	<b>Apr-27</b>	<b>Low Risk</b>	Clear progress on key Pipeline projects; governance arrangements being finalised.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A1.1	Cabinet Approval of Regen Strategy and Pipeline 2022-27	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A1.2	Pipeline projects monitored on a 6-monthly basis	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth				Ongoing	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	April- September update due. First update report across the 63 projects in the pipeline. Aiming for scrutiny and Cabinet in November/December	On Track- little or no slippage	April- September update due. First update report across the 63 projects in the pipeline. Aiming for scrutiny and Cabinet in November/December	Yes
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A1.3	Internal infrastructure established for delivery.	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth			Mar-22	Mar-23	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	There are internal discussions about capacity and expertise to deliver the pipeline, these are not yet concluded.	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	There are internal discussions about capacity and expertise to deliver the pipeline, these are not yet concluded.	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A1.3a	o Programme and Project Management Structures in place	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	complete	Complete	complete	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A1.3b	o Programme Management Software Procurement	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth				Apr-23	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Demonstration is occurring during October.	On Track- little or no slippage	Demonstration of VERTO has taken place (29/9/22); agreement in principle that this will be procured and piloted in Regen, Business Strategy & Change, Housing and Adult Social Care	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A1.3c	o Project Management Software procurement	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	complete	Complete	complete	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A1.3d	o Microsite creation for information around priority projects for stakeholders	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth				Nov-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Website has been delivered, was due to go live this week (26/09) but has been postponed until November due to By-Election.	Complete	Website launched on 31 October after by-election ad featured in the Message to All Council Staff as an item.	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A2.0	<b>Corporate Asset Management Strategy Development</b>	<b>Director-Regeneration &amp; Growth</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth</b>		<b>Service Manager- Strategic Asset &amp; Land</b>	<b>Autumn 2021</b>	<b>Sep-22</b>	<b>Medium Risk</b>	If timescales are not met, there will be a period during which the Council will not have a fit-for-purpose asset database	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A2.1	<b>Work Place Vision</b>	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth		Service Manager- Strategic Asset & Land		x	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A2.2	Confirmation of funding for remaining Workplace Vision components	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth		Service Manager- Strategic Asset & Land		Autumn 22 linked to MTFP	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	No conclusion have yet been reached on this funding issue	Complete	Workplace vision has been closed. New corporate asset management strategy sets out the priorities.	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A2.3	<b>Transforming Local Services</b>	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth		Service Manager- Strategic Asset & Land		x	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A2.4	Cabinet Workshop to provide steer	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth		Service Manager- Strategic Asset & Land	Mar-22	Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	

Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	October Update Due		
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	Change Control required
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A2.5	Options for hub locations identified	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth	<b>Director -Housing (update required from both directors)</b>	Service Manager-Strategic Asset & Land	Jun-22	Sep-22	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Cabinet workshop is concluded, options for (6) locations identified- agreed in principle by Cabinet. To go to Cabinet in November (delayed due to By Election)	Duplicate/ link to another action	The locations have been identified and agreed as per the Cabinet Workshop; report setting out this detail will formally be approved at 16 November Cabinet when this action can then be closed off. Action has now been incorporated within the Customer Journey Workstream and will be progressed through that programme (CO.D5)	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A2.6	<b>Asset Review</b>	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth		Service Manager-Strategic Asset & Land		x	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A2.7	Procurement of asset database	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth		Service Manager-Strategic Asset & Land		Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A2.8	Implementation of new Asset Database	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth		Service Manager-Strategic Asset & Land	May-22	Dec-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	On track for completion in December.	On Track- little or no slippage	Project is on track for completion in December.	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A2.9	<b>Surplus Assets &amp; commercial estate</b>	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth		Service Manager-Strategic Asset & Land			N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A		
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A2.10	Maximising Value out of surplus assets portfolio – Cabinet report	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth		Service Manager-Strategic Asset & Land		Sep-22	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	This will now be part taken to Cabinet in November (delay due to By-election)	Closed	The surplus assets report is incorporated within the Corporate Asset Management Strategy. (Action below)	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A2.11	Corporate Asset Management Strategy Approved	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth		Service Manager-Strategic Asset & Land		Sep-22	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	This will now be part of cabinet in November (delay due to By-election)	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	This will now be part of cabinet in November (delay due to By-election)	Yes
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A3.0	Communications and Corporate Affairs Strategy Development and Delivery	<b>Director - Business Strategy and Change</b>	<b>Leader of the Council</b>			Autumn 2021	Ongoing	Low Risk	Failure to deliver against strategy	On Track- little or no slippage	NC 28/9/22: Presentation to Leadership Team on 20/9 around co-ordinating corporate affairs messaging, social media strategy and development of a corporate narrative. All proposals agreed and progressing	On Track- little or no slippage	Proposals from LT paper 20/09 progressing. Milestones around internal comms added to OCE.2	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A3.1	Corporate Communications Strategy approved	Director - Business Strategy and Change	Leader of the Council				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A3.2	Communications Team restructure concluded to focus resources on key workstreams of Communications Strategy	Director - Business Strategy and Change	Leader of the Council				May-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A4.0	<b>Refresh and embed the Corporate Procurement Strategy</b>	Director- Finance	<b>Deputy Leader</b>		<b>Interim Procurement Strategy Manager</b>	<b>Autumn 2021</b>	<b>Jul-22</b>	Low Risk		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	



Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	October Update Due		Change Control required
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	October
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A4.1	Procurement & Contract Procedure Rules approved	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader		Interim Procurement Strategy Manager		May-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	complete	Complete	complete	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A4.2	Training developed	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader		Interim Procurement Strategy Manager	Aug-22	Oct-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Training to be launched w/c 3rd October	Complete		
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A4.3	Training delivered	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader		Interim Procurement Strategy Manager	Autumn 22	Dec-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	As above	On Track- little or no slippage	Training launched 3rd October consisting of initial introduction for managers. Further tailored training taking place for staff with procurement responsibilities.	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A5.0	Develop and Implement the Commercial Strategy	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Autumn 2021	Jul-22	Medium Risk	Strategy has been drafted but limited opportunities for business streams have emerged. Training to be undertaken as next step to give relevant officers the appropriate skills and knowledge to review opportunities again	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A5.1	Commercial Strategy Approved	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader				Oct-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Business Cases being developed and strategy will be updated at that point.	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Commercial Opportunity Assessment Report received. Needs to be reviewed by Leadership Team and then Commercial Strategy can be updated to reflect opportunities to be taken forward.	Yes
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A5.2	Business Cases Presented for commercial workstreams	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader				Oct-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	As above	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	As above	Yes
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A6.0	HRA 30 year Business Plan	Director- Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing	Assistant Directors - Housing Management and Asset Management		Autumn 2021	Apr-23	Low Risk	Plan is necessary for long term planning but delivery of asset improvements still continues without the plan	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A6.1	Review of compliance and stock data	Director- Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing	AD, Asset Management and Improvement			May-22	N/A	N/A	closed	closed	closed	closed	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A6.2	HRA Business Plan developed	Director- Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing	ADs		May-22	Mar-23	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	GD 29/09: Draft plan has been received and shared with Lead Member. Data to be added and consultation started with key stakeholders	On Track- little or no slippage	Draft plan is due at Safer neighbourhoods and active communities Scrutiny Board on 1 Nov. On track for Cabinet in February.	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A6.3	HRA Business Plan approved (in line with budget approval 2023-24)	Director- Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing				Apr-23	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	As above	On Track- little or no slippage	as above	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A6.4	Procurement of stock condition surveys	Director- Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing				Jun-23	N/A		On Track- little or no slippage	GD 29/09: Agreed by Cabinet 28/9 and now going out to tender.	On Track- little or no slippage	Due to go to tender in November 22	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A7.0	Refresh the Early Help Strategy	Director- Children & Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Autumn 2021	Mar-22	Low Risk	The strategy has been refreshed ahead of the launch in March 2022.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	

Static data				Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	October Update Due		
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	Change Control required	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A7.1	Launch of Early Help Strategy	Director- Children & Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education				Complete	N/A		Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete		
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A7.2	Early Help Strategy to be reviewed annually at the early help partnership board	Director- Children & Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Apr-23	Annually	N/A		Not due to start		Assurance Action	new assurance action - to be agreed	yes	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A8.0	Refresh Corporate Parenting Strategy	Director- Children & Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Jan-22	Sep-22	Medium Risk	The Corporate Parenting Strategy Board are considering the refresh of the current strategy ahead of the implementation in September 2022.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A8.1	Re-focusing of strategic priorities	Director- Children & Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education				Sep-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	The Corporate Parenting Strategy Board are considering the refresh of the current strategy ahead of the implementation in September 2022.	Complete	The strategy has been circulated and agreed by corporate parenting board members		
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A8.2	Corporate Parenting Strategy approved	Director- Children & Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education				Sep-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	The Corporate Parenting Strategy Board are considering the refresh of the current strategy ahead of the implementation in September 2022.	Complete	The strategy has been circulated and agreed by corporate parenting board members- assurance action to be added to the improvement plan		
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A8.3	Corporate Parenting Strategy - yearly assurances provided to the Corporate Parenting Board	Director- Children & Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Sep-23	Annually	N/A		Not due to start		Assurance Action	new assurance action - to be agreed	yes	
Equality and Diversity	SD.B1.0	Equality and Diversity	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Autumn 2021	Ongoing	Medium Risk	If the Council does not comply with the Equality Act 2010 there is a risk of reputational damage.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Equality and Diversity	SD.B1.1	Continue to embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) staff networks	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Ongoing	Ongoing	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Ongoing. Work with staff networks is continuing. No issues arising	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Ongoing. Legacy issues are resurfacing which is affecting the operation on the networks and level of engagement. Work is being undertaken to understand underlying reasons with a view to taking a report to Leadership Team in coming weeks.		
Equality and Diversity	SD.B1.2	Establish Women's network and Faith & Belief staff network	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Jun-22	Dec-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Work underway and on track	On Track- little or no slippage	Connected to the action above		
Equality and Diversity	SD.B1.3	Continue to deliver on Equalities Commission Board priorities	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Ongoing	Ongoing	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Ongoing. No issues arising	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Ongoing. Some of the EDI issues that are emerging are impacting upon our ability to deliver the board priorities. Linked to update report to Lshp Team referenced above.		
Equality and Diversity	SD.B1.4	Equality Policy reviewed	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			May-22	Oct-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Review took place	Complete	complete		
Equality and Diversity	SD.B1.5	Equality Policy approved	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Jul-22	Oct-22	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Draft policy prepared. Con	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Scheduled 16 Nov. Recommended for approval by scrutiny and the Equalities Commission Board.		

Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	October Update Due		
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	Change Control required
Equality and Diversity	SD.B1.6	EDI Workforce action plan review	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Jun-22	Dec-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Review will consider which actions can be implemented immediately and which will be reviewed as part of LGA Equalities Framework early next year	On Track- little or no slippage	Substantive actions within workforce plan will form part of the LGA equalities framework. Feedback will be considered by LT as part of overall report (as above)	
Equality and Diversity	SD.B1.7	Approval of EDI Workforce plan	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Mar-23	Mar-23	N/A	N/A	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start	
Equality and Diversity	SD.B1.8	Review approach to Equality Impact Assessments	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Review completed and new advice and guidance to be issued to Officers.	Complete	Review completed. Guidance on EIAs has been updated on the intranet.	
Equality and Diversity	SD.B1.9	Review of Council EDI decision making process	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Initial discussions have begun – linked to the EIA review, and decision making training.	Significant issues / actual/projected slippage- more than 2 months	This action will form part of the LGA equalities framework review. The approach will be set out in the report going to Cabinet (Nov) in relation to the Equality Policy Approval. Report seeks Cabinet approval to adopt LGA Equalities Framework	Yes
Equality and Diversity	SD.B1.10	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy approved	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Autumn 2022	Autumn 2022	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Roadmap for EDI strategy will be achieved within the timeline. Strategy development will be a product of the LGA equalities framework review. End 2023 for strategy approval.	Significant issues / actual/projected slippage- more than 2 months	The approach will be set out in the report going to Cabinet (Nov) in relation to the Equality Policy Approval. Report seeks Cabinet approval to adopt LGA Equalities Framework. By adopting and following the framework, the outcome will be the production of an EDI strategy and revised equalities policy.	Yes
Equality and Diversity	SD.B1.11	Embed equalities, diversity and inclusion within Member and Officer Development Programmes	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Early 2023	Early 2023	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Update as per last month	On Track- little or no slippage	Some training has already been provided. Further training planned as part of EDI agenda.	Yes
Locality Working	SD.C1.0	Developing a model for locality working	Director- Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing	Director – Business Strategy and Change		Mar-22	TBC	Medium Risk	Locality working model is linked to community hubs being progressed.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes
Locality Working	SD.C1.1	Cabinet Workshop to provide steer on community hubs model	Director- Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing	Director – Business Strategy and Change		Complete	Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Locality Working	SD.C1.2	Pilot of Town Co-ordinator role commences	Director- Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing	Director – Business Strategy and Change		Summer 2022	Summer 2022	N/A	N/A	Action on Hold	Pilot of town co-ordinator role was unsuccessful. Approach to locality working is now being considered by Cabinet and Leadership Team in conjunction with the Customer First priority. A set of new actions will be developed and included in the Improvement Plan which reflects this approach. Since last month, further sessions have been held by Leadership Team focusing on Customer First.	Action on Hold	Pilot of town co-ordinator role was unsuccessful. Approach to locality working is now being considered by Cabinet and Leadership Team in conjunction with the Customer First priority. A set of new actions has been included within the new customer journey workstream within corporate oversight theme	
Locality Working	SD.C1.3	Customer Access Strategy Development Commences Action to become main action SD.F1.0 within Customer Journey Workstream 'Customer Journey Strategy Approved'	Director- Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing	Director – Business Strategy and Change		Sep-22	Sep-22	N/A	N/A			On Track- little or no slippage	The development of the customer journey strategy has commenced and is incorporated within the customer journey programme (within Corporate Oversight theme). This action to be amended to become a main action 'Customer Journey Strategy'. Milestones tbc.	Yes

Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	October Update Due		
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Change Control required
															October
Locality Working	SD.C1.4	Business Cases for hub locations progressed, as appropriate	Director- Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing	Director – Business Strategy and Change		Sep-22	Spring 2023	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	See update on action SD.A2.5: Cabinet workshop to identify hub locations is concluded. options for (6) locations identified- agreed in principle by Cabinet. To go to Cabinet in November as part of Asset Management Strategy. Business Cases (as required) to be developed thereafter.	Duplicate/ link to another action	Not going to Cabinet in November as more work needs to be done as part of the customer journey programme. PMO comment: Incorporated within Customer Journey Workstream in Corporate Oversight Theme	
MTFP & Capital Strategy	SD.D1.0	Fundamental review of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Capital Strategy	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Jan-22	Autumn 2022	Low Risk	Risk of missed opportunities and inefficiencies	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
MTFP & Capital Strategy	SD.D1.1	Review concluded	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader				Sep-22	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Will now be reported to November Cabinet due to by-election and pre election period	Complete	On track to go to November Cabinet - LT reviewed draft today - review complete.	
MTFP & Capital Strategy	SD.D1.2	Approval of MTFP and Capital Strategy	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader				Autumn 2022	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	As above	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Will now be reported to November Cabinet due to by-election and pre election period	Yes
MTFP & Capital Strategy	SD.D1.3	New Assurance Action (strategy implemented through budget plans): Budget Report to Cabinet (2023-2026) reflects funding gaps identified in MTFP	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Feb-23	and annually thereafter					New Action Added		Yes
MTFP & Capital Strategy	SD.D1.4	New Assurance Action (embedding the approach): MTFP and Capital Strategy refreshed and approved in October each year	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			October 2023	and annually thereafter					New Action Added		Yes
Consultation and Engagement	SD.E1.0	Public Consultation to be carried out as part of budget process for 2023/24	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader	Director Business Strategy and Change		Jan-22	Autumn 2022	Low Risk	Risk that budget decisions do not give consideration to residents views and priorities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Consultation and Engagement	SD.E1.1	Procurement concluded to provide capacity for a regular Resident's Survey	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader	Director Business Strategy and Change			May-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	complete	Complete	complete	
Consultation and Engagement	SD.E1.2	Public Consultation undertaken	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader	Director Business Strategy and Change		Autumn 2022	Autumn 2022	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Consultation closed, feedback received and shared with LT and Cabinet.	Complete		
Consultation and Engagement	SD.E1.3	Public Consultation outcomes inform budget setting	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader	Director Business Strategy and Change			Autumn 2022	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	As above	On Track- little or no slippage	Consultation closed, feedback received and shared with LT and Cabinet. Consideration of feedback will be included in MTFP (Nov) and Budget Setting (Feb 2023)	Yes
Consultation and Engagement	SD.E2.0	Incorporate Public Consultation Results into Performance Management Framework	Director - Business Strategy and Change	Leader of the Council			Autumn 2022	May-23	Medium Risk	Unable to secure representative sample of residents to respond to consultations and survey	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Consultation and Engagement	SD.E2.1	First Resident's Survey conducted	Director - Business Strategy and Change	Leader of the Council			Autumn 2022	Autumn 2022	N/A	N/A	Complete	28/9/22 NC: Findings presented at LT away day and to Cabinet	Complete		
Consultation and Engagement	SD.E2.2	First report from Resident's Survey	Director - Business Strategy and Change	Leader of the Council			Autumn 2022	Autumn 2022	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	28/9/22 NC: Findings presented at LT away day and to Cabinet	Complete	complete	
Consultation and Engagement	SD.E2.3	Survey results embedded within PMF and used to inform insight into how the Council is performing	Director - Business Strategy and Change	Leader of the Council			Autumn 2022	May-23	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	RI 29/09/22: Results from residents survey, budget report and SHAPE survey presented at LT away day and to Cabinet. Intelligence is being incorporated within business planning process for 2023 onwards, and being used to shape budget.	On Track- little or no slippage	RI 19.10.22: Residents' Survey Report will be included in Q2 Performance Report and will be shared with staff at an all staff briefing on 2nd November. Intelligence is being incorporated within business planning process for 2023 onwards, and being used to shape budget.	
Consultation and Engagement	SD.E2.4	New action: Proposal approved for the next phase of resident consultation and budget consultation	Director - Business Strategy and Change			Strategic Lead	October 2022	November 2022	N/A		Not due to start		New Action Added		yes
Consultation and Engagement	SD.E2.5	New action: Focus Groups held to explore responses to key areas raised in Residents Survey, Shape survey and budget consultation.	Director - Business Strategy and Change			Strategic Lead - Service Improvement							New Action Added		y
Customer Journey	SD.F1.0	New Main Action: Customer Journey Strategy	Director - Business Strategy and Change			Strategic Lead - Customer							New Action Added		

Theme 4 - Decision Making

Static data											October Update Due				
Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Change Control required
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	October
4 Yearly Election Cycle	DM.A1.0	Implement 4-yearly election cycle	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			May-22	Sep-23	Medium Risk	If we don't reach a decision in October, then there will be a reputational risk associated with delaying making a decision	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
4 Yearly Election Cycle	DM.A1.1	Options Paper to Leadership Team	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council				Jun-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
4 Yearly Election Cycle	DM.A1.2	Council Decision to implement	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council				TBC	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Now due at Council in November (slippage due to change of Council date). Consultation concluded. Report being prepared.	On Track- little or no slippage	On track for Nov Council.	
Constitution and Governance Framework	DM.B1.0	In-depth review and revision to Corporate Governance Documents	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Dec-21	Oct-22	Medium Risk	If Corporate Governance Documents are not updated, then other improvement work with Members and Officers will be adversely impacted.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Constitution and Governance Framework	DM.B1.1	Effective Decision Making Training	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Jul-22	Sep-22	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/projected slippage of 1-2 months	Being prepared for Nov/Dec linked to Council date slippage to Nov. Centre for Governance and Scrutiny are providing training in Nov.	Medium Progress- actual/projected slippage of 1-2 months	Repeat of OC.B1.3: Guidance around decision making is being issued to Officers in October. Dates for training are being agreed. Training will take place Nov/Dec. Change control to amend delivery date to December 2022.	Yes
Constitution and Governance Framework	DM.B1.2	Revised Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules agreed	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council				Jul-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Constitution and Governance Framework	DM.B1.3	Revised Financial Regs agreed	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council				Oct-22	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/projected slippage of 1-2 months	The remaining areas of the Fin Regs that need reviewing will slip to December Council. As the key changes have already been approved the risk/impact of the slippage on the outstanding bits is very low.	Medium Progress- actual/projected slippage of 1-2 months	The remaining areas of the Fin Regs that need reviewing will slip to December Council. As the key changes have already been approved the risk/impact of the slippage on the outstanding bits is very low. Change Control- date change Oct. 22- Dec 22	Yes
Constitution and Governance Framework	DM.B1.4	Revised Council Procedure Rules	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council				Jul-22	N/A	N/A	Significant issues / actual/projected slippage- more than 2 months	CPRs have been updated and will be presented to November Council. (Slippage from October due to change of Council date).  Note: July commentary and update was not correct (incorrectly stated that council procedure rules were approved at Council in July). Should have been included in August Change Control as a change from July to October. NB Action will therefore flag as red progress due to July date. Further impacted by by-election.	Significant issues / actual/projected slippage- more than 2 months	On track for Nov Council.  Note: July commentary and update was not correct (incorrectly stated that council procedure rules were approved at Council in July). Should have been included in August Change Control as a change from July to October. NB Action will therefore flag as red progress due to July date. Further impacted by by-election	Yes

Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	October Update Due		
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	Change Control required
Constitution and Governance Framework	DM.B1.5	Revised Sale of Land and Buildings Protocol	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Leader of the Council		Service Manager- Strategic Asset & Land		Aug-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	complete	Complete	complete	
Constitution and Governance Framework	DM.B1.6	Revised Scheme of Delegations agreed	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council				Oct-22	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Due at November Council (slippage due to change of date for Council). Any sub-delegations required below Director-level can be authorised by Directors at any time. However, Democratic Services will be working with Directors to establish a sub-authorisation scheme related to the revised scheme of delegations.	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	On track for Nov Council.	Yes
Constitution and Governance Framework	DM.B2.0	<b>Refresh existing arrangements for arms-length companies</b>	<b>Director- Law &amp; Governance</b>	<b>Deputy Leader</b>		Governance and Business Support Principal Lead & Solicitor	Jan-22	Jul-22	Low Risk	If we don't ensure that there is sufficient governance and oversight, it can lead to significant and/or unintended consequences for the organisation e.g. reputational issues, Council not discharging legal obligations.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes
Constitution and Governance Framework	DM.B2.1	Identify existing arms-length companies, company directors and company administration	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader			Apr-22	Apr-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Constitution and Governance Framework	DM.B2.2	Conduct review to ensure appropriate resources are allocated to these organisations	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader			May-22	Jul-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Constitution and Governance Framework	DM.B2.3	Implement annual reporting arrangements	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader				Jul-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Role and Function of Scrutiny and Audit	DM.C1.0	<b>Refresh decision making-arrangements including the role of Scrutiny</b>	<b>Director- Law &amp; Governance</b>	<b>Leader of the Council</b>			Dec-21	Jul-22	Medium Risk	If there isn't an effective overview and scrutiny function in place, then the Council decision-making will not be as effective as it can be.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Role and Function of Scrutiny and Audit	DM.C1.1	Review of scrutiny arrangements	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council				Oct-22	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Scrutiny Review was approved by scrutiny in September. Report due to Council in November. (slippage due to change of Council date). LGA have been very complimentary around scrutiny arrangements.	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	On track for Nov Council.	Yes
Role and Function of Scrutiny and Audit	DM.C1.2	Scrutiny Work Planning event	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council				Jun-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Role and Function of Scrutiny and Audit	DM.C1.3	Approval of any changes to scrutiny (if required following review)	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Oct-22	(specific timescale for implementation will be determined once review concluded)	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	As per DM.C.1.0	On Track- little or no slippage	Will follow DM.C1.1	
Role and Function of Scrutiny and Audit	DM.C.2.0	<b>Implementation of Scrutiny Recommendations relating to key issues</b>	<b>Director- Law &amp; Governance</b>	<b>Deputy Leader</b>			Dec-21	Sep-22	Medium Risk	If we don't implement scrutiny recommendations, this undermines the Council's decision making and leaves the Council open to risk and challenge.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	

Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	October Update Due		
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	Change Control required
Role and Function of Scrutiny and Audit	DM.C2.1	SEND Transport recommendations relating to procurement concluded	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader	Director-Children & Education Scrutiny		Early 2022	Sep-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	The new SEND procurement exercise has been undertaken, consistently with our contract procedure rules and recommendations from scrutiny.	On Track- little or no slippage	The recommendations from C&E Scrutiny Board are being monitored and will be updated at the next Scrutiny Board in XX.	
Role and Function of Scrutiny and Audit	DM.C2.2	Recommendations relating to Waste Contract concluded	Director- Borough Economy	Deputy Leader	Director- Law and Governance			Dec-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Scrutiny session delivered 31.08.22 relating to missed collections over Summer period 2022.	On Track- little or no slippage	AD Oct 22 Recommendations progress on track pending any changes relating to major contract scrutiny report	
Role and Function of Scrutiny and Audit	DM.C.3.0	Manage position on historic issues through work with ARAC chair	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader			Dec-21	Ongoing	Low Risk	Risk of historic issues resurfacing through ARAC	On Track- little or no slippage	Meeting held with Chair in September around historic issues. Follow up discussion taking place with Leader taking place to deal with an outstanding ARAC resolution. Due in October	On Track- little or no slippage	Follow up discussion due to take place in October	
Role and Function of Scrutiny and Audit	DM.C4.0	ARAC report and recommendations in relation to SEND Transport	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader			Dec-21	Oct-22	Medium Risk	If we don't implement ARAC recommendations, this undermines the Council's decision making and leaves the Council open to risk and challenge	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Role and Function of Scrutiny and Audit	DM.C4.1	Completion of report and recommendations	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader		Group Head for Education Support Services		Oct-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Procurement exercise complete. Internal audit has included a review of compliance with contract procedure rules as part of their work programme. Contracts have gone live. As part of internal audit work programme there is a review of compliance with contract procedure rules and this will be undertaken this municipal year.	Complete	Procurement concluded. When subsequent internal audit report into SEND Transport Procurement is conducted (March 2023), this will be reported to ARAC as part of BAU reporting on audit work programme.	

Theme 5- Procurement & Commercial

Static data												October Update Due				
Owners			Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Change Control required					
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	October	
Waste Contract	PC.A1.0	Introduction of a more focused framework for contract monitoring	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services			Autumn 2021	Aug-22	Medium Risk	Risk of service delivery being of a poor quality for waste collection / street cleansing. Risk that contract monitoring does not drive service performance	Complete	Contract monitoring approach in place	Complete	complete	Yes	
Waste Contract	PC.A1.1	Contract Monitoring Framework agreed	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	complete	Complete	complete		
Waste Contract	PC.A1.2	Contract Management framework in place and embedded in PMF reporting – (in line with Q1)	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services				Aug-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	complete	Complete	complete		
Waste Contract	PC.A1.3	Assurance Action- Report provided to Officer Leadership on a quarterly basis. Regular reporting through PMF	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services			Feb-22	quarterly	N/A	N/a	Not due to start	not due to start	New Action Added	assurance action	Yes	
Waste Contract	PC.A1.4	Assurance Action- Annual report on leisure and waste contracts going through to cabinet member	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services			Nov-22	annually	N/A	N/a	Not due to start	not due to start	New Action Added	assurance action	yes	
Waste Contract	PC.A1.5	Assurance Action- The large contracts in BE for waste/street cleansing, and both leisure providers will be added to the Intend contract management module.	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services			dates	dates	N/A	N/a	Not due to start	not due to start	New Action Added	assurance action	yes	
Waste Contract	PC.A2.0	Review of the contract to refocus our communications and contract monitoring in areas of poor performance and to ensure the council receives the full provisions within the contract from Serco	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services			Autumn 2021	Jan-23	Low Risk	Service capacity to procure and manage contract review. Mitigated by appointment of interim waste manager from 11th July 2022	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Waste Contract	PC.A2.1	Procurement of support to review contract	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services				May-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	complete	Complete	complete		
Waste Contract	PC.A2.2	Review of contract completed	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services				Sep-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Frith contract review in progress supported by Serco & SMBC officers. First draft report SMBC comment provided 22.09.22	Complete	Initial review report received end sept 22		
Waste Contract	PC.A2.3	Recommendations reviewed	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services				Oct-22	N/A	N/A	Not due to start	Not due to start	On Track- little or no slippage	Recommendations review is underway and briefing to cabinet member planned for early November 22		
Waste Contract	PC.A2.4	Recommendations adopted, as appropriate	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services				Jan-23	N/A	N/A	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start		
Waste Contract	PC.A2.5	Delivery of recommendations – as appropriate	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services				TBC	N/A	N/A	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start		
Waste Contract	PC.A3.0	Waste and Recycling Recovery Plan – completion and implementation	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services					Low Risk	Risk that Serco did not improve	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Waste Contract	PC.A3.1	Implementation Complete	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services				Jun-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	complete	Complete	complete		
Waste Contract	PC.A4.0	Street Cleansing Recovery Plan – completion and implementation	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services			Autumn 2021	Mar-23	Medium Risk	Although an increase in complaints would be likely if performance for street cleansing is not improved, this would not have further more serious impact.	N/A		N/A		No	
Waste Contract	PC.A4.1	Recovery Plan approved by Waste Management Board	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services				Jul-22	Low Risk	Risk of service delivery being of a poor quality for waste collection / street cleansing. Risk that contract monitoring does not drive service performance	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Plan on track to presentation to October Waste Board. Revised plan following SMBC feedback to draft to be presented to Waste Board Oct 2022	Complete	Revised plan following SMBC feedback to be presented to Waste Board 19 Oct 2022		
Waste Contract	PC.A4.2	Recovery plan implemented	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services				Mar-23	N/A	N/A	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start		
Waste Contract	PC.A4.3	Assurance Action- Senior management meeting - annual plans requested- service delivery plan from SERCO is contractually compliant and includes elements of street cleansing.	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services			quarterly review	quarterly			Not due to start	Not due to start	New Action Added		Yes	



Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	October Update Due		Change Control required
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	October
Waste Contract	PC.A5.0	Manage the delayed Serco Fleet replacement programme in line with the requirements of the contract	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services			Autumn 2021	Mid 2023	Medium Risk	May lead to some loss of service due to fleet unavailability	N/A		N/A		No
Waste Contract	PC.A5.1	Fleet replacement schedule in place	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Waste Contract	PC.A5.2	Fleet replacement complete	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services				Mid 2023	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Plan in delivery phase with dates into 2023	On Track- little or no slippage	AD Oct 2023 Plan in delivery phase with dates into 2023	
Waste Contract	PC.A5.3	Assurance Action- Monthly fleet steering group taking place where the documentation considered by the group is contractually compliant.	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services					N/A	N/A			New Action Added		
SEND Transport	PC.B1.0	Plan in place to ensure new contract commences prior to expiry of current arrangements and appropriate records in place	Director- Finance	Dept Leader / Cabinet Member for Children and Education	Director – Children & Education		Jan-22	Sep-22	Low Risk	MI to review: Contracts commenced (pre-risk drafted as follows-On track-Tender offer letters have been issued (10 day standstill period).	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
SEND Transport	PC.B1.1	Cabinet approval	Director- Finance	Dept Leader / Cabinet Member for Children and Education	Director – Children & Education			Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
SEND Transport	PC.B1.2	Procurement commenced	Director- Finance	Dept Leader / Cabinet Member for Children and Education	Director – Children & Education			Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
SEND Transport	PC.B1.3	Procurement published for framework	Director- Finance	Dept Leader / Cabinet Member for Children and Education	Director – Children & Education			May-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
SEND Transport	PC.B1.4	Expiry of current arrangements – end of 2021-22 Academic Year	Director- Finance	Dept Leader / Cabinet Member for Children and Education	Director – Children & Education			Jul-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
SEND Transport	PC.B1.5	New contract in place	Director- Finance	Dept Leader / Cabinet Member for Children and Education	Director – Children & Education			Sep-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	All new contracts issued and accepted by operators new framework commenced 1.9.22	Complete	All new contracts issued and accepted by operators new framework commenced 1.9.22	
SEND Transport	PC.B1.6	Contract Monitoring Arrangements in Place	Director- Finance	Dept Leader / Cabinet Member for Children and Education	Director – Children & Education			Sep-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	All new contracts issued and accepted by operators new framework commenced 1.9.22	On Track- little or no slippage	Contracts are being monitored. Contract monitoring arrangements to be confirmed in Jan 23. Change control Seq 22 Jan 23	Yes
SEND Transport	PC.B2.0	Implementation of recommendations from Audit and Scrutiny in relation to SEND Transport	Director- Law & Governance	Dept Leader / Cabinet Member for Children and Education	Scrutiny Director – Children & Education		Autumn 2021	Sep-22	Medium Risk	If we don't implement scrutiny and ARAC recommendations, this undermines the Council's decision making and leaves the Council open to risk and challenge	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
SEND Transport	PC.B2.1	Scrutiny Recommendations embedded in plans for new arrangements	Director- Law & Governance	Dept Leader / Cabinet Member for Children and Education	Scrutiny Director – Children & Education			Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
SEND Transport	PC.B2.2	Update to Education Scrutiny	Director- Law & Governance	Dept Leader / Cabinet Member for Children and Education	Scrutiny Director – Children & Education			Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	

Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	October Update Due		Change Control required
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	October
SEND Transport	PC.B2.3	Recommendations related to procurement embedded in procurement process	Director - Law & Governance	Dept Leader / Cabinet Member for Children and Education	Scrutiny Director – Children & Education			Sep-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	On track to conclude procurement-related recommendations in line with the commencement of new contract from September 2022. Children and Education Scrutiny Board review a recommendation action tracker at each meeting and an update is due in October 2022.	Complete	The recommendations from C&E Scrutiny Board are being monitored and will be updated at the next Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board meeting.	
SEND Transport	PC.B2.4	ARAC recommendations implemented	Director - Law & Governance	Dept Leader / Cabinet Member for Children and Education	Director – Children & Education ARAC			Oct-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Process is concluded and contracts have been issued to operators. Service effective from 1.9.22	Complete	Procurement concluded. When subsequent internal audit report into SEND Transport Procurement is conducted (March 2023), this will be reported to ARAC as part of BAU reporting on audit work programme.	
SEND Transport	PC.B3.0	Procurement of 2024 SEND Transport Contract	Director - Children and Education				Nov-22	Sep-24			Not due to start		New Action Added	new action	Yes
SEND Transport	PC.B3.1	Leadership review of lessons learnt from SEND 2	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education Dept Leader	Director - Law & Governance Director - Finance	Group Head - Education	Sep-22	Nov-22	N/A		Not due to start		New Action Added	new action	
SEND Transport	PC.B3.2	Mobilise project team and establish project governance	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education Dept Leader	Director - Law & Governance Director - Finance	Group Head - Education			N/A		Not due to start		New Action Added	new action	
SEND Transport	PC.B3.3	Commence Procurement	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education Dept Leader	Director - Law & Governance Director - Finance	Group Head - Education	Spring 2023		N/A		Not due to start		New Action Added	new action	
New System Procurement	PC.C1.0	Explore implementation of a corporate performance management system	Director- Business Strategy & Change	Deputy Leader			Jun-21		Low Risk	Not having the appropriate resource, both financial and employees, to support the implementation of new system	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
New System Procurement	PC.C1.1	Options Appraisal	Director- Business Strategy & Change	Deputy Leader		Strategic Lead - Service Improvement		Sep-22	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	PM system is on hold – research/soft market testing being conducted, project management capacity to be identified within Transformation Team	Significant issues / actual/projected slippage- more than 2 months	Not progressed past soft market testing. Further demonstration with another provider. Size and scale of system to be considered for scope of project.	Yes
New System Procurement	PC.C1.2	Business Case and Implementation Plan Considered	Director- Business Strategy & Change	Deputy Leader		Strategic Lead - Service Improvement		TBC based on selected option	N/A	N/A	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start	
New System Procurement	PC.C2.0	Procurement of new asset management system	Director – Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth			Autumn 2021	Dec-22	Low Risk	Procurement is on track but timetable is tight	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
New System Procurement	PC.C2.1	Market Research	Director – Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
New System Procurement	PC.C2.2	Procurement Concluded	Director – Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	

Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	October Update Due		Change Control required
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	October
New System Procurement	PC.C2.3	Implementation	Director – Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth				Mar-23	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Implementation is on track as SD.A2.8	On Track- little or no slippage	Implementation is on track as SD.A2.8	
Lion farm	PC.D1.0	Action plan to agree way forward and resolve matter	Director – Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth			Dec-21	Dec-23	Medium Risk	Medium Risk as the issues are subject to an external Expert Determination Process on the Lion Farm Option Agreement	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Lion farm	PC.D1.1	Brief Cabinet on options	Director – Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Lion farm	PC.D1.2	Presentation of proposal by developer to Cabinet	Director – Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Lion farm	PC.D1.3	Options appraisal report to Cabinet for approval of way forward	Director – Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Lion farm	PC.D1.4	Implement approved way forward	Director – Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth			Feb-22	In progress	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Papers have been submitted to the external party that will conduct the expert determination.	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Papers have been submitted to the external party that will conduct the expert determination. The date for Expert Determination is outside the hands of the Council and will be decided by a third party.	
Lion farm	PC.D1.5	Responsibilities of both council and developer clarified within action plan	Director – Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth				Est. Dec 2022	N/A	N/A	Complete	Formal document detailing the respective roles and responsibilities of Council and developer.	Complete	complete	
Leisure Contract	PC.E1.0	Governance arrangements to manage, develop and support the current and future delivery of leisure services across the borough, including the new Aquatic Centre	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Leisure and Tourism			Autumn 2021	May-23	Medium Risk	Some risks remain pending the fully established new LATC to manage the leisure facilities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Leisure Contract	PC.E1.1	Governance arrangements in place	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Leisure and Tourism				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Leisure Contract	PC.E1.2	Termination of existing Contract	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Leisure and Tourism				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Leisure Contract	PC.E1.3	Step-in provider in place	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Leisure and Tourism				Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	

Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	October Update Due		Change Control required
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	October
Leisure Contract	PC.E14	Option appraisal for future facility management options– Cabinet report	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Leisure and Tourism				Summer 2022	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Leisure Contract	PC.E15	Arrangement in place for future delivery of leisure facilities	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Leisure and Tourism				May-23	Medium Risk	remain in relation to utility	On Track- little or no slippage	Cabinet Workshop for legal vehicle options consideration, specification, property and company name delivered 14.09.22.	On Track- little or no slippage	Chief Operating Officer recruitment in progress. Further legal vehicle structure session undertaken with Cabinet Member. Tax Advisors appointed.	No

Theme 6-Partnerships & Relationships

Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	October Update Due		Change Control required
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	October
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A1.0	Continue with robust governance arrangements in place ensuring the accountability of SCT to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people in Sandwell in line with the contract	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Autumn 2021	Ongoing	Medium Risk	This is identified as a Corporate Risk - the contract between SCT and the Council is subject to review, the Council are embarking on a mid-point contract review with the Trust and the DfE - this will include revision on Key Performance indicators (KPIs) in line with approved government arrangements	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A1.1	Performance reporting embedded within Council PMF	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Jan-22	Aug 2022 and then quarterly	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Completed - included in the PMF.	Complete	Completed - included in the PMF.	
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A1.2	KPI Suite reviewed	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Mar-22	Summer 2022	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	This forms part of the contract review for implementation on 1.4.23	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	This forms part of the contract review for implementation on 1.4.23. KPI Suite review due to be complete by December .	yes
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A1.3	Revised KPI suite agreed	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Summer 2022	Summer 2022	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	The KPIs are being confirmed between the Council and the Trust ahead of the implementation date 1.4.23	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	KPI suite will be agreed in December 22 for implementation on 1/4/23	yes
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A1.4	Review of Contract concludes	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education				Autumn 22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	The revised contract will commence on 1.4.23. Negotiations have commenced between the Council and the Trust and both parties have shared responses to the contract review. The Contract Sum negotiations commenced 26.9.22.	On Track- little or no slippage	The revised contract will commence on 1.4.23. Negotiations have commenced between the Council and the Trust and both parties have shared responses to the contract review. The Contract Sum negotiations commenced 26.9.22.	yes

Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	October Update Due		Change Control required
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	October
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A1.5	Contract Review with DfE	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education	Director – Finance			Nov-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	The contract review process is on schedule with revised date. The review team met 20 July 2022 to progress developments with a cross section of senior officers across the council, Trust and DfE. The review will focus on contract requirements, revised KPIs and governance arrangements as part of the DfE statutory direction. Change control to be put forward to adjust due date, as able to be flexible now Ofsted inspection has happened and do not propose to evoke the break clause.	On Track- little or no slippage	The contract review process is on schedule with revised date. The review team met 20 July 2022 to progress developments with a cross section of senior officers across the council, Trust and DfE. The review will focus on contract requirements, revised KPIs and governance arrangements as part of the DfE statutory direction. Change control to be put forward to adjust due date, as able to be flexible now Ofsted inspection has happened and do not propose to evoke the break clause.	Yes
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A3.0	Establish corporate approach to working with SCT on shared issues, such as corporate parenting and delivery of Early Help service	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Autumn 2021	Ongoing	Medium Risk	The realignment of the new Children & Families Strategic Partnership (CaFSP) has enabled shared priorities to be developed and integrated across the wider children's partnership - this has led to an improved understanding of strategic planning including, though not limited to, the launch of the Early Help and Corporate Parenting Strategies.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A3.1	Continuation of arrangements for strategic priorities to be shared across the partnership and include a series of joint work. Initial focus areas are corporate parenting and early help.	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education				Ongoing	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Completed. Strategic Priorities form part of the Children & Families Strategic Partnership (CaFSP) work programme.	Complete	All strategic priorities agreed and monitored through Children and Families strategic partnership	
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A3.2	Assurance that approach to working together is effective through regular programme of performance reports	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education				Aug 2022 and then ongoing	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	This assurance is in place as part of the governance arrangements (as part of the contract) and include the Operational Partnership Board, Strategic Partnership Board, SCT Improvement Board and twice yearly updates to Children and Education Scrutiny Board.	Complete	This assurance is in place as part of the governance arrangements (as part of the contract) and include the Operational Partnership Board, Strategic Partnership Board, SCT Improvement Board and twice yearly updates to Children and Education Scrutiny Board.	
Regional and Sub-Regional presence	PR.B1.0	Continue to develop the relationship with and actively participate in regional and sub-regional bodies (e.g. WM Combined Authority, Black Country LEP) to maximise opportunities for Sandwell	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Leader of the Council / Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth	Cabinet Chief Executive		Jan-22		Medium Risk	Member input into key WMCA meetings needs to increase which is expected to with new Cabinet Member.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Regional and Sub-Regional presence	PR.B1.1	Officer representation agreed to attend key meetings and a clear agenda set for each forum	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Leader of the Council / Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth	Cabinet Chief Executive			Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Regional and Sub-Regional presence	PR.B1.2	Sandwell asks of trailblazer devolution deal agreed	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Leader of the Council / Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth	Cabinet Chief Executive			Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Regional and Sub-Regional presence	PR.B1.3	Participation in Investor Conference	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Leader of the Council / Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth	Cabinet Chief Executive			Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Regional and Sub-Regional presence	PR.B1.4	CRSTS allocation (transport) approved by CA Board	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Leader of the Council / Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth	Cabinet Chief Executive			Complete	N/A	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Regional and Sub-Regional presence	PR.B1.5	Member representation to attend key meetings agreed and agenda for each forum shared	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Leader of the Council / Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth	Cabinet Chief Executive			Jun-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Attendance from members at external partnership meetings is improved and ongoing. Assurance action required	Complete	Complete	

Static data			Owners				Dates		Main Action Risk		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Change Control required
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Description	Status (September 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(September 22)	Status (October 2022)	Update (Initial and Date)(October 22)	October
Regional and Sub-Regional presence	PR.B1.6	Assurance Action: Update provided on a 6 monthly basis by Director of Regen and Growth to confirm representation at key meetings continues and brings benefit to the council. Key meetings for Members to attend at sub regional and regional level are: ABCA Leaders; WMCA Board; WMCA Economic Growth Board; WMCA Housing and Land Board.	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Leader of the Council / Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth			Mar-23	6 monthly update	N/A	N/A	Not due to start	Not due to start	New Action Added	new assurance action	
Effective Local Structures	PR.C1.0	Review partnership structures within the 'People's sphere'	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education / Cabinet Member for Adults, Social Care and Health	Director-Adult Social Care Director- Public Health				Medium Risk	Work is underway to review the governance arrangements. The children's safeguarding arrangements have been refreshed and discussions are underway in relation to aligning children and adults safeguarding arrangements. Further consideration is being given to the strategic connection across the 4 Board governance arrangements.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Effective Local Structures	PR.C1.1	Partnership structures in relation to transition from children's to adults in place	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education / Cabinet Member for Adults, Social Care and Health	Director-Adult Social Care Director- Public Health			In place	N/A	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Meeting booked for the 17 October 2022 to commence work on the reviewing and remodelling of the pathway. The Lead for the project from an Adults LD perspective has gained a new role in the council and we are going out to advert to gain a project lead for this work.	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Meeting booked for November 22 to commence work on the reviewing and remodelling of the pathway. Following November meeting, actions to be decided and added to Improvement plan. The ASC restructure will add a Learning Disability Team to the ASC structure which will assist with building the offer around	yes
Effective Local Structures	PR.C1.2	Initial scoping of work with partners around partnership structures in the children's sphere	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education / Cabinet Member for Adults, Social Care and Health	Director-Adult Social Care Director- Public Health		Mar-22	Sep-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Wider discussions will take place to include Chair reps of the 4 Strategic Boards across the children's landscape.	Complete	Initial discussions with partnership has been completed. Now looking to extend discussion to include adults - new action to be added- PR.C1.5	
Effective Local Structures	PR.C1.3	Develop Health & Wellbeing Strategy that builds on existing whole system approach to addressing health inequalities	Director-Adult Social Care	Cabinet Member for Children and Education / Cabinet Member for Adults, Social Care and Health	Director- Public Health		Apr-22	Jul-22	N/A	N/A	Complete	Strategy complete and approved by both Health & Wellbeing Board.	Complete	Corporate Plan Monitoring within PMF is providing progress updates and is tracking outcomes achieved relating to health inequalities.	No
Effective Local Structures	PR.C1.4	Test adequacy of partnerships and integration through Health Outcomes Framework and system-wide thematic deep dives	Director-Adult Social Care	Cabinet Member for Children and Education / Cabinet Member for Adults, Social Care and Health	Director- Public Health		Apr-22	Jul-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Deep dives being completed as planned and on time. (PMO addition: Ongoing action. Initial set of actions achieved by due date)	Complete	Ongoing action. Mechanisms within the system are now in place - SHCP Board and Integrated Care Board are regularly reviewing the progress of deep-dives, the outcomes from them, and any follow up actions needed. Change proposed to close action and add a new assurance action to receive a quarterly update from DPH and DASC to provide assurance that governance remains in place and	Yes
VCS Relationships	PR.D1.0	Relationship with Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) and Funding to Voluntary & Community Sector.	Leadership Team	Cabinet Member for Communities			Mar-22	Jul-05	Medium Risk	Missed opportunities around partnership and value for money: If the future relationship and the funding	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
VCS Relationships	PR.D1.1	Corporate review of grant funding	Director - Housing	Cabinet Member for Communities			Mar-22	Sep-22	N/A	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Review of grants complete as per timeline and communication with organisations complete as well as a letter to the sector. Process to meet 2023/24 savings target agreed.	Complete	Action complete as per previous month update. Consider next steps in terms of developing VCS strategy and add once identified to the plan	
VCS Relationships	PR.D1.2	VCS Strategy formation commences	Leadership Team	Cabinet Member for Communities			2023	2023	N/A	N/A	Not due to start	Not due to start	On Track- little or no slippage	Work has commenced. Approach is for SCVO and the council to run a series of face to face focus groups with cross sections of Sandwell's VCS to explore a series of key themes. These will be used to draft the main elements of the strategy. Focus group pilot approach was held in September. Focus Groups due to take place from October onwards	

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## Improvement Plan Theme Progress Summary October 2022

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
<b>Organisational Culture</b>	<p><b>Summary Statement:</b></p> <p>Progress is being made across all workstreams. Slippage is being experienced in a couple of areas that are classed as medium risk one of which is due to the impact of the by-election. In addition there is some slippage relating to the establishing the desired organisational culture (which is rated as a green risk).</p> <p>Of the 16 main action areas, there are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• zero main actions with a red risk rating,</li> <li>• 7 main actions with an amber risk rating,</li> <li>• 9 main actions with a green risk rating.</li> </ul> <p>Of the 7 actions with an amber risk rating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 live sub-actions to deliver the action are on track</li> <li>• 2 sub-action have or will experience medium slippage or issues. These actions relate to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Create the right environment for that organisational culture to thrive</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Organisational Development Strategy and Plan Approved- being redefined as Workforce</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member Development programme part of BAU</li> <li>• Final interview for CEx taken place</li> </ul> <p>September:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEx long-list interviews undertaken</li> <li>• 4 sessions between Members and Officers with LGA have taken place</li> </ul> <p>August:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEx recruitment out to advert</li> <li>• Training provider in place for Directorship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part 2 engagement – determining desired culture - August – December 2022- <b>Commenced</b></li> <li>• Corporate Governance Training Delivery - Autumn 2022 - <b>Commenced</b></li> <li>• Approval of document / statement setting out desired organisational culture – <b>On track for Jan 2023</b></li> <li>• Organisational Development Strategy and Plan Approved – <b>On track for March 2023</b></li> </ul>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<p>Strategy. This is dependent on the outcomes of the culture listening groups which will conclude in October.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Design and deliver Corporate Governance Training for Members:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ *Effective decision-making training- (delay of Council date due to by-election)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 2 sub-actions have been marked completed this month. These actions relate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Ward and Casework</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Leadership Team conversation to identify mechanisms to embed and sustain the required approach and process forward and casework (linked to desired organisational culture)</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Deliver Member Development Programme including Finance Training Programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Deliver Member Development Programme</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• 1 main action has been marked complete this month: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Actions to respond to employee survey outcomes to be identified and embedded in improvement plan</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• 2 sub-actions are not yet due to commence</li> </ul>	<p>and Trusteeship Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisational Culture Champion training commenced</li> <li>• Listening groups scheduled and invites to 460 employees issued</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of Permanent Chief Executive- <i>On track for Nov 2023</i></li> </ul> <p>Complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget Holder Role Profile Approved</li> <li>• Employee Engagement Survey Report</li> <li>• New Member Induction</li> <li>• Employee Engagement Survey Results</li> <li>• Meeting structures to support regular dialogue between Senior Leadership (Officer and Member) confirmed for new</li> <li>• Municipal Year- Part 1 Engagement – Starting the Conversation</li> </ul>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<p><b>Organisational Culture Workstream Updates</b></p> <p><b>Establishing Organisational Culture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultancy engaged.</li> <li>• Phase 1 engagement has been complete. Culture champions have been recruited and attended training. Listening sessions have been carried out. Survey to be issued October/November.</li> <li>• Outcome session to be held with LT November 22. Draft of document setting out the desired organisational culture will then be refined and work commence on workforce strategy.</li> </ul> <p><b>Officer Learning and Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparatory discussions are taking place for the revision of corporate induction</li> <li>• Guidance around decision making is being issued to Officers in October. Dates for training are being agreed.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope of Corporate Governance Training approved</li> <li>• Member Development Programme approved</li> <li>• Corporate Governance Training – Procurement for delivery partner</li> </ul>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Range of corporate governance training has been delivered linked to the constitutional approvals.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Effective decision-making training scheduled to commence late November linked to scheme of delegation approvals.</li> <li>○ Procurement and Officer-Member behaviour training commenced as planned.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A broader Management Development Programme and revision to the Corporate Induction will be rolled out in 2023 following the approval of the OD Strategy and Plan.</li> </ul> <p><b>Officer and Member Relationship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular meetings with Whips are being diarised.</li> <li>• Regular meetings with Group Leaders have been taking place and these have been meeting needs. Regular meetings between Cabinet and Leadership Team in place for Municipal Year</li> <li>• 1 more session to take place with Officers (Nov) and there will then be a report produced by LGA, identifying any further actions required.</li> </ul> <p><b>Member Learning and Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member Development Programme in place and moved into regular business of the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee.</li> <li>• Centre for Governance and Scrutiny are providing training on 28 Nov.</li> <li>• Effective decision-making training to be delivered in November/December to key officers (<i>delay due to Council date change</i>).</li> <li>• Annual refresher training of Corporate Governance training planned in November 22.</li> <li>• Forward Plan for All Member Briefings in place for new Municipal Year. Latest briefing took place 18 October</li> <li>• Leadership Team Review of All Member Briefings to ensure they are meeting needs. Briefing note will be compiled to report back on the last 12months as a closure report.</li> </ul> <p><b>Internal Communications</b></p>		

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comms messages have taken place and training sessions held have reinforced the messages around the relationship.</li> <li>Director Live Events have taken place over Autumn. All Staff briefing taking place in November.</li> <li>Paper outlining comms on IP to date and future plans is being presented on 03/11</li> </ul> <p><b>Employee Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership Team considered action plan in response to Employee Engagement Survey 18/10.</li> <li>EES specific action plan in place containing corporate actions and Directorate-specific actions.</li> <li>Actions around staff conference and formal employee recognition scheme have been added to OC.E2.</li> <li>EES Action plan will be monitored twice a year.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recruitment of Chief Executive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final interviews with Chief Officer Terms and Conditions Committee took place 20 October 2022; council ratification due 8 November</li> </ul>		
<b>Corporate Oversight</b>	<p><b>Summary Statement:</b> Progress is being made across all workstreams.</p> <p>Of the 11 main actions there is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 main action with a red risk rating,</li> <li>4 main actions with an amber risk rating</li> <li>6 actions with a green risk rating.</li> </ul> <p>Of the 1 main action with a red risk rating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All sub-actions are now complete with the Q1 report presented to Cabinet, Scrutiny and an All Member briefing. New actions are proposed for inclusion within this workstream.</li> </ul>	<p>October:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q1 Performance Management Report made to Scrutiny and at an All Member Briefing.</li> </ul> <p>September:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q1 Performance Management Report made to Cabinet</li> <li>ERP Contract signing and mobilisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Directorate-level restructuring completed- On track for December completion of AD level.</li> <li>Oracle Fusion Implemented- In progress</li> </ul>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<p>Of the 4 main actions with an amber risk rating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 live sub-actions to deliver the action are on track</li> <li>• 1 sub-action has or will experience medium slippage or issues. This action relates to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Programme and Project Management:</b> Programme and Project Management System Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Further exploration taking place of Verto system to fulfil transformation programme needs</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Zero sub-actions have been completed this month.</li> <li>• Zero sub-actions are not yet due to commence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Management training rolled out to key project members for Oracle Fusion</li> </ul> <p>August:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ERP Contract Awarded</li> <li>• Financial Services new structure in place</li> </ul> <p>July:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business process re-engineering resources have been approved.</li> </ul>	<p>Complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish Performance Management Framework</li> <li>• Improvement Plan approved</li> <li>• Procure new support provider to deliver Oracle Fusion</li> <li>• First Performance Management Report</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Corporate Oversight Workstream Updates</b></p> <p><b>ERP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key project members have received training. Ongoing training to be arranged as needed in the future.</li> </ul>		

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procurement complete and contract awarded</li> <li>• Support provider in place</li> <li>• New milestones to be added to Improvement Plan</li> </ul> <p><b>Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioners report prepared and submitted to Secretary of State – next submission due in December 2022.</li> <li>• Awaiting formal response from DLUHC.</li> <li>• Initial scoping of work has commenced for the Continuous Improvement plan</li> </ul> <p><b>Performance Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q1 report considered by Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board 13/10/22, and an All Member briefing on Q1 report being held 18/10/22.</li> <li>• Preparations underway for Q2 report to Cabinet in December.</li> <li>• Monthly Budget monitoring is taking place and report received by leadership team monthly.</li> </ul> <p><b>Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KPIs and standards developed for financial services section by November</li> <li>• Review of corporate debt recovery processes underway covering multiple teams- completion date December 22.</li> <li>• C.Co in place to support finance transactional processes. Series of back office process reviews are being progressed through the Fusion Programme.</li> <li>• Approach to transformation being considered by LT 03/11/22</li> </ul> <p><b>Programme and Project management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership Team approved governance and framework.</li> </ul>		

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Nov, Leadership Team will consider how we manage pipeline of business change projects, governance to manage approval and progress of projects, project and programme mgmt methodology, business analysis methodology, business change methodology, setting up PMO, managing benefits lifecycle.</li> <li>Verto system is being looked at further exploration needed with a view to a pilot.</li> </ul>		
<b>Strategic Direction</b>	<p><b>Summary Statement:</b> Progress is being made, however some specific issues emerging around the EDI agenda along with the forthcoming decision to adopt the LGA equalities framework review are impacting on the ability to deliver on the actions to the original timescales. Slippage has also occurred against original timescales for the Commercial Strategy. Locality Working Workstream placed on hold and proposed creation of Customer Journey Workstream.</p> <p>Of the 13 main action areas, there are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>zero actions with a red risk rating,</li> <li>6 actions with an amber risk rating,</li> <li>7 actions with a green risk rating.</li> </ul> <p>Of the 6 main actions with an amber risk rating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7 live sub-actions to deliver the action are on track</li> <li>4 sub-actions have or will experience medium slippage or issues (two of which are related to delays due to the by-election). These actions relate to</li> </ul>	<p><b>October</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate Parenting Strategy Approved</li> <li>Review of MTFP concluded</li> <li>Microsite creation for information around priority projects for stakeholders launched</li> </ul> <p><b>September:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equality policy review complete</li> <li>First Resident's Survey completed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approval of Medium-Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy- <b>on track for November Cabinet</b></li> <li>Corporate Procurement Strategy – <b>Commenced</b></li> <li>Commercial Strategy <b>Commenced</b></li> <li>Regular Resident Survey in place- <b>2022 budget consultation and Residents' survey completed. Plans to sustain approach being developed</b></li> </ul>



Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Corporate Asset Management Strategy Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ *Corporate Asset Management Strategy Approved <i>(delay due to by election)</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Develop and Implement the Commercial Strategy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Commercial Strategy Approved</li> <li>▪ Business Cases Presented               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial Opportunity Assessment report to be received by Leadership Team.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Equality and Diversity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue to embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) staff networks</li> <li>▪ Continue to deliver on Equalities Commission Board priorities</li> <li>▪ *Equality Policy approved- Scheduled for Nov 22 <i>(delay due to by election)</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Two sub-actions have or will experience significant slippage or issues.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Equality and Diversity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review of Council EDI decision making process</li> <li>▪ Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy approved</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• 6 sub-actions have been marked complete this month</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget Consultation Completed</li> </ul> <p><b>July:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Procurement Strategy approved</li> <li>• Budget Consultation Launched</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equalities Policy approved- <b>on track for November approval</b></li> <li>• Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy approved- <b>Autumn 2023</b></li> <li>• Corporate Asset Management Strategy Approved- <b>On track for November Cabinet</b></li> <li>• HRA 30 Year Business Plan approved- <b>On track for Spring 2023</b></li> <li>• Model for Locality Working Approved- <b>On hold and incorporation within Customer Journey Workstream.</b></li> </ul> <p>Complete:</p>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Corporate Asset Management Strategy Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Confirmation of funding for remaining Workplace Vision components</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Refresh Corporate Parenting Strategy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Re-focusing of strategic priorities</li> <li>▪ Corporate Parenting Strategy approved</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Equality and Diversity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review approach to Equality Impact Assessments</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Incorporate Public Consultation Results into Performance Management Framework</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ First report from Resident's Survey</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Developing a model for locality working</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Customer Access Strategy Development Commences</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 sub-actions are not yet due to commence</li> </ul> <p>1 sub action has been placed on hold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Developing a model for locality working</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pilot of Town Co-ordinator role commences</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval of Communications and Corporate Affairs Strategy</li> <li>• Approval of Regeneration Strategy and Pipeline-</li> <li>• Early Help Strategy approved and launched</li> <li>• Public Consultation to be carried out as part of budget process</li> <li>• Corporate Parenting Strategy Refresh Approved</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Strategic Direction Workstream Updates</b></p> <p><b>Strategy Development and Refresh</b></p>		

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Regen Strategy and Pipeline:</b> First update report across the 63 projects in the pipeline being compiled. Aiming for scrutiny and Cabinet in November/December <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Discussions ongoing around capacity and expertise to deliver pipeline.</li> <li>○ Software procurement not taken place yet. Demonstration is due in October</li> <li>○ Microsite created and launched at the end of October.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Corporate Asset Management Strategy:</b> Workplace vision has been closed. New Corporate asset management strategy due to Cabinet in November (including surplus assets report). Options for hub locations actions has been incorporated within the customer Journey workstream.</li> <li>• <b>Commercial Strategy:</b> Assessment Report received. To be reviewed by Leadership Team and then Commercial Strategy can be updated to reflect opportunities to be taken forward.</li> <li>• <b>Corporate Parenting:</b> The strategy has been circulated and agreed by corporate parenting board members.</li> <li>• <b>HRA Business Plan:</b> Draft plan is due at Safer neighbourhoods and active communities Scrutiny Board on 1 Nov. On track for Cabinet in February. Procurement of stock condition surveys due to go to tender November 22</li> </ul> <p><b>Equality and Diversity.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of council EDI decision making process – this focused on the EIA Review which has been completed and the updated EIA form and guidance is being uploaded onto the intranet</li> <li>• Approval of EDI strategy - Significant slippage in relation to two components of EDI workstream due to adoption of LGA Equalities Framework leading to pushing back original timescales. Timescales agreed to be reprofiled through October's change control. This is referenced in the report going to Cabinet seeking approval of the equalities policy – but also seek approval of using the LGA Equalities Framework.</li> <li>• Continue to embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) staff networks – Ongoing work – some networks are functioning better than others;</li> <li>• Continue to deliver on Equalities Commission Board priorities. EDI legacy issues are resurfacing which is impacting on operation of staff networks and delivery on Equalities Commission Board priorities. Report due to</li> </ul>		

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<p>Leadership Team in coming weeks. All these actions will be swept up as part of the LGA Equalities Framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Equality Policy approved- Scheduled for Nov 22 (delay due to by election)</li> </ul> <p><b>Locality Working</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Workstream proposed to be closed and actions incorporated within Customer Journey Workstream.</b></li> <li>Pilot of town co-ordinator role was unsuccessful and placed on hold.</li> </ul> <p><b>Medium Term Financial Plan &amp; Capital Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Approval of MTFP and Capital Strategy has been pushed to the November Cabinet (delay due to by election). On track</li> </ul> <p><b>Consultation and Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget consultation, residents survey and SHAPE survey being used to inform business planning and budget setting. Proposal for regular surveys due in November</li> </ul>		
<b>Decision Making</b>	<p><b>Summary Statement:</b> Progress is being made across all workstreams.</p> <p>Of the 7 main actions there are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>zero main actions with a red risk rating,</li> <li>5 main actions with an amber risk rating,</li> <li>2 main actions with a green risk rating.</li> </ul> <p>Of the 5 main actions with an amber risk rating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 live sub-actions to deliver the action are on track</li> </ul>	<p>October:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ARAC recommendations and report into SEND transport complete</li> </ul> <p>September:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEND procurement exercise undertaken in line</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of scrutiny arrangements- <b>On track for Nov Council.</b></li> <li>Council Decision on options for alternative election cycle- <b>Due Nov 2022</b></li> <li>Revised Financial Regulations agreed-</li> </ul>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 sub-actions have or will experience medium slippage or issues. All bar one relate to delays due to the by-election:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>In-depth review and revision to Corporate Governance Documents</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ *Effective Decision-Making Training- (delay due to by election)</li> <li>▪ *Revised Scheme of Delegations agreed- (delay due to by election)</li> <li>▪ Revised Financial Regs agreed                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slippage relates to the remaining areas of the Financial Regulations that need reviewing. This will slip to December Council. As the key changes were approved in July, the risk and impact of the slippage of the outstanding bits is very low.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Refresh decision making-arrangements including the role of Scrutiny</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ *Review of scrutiny arrangements- (delay due to by election)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• 1 sub-action has or will experience significant slippage or issues. These actions relate to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>In-depth review and revision to Corporate Governance Documents</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Revised Council Procedure Rules. <i>This is Red rated due to an error in July's commentary and omission</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>with contract procurement rules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contracts now live</li> </ul> <p>August:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation launched re 4-yearly election cycle</li> </ul>	<p><b>On track for December</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised scheme of Delegations agreed- <b>due for approval in November</b></li> <li>• Approval of any changes to scrutiny (if required following review)- <b>From Nov</b></li> </ul> <p>Complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Options Paper to Leadership Team for 4 yearly election cycle</li> <li>• Scrutiny work planning event</li> <li>• Revised Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules agreed</li> <li>• Revised Council Procedure Rules</li> <li>• Revised Sale of Land and Buildings Protocol</li> </ul>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>from change control. Due for Council approval in November/December.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 sub-action is marked complete this month. This action relates to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>ARAC report and recommendations in relation to SEND Transport</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Completion of report and recommendations</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• zero sub-actions are not yet due to commence</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of Scrutiny Recommendations for SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) Transport and Waste</li> <li>• Completion of ARAC report and recommendations in relation to governance issues raised (SEND Transport, Waste Contract)</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Decision Making Workstream Summary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>4 Yearly Election Cycle</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final decision report due at Council in November. (delay due to by election)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Constitution and Governance Framework</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training to be rolled our beginning of November/December 22 after approval at Council in November 22 of further constitutional changes. (delay due to by election)</li> <li>• Refresh of financial regulations will be presented to full Council in December.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revised scheme of delegation being prepared for Council in November</li> </ul> <p><b>Role and function of Scrutiny and Audit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of scrutiny arrangements are ongoing and due to be reported to full Council in November. LGA have been complimentary around scrutiny arrangements</li> <li>Scrutiny work plans have been agreed and workplans are in the process of being delivered.</li> <li>Follow up discussion due to take place in October to manage the position on historic issues with ARAC chair.</li> <li>Survey to Scrutiny and Audit Members, and Officers attending Committees conducted over September. Findings were reported to IPRM 6 October. Surveys will continue to be sent out after meetings and reported quarterly.</li> </ul>		
<b>Procurement &amp; Commercial</b>	<p><b>Summary Statement:</b> Progress is being made across all workstreams. Implementation of a corporate performance management system is rated as low risk but is experiencing a significant level of slippage.</p> <p>Of the 11 main actions there are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>zero actions with a red risk rating,</li> <li>7 actions with an amber risk rating,</li> </ul>	<p>October:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of Serco Contract Complete</li> <li>Street Cleansing revised plan approved at Waste Board.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEND Transport Contract Monitoring arrangements in place- <b>Due in January</b></li> <li>Arrangement in place for future delivery of leisure services- <b>May 2023</b></li> </ul>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 actions with a green risk rating</li> </ul> <p>Of the 7 actions with an amber risk rating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 live sub actions are on track</li> <li>• 1 sub-actions have or will experience medium slippage or issues. This action relate to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Lion Farm Options Agreement:</b> Implement approved way forward:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Papers have been submitted to the external party that will conduct the expert determination. Update required at IPRM</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• 1 action with a green risk rating is experiencing a significant level of slippage:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Corporate Performance Management System – not progressed past soft market testing due to project management capacity.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 4 sub actions have been completed this month. These relates to               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Review of the Serco contract</b></li> <li>○ <b>Street Cleansing Recovery Plan</b> approved by Waste Management Board</li> <li>○ <b>Implementation of recommendations from Audit and Scrutiny in relation to SEND Transport:</b> Recommendations related to procurement embedded in procurement process, and ARAC recommendations implemented</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Zero sub-actions have not yet been rated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LATC Chief Officer recruitment underway</li> </ul> <p>September:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lion Farm: Responsibilities of both council and developer clarified within formal documentation</li> <li>• SEND Transport Contract has gone live</li> </ul> <p>July:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEND contract awarded</li> <li>• Cabinet decision on future delivery of leisure services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fleet replacement complete- <b>Mid 2023</b></li> <li>• Implementation of Asset Management System- <b>On track for December completion</b></li> <li>• Lion Farm report to Cabinet on determination of position of developer- date tbc as part of the ED process</li> </ul> <p>Complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Termination notice for SLT contract approved by Cabinet</li> <li>• Revised contract governance arrangements in place for Serco contract</li> <li>• Asset Management System Procured</li> </ul>



Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 sub actions are not due to start</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEND Transport procurement published</li> <li>Waste and Recycling recovery plan implementation</li> <li>Option appraisal for future leisure management options</li> <li>Street Cleansing Recovery Plan Approved</li> <li>Serco contract performance reporting embedded in PMF</li> <li>Review of Serco contract completed</li> <li>New SEND Transport contract in place</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Procurement and Commercial Workstream Summary</b></p> <p><b>Waste Contract:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frith contract review in progress supported by Serco &amp; SMBC officers.</li> </ul>		

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommendations review is underway and briefing to Cabinet member planned for early November 2022.</li> <li>• Street Cleansing Recovery plan presented to Waste Board 19 October 2022</li> <li>• Fleet replacement programme is in delivery phase with dates into 2023.</li> </ul> <p><b>SEND Transport:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All new contracts issued and accepted by operators new framework commenced 1.9.22</li> <li>• Contract monitoring arrangements to be confirmed in January 2023</li> <li>• Recommendations from Children &amp; Education Scrutiny Board are being monitored</li> <li>• When subsequent internal audit report into SEND Transport Procurement is conducted (March 2023), this will be reported to ARAC as part of BAU reporting on audit work programme.</li> <li>• Lessons Learnt from SEND Transport procurement 2 being captured.</li> </ul> <p><b>New System Procurement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial market testing for Performance Management System and demonstration complete. Not progressed past soft market testing. Size and scale of system to be considered.</li> <li>• Asset Management System is procured and implementation is on track for December 2022.</li> </ul> <p><b>Lion Farm:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approved way forward is being implemented, papers have been submitted to the external party that will conduct the expert determination.</li> <li>• Formal document detailing the respective roles and responsibilities of Council and developer.</li> </ul> <p><b>Leisure Contract:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision made by Cabinet to transfer services to LATC (Local Authority Trading Company)</li> <li>• Implementation phase has commenced.</li> <li>• Chief Operating Officer recruitment in progress.</li> <li>• Further legal vehicle structure session undertaken with Cabinet Member.</li> </ul>		

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tax Advisors appointed.</li> </ul>		
Partnerships & Relationships	<p><b>Summary Statement:</b> Progress is being made across workstreams with some slippage in relation to the SCT KPI review, partnership structures around transition from children's to adult's</p> <p>6 sub actions have been closed this month</p> <p>Of the 6 main action areas, there are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>zero actions with a red risk rating,</li> <li>5 actions with an amber risk rating,</li> <li>1 action with a green risk rating.</li> </ul> <p>Of the 4 actions with an amber risk rating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 live sub-actions to deliver the action are on track</li> <li>3 sub-actions have or will experience medium slippage or issues. These actions relate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Continue with robust governance arrangements in place ensuring the accountability of SCT to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people in Sandwell in line with the contract</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCT contract performance embedded within PMF</li> </ul> <p>September:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic Priorities form part of the Children &amp; Families Strategic Partnership (CaFSP) work programme.</li> <li>Health and Wellbeing Strategy approved</li> <li>Review of Grants completed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of SCT Contract concludes- <b>due Autumn 2022 for commencement from April 2023.</b></li> </ul> <p>Complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular cross-SMBC/SCT Leadership meetings</li> <li>City Region Sustainable Transport Scheme approved by CA Board</li> <li>Sandwell asks of trailblazer devolution deal agreed</li> <li>Officer &amp; Member representation agreed to key regional and sub-</li> </ul>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ KPI Suite reviewed and agreed - due to be complete December 2022 for implementation in April 2023.</li> <li>○ <b>Review partnership structures within the 'People's sphere'</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Partnership structures in relation to transition from children's to adult's services - review due to commence in November on the reviewing and remodelling of the pathway..</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 6 sub-action has been completed this month <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>SCT</b> Performance reporting embedded within Council PMF</li> <li>○ <b>Establish corporate approach to working with SCT on shared issues, such as corporate parenting and delivery of Early Help service</b></li> <li>○ <b>Review partnership structures within the 'People's sphere'</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Initial scoping of work with partners around partnership structures in the children's sphere</li> <li>▪ Test adequacy of partnerships and integration through Health Outcomes Framework and system-wide thematic deep dives</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>regional meetings and clear</li> <li>• VCS Grants review update report to Leadership Team</li> <li>• Health and Wellbeing Strategy</li> <li>• SCT Contract performance reporting embedded within Council PMF-</li> <li>• Quarterly system-wide deep dives conducted for health inequality</li> <li>• VCS Strategy formation commences</li> </ul>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Relationship with Voluntary &amp; Community Sector (VCS) and Funding to Voluntary &amp; Community Sector. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Corporate review of grant funding</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 1 sub-actions is not yet due to commence</li> </ul>		
	<p><b>Partnerships and Relationships Workstream Summary</b></p> <p><b>Sandwell Children’s Trust</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance reporting embedded within Council PMF</li> <li>• KPI Suite reviewed and agreed between Council and Trust by December 2022 ahead of implementation date 1/4/23.</li> <li>• Revised contract will commence on 1/4/23. Negotiations have commenced between the Council and the Trust.</li> <li>• Contract review DFE- The review will focus on contract requirements, revised KPIs and governance arrangements as part of the DfE statutory direction.</li> <li>• Assurance that approach to working together is effective is being supplied through the inclusion at Operational Partnership Board, Strategic Partnership Board, SCT Improvement Board and twice yearly updates to Children and Education Scrutiny Board.</li> </ul> <p><b>Regional and Sub Regional Presence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of actions complete</li> <li>• Attendance at and engagement within agenda issues at WMCA, ABCA and BCLEP is much improved and ongoing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Effective Local Structures</b></p>		

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period (Aug-Oct)	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition from children to adult services -Meeting booked for November 22 to commence work on the reviewing and remodelling of the pathway. Going out to advert for a project lead. Following November meeting, actions to be decided and added to Improvement plan. ASC restructure will add a Learning Disability Team to the ASC structure which will assist with building the offer around transition for people with LD.</li> <li>• Health and Wellbeing Strategy complete and approved by both Health &amp; Wellbeing Board.</li> <li>• Deep Dives are being completed as planned and on time. SHCP Board and Integrated Care Board are regularly reviewing the progress of deep-dives, the outcomes from them, and any follow up actions needed</li> </ul> <p><b>VCS (Voluntary and Community Sector) Relationship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of grants complete as per timeline. Process to meet 2023/24 savings target agreed.</li> <li>• Strategy formation work has commenced</li> </ul>		

## Appendix 3 – Statutory Recommendation Status Summary October 2022

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Statutory Recommendation	Summary	Achievements this month	Milestones
<p>S1 - It is imperative that senior officers and senior members take effective corporate grip of long-standing service issues highlighted by the findings in this report (including SLT, SCT, the waste service, the ERP system, and Lion Farm) and prioritise corporate effort in managing the issues identified and embed the solutions into the Council</p>	<p><b><u>Organisational Culture</u></b> No actions in this theme</p> <p><b><u>Corporate Oversight</u></b> <b>ERP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key project members have received training. Ongoing training to be arranged as needed in the future.</li> <li>• Procurement complete and contract awarded</li> <li>• Support provider in place</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Strategic Direction</u></b> <b>Strategy Development and Refresh</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regen Strategy and Pipeline: April- September update due. First update report across the 63 projects in the pipeline is aiming for scrutiny and Cabinet in November/December. Software procurement not taken place yet. Demonstration of VERTO has taken place. Microsite created and launched- 31 October 2022</li> <li>• The Corporate Parenting Strategy has been circulated and agreed by Corporate Parenting Board members.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Decision Making</u></b> <b>Role and function of Scrutiny and Audit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of scrutiny arrangements are ongoing and due to be reported to full Council in November. LGA (Local Government Association) have been complimentary around scrutiny arrangements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Microsite created for information around priority regeneration projects for stakeholders- launched</li> <li>• Corporate Parenting strategy circulated and agreed by Corporate Parenting Board</li> <li>• ARAC recommendations and report into SEND transport complete</li> <li>• Review of Serco Contract Complete</li> <li>• Street Cleansing revised plan approved at Waste Board.</li> <li>• LATC Chief Officer recruitment underway</li> <li>• SCT contract performance embedded within PMF</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oracle Fusion Implemented- <b>In progress</b></li> <li>• Review of scrutiny arrangements- <b>On track for Nov Council.</b></li> <li>• Approval of any changes to scrutiny (if required following review)- <b>From Nov</b></li> <li>• Review of SCT Contract concludes- <b>due Autumn 2022 for commencement from April 2023.</b></li> </ul> <p>Completed milestones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Termination notice for SLT contract approved by Cabinet- <b>complete</b></li> <li>• Revised contract governance arrangements in place for Serco contract- <b>complete</b></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutiny work plans have been agreed and workplans are in the process of being delivered.</li> <li>• Scrutiny session delivered on 31/08/22 relating to missed bin collection over Summer 2022</li> <li>• New SEND Transport procurement exercise has been undertaken- consistent with contact procurement rules and recommendations from scrutiny.</li> <li>• Internal audit has included a review of compliance with contract procedure rules as part of their work programme and will be undertaken this municipal year.</li> <li>• Survey to Scrutiny and Audit Members, and Officers attending Committees conducted over September. Findings reported to IPRM 06/10 and shared with Members. Link for further feedback surveys will be shared after each meeting.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Procurement &amp; Commercial</u></b></p> <p><b>Waste Contract:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frith contract review in progress supported by Serco &amp; SMBC officers. Initial review report received end of Sept 22.</li> <li>• Monitoring framework progressing well with an agreed framework in place. Q1 performance reported alongside PMF (Performance Management Framework) report to Cabinet and reported to Officer leadership and will continue as part of quarterly PMF reports.</li> <li>• Street Cleansing Recovery Plan presented to Waste Board in October.</li> <li>• Fleet replacement programme is in delivery phase with dates into 2023.</li> <li>• SERCO fleet replacement on track.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waste and Recycling Recovery Plan Implementation - <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Street Cleansing Recovery Plan approval – Resubmission to Waste Management Board in - <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• SERCO contract performance reporting embedded in Performance Management Framework - <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Option appraisal for future leisure management options – <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Scrutiny work Planning event - <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Procure new support provider to deliver Oracle Fusion- <b>complete</b></li> <li>• Approval of Regeneration Strategy and Pipeline- <b>Complete</b></li> </ul>
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	<p><b>SEND Transport:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All new contracts issued and accepted by operator's new framework commenced 1.9.22</li> <li>• Procurement-related recommendations from Audit and Scrutiny fulfilled in line with new contract from September 22.</li> <li>• Lessons Learnt from SEND Transport procurement 2 being captured.</li> </ul> <p><b>New System Procurement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance Management System - Not progressed past soft market testing- further demonstration with another provider. Size and scale of system to be considered for scope of project.</li> <li>• Asset Management System is procured, and implementation is on track</li> </ul> <p><b>Lion Farm:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action plan being implemented, however, there has been some slippage due to legal representatives of both sides taking longer than expected.</li> <li>• Papers have been submitted to the external party that will conduct the expert determination.</li> <li>• The date for Expert Determination is outside the hands of the Council and will be decided by a third party.</li> <li>• Formal document detailing the respective roles and responsibilities of Council and developer complete.</li> </ul> <p><b>Leisure Contract:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision made by Cabinet to transfer services to LATC (Local Authority Trading Company)</li> <li>• Implementation phase has commenced.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Help Strategy approved and launched- <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Corporate Parenting Strategy Refresh Approved- <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• SEND Transport procurement published- <b>complete</b></li> <li>• SMBC/SCT Leadership meetings - <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• SCT Contract performance reporting embedded within Council PMF- <b>Complete</b></li> </ul>
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- Cabinet Workshop for legal vehicle options consideration, specification, property, and company name delivered 14.09.22
- Chief Operating Officer recruitment in progress.
- Further legal vehicle structure session undertaken with Cabinet Member.
- Tax Advisors appointed.
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### **Partnerships & Relationships**

#### **Sandwell Children's Trust**

- Performance reporting embedded within Council PMF
- KPI (Key Performance Indicators) Suite reviewed and being confirmed between Council and Trust ahead of implementation date 1/4/23. Suite due to be complete by December
- Revised contract will commence on 1/4/23. Contract Sum negotiations commenced 26/9/22.
- Contract review DfE (Department for Education)- The review will focus on contract requirements, revised KPIs and governance arrangements as part of the DfE statutory direction.
- Meetings in place with Trust, SMBC and Councillor Hackett - Lead Member
- All strategic priorities agreed and monitored through Children and Families strategic partnership

S2 - The Council must ensure that the learning in relation to commercial decisions, procurement and contract management highlighted in this report are understood through the organisation

**Organisational Culture**

**Officer Learning and Development**

- Range of corporate governance training has been delivered linked to the constitutional approvals.
- Effective decision-making training scheduled to commence late November linked to scheme of delegation approvals. Guidance around decision making is being issued to Officers in October.
- Procurement and Officer-Member behaviour training commenced as planned.
- A broader Management Development Programme and revision to the Corporate Induction will be rolled out in 2023 following the approval of the OD Strategy and Plan.

**Member Learning and Development**

- Member Development Programme in place and will be regularly reviewed.
- Effective decision-making training to be delivered in November/December to key officers (*delay due to Council date change*).
- Annual refresher training of Corporate Governance training planned in November 22.
- Training delivered ahead of interviews for CEx (on the specific processes relating to that appointment).
- Forward Plan for All Member Briefings in place for new Municipal Year

**Corporate Oversight**

**Performance Management**

- Q1 Performance Management Report made to Scrutiny and at an All Member Briefing.
- Procurement and Contract Procedures Rules training launched
- Member Development programme part of BAU

- Regular Resident Survey in place – *budget consultation and Residents' survey completed. Plans to sustain approach being developed*
- Commercial Strategy approved – *Slippage*
- Revised Financial Regs – *slippage to December for final component*
- Revised Scheme of Delegation – *due for Council approval in November*
- Corporate Governance Training Delivery -*Commenced*
- Corporate Asset Management Strategy Approved- *On track for November Cabinet*
- HRA 30 Year Business Plan approved- *On track for Spring 2023*
- Implementation of Asset Management System- *On track for December completion*

Completed milestones

- Q1 report considered by Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board 13/10/22.
- All Member briefing on Q1 report held 18/10/22.
- Preparations being made for Q2 report to Cabinet in December.
- Monthly Budget monitoring is taking place and report received by leadership team monthly

### **Strategic Direction**

#### **Strategy Development and Refresh**

- **Corporate Asset Management Strategy:** Workplace vision has been closed. New corporate asset management strategy sets out the priorities. Options for hub locations were identified – the action has now been incorporated within the Customer Journey Workstream and will be progressed through that programme. Implementation of new asset database is on track. Surplus assets portfolio has been delayed but it scheduled for Cabinet in November as part of the Corporate Asset Management Strategy.
- **Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules** approved in July. Training launched 3rd October consisting of initial introduction for managers. Further tailored training taking place for staff with procurement responsibilities.
- **Commercial Strategy:** Commercial Opportunity Assessment Report received. Needs to be reviewed by Leadership Team and then Commercial Strategy can be updated to reflect opportunities to be taken forward.
- **HRA Business Plan:** Draft Plan has been received and shared with Lead Member. Data to be added and

- Budget Holder Role Profile agreed - **Complete**
- Establish Performance Management Framework – **Complete**
- First Performance Management Report - **Complete**
- Revised PCR, and Sale of Land and Buildings Protocol – **Complete**
- New Member Induction- **Complete**
- Member Development Programme - **Complete and BAU**
- Asset Management System Procured- **complete**

	<p>consultation started with key stakeholders. Going out to tender on stock condition surveys</p> <p><b><u>Decision Making</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Constitution and Governance Framework</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council on 26<sup>th</sup> July approved revised procurement and contract procedure rules--Training to be rolled out beginning of November/December 22 after approval at Council in November 22 of further constitutional changes. (delay due to by election)</li> <li>• Refresh of financial regulations will be presented to full Council in December.</li> <li>• Revised scheme of delegation being prepared for Council in November</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Procurement &amp; Commercial</u></b></p> <p><b><u>New System Procurement:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asset Management System is procured, and implementation is on track</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Partnerships &amp; Relationships</u></b></p> <p>No actions in this theme</p>		
<p>S3 - Senior leadership, both officers and members, must demonstrate that they can continue to work together effectively, that they operate in line with</p>	<p><b><u>Organisational Culture</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Establishing Organisational Culture</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultancy Engaged. Phase 1 is complete and included the initial scoping of the approach to be taken to determining the desired organisational culture and initial communication and engagement with staff ahead of Phase 2 (detailed engagement).</li> <li>• Phase 2 commenced with the listening group exercises. Drop in sessions planned for front line workers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 sessions between Members and Officers with LGA have taken place.</li> <li>• Member Development Programme in place and will be regularly reviewed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisational Culture - Part 2 engagement – determining desired culture - <b>Commenced</b></li> <li>• Approval of document / statement setting out desired organisational culture – ‘Our Values:</li> </ul>

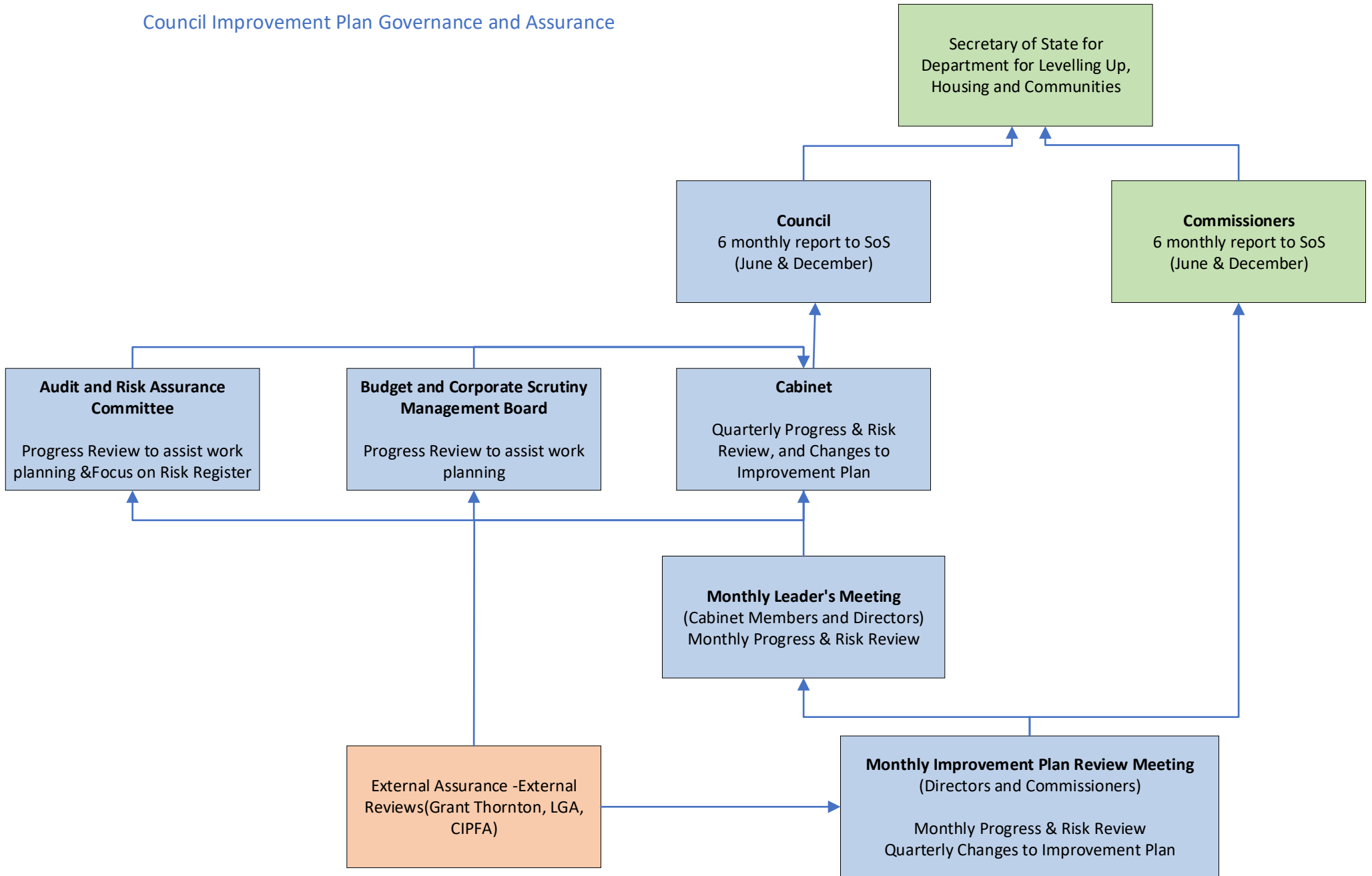
<p>the Council's values, codes, policies, and procedures, and that there is zero tolerance to inappropriate behaviours. This includes changing the organisational culture in relation to complaints so that they restore balance and proportionality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture champions recruited, trained, and listening sessions carried out.</li> <li>• Phase 2 final listening groups taking place in October. Survey issued in Oct. Plan to present the outcomes of the sessions/surveys to LT on 22 November.</li> </ul> <p><b>Officer Learning and Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Range of corporate governance training has been delivered linked to the constitutional approvals.</li> <li>• Effective decision-making training scheduled to commence late November linked to scheme of delegation approvals. Guidance around decision making is being issued to Officers in October.</li> <li>• Procurement and Officer-Member behaviour training commenced as planned.</li> <li>• A broader Management Development Programme and revision to the Corporate Induction will be rolled out in 2023 following the approval of the Workforce Plan.</li> </ul> <p><b>Officer and Member Relationship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular meetings with Whips are being diarised.</li> <li>• Regular meetings with Group Leaders have been taking place and these have been meeting needs. Regular meetings between Cabinet and Leadership Team in place for Municipal Year</li> <li>• 4 sessions between Members and Officers with LGA have taken place. 1 more session to take place with Officers (Nov) and there will then be a report produced by LGA, identifying any further actions required.</li> <li>• A review of all member enquiries is being undertaken-including member portal. Awaiting LGA report to identify next steps.</li> </ul>		<p>Our Behaviours'- <b>On track for Jan 2023</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisational Development Strategy and Plan Approved – <b>On track for March 2023</b></li> </ul> <p>Completed milestones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisational Culture - Part 1 Engagement – Starting the Conversation- <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• New Member Induction - <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Meeting structures to support Senior Leadership (Officer and Member) – <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Member Development Programme approved- <b>Complete</b></li> </ul>
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	<p><b>Member Learning and Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Member Development Programme in place and will be regularly reviewed.</li></ul> <p><b><u>Corporate Oversight</u></b> No Actions in Theme</p> <p><b><u>Strategic Direction</u></b> No actions in Theme</p> <p><b><u>Decision Making</u></b> No actions in Theme</p> <p><b><u>Procurement &amp; Commercial</u></b> No actions in Theme</p> <p><b><u>Partnerships &amp; Relationships</u></b> No actions in Theme</p>		
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Council Improvement Plan Governance and Assurance



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# LGA Corporate Peer Challenge – Progress Review

Sandwell Council

26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Feedback





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# 1. Introduction

The council undertook a Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) across the four days from 31<sup>st</sup> January to 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2022. The council published the related report on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2022, with this forming part of a wider report to Full Council on the council's Improvement Plan which was produced in response to the statutory direction of the Secretary of State and the findings from the various forms of external challenge that the council has undertaken over the last year or so.

The progress review that the peer team has undertaken now is an integral part of the peer challenge process. It is designed to provide the opportunity for the council to:

- Update peers on the progress made in relation to the recommendations made by the peer team and to receive feedback on this
- Consider the peers' reflections on any new opportunities or challenges that may have arisen since the peer team were on-site, including any further support needs
- Discuss impact and learning from the progress made to date

The LGA would like to thank Sandwell Council for their commitment to sector led improvement. This progress review was the next step in an ongoing, open and close relationship that the council has with the LGA and sector-led support.

## 2. Summary of the approach

The progress review at Sandwell Council took place across the two days of Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> October. The following individuals, drawn from the original peer team, were involved:

- Kath O'Dwyer, Chief Executive, St Helens Council
- Councillor Chris Read, Leader, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

- Viv Geary, LGA Associate with a background in governance and a former Monitoring Officer
- Helen Murray, Principal Adviser (West Midlands), LGA
- Chris Bowron, Peer Challenge Manager, Local Government Association

The following written feedback is provided using a framework that reflects a number of the key themes in the council's Improvement Plan.

### 3. Progress Review - Feedback

#### **Strategic Direction, Corporate Oversight and Partnership and Relationships**

Much greater stability can now be seen in the council, both politically and managerially. There were a number of changes at Cabinet level in May this year, following the elections, with these involving a combination of new appointments and people having a change in their portfolio. The recently recruited Director team are now well settled in their roles.

The Leader received glowing endorsements during our discussions with stakeholders both internally and externally. People particularly highlighted her inclusive and supportive approach. She is seen to be a Leader for Sandwell who is engaged in all the right places – internally, locally, sub-regionally and nationally.

People really value the Managing Director's style and what he has brought to the council and to the borough. He will be a tough act to follow but there is excitement at the impending permanent Chief Executive appointment. Whilst this transition will represent change in the short term it will add to the sense of stability in due course.

External partners we spoke to within the sub-region are seeing the council now being much better engaged at that level, with a notable difference made in just a few short months. Sandwell's voice is now being heard more widely and the council and its leadership is felt to be making an effective contribution. The political leadership has also demonstrated a willingness to give a 'contra view' where, on a limited number of occasions, that has been appropriate as it has sought to act in the best interests of

the borough. There is appropriate and consistent council representation in key strategic fora, although Sandwell remains less visible below Leader, Cabinet, Chief Executive and Director level in networks and bodies at more of a working group and networking level.

Cabinet is forming well following the recent changes and in meeting them they demonstrated a strong sense of 'team', appropriately balancing the respecting of individuals' areas of responsibility with ensuring collective understanding, responsibility and decision-making. The managerial Leadership Team has settled following its' completion but now has to become central to a 'One Council, One Team' approach and driving key organisational-wide agendas. These include improving customer service and establishing the desired organisational culture.

The leadership stability that now exists has enabled a clearer approach to internal communications to be established. As a result of this and the communications channels that have been put in place, staff are feeling much better communicated with from the senior leadership level – albeit with a recognition that moving to more two-way communication will be beneficial.

Cabinet and Leadership Team are working increasingly well at both a bilateral and collective level. At the heart of this sits a 'no surprises' principle. Cabinet members outlined to us that they now feel much better appraised of emerging issues and senior officers indicated a greater confidence in drawing elected members' attention to challenging issues.

The officers and elected members that we met are open about the need for continued change and improvement in the way the organisation functions and are committed to delivering it. A single Improvement Plan has been developed responding to the statutory direction of the Secretary of State and the findings from the various forms of external challenge that the council has undertaken over the last year or so. The Plan was approved at the Full Council meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> June this year and is designed to provide the organisation with a clear direction for its improvement journey and aid the continued delivery of the council's strategic priorities reflected in the Corporate Plan 2021-2025. Governance mechanisms to oversee the delivery of the Improvement Plan are outlined within it. Reporting on progress against the Plan is reassuring Cabinet, whilst officers that we met from a range of levels within the

organisation believe the changes that are being seen will be sustained this time around, contrasting with what has been experienced previously.

A new performance management framework has been established, with this having been approved by Full Council on 12<sup>th</sup> April this year. It is enabling a much better understanding of how the council is performing. This links to the ‘no surprises’ principle and Cabinet reflected that they are now gaining insights to issues more, and at an earlier stage, compared with before. Quarterly reporting to Cabinet on the four key components within the framework commenced last month. These components are ‘Improvement’ (including delivery of the Corporate Plan), ‘Customer Experience’, ‘Financial Performance’ and ‘Organisational Health’. The quarterly report additionally features the council’s Strategic Risk Register. The framework, and the information and insights it provides, act as a prime example of the way in which an increased evidence-base for decision-making can be seen in the council. It also provides the basis for a ‘golden thread’ that enables the links to be made between the council’s strategic objectives and the plans at directorate and service level. This thread can be articulated at Director, Assistant Director and Service Manager level but not yet below that.

Key achievements across the council in recent months include:

- Children’s Services progressing to ‘Requires Improvement’
- The relationship between the council and the Children’s Trust being seen to have continued to progress and the contract having been extended
- The delivery on time and budget of the Sandwell Aquatic Centre and the contribution of the borough and the council to the success of the 2022 Commonwealth Games – with this positively impacting on reputation and confidence
- The smooth letting of the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) transport contract, capitalising on learning from before
- Improved management of the council’s waste contract
- Plans developing for a shift to leisure facilities and related services being delivered through a local authority trading company



- The creation of an integrated health and care facility (Harvest View) – within a broader picture of good relationships with health, including positive engagement with NHS ‘place’ arrangements
- Coping with everything that has been thrown at the organisation, including supporting communities and businesses during the pandemic and the growing cost of living crisis; responding to the Ukrainian refugee situation; and managing the implications of the economic challenges for the council’s finances

The council commissioned a residents’ survey this year and there are a number of positive findings that the organisation will hope to see repeated in future years. This includes satisfaction with the council being slightly higher than the national average (66% compared to 62%); trust in the council standing at 67% compared to a national average of 58%; and 60% of respondents indicating they feel the council acts on the concerns of local residents compared to 52% nationally. Satisfaction with waste services; street cleaning; maintenance of both roads and pavements; sport and leisure services; and services and support for children and young people were all higher than the national average although the reverse was true for library services; services and support for older people; and parks and open spaces.

An employee engagement survey has also been undertaken this year, following that from 2018 and with 61% of staff responding to it. The results have been widely shared and are being used to inform discussions and thinking at directorate and team levels and there has been a corporate response to them. The latter includes placing ‘organisational culture’ at the heart of the Improvement Plan and the enhancing of internal communications, as touched on earlier. Both the residents’ survey and the employee survey will be built on through ‘pulse’ surveys – a brief and regular set of questions posed to people – being undertaken going forward.

Cabinet is building a track record of taking difficult decisions. A prime example is that of approving plans for the building of a primary school, 190 homes and a public park on the site of the former Brandhall Golf Course which is currently being scrutinised as part of a Call-In of the Cabinet decision. Another example is the introduction of charging for the collection of green garden waste which is due to be considered by Cabinet in November. What this approach in recent months reflects is Cabinet maintaining a focus on ‘doing the right thing’ as it sees it, even when the going gets

tough. This is in contrast with a view that criticism from ‘the loudest voices’ might have driven some decisions previously.

Cabinet are showing a commitment and willingness to face the further tough decisions that will undoubtedly be required over the coming months and years as the financial challenge facing the council continues. Whilst there is clear recognition amongst all those we spoke to that the financial challenge is only likely to worsen over the next year and beyond, there is currently an absence of a whole organisation view of both the scale of this and how it will be addressed. Establishing a clear shared understanding of the extent of the budget gap (we recognise the fluid situation that exists at present makes establishing certainty difficult) will be important in focusing effort and attention and identifying and implementing a whole-council approach to solutions. In a context of the ‘One Council, One Team’ philosophy acting as a key driver for the organisation, ensuring a corporate and cross-cutting approach to addressing the financial challenge will be important in order to avoid retrenchment on the part of individual areas functions and services and the resulting siloed thinking and action.

As we touched on earlier, people have coped with everything that has been thrown at the organisation in recent times. This has been taking its toll, but the demands on the organisation and its people aren’t going to dissipate. All councils are experiencing increased demand around ‘business as usual’ and having to adapt to deal with change in what ‘business as usual’ represents and how it is delivered. They are also all facing very significant financial challenges. Sandwell is having to cope with all of this but additionally is delivering an extensive Improvement Plan.

The injection of additional capacity in key areas has helped to drive improvement. Examples include governance expertise to inform and support Constitutional revisions; project and programme management specialists; additional communications professionals; and support with the development of the performance management framework. Often in our discussions, people indicated that the injection of additional capacity would be the answer to the challenges within their spheres but there needs to be a much greater sense of realism around this, given the financial picture facing the council. Thus, in order to make things feel as achievable as possible going forward, there needs to be a stocktake of the level of available

resource, the pace and phasing of change that will be required going forward and where any additional capacity that can be secured will deliver the greatest impact.

## **Governance and Decision-Making**

A key strand of the council's Improvement Plan relates to the 'Constitution and Governance Framework'. An inclusive process developing changes to the Constitution, involving cross-party engagement, saw those changes put before Full Council in July this year being agreed very smoothly. This included revisions to the Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules; Financial Regulations; and Council Procedure Rules. Things appear on track for further revisions to be agreed through Full Council in November and December, including elements relating to the Scheme of Delegations; Access to Information Procedure Rules; and the Protocol for Member/Employee Relations. An annual review of the Constitution going forward has been agreed in order to enable on-going refinement and adaptation of the way the council operates.

One of the most noticeable changes in recent months is the much-improved set of relationships between officers and elected members. The training linked to this has been highly valued and has played an important role. The positive way Cabinet and the Leadership Team engage with one other is modelling the way.

There is a note of caution to signal here though, with an emerging risk around the poor organisational responsiveness to the customer, and to casework issues brought forward by elected members, starting to generate tensions on the part of both councillors and officers, thus undermining the good progress that has been made in relationships. This needs to be avoided through on-going and intensive focus on the 'Ward and Casework Management' element of the Improvement Plan and the work around the 'customer journey' that is being embarked upon.

In the same way that training in respect of officer and elected member relationships has been highly valued, the development activity relating to public speaking and chairing skills – delivered through an external facilitator – has also gone down very well with councillors. This forms part of a very positive story in relation to elected

member training and development more generally, including the induction programme put in place following the elections in May and 'all member briefings' on key issues. There is a comprehensive training and development programme now in place, informed by personal development plans for councillors. The programme is ensuring increased knowledge and understanding and is injecting external perspectives. Councillors are supplementing this with increasingly getting 'out and about' to draw in learning, including a recent visit to Leeds to look at customer contact centre arrangements there and linking up as Cabinet members with opposite numbers in neighbouring boroughs.

The council is committed to reviewing the elected member development programme at regular intervals going forward. It will be important to ensure that the pace of delivery is made to feel sustainable, with some councillors the peer team spoke to reflecting an intensity to it in recent months that risks being too demanding in terms of their time.

A revision of the role of, and approach to, Overview and Scrutiny also represents an important element of the council's Improvement Plan. This was embarked upon in the latter part of last year and it is clear from people we spoke to that this key strand of the council's governance arrangements is going from strength to strength. Regular meetings between members of Overview and Scrutiny and the Cabinet, along with discussions with senior officers, enables the exploration of opportunities for Overview and Scrutiny to help to shape strategy and policy at the pre-decision-making level. Recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny are also regularly now being considered by Cabinet and flowing into Leadership Team. The Committee Chairs are reporting regularly to Full Council on the work and impact of their respective Overview and Scrutiny Committee. 'Job roles' and a framework to guide the way Overview and Scrutiny works, at both an individual and Committee level, have also been developed and have been supplemented with a range of training.

The renewed sense of energy and drive that is being seen with Overview and Scrutiny is replicated across other key committees and the Chairs are integral to this. Mature engagement between the Leader, Cabinet, Committee Chairs and officers is providing for good planning and work programming across the different committees. One example is the mapping of their respective remits between Overview and

Scrutiny and Audit Committee in relation to monitoring progress in the delivery of the Improvement Plan.

There is also a sense more widely of a 'maturing politics' within the council. This is reflected in the considered approach taken by the Opposition; the cross-party working that has been taking place on the revisions to the Constitution; and the way in which the Call-In of the Cabinet decision on the Brandhall site was handled by all involved. Standards complaints have dropped significantly, which could be used as a proxy indicator of the improvements that have been seen in relation to elected member behaviour and governance.

Full Council in November will consider whether there is a shift to a four yearly electoral cycle. A report outlining the key considerations, including the public consultation outcome on the matter, will be presented by the Director of Law and Governance to inform the thinking and decision-making of elected members.

## **'Customer Journey' and 'Organisational Culture'**

The work to be delivered in relation to improving the 'customer journey' is being widely talked about in the council. There is a long way to go on this, with organisational responsiveness to customers and casework, raised by elected members on behalf of residents, still being a major issue.

The message has come through loud and clear that addressing the issues that exist is a major priority for the council. Staff that we spoke to are welcoming of this but there is, as yet, a lack of clarity about what this will entail and the way forward. This includes what a 'whole council' programme and approach will look like; what the expectations on services and directorates are and the roles that they are required to play; and who is leading the work and where the related accountability sits.

At a more basic level, there needs to be a quickly established shared understanding regarding what the council's service standards and timescales for responding are currently and/or will be going forward.

It is recognised that it is only in recent weeks that the prioritisation of the improvement of the 'customer journey' has been communicated. It is important now

to cement the commitment that has been given and capitalise upon the enthusiasm that has been generated, by establishing clear leadership of the agenda.

'Organisational culture' forms the first theme in the council's Improvement Plan. Activity is already underway in relation to this, including the identification of 'culture champions' and their involvement in 'listening events' which will link to work on values and behaviours. However, things feel very much at the outset in relation to this key strand of work and clarity is still required in key respects. This includes what the 'organisational culture' change agenda in Sandwell will cover; how it links to the work on the 'customer journey' – given the inter-related nature of these two key strands of work; and the connection with the whole organisation transformation plan that the council has indicated it intends to develop.

Currently it is difficult to see what an 'organisational culture' change programme does or will entail. Driving forward the 'One Council, One Team' philosophy would logically form a key component of it. Another strand might usefully relate to the 'return to the office' arrangements post-pandemic which require further focus and clarification of expectations. People spoke of the way in which corporate guidelines have been provided around the presence of people and teams in the office and some valued the freedom they had been given in finding ways to balance meeting these requirements with the needs and preferences of their staff, whilst others sought greater clarity on expectations and greater equity. It is, however, clear that approaches are evolving and that learning is taking place. This could all usefully be drawn together to inform a further round of corporate guidance to support meeting customer need; maximising the effectiveness of the use of office space; and maintaining and enhancing relationships within and between teams.

Whether workforce planning constitutes part of the organisational culture change programme also needs to be clarified. The original corporate peer challenge report outlined the need for role titles and functions to better describe 'what they say on the tin' and a requirement for consistency in terminology and managerial spans of control and levels of responsibility. There remains a lack of clarity around this. Additionally, recruitment and retention challenges are biting, as they are everywhere, and there are no easy answers, with concerted effort and creativity, possibly encompassing other councils and sectors, being required to develop solutions. There is also an

issue of succession planning to be addressed, linked to the age profile of the workforce.

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) represents another key area of work that has been identified as an organisational priority. There is a clear commitment to the EDI agenda, reflected in the investment that has been made in creating a team to drive it, but things are still very much at the outset. The EDI agenda must be made integral to the work around 'organisational culture'.

Essentially, the 'customer journey', EDI and 'organisational culture' are major pieces of inter-related work that are fundamental to future success and require a clear plan and sense of deliverability.

## 4. Final thoughts and next steps

The LGA would like to thank Sandwell Council for its engagement in both the corporate peer challenge and the progress review. We recognise that the senior managerial and political leadership of the council will want to reflect on the findings and how to utilise them to support the council's improvement journey.

Under the umbrella of LGA sector-led improvement, there is an on-going offer of support to councils. The LGA is well placed to provide additional support, advice and guidance on a number of the areas identified for development and improvement and we would be happy to discuss this. Helen Murray (Principal Adviser for the West Midlands) is the main point of contact between the authority and the LGA and her e-mail address is [helen.murray@local.gov.uk](mailto:helen.murray@local.gov.uk)

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# Improvement Plan Risk Register

October 2022



1. Best start in life for children and young people



2. People live well and age well



3. Strong resilient communities




4. Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods






5. A strong and inclusive economy






6. A connected and accessible Sandwell


Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (Jul 22)	Current Risk Score (Oct 22)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)	Key Sources of Assurance
IP1	<p><b>Improvement Plan objectives and member / officer engagement in those objectives</b></p> <p>If programme objectives are not clearly defined to ensure they are within scope, deliverable, understood and agreed then the programme will proceed with no clear direction and may become unmanageable and/or scope creep may take place.</p>	6 (Green)	6 (Green)	3 (Green)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement as part of the development of the Improvement Plan - sharing themes and workstreams with staff and members</li> <li>Communications Plan implemented for governance review, CPC and Statutory Notice</li> <li>Communications Approach set out in Draft Improvement Plan</li> <li>Objectives for each Theme within the Improvement Plan identified</li> <li>Set of key messages for stakeholders in place and issued to all Directors</li> <li>Council approval of Improvement Plan</li> <li>All Member briefing held (incl. newly elected Members)</li> <li>Regular informal reporting to Cabinet in place on IP progress</li> <li>Regular Staff communications on progress of Improvement Plan</li> <li>Reporting approach to ARAC and B&amp;CSM agreed, with quarterly report in September 22</li> <li>Change control approach agreed to ensure updates to plan are appropriate and in line with agreed objectives</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications Plan delivered</li> <li>Staff and member engagement through Organisational Culture change programme</li> <li>All staff briefing in November with update on IP</li> </ul>	



Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (Jul 22)	Current Risk Score (Oct 22)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)	Key Sources of Assurance
IP2	<p><b>Programme management arrangements</b></p> <p>If appropriate programme management arrangements are not put in place then there is a risk that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project will not be delivered to scope</li> <li>The required improvements will not be made within the necessary timescales</li> <li>The government may lose confidence in the council's ability to improve and intervention may be extended</li> <li>The borough's residents may lose confidence in the council ability to deliver effective services</li> <li>Inefficient use of limited resources</li> <li>Continued reputational damage</li> </ul>	8 (Amber)	8 (Amber)	4 (green)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvement Plan approved by Council 07/06/22</li> <li>PMO support being provided by existing experienced resources within Service Improvement</li> <li>Processes around progress monitoring and change control established for Governance Improvement Plan</li> <li>Risk register in place and will be reported to Leadership Team monthly and Cabinet quarterly</li> <li>Establishment of PMO Teams Site for collation of programme documents and evidence</li> <li>Approach and process for change control and issues in place</li> <li>Exception reporting format confirmed via highlight report standard template</li> <li>Terms of Reference for internal Improvement Plan Review Meeting updated to reflect government intervention, single Improvement Plan and assurance framework</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of dedicated Programme Management Office - dependent upon appointment of dedicated Corporate Performance Management posts</li> </ul>	
IP3	<p><b>Allocation of sufficient resources to project management and project delivery/ maintaining Business as Usual while delivering the Improvement plan</b></p> <p>If sufficient resources (capacity and capability) and where</p>	8 (Amber)	8 (Amber)	4 (green)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PMO support being provided by existing experienced resources within Service Improvement</li> <li>Resource gaps / pressures associated with actions within the Improvement Plan have been identified</li> </ul>	

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (Jul 22)	Current Risk Score (Oct 22)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)	Key Sources of Assurance
	necessary additional resources are not allocated to the management and delivery of the improvement plan then this may result in officer fatigue, loss of motivation and the programme will fail to deliver all of its objectives.					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council on 07/06/22 approved Use of Improvement &amp; Capacity Reserve and 2021/22 underspend allocated to Improvement Plan actions</li> <li>• Resource issues and risks associated with the Improvement Plan to reviewed monthly by Leadership Team and Register maintained</li> <li>• Appointment of interim corporate transformation capacity to establish programme and project management governance arrangements, as well as moving forward key transformational activity</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of dedicated Programme Management Office</li> <li>• Recruitment to posts following allocation of funding</li> </ul>	
IP4	<p><b>Project and risk governance assurance arrangements</b></p> <p>If a robust assurance framework is not put in place to in respect of project assurance, including detailing roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders (eg Cabinet, Scrutiny, ARAC, partners, IB, etc) then the council may be unable to effectively monitor and evidence the improvement required.</p>	6 Green	6 Green	3 (green)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terms of Reference for Improvement Plan Review Meeting in place</li> <li>• Governance approach included within Council report 07/06/22</li> <li>• Risk identification has taken place</li> <li>• Agreement for Grant Thornton, LGA and CIPFA to review progress regularly</li> <li>• Improvement Plan Risk Register in place</li> <li>• Terms of Reference for internal Improvement Plan Review Meeting updated to reflect government intervention, single Improvement Plan and assurance framework including role of Scrutiny and Audit Committees.</li> <li>• Roles of Cabinet, Scrutiny and Audit agreed with Chairs</li> </ul>	


Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (Jul 22)	Current Risk Score (Oct 22)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)	Key Sources of Assurance
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly reports to Cabinet, Audit and Scrutiny presented in September.</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly Reports to Scrutiny, Audit and Cabinet in December 2022</li> <li>Review update visits by CIPFA arranged for November 2022</li> <li>Quarterly Report to Scrutiny to focus on Culture Theme and provide assurance on council's approach to engaging 'hard to reach' staff</li> <li>Review update visits by GT and LGA in September/October 2022</li> </ul>	
IP5	<p><b>Communication Strategy</b></p> <p>If a robust communications strategy is not put in place detailing how, when and what information is shared with the various internal and external stakeholders, then not everyone will be aware of their respective roles and responsibilities for delivering the improvement plan and effective service delivery. In addition, the DLUHC may lose confidence in the council's ability to improve resulting in extended/ additional intervention.</p>	8 (Amber)	8 (Amber)	4 (green)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications Approach set out in Improvement Plan approved by Council 07/06/22</li> <li>Key messages document for stakeholders in place</li> <li>Regular PMO/Communications meetings to ensure key messages are embedded within internal and external communications</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications plan prepared including specific activities e.g. Live event, Improvement Plan briefings</li> <li>Communication with stakeholders to share details of Improvement Plan</li> <li>All staff briefing in November with update on IP</li> </ul>	

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (Jul 22)	Current Risk Score (Oct 22)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)	Key Sources of Assurance
IP6	<p><b>Investment and Financial Resources</b></p> <p>If sufficient/ additional financial resources are not made available, and the IP is expected to be delivered from existing budgets then the IP may not be delivered within the necessary timescales or to scope.</p>	12 (Red)	8 (Amber)	8 (Amber)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resource gaps / pressures associated with actions within the Improvement Plan identified</li> <li>Council on 07/06/22 approved use of Improvement &amp; Capacity Reserve and 2021/22 underspend allocated to Improvement Plan actions</li> <li>Resource issues and risks associated with the Improvement Plan reviewed monthly by Leadership Team</li> <li>Appointment of interim corporate transformation capacity to establish programme and project management governance arrangements, as well as moving forward key transformational activity</li> <li>Regular monitoring of improvement plan is in place and key milestones are being delivered</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment to posts following allocation of funding</li> <li>Review resource allocation to deliver the Improvement Plan and determine if there are any gaps</li> <li>Identify additional resources or reprioritise activity following identification of resource gaps</li> </ul>	
IP7	<p><b>Organisational Culture</b></p> <p>If the organisational culture does not change including improvement of member and officer relationships and political relationships, then this will impact the delivery of the IP objectives and the timescales within which delivery is</p>	8 (Amber)	8 (Amber)	4 (green)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific theme in place within Improvement Plan</li> <li>Corporate Governance Theme timescales revised to allow for additional engagement activity around Corporate Governance changes</li> </ul>	

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (Jul 22)	Current Risk Score (Oct 22)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)	Key Sources of Assurance
	achieved and may result in extended government intervention.					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular meetings in place between senior members and officers to develop positive working relationships and information sharing</li> <li>LGA training on officer/member relationships delivered in September 2022.</li> <li>External consultant engaged to support development of desired values and behaviours, providing independent facilitation</li> <li>Employee Engagement Survey results disseminated and discussed at DMTs and team meetings - action plans developed and monitored at LT</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actions agreed for organisational culture theme following outcome of staff listening groups</li> <li>External Reviews to provide assurance</li> </ul>	
IP8	<p><b>Impact of Covid 19 on the Project Resources</b></p> <p>If there is a continued impact of Covid 19 on resource availability, then this will impact the programme delivery plan.</p>	6 (Green)	6 (Green)	3 (green)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PMO resourcing in place from within Service Improvement</li> <li>Resource gaps / pressures associated with actions within the Improvement Plan are being identified</li> <li>Regular monitoring of improvement plan is in place and key milestones are being delivered</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Single dependencies to be identified within resourcing plan</li> </ul>	

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (Jul 22)	Current Risk Score (Oct 22)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)	Key Sources of Assurance
IP9	<p><b>Constitutional Changes</b> If key governance documents and procedures (such as the Financial Regulations, Land and Asset Disposal Policy, Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules, Scheme of Delegation, Code of Corporate Governance, etc) are not reviewed and updated to reflect the changes required then foundations for change will not be in place and progress will be limited.</p>	9 (Amber)	9 (Amber)	3 (green)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key corporate Governance Documents are being reviewed and are scheduled for approval in July 2022 and Autumn 2022</li> <li>Engagement with Constitutional Working Group established as part of changes to governance arrangements</li> <li>Alignment of workstream with organisational culture theme through Officer participation</li> <li>Land and Asset Disposal Policy, Procurement &amp; Contract Procedure Rules and Key Decision Thresholds approved by Council in July 2022</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued engagement with Members around proposed changes</li> <li>Approval of Corporate Governance Changes (including Scheme of Delegation and Financial Regulations)</li> </ul>	
IP10	<p><b>Performance Management Framework (PMF) and Data Quality</b> If a robust PMF is not put in place and appropriate quality data captured then the council will be unable to effectively monitor and evidence improvement, delivery of the Improvement Plan and delivery of the Corporate Plan resulting in a failure to achieve the Council's objectives.</p>	12 (Red)	12 (Red)	8 (amber)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance Management Framework approved in April 2022</li> <li>Evidence of success outlined within each of the Improvement Plan themes focusing on outcomes for each theme</li> <li>Improvement Plan Monitoring approach approved by Council and regular monitoring in place</li> <li>Resources approved by Council to address staffing resources required to sustain PMF</li> <li>2022/23 Quarter 1 Corporate Performance Report presented to Cabinet in September 2022 and Scrutiny in October 2022</li> </ul>	



Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (Jul 22)	Current Risk Score (Oct 22)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)	Key Sources of Assurance
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residents Survey and Budget Consultation exercise conducted in Summer 2022 to feed into PMF and 2023/24 service and financial planning</li> <li>Process in place for monthly and quarterly monitoring at corporate level</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence framework to be produced to support IP</li> <li>Agree corporate approach to consultation and engagement with residents, including regular residents survey. Report to Leadership Team due end November 2022</li> <li>Recruitment to dedicated Corporate Performance Management posts</li> <li>2022/23 Q2 Corporate Performance Report to include data on wider range of KPIs within the Corporate Plan PMF</li> <li>Development of customer experience metrics as part of Customer Journey Transformation Programme</li> <li>Performance Management System options appraisal and procurement to provide capability for performance management</li> </ul>	
IP11	<p><b>Continued focus and resources allocated to historic issues</b></p> <p>If the council does not focus on the Improvement plan and corporate plan priorities and continues to focus and allocate resources on historic issues, then this will impact the timely delivery of both the Improvement Plan and Corporate Plan.</p>	8 (Amber)	8 (Amber)	4 (green)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvement Plan contains activity to be concluded, and lessons learnt embedding from historic issues</li> <li>Cabinet and Leadership Team approach to historic issues</li> <li>Regular monitoring of improvement plan is in place</li> <li>Progress on GT recommendations specifically related to the proper functioning of Scrutiny and Audit Committees.</li> </ul>	

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (Jul 22)	Current Risk Score (Oct 22)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)	Key Sources of Assurance
						<b>Further Actions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grant Thornton review of progress against historical issues</li> <li>Lessons learnt framework to be introduced as part of continuous improvement plan. Lessons learnt to be collated relating to historic issues and shared across organisation</li> </ul>	
IP12	<b>Risk approach and progress monitoring (optimism bias):</b> If the approach taken to risk scoring and/or progress monitoring against the delivery plans is unrealistic (e.g. being overly optimistic around progress and timescales or likelihood and severity of a risk) then there will be a failure to appropriately manage the programme and a loss of confidence in its delivery.	9 (Amber)	9 (Amber)	6 (Green)	↔	<b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate risk scoring definitions applied</li> <li>Definition in place for progress monitoring Red/Amber/Green progress monitoring for Improvement Plan</li> <li>Roles of Scrutiny and Audit confirmed</li> <li>Reports to Scrutiny and Audit Committees presented in September 2022</li> <li>PMO reviewed use of RAG ratings for consistency and to ensure that progress monitoring is presenting a realistic view and reflecting risk associated with actions as well as progress against plans (September 2022).</li> </ul> <b>Further Actions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External Reviews to provide assurance</li> </ul>	

October All change control									
Change Number	Theme	Action reference	Action Title	Owner	Date Raised	Type of Change	If date change is required		Change/ Impact of change (incl. any dependencies)/ Reason for change
							Change date from	Change date to	
27	Decision Making	DM.B1.4	Revised Council Procedure Rules	Director - Law and Governance	8/15/2022 Updated 24/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Jul-22	Nov-22	This item was missed from the July Change Control approvals and should have been put forward as a date change to October 2022. Further impacted by by-election, so revised end date is November 2022.
28	Partnership & Relationships	PR.C1.3	Develop Health & Wellbeing Strategy that builds on existing whole system approach to addressing health inequalities	Director - Adult Social Care	18/08/2022	Change of Delivery Lead(s)	N/A	N/A	Director of Adult Services requested that lead director be changed to Director of Public Health. Discussed and agreed with Director of Public Health on 18.8.22
29	Partnership & Relationships	PR.C1.4	Test adequacy of partnerships and integration through Health Outcomes Framework and system-wide thematic deep dives	Director - Adult Social Care	18/08/2033	Change of Delivery Lead(s)	N/A	N/A	Director of Adult Services requested that lead director be changed to Director of Public Health. Discussed and agreed with Director of Public Health on 18.8.22
30	Procurement & Commercial	PC.A4.1	Recovery Plan approved by Waste Management Board	Director - Borough Economy	25/08/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Jul-22	Oct-22	Resubmission to October waste Board is required due to further comments made on integrated street cleansing recovery plan within Service Delivery Plan
31	Corporate Oversight	CO.D2.4	KPIs and standards developed for financial services section	Director- Finance	16/09/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Aug-22	Oct-22	Some KPI's have been developed but these will be reviewed once Budget Holder survey is completed and results analysed. Likely to be in place by October.
32	Strategic Decision	SD.C1.2	Pilot of Town Co-ordinator role commences	Director- Housing	16/09/2022	Changes to objectives and deliverables	N/A	N/A	on hold - pending community hubs model. A revised set of actions will be required for this workstream (to be considered at next change control).
33	Partnership & Relationships	PR.D1.1	Corporate review of grant funding	Director- Housing	16/09/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	N/A	N/A	Revised set of actions will be required within next change control
34	Decision Making	DMA1.2	Council Decision to Implement 4-yearly election cycle	Director- Law & Governance	10/04/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	N/a	November	Accurate monitoring of progress by date being included
35	Corporate Oversight	CO.B2.0	Single Improvement Plan Phase 2	Leadership Team	10/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	June 22 - Jan 23	Start Dec 22 - March 23 for Council approval alongside quarterly monitoring	Phase 2 Plan to be informed by findings of External Reviews and SoS letter
36	Corporate Oversight	CO.C2.0	Budget Monitoring	Director- Finance	17/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action			Assurance Actions required to ensure approach embedded and that any issues are being addressed. Proposed actions: CO.C2.4 and CO.C2.5 (Quarterly Budget Monitoring Reports made to Leadership Team, Cabinet and Scrutiny; and Where budget pressures identified, assurance provided that action has/is being taken (monthly summary comment from S151 Officer / raise issues)
37	Corporate Oversight	CO.D2.3	Workforce development plan implemented for financial services section	Director- Finance	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)			Slippage in delivery. Due to be completed in October, and therefore change control may not be required.
38	Corporate Oversight	CO.D3.3	Review of corporate debt recovery processes completed	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Oct-22	01-Dec	Review underway but significant piece of work covering multiple teams so completion date now December 2022.

October All change control									
							If date change is required		
39	Corporate Oversight	CO.D2.5	Embed Finance Business Partner Role	Director- Finance	17/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action		Quarterly monitoring	Assurance action required to ensure that Business Partner Role is having a positive impact. Assurance Action: Performance against KPIs for financial services section - quarterly comment
40	Corporate Oversight	CO.D3.5	Implementation of Recommendations from CIPFa in relation to internal charges	Director- Finance	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Start date from Aug 22. End date from Oct 22	Start date to: Oct 22 End Date to: TBC	Report not yet received from CIPFa.
41	Corporate Oversight	CO.D4.4	Resolve issues relating to completion and sign-off of accounts	Director- Finance	17/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action	Dates to be populated		Assurance that work undertaken to prepare for completion of accounts has helped resolve issues raised by GT. Assurance action proposed: GT sign-off of 2020/21 Accounts (assurance that previous issues raised have been resolved)
42	Corporate Oversight	CO.D4.5	Resolve issues relating to completion and sign-off of accounts	Director- Finance	17/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action	Dates to be populated		Assurance that processes for completion of accounts are becoming embedded. Assurance action proposed: Preparation of Draft Accounts for 2021/2022
43	Corporate Oversight	CO.D4.6	Resolve issues relating to completion and sign-off of accounts	Director- Finance	17/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action	Dates to be populated		Assurance that any new issues raised are resolved. Assurance action proposed: GT sign-off of 2021/22 Accounts
44	Strategic Decision	SD.D1.1	Review concluded: Review of MTFP	Director- Finance	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	October 2022	Nov 2022	Later Cabinet Date due to by-election
45	Strategic Decision	SD.D1.2	Approval of MTFP and Capital Strategy	Director- Finance	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Oct 2022	Nov 2022	Later Cabinet Date due to by-election
46	Strategic Decision	SD.D1.3	Approval of MTFP and Capital Strategy	Director- Finance	17/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action	Feb-23	and annually thereafter	Assurance action proposed: Budget Report to Cabinet (2023-2026) reflects funding gaps identified in MTFP
47	Strategic Decision	SD.D1.4	Approval of MTFP and Capital Strategy	Director- Finance	17/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action	October 2023	and annually thereafter	Assurance action proposed: MTFP and Capital Strategy refreshed and approved in October each year
48	Strategic Decision	SD.E1.3	Public Consultation outcomes inform budget setting	Director- Finance	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Autumn 2022	Mar-23	Autumn date captures how consultation is used to inform MTFP. The consideration of the outcomes also need to be reflected in the Spring budget setting report
49	Strategic Decision	SD.E2.4	Public Consultation	Director - Business Strategy and Change	17/10/22	Add - New Sub Actions			New action to ensure surveys are resourced and repeated so that they become an embedded part of the strategic planning framework 'Proposal agreed for the future of resident consultation and engagement'
50	Strategic Decision	SD.E2.5	Public Consultation	Director - Business Strategy and Change	17/10/22	Add - New Sub Actions			New action to reflect focus group work following survey responses: 'Focus Groups held'
51	Organisational Culture	OCA1.3	Approval of document setting out the desired organisational culture	Director - Business Strategy and Change	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Autumn 2022	Jan-23	Additional time for Lshp Team to comment on first draft (which will be presented in November) and refine.
52	Organisational Culture	OC.A2.1	Organisational Development Strategy and Plan Approved	Director - Business Strategy and Change	17/10/22	Change to action description			Action wording to change from 'Organisational Development Strategy' to 'Workforce Strategy approved'
53	Organisational Culture	OC.A2.1	Organisational Development Strategy and Plan Approved	Director - Business Strategy and Change	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Start: tbc End: 2022	Start: Dec 2022 End: March 2023	Action dependent on establishing desired organisational culture which is proposed through change control to be re-profiled to January completion.

October All change control									
							If date change is required		
54	Organisational Culture	OC.B1.3	Effective decision-making training	Director - Law and Governance	19/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Sep-22	Dec-22	Slippage in delivery of effective decision making training linked to the constitutional approvals being presented to Council in November.
55	Organisational Culture	OC.B1.7	Delivery of Directorship and Trusteeship Training	Director - Law and Governance	19/10/22	Add - New Sub Actions			New action required to reflect delivery of training. Existing action relates to procurement of training provider.
56	Organisational Culture	OC.B2.1	Management Development Programme Designed	Director - Business Strategy and Change	17/10/22	Change to action description			Action wording to change to 'Management and Development Programme Scope, Content and Budget agreed'
57	Organisational Culture	OC.B2.1	Management Development Programme Designed	Director - Business Strategy and Change	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Start: Aug 2022 End: Dec 2022	Start: Oct 2022 End: April 2023	Broader management development programme needs to align to the Workforce Strategy (due for approval March 2023)
58	Organisational Culture	OC.B2.4	Management Development Programme Delivery	Director - Business Strategy and Change	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Start: 2023 End: 2023	Start: April 2023 End: TBC	Provide a firmer start date. Was expressed as 2023.
59	Corporate Oversight	CO.D5.0				Add - New Main Action			Addition of New Workstream to reflect priority of Customer First and Customer Experience
60		OC.C1.1							
61	Partnership & Relationships	PRC1.1	Partnership structures in relation to transition from children's to adults in place	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	in place	December	To reflect that sub-actions are being developed
62	Partnership & Relationships	PR.C1.6	Effective local structures: System-wide deep dives	Director - Adult Social Care	20/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action			To reflect that governance in place through HWB and Health Outcomes Framework. 'Receive a quarterly update from DPH and DAS to provide assurance that governance remains in place to test adequacy of partnerships through system-wide thematic deep dives and that any issues are being addressed by the partnership'
63	Strategic Decision	SD.A7.2	Early Help Strategy to be reviewed annually at the early help partnership board	Director- Children and Education	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action			New assurance action proposed: Early Help Strategy to be reviewed annually at the early help partnership board- SD April 23 and annually
64	Strategic Decision	SD.A8.3	Parenting Strategy - yearly assurances provided to the Corporate Parenting Board	Director- Children and Education	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action			New assurance action proposed: Corporate Parenting Strategy - yearly assurances provided to the Corporate Parenting Board. SD- Sept 23 and annually
65	Procurement & Commercial	PC.B3.0	Procurement of 2024 SEND Transport Contract	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Add- New Main Action			New main action- Procurement of 2024 SEND Transport Contract . SD Nov 22 ED Sept 24
66	Procurement & Commercial	PC.B3.1	Leadership review of lessons learnt from SEND 2	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Add - New Sub Actions			Leadership review of lessons learnt from SEND 2- Nov 22
67	Procurement & Commercial	PC.B3.2	Mobilise project team and establish project governance	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Add - New Sub Actions			Mobilise project team and establish project governance
68	Procurement & Commercial	PC.B3.3	Commence Procurement	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Add - New Sub Actions			Commence Procurement. sd- Spring 23
69	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A1.2	KPI Suite reviewed	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Summer 22	22-Dec	This forms part of the contract review for implementation on 1.4.23. KPI Suite review due to be complete by December .
70	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A1.3	Revised KPI suite agreed	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Summer 22	22-Dec	KPI suite will be agreed in December 22 for implmentation on 1/4/23
71	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A1.4	Review of Contract concludes	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Autumn 22	22-Dec	The revised contract will commence on 1.4.23. Negotiations have commenced between the Council and the Trust and both parties have shared responses to the contract review. The Contract Sum negotiations commenced 26.9.22.

October All change control									
							If date change is required		
72	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A1.5	Contract Review with DfE	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	22-Nov	Spring 23	Change control to be put forward to adjust due date, as able to be flexible now Ofsted inspection has happened and do not propose to evoke the break clause.
73	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A1.6	Contract commences	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Add - New Sub Actions	n/a	n/a	Contract commences SD- april 23 ED april 23
74	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A1.7	New KPIs reported through PMF	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Add - New Sub Actions			New KPIs reported through PMF SD aug 23- ED Sept 23
75	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A2.3	Feedback provided on a 6 monthly basis on the continuation of regular cross - SMBC/SCT leadership team meetings.	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action			Assurance action proposed: Feedback provided on a 6 monthly basis on the continuation of regular cross - SMBC/SCT leadership team meetings.
76	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A3.3	Twice yearly performance reports tabled at Children and Education Scrutiny Board	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action			Assurance action proposed: Twice yearly performance reports tabled at Children and Education Scrutiny Board SD April 23- every 6 months (oct)
77	Partnership & Relationships	PR.C1.2 b	To broaden scope of partnership structures to explore the integration of adult services where appropriate	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Add - New Sub Actions			To broaden scope of partnership structures to explore the integration of adult services where appropriate- April 23 date
78	Decision Making	DM.B1.6	Revised Scheme of Delegations agreed	Director- Law & Governance	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Oct-22	Nov-22	By-election has led to date being pushed back for Council
79	Decision Making	DM.C1.1	Review of scrutiny arrangements	Director- Law & Governance	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	22-Oct	22-Nov	By-election has led to date being pushed back for Council
80	Organisational Culture	OC.C1.1	Regular meetings of Commissioners, Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer and Chief Whips commence	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	May-22	Nov-22	Delay to diarising meetings with the Whips
81	Organisational Culture	OC.C2.0	Continue to adopt star chamber approach for Cabinet Members and Chief Officers as part of budget setting approach	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Closure of Main Action			Star Chambers all completed by 28th September. Approach will be used for future budget setting.
82	Organisational Culture	OC.C4.0	Ward and Casework Management	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Closure of Main Action			Main action to be incorporated within the new workstream focusing on customer experience main action to be closed.
83	Organisational Culture	OC.D1.0	Deliver Member Development Programme including Finance Training Programme	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Closure of Main Action			This has moved into regular business of the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee. They review the MDP. Immediate requirements have been met for the purposes of the IP. ES&MDC review on a regular basis.
84	Organisational Culture	OC.D2.2	Effective decision-making training	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Sep-22	Dec-22	Being prepared for Nov/Dec linked to Council date slippage to Nov. Centre for Governance and Scrutiny are providing training in Nov.
85	Organisational Culture	OC.D2.5	Annual Refresher and inclusion in new Member induction	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Start : sep 22 End: Nov 22	Start: March 23 End:Summer 23	This action will commence in line with annual refresher of MDP. Change control- Change to Start: March 2023 for delivery following Annual Council: Summer 2023
86	Organisational Culture	OC.F1.0	Actions to respond to employee survey outcomes to be identified and embedded in improvement plan	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Closure of Main Action			Main action to close and new main action will be added to Coporate Oversight- IP workstream.
87	Organisational Culture	OC.E1.0	A clear and joint message from Chief Executive and Leader regarding Officer and Elected Member relationship delivered	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Closure of Main Action			Comms messages have taken place and training sessions held have reinforced the messages around the relationship. Approach to action has been different to how drafted. Attendance records and engagement with training help demonstrate that message has been delivered.

October All change control									
							If date change is required		
88	Organisational Culture	OC.E2.1	Add new action: Internal comms channels used to deliver comms messages on an ongoing basis including: - All staff briefing - Team Talk Leadership Updates - Member bulletin - Director live events - Bostin People e-bulletin	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions			
89	Organisational Culture	OC.E2.2	Add new action: Chief Executive's 100 day Comms Plan launched	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions			
90	Organisational Culture	OC.E2.3	Add new action: Develop proposal for all staff conference	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions			
91	Organisational Culture	OC.E2.4	Add new action: Formal Employee Recognition Scheme - approach and resources identified	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions			
92	Organisational Culture	OC.E2.5	Add new action: Continuous feedback on effectiveness of internal comms	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions			
93	Corporate Oversight	CO.B1.4	New Action Added: Ongoing Monitoring of Improvement Plan (Monthly Monitoring by Leadership Team, Quarterly Monitoring by Cabinet, ARAC regular review of IP and IP Risk Register, Scrutiny regular review of IP)	Leadership team	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions			
94	Corporate Oversight	CO.B1.5	New Action Added: 6 monthly report to Secretary of State	Leadership team	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions			
95	Corporate Oversight	CO.B1.6	New main action: Employee Engagement Survey Action Plan monitored and reviewed by Leadership Team	Leadership team	27/10/2022	Add- New Main Action			
96	Corporate Oversight	CO.C1.3	New Action Added: Quarterly Performance Reports made to Cabinet	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions			
97	Corporate Oversight	CO.C1.4	New Action Added: Review Corporate KPIs for organisational health to reflect workforce strategy	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions			
98	Corporate Oversight	CO.C1.5	New Action Added: Review Corporate KPIs for customer experience to reflect customer experience programme	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions			
99	Corporate Oversight	CO.C2.4	New Assurance action Added: Quarterly Budget Monitoring Reports made to Leadership Team, Cabinet and Scrutiny	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action			
100	Corporate Oversight	CO.C2.5	New assurance action added: Where budget pressures identified, assurance provided that action has/is being taken (monthly summary comment from S151 Officer / raise issues)	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action			

October All change control									
							If date change is required		
101	Corporate Oversight	Co.D1.2	New action: Review of spans and layers across Council's managerial structures in line with LGA Guidance (likely to be incorporated within Target Operating Model Programme in due course)	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions			
102	Corporate Oversight	CO.D2.3	Workforce development plan implemented for financial services section	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Sep-22	Nov-22	Slight slippage due to delay in interim resources starting.
103	Corporate Oversight	CO.D4.4	New assurance Action: GT sign-off of 2020/21 Accounts (assurance that previous issues raised have been resolved)	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action			one of milestone
104	Corporate Oversight	CO.D4.5	New assurance Action: Preparation of Draft Accounts for 2021/2022 (assurance that approach to completion and sign-off of final accounts is becoming embedded)	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action			one of milestone
105	Corporate Oversight	CO.E1.4	Programme and Project Management System Implementation	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Late 22	Feb-23	Further exploration needed with a view to a pilot. End Date to be adjusted to Feb 2023 for implementation.
106	Corporate Oversight	CO.F5.0	Add new Main Action: Customer Journey Programme	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add- New Main Action			
107	Corporate Oversight	CO.F5.1	Add new action: Structure and Governance for Customer Experience Programme approved	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions			
108	Corporate Oversight	CO.F5.2	Add new action: Workstream Plans agreed (timeline, cost and resource) for 5 workstreams (fix the backlog, fix the OSS, customer experience strategy, contact centre/community hubs approach, technology)	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions			
109	Corporate Oversight	CO.F5.3	Add new action: Programme board in place (first programme board to involve ToR, scope of workstreams, nominations for resources for each workstream, and high level milestones)	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions			
110	Strategic Decision	SD.A1.2	Pipeline projects monitored on a 6-monthly basis	Director-Regeneration and Growth	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action			Change actino to an assurance action to be monitred on a 6 montly basis
111	Strategic Decision	SD.A2.11	Corporate Asset Management Strategy Approved	Director-Regeneration and Growth	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Sep-22	Nov-22	Delay due to by-election
112	Strategic Decision	SD.A5.1	Commercial Strategy Approved	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Oct	??	
113	Strategic Decision	SD.A5.2	Business Cases Presented for commercial workstreams	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)			
114	Strategic Decision	SD.A7.2	Early Help Strategy to be reviewed annually at the early help partnership board	Director- Children and Education	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action			
115	Strategic Decision	SD.A8.3	Corporate Parenting Strategy - yearly assurances provided to the Corporate Parenting Board	Director- Children and Education	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action			



October All change control									
							If date change is required		
116	Strategic Decision	SD.B1.9	Review of Council EDI decision making process	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Autumn 22	Autumn 23	
117	Strategic Decision	SD.B1.10	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy approved	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Autumn 22	Autumn 23	
118	Strategic Decision	SD.B1.11	Embed equalities, diversity and inclusion within Member and Officer Development Programmes	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Early 23	Mar-24	
119	Strategic Decision	SD.C1.0	Developing a model for locality working	Director- Housing	27/10/2022	Closure of Main Action			Closurere of main action to incoproparate in to 'Customer Journey Programme'
120	Strategic Decision	SD.C1.3	Customer Access Strategy Development Commences	Director- Housing	27/10/2022	Add- New Main Action			Action to become main action SD.F1.0 within Customer Journey Workstream 'Customer Journey Strategy Approved'
121	Strategic Decision	SD.D1.2	Approval of MTFP and Capital Strategy	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Autumn 22	Nov-22	date change due to by-election
122	Strategic Decision	SD.D1.3	New Assurance Action (strategy implemented through budget plans): Budget Report to Cabinet (2023-2026) reflects funding gaps identified in MTFP	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action			
123	Strategic Decision	SD.D1.4	New Assurance Action (embedding the approach): MTFP and Capital Strategy refreshed and approved in October each year	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action			
124	Strategic Decision	SD.E1.3	Public Consultation outcomes inform budget setting	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Autumn 22	Feb-23	Date change to reflect Feb 2023 Budget Report needing to reflect consideration of consultation outcomes
125	Strategic Decision	SD.E2.4	New action: Proposal approved for the next phase of resident consultation and engagement and budget consultation	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions			
126	Strategic Decision	SD.E2.5	New action: Focus Groups held to explore responses to key areas raised in Residents Survey, Shape survey and budget consultation.	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions			
127	Strategic Decision	SD.F1.0	New Main Action: Customer Journey Strategy	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add- New Main Action			
128	Decision Making	DM.B1.1	Effective Decision Making Training	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Sep-22	Dec-22	Training will take place Nov/Dec. Change control to amend delivery date to December 2022.
129	Decision Making	DM.B1.3	Revised Financial Regs agreed	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Oct-22	Dec-22	The remaining areas of the Fin Regs that need reviewing will slip to December Council. As the key changes have already been approved the risk/impact of the slippage on the outstanding bits is very low.
130	Decision Making	DM.B1.6	Revised Scheme of Delegations agreed	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Oct-22	Nov-22	Due at November Council (slippage due to change of date for Council)
131	Decision Making	DM.B2.0	Refresh existing arrangements for arms-length companies	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Closure of Main Action			Wokstream closure - only one is SCT and covered with contract mgmt
132	Decision Making	DM.C1.1	Review of scrutiny arrangements	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Oct-22	Nov-22	Slippage due to by-election. Scrutiny Review was approved by scrutiny in September. Report due to Council in November.
133	Decision Making	DM.C4.0	ARAC report and recommendations in relation to SEND Transport	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Closure of Main Action			closed on basis that recommendations fulfilled through procurement and contracts that went live in Sep. Workstream is also contained within procurement and commercial for ongoing milestones for next procurement



Change to Action Description							
Change Number	Theme	Action reference	Action Title	Owner	Date Raised	Type of Change	Change/ Impact of change (incl. any dependencies)/ Reason for change
32	Strategic Decision	SD.C1.2	Pilot of Town Co-ordinator role commences	Director Housing	16/09/2022	Changes to objectives and deliverables	on hold - pending community hubs model. A revised set of actions will be required for this workstream (to be considered at next change control).
52	Organisational Culture	OC.A2.1	Organisational Development Strategy and Plan Approved	Director - Business Strategy and Change	17/10/22	Change to action description	Action wording to change from 'Organisational Development Strategy' to 'Workforce Strategy approved'
56	Organisational Culture	OC.B2.1	Management Development Programme Designed	Director - Business Strategy and Change	17/10/22	Change to action description	Action wording to change to 'Management and Development Programme Scope, Content and Budget agreed'

Change to Delivery Date									
Change Number	Theme	Action reference	Action Title	Owner	Date Raised	Type of Change	Change date from	Change date to	Change/ Impact of change (incl. any dependencies)/ Reason for change
27	Decision Making	DM.B1.4	Revised Council Procedure Rules	Director Law and Governance	8/15/2022 Updated 24/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Jul-22	Nov-22	This item was missed from the July Change Control approvals and should have been put forward as a date change to October 2022. Further impacted by by-election, so revised end date is November 2022.
30	Procurement & Commercial	PC.A4.1	Recovery Plan approved by Waste Management Board	Director Borough Economy	25/08/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Jul-22	Oct-22	Resubmission to October waste Board is required due to further comments made on integrated street cleansing recovery plan within Service Delivery Plan
31	Corporate Oversight	CO.D2.4	KPIs and standards developed for financial services section	Director Finance	16/09/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Aug-22	Oct-22	Some KPI's have been developed but these will be reviewed once Budget Holder survey is completed and results analysed. Likely to be in place by October.
34	Decision Making	DMA1.2	Council Decision to Implement 4-yearly election cycle	Director Law and Governance	10/04/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	N/a	November	Accurate monitoring of progress by date being included
35	Corporate Oversight	CO.B2.0	Single Improvement Plan Phase 2	Leadership Team	10/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	June 22 - Jan 23	Start Dec 22 March 23 for Council approval alongside quarterly monitoring	Phase 2 Plan to be informed by findings of External Reviews and SoS letter
37	Corporate Oversight	CO.D2.3	Workforce development plan implemented for financial services section	Director - Finance	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)			Slippage in delivery. Due to be completed in October, and therefore change control may not be required.
38	Corporate Oversight	CO.D3.3	Review of corporate debt recovery processes completed	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Oct-22	01-Dec	Review underway but significant piece of work covering multiple teams so completion date now December 2022.
40	Corporate Oversight	CO.D3.5	Implementation of Recommendations from CIP	Director - Finance	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Start date from Aug 22. End date from Oct 22	Start date to: Oct 22 End Date to: TBC	Report not yet received from CIPFa.
44	Strategic Decision	SD.D1.1	Review concluded: Review of MTFP	Director - Finance	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	October 2022	Nov 2022	Later Cabinet Date due to by-election
45	Strategic Decision	SD.D1.2	Approval of MTFP and Capital Strategy	Director - Finance	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Oct 2022	Nov 2022	Later Cabinet Date due to by-election
48	Strategic Decision	SD.E1.3	Public Consultation outcomes inform budget set	Director - Finance	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Autumn 2022	Mar-23	Autumn date captures how consultation is used to inform MTFP. The consideration of the outcomes also need to be reflected in the Spring budget setting report
51	Organisational Culture	OCA1.3	Approval of document setting out the desired organisational culture	Director - Business Strategy and Change	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Autumn 2022	Jan-23	Additional time for Lshp Team to comment on first draft (which will be presented in November) and refine.
53	Organisational Culture	OC.A2.1	Organisational Development Strategy and Plan Approved	Director - Business Strategy and Change	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Start: tbc End: 2022	Start: Dec 2022 End: March 2023	Action dependent on establishing desired organisational culture which is proposed through change control to be re-profiled to January completion.
54	Organisational Culture	OC.B1.3	Effective decision-making training	Director - Law and Governance	19/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Sep-22	Dec-22	Slippage in delivery of effective decision making training linked to the constitutional approvals being presented to Council in November.

Change to Delivery Date										
Change Number	Theme	Action reference	Action Title	Owner	Date Raised	Type of Change	If date change is required please state from and to	Change date from	Change date to	Change/ Impact of change (incl. any dependencies)/ Reason for change
57	Organisational Culture	OC.B2.1	Management Development Programme Designed	Director - Business Strategy and Change	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Start: Aug 2022 End: Dec 2022	Start: Oct 2022 End: April 2023		Broader management development programme needs to align to the Workforce Strategy (due for approval March 2023)
58	Organisational Culture	OC.B2.4	Management Development Programme Delivery	Director - Business Strategy and Change	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Start: 2023 End: 2023	Start: April 2023 End: TBC		Provide a firmer start date. Was expressed as 2023.
61	Partnership & Relationships	PRC1.1	Partnership structures in relation to transition from children's to adults in place	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	in place	December		To reflect that sub-actions are being developed
69	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A1.2	KPI Suite reviewed	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Summer 22	22-Dec		This forms part of the contract review for implementation on 1.4.23. KPI Suite review due to be complete by December .
70	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A1.3	Revised KPI suite agreed	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Summer 22	22-Dec		KPI suite will be agreed in December 22 for implementation on 1/4/23
71	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A1.4	Review of Contract concludes	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Autumn 22	22-Dec		The revised contract will commence on 1.4.23. Negotiations have commenced between the Council and the Trust and both parties have shared responses to the contract review. The Contract Sum negotiations commenced 26.9.22.
72	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A1.5	Contract Review with DfE	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	22-Nov	Spring 23		Change control to be put forward to adjust due date, as able to be flexible now Ofsted inspection has happened and do not propose to evoke the break clause.
78	Decision Making	DM.B1.6	Revised Scheme of Delegations agreed	Director- Law & Governance	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Oct-22	Nov-22		By-election has led to date being pushed back for Council
79	Decision Making	DM.C1.1	Review of scrutiny arrangements	Director- Law & Governance	17/10/22	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	22-Oct	Nov-22		By-election has led to date being pushed back for Council
80	Organisational Culture	OC.C1.1	Regular meetings of Commissioners, Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer and Chief Whips commence	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	May-22	Nov-22		Delay to diarising meetings with the Whips
84	Organisational Culture	OC.D2.2	Effective decision-making training	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Sep-22	Dec-22		Being prepared for Nov/Dec linked to Council date slippage to Nov. Centre for Governance and Scrutiny are providing training in Nov.
85	Organisational Culture	OC.D2.5	Annual Refresher and inclusion in new Member induction	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Start : sep 22 End: Nov 22	Start: March 23 End:Summer 23		This action will commence in line with annual refresher of MDP. Change control- Change to Start: March 2023 for delivery following Annual Council: Summer 2023
102	Corporate Oversight	CO.D2.3	Workforce development plan implemented for financial services section	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Sep-22	Nov-22		Slight slippage due to delay in interim resources starting.
105	Corporate Oversight	CO.E1.4	Programme and Project Management System	Director- Business Strategy & Change	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Late 22	Feb-23		Further exploration needed with a view to a pilot. End Date to be adjusted to Feb 2023 for implementation.
111	Strategic Decision	SD.A2.11	Corporate Asset Management Strategy Approved	Director- Regeneration and Growth	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Sep-22	Nov-22		Delay due to by-election
112	Strategic Decision	SD.A5.1	Commercial Strategy Approved	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Oct	tbc		
113	Strategic Decision	SD.A5.2	Business Cases Presented for commercial workstreams	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)		tbc		
116	Strategic Decision	SD.B1.9	Review of Council EDI decision making process	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Autumn 22	Autumn 23		

Change to Delivery Date										
Change Number	Theme	Action reference	Action Title	Owner	Date Raised	Type of Change	If date change is required please state from and to	Change date from	Change date to	Change/ Impact of change (incl. any dependencies)/ Reason for change
117	Strategic Decision	SD.B1.10	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy approved	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)		Autumn 22	Autumn 23	
118	Strategic Decision	SD.B1.11	Embed equalities, diversity and inclusion within Member and Officer Development Programmes	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)		Early 23	Mar-24	
121	Strategic Decision	SD.D1.2	Approval of MTFP and Capital Strategy	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)		Autumn 22	Nov-22	date change due to by-election
124	Strategic Decision	SD.E1.3	Public Consultation outcomes inform budget setting	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)		Autumn 22	Nov-22	Date change to reflect Feb 2023 Budget Report needing to reflect consideration of consultation outcomes
128	Decision Making	DM.B1.1	Effective Decision Making Training	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)		Sep-22	Dec-22	Training will take place Nov/Dec. Change control to amend delivery date to December 2022.
129	Decision Making	DM.B1.3	Revised Financial Regs agreed	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)		Oct-22	Dec-22	The remaining areas of the Fin Regs that need reviewing will slip to December Council. As the key changes have already been approved the risk/impact of the slippage on the outstanding bits is very low.
130	Decision Making	DM.B1.6	Revised Scheme of Delegations agreed	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)		Oct-22	Nov-22	Due at November Council (slippage due to change of date for Council)
132	Decision Making	DM.C1.1	Review of scrutiny arrangements	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)		Oct-22	Nov-22	Scrutiny Review was approved by scrutiny in September. Report due to Council in November. (slippage due to by-election)
139	Procurement & Commercial	PC.B1.6	Contract Monitoring Arrangements in Place	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)		Sep-22	Jan-23	Contracts are being monitored. Contract monitoring arrangements to be confirmed in Jan 23
144	Procurement & Commercial	PC.C1.1	Options Appraisal	"Director- Business Strategy & Change"	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)		Sep-22	Mar-23	Not progressed past soft market testing of performance management system- further demonstration with another provider. Size and scale of system to be considered for scope of project.

Actions Proposed for Closure							
Change Number	Theme	Action reference	Action Title	Owner	Date Raised	Type of Change	Change/ Impact of change (incl. any dependencies)/ Reason for change
81	Organisational Culture	OC.C2.0	Continue to adopt star chamber approach for Cabinet Members and Chief Officers as part of budget setting approach	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Closure of Main Action	Star Chambers all completed by 28th September. Approach will be used for future budget setting.
82	Organisational Culture	OC.C4.0	Ward and Casework Management	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Closure of Main Action	Main action to be incorporated within the new workstream focusing on customer experience
83	Organisational Culture	OC.D1.0	Deliver Member Development Programme including Finance Training Programme	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Closure of Main Action	main action to be closed. This has moved into regular business of the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee. They review the MDP. Immediate requirements have been met for the purposes of the IP. ES&MDC review on a regular basis.
86	Organisational Culture	OC.F1.0	Actions to respond to employee survey outcomes to be identified and embedded in improvement plan	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Closure of Main Action	Main action to close and new main action will be added to Coporate Oversight- IP workstream.
87	Organisational Culture	OC.E1.0	A clear and joint message from Chief Executive and Leader regarding Officer and Elected Member relationship delivered	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Closure of Main Action	Comms messages have taken place and training sessions held have reinforced the messages around the relationship. Approach to action has been different to how drafted. Attendance records and engagement with training help demonstrate that message has been delivered.
119	Strategic Decision	SD.C1.0	Developing a model for locality working	Director- Housing	27/10/2022	Closure of Main Action	Closurer of main action to incopporate in to 'Customer Journey Programme'
131	Decision Making	DM.B2.0	Refresh existing arrangements for arms-length companies	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Closure of Main Action	Wokstream closure - only one is SCT and covered with contract mgmt
133	Decision Making	DM.C4.0	ARAC report and recommendations in relation to SEND Transport	Director- Law & Governance	27/10/2022	Closure of Main Action	closed on basis that recommendations fulfilled through 2022 procurement and contract go live from Sep. Ongoing actions contained within workstream within procurement and commercial

Add Main, Sub & Assurance Actions							
Change Number	Theme	Action reference	Action Title	Owner	Date Raised	Type of Change	Change/ Impact of change (incl. any dependencies)/ Reason for change
33	Partnership & Relationships	PR.D1.1	Corporate review of grant funding	Director Housing	16/09/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	Revised set of actions will be required within next change control
36	Corporate Oversight	CO.C2.0	Budget Monitoring	Director - Finance	17/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action	Assurance Actions required to ensure approach embedded and that any issues are being addressed. Proposed actions: CO.C2.4 and CO.C2.5 (Quarterly Budget Monitoring Reports made to Leadership Team, Cabinet and Scrutiny; and Where budget pressures identified, assurance provided that action has/is being taken (monthly summary comment from S151 Officer / raise issues)
39	Corporate Oversight	CO.D2.5	Embed Finance Business Partner Role	Director - Finance	17/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action	Assurance action required to ensure that Business Partner Role is having a positive impact. Assurance Action: Performance against KPIs for financial services section - quarterly comment
41	Corporate Oversight	CO.D4.4	Resolve issues relating to completion and sign-off of accounts	Director - Finance	17/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action	Assurance that work undertaken to prepare for completion of accounts has helped resolve issues raised by GT. Assurance action proposed: GT sign-off of 2020/21 Accounts (assurance that previous issues raised have been resolved)
42	Corporate Oversight	CO.D4.5	Resolve issues relating to completion and sign-off of accounts	Director - Finance	17/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action	Assurance that processes for completion of accounts are becoming embedded. Assurance action proposed: Preparation of Draft Accounts for 2021/2022
43	Corporate Oversight	CO.D4.6	Resolve issues relating to completion and sign-off of accounts	Director - Finance	17/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action	Assurance that any new issues raised are resolved. Assurance action proposed: GT sign-off of 2021/22 Accounts
46	Strategic Decision	SD.D1.3	Approval of MTFP and Capital Strategy	Director - Finance	17/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action	Assurance action proposed: Budget Report to Cabinet (2023-2026) reflects funding gaps identified in MTFP
47	Strategic Decision	SD.D1.4	Approval of MTFP and Capital Strategy	Director - Finance	17/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action	Assurance action proposed: MTFP and Capital Strategy refreshed and approved in October each year
49	Strategic Decision	SD.E2.4	Public Consultation	Director - Business Strategy and Change	17/10/22	Add - New Sub Actions	New action to ensure surveys are resourced and repeated so that they become an embedded part of the strategic planning framework 'Proposal agreed for the future of resident consultation and engagement'
50	Strategic Decision	SD.E2.5	Public Consultation	Director - Business Strategy and Change	17/10/22	Add - New Sub Actions	New action to reflect focus group work following survey responses: 'Focus Groups held'



Add Main, Sub & Assurance Actions							
Change Number	Theme	Action reference	Action Title	Owner	Date Raised	Type of Change	Change/ Impact of change (incl. any dependencies)/ Reason for change
55	Organisational Culture	OC.B1.7	Delivery of Directorship and Trusteeship Training	Director - Law and Governance	19/10/22	Add - New Sub Actions	New action required to reflect delivery of training. Existing action relates to procurement of training provider.
62	Partnership & Relationships	PR.C1.6	Effective local structures: System-wide deep dives	Director - Adult Social Care	20/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action	To reflect that governance in place through HWB and Health Outcomes Framework. 'Receive a quarterly update from DPH and DAS to provide assurance that governance remains in place to test adequacy of partnerships through system-wide thematic deep dives and that any issues are being addressed by the partnership'
63	Strategic Decision	SD.A7.2	Early Help Strategy to be reviewed annually at the early help partnership board	Director- Children and Education	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action	New assurance action proposed: Early Help Strategy to be reviewed annually at the early help partnership board- SD April 23 and annually
64	Strategic Decision	SD.A8.3	Parenting Strategy - yearly assurances provided to the Corporate Parenting Board	Director- Children and Education	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action	New assurance action proposed: Corporate Parenting Strategy - yearly assurances provided to the Corporate Parenting Board. SD- Sept 23 and annually
65	Procurement & Commercial	PC.B3.0	Procurement of 2024 SEND Transport Contract	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Add- New Main Action	New main action- Procurement of 2024 SEND Transport Contract . SD Nov 22 ED Sept 24
66	Procurement & Commercial	PC.B3.1	Leadership review of lessons learnt from SEND 2	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Add - New Sub Actions	Leadership review of lessons learnt from SEND 2- Nov 22
67	Procurement & Commercial	PC.B3.2	Mobilise project team and establish project governance	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Add - New Sub Actions	Mobilise project team and establish project governance
68	Procurement & Commercial	PC.B3.3	Commence Procurement	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Add - New Sub Actions	Commence Procurement. sd- Spring 23
73	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A1.6	Contract commences	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Add - New Sub Actions	Contract commences SD- april 23 ED april 23
74	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A1.7	New KPIs reported through PMF	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Add - New Sub Actions	New KPIs reported through PMF SD aug 23- ED Sept 23
75	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A2.3	Feedback provided on a 6 monthly basis on the continuation of regular cross - SMBC/SCT leadership team meetings.	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action	Assurance action proposed: Feedback provided on a 6 monthly basis on the continuation of regular cross - SMBC/SCT leadership team meetings.
76	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A3.3	Twice yearly performance reports tabled at Children and Education Scrutiny Board	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Add- New Assurance Action	Assurance action proposed: Twice yearly performance reports tabled at Children and Education Scrutiny Board SD April 23- every 6 months (oct)
77	Partnership & Relationships	PR.C1.2 b	To broaden scope of partnership structures to explore the integration of adult services where appropriate	Director- Children and Education	20/10/22	Add - New Sub Actions	To broaden scope of partnership structures to explore the integration of adult services where appropriate- April 23 date

Add Main, Sub & Assurance Actions							
Change Number	Theme	Action reference	Action Title	Owner	Date Raised	Type of Change	Change/ Impact of change (incl. any dependencies)/ Reason for change
88	Organisational Culture	OC.E2.1	Add new action: Internal comms channels used to deliver comms messages on an ongoing basis including: - All staff briefing - Team Talk Leadership Updates - Member bulletin - Director live events - Bostin People e-bulletin	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	
89	Organisational Culture	OC.E2.2	Add new action: Chief Executive's 100 day Comms Plan launched	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	
90	Organisational Culture	OC.E2.3	Add new action: Develop proposal for all staff conference	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	
91	Organisational Culture	OC.E2.4	Add new action: Formal Employee Recognition Scheme - approach and resources identified	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	
92	Organisational Culture	OC.E2.5	Add new action: Continuous feedback on effectiveness of internal comms	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	
93	Corporate Oversight	CO.B1.4	New Action Added: Ongoing Monitoring of Improvement Plan (Monthly Monitoring by Leadership Team, Quarterly Monitoring by Cabinet, ARAC regular review of IP and IP Risk Register, Scrutiny regular review of IP)	Leadership team	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	
94	Corporate Oversight	CO.B1.5	New Action Added: 6 monthly report to Secretary of State	Leadership team	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	
95	Corporate Oversight	CO.B1.6	New main action: Employee Engagement Survey Action Plan monitored and reviewed by Leadership Team	Leadership team	27/10/2022	Add- New Main Action	
96	Corporate Oversight	CO.C1.3	New Action Added: Quarterly Performance Reports made to Cabinet	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	
97	Corporate Oversight	CO.C1.4	New Action Added: Review Corporate KPIs for organisational health to reflect workforce strategy	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	
98	Corporate Oversight	CO.C1.5	New Action Added: Review Corporate KPIs for customer experience to reflect customer experience programme	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	

Add Main, Sub & Assurance Actions							
Change Number	Theme	Action reference	Action Title	Owner	Date Raised	Type of Change	Change/ Impact of change (incl. any dependencies)/ Reason for change
99	Corporate Oversight	CO.C2.4	New Assurance action Added: Quarterly Budget Monitoring Reports made to Leadership Team, Cabinet and Scrutiny	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action	
100	Corporate Oversight	CO.C2.5	New assurance action added: Where budget pressures identified, assurance provided that action has/is being taken (monthly summary comment from S151 Officer / raise issues)	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action	
101	Corporate Oversight	Co.D1.2	New action: Review of spans and layers across Council's managerial structures in line with LGA Guidance (likely to be incorporated within Target Operating Model Programme in due course)	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	
103	Corporate Oversight	CO.D4.4	New assurance Action: GT sign-off of 2020/21 Accounts (assurance that previous issues raised have been resolved)	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action	one off milestone
104	Corporate Oversight	CO.D4.5	New assurance Action: Preparation of Draft Accounts for 2021/2022 (assurance that approach to completion and sign-off of final accounts is becoming embedded)	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action	one off milestone
106	Corporate Oversight	CO.F5.0	Add new Main Action: Customer Journey Programme	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add- New Main Action	
107	Corporate Oversight	CO.F5.1	Add new action: Structure and Governance for Customer Experience Programme approved	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	
108	Corporate Oversight	CO.F5.2	Add new action: Workstream Plans agreed (timeline, cost and resource) for 5 workstreams (fix the backlog, fix the OSS, customer experience strategy, contact centre/community hubs approach, technology)	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	
109	Corporate Oversight	CO.F5.3	Add new action: Programme board in place (first programme board to involve ToR, scope of workstreams, nominations for resources for each workstream, and high level milestones)	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	
110	Strategic Decision	SD.A1.2	Pipeline projects monitored on a 6-monthly basis	Director-Regeneration and Growth	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action	Change action to an assurance action to be monitored on a 6 monthly basis

Add Main, Sub & Assurance Actions							
Change Number	Theme	Action reference	Action Title	Owner	Date Raised	Type of Change	Change/ Impact of change (incl. any dependencies)/ Reason for change
114	Strategic Decision	SD.A7.2	Early Help Strategy to be reviewed annually at the early help partnership board	Director- Children and Education	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action	
115	Strategic Decision	SD.A8.3	Corporate Parenting Strategy - yearly assurances provided to the Corporate Parenting Board	Director- Children and Education	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action	
120	Strategic Decision	SD.C1.3	Customer Access Strategy Development Commences	Director Housing	27/10/2022	Add- New Main Action	Action to become main action SD.F1.0 within Customer Journey Workstream 'Customer Journey Strategy Approved'
122	Strategic Decision	SD.D1.3	New Assurance Action (strategy implemented through budget plans): Budget Report to Cabinet (2023-2026) reflects funding gaps identified in MTFP	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action	
123	Strategic Decision	SD.D1.4	New Assurance Action (embedding the approach): MTFP and Capital Strategy refreshed and approved in October each year	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action	
125	Strategic Decision	SD.E2.4	New action: Proposal approved for the next phase of resident consultation and engagement and budget consultation	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	
126	Strategic Decision	SD.E2.5	New action: Focus Groups held to explore responses to key areas raised in Residents Survey, Shape survey and budget consultation.	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	
127	Strategic Decision	SD.F1.0	New Main Action: Customer Journey Strategy	Director - Business Strategy and Change	27/10/2022	Add- New Main Action	
134	Procurement & Commercial	PC.A1.3	Assurance Action- Report provided to Officer Leadership on a quarterly basis. regular reporting through PMF	Director - Borough Economy	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action	assurance action for action PC.A1.0- Introduction of a more focused framework for contract monitoring.
135	Procurement & Commercial	PC.A1.4	Assurance Action- Annual report on leisure and waste contracts going through to cabinet member	Director - Borough Economy	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action	assurance action for action PC.A1.0- Introduction of a more focused framework for contract monitoring.
136	Procurement & Commercial	PC.A1.5	Assurance Action- The large contracts in BE for waste/street cleansing, and both leisure providers will be added to the Intend contract management module.	Director - Borough Economy	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action	assurance action for action PC.A1.0- Introduction of a more focused framework for contract monitoring.- dates to be agreed
137	Procurement & Commercial	PC.A4.3	Assurance Action- Senior management meeting - annual plans requested- service delivery plan from SERCO is contractually compliant and includes elements of street cleansing.	Director - Borough Economy	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action	assurance action for main action PC.A4.0- Street Cleansing Recovery Plan – completion and implementation
138	Procurement & Commercial	PC.A5.3	Assurance Action- Monthly fleet steering group taking place where the documentation considered by the group is contractually compliant.	Director - Borough Economy	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action	assurance action for main action PC.A5.0- Manage the delayed Serco Fleet replacement programme in line with the requirements of the contract- dates to be agreed
139	Procurement &	PC.B1.6	Contract Monitoring Arrangements in Place	Director- Finance	27/10/2022	Change to delivery timescales (actions	Contracts are being monitored. Contract

Add Main, Sub & Assurance Actions							
Change Number	Theme	Action reference	Action Title	Owner	Date Raised	Type of Change	Change/ Impact of change (incl. any dependencies)/ Reason for change
140	Procurement & Commercial	PC.B3.0	Procurement of 2024 SEND transport contract	Director- Children and Education	27/10/2022	Add- New Main Action	
141	Procurement & Commercial	PC.B3.1	Leadership review of lessons learnt from SEND 2	Director- Children and Education	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	
142	Procurement & Commercial	PC.B3.2	Mobilise project team and establish project governance	Director- Children and Education	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	
143	Procurement & Commercial	PC.B3.3	Commence Procurement	Director- Children and Education	27/10/2022	Add - New Sub Actions	
145	Partnership & Relationships	PR.C1.5	Assurance action: Receive a quarterly update from DPH and DAS to provide assurance that governance remains in place to test adequacy of partnerships through system-wide thematic deep dives and that any issues are being addressed by the partnership.	Director - Adult Social Care Director - Public Health	27/10/2022	Add- New Assurance Action	
146	Partnership & Relationships	PR.B1.6	Assurance Action: Update provided on a 6 monthly basis by Director of Regen and Growth to confirm representation at key meetings continues and brings benefit to the council. Key meetings for Members to attend at sub regional and regional level are: ABCA Leaders; WMCA Board; WMCA Economic Growth Board; WMCA Housing and Land Board.	Director-Regeneration and Growth	11/02/2022	Add- New Assurance Action	Add new assurance for action PR.B1.0- Continue to develop the relationship with and actively participate in regional and sub-regional bodies (e.g. WM Combined Authority, Black Country LEP) to maximise opportunities for Sandwell

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# Report to Cabinet

**28 September 2022**

<b>Subject:</b>	Improvement Plan Progress
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Leader of the Council Cllr Kerrie Carmichael
<b>Director:</b>	Managing Director Kim Bromley-Derry
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Strategic Lead – Service Improvement Kate Ashley <a href="mailto:Kate1_ashley@sandwell.gov.uk">Kate1_ashley@sandwell.gov.uk</a>  Senior Lead Officer – Service Improvement Rebecca Jenkins <a href="mailto:Rebecca_jenkins@sandwell.gov.uk">Rebecca_jenkins@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

## 1. Recommendations

- 1.1. That progress against the Improvement Plan up to 4 August 2022 be received.
- 1.2. To receive the Improvement Plan Risk Register.
- 1.3. To receive the changes made to the Improvement Plan.
- 1.4. To receive any recommendations or comments made by Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board following their meeting on 22 September, and to note that any comments or recommendations made by Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at their meeting on 29 September will be reported to a future Cabinet meeting.



## 2. Reasons for Recommendations







- 2.1 This report provides a quarterly update on progress against the Improvement Plan agreed by Council on 7 June 2022. The Improvement Plan incorporates all recommendations from the Grant Thornton Governance Review, the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge and the CIPFA Financial Management Review, as well as the Statutory Directions from the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- 2.2 Risk management is embedded within the council's programme management of the Improvement Plan. A risk register has been developed which underpins the council's strategic risk relating to the Improvement Plan (59a 02/22). Cabinet is asked to receive the Improvement Plan Risk Register to provide assurance that risks are being managed effectively and to provide contextual information for future decision making.
- 2.3 The Improvement Plan is intended to be a live document updated to take account of progress and relevant changes. Changes to the Improvement Plan are tracked through programme management mechanisms. Cabinet is asked to receive the changes to provide assurance that changes are being managed effectively.
- 2.4 As part of the Governance and assurance arrangements for the Improvement Plan, Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board will review progress of the Improvement Plan and utilise the plan for work programming purposes. Both Committees are due to consider progress at their meetings in September. Any recommendations or comments they wish to make to Cabinet will be presented during the meeting for Cabinet's consideration.

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

- 3.1 Sandwell Council's Improvement Plan focuses on the governance arrangements of the council and areas of improvement across the organisation. The underpinning objective of the Improvement Plan is to ensure that the council is able to deliver on the aims and priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan. The deliverables set out in this Improvement Plan will achieve long-term sustainable improvements in how the council operates and is able to make effective decisions focused on improving outcomes for residents and experiences of service users. Therefore, this impacts on the council's ability to deliver all the objectives in the Corporate Plan.





	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

## 4 Context and Key Issues

### 4.1 Background

4.1.1 The council's external auditors Grant Thornton conducted a Value for Money Review into the council's governance arrangements over the period August to October 2021 and reported their findings of this review to Full Council in January 2022. In response, Council approved a Governance Improvement Plan in January 2022 to address the recommendations made by Grant Thornton and the proposed reporting mechanisms to ensure progress is managed effectively.

4.1.2 Since the approval of the Governance Improvement Plan findings were received from the CIPFA financial management review, LGA Corporate Peer Challenge along with the Statutory Directions from the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.



- 4.1.3 A single Improvement Plan was agreed by Council on 7 June 2022 which addresses the recommendations from all the external reviews and the Statutory Directions. The Improvement Plan provides the organisation with a clear direction for sustainable improvement under six thematic headings. The single Improvement Plan has superseded the Governance Improvement Plan.
- 4.1.4 To ensure that senior officers and members have oversight of delivery against the Improvement Plan, Council approved that progress will be monitored by Leadership Team monthly and reported to Cabinet quarterly. This will continue until all actions have been completed, or changes have been embedded into business as usual. As part of the Governance and assurance arrangements for the Improvement Plan, Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board will review progress of the Improvement Plan and utilise the plan for work programming purposes.
- 4.1.5 This report is the first quarterly update on progress of the Improvement Plan. Quarterly progress updates on the Governance Improvement Plan were provided to Cabinet in April 2022 and July 2022.

## 4.2 Improvement Plan Progress

### 4.2.1 Summary of achievements:

- Significant progress made on long-standing service issues to implement decisions taken by Cabinet between December 2021 and July 2022: Sandwell Leisure Trust and establishment of Arms-Length Trading Company, Sandwell Children's Trust, the waste service, the ERP system and Lion Farm
- SEND Transport Contracts awarded and preparations for commencement from September 2022. The procurement has incorporated lessons learned from previous procurement
- Regular meeting structures in place to enable development of positive and constructive working relationships between officers and members
- Learning taken from commercial decisions, procurement and contract management and national best practice is being included in refresh of Corporate Governance Documents. The first wave of



policies were approved by Council in July 2022 with others to follow this calendar year.

- Regular reporting on budget monitoring, performance information and Improvement Plan in place
- Approval of Performance Management Framework that underpins the delivery of the Corporate Plan. Q1 performance report will be made to Cabinet in September
- Approval of the single Improvement Plan that addresses the recommendations of all three external reviews and aims to improve how the council operates
- Approval of Regeneration Strategy and Pipeline to encourage and deliver significant investment in Sandwell
- Launch of the Early Help Strategy with partners
- Employee engagement survey conducted and being used to shape culture theme
- Council representatives actively participating in key regional and sub-regional bodies
- Capacity in Finance – specialist training delivered, and a restructure completed to ensure there is sufficient capacity to manage the council’s financial reporting responsibilities.
- Completion of New Member induction
- Review of Arms-Length Companies complete
- Children’s Services Ofsted judgment and specific comments around the improved governance and effective relationships between Council and Trust
- Commencement of Consultation on 4-yearly election cycle following Council’s approval in July
- Commencement of Consultation in relation to the Budget
- Search Consultancy engaged to commence Chief Executive recruitment



4.2.2 A comprehensive monitoring tool has been developed to monitor progress of the Improvement Plan. This tool includes both a risk rating for each main action within the Improvement Plan and a progress status rating for all actions. The Improvement Plan Monitoring Tool is included at Appendix 1. The monitoring tool provides quick reference around which actions are on track for delivery, as well as highlighting areas that may require remedial action or additional levels of assurance.

4.2.3 Progress against each theme of Improvement Plan is summarised within Appendix 2. This includes an overall status rating, a description of workstream progress, commentary on progress against milestones and achievements. The theme ratings and a summary of any issues is provided below.

#### 4.2.4 Theme 1 - Organisational Culture

4.2.4.1 Overall Status Rating Green – Progress is being made across all workstreams. Of the 7 actions with an amber risk rating, all sub-actions to deliver the action are on track

4.2.4.2 Organisational Culture Progress Issues: None to report – all workstreams on track.

#### 4.2.5 Theme 2 - Corporate Oversight

4.2.5.1 Overall Status Rating Amber: Progress is being made across all workstreams with some slippage/issues.

4.2.5.2 1 action has a red risk rating, but actions are all on track. This relates to **Performance Management Framework**.

##### **Performance Management Framework**

- The risk status is red due to need to recruit a dedicated corporate performance management resource. Whilst the dedicated resource is being recruited to, significant progress has been made to further embed the corporate performance management framework agreed by Council in April 2022, with the first quarterly performance report due to be presented to Cabinet on 28 September 2022

4.2.5.3 One area of amber risk, is experiencing a medium level of slippage and/or issues. This relates to **Oracle Fusion**.



## ERP (Oracle Fusion)

- Procurement of the new Oracle Fusion provider evaluation period being extended by 3 weeks, due to the need for further financial evaluation, clarification needed from bidders.
- Due to the evaluation period extension, there is slippage on the support provider being in place and delivery.

### 4.2.6 Theme 3 - Strategic Direction

4.2.6.1 Overall Status Rating Red – Progress is being made across workstreams but there are many areas with slippage/issues

4.2.6.2 There are 6 actions with an amber risk rating. Of the 6 actions with an amber risk rating:

- 2 have sub-actions that have or will experience significant slippage or issues. These actions relate to **Equality Policy approval** and **Locality Working: Pilot of Town Co-ordinator role**
- 4 have sub-actions that have or will experience medium slippage or issues. These actions relate to **Corporate Asset Management Strategy Development, Commercial Strategy, Corporate Parenting Strategy, and Review of Equality and Diversity policy**

### Equality and Diversity

- There has been slippage in the approval of Equality Policy due to consideration of best practice models. Policy is being prepared for October approval

### Developing a model for locality working

- Pilot of town co-ordinator role has not taken place due to recruitment issues and is being reconsidered in line with community hubs approach

### Corporate Asset Management Strategy Development

- Strategy is being prepared for September in line with original schedule.



- Confirmation of funding for remaining Workplace Vision components is pending
- Surplus Assets Portfolio Cabinet report has been delayed but is being prepared September Cabinet
- Implementation of asset database is on track however risk of slippage

### **Develop and Implement the Commercial Strategy**

- Work ongoing with Commercial Strategy but slippage from original timescales
- Strategy is in draft and will be reviewed following training with C CO and approval by Leadership Team. 5 potential workstreams are within the draft. LATC (in relation to leisure provision) will be added to the draft workstreams.

### **Refresh of Corporate Parenting Strategy**

- Strategic priorities to be confirmed by Corporate Parenting Board ahead of September Board. Corporate parenting strategy due to be approved in September 22 by Board Members.

## **4.2.7 Theme 4 - Decision Making**

4.2.7.1 Overall Status Rating Amber: Progress is being made across all workstreams with significant progress made this month through Council's approval of first wave of changes to Corporate Governance Documents, and agreement to consult on 4-yearly election cycle.

4.2.7.2 Of the 5 main actions with an amber risk rating:

- 1 sub-action has or will experience significant slippage or issues. This action relates to **Revised Financial Regulations**
- 1 sub-action has or will experience medium slippage or issues. This relates to the completion of ARAC recommendations in relation to SEND Transport.
- 1 sub-action has or will experience medium slippage or issues which is due to an error in the dates recorded. This relates to **Approval of changes to scrutiny**

### **Revised Financial Regulations**



- Financial Regulations are being reviewed. Priority for change was in relation to thresholds for decisions which were approved by Council in July. Further amends to Financial Regulations will be presented to Council in October.

### **Completion of ARAC recommendations in relation to SEND Transport**

- All contracts have now been offered and accepted in line with commencement from new academic year. Issues were encountered due to providers returning contracts which has been resolved. Internal audit has included a review of compliance with contract procedure rules as part of their work programme. Lessons learnt regarding procurement exercises to take place.

## **4.2.8 Theme 5 - Procurement and Commercial**

4.2.8.1 Overall Status Rating Amber: Progress is being made but there is some slippage in delivery timescales.

4.2.8.2 Of the 5 actions with an amber risk rating, there are 2 sub-action that have or will experience medium slippage or issues. These relate to: **Lion Farm Options Agreement, and Completion of ARAC recommendations in relation to SEND Transport.**

### **Lion Farm Options Agreement**

- Some slippage due to legal representatives of both sides taking longer than expected to agree terms for the Expert Determination process

### **Completion of ARAC recommendations in relation to SEND Transport**

- All contracts have now been offered and accepted in line with commencement from new academic year. Issues were encountered due to providers returning contracts which has been resolved. Internal audit has included a review of compliance with contract procedure rules as part of their work programme. Lessons learnt regarding procurement exercises to take place.



## 4.2.9 Theme 6 - Partnerships and Relationships

4.2.9.1 Overall Status Rating Amber: Progress is being made but there is some slippage in delivery timescales.

4.2.9.2 Of the 4 actions with an amber risk rating: 4 have sub-actions that have or will experience medium slippage or issues. These actions relate to: **SCT Governance Arrangements, Review partnership structures within the 'People's sphere', Corporate Review of Grant Funding**

### **SCT Governance Arrangements**

- SMBC have drafted KPIs (Key Performance indicators) which were reviewed in July and confirmed KPIs will be included in the revised contract.
- Review of contract to be concluded in Autumn (change to original timescale) to take into account the ability to be more flexible, and to align with DfE (Department for Education) schedule.
- Monthly four-way meetings diarised throughout the year.
- Ofsted Judgement 'require improvement to be good' with comments around the improved governance and effective relationships between Council and Trust.

### **Review partnership structures within the 'People's sphere'**

- Project manager to be appointed to the partnership restructures to transition from children's to adults in place- post has been advertised.
- Partnership discussions taking place for scoping of work with partners around partnership structures in children's sphere.
- Joint approach between HWBB and SHCP (Sandwell Health & Care Partnership).
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy in draft form and will be present to the next Health and Wellbeing Board in September
- Substance Misuse deep dive presented to SHCP board and currently being written up as a stakeholder report.

### **Corporate Review of Grant Funding**

- Desktop assessments completed of all council funded voluntary and community sector grants to understand how current funding aligns with the council's strategic priorities and to ensure that investment in the sector represents value for money for Sandwell. Where this review has identified that funding should come to an





end, communication with affected organisations has commenced. Plans are being developed to meet the savings identified within the council's budget for 2023/24.

### 4.3 Statutory Recommendations

4.3.1 The Value for Money Governance Review made three statutory recommendations that the council has a legal obligation to respond to. These recommendations are incorporated into the single Improvement Plan, and are embedded across each of the six themes.

4.3.2 To provide an overview of progress against these three specific recommendations, Appendix 3 extracts the key actions that respond to each of the recommendations and they are summarised below.

4.3.3 **Statutory Recommendation 1** - It is imperative that senior officers and senior members take effective corporate grip of long-standing service issues highlighted by the findings in this report (including SLT, SCT, the waste service, the ERP system, and Lion Farm) and prioritise corporate effort in managing the issues identified and embed the solutions into the Council.

#### *Progress update:*

- Continuing to implement strategies to address the service issues highlighted in the Grant Thornton report.
  - SLT – progressing the approach agreed by Cabinet in June 2022 to transfer services to a Local Authority Trading Company.
  - SCT – Governance arrangements remain in place. Joint work in place with SCT in relation to corporate parenting and early help.
  - Waste Contract – Contract Monitoring framework progressing well. Review of the Contract has commenced.
  - ERP (Oracle Fusion) – Tender evaluation period has been extended for support provider. Project Management and Governance arrangements are in place.
  - Lion Farm – action plan to implement Cabinet decision made on 12 January 2022 is on track. Responsibilities for council and developer are clearly set out.



- Regeneration Strategy and Pipeline to underpin significant regeneration in Sandwell approved by Cabinet 23 March 2022. First monitoring update due in November.

**4.3.4 Statutory Recommendation 2** - The Council must ensure that the learning in relation to commercial decisions, procurement and contract management highlighted in this report are understood through the organisation.

*Progress Update*

- The Governance Review of key documents within the council's Constitution is well underway. Approval in July to revised procurement and contract procedure rules, financial thresholds for key decisions, sale of land and buildings protocol.
- Corporate Governance Training - Programme of training and development commencing in September 2022 on effective decision-making, good governance, and revised contract procedure rules
- Development of a Commercial Strategy continues
- Corporate Asset Management Strategy in development.

**4.3.5 Statutory Recommendation 3** - Senior leadership, both officers and members, must demonstrate that they can continue to work together effectively, that they operate in line with the Council's values, codes, policies and procedures, and that there is zero tolerance to inappropriate behaviours. This includes changing the organisational culture in relation to complaints so that they restore balance and proportionality.

*Progress Update*

- Member Development – New Member induction complete and Member Development Programme is being delivered.
- Officer Development – A consolidated programme of fundamental training for managers on Corporate Governance matters is being developed for delivery from Autumn onwards
- Organisational Culture – consultancy engaged and champion recruitment underway
- Work has commenced to design the Senior Leadership Team development programme which will feed into the new Management



Development Programme to ensure consistency across all levels of management.

- Meeting structures to facilitate Cabinet Member and Leadership Team cross-working re-established following election.

#### 4.4 Reporting Framework and Governance

4.4.1 To ensure that senior officers and members have oversight of delivery, Council approved the reporting mechanism for the Improvement Plan in June 2022. This set out that progress will be monitored by Leadership Team monthly and reported to Cabinet quarterly until all actions have been completed, or changes have been embedded into business as usual. The diagram included at Appendix 4 sets out the governance framework.

4.4.2 Two quarterly updates on progress of the Governance Improvement Plan were provided to Cabinet in April 2022 and July 2022. This report forms the first quarterly update to Cabinet on the single Improvement Plan.

4.4.3 The government Directions require reporting on the delivery of the Improvement Plan at six monthly intervals to the Secretary of State from the council and the Commissioners. The next report is due in December 2022.



- 4.4.4 The report to Council seeking approval of the Improvement Plan stated that existing member-led committees, such as the Governance & Constitution Review Committee, Audit & Risk Assurance Committee and Scrutiny Committees, will be used for decision making and maintaining oversight of the actions and implementation of the Improvement Plan.
- 4.4.5 The Governance & Constitution Review Committee and cross-party Working Group have been integral to the development and review of the governance documents, ahead of decisions taken by Council in July and due in October this year.
- 4.4.6 Audit & Risk Assurance Committee received an introduction to the Improvement Plan and the Improvement Plan Risk Register on 28 June 2022 to support the committee's work programming. The Improvement Plan Risk Register and overall progress will be reported to the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee regularly. The Committee will focus primarily on assurance and risk management of the Plan. The next report to Audit & Risk Assurance Committee will take place on 29 September 2022.
- 4.4.7 Scrutiny Boards have now developed their work programmes. Budget & Corporate Scrutiny Management Board has included several elements of the Improvement Plan on their work programme as well as regular reports on overall progress. The first report on overall progress will be made on 22 September 2022.
- 4.4.8 Following the first progress report to Audit & Risk Assurance Committee and Budget & Corporate Scrutiny Management Board, those members will identify areas for further exploration and reporting. Any recommendations or comments from these committees for Cabinet's consideration will be presented at Cabinet's meeting on 28 September.
- 4.4.9 External assurance will continue to play a part in our improvement journey. Grant Thornton, CIPFA and the LGA have been invited back in Autumn 2022 to monitor our progress in addressing the recommendations in their reviews.

## 4.5 Risk Management

- 4.5.1 The Improvement Plan Risk Register underpins the council's strategic risk relating to the council's Improvement Plan (59a 02/22) and is currently rated as an overall Amber risk. The risk register is reported monthly to Leadership Team and quarterly to Cabinet.



4.5.2 The current risk register is attached as Appendix 5. The main risks are associated with:

- **Resources** – for delivery of key components of the plan including the performance management framework, asset management system implementation and culture change programme. The financial resources required have been identified and were approved by Council in June.
- **Organisational Culture** – If the organisational culture doesn't change, this will limit the improvements that can be made. A theme within the Improvement Plan focuses on organisational culture. It includes plans for a comprehensive engagement programme with staff and members to define a collectively owned culture. We will then embed the conditions for this culture to thrive.
- **Communication** – to ensure everyone is aware of their respective roles and responsibilities. A detailed communication plan will be developed to ensure effective and timely communication with stakeholders
- **Constitutional Changes**– key corporate governance documents are being reviewed and the first set were approved in July with others to follow in October. Once approved, these provide an important foundation for improvement.
- **Performance Management Framework** – to ensure that we can effectively monitor progress and evidence improvement. Each theme includes an outline of how success will be evidenced. Processes for monitoring progress are in place, and processes for capturing and using evidence of improvement will be developed.
- **Historic Issues** – if there is a continued focus on and resource directed towards historic issues this will hinder improvement. The improvement plan contains actions to bring historic issues to a conclusion and embed lessons learnt.
- **Progress Monitoring and Risk Management approach** – if assessment of progress and risk assessment contains optimism-bias, this will prevent an accurate and realistic view of progress. Assurance mechanisms will help manage this risk.

## 4.6 Changes to the Improvement Plan

4.6.1 The Improvement Plan is intended to be a live document updated to take account of progress and relevant changes.

4.6.2 The Improvement Plan report to Council in June 2022 set out that changes (which may include the addition of new workstreams or



objectives, or the amendment of timescales for delivery of actions) will be tracked through programme management mechanisms and that Cabinet will retain oversight of changes through regular formal reporting.

- 4.6.3 Changes are considered by Leadership Team on a quarterly basis. Appendix 6 contains details of all the changes made to the Improvement Plan this quarter and are summarised as follows:
- 3 changes made to address errors in the Improvement Plan
  - 15 changes made to amend delivery timescales
  - 1 change to add a new action
  - 1 change to amend the delivery lead

## 5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The Value for Money Governance Review was undertaken as part of the external auditor's role to provide assurance on the council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. As the report includes statutory recommendations the council has a legal obligation to respond appropriately.
- 5.2 The Directions issued by the Secretary of State are a statutory requirement and the council has a legal obligation to respond appropriately. Failure to do so would likely result in further intervention measures.
- 5.3 Reviewing progress against the Improvement Plan enables senior officers and members have oversight of delivery, and take corrective action, as necessary.
- 5.4 There are no alternative options to consider.

## 6 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	Resources to deliver the Improvement Plan have been allocated from within existing commitments in the majority of cases. When the Improvement Plan was approved by Council in June 2022, one-off funding was approved to enable the delivery of improvements.
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	<p>Where funding is required for longer-term change, this will be incorporated into the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.</p> <p>There are no land or building implications associated with the Improvement Plan as a whole.</p>
<p><b>Legal and Governance:</b></p>	<p>On 22 March 2022, The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities issued Directions under Section 15(5) and (6) of the Local Government Act 1999 (the 1999 Act) in order to ensure that the council can comply with the requirements of Part 1 of the 1999 Act. Failure to comply with these Directions may lead to further intervention measures for the council.</p> <p>The regular reporting development and approval of this Improvement Plan will mean that the council has achieved one of the elements within the Directions within the specified timescales.</p> <p>The delivery of the Improvement Plan and achievement of the desired outcomes will meet the remainder of the Directions.</p> <p>Ultimately, the changes made through the Improvement Plan will enable the council to effectively deliver its strategic priorities and ensure it is delivering value for money for Sandwell.</p>
<p><b>Risk:</b></p>	<p>If the Council fails to take appropriate action to meet the requirements set out in the government Direction, or the Commissioners appointed by the Secretary of State do not have sufficient confidence that appropriate actions are being taken to implement and sustain the required improvements, then the council risks not having appropriate arrangements in place to comply with its best value duty under Part 1 of the 1999 Act. This could lead to further government intervention, increased costs and damage to reputation.</p>



	A risk register is being maintained for the duration of the Improvement Plan which will underpin the council's strategic risk relating to the council's Improvement Plan (59a 02/22). This is reported monthly to Leadership Team, quarterly to Cabinet, and will be regularly reported to Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.
<b>Equality:</b>	The successful delivery of the Improvement Plan will require the development and review of many of the council's policies and procedures. These changes will build in consideration of the impact on equalities throughout the development and will include an Equality Impact Assessment where appropriate.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	The underpinning objective of the Improvement Plan is to ensure the council is able to achieve the strategic priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan. These priorities focus on improving the health and wellbeing of our residents and tackling health inequalities in a multi-faceted way. Therefore, any improvements to the council's governance structures will strengthen the council's ability to deliver services that will improve the health and wellbeing of Sandwell.
<b>Social Value</b>	Within the Improvement Plan, the council is committed to developing its Social Value Policy in conjunction with the refresh of the Procurement & Contract Procedure Rules. Through strengthening our asks of contractors through this Social Value Policy and linking them to the Corporate Plan objectives, the council will be able to maximise its social value return.

## 7. Appendices

1. Improvement Plan Monitoring Tool July 2022
2. Improvement Plan Theme Progress Summary July 2022
3. Statutory Recommendations Reporting July 2022
4. Improvement Plan Governance Diagram
5. Improvement Plan Risk Register July 2022
6. Changes to the Improvement Plan





## 8. Background Papers

### Sandwell Council Governance Improvement Plan

- [Adopted January 2022](#)
- [Quarterly Monitoring April 2022](#)
- [Quarterly Monitoring July 2022](#)

### Sandwell Council Improvement Plan [Report to Council 7 June 2022](#)

#### Appendices:

- [Sandwell Council Improvement Plan](#)
- Grant Thornton Value for Money Governance Review Report December 2021
- CIPFA Financial Management Review Report January 2022
- LGA Corporate Peer Challenge March 2022
- Sandwell Directions under Section 15(5) and (6) of the Local Government Act 1999, 22 March 2022
- Sandwell Directions - Explanatory Memorandum



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*DRAFT Letter to Rt Hon Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up,  
Housing and Communities*



**Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council**  
*Council Leader – Cllr Kerrie Carmichael*

As part of the government's support to our improvement journey, we welcomed Kim Bromley-Derry, Jim Taylor and their staff to Sandwell in March 2022.

To set out a clear direction for sustainable improvement, Council agreed a [single Improvement Plan](#) on 7 June 2022. This plan brought together the recommendations from the LGA's Corporate Peer Challenge, Grant Thornton's Value for Money Governance Review and CIPFA's Financial Management Review, as well as the government's Statutory Directions. We now have a clear programme under six thematic headings that enable us to track our progress and the impact that these changes are having on our organisation.

Now 6 months on from the approval of the Improvement Plan, there is a tangible sense of stability in leadership and member and officer relationships are significantly improving. The improvement has been acknowledged by the LGA in their recent follow-up visit. Scrutiny and Audit Committees are working more effectively and remain committed to continuous improvement.

Key milestones have been reached including the recruitment of a new chief executive, consideration of a move to 4-yearly elections, revisions to the Council's constitution, approval of the scrutiny review and a suite of strategies. Support has also been commissioned and work is underway to assist us in developing a positive organisational culture.

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We now have a new SEND Transport framework in place which has delivered against the concerns in relation to service resilience and value for money which were raised in the Grant Thornton review and also through a Children and Education Scrutiny Review. Lessons learnt from previous procurements were embedded in the approach. The contract is now in full operation (September 2022) and we are operating as business as usual.

The council now has a much better grip on the key issues that were identified previously, and leadership oversight has been greatly improved by establishing a new performance management framework and the mechanisms to effectively manage issues. This includes ensuring we are delivering the priorities in the Corporate Plan to improve outcomes for our residents. Practical steps have been taken to improve communication at all levels of the council and this remains a focus for improvement.

We have been working to improve the quality of our partnership work with external organisations, and tangible improvements have been seen in a range of work areas. For example, the development of a shared outcomes framework and strategy between the Integrated Care System and the Health and Wellbeing Board, as well as NHS investment in key council programmes (such as the Sandwell Language Network) has been enabled by the Director of Public Health acting as a Senior Responsible Officer within the Integrated Care Partnership. Senior Officers and Members are proactively engaged with key regional and sub-regional bodies, the progress against which was acknowledged by the LGA in their recent follow-up visit.

This Summer, during the Commonwealth Games, Sandwell had its proud moment in the international spotlight and rose to the opportunity with aplomb. Host to 11 days of swimming and diving competition, the Sandwell Aquatic Centre had been delivered on time and within budget to a world class standard, despite the significant challenges that building during the pandemic posed. Sandwell was at the centre of positive media attention and the council was commended by those involved in the Games for managing logistics seamlessly around the Aquatic Centre. The profile of the Games and the excitement around it has served to build Sandwell's sense of pride and this is providing a base from which to [celebrate Sandwell's](#) achievements more generally.

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We have programme management and governance arrangements in place to keep us focused on delivering the actions within the Improvement Plan. We value external perspective and assurance and invited Grant Thornton, LGA and CIPFA to follow-up from their reviews undertaken in 2021 and early 2022 to review our progress against their areas of recommendation.

Accompanying this letter are the quarterly progress reports to Cabinet made in September and December 2022. They set out key achievements against the Improvement Plan, highlight any progress issues, and report on risks, resources and changes to the Improvement Plan.

We recognise that there is still work to do in putting the customer front and centre of our business, living our desired organisational culture, embedding our changes so they achieve the desired impact, and building continuous improvement into our normal business. This will be the focus in the next stage of our journey.

Importantly, the Council has the drive and determination to see through and embed the required improvements and has proven that collectively we have the capability and capacity to make effective change at pace.

We are immensely proud of the progress made in this short space of time and there continues to be a clear focus and determination to deliver what needs to improve.

Yours sincerely

*DRAFT*

**Cllr Kerrie Carmichael**  
**Council Leader**

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## Report to Cabinet

7 December 2022

<b>Subject:</b>	Sandwell Local Plan – Approval to carry out consultation on Issues & Options and open a Call for Sites exercise
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Growth Councillor Peter Hughes
<b>Director:</b>	Director Regeneration & Growth Tony McGovern
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Andy Miller – Strategic Planning & Transportation Manager <a href="mailto:andy_miller@sandwell.gov.uk">andy_miller@sandwell.gov.uk</a>  Sam Holder – Senior Planning Officer – Planning Policy Team <a href="mailto:samantha_holder@sandwell.gov.uk">samantha_holder@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

### 1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That Cabinet approves the Sandwell Development Plan Issues & Options document for public consultation for six weeks commencing in February 2023.
- 1.2 That the Director - Regeneration & Growth, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Growth, be authorised to make minor amendments, if required, to the Issues & Options document prior to the start of public consultation.
- 1.3 That Cabinet authorises the opening of a Call for Sites exercise for six weeks commencing in February 2023.




## 2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 It is a statutory requirement of every Local Planning Authority to have an up-to-date Local Plan. Government has previously expressed a desire to see full Local Plan coverage across England by December 2023, or as soon as is practical after that date.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022, the Association of Black Country Authorities formally decided to halt the preparation of the Black Country Plan (BCP); and for the four Black Country authorities to proceed with the preparation of individual Local Plans as soon as is practical.
- 2.3 As a result of this decision, on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022 Cabinet gave approval for the preparation of a single-tier Local Plan covering the whole of Sandwell which, on adoption, will replace the following:
- Black Country Core Strategy (2011)
  - Sandwell Site Allocations & Delivery Development Plan Document (2012)
  - Smethwick Area Action Plan (2008)
  - Tipton Area Action Plan (2008)
  - West Bromwich Area Action Plan (2012)
- 2.4 One of the first stages in the preparation of this new Local Plan is to undertake a public consultation on an Issues & Options document; and also the opening of a Call for Sites Exercise. To meet the timetable published in Sandwell's Local Development Scheme (November 2022), these stages need to commence in early 2023.





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

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people – the Local Plan helps to develop policies that will contribute to the delivery of facilities, services and opportunities for children and young people through the local plan process.</p>
	<p>People live well and age well - Health and wellbeing is a key theme addressed throughout the documents of the Local Plan. It will promote healthy living and create opportunities for active lifestyles and healthy transport choices including walking, cycling and outdoor recreation.</p>
	<p>Strong resilient communities – The Local Plan will build in effective community involvement and will be important to local communities.</p>
	<p>Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods – the Local Plan will play an important part in delivering the spatial and land use aspects of the Council’s vision 2030, particularly as it relates to housing, employment, transport, environment and education goals.</p>
	<p>A strong and inclusive economy - The Local Plan will provide the regeneration framework for future investments and projects.</p>
	<p>A connected and accessible Sandwell - Sustainability is a key theme addressed throughout the documents of the Local Plan. They will help to deliver sustainable, prosperous communities, an integrated transport network and reduce the need to travel by car.</p>



## 4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 In Sandwell the Local Plan consists of;

**Tier 1** *Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS)* prepared jointly with Dudley, Walsall and Wolverhampton. It was adopted in 2011 and runs to 2026

**Tier 2** *Sandwell Site Allocations & Delivery Plan (the SAD)* which was adopted in 2012 and ran till 2021  
*West Bromwich Area Action Plan (WBAAP)* which was adopted in 2012 and runs to 2026

There are two earlier AAPs covering Smethwick and Tipton which, technically, are still relevant. These AAPs, however, were largely absorbed into the SAD on its adoption, and will be superseded fully by the new Sandwell Local Plan (as they would have been by the BCP).

4.2 It is a statutory requirement of every Local Planning Authority to have an up-to-date Local Plan; and to review these plans periodically to keep them up-to-date. The Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) was adopted in 2011 and forms the upper tier of the Local Plan in Sandwell. Once adopted, the BCP was intended to replace the BCCS, along with parts of the Sandwell Site Allocations & Delivery Plan (the SAD). The remainder of the SAD and the AAPs would have been replaced by a further Tier 2 document, which would have been known as the Sandwell Development Plan.

4.3 The decision to halt the BCP, together with the age and status of Sandwell's Tier 2 Plans (and associated documents), means that Sandwell needs to commence a full review of its Local Plan as a matter of urgency. This was approved by Cabinet on 16<sup>th</sup> November.

4.4 On 16<sup>th</sup> November the Cabinet was advised of the process for preparing a Local Plan and the proposed timetable for the preparation of the new Local Plan, to be called the Sandwell Development Plan (or SDP for short). The proposed timetable is also set out in the published Local Development Scheme (LDS), which was also approved at that meeting.



4.5 The process consists of the following stages;

- *Evidence gathering* – underway and ongoing through to Submission stage.
- *Issues & Options Stage* – public consultation planned for February/March 2023.
- *Call for Sites* – planned for February/March 2023.
- *Draft Plan* – public consultation September/October 2023.
- *Submission Plan* – public consultation September/October 2024.
- *Examination In Public (EIP)* – Sometime between December 2024 and Summer 2025 dependant on Planning Inspectorate availability.
- *Adoption* – Late 2025/Early 2026 depending on when the EIP is held.

4.6 This report covers the Issues & Options consultation and Call for Sites exercise intended to take place during February and March 2023.

## Issues & Options

4.7 Effectively the first stage of the Local Plan process, the Issues & Options consultation is a scoping exercise that seeks to involve local people, businesses and other stakeholders in identifying what the new plan should address. It provides an initial opportunity for interested parties, the public and stakeholders to engage in the process, and to help inform the next stage of the plan.

4.8 The Issues & Options document sets out the context in which the plan is being prepared, and outlines the amounts of new development, such as housing and employment land, that is needed. It also seeks the views of the communities and stakeholders of Sandwell on what they think the key land use issues are for the borough.

4.9 It asks a series of questions about key topic areas and seeks feedback on how the following should be addressed;

- Links to wider Council objectives



- Tackling climate change
- Housing need
- Creating healthy communities
- Thriving towns
- Supporting the economy
- Employment needs
- Infrastructure needs
- Protecting and enhancing the environment

4.10 However, it does not detail proposed policies, nor does it seek to allocate development sites. This would be done at the next stage of the plan preparation, following consideration of the responses to the Issues & Options consultation.

4.11 The consultation responses will be reviewed in detail and used to inform the next stage of the plan, particularly in helping to draft policies to address issues and topics identified by local people in relation to future land use and development.

4.12 Preparation of the Local Plan includes the carrying out of an integrated Sustainability Appraisal at each formal stage, and at later stages, an Equality Impact Assessment and Health Impact Assessment. The Local Plan will seek to ensure that sufficient homes, shops, employment land, along with social and recreational facilities, are planned and provided for to meet the needs of Sandwell during the period that the Plan covers (i.e. up to 2040). This will include meeting the needs of children and young people by seeking to provide sufficient facilities for them, as well as having a positive impact on future generations.

4.13 A consultation and engagement programme (attached at Appendix B) has been prepared for this stage of the plan's preparation. It will continue to be developed for later stages of the plan. A consultation database is being established which will enable easier follow-up consultation to take place with all interested parties.



4.14 The key elements of this Issues and Options consultation (which will run for 6 weeks during February and March 2023) include:

- A Press release announcing the start of the consultation period - to raise awareness.
- Promotion through local media.
- Leaflet summarising key information - available at events and on line.
- Use of social media and a branded web page - to help engagement.
- Drop in events across all 6 towns.
- Use of 'pop up' boards at structured events – also available for use at reception in Council Buildings and at stakeholder events when not in use at formal consultation events.

This variety of approaches will help to broaden the consultation catchment to help encourage more responses to the consultation.

4.15 At each event, Officers will be available to answer questions and receive comments. In addition, the consultation material will be displayed in the reception area at the Council House in Oldbury for the full six weeks of the consultation period. Information, leaflets etc. will also be available in libraries and other Council offices, that are open to the public.

### **Call for Sites**

4.16 A key part of this stage of the plan's preparation is the 'Call for Sites'. This is an opportunity for anybody, including land owners and potential developers, to suggest sites to the Council that could either be developed, or used for specific purposes, such as the provision of Biodiversity Net Gain. The Council and other public bodies will also be expected to review their land assets to see if they can make a contribution towards meeting the development need, through the release of sites/assets.

4.17 A previous 'Call for Sites' took place between July and September 2017, and again in August 2020, as part of the BCP preparation. Whilst it is likely that many sites will have been identified previously through that process,



it is appropriate and prudent to provide a further opportunity to ensure that no potential sites are missed.

4.18 The 'Call for Sites' exercise will run concurrently with the 'Issues & Options' consultation. Any sites put forward will be assessed and considered for inclusion in the Draft Plan.

## 5 Alternative Options

5.1 The preparation of a Local Plan is a statutory requirement under planning legislation. The process for preparing a Local Plan is set out in legislation and guidance. As a result, there are no alternative solutions to the preparation of a new local plan for Sandwell, which is a matter of increasing urgency. Options relating to the form and content of the Local Plan were set out in the report to Cabinet on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

## 6 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	The resource implications of preparing the Sandwell Local plan were outlined in the cabinet report on 16 <sup>th</sup> November. This included the costs of preparing and consulting on the Issues & Options document and the Call for Sites. There are no additional resource implications arising from the course of action recommended in this report.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	The process for the preparation of development plans is set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.  In accordance with section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, every local planning authority must prepare planning policy documents and maintain the Local Development Scheme, specifying the documents that will be local development documents; their subject matter and area; and the timetable for their preparation and revision.



	<p>There are three consultation periods that are statutory requirements of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012; Issues and Options consultation (Regulation 18); Preferred Options/Draft Plan consultation (Regulation 18) and Publication/Pre-submission consultation (Regulation 19).</p>
<b>Risk:</b>	<p>The Council's corporate risk management strategy has been complied with, to identify and assess the risks associated with this decision/recommendation. The following should be noted;</p> <p>Failure to have a Local Plan that is based on sound evidence could result in the borough having insufficient land to meet the need for housing, employment and other land uses that are necessary to support the economic and environmental well-being of the area. It could also result in development taking place in inappropriate or harmful locations, leading to an inefficient use of resources, traffic congestion and other harm.</p> <p>Having an up-to-date Local Plan in place is also essential to defend the Council's position at planning appeals. In the event of the Council not having, or working towards, an up-to-date Local Plan, there is a risk of intervention from Central Government which may compromise the ability to take decisions locally.</p>
<b>Equality:</b>	<p>An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out for the Issues and Options document and further iterations will be completed at later stages of the plan's production. This ensures that any impacts likely to affect local communities / groups / individuals can be taken into account when decisions are made on the content and direction of the Local Plan.</p>



<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	<p>Health and wellbeing is a key theme which will be addressed throughout the Local Plan. It will promote healthy living and create opportunities for active lifestyles and healthy transport choices including walking, cycling and outdoor recreation.</p> <p>Later stages of the plan will be accompanied by a Health Impact Assessment.</p>
<b>Social Value</b>	<p>The Local Plan will play an important part in delivering the spatial and land use aspects of the Council’s vision 2030, particularly as it relates to housing, employment, transport, environment and education goals.</p>

## 7. Appendices

- Appendix A - Draft Sandwell Development Plan Issues & Options Document.
- Appendix B - Draft Consultation & Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

## 8. Background Papers

- The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- The Localism Act 2011
- The National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)
- Report to Cabinet – 16:11:22
- Sandwell Local Development Scheme (November 2022)





# **Sandwell Development Plan**

## **Issues and Options Review**

DRAFT - WORKING DOCUMENT

**Public Consultation**

**February – March 2022**

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DRAFT - WORKING DOCUMENT

## Sandwell Local Plan Review

Sandwell Council is starting the process of reviewing its current local plan. This currently consists of the Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) (adopted 2011), the Sandwell Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document (SAD) (adopted 2012) and the West Bromwich Area Action Plan (WBAAP) (adopted 2012).

The Government requires all local councils to produce a long-term plan that sets out a vision for their area. It should identify where and how development should take place in the future. This document is known as a local plan.

### What is a Local Plan?

A Local Plan shows how an area will develop in the future and provides policies that will guide decisions on whether planning applications are granted. Sandwell's new local plan (the Sandwell Development Plan or SDP) is intended to support high-quality development in the right locations to meet future needs whilst also protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment for residents, businesses and visitors.

A local plan therefore sets out all the planning policies and proposals for an area. It addresses needs and opportunities in relation to housing and the economy, whilst ensuring that we have sufficient community facilities and infrastructure to support a growing population. It also contains policies to safeguard the environment, mitigate and adapt to climate change, and achieve well-designed neighbourhoods.

### Background to Review

The documents that make up the current Sandwell Local Plan, adopted in 2011 - 12, cover the period 2006 - 2026. The new Local Plan must cover a minimum period of 15 years following adoption and should identify the scale of development and the key locations to meet this need during this plan period. The Council could decide to plan for a longer time frame if it considers it appropriate to do so. The timetable for production of the Local Plan sets out likely adoption of a new plan by 2025, and so based on this, the Local Plan will need to run until at least 2040.

### The Review Process

The first part of this review process is to involve local people, businesses and other stakeholders in identifying what the new local plan should address, in a scoping exercise known as the **Issues and Options Review**. This is also known as the Issues and Options stage. Here, you tell us how you would want us to tackle the important land use and related matters that will affect the future of our borough. This doesn't just mean considering housing issues, although the scale and location of future growth are important considerations. It also involves thinking about issues around the environment, jobs, centres, transport and infrastructure. Your answers will be considered alongside a detailed technical evidence base that we will put together and use to carry out further analysis of the main issues.

Together, this evidence-gathering and analysis will help to create a sound base for the new Sandwell Development Plan.

We want you and other interested stakeholders to get involved in providing comments and information so that the SDP can benefit from your local knowledge and lived experience of Sandwell.

In this document, we introduce various land use and planning-related issues that we think may be important in Sandwell. We would like to hear your views on these matters and have posed some questions along the way to help focus the discussion. Your responses to those questions will help us recognise what matters to local people.

The process of producing a local plan is summarised below.

### Local Plan preparation

#### 1. Gather evidence

The council conducts a range of detailed studies and considers everything a Local Plan needs, like how many new homes and jobs are needed and what supporting infrastructure is required.

## 2. Issues and options stage

The council considers the ways future development needs could be met and asks the public and other stakeholders to comment on these key issues as well

## 3. Draft Plan Consultation (Regulation 18)

The council reviews comments made following the Issues and Options stage and after careful consideration, publishes a draft Local Plan for public consideration and comment reflecting those comments where applicable.

## 4. Submission Plan Consultation (Regulation 19)

Comments made on the draft plan are then used to amend it further and prepare a revised version. The revised draft Local Plan is published for representations to be submitted on its 'soundness'.

## 5. Examination in public

The Secretary of State appoints an Independent Planning Inspector to examine the draft Local Plan in detail. Public hearing sessions are held during this stage.

## 6. Adopt the Local Plan

The Planning Inspector's final report recommends whether the council can adopt the plan. Once adopted, the Local Plan will be used to make decisions on all planning applications.

### What is the purpose of this document?

This Issues and Options document is the first consultation stage in the local plan process. It provides an opportunity for you to get involved in developing our future local plan and to offer your thoughts and comments on how you think we should address some of the key issues that our borough faces.

### What do we want your comments on?

This document identifies some of the borough's key issues. It also starts to look at various ways that the new local plan might help to address them.

The issues and options are arranged into topic area. You are welcome to comment on every issue, or alternatively, you can just focus on the ones that specifically interest you.

If there are any other issues around land use and development you think the new plan should include that we haven't covered, this is also your opportunity to bring these to our attention.

### How you can submit your comments

Comments must be made in writing, electronically or by hand. You can submit your comments to us in several ways. Electronic responses are preferred but there is the opportunity for you to write to us if you prefer:

- **Online**  
Complete the form online using the link on our website.
- **By Email**  
Download and complete the online version of the form and return it by email to us at [LDF.Planning@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:LDF.Planning@sandwell.gov.uk)
- **In writing**  
A small number of hard copies of the form will be made available at libraries, together with a copy of the document. Responses should be sent to:

The Planning Policy Team,  
Sandwell Council,  
PO Box 2374,  
OLDBURY  
B69 3DE

The closing date for responses is **5pm on xxxxxx**. Any responses that are received after this time may not be considered.

#### What happens next?

This issues and options document is part of the local plan process. Your feedback will be collated and analysed to inform the next stage of the process, where Sandwell's new local plan will begin to take shape. There will be further opportunities for you to get involved at each stage and to comment on new policies and proposals as they emerge.

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## The Timeline for the Local Plan Review

The timescale for the production and eventual adoption of the new Sandwell Plan is set out below:

Date	Action
Feb - March 2023	Six-week Issues and Options consultation and Call for Sites.
March – Aug 2023	Evidence refresh and Draft Plan preparation.
Oct - Dec 2023	Six-week Draft Plan consultation.
Jan – June 2024	Consideration of representations and Submission Plan preparation.
Sep – Oct 2024	Six-week Submission Plan consultation.
Nov 2024	Submit the Plan and representations to the Secretary of State.
Dec 2024 – Summer 2025	Window for holding the Examination in Public followed by Inspector's report
Late 2025 - early 2026	Adoption at Full Council

This is a tight timetable but will ensure the review of the Local Plan is delivered as soon as possible. The review process will inevitably be subject to outside forces, including any new national planning legislation that may be introduced, political activity at either a local or national level and other unforeseen circumstances. However, we will do our best to ensure the SDP meets this schedule.

### The National Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) requires local councils to deliver sustainable development, which is summarised as development meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This requires balancing economic, social and environmental objectives, which should be delivered in complementary ways.

National policy also requires local planning authorities to prepare design guides or codes that reflect local character and design preferences, to set out expectations for development at an early stage. Design guides and codes can vary in their geographic coverage and their level of detail.

The Local Plan must consider the guidance set out by national government in the NPPF and other relevant policies and proposals. This means Sandwell's new local plan is required to effectively reflect these external requirements unless there is sufficient local evidence to demonstrate a different approach is justified.

### The Sub-Regional Context

Prior to the publication of this Issues and Options document, Sandwell was closely involved in the production of a replacement for the original Black Country Core Strategy, in the form of the Black Country Plan, alongside the other three Black Country councils. Work on the production of the joint BCP officially ceased in October 2022.

Given the work that had already been undertaken on the plan, both in terms of evidence gathering and policy writing, and the fact that it had been through significant public consultation, we have decided that there is merit in retaining and adapting some of the policies for our new plan in Sandwell. The other Black Country councils are likely to be doing the same; including similar or shared policies on certain issues such as pollution, transport, nature networks and other more strategic aspects of land use will make it much easier to ensure those matters are dealt with in a more effective way across boundaries.



Sandwell's local plan will therefore include policies previously seen in the BCP and consulted upon and will adapt those policies to make them more specific to our borough.

A list of the former BCP policies (several of which will be reused in the SDP) is included at the end of this document (Appendix A).

The BCP policies will be incorporated into the draft local plan when it is produced for further public consultation. The SDP will also rely on some of the evidence gathered for it, where this remains relevant and up-to-date, and will respond to some of the issues raised by the public and others during the public consultation on the draft BCP (held during October – November 2021).

**NOTE:** *As the issues and options for the BCP policies have already been explored during various stages of public consultation, the policies they resulted in will not be included in this current consultation. However, the BCP policies that are subsequently reused in the draft SDP will be subject to further public consultation at later stages of this plan's preparation.*

*This Issues and Options document is intended to address: -*

- *matters that the BCP policies did not pick up in detail relating to local issues;*
- *matters where Sandwell Council feels more specific consideration is needed in a Sandwell context; and*
- *to get the views of local communities / stakeholders on issues of local importance.*

## The Local Context

The Sandwell Development Plan, once it is adopted, will be the spatial expression of the Council Plan and other Sandwell Council strategies – it will help to deliver the Council's priorities across a range of policy areas through supporting sustainable development and appropriate land use.

Every local plan is required by current legislation to identify strategic priorities for the use of land in its area. This is often achieved in part through setting out a clear Vision describing what the authority wants to accomplish through its approach to land use and development and how and where it sees the borough progressing if those priorities are met.

The SDP's Vision will be guided by, and echo the priorities identified in, the Council Plan and other adopted Council strategies. This will ensure that land use decisions can reflect and support the delivery of council services and functions across the whole borough and in different areas of impact.

The Council will use the new plan policies, and additional guidance based on those policies, to assess planning applications and guide its decisions on:

- the type of development needed in the borough;
- the standards that new development should meet;
- what it should look like – its design and appearance;
- what services and infrastructure are needed, and where;
- how residents will benefit from growth and development.

## Links with the Corporate Plan

The main purpose of Sandwell Council's Corporate Plan 2021 - 2025<sup>1</sup> is to support the delivery of a healthier, more successful future for the people of Sandwell. This will involve working closely with residents, businesses and other stakeholders to deliver improved opportunities in economic, social and environmental circumstances and protect and enhance people's life chances across the borough.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://intranet.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/13179/corporate\\_plan\\_2021-2025](https://intranet.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/13179/corporate_plan_2021-2025)

The council's **Sandwell Vision 2030**<sup>2</sup> is as follows:

*It's where we call home and where we're proud to belong - where we choose to bring up our families, where we feel safe and cared for, enjoying good health, rewarding work, feeling connected and valued in our neighbourhoods and communities, confident in the future, and benefiting fully from a revitalised West Midlands.*

The Sandwell Vision 2030 also sets out ten ambitions for a successful Sandwell and what it will look like, all of which will have direct or indirect relevance to the aims of the new SDP. These are included in the Vision 2030 document, available to view on our website, but they are briefly set out below together with an explanation of the role the SDP will play in meeting them.

<b>Ambition 1</b>
<b>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.</b>
SDP relevance: promoting and supporting sustainable development that helps to meet local need / demand; provides for sufficient services and facilities in locations accessible to all in Sandwell's communities; delivers a healthy supply of land for economic growth and employment; deliver strong policy support to combatting climate change adaptation and mitigation; protect and enhance the natural environment, nature conservation and open spaces; deliver opportunities for biodiversity net gain, landscaping and tree planting.
<b>Ambition 2</b>
<b>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.</b>
SDP relevance: protecting, enhancing and making accessible land for sport, leisure and active and passive recreation; providing clear policy support for development aimed to deliver health and welfare infrastructure;
<b>Ambition 3</b>
<b>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</b>
SDP relevance: delivering a healthy supply of land for economic growth and employment
<b>Ambition 4</b>
<b>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.</b>
SDP relevance: provides land and sites for sufficient services and facilities in locations accessible to all in Sandwell's communities including schools, colleges and opportunities for higher education
<b>Ambition 5</b>
<b>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.</b>
SDP relevance: promotes the development and improvement of attractive, safe and accessible public realm, support services and community infrastructure as part of new development and project delivery
<b>Ambition 6</b>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/Vision2030>

<b>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.</b>
SDP relevance: deliver a co-ordinated and strategic travel and transport network through Sandwell that links communities to opportunities both within and beyond its boundaries supported by appropriate planning policies and land use designations
<b>Ambition 7</b>
<b>We now have many new homes to meet a full range of housing needs in attractive neighbourhoods and close to key transport routes.</b>
SDP relevance: delivering a healthy supply of land for the delivery of zero and low carbon housing across the borough and supporting the creation of additional affordable and sustainable communities
<b>Ambition 8</b>
<b>Our distinctive towns and neighbourhoods are successful centres of community life, leisure and entertainment where people increasingly choose to bring up their families.</b>
SDP relevance: promoting and supporting sustainable development that helps to meet local need / demand; provides for sufficient services and facilities in locations accessible to all in Sandwell's communities;
<b>Ambition 9</b>
<b>Sandwell has become a location of choice for industries of the future where the local economy and high performing companies continue to grow.</b>
SDP relevance: delivering a healthy supply of land for economic growth and employment; supporting the delivery of sufficient high quality physical / digital infrastructure; deliver a co-ordinated and strategic travel and transport network through Sandwell; provides land and sites for sufficient educational services and facilities in locations accessible to all
<b>Ambition 10</b>
<b>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.</b>
SDP relevance: up-to-date local plan backed by sound evidence and robust policies that enable planning permissions to be granted swiftly and in close co-operation with applicants, developers and local communities.

## Vision for the SDP

The corporate Vision above sets out the overarching intention of Sandwell Council to deliver safe, healthy and sustainable growth and support communities across the borough. In terms of its land use aspirations, the SDP could also develop its own vision to help meet these ambitions and objectives, and some suggested wording is set out below:

*In 2040, Sandwell is a thriving, growing and active Borough, leading the urban renaissance of the West Midlands conurbation.*

*Sandwell is at the forefront of tackling climate change, in its role as a hub for climate adaptation and mitigation technologies and industries. Its new buildings are clean and green in their design, materials and operations, its old buildings are adapted to deliver low and*

*zero carbon outputs. It sets the standard in both public and private sectors for embedding climate change awareness and sensitivity in all its actions, outcomes and decisions.*

*Notwithstanding its urban character, Sandwell's residents enjoy access to country and town parks, open spaces, green networks and corridors and increasing numbers of pocket parks, landscaping schemes and tree cover, as part of their everyday activities and leisure time. Sandwell's natural environment is valued for its own sake as well as operating as part of its drive towards creating an attractive and healthy background for people living, working, learning in and enjoying the borough.*

*Sandwell continues to deliver sustained and sustainable economic growth and investment opportunities from its highly accessible location at the heart of the country. It provides high-quality goods and services from its powerful industrial base and levels of employment, wages and economic activity are high and rising.*

*Sandwell's residents enjoy longer and healthier lives than in previous decades, thanks to the increase in open spaces, the provision of services and facilities designed to promote active recreation and leisure, the improvement of and increased accessibility to healthcare infrastructure and the promotion of healthy lifestyle choices. They have access to well-performing schools, higher and further education provision at all levels and to continued opportunities for skills development and training.*

*There is a wide range of housing available to Sandwell residents, designed to support green living and suitable for adaptation to suit all sections of the community. Affordable, social and council houses are available to those who need them. New developments are located within attractively landscaped areas, with access to district and low-cost energy and heating projects, sustainable drainage designed to improve the local environment as well as provide reliable protection against flooding and run-off and all necessary services and facilities within walking distance or a short bus ride away.*

*Sandwell's town centres thrive by day and by night, with an expanded range of retail, leisure and socialising opportunities as well as acting as the foci for new residential developments, community activities and social enterprises.*

## Objectives

The following set of objectives has been drafted for the new Local Plan for public consultation. These are intended to help the achievement of the proposed vision for Sandwell and the delivery of sustainable growth. The objectives will form the framework for the SDP, and the policies and proposals of the Local Plan should all contribute to achieving them in a balanced way. This consultation seeks views on these suggested objectives at this stage – they are not fixed / agreed but are intended at this stage to prompt discussion and can be changed.

**Objective 1** - Ensure new development takes a proactive approach to climate change mitigation, adaptation and carbon reduction, and that development is resilient to climate change

**Objective 2** - Deliver sustainable development in locations where people can access jobs and services, delivering wider positive social and economic outcomes and protecting and enhancing local built and natural environments

**Objective 3** - Address Sandwell's identified and wide-ranging housing needs by supporting the provision of high-quality new homes that are capable of being adapted to meet the future needs of occupiers, provide sufficient internal and external space and promote and support climate change

adaptation and mitigation through good design and in the materials and techniques used for their construction.

**Objective 4** - Support regeneration, business investment and job creation to maintain and grow a prosperous and resilient local and regional economy in ways that consider environmental and climate change factors

**Objective 5** - Support Sandwell's towns and local centres as places for economic, residential and cultural activity with good access to services in ways that protect their heritage, character and identity

**Objective 6** - Ensure communities in Sandwell are safe and resilient and social cohesion is promoted and enhanced

**Objective 7** - Require new development to deliver a high standard of design reflecting local character and distinctiveness and that creates greener and safer places that people feel proud to live and work in.

**Objective 8** - Ensure new development and open spaces support health and wellbeing for all, reduce health inequalities and encourage active and healthy lifestyles

**Objective 9** - Protect and improve Sandwell's environment, including its natural landscapes, green infrastructure and biodiversity, as well as its rich historic built environment

**Objective 10** - Encourage the effective and prudent use of previously developed land and natural resources, including the efficient use of land and buildings and the use of sustainable and climate-aware construction techniques within new developments, as well as providing for waste management and disposal

**Objective 11** - Ensure development is supported by essential infrastructure and services and promotes safe movement and more sustainable modes of travel through promoting greener travel networks for walking, cycling and public transport

#### Questions – Vision and Objectives

<b>What do you think are the main issues that the new SDP should address in Sandwell?</b>
<b>Please indicate which option you think should be used as the basis for preparing the Local Plan:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Option A: The Sandwell Vision 2030 should be used as the basis of preparing the Local Plan, bearing in mind that it will be for the Local Plan to establish a sustainable strategy for the scale and location for future growth and development.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Option B: Create a new vision specifically for the Local Plan and the plan period it will cover along the lines of the suggested wording included above.</b></li> </ul>
<b>If you think the SDP should include a new Vision, do you think the Vision should cover any other issues?</b>
<b>Once you have had a look at the issues raised in this document, please let us know your thoughts on the following overall matters:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Are the topic areas and issues being covered the rights ones?</b></li> <li>○ <b>Is there anything else we should be covering?</b></li> <li>○ <b>Do you have any thoughts on the evidence base needed to support the Local Plan Review?</b></li> </ul>

<p><b>Should the Sandwell Development Plan:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>promote higher levels of development to support economic growth; or</b></li> <li>○ <b>plan for the minimum necessary to meet the needs of our population?</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Do you think the SDP should be valid until 2040 or should it run for longer?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>If you think the Plan should run for longer, what would be your reason for this?</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>What are your thoughts on the draft objectives?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Do you think they are appropriate?</b></li> <li>○ <b>Are there any other objectives we should be including?</b></li> <li>○ <b>Do you disagree with them - if so, can you explain which ones and why?</b></li> </ul>

The intention is to include certain draft policies from the Black Country Plan in the SDP, as described in the section headed “Sub-regional Context” above. This will enable us to take advantage of detailed evidence and policy work that has already been carried out, and to allow for some topics to be addressed similarly to the other Black Country councils, who will also be reusing some of the BCP policies.

#### Questions – Strategic Policies

<p><b>Do you agree with the Council’s decision to incorporate some of the former BCP policies<sup>3</sup> into the SDP, to benefit from the work already done on them and to ensure that the four Black Country councils can continue to address certain wider than local matters in a joined-up manner?</b></p> <p><b>If so: -</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Are there any of the BCP policies listed in the appendix that you think the Council should definitely include?</b></li> <li>○ <b>Are there any of the BCP policies in the appendix that you think the Council does not need to include?</b></li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Summarised in Appendix A to this document

## Tackling Climate Change

The issue of climate change is at the forefront of international, national and local environmental, ecological and political thinking. In March 2020 Sandwell Council declared a Climate Emergency. Council Members agreed that greenhouse gas emissions needed to be reduced to a level compatible with keeping global warming below 1.5C above pre-industrial levels. To achieve that, the Council committed to becoming carbon neutral in its own activities by 2030 and seeing Sandwell become a carbon neutral borough by 2041. The emerging SDP will contain a suite of new policies designed to help Sandwell mitigate and adapt to the changing climate at a strategic level, in line with the Council's adopted Climate Change Strategy<sup>4</sup>.

One of the main ways of combatting climate change is through promoting decarbonisation. Decarbonisation is the term used to describe the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions by utilising low and renewable sources (solar, wind etc.), thereby achieving a lower output of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. The aim of decarbonising is to achieve something called 'Net Zero'. Net zero means that any carbon emissions created are balanced by taking the same amount out of the atmosphere. We will reach net zero when the amount of carbon emissions we add is no more than the amount taken away. This in turn helps to control global warming by ensuring that no extra carbon is released overall.

Net Zero will tolerate some emissions however, providing they are balanced out elsewhere. This allows for some industries to continue to operate where it would be difficult for them to reach zero emissions, such as aviation, with their emissions being offset by other sectors where it is easier to reduce emissions or find alternatives for energy consumption. In addition, carbon offset can be helped by industrial or natural processes that consume carbon, such as planting trees for example.

The Government's ambitious *Net Zero Strategy: Building Back Greener* (October 2021) proposes a decarbonised economy by 2050 and identifies various approaches and policies to achieve this

*"... this strategy sets out our plans for reducing emissions from each sector of our economy, while hoovering up any remaining emissions with greenhouse gas removals – either natural, like trees, or technological, using carbon capture."*

Building Back Greener Executive Summary (October 2021)<sup>5</sup>

The government's intentions for industry set out in the document include decarbonising it in line with net zero goals whilst simultaneously transforming industrial heartlands by attracting inward investment, future-proofing businesses, and securing high-wage, high-skill jobs. To achieve this will involve supporting industry to switch to cleaner fuels; helping it improve resource and energy efficiency; and through fair carbon pricing to drive the deep decarbonisation of industry.

Sandwell, with its wealth of experience in developing manufacturing and engineering solutions, is well-placed to deliver green and carbon reduction-supporting technologies that will help to meet these requirements and targets, which in turn will help revitalise local markets and employment activity.

Decarbonising the economy by deploying renewable energy and strengthening the grid, together with measures to protect communities and infrastructure from flood risk, also have the potential to impact on the landscape. Continued urban development, new or upgraded transport infrastructure, plans for woodland expansion and potential changes in the way open land is managed will all contribute.

Understanding what makes landscapes resilient is becoming increasingly important. Droughts, rising temperatures, floods and the spread of pests and diseases are already evident, affecting landscapes and species across the country.

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/31151/climate\\_change\\_strategy.pdf](https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/31151/climate_change_strategy.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1033990/net-zero-strategy-beis.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1033990/net-zero-strategy-beis.pdf)

The SDP can help to achieve this by making sure its policies and proposals reflect local ambitions and opportunities for growth while delivering the level of carbon and energy savings the government is seeking. To facilitate this, Sandwell Council needs to hear from companies, businesses, educational providers and local people on how they see the future economy and their surroundings developing to fulfil this new role.

Some of the possible issues to be considered are set out below – this list is not meant to be complete and other issues relating to climate change, carbon capture and adaptation can be included where they could be delivered through a land use policy in the SDP.

These policies will not replace nor repeat anything in national planning guidance or legislation. The purpose is to identify if necessary those issues that are of more significance in Sandwell and to provide further guidance through local policies as required.

The Draft Black Country Plan contained several policies relating to climate change and a reduction in carbon and we intend to adapt and reuse those policies of relevance to Sandwell. The policies cover the following areas:

- Increasing efficiency and resilience
- Energy Infrastructure
- Managing Heat Risk
- Air Quality
- Flood Risk
- Sustainable drainage and surface water management (SuDS)
- Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and BREEAM Standards

Other policies in the BCP also address issues around greener transport infrastructure, such as electric charging points, and the need to support and promote active travel initiatives, and these areas will also be reflected and addressed in the Sandwell local plan as necessary.

#### Questions – Climate Change

**How should we address the climate crisis in the Local Plan Review – what should be our priority or priorities? The following are examples only and you are invited to identify as many other ways as you feel are necessary:**

- **Reducing the need to travel through promoting accessibility**
- **Protecting open space**
- **Planting more trees**
- **Promoting climate change-focussed ways of building homes and businesses**
- **Requiring development to be carbon-neutral or low carbon**
- **Any other priorities**

**How else can new development reduce greenhouse gas emissions and respond to the climate crisis?**

**Should the new plan leave the issue of carbon reduction in new buildings to other relevant legislation rather than making its own provision – i.e., should the plan not include policies on carbon reduction but instead wait for emerging Building Regulations legislation to become law?**



**How would you feel about building extensions and alterations to your property that were more climate-change adapted and low carbon? For example;**

- **choosing a design that maintained a more constant indoor temperature during extremes of both heat and cold;**
- **only using certain building materials that were lower in carbon; or**
- **planting trees and other vegetation to shade parts of your property that would otherwise get too hot?**

**Heat networks** (sometimes referred to as district heating) supply heat from a central source to consumers, via a network of pipes (usually underground) carrying hot water or steam. They can cover a large area or be more locally, supplying a development site or small cluster of buildings. Importantly, a heat network removes the need for individual boilers or electric heaters in every building. Ideally, the heat they use should be derived from a low carbon source.

As part of its own response to reducing carbon and cutting heating bills for residents, Sandwell Council is currently looking at detailed project development work for a potential heat network, located in West Bromwich with a possible extension to the Cape Hill area of Smethwick.

#### Questions - Heat Networks

**Do you agree that Sandwell Council should support the development and delivery of heat networks as part of its own development proposals to meet Net Zero?**

**Do you think the Council should require private sector and other developers to make provision for heat networks?**

**What other sources of renewable energy should the Council be looking at supporting in its local plan policies – e.g. solar panels over car parks?**

**Resilient Landscapes** - some landscapes tend to be more able to retain their key characteristics and qualities than others – they are more resilient to change. Such landscapes can absorb a certain amount of change without losing what makes them distinctive and special. Less resilient landscapes can suffer disproportionately when changes occur, sometimes setting off a cycle of decline and ultimately causing a loss of character.

Landscapes that are resilient often include areas where the natural layout or topography of the landscape helps make it visible (so people value it), where habitats are managed sympathetically, where there is variety in terms of tree species, cropping patterns, field boundaries and wider landscape features, and where land uses and activities work with nature, not against it.

Understanding a landscape's resilience can help manage the changes impacting upon it. It can also help maintain the character and diversity that are important to national and local identities and a sense of place.

## Questions - Resilient Landscapes

<b>How should we ensure new development is able to withstand climate change and provide a comfortable living and working environment for people?</b>
<b>What should be our priorities when considering new design and landscaping to help us cope with climate change?</b>
<b>Apart from not building on or near them, how should we protect the open spaces, parks, countryside and ecology of Sandwell?</b>

**Sustainable drainage systems** (SuDS) are a natural approach to managing drainage in and around properties and other developments. They work by slowing and holding back the excess surface water that runs off from a site and allowing natural processes to break down pollutants. SuDs include

- green roofs;
- permeable surfaces for footpaths and roads;
- infiltration trenches, filter drains and filter strips;
- swales (shallow drainage channels); and
- detention basins, purpose-built ponds and wetlands.

Given the highly built-up nature of Sandwell, and its topography, flooding is evident in several areas following heavy rain. The new local plan needs to address in more detail suitable means of controlling run-off. One option to deal with this might be to include a policy in the SDP on SuDS, which sets proposed run-off rates for development that achieve at a minimum a reduction equivalent to the current climate change ratio. The policy could also require land to be set aside on development sites to manage flooding and drainage and planted up to assist in absorbing excess water.

## Questions – Sustainable Drainage

<b>How should the Local Plan Review best manage flood risk whilst still achieving the growth that is needed to make Sandwell successful?</b>
<b>Do you think the SDP needs a policy to identify an acceptable rate of run-off for new developments, or is this covered in sufficient detail in the Black Country Local Standards for SuDS (BCP evidence base<sup>6</sup>)?</b>
<b>Do you think the SDP should include details of the type of SuDS that the Council would prefer to see delivered, or should developers be able to propose their own schemes?</b>

<sup>6</sup> [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, section 9](#)

## Development Strategy and Housing Provision

Sandwell is a place of contrasts – a highly urbanised landscape with a rich history of heavy industry containing significant areas of open space, parks and canals, historic buildings and places and a growing number of young and ambitious communities. The aim of the SDP is to provide sufficient land and infrastructure to support the continued growth and regeneration of the borough's economy while at the same time protecting its valuable and sensitive open spaces, natural and historic landscapes and distinctive communities.

The borough is multi-centric, with seven main town centres and several smaller local centres serving the population. The development strategy will need to act as a framework within which each of these centres and their associated communities will sit, allowing development to spread around Sandwell into the locations best suited for it.

The SDP will have to deal with allocating **housing** sites across the borough and identifying sufficient housing sites to provide new houses to meet current and future demand. It will also need to address how sites that come forward during the lifetime of the plan can be dealt with, in particular where they result from the loss of employment land.

There is still, despite the number of housing sites that have been identified and allocated, a shortfall in the numbers of houses that need to be built across the Black Country to meet current needs. Sandwell itself has a housing need of approximately 30,300 new dwellings between 2021 and 2041 that will not all be delivered by the allocations that will be included in the plan, with an overall supply figure of around 9,492<sup>7</sup>. There will be several options for dealing with this, but the main issue remains the lack of available land suitable for housing.

We have a finite supply of land and it may be that we cannot meet all our housing need within Sandwell itself. We can ask adjacent councils if they can let us effectively count some of their available housing towards our need in Sandwell, but many other local councils are in a similar position to us in not having sufficient land to meet their own development needs.

Another possible option is to increase the numbers of houses proposed for new housing sites – we can require developer to build to a higher density in areas where the local infrastructure will support this. For example, housing sites in town centres or close to good public transport links can usually accommodate higher housing numbers than in the suburbs or less-developed areas. The draft BCP suggested densities of 100+ dwellings per hectare on sites in strategic or main town centres, 45+ dwellings per hectare where sites were highly accessible (e.g. within a ten-minute walk to a GP surgery, local shops etc.) and 40+ dwellings per hectare for other locations.

### Questions – Future Development in Sandwell

<b>What do you think are the main challenges we face in planning for Sandwell between now and 2040?</b>
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<b>What are your views on the overall amount of new housing and employment that is needed in Sandwell?</b>
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<b>What <u>types</u> of homes are needed in Sandwell?</b>
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**Examples will include, but not be limited to:**

- Detached family housing**

<sup>7</sup> The need figure will change depending on the affordability ratio and the supply is as at 2021.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Bungalows</b></li> <li>○ <b>Smaller houses such as maisonettes or terraced housing</b></li> <li>○ <b>Higher density development such as flats and town houses</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>What sort of development (new homes, workplaces, shops, leisure facilities etc) do you think would help make Sandwell a <u>better</u> place to live by 2040?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Where do you think it should be built?</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Do you think there are any sorts of development that would make Sandwell a <u>worse</u> place to live by 2040?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>What harm do you think that sort of development might do to Sandwell?</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Do you think we should be asking for higher density developments in centres and on sites near public transport hubs / links?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>If so, do you think we should use the densities identified in the draft BCP (Policy HOU2)?</b></li> <li>○ <b>Should we ask for higher densities than this?</b></li> <li>○ <b>Should we ask for lower densities than this?</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Tell us about some developments or buildings that you know and <u>like</u>.</b> <b>Why do you like them?</b></p>
<p><b>Tell us about some developments or buildings that you know and <u>don't like</u>.</b> <b>Why don't you like them? How might they have been done better?</b></p>
<p><b>Which of the following issues are most important to you?</b> <b>Please identify your priorities in order if you can, as this will help us address what is most important to Sandwell's residents and occupiers.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Building affordable housing.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Increasing the number of well-paid jobs in the area.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Protecting and improving green spaces and wildlife habitats.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Attracting investment and new businesses to the area.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and tackling the climate crisis.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Making it easier to travel by bus, train, walking and cycling.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Providing houses of a good size, with gardens and associated open spaces.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Developing a well-designed and attractive built environment, with new buildings and areas that make a positive contribution to their surroundings.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Maintaining a safe and welcoming environment that minimises the likelihood of crime / antisocial behaviour taking place.</b></li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Promoting pleasant, clean and lively town centres that people want to visit and use.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Should there be a greater emphasis on allocating land for mixed-use development (where housing, employment / business development, community facilities and other buildings all sit next to each other) rather than single end uses, such as just housing or just employment?</b></p>
<p><b>Do you have any other comments to make about what you think we should consider as we review the Sandwell Development Plan?</b></p>

Additional small housing sites will become available after the Plan has been adopted and provision to deal with them will need to be made in the new plan. These developments, known as **housing windfall** sites, are expected to provide approximately 1920 homes across Sandwell between 2021 and 2041 and as a result the SDP will have a role in both allocating those sites that are known about when the SDP is being prepared and in dealing with similar sites that are not currently allocated but come forward subsequently.

Where sites are identified during the lifetime of the SDP, they will be dealt with like other planning applications, with reference to the appropriate strategic and local policies on sustainability, design, location, infrastructure and environment. In Sandwell, windfall sites are likely to arise where sites currently in employment use are vacated. In some cases, these sites will be retained for employment uses as they will be of strategic importance to the local economy. In other cases, the council will need to decide whether sites should remain in employment use or be redeveloped for housing or other uses.

#### Questions – Housing Windfall Sites

<p><b>We think that a local windfall policy is needed to ensure that any proposals for small residential development on sites that are not allocated are in the right place and do not have adverse impacts on current and neighbouring uses.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Do you agree?</b></li> <li>○ <b>If so, what should it contain?</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Are there any specific local considerations that we should include when we are making decisions on windfall sites? For example,</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>should development be allowed on current employment land?</b></li> </ul>

Sandwell is a highly **sustainable location** in many ways, given its history of industry and employment existing alongside residential areas and its good transport and road links. The SDP will seek to maintain those close relationships and networks by encouraging development to make the most of its surroundings and communities, and to provide sufficient opportunities for new and improved infrastructure such as schools, health and emergency services and open spaces.

#### Questions – Sustainable Locations

<p><b>Should most new development</b></p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>be concentrated in locations with the best levels of sustainable access to jobs, transport, services and facilities?</b></li> <li>○ <b>be spread out between different towns and centres, to help support new growth and investment in those locations currently without a good supply of jobs, transport, services and facilities?</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Are there any locations in Sandwell you think we should look at in particular to find land for new development?</b></p>
<p><b>What can the SDP do to support the sustainability of local communities?</b></p>
<p><b>How can the SDP help to increase the number of journeys made on foot, bicycle and public transport by people who want to access services and facilities?</b></p>

**Masterplans** are generally used to help guide development proposals for large or complex sites by showing how new development can be included in local areas. The council has produced masterplans for West Bromwich<sup>8</sup> and the Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor<sup>9</sup> that will be used to support the ongoing regeneration of the areas, and similar documents can be produced where they would help deliver high quality and comprehensive development.

The main issue for the SDP is whether there is a need for a policy about the production of masterplans and to set out the circumstances under which one would be required.

#### Questions - Masterplanning

<p><b>What sort of development do you think would benefit from having a masterplan? e.g.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>housing developments over a certain number of dwellings;</b></li> <li>○ <b>employment development over a certain area of floorspace / size of site;</b></li> <li>○ <b>mixed use development (housing and other uses such as employment on the same site);</b></li> <li>○ <b>regeneration schemes in centres?</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Please identify what sort of schemes you think would benefit or whether you think they should all have masterplans.</b></p>
<p><b>Should there be a type / scale / size of proposal that would automatically require a masterplan to be produced?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>If so, what would that be?</b></li> </ul>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/32496/west\\_bromwich\\_masterplan](https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/32496/west_bromwich_masterplan)

<sup>9</sup> [Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor Framework and Grove Lane Masterplan](#)

The National Design Guide<sup>10</sup> is a comprehensive document that sets out the need for and role of **good design**. It identifies and illustrates the Government's priorities for well-designed places and forms part of the NPPF. Where councils do not have their own in-house design guidance, the national guidance should be used.

There is also a National Model Design Code<sup>11</sup> that provides detailed information on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. The National Model Design Code states a Design Code is:

*A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area.*

The BCP proposed two policies<sup>12</sup> relating to design, which supported the delivery of well-designed buildings and spaces that provided an attractive and accessible environment. They also considered climate change and required buildings and landscapes to be designed in ways that could help mitigate its impacts.

There are several documents already in use in Sandwell that help planning officers make decisions on applications with design implications. These include the Residential Design Guide (2014), the Community Safety and Cycling supplementary planning guidance documents (both 2004), area action plans for West Bromwich, Smethwick and Tipton and some neighbourhood and local guidance. Much of this work can be used to develop and inform any design guide / code and can also be either incorporated into the new local plan where needed or updated following adoption of the new plan.

Any new design code will be subject to public consultation as part of its adoption, and as such authorities will sometimes prepare and consult on them in tandem with the preparation of a local plan.

We intend to adopt and use the Nationally Described Space Standards<sup>13</sup>, which deal with internal space within new dwellings and is suitable for application across all tenures. It sets out requirements for the Gross Internal (floor) Area of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home, notably bedrooms, storage and floor to ceiling height. Using these standards ensures that new houses are built with sufficient internal space to allow for comfortable and healthy occupation.

#### Questions – Good Design

<p><b>Do you think we should:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> provide a local design policy / design guidance specifically for Sandwell; or</li> <li><input type="radio"/> use the national code and guidance instead?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Instead of producing a new design code for Sandwell, should we review and update the existing guidance we already have instead?</b></p>
<p><b>We intend to reuse elements of the draft BCP design policies to support the local plan. Do you have a view on this approach?</b></p>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-model-design-code>

<sup>12</sup> CSP4 - Achieving well-designed places; ENV10 - Design Quality

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard>

**Do you agree with our intention to adopt the Nationally Described Space Standards for new houses?**

- If not, can you explain why?**

Planning permission is required for any alteration that materially affects the external appearance or **design of shopfronts**, including canopies /awnings and some security measures. Many proposed shop signs will also require Advertisement Consent.

All new external **security shutters on shopfronts** need planning permission. However, use of toughened glass and internal grills would not normally require planning permission unless the building is 'listed' in which case 'Listed Building Consent' may be required.

The current SAD contains policies on both these matters, and it will be important for the SDP to offer continued guidance on aspects of town centre design to help ensure our shopping centres become and remain attractive and welcoming places to visit. It is intended to retain / update both policies in the SDP.

Question - Shopfront Design

**Do you agree with this approach?**

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## Other Housing Issues

There is not much evidence of an interest in **self and custom-build housing** in Sandwell and it may be that we do not need a specific policy relating to the matter. However, this may change, and we may wish to produce further guidance on the matter in the future. Legislation requires us to keep a register of enquiries for self-build and interested parties can visit the Council's website to register their own interest<sup>14</sup>.

The provision of sites for self and custom-build housing projects can sometimes entail developers setting aside plots for private individuals to purchase and develop alongside their own schemes. This can be achieved in policy terms by identifying a percentage of plots for self-build on sites over a certain size – for example, requiring that 5% of plots on sites of over 100 dwellings be identified for self-build. The developers will provide access and services to the edge of the plots and the new plot owners will then take on the task of developing their houses.

### Questions – Self- and Custom-Build Housing

<b>Do you think Sandwell's new local plan should include a policy on self- and custom-build?</b>
<b>If you do, how do you think the Council should deal with issues around self-build proposals on commercial housing sites?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>A design policy requiring self-build homes to reflect the design elements of the site on which they are located (e.g. height, scale, mass, materials, type and design of features such as doors, windows, etc.?)</b></li> <li>○ <b>Requiring developers to allocate sections of commercial housing sites where people undertaking self-build can have a freer hand in the design of their house?</b></li> </ul>
<b>Do you think self-build should be supported in another way in Sandwell (e.g. not provided on commercial housing development sites; subject to a different policy approach)?</b>

SAD Policy H4 refers to the housing needs of people with **specific housing requirements**, including the elderly, the physically less able, people who require supported living opportunities and people with other mental or physical issues.

The Council feels it is important to keep a revised version of the current policy and to understand how it might be used to encourage the delivery of suitable housing without causing issues around viability for developers (e.g. by referring to the standards outlined in the optional Building Regulations Requirement M4(2): Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings).

### Questions – Specific Housing Requirements

<b>Do you agree that the new SDP should contain a policy on housing suitable to meet the needs of people who have special needs or who require additional support?</b>
<b>What types of housing designed to meet special needs do you think should be encouraged and delivered in Sandwell? E.g.</b>

<sup>14</sup> [https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200183/land\\_and\\_property/4164/self-build\\_and\\_custom\\_housebuilding\\_act\\_2015](https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200183/land_and_property/4164/self-build_and_custom_housebuilding_act_2015)

- **bungalows;**
- **houses capable of easy adaptation for users of assistive technology such as wheelchairs;**
- **houses that can be easily altered as people age or their medical or physical condition changes;**
- **specialist sites and supporting infrastructure for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople;**
- **other types of dwellings.**

**The Council intends to incorporate the national minimum space standards for new housing as set out in the optional Building Regulations Requirement M4(2): Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings<sup>15</sup>.**

- **Do you agree with this approach?**

Over the last few years the issue of the number and location of **Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)** in Sandwell has risen in importance. A combination of changes to permitted development rights and the need to provide affordable accommodation for people on low incomes has led to an increase in the number of HMOs and in the numbers of applications being put before Planning Committee.

HMOs provide an additional and valuable source of lower cost housing for sections of the community who cannot afford to purchase their own property or who do not qualify for other forms of social housing. They also provide for the needs of students and people commuting from elsewhere to work in Sandwell.

There is a perception however that HMOs lead to increases in anti-social behaviour, increased activity, parking problems, noise nuisance and more transient occupiers leading to a weakening of community coherence. As a result, applications often result in widespread objections from the public. However, in many cases there are no planning grounds for officers to recommend refusal, resulting in members either going against officer recommendations or being left feeling that they have no powers to control the proposed use.

There is currently no reference to, or policy on, HMOs in either the Black Country Core Strategy or the SAD. Some national planning guidance is available, covering licensing and mandatory room sizes<sup>16</sup>.

Having a policy on HMOs in the SDP will allow Sandwell to produce further supplementary planning guidance on HMOs. This will set out what people need to consider when developing HMOs, thereby supporting both the council and landlords and hopefully reducing the need for planning appeals.

Issues around space standards, parking and other design-related aspects can be dealt with either through other policies in the SDP or by addressing them in the supplementary planning document.

#### Questions – Houses in Multiple Occupation

**We think that the Sandwell Plan could have a policy on HMOs that seeks to:**

**Define areas where HMOs would be inappropriate**

<sup>15</sup> This requires houses to be designed and built to meet the requirements of people with differing needs, such as older people or people with a disability, and to be capable of being adapted for use where people's physical abilities change over time.

<sup>16</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/925269/HMOs\\_and\\_residential\\_property\\_licensing\\_reforms\\_guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/925269/HMOs_and_residential_property_licensing_reforms_guidance.pdf)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Do you agree and if so what criteria do you think should be used to evidence why they are inappropriate?</b></li></ul>
<p><b>Identify aspects of HMO provision that have the potential to adversely affect the amenities of adjoining or neighbouring properties (e.g. noise, overlooking, general disturbance, or impact on visual amenity) and provide criteria to manage those issues</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Do you agree and if so, what sort of realistic criteria should we be looking to include?</b></li></ul>
<p><b>Introduce percentage thresholds to control the number of HMOs in a given area;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Do you agree and if so what evidence is needed to justify the threshold level above which additional HMOs would harm the area?</b></li></ul>
<p><b>Introduce a clustering policy to ensure that HMOs are not grouped in an area above a certain level;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Do you agree and if so what evidence is needed to set the level and what would be the justification for it?</b></li></ul>

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## Healthy People and Communities

Sandwell is a borough with high levels of poor health and deprivation and a lower than average life expectancy. The people of Sandwell experience significant inequalities in health when compared to the rest of England. On average, they do not live for as long as people in other areas of England and spend more of their lives ill or disabled<sup>17</sup>.

The Marmot Review of Health Inequalities showed that the largest influences on physical and mental health are the social determinants of health, for example, education, employment, social networks and housing<sup>18</sup>. These aspects can be positively impacted by planning for the right development in the best locations, which is what the SDP will do.

There are various elements that can contribute to increasing physical activity in a healthy environment such as travel planning, active design, access to green and blue spaces, allotments, safe places, clean air and a positive soundscape. In one study, people with good access to green spaces were 24% more likely to be active<sup>19</sup>.

### Questions – Development for Health

<b>What do you think are the key public health issues facing Sandwell?</b>
<b>How should we plan for our ageing population?</b>
<b>Do we need to include specific development allocations such as sites for retirement facilities or assisted living?</b>
<b>Where should such allocations be located?</b>

**Community and social facilities** are those aspects of a town, village or settlement that enable people to make the most of their local area. They provide those services and functions that allow people to interact with each other; they also deliver the facilities that make society run smoothly. Any successful and sustainable location or development will deliver and enhance these functions as part of their offer.

Community and social facilities can include (but not be limited to) the following: -

- a) health and social care facilities (e.g. GP surgeries, NHS walk-in centres, dentists);
- b) leisure and sports facilities;
- c) green infrastructure and heritage assets (e.g. parks, gardens, woodlands, playing fields, allotments, cemeteries);
- d) transport (e.g. footpaths, bridleways, cycleways, highways, public transport, railways, car parks);
- e) community centres / meeting halls;
- f) youth facilities;

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.sandwelltrends.info/health-general-page/>

<sup>18</sup> Marmot, M (2010). Fair Society, Healthy Lives, The Marmot Review.

<sup>19</sup> Natural England, Technical Information Note TIN055, "An estimate of the economic and health value and cost effectiveness of the expanded WHI scheme 2009", Natural England, 2009.

- g) play facilities;
- h) library and information services;
- i) cultural facilities;
- j) places of worship;
- k) theatres, public art, heritage centres;
- l) public house;
- m) local shops;
- n) post offices;
- o) schools and other places of learning.

Making sure new development is located where there is access to these services and facilities will ensure that sustainable, vibrant and healthy communities can be created and supported. Where such facilities don't exist or are not sufficient to meet the needs of local communities, the SDP can help to identify what infrastructure might be required to do so.

Increasing the provision of, and accessibility to, sports fields and areas for **active recreation** will have a positive impact on the health and fitness of local communities, as well as supporting community interactions and participation in formal sports. We have recently completed a review of the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy for Sandwell as part of the work undertaken for the BCP and so have a very clear understanding of the demand for, and supply of, facilities for sport.

Sport England's publication 'Active Design'<sup>20</sup> provides details, case studies and a framework describing how to incorporate active lifestyles and sport into cities, towns and villages. Sport England states that,

*"Active Design wraps together the planning and considerations that should be made when designing the places and spaces we live in. It's about designing and adapting where we live to encourage activity in our everyday lives, making the active choice the easy choice".*

Question – Active Recreation

<b>Should we require masterplans and new developments to refer the Sport England Active Design Principles<sup>21</sup>?</b>
<b>How best can we support the protection and enhancement of current sporting provision?</b>

One issue that has become apparent is the reuse of buildings for **community purposes**. In some cases, these new uses can attract large numbers of visitors and might generate significant additional traffic on often congested local roads, especially in residential areas. A possible solution may be to encourage community uses to occupy vacant premises in town centres, where increased activity can more easily be accommodated, not least by public transport networks and the availability of more accessible parking. Given the increase in vacant retail and other commercial buildings in town centres, this would also help to maintain the vitality and viability of centres by introducing additional visitors and activity.

<sup>20</sup> Sport England, "Active Design: Planning for health and wellbeing through sport and physical activity," Sport England, 2015.

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.sportengland.org/news/active-design-guide>

## Questions – Community Facilities and Services

<b>Which community facilities and services do you think we need more of in Sandwell as a whole?</b>
<b>Setting aside health-related uses (surgeries, health centres, dentists etc.), schools and shops for a moment, are there <u>any other</u> public facilities and services you would like to see more of in Sandwell?</b>
<b>Is there a shortage of community facilities and services in your area? (If you can give us an idea of what part of Sandwell you are referring to, that would be helpful)</b>
<b>If you think your area needs more community facilities and services, how and where would you want to see these uses provided?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> We would be especially interested in locations where services can be easily accessed without people having to use a car.</li> </ul>
<b>Where new community facilities are proposed, such as churches, mosques, community centres and other uses generating additional footfall / car journeys, should the SDP require those uses to be sited in town centres in most cases?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> If you disagree with this, can you explain why?</li> </ul>

**Green infrastructure** is about more than just landscaping schemes, although it will also include amenity planting and layouts. Green infrastructure is essentially a network of multi-functional green space and other natural features, that have benefits for the quality of life and environment of communities. These assets will support habitats and biodiversity as well as creating shelter, a focus and possibly a way of shaping plots, defining routes and building phases and can include parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, street trees, allotments, private gardens and green roofs and walls.

They will also assist in water absorption and improving air quality. Linked open spaces (overlooked by active frontages) of a variety of sizes, sense of enclosure and function should run through the scheme, to provide pleasant walkways, opportunities for exercise and outdoor public sitting areas. They will also help to create and sustain wildlife corridors. It will include proposals to use green assets such as hedgerows and trees as fully as possible.

**Blue infrastructure** refers to the planned handling of water and drainage on sites and the incorporation of existing water features such as rivers, canals and ponds into designs. This will usually be closely associated with green infrastructure and can include swales, drainage ditches, balancing ponds and other components of a sustainable drainage scheme, contributing to the absorption and slow release of surface water.

Sandwell has an unparalleled network of leisure waterways that are increasingly valued as corridors of biodiversity, passive or active recreation and sustainable transport. Towns Fund bids have prioritised significant investment in upgrading the infrastructure of canals and raising their profile to encourage usage, especially as canals are supported and loved by many. More could be made of canals and waterways where they adjoin proposed development sites and areas identified for recreational and leisure use. We intend to use the draft BCP policy relating to canals as a basis for further consideration of the role canals and

waterways play in the environment of Sandwell, perhaps through the introduction of supplementary guidance.

#### Questions – Green and Blue Infrastructure

<p><b>Should the SDP take a more positive approach to ensuring green and blue infrastructure and their benefits are maximised in new development?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Should new green / blue infrastructure always be required on sites?</b></li> <li>○ <b>Should this be required even if it would mean losing the opportunity to provide more housing or employment development?</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>If so, do you have any suggestions how this might be done?</b></p>

The NPPF (revised July 2021) requires local authorities to plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, including **open space** (paragraph 93). In paragraph 98, it goes on to state,

*Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision.*

New housing developments will often include an element of open space, but to date no formal policy guidance has been available from Sandwell Council about exactly how much open space should be provided. A broad monitoring target of 4.42ha of accessible open space per 1,000 population has been established, but there is currently no formula for calculating open space provision to meet additional needs generated by new housing, or to maintain or improve existing supply.

As larger and more complex housing sites are brought forward within Sandwell, having a formal requirement for additional open space would allow the Council to maintain and, in some instances, improve the borough's supply of open and informal spaces.

Other authorities have produced policies and related planning guidance on the provision of open space on development sites and this is an issue to be considered in Sandwell. For example, policies elsewhere may state that development proposals should maintain and/or enhance the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space and address any shortfalls in provision, when measured against locally derived standards; or development that increases demand for open space will be required to address this demand in line with the relevant planning policy.

There are questions around the viability of requiring housebuilders to give up land that might otherwise go for housing, and that will need to be considered when the Council decides how to take this issue forward.

There is also a need to consider whether we should be prepared to accept the loss of some current open spaces (for example, those areas that are of poor quality, low accessibility and minimal value to local communities and that would cost a disproportionate amount of money to upgrade), to provide development sites and help meet our housing need. In turn, releasing such sites for alternative development could protect more environmentally sensitive land from development pressure; we could also require the provision of replacement open spaces of a higher quality than previously to compensate as part of any new development. On the other hand, it is often the case that even land in poor condition can have value for local people and wildlife.

It may be that a combination of open space provision can be agreed, such as on-site provision where possible in the first instance, off-site provision or improvements to existing facilities in the immediate vicinity or as a last resort, a commuted financial contribution to be spent elsewhere on open space and recreation improvements.

The draft Black Country Plan included policies on open space and recreational provision and we intend to incorporate amended versions of those policies where they are relevant to Sandwell. They relate to the following areas:

- Open Space and Recreation
- Playing Fields and Sports Facilities

#### Questions – Open Space

<b>How should new developments support the provision of high quality open space?</b>
<b>Do you think development proposals, especially big housing schemes, should always include dedicated open space for recreation and leisure on site?</b>
<input type="radio"/> If not, can you explain why?
<b>Do you think a combined approach (provision of open space on-site / new off-site provision / financial contributions for improvements to existing open space nearby) would be more appropriate?</b>
<input type="radio"/> Can you explain why?
<b>What scale of housing site do you think should be required to contribute towards providing open space? For example, should we be asking for new open space on</b>
<input type="radio"/> sites above ten houses in size <input type="radio"/> sites above 20 houses in size <input type="radio"/> sites above 40 houses in size?
<b>Would you rather:</b>
<input type="radio"/> see improvements to existing areas of open space in your area, or <input type="radio"/> see new open spaces be created when development happens nearby?
<b>Can you explain a bit more about why you think this?</b>
<b>What amount of open space should be provided? For example, should new open space be provided covering: -</b>
<input type="radio"/> 10% <input type="radio"/> 15% <input type="radio"/> 20% <input type="radio"/> another percentage (please say how much)



<b>of the area of a housing site?</b>
<b>Should the amount of open space instead be calculated based on the number of bedrooms per property being provided?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ For example, developments delivering larger accommodation (properties with three, four or more bedrooms) should provide more open space than those for one or two bedroomed properties.</li> </ul>
<b>Should open space requirement be relaxed for types of housing that are less likely to generate high levels of active demand, such as accommodation for older people?</b>
<b>If large areas of open space are required, this might affect how many houses can be built on a site – what is your view on that?</b>
<b>Should we: -</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ consider releasing sites that are demonstrated to be of poor quality and low value and that have no significant environmental benefits for development (where open space of a higher quality can be provided)?</li> <li>○ protect all current open space notwithstanding its condition or accessibility?</li> </ul>
<b>What type of open space should be provided? For example, informal open space such as fields for walking, dog walking etc., playgrounds / play areas for children, formal parks, allotments etc.?</b>
<b>Would you like to see more allotments / opportunities for growing food in your community provided as part of housing developments or in the wider area?</b>

**Hot food takeaways and gambling establishments** are legitimate and licensed / registered aspects of functioning communities and are not inappropriate in suitable places. Planning and planning policies do not assign moral weight to their operation or use, and they provide for the needs of people who patronise them with no related adverse impacts, for the most part.

However, these are also uses that, if over-concentrated in an area or located near other potentially sensitive uses, can cause a harmful effect on vitality and viability, character, function and amenity, and can also have negative impacts on people's health and wellbeing.

The onset of the COVID19 pandemic and its related lockdowns saw the Government relaxing the relevant legislation to allow pubs and restaurants to offer takeaways, to enable them to continue trading at a time when the hospitality sector was under great economic pressure. This relaxation was extended to March 2022 and there has so far been no further advice or guidance from the government on when it might be rescinded.

Betting shops and adult gaming centres can also have negative impacts, particularly where there are high concentrations of these uses in a location. This particularly relates to the impacts on retail areas and the impact upon personal health and wellbeing related to problem gambling.

Planning policies and supplementary planning documents (such as the Council's current SPD on hot food takeaways) can, where justified, seek to limit the proliferation of certain uses where evidence demonstrates this is appropriate (and where such uses require planning permission). This could include having regard to the impact of certain uses in proximity to locations where children and young people congregate such as schools, community centres and playgrounds, and the over-concentration of certain uses within a specified area.

#### Questions – Hot Food Takeaways and Gambling Establishments

<p><b>Do you think the Council should look more closely at where businesses such as hot food takeaways and gambling establishments are located?</b></p>
<p><b>Do you have a view on where they should be allowed in relation to sensitive uses such as schools, etc.?</b></p>
<p><b>Do you think that the SDP should try to control / regulate hot food takeaways or not (bearing in mind that there is no legislation that allows councils to refuse planning permission for these uses solely on the basis that people find them undesirable)?</b></p> <p><b>This could be addressed by having a policy that looked at:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Clustering (only granting permission for a given number / percentage of similar uses within a certain radius, limiting the maximum number of consecutive takeaway food outlets, or capping the proportion of all retail space occupied by this use in an area)</li> <li>○ Location (refusing consent for new proposals within a given distance of a sensitive use e.g. schools, parks, leisure facilities including sport centres and youth clubs)</li> <li>○ The implementation of community infrastructure levies with funds allocated to obesity prevention initiatives;</li> <li>○ Mandatory sign-up to a healthy catering commitment scheme and requirements for submission of health impact assessments alongside planning applications.</li> <li>○ Impacts on the amenity of residential and other sensitive uses e.g. by creating excessive noise, litter, odours, traffic problems</li> </ul>
<p><b>Do you think that the SDP should try to control / regulate betting shops, adult gaming centres, amusement arcades, pawnbrokers, pay day loan shops and shisha bars (bearing in mind that there is no legislation that allows councils to refuse planning permission for these uses solely on the basis that some people find them undesirable)?</b></p> <p><b>This could be addressed by having a policy that looked at:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Clustering (as for hot food takeaways);</li> <li>○ Location relative to sensitive uses (as for hot food takeaways);</li> <li>○ Providing an active frontage creating a positive visual impact on the street scene;</li> <li>○ Impacts on local community and residential amenity.</li> </ul>



DRAFT - WORKING DOCUMENT

## Thriving Towns

COVID-19 has had a profound effect on Sandwell's established centres, as patterns of shopping have changed radically and perhaps permanently in some cases. However, these changes were not wholly unexpected; the lockdown effectively sped up a transformation that was already happening in relation to the continuing rise in online shopping. The role of centres is increasingly moving away from their traditional primary functions. While there will clearly remain demand for in-person shopping and retail-related activities, centres will also need to provide additional draws / opportunities (such as for leisure, education, community uses and recreation) to offset the loss in shopping-related footfall and to help retain their vitality and viability. On the other hand, some centres in Sandwell, especially those that had been performing well before the pandemic, have recovered more quickly from the related downturn and in some cases have continued to perform more strongly than previously. In addition, smaller centres serving a local population and with a good range of shops and services have done well, as have larger supermarkets and discount stores.

Work was undertaken as part of the BCP evidence base on the current and future ability of the Black Country's main centres to provide and maintain retail capacity<sup>22</sup> across the area. In the context of the issues and challenges, and the findings of the capacity forecasts, the four Black Country authorities need to plan for less, not more retail floorspace over the next 5-10 years and beyond. Although retail will remain a key part of their overall offer - helping to generate trips, footfall and spend – there is a need for locally-derived policies and strategies to help promote greater flexibility and diversity, enabling these areas to respond more effectively and rapidly to future trends. This flexibility and diversity will, in turn, help to create more resilient, attractive and successful town centres. It will also help to strengthen their respective roles in the network and hierarchy of centres as places to live, work, shop, study, play and visit.

Councils have traditionally used land use frontage policies to try to shape and manage what types of commercial activity operates in different parts of town centres. For example, primary frontages (such as main / high streets) are the locations for most of the retail units in centres and maintain the sense of vitality of the centre by encouraging footfall. Financial and professional uses (such as banks, building societies, etc., traditionally with a lower reliance on passing trade / footfall for their businesses), restaurants, bars and other non-shop uses can then be directed to adjacent areas, where they will not disrupt the retail offer and will enjoy the benefits of co-location by being in proximity to similar uses and thus to a wider potential market for their services. This approach will need to change given the trends outlined above, so different uses are spread out through a centre rather than being grouped together, in particular where a night-time economy is developing and new opportunities for housing in centres is also explored.

Current SAD policy CEN1 promotes a frontage approach within such centres with a defined core, or which may have a core subsequently defined by an AAP or DPD, the retail function should be protected by restricting the number of non-retail uses. Outside the retail core a wider range of uses and a higher proportion of these will be encouraged. In centres where the core is not defined the policy states that it may be necessary to control non-retail uses to protect the retail function, vitality and viability of the centre.

However, the Government's changes to planning regulations means that Councils can no longer take this approach. A landowner no longer needs planning permission to change any shop to a restaurant or even to an office.

The Council will still have a role to play in the evolution of town centres. An attractive town centre that provides a range of unit types will be best placed to make a strong and lasting recovery in the future. The Council can also choose to promote, or discourage, the diversification of an entertainment or evening economy. Planning permission is still needed to make changes to the use or physical appearance of buildings

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<sup>22</sup> <https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/t2/p4/t2p4a/>

in centres, and the licensing regime will still allow the Council to protect the living conditions of those who live within, or close to, town centres.

#### Questions – Retailing in Town Centres

<b>What are the main issues you think our town centres and high streets are facing?</b>
<b>What can the SDP do to help them adapt to changing shopping trends – for example, by managing or promoting certain sorts of development within them?</b>
<b>Do you think more people should be encouraged to live in centres?</b>
<b>How can we identify sites in our town centres for future shopping, leisure and commercial / employment needs?</b>
<input type="radio"/> <b>Do you know of any suitable sites or premises in your local area that you think could be developed to provide modern town centre uses?</b>
<b>Should Sandwell maintain a policy for controlling the balance of retail and non-retail uses in main town centre core frontages?</b>

SAD Policy DM5 refers to the special consideration that will be given to any proposals that relate to sites at any of the **borough's gateways** – these are generally areas located around the borough boundary at high profile intersections and road junctions. Gateways set the effective standard for new visitors' experiences of coming into Sandwell and the current policy seeks to ensure that the best is made of these prominent locations and sites.

The current policy includes several principles around preserving and enhancing existing buildings and structures, reflecting the topography of the area and making sure new development is of a high design quality and uses good quality materials. It also supports the improvement of the wider area within which the gateway site sits.

#### Question – Gateway Sites

<b>Do we need to retain a policy referring to gateway sites?</b>
<input type="radio"/> <b>If so, do we need to revise or update it in accordance with other potential policy areas of the SDP, such as those dealing with climate change mitigation or opportunities for increasing biodiversity and ecological value?</b>

Sandwell has a hierarchy of **town and local centres** and benefits from their links with their local communities and beyond. The major centres and towns in Sandwell (excluding West Bromwich) serve their local communities and include: -

- Bearwood;
- Oldbury;
- Blackheath;

- Wednesbury;
- Cradley Heath;
- Great Bridge;
- Cape Hill.

To ensure each centre is given the right opportunities to develop and retain / improve its essential functions, it will be necessary to consider whether some or all of them need specific policies designed to support their roles. In addition, each town centre will need to have an identified boundary within which these specific policies apply.

Some suggestions have been received about potential changes to existing town centre boundaries. These are included below as examples only - we would welcome your thoughts on these and any other changes you may think appropriate:

- Oldbury – should the town centre boundary include the Oldbury Green Retail Park?
- Cradley Heath – should the boundary include the Lidl store on Lower High Street?
- Blackheath – should the boundary be extended across the ring road to include the Lidl store?
- Bearwood – should the boundary be amended to include St Marys Church, church hall and community hub (corner of Bearwood Road / St Mary’s Road) and St Gregory’s church on Three Shires Oak Road? Should the boundary also extend to include the 24/7 gym, Jet filling station and Majestic Wines on Hagley Road?

Appendix B sets out the current identified town centre boundaries for each of the centres.

#### Questions – Town Centres

<p><b>Looking at the town centre boundary plans (Appendix B to this document), especially for the centre(s) you know best, do you think the current area they include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Is about right (all the main areas of the centre are included and there is no need to expand or reduce it)</b></li> <li>○ <b>Is too big (i.e. the centre in reality is more tightly focussed around certain roads or areas and / or the current boundary covers places that aren’t really in the town centre)</b></li> <li>○ <b>Should be expanded (the town centre as you know and use it covers a wider area than shown and additional streets or locations could be included)?</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Are there any additional centres that you think should be “upgraded” to a similar status as the major centres identified above, because of their degree of activity or size?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>If so, which ones and why?</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Thinking about the centre(s) you know best, because you live in them or close by, or work in them for example, what do you think their good points are – e.g. safe and pleasant environment, range of shops and services, historic buildings etc.?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>What aspects would you want to see kept and made even more of, if possible?</b></li> <li>○ <b>Please indicate which centres you are referring to</b></li> </ul>

**Thinking about the centre(s) you know best, because you live in them or close by, or work in them for example, what do you think their bad points are – e.g. empty shops, poorly laid out, inaccessible, car parking etc?**

- **What would you like to see done to improve them?**
- **Please indicate which centres you are referring to**

**Do you think areas of denser residential development (e.g. flats above shops and office building conversions) in town centres should be located close to rail / metro links / public transport opportunities?**

- **Should the boundary of a town centre be adjusted to enable such changes to take place?**

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## West Bromwich

West Bromwich is the largest centre in Sandwell and fulfils a strategic role within the wider Black Country in delivering opportunities for retailing, business and commercial activity, education, regeneration, housing and as part of a strategic transportation network.

Prior to the start of the local plan review, and to aid regeneration of the centre and stimulate a COVID-19 recovery, a masterplan for West Bromwich centre<sup>23</sup> was commissioned alongside the production by the Council of an Interim Planning Statement (IPS)<sup>24</sup>, with a final report endorsed by Cabinet on the 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022. It is hoped that the masterplan will act as a catalyst for on-going and new regeneration schemes for West Bromwich – unlocking further investment and opportunities to boost the town's future economic growth. The masterplan builds on the Towns Investment Plan for West Bromwich, which was drawn up by the council in response to the Government's Towns Fund programme.

The IPS will form the basis for future policies for West Bromwich and has been subject to public consultation during its preparation.

The priorities for West Bromwich are to reinvigorate the town centre; unlock land to aid regeneration; support good quality jobs and stimulate Covid-19 recovery by: -

- Repurposing vacant premises and sites in the strategic centre to provide community, education, healthcare provision, with additional residential use being a major contributor in attracting investment and promoting vitality of the centre.
- Seeking office development in sustainable locations within the centre.
- Transforming the town centre further through site assembly and development paving the way for new markets, education facilities and high-quality housing.

**Key issues for West Bromwich** include: -

- The loss of comparison retail shopping (i.e. clothes, shoes, electrical goods etc) to the internet.
- Increased levels of convenience (food) shopping now being undertaken online.
- The rise of limited-range food discounters.
- A greater than forecast demand for employment land, which has had an impact on the provision of vacant / brownfield land for housing in the borough. This is compounded by viability issues. In Sandwell there is now a substantial shortfall in the supply of new dwellings.
- In relation to the above, rather than the forecast surplus of employment land freeing up brownfield land for housing, there is now a deficit of employment land available for economic development and growth purposes.
- Permitted development rights have changed significantly in recent years; this has seen considerable numbers of new dwellings being created from the conversion of existing offices in the centre. This is likely to continue.
- Technological changes driven by people working from home has led to reduced demand for offices in centres, with levels of future demand now uncertain.
- 'Knock-on' effects of reduced office occupancy on aspects of the service economy formerly dependent on high footfall in centres like West Bromwich.

<sup>23</sup> [https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/32496/west\\_bromwich\\_masterplan](https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/32496/west_bromwich_masterplan)

<sup>24</sup> [https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/download/2798/west\\_bromwich\\_interim\\_planning\\_statement](https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/download/2798/west_bromwich_interim_planning_statement)



These trends were accelerated by COVID-19 pandemic-related opening restrictions on non-essential retail and services.

#### Questions – West Bromwich

<p><b>Thinking about West Bromwich Town Centre, do you think the issues listed above are the right ones for the Council to consider in the SDP?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Are there any additional issues in West Bromwich you think should be included for consideration?</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Of the issues for West Bromwich listed above, which ones do you think the SDP should deal with first or more urgently? Please identify a “top three” if you can.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Why do you think so?</b></li> </ul>

As it is now clear that the levels of retail expenditure growth forecast previously in West Bromwich have not come forward, there is an excess of retail floorspace in the centre that will require repurposing. This has been reflected in the Masterplan in particular, but we are keen to understand whether you have any other thoughts on suitable uses.

#### Questions – West Bromwich Future Uses

<p><b>What would you like to see vacant shops used for in West Bromwich?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Retail (retain as shop units)</b></li> <li>○ <b>Houses / residential accommodation</b></li> <li>○ <b>Other employment uses e.g. offices, businesses, live / work etc.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Public facilities / services e.g. educational uses, healthcare facilities, community hubs / meeting places etc.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Leisure uses e.g. gyms, fitness and wellbeing studios, amusement arcades etc.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Cafes / restaurants / entertainment venues</b></li> <li>○ <b>Other uses</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>What sort of development or activity do you think West Bromwich lacks?</b></p>

## Supporting a Sustainable Economy

Building a strong, responsive and competitive economy is one of the three overarching objectives of the NPPF. This should be achieved by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right place at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity and by identifying and co-ordinating the provision of infrastructure.

In terms of job numbers, the three main employment sectors in Sandwell are retail and wholesale, manufacturing and health and social care. In terms of critical or Sandwell-specific sectors, where Sandwell plays a stronger or more disproportionate role within the wider economy than the national average, the highest contributors are manufacturing (+111% greater than the national average); electricity, gas and air conditioning (+100% greater); water supply and waste management (+71% greater); transportation and storage (+59% greater); and retail and wholesale (+40% greater)<sup>25</sup>.

The Plan will need to set out the amount of employment land that is required over the period up to 2040. The evidence base for the employment land policies consists of a two stage Economic Needs Assessment (EDNA) and the Black Country Employment Area Review (BEAR). The EDNA provides an objective assessment of the industrial land needs for the Black Country, based upon an independent assessment of the area's economic development needs.

The EDNA identifies a need for 205.4 hectares of employment land over the Plan period, and that Sandwell has a supply of 69.9 hectares, resulting in a shortfall of 135.5 hectares to 2040.

Key conclusions of the EDNA included: -

- a) The Black Country was hit hard by COVID-19 but is expected to recover strongly and has the capacity to deliver significant growth.
- b) Even pre-COVID, recent growth was achieved against a backdrop of a weak local skills base, low business start-up rates and low GVA per head in comparison with the West Midlands and UK averages.
- c) Economic development strategies including the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and Local Industrial Strategy seek to address these challenges to accelerate growth of the local economy.
- d) The Black Country employment land supply in 2020 was largely inherited from the Core Strategy and the existing SAD. The land supply is dominated by small sites.
- e) Going forward, attracting high growth knowledge-based industries in line with the SEP ambitions will require the provision of more prestigious sites and high-quality spaces with good connectivity and easy access to key transport hubs.
- f) The Black Country should look to accommodate a variety of business needs, including start-ups and smaller businesses. This means a mixed portfolio of sites will need to be made available, including large and small sites and spaces.
- g) It is imperative to protect the existing supply of land to meet future needs that will arise from a high growth driven economy.

Ensuring that an adequate supply of employment land is maintained throughout the plan period will be essential in enabling long term balanced growth to be sustained and is therefore a key challenge. To address the above issues, employment policies should address the following: -

- a) Allocate land for new development within Sandwell, to facilitate growth and diversification of the economy

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<sup>25</sup> Source – Business Growth Team, Sandwell MBC

- b) Accommodate a variety of business needs including high technology manufacturing and logistics sectors.
- c) Protect and enhance land and premises within existing employment areas where this provides for the needs of jobs and businesses.
- d) Recognise that some sites will become unsuitable for continued employment uses and to facilitate their redevelopment to alternative uses.
- e) Enable local communities to share the benefits of economic growth.

The Black Country Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) has identified a short fall between **employment land need** and supply up to 2040. This shortfall is based on the demand requirement taking into account potential losses of land and opportunities for windfall development associated with the development of vacant and underused land within existing employment areas.

Sandwell's 'Top 50 Fastest Growing Companies Index 2020' report lists the 50 highest-growth companies in Sandwell, with all 50 of these companies having grown by more than 10% and the top 22 having grown by 20% - and having generated £2.2 billion in revenue. Ensuring companies such as these have premises to expand in within the Sandwell is critical to the area's economy – 44% are within the manufacturing sector and therefore rely upon employment land.

#### Questions – Employment Land Need

<b>How do you think the shortfall in the supply of employment land should be addressed?</b>

As stated in the 2017 EDNA the diversity of the economic sectors in the area and local strongholds of employment e.g. manufacturing and wholesale/distribution as well as retail and health, need to be spatially accommodated in a way that both meets these sectors' current and future needs and ensures their sustained growth. New sectors are also emerging and their needs for employment space will also need to be accommodated.

#### Questions – Sandwell's Economy

<b>Do you think that a local Economic Development Strategy policy is still required for Sandwell?</b>
○ <b>If you do, what do you think it should cover?</b>
<b>Are there any sorts of new / emerging industries that we should be trying to attract into Sandwell?</b>

The primary focus for co-ordinated and sustained **regeneration** in Sandwell is in the Central Core Growth Area, which includes the key employment areas of the Borough. It will be the focus for the delivery of regeneration and renewal opportunities for employment.

The need for regeneration in Sandwell is at the heart of much of what the Council does, and it has delivered some innovative and important schemes already. The ongoing commitment to regeneration will continue across the Council as a whole, but the Issues and Options process gives us an opportunity to think about how else we might contribute to making Sandwell a better place to live, work and spend time.

Regeneration will include delivering new development / redevelopment in both industrial and residential areas. As part of these proposals, the Council will be looking at associated opportunities for delivering climate change mitigation and improving the physical environments that people occupy and use.

## Question - Regeneration

<p><b>Do you think that the SDP needs a specific policy in relation to the regeneration of parts of Sandwell?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> <b>If so, what should the policy contain?</b></li> <li><input type="radio"/> <b>Do you know of any areas in particular that should be included?</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Thinking about areas that need to be improved, what do you think would make Sandwell a more attractive prospect for potential homeowners, inward investment and new business occupiers?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> <b>Improved infrastructure (e.g. roads, drainage, accessibility to public transport)?</b></li> <li><input type="radio"/> <b>Areas of mixed use (i.e. where housing and employment uses are situated next to or near each other, for example in town centres or industrial areas)?</b></li> <li><input type="radio"/> <b>The inclusion of more open space and landscaping (e.g. pocket parks, tree planting, open space and informal sitting areas)?</b></li> <li><input type="radio"/> <b>Anything else?</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>There is evidence of demand from big companies for large sites for new inward investment, but the supply of available sites for new business tends to be smaller ones. Do you have any ideas or suggestions on how we might address this issue?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> <b>Concentrate on attracting smaller businesses into Sandwell until larger sites become available through natural churn (where businesses move into / out of an area as they grow or change)</b></li> <li><input type="radio"/> <b>Identify existing larger areas of current employment activity and explore opportunities for improving their attractiveness to the market (e.g. through renewing and improving infrastructure such as parking and access, supporting the improvement of existing buildings and premises, introducing new or additional landscaping)</b></li> <li><input type="radio"/> <b>Identify opportunities to actively create sites for large companies or industrial occupiers (e.g. through the council using compulsory purchase powers / buying sites on the open market, or using land they own)</b></li> <li><input type="radio"/> <b>Any other suggestion?</b></li> </ul>

In addition to areas/sites being safeguarded for employment uses, we need to decide whether some types of employment generating **non-industrial and warehousing uses**, such as childcare facilities and small-scale food and drink outlets, may be permitted where it can be demonstrated robustly that they support, maintain or enhance existing business and employment functions.

## Questions – Non-conforming Employment Uses

<p><b>Do you agree that these non-conforming employment uses should be addressed in the SDP?</b></p>
<p><b>IF so, do you think the SDP should contain a policy addressing what ancillary uses might be appropriate and in what locations (e.g. where there are no suitable facilities within a short walk or where the ancillary use is not one that needs to be in a town centre)?</b></p>

The employment land policies contained in the draft BCP set out the **types of employment uses** that would be permitted in the areas/sites allocated as strategic or local employment land. These sites would be safeguarded for

- light industrial employment uses (the research and development of products or processes or any industrial process that could be carried out in a residential area without causing detriment to the amenity of the area);
- general industry; and
- storage and warehousing.

Sandwell's SDP intends to carry this protection forward by including many aspects of the proposed BCP employment policies adapted to meet Sandwell's purposes.

Local employment sites are those areas where development is supported primarily for new or smaller-scale employment purposes. In some cases, housing or other non- ancillary, non-employment uses may be considered on these sites but only where there is robust evidence to demonstrate they are no longer required for employment purposes.

In the past local employment land in Sandwell has come under pressure from non-employment proposals, such as banqueting suites and other community uses. This has caused problems in some cases as the new uses have been proposed on sites adjacent to uses occupied by general employment uses. Having non-employment uses near heavy industry can cause problems for both sets of occupiers; the "agents of change" principle in the NPPF requires the latest incomer to ensure that their activities do not adversely impact on adjacent uses. As an example, incoming industrial users on appropriate and allocated industrial sites adjacent to community or leisure activities would have to use additional money and resources ensuring their activities did not impact on places used for social events. This in turn could mean potential industrial and employment-generating uses avoiding such sites on viability grounds.

In some locations large-scale **commercial entertainment and community activities** may be appropriate, assuming the likelihood of sufficient parking being available, and events being held during evenings and weekends when areas of employment uses are likely to be less busy. However, these types of activities will generally be more properly located in town and local centres, with good accessibility by public transport; they should be subject to a robust sequential test if they are being proposed outside centres.

In addition, there are other larger-scale activities that are not classed as employment uses (although they do employ sometimes significant numbers of people), but which require large premises away from housing areas or other more sensitive uses. These might include wholesale catering, larger indoor recreational and leisure uses and dog day-care for example.

#### Questions – Alternative Uses in Industrial Areas

<b>Do you agree that local employment estates / land / sites should be retained exclusively for local and small-scale employment uses?</b>
<b>Are there any circumstances where you feel non-employment uses would be appropriate in such areas?</b>
<b>If so, what sort of uses do you think would be appropriate?</b>
<input type="radio"/> <b>Housing?</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>Non-industrial employment uses (e.g. gyms, vets, children's play spaces, dog day-care)?</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Community spaces?</b></li> <li>○ <b>Banqueting suites and venues?</b></li> <li>○ <b>Any other use?</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Please identify which ones you think would be acceptable and why.</b></p>
<p><b>Where else do you think larger community and commercial activities like the examples given above should be located? The preference is for town centre locations in the first instance, as the most sustainable locations, but depending on circumstances this may not be achievable:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>In vacant units on business parks or industrial estates (this would mean the loss of those units to potential occupiers with larger workforces / more job opportunities)</b></li> <li>○ <b>In large buildings elsewhere in Sandwell (potential for noise, fumes, disturbance etc. may be greater)</b></li> <li>○ <b>On new development sites in purpose-built premises (costs may be prohibitive for operators)</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>How do we ensure that <u>if</u> such uses are allowed in employment locations, they do not proliferate / draw trade and activity away from town centres?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Sequential test (e.g. clear demonstration that no suitable site can be found within an existing centre or be more sustainably located)?</b></li> <li>○ <b>Proliferation considerations (e.g. no more than X number of similar venues within a set radius)?</b></li> <li>○ <b>Both?</b></li> <li>○ <b>Any other criteria?</b></li> </ul>

We think an updated version of the SAD policy on **training and recruitment** will be sufficient. Reference to the Neighbourhood Employment and Skills Plan will need to be removed from an updated SDP policy as it no longer exists. This revised policy will be aligned to the Council's Social Value reference of social, environmental and economic elements and should include developments of over ten units or more of housing and /or 10,000 sqm of commercial floorspace in creating local jobs and providing opportunities for skills development.

#### Question – Training and Recruitment

<p><b>We intend to update the existing SAD policy on training and recruitment. Do you agree?</b></p>

## Industrial Legacy

The SAD previously contained several policies designed to deal with some of the legacy issues created by Sandwell's historic role as a centre of heavy industry and manufacturing. These policies addressed pollution, industrial safety, hazardous substances and ground conditions.

The policies themselves will be retained in the SDP as they remain relevant to the ongoing remediation and regeneration of Sandwell. However, this is an opportunity for the Council to ensure they are up to date and to include any additional topics that have arisen since 2011 that may need addressing.

The current policy headings are listed below: -

- i. Areas affected by Abandoned Limestone Mines
- ii. Zones Around Hazardous Installations
- iii. New Developments and Hazardous Substances
- iv. Pollution and Contamination Control
- v. Land Affected by Tipped Material Generating Landfill Gas
- vi. Land Affected by Contaminants, Ground Instability, Mining Legacy, Land of Unsatisfactory Load Bearing Capacity or Other Constraints

Part of the borough's legacy of heavy industry is the presence of large industrial sites and premises that have been reused by several smaller firms, creating clusters of smaller businesses. This can mean that potential new occupiers with a need for large buildings are unable to set up in Sandwell because these big legacy sites are unavailable for single occupiers. We need to consider whether we should be supporting the change to smaller businesses across the borough or whether we should be identifying opportunities to maintain a stock of larger sites for single companies.

### Questions – Industrial Legacy

<b>Are you aware of any additional policy areas relating to Sandwell's industrial legacy that in your view should be addressed in a new land use policy?</b>
<b>If so, what are the main areas of concern for you, and if you can, how would you advise that the council should tackle them?</b>
<b>Do you think we should be:</b>
<input type="radio"/> <b>Focussed on supporting the growth of smaller businesses and companies on sub-divided former industrial sites; or</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>Looking to deliver several larger sites to accommodate big companies who want to expand or move into Sandwell, even if that means displacing smaller employers to do so?</b>

## Waste Management

### Sustainable Waste and Resource Management

The BCCS contained a strategic policy on waste management that identified several locations across the Black Country where new waste facilities could be developed. Managing waste in a responsible way is an important element of sustainable development and facing up to climate change. This can be achieved in various ways, including: -

- by addressing waste as a resource;
- through minimising waste;
- by managing unavoidable waste in ways that will minimise harmful effects; and
- by providing sufficient waste management capacity to meet current and future requirements of Sandwell.

The SAD contains a policy on the design of new waste management facilities (SAD EMP3) and dealt with more site-specific issues under the work undertaken on the regeneration corridors.

#### Question – Strategic Waste Management

**Do you think that a Strategic Waste policy is still required for Sandwell, to help identify suitable locations for new waste sites?**

- If you do, what do you think it should cover?**

### Protecting and Enhancing Existing Waste Management Capacity

As part of the Black Country Waste Study 2020, a review of land availability was undertaken within the context of the predominantly urban nature of the Black Country, which retains large areas of existing employment uses in adopted plans. However, an ongoing agenda of regeneration projects and initiatives designed to diversify employment, reverse population decline and improve the environment of the Black Country all imply greater challenges to the retention or provision of increasingly nonconforming uses (e.g. waste and recycling facilities and activities).

In most situations, development for housing and high-quality employment will always yield greater revenues than waste management and recovery use. Whilst viable development depends on the interplay of location, abnormal development costs, policy requirements and landowner expectations that can only be evaluated on a site-by-site bases, there are significant areas where land use has changed to housing development – and there is ample evidence of this being an ongoing trend through planning applications and promotions.

At a national level, areas of previously developed land saved for potential waste use are being lost to other forms of development and existing waste capacity is being threatened. This is likely to be a particular issue in the Black Country, where the waste sector is comparatively more important to the local economy than in England as a whole.

As waste facilities are an essential part of the total infrastructure of an area, it is not only important that they are appropriately located but also that policy protection is applied to areas suitable for waste uses, to help achieve the objectives of moving waste up the hierarchy and enabling communities to take responsibility for waste arising in their area.

#### Question – Protection of Waste Facilities; use of employment areas for new waste facilities

**Do you agree that the SDP should contain a policy protecting Waste Sites from non-conforming development such as residential development?**



<b>Should employment areas be identified as suitable locations for the location of new waste facilities?</b>

DRAFT - WORKING DOCUMENT

## Greener Infrastructure

The SDP will need to provide clear guidance on the provision of suitable and sufficient **infrastructure** to support the regeneration and growth of Sandwell. Much of this infrastructure will need to be provided before or alongside new development and will need to be subject to viability considerations to ensure it does not make the development financially undeliverable.

The definition of infrastructure in this context is wide, including (but not limited to): -

- a) transport and road-related
- b) fast broadband;
- c) affordable housing;
- d) renewable energy;
- e) publicly accessible open space;
- f) sustainable drainage;
- g) sport and recreational facilities;
- h) air quality mitigation measures;
- i) residential services (residential services refer to four priority services - housing density, type and accessibility - and relates to access to employment, health services, fresh food retailing, and education services by sustainable transport means).

There will also be other requirements, such as crime prevention measures, and cross-boundary requirements, such as waste water management. Impacts on the environment can include loss of open space or wildlife habitat, which must be mitigated.

### Question – General Infrastructure

**Are you aware of any other forms of infrastructure that you think may be required?**

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### Question – Transport Infrastructure

**Are you aware of any locations where you think new or improved transport infrastructure may be required?**

- **This may include public transport, cycle facilities, pedestrian upgrades or highway alterations.**

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Issue: **Greener Travel Networks** - TEXT TO FOLLOW

Issue: **Achieving safe access and addressing transport impacts** - TEXT TO FOLLOW

The current local plan contains two policies relating to **communications and digital infrastructure**. Times have changed greatly since these policies were first proposed and the new SDP will need to update those policies to reflect the most up-to-date position

SAD policy TEL 1 refers to antennae and masts put up for telecommunications purposes.

We think that the applicants need to demonstrate that the installation is in full compliance with the requirements of the radio frequency (RF) public exposure guidelines of the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP). We therefore propose that TEL 1 will also require that

all prior approval and full planning applications must be accompanied by a declaration that the proposal, when operational, will meet the ICNIRP.

Question – Communications and Digital Infrastructure

<b>Do you agree with this approach?</b>

SAD policy TEL2 refers to **telephone kiosks**. As times have changed and the type of equipment used for communication has evolved, we think that Policy TEL 2 needs to reflect these changes. Therefore, we propose to amend the policy so that it relates to Digital Infrastructure / Equipment – this includes Kiosks and Digital Interactive Finger Posts. This will enable siting and design to be controlled so that they do not detract from the visual amenities of the street scene.

Question – Telephone Kiosks

<b>Do you agree with this approach?</b>

Given the importance of **fast and reliable broadband** and associated digital infrastructure to all aspects of modern society, a new strategic policy is proposed, based on the draft policy produced for the BCP. Planning policy can play an important role in helping to address the key digital connectivity infrastructure needs of Sandwell. The draft policy sets out proposals for ensuring the provision of full fibre broadband connectivity is considered in all new major development proposals. It also sets out the approach for supporting and assessing 5G network infrastructure proposals (and any successor network infrastructure).

Question - Broadband

<b>Do you agree with this approach?</b>

The current SAD contains a specific policy on **taxis and private hire vehicles**, requiring the provision of taxi ranks where appropriate in new development and where uses generate large flows of visitors. It is proposed to maintain this policy where town centre regeneration and development is proposed.

Question – Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles

<b>Do you agree with this approach?</b>

## Enhancing the Natural and Built Environment

Despite its industrial heritage and highly urban nature, Sandwell is home to several significant areas of green and open space, a network of wildlife corridors and sites with significant ecological and environmental value and several historic and architecturally significant buildings and locations.

The draft Black Country Plan contained a suite of policies relating to the **natural environment**, many of which will be used to strengthen Sandwell's own approach to the conservation and improvement of the natural environment. The relevant policies cover the following areas (see also appendix A):

- Nature Conservation – ENV1
- Nature Recovery Network and Biodiversity Net Gain – ENV3
- Provision, retention and protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows – ENV4
- Historic Character and Local Distinctiveness of the Black Country – ENV5
- Geodiversity and the Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark – ENV6
- Canals – ENV7

National planning and environmental policy sets out a requirement for all qualifying new development to provide a minimum of 10% **biodiversity net gain**. This means that where habitat or the natural environment is lost or adversely impacted by development, developers will have to provide as a minimum an additional 10% of replacement habitat on top of compensating for what was already there. This compensatory habitat will be sought on the site being developed itself in the first instance, but where this cannot be achieved, the regulations allow for off-site habitat creation or enhancement near the site.

Only if this too cannot be delivered, and as a last resort, will developers be able to offer other types of compensation such as payments or contributions to habitat and ecological works beyond the immediate area (known as biodiversity credits). If developers cannot produce biodiversity net gain within Sandwell itself, we are considering whether we should seek a higher percentage of credits than 10%, to offset the lack of a direct contribution to Sandwell's biodiversity.

Local authorities can help identify offsite biodiversity opportunities to developers through pinpointing local opportunities / sites suitable for biodiversity habitat creation in line with their identified aims and objectives. Given the highly urban nature of Sandwell, it will not always be possible to provide replacement habitats on development sites themselves, so the Council may want to identify sites and projects beyond the immediate vicinity of the actual development in some cases.

Having a Local Plan policy that links BNG to the delivery of local strategic priorities (such as those in the Nature Recovery Network strategy) will be helpful.

### Questions – Biodiversity Net Gain

**Do you think the SDP should contain a policy on how to retain offsite biodiversity net gain in Sandwell?**

- **Do you think we should explore a requirement for additional biodiversity net gain credits should developers be proposing to purchase then for schemes outside Sandwell?**

**If so, how do you think the Council should achieve this?**

**Please identify which of the following options you prefer; you can pick as many as you like or suggest something different.**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Identify privately-owned sites as receptors for BNG credits and allocate them in the SDP?</b></li> <li>○ <b>Identify Council-owned sites as receptors for BNG credits and allocate them in the SDP?</b></li> <li>○ <b>Support wider landscape-scale schemes such as the Natural England Purple Horizons project (restoring and connecting fragmented heathlands to create a mosaic of heathlands, wetlands, woodlands and grasslands between Cannock Chase and Sutton Park) that are nearby but not necessarily in Sandwell itself?</b></li> <li>○ <b>A combination of private and public approaches?</b></li> <li>○ <b>Something else (please specify)?</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Are you the owner or promoter of any sites or land within Sandwell that you think may be suitable for allocation under a Conservation Covenant (bearing in mind it would then be protected from further development or change for at least 30 years) as a potential receptor site for biodiversity net gain?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>If so, would you be willing to have your site allocated for this purpose in the SDP (assuming it was considered suitable after an ecological assessment)?</b></li> </ul>

Being in **green spaces** boosts various aspects of thinking, including attention, memory and creativity, in people both with and without depression<sup>26</sup>, as well as producing positive improvements in physical and mental wellbeing.

All features of the outdoor environment contribute to environmental infrastructure, including natural and semi-natural habitats, parks and other open spaces, formal and informal recreation and sports facilities, historic buildings and landscapes, the public realm of spaces and streets, rivers, canals and drainage systems.

Policy EOS 1 of the SAD identified a green space hierarchy in Sandwell, intended to -

*"... analyse existing provision of green /open space, to identify strengths and weaknesses in the provision, and to guide decisions about improvements, new and replacement provision, and development proposals which impact on the provision."*

The hierarchy identified types of green space, ranging from Regional / Sub Regional Green Space, such as Sandwell Valley and Strategic Open Space such as the Rowley Hills down to local formal and informal areas of open space, such as gardens, playgrounds and landscaped public spaces. We intend to revisit and reassess the hierarchy and its current accessibility standards as part of work on the new local plan.

<b>Do you agree with this proposal?</b>

The **Rowley Hills** are a range of four hills – Turner’s Hill, Bury Hill, Portway Hill and Darby’s Hill – located within Sandwell. Together they form a ridge that divides the Black Country into two parts with distinctly differing topographic features. The ridge also coincides closely with the main watershed of England. Turner’s Hill at 271m (870ft) is the highest point, visible from most parts of

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/our-work/research/nature-how-connecting-nature-benefits-our-mental-health>

the Black Country and is a distinctive landscape feature that can be seen from the adjacent motorway and railways. Traditionally the Hills have been the location for both stone quarrying and coal mining but are now mostly used for informal recreation. The Hills have importance both for historic landscape reasons and for their value for nature conservation.

Evidence suggests that there is pressure for additional development on the Rowley Hills. To date, the Council has been successful in preventing inappropriate development from occurring, which has been helped by SAD policy EOS3, formal recognition of the ecological and geological value of the area and through the adoption of the Rowley Hills District Plan in 1987. This sought to maintain and improve the area as open space for recreation and to protect the skyline from inappropriate and intrusive development.

The continued protection of the open and undeveloped nature of the Rowley Hills could also be achieved if the area were to be designated as green belt or Local Green Space, as set out in the NPPF.

A Local Green Space designation allows communities to identify and protect green areas of importance to them through its specific allocation in a local plan; the designation allows for land to be protected along similar lines to the green belt provided it is: -

- “... a) *in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
- b) *demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
- c) *local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.*”<sup>27</sup>

#### Questions - The Rowley Hills

**The Rowley Hills have been protected to date from development that might have affected its visual, historic and ecological amenity. They are subject to a variety of policies / allocations that have prevented most inappropriate development from taking place.**

- Do you think the current level of protection is sufficient to continue safeguarding the distinctive character, environment and visual amenity of the Hills?**
- Do you think the level of protection needs to be increased?**
- Do you think there is scope for any residential or economic development in the area, assuming it did not have an impact on the Hills’ ecology, historic character, geological importance<sup>28</sup> or skyline?**
- If so, what sort / level of development would be appropriate in your view and why?**

**Do you think the Rowley Hills should be allocated as Local Green Space in the SDP?**

- Can you explain why you think it should be?**
- If you disagree, can you explain why you think it doesn’t need this designation?**

**Do you think the Rowley Hills should be designated as green belt?**

<sup>27</sup> Paragraph 102, NPPF (2021)

<sup>28</sup> As identified on the Black Country Geopark website (<https://blackcountrygeopark.dudley.gov.uk/sites-to-see/the-rowley-hills/>) and where appropriate by specialist reports

- **Can you explain why you think it should be?**
- **If you disagree, can you explain why you think it doesn't need this designation?**

Government policies refer to **heritage assets** as any building, monument, place, area or landscape that have heritage interest. Some heritage assets are formally designated under legislation for example, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens and conservation areas. Other assets have local importance but are not formally designated by legislation.

There are many pressures on heritage assets - to modernise or demolish historic buildings, change their uses, develop within heritage conservation areas and remove landscaping. Given the irreplaceable contribution heritage assets make, national guidance is clear that it is important that heritage assets and their settings are preserved or enhanced as a reminder of the history and evolution of the area.

Some heritage assets are specifically identified as being 'at risk' on Historic England's 'Heritage at Risk' Register. We will continue to pursue funding opportunities and work with landowners to secure improvements to these heritage assets wherever possible.

The NPPF defines **undesigned heritage assets** as follows:

*Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.*

Local heritage assets that are not formally designated are currently being reviewed and will be set out in a **Local List**. We could seek to introduce specific policies and controls to prevent the loss of assets that contribute to the local identity of Sandwell. This could help to protect more unlisted heritage features. It may also help prevent some of these buildings being redeveloped for other uses. A Local List does not give the buildings on it the same level of protection as the national list of buildings of architectural or historic merit but does mean their importance can be taken into account as a material consideration when planning decisions are made that would impact on them.

Heritage assets are an irreplaceable part of the Borough's unique character and identity and must be considered when new **design in the historic environment** is being proposed. Heritage significance will be assessed according to interest as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Development affecting the significance of an asset may include, but is not limited to:

- the introduction of new structures /objects;
- alterations;
- complete or partial demolition;
- removal of buildings /features or parts thereof;
- development in the curtilage of an asset or demolition of assets within the curtilage of a structure;
- the introduction of signage or advertisements;
- changes of use (including the use of open spaces);

- subdivision or fragmentation;
- changes to landscaping;
- the removal of built or landscape features or parts thereof; or
- any other form of development which fails to conserve and enhance the asset or its setting.

Enhancement of a heritage asset can take many forms, including, but not limited to:

- restoration;
- repair;
- removal of inappropriate development;
- increasing access;
- increasing visibility;
- increasing the educational value;
- conversion to a more appropriate use; or
- enhancement of the asset's setting.

Only rarely will there be no opportunity for enhancement.

An issue that is becoming of increasing importance to the protection and retention of the character and amenity of heritage assets is that of climate change. Local authorities are having to balance their duty to enhance and protect the historic environment with their commitment to deliver climate change adaptation and mitigation, which in some cases may involve alterations and additions to historic buildings or changes to their settings or to historic landscapes.

#### Questions – Heritage Assets

<b>Do we need to prepare a policy to support the adoption of a Sandwell Local List of buildings of historic / architectural merit?</b>
<b>Do we need to prepare a new policy to address the safeguarding of heritage assets when mitigating against and adapting to the climate change emergency?</b>
<b>Do we need to consider the introduction of special controls that prevent the demolition of non-designated, locally important heritage assets<sup>29</sup>?</b>

There are just over 200 **listed buildings**<sup>30</sup> in Sandwell. The National Heritage List for England is the official and up to date, register of all nationally protected historic buildings and sites in England - listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected wrecks, registered parks and gardens, and battlefields. Listing marks and celebrates a building's special architectural and historic interest, and also brings it under the consideration of the planning system, so that it can be protected for future

<sup>29</sup> An Article 4 direction – this can be used to withdraw permitted development rights where it is considered necessary to safeguard the special interest of local heritage assets.

<sup>30</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/results/?searchType=NHLE+Simple&search=Sandwell>



generations. The older a building is, and the fewer the surviving examples of its kind, the more likely it is to be listed.

There are five designated parks and gardens (all listed at Grade II);

- Brunswick Park
- Dartmouth Park
- Great Barr Park
- Victoria Park
- Warley Park

**Conservation Areas** can be created where a local planning authority identifies an area of special architectural or historic interest, which warrants careful management to protect that character. An area must be identified by the local authority as having a definite architectural quality or historic interest to merit designation. Research by the London School of Economics has found that people value living in conservation areas. This is evidenced by properties in conservation areas having higher prices and greater price appreciation, even after adjusting for location and other factors that affect prices<sup>31</sup>.

There are currently nine conservation areas in Sandwell, mainly located in Sandwell's historic town centres. Many of the conservation areas have not been reviewed since they were originally designated.

Conservation area name	Last appraised
Windmill End	Never
High Street, Smethwick Town Centre	May 2004
Cape Hill Town Centre, Smethwick	Apr 2005
High Street and Crocketts Lane, Smethwick	Apr 2005
Galton Valley, Smethwick	Jun 2005
High Street, West Bromwich	Apr 2007
Factory Locks, Tipton	Jun 2008
Church Square, Oldbury	Jun 2009
Market Place, Wednesbury	Aug 2017

Within those areas, it is likely that some development will have taken place over time, such that the current adopted boundaries of the area may not be the most appropriate ones; for example, new development might mean that historic features have been newly identified, changed or lost and so the extent of the conservation area may need to change to reflect that.

**Wednesbury High Street Heritage Action Zone** - one specific area identified on the Register is Wednesbury Town Centre Conservation Area. Sandwell Council have successfully applied for funding to create a Heritage Action Zone to improve the quality of the area and support heritage-led regeneration.

<sup>31</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/your-home/owning-historic-property/conservation-area/>

Heritage Action Zones are an initiative funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and administered through Historic England in partnership with local authorities, to create economic growth and improve quality of life in places that are rich in heritage and full of promise; unlocking their potential and making them more attractive to residents, businesses, tourists and investors.

To be eligible, the area needs to be a conservation area 'at risk'. Wednesbury Market Place conservation area was selected because of its many fine buildings and underlying high quality public realm.

#### Questions - Conservation Areas

**Some of the conservation areas in Sandwell are in centres where there is or has been a lot of pressure for development and growth. As a result, any previous appraisals undertaken when they were first designated are likely to be out of date.**

**Other conservation areas are unlikely to have changed much since they were first adopted.**

**Do you think the Council should: -**

- undertake a review of all conservation area whether they have been subject to any development pressure or not;**
- undertake comprehensive appraisals of those conservation areas where there has been a significant amount of development or other physical changes (such as new infrastructure or changes to road layouts, etc.), to ensure the appraisals remain relevant and up to date for making decisions on planning applications;**
- leave the current conservation area appraisals as they are and accept that the contribution the appraisals can make to the determination of planning applications and appeals will be limited?**

**Do you think the Council should also be looking at whether there are any new conservation areas that could be designated, or whether any current ones no longer carry sufficient interest and importance to be retained as a conservation area?**

- Do you know of any areas of historic interest in your local area that you think could be made into a conservation area?**
- Do you know of any conservation areas that have lost their historic value because of newer development, or ones where the current boundaries do not reflect their most valuable historic areas?**

Sandwell's **archaeological heritage** is a vital component of the historic environment, comprising many hundreds of sites, buildings and structures. All archaeological remains, whether structures, earthworks or buried deposits potentially hold the key to a better understanding of the borough's past. Sandwell has identified several areas of archaeological importance and therefore when new development is proposed within these areas an archaeological desk-based assessment should accompany the planning application. A record of all Sandwell's known archaeological sites is kept on the Historic Environment Record (HER), which is available to view by appointment.

Sandwell does not maintain a borough archaeologist. The SAD contained a policy (SAD HE 5 - Archaeology & Development Proposals) that provided guidance on the requirements for developers dealing with sites where archaeological remains were anticipated to exist on sites and it is intended to revisit and revise this policy as required.

<b>Do you agree with this proposal?</b>

The Black Country contains a wealth of geological history and assets, recognised by its recent designation as a **UNESCO Global Geopark**. A Global Geopark is a single, unified geographical area where sites and landscapes of international geological significance are located. It is an area of geological significance, managed with three main objectives in mind:

- a) to protect the geological landscape and the nature within it;
- b) to educate visitors and local communities; and
- c) to promote sustainable development, including sustainable tourism.

The draft BCP included a policy on the Black Country Geopark and it is intended to include that policy in the SDP.

Questions – Black Country Geopark

<b>Do you agree with this proposal?</b>
<b>Are you aware of any features of geological interest in your area that you want to bring to our attention?</b>

## APPENDIX A – draft Black Country Plan policies - summary

<b>BCP policy</b>	<b>Summary of policy contents</b>
Policy CSP1 – Development Strategy	Provides the overarching spatial strategy for the Black Country, setting out the scale and distribution of new development for the Plan period.
Policy CSP2 – The Strategic Centres and Core Regeneration Areas	Sets out the strategic approach for the growth network, consisting of the Strategic Centres and Core Regeneration Areas, which is the primary focus for regeneration and infrastructure investment to support the delivery of regionally significant growth and promote wider benefits to Black Country communities.
Policy CSP3 – Towns and Neighbourhood Areas and the green belt	Sets the strategic approach for the Towns and Neighbourhood Areas and the Green Belt, essentially all development outside the centres and regeneration areas (CSP2).
Policy CSP4 - Achieving well-designed places	Supports the development of places and buildings providing a range of functions, tenures, facilities, and services, intended to support the needs of diverse local communities. Promotes high quality and sensitive design for spaces and buildings, reflecting the character of the area and its heritage
Policy CSP5 - Cultural Facilities and the Visitor Economy	Supports the protection, promotion and expansion of existing cultural facilities, visitor attractions and associated activities to ensure their role as key economic drivers stimulating and regenerating the local economy is supported and enhanced.
Policy GB1 – The Black Country Green Belt	Protects local green belt from inappropriate development unless very special circumstances apply.
Policy GB2 – Compensatory Improvements for Loss of Green Belt	Manages the protection of green belt where development takes place and compensatory improvements to remaining green belt is required.
Policy GB3 – Extensions and Replacement Buildings in the Green Belt	Sets out guidance on changes to existing buildings and uses in the green belt.
Policy DEL1 – Infrastructure Provision	Sets out how the BCA will secure infrastructure provision from future planned development. It also sets out the requirement for viability evidence where, in exceptional circumstances, proposals are unable to comply with the policies of the BCP.
Policy DEL2 – Balance between employment land and housing	Sets out the approach for assessing windfall employment and housing developments, ensuring they are in suitable and sustainable locations.
Policy DEL3 – Promotion of Fibre to the Premises and 5G Networks	Sets out proposals for ensuring the provision of full fibre broadband connectivity is considered in all new major development proposals. It also sets out the approach for supporting and assessing 5G Network infrastructure proposals.
Policy HW1 – Health and Wellbeing	Provides a context for how health and wellbeing are influenced by planning and how to improve the health impacts of new developments and minimise negative impacts.
Policy HW2 – Healthcare Infrastructure	Sets out requirements for the provision of health infrastructure to serve the residents of new developments.

<b>BCP policy</b>	<b>Summary of policy contents</b>
Policy HW3 – Health Impact Assessments (HIAs)	Provides for the individual Black Country Authorities to require Health Impact Assessments for development proposals, in line with locally determined criteria, to be set out in local development documents.
Policy HOU1 – Delivering Sustainable Housing Growth	Identifies the amount of housing needed across the Black Country until 2039 to meet predicted housing need.
Policy HOU2 – Housing Density, Type and Accessibility	Directs that the new homes delivered over the plan period are in places with good sustainable transport access to key residential services and include a mix of types and densities which are appropriate to their location and help to meet local needs.
Policy HOU3 – Delivering Affordable, Wheelchair Accessible and Self Build / Custom Build Housing	Directs that a sufficient proportion of new homes provided over the plan period should be affordable and wheelchair accessible, and enough plots should be provided to meet local demand for self-build and custom build housing.
Policy HOU4 – Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	Aims to provide sufficient, appropriately designed and integrated sites to accommodate the needs of travelling communities over the plan period.
Policy HOU5 – Education Facilities	Guidance on the provision of educational facilities, including that they can be accessed easily by sustainable forms of transport and meet the variety of needs for different age groups and educational needs.
Policy HOU6 – Houses in Multiple Occupation	Addresses issues around the provision of HMOs and sets out criteria to be met when planning applications are made for them.
Policy EMP1 – Providing for Economic Growth and Jobs	Seeks to ensure a sufficient quantum of development opportunities are provided to meet the demand for economic growth and support the diversification of the Black Country economy.
Policy EMP2 – Strategic Employment Areas	Provides for a sufficient stock of Strategic Employment Land suitable for a growing and diversified economy.
Policy EMP3 – Local Employment Areas	Makes provision for those types of industrial, logistics and commercial activities that do not need to be situated in Strategic Employment Areas and are not appropriate for town centres or residential locations.
Policy EMP4 – Other Employment Sites	Provides a flexible policy framework to guide development proposals within older industrial areas where sites and premises may be suitable for redevelopment for a continued employment use, or to alternative uses such as housing.
Policy EMP5 – Improving Access to the Labour Market	Requires proposals for large-scale employment generating development to demonstrate that the new jobs are accessible to as many of the Black Country's residents as possible, especially those in the most deprived areas or priority groups.
Policy CEN1 – The Black Country Centres	Sets out the overall priorities and strategy for centres and defines the hierarchy of centres.
Policy CEN2 – Tier One: Strategic Centres	Identifies the four strategic centres of Brierley Hill, Walsall, West Bromwich, and Wolverhampton and sets out the approach and priorities for them in promoting appropriate levels of diversification and flexibility so that investment and regeneration can be maximised.

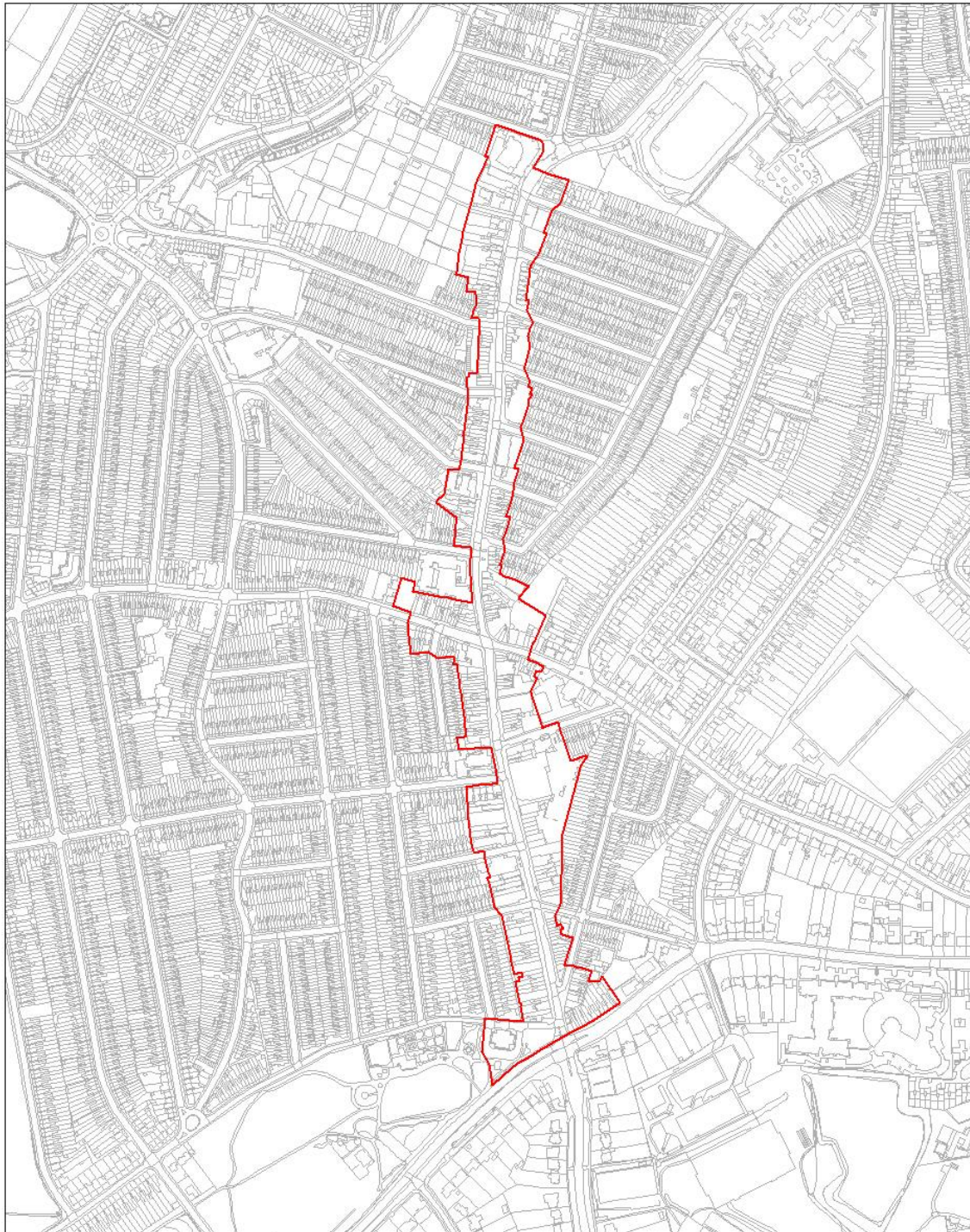
<b>BCP policy</b>	<b>Summary of policy contents</b>
Policy CEN3 – Tier Two Centres	Supports the important local function provided by Tier Two Centres, particularly convenience retail provision, and their future diversification and regeneration of town centres.
Policy CEN4 – Tier Three Centres	Protects and supports the large network of centres that provide day-to-day convenience shopping and local service needs.
Policy CEN5 – Provision of Small-Scale Local Facilities	Applies to proposals for small-scale local facilities (centre uses and complementary uses including social infrastructure and community uses) not in a centre and intended to meet local community needs.
Policy CEN6 – Edge-of-Centre and Out-of-Centre Development	Sets out robust requirements that will ensure that investment in centres is maximised and significant adverse impacts are prevented by managing edge of centre and out of centre proposals over a certain size.
Policy TRAN1 - Priorities for the Development of the Transport Network	Sets out the strategic approach to delivering an integrated, modernised and sustainable transport network through providing sufficient land in accessible locations and identifying and protecting key transport networks.
Policy TRAN2 - Safeguarding the Development of the Key Route Network	Identifying capital improvements and management strategies to ensure the Key Route Network meets its function of serving the main strategic demand flows of people and freight across the Black Country.
Policy TRAN3 - Managing Transport Impacts of New Development	Requires planning proposals to identify and mitigate transport-related impacts.
Policy TRAN4 - The Efficient Movement of Freight	Supports the movement of freight across the Black Country by sustainable modes of transport and through targeted network improvements and links with the rail network.
Policy TRAN5 - Creating Coherent Networks for Cycling and for Walking	Sets out the intention to develop a strategic cycling network across the Black Country using existing cycle routes and common cycle infrastructure; ensure locations are accessible to pedestrians and cyclists.
Policy TRAN6 - Influencing the Demand for Travel and Travel Choices	Identifies priorities for traffic management and travel choices, promoting sustainable transport and park and ride.
Policy TRAN7 - Parking Management	Sets out the requirements for the sustainable delivery and management of parking in centres and elsewhere.
Policy TRAN8 - Planning for Low Emission Vehicles	Supports the use of and infrastructure for low emission vehicles.
Policy ENV1 – Nature Conservation	Sets out the strategic framework for the protection and enhancement of nature conservation across the Black Country, relating to protected sites, species, habitats and geological features.
Policy ENV2 - Development Affecting Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)	Sets out the need to protect special areas of conservation across the Black Country from adverse impacts caused by development.

<b>BCP policy</b>	<b>Summary of policy contents</b>
Policy ENV3 – Nature Recovery Network and Biodiversity Net Gain	Sets out how development proposals will be required to consider the Nature Recovery Network Strategy and how biodiversity net gain would be secured.
Policy ENV4 – Provision, retention and protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows	Supports and protects a sustainable, high-quality tree population and will aim to significantly increase tree cover across the area; supports the planting of replacement trees and the provision of additional trees where appropriate; supports the protection of hedgerows.
Policy ENV 5 - Historic Character and Local Distinctiveness of the Black Country	Aims to ensure that where historic character persists, and development is proposed, it should be conserved, and efforts made to ensure that the Black Country's historic environment is fully appreciated and enhanced in terms of its townscape, landscape and individual heritage assets.
Policy ENV6 - Geodiversity and the Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark	Sets out that new development should have regard to the conservation of geological features and should take opportunities to achieve gains for conservation through the form and design of development.
Policy ENV7 – Canals	Identifies the need to protect and enhance the canal network where possible and recognises its role in and opportunities for leisure, recreation, nature conservation, design and the historic environment.
Policy ENV8 – Open Space and Recreation	Recognises the role of open space in promoting good design, healthy communities, leisure and recreation, conservation and wildlife protection. Promotes the need for up to date open space standards.
Policy ENV9 – Playing Fields and Sports Facilities	Requires the retention of sports pitches and playing fields and their enhancement where possible; guides the delivery of compensatory provision should a facility be lost.
Policy ENV10 – Design Quality	Sets out the requirements for design across the Black Country, including incorporating national design standards, space standards, road safety and crime prevention principles; identifies the elements needed to produce high-quality design in the context of the Black Country.
Policy CC1 – Increasing efficiency and resilience	Sets out the principle of designing, constructing and using buildings to mitigate and adapt to climate change and promote the low / zero carbon approach.
Policy CC2 – Energy Infrastructure	Supports the provision of decentralised energy networks – district heating, linking new development to sources where available or making provision for when they might become available; onsite energy provision.
Policy CC3 – Managing Heat Risk	Minimising internal heat gain and tackling the urban heat island effect through appropriate materials, design and landscaping; e.g. energy-efficient design, shading, albedo, trees, green roofs / walls etc.
Policy CC4 – Air Quality	Promotes initiatives to improve air quality such as walking, cycling and electric changing points; promotes public transport; need to provide and protect open spaces and tree cover; minimise commuting. New development should be air quality neutral and indoor air quality should be considered.
Policy CC5 – Flood Risk	Requires the risk assessment of flooding for new development. Promotes the naturalisation of urban water courses, opening up


BCP policy	Summary of policy contents
	culverts, protection of groundwater and prevention of downstream flooding.
Policy CC6 - Sustainable drainage and surface water management (SuDS)	Promotes the use of SuDS; proposals should include details of adoption, maintenance and management. Surface water flows should be reduced to equivalent greenfield runoff rates unless this is not viable.
Policy CC7 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and BREEAM Standards	Supports development using renewable or low carbon energy sources where the proposal accords with local and national guidance and wouldn't harm the local, natural and historic environment.
Policy W1 – Waste Infrastructure – Future Requirements	Sets out the overall strategy and principles for waste management in the Black Country and the types of waste development that will support this; identifies how much new waste management capacity is required.
Policy W2 – Waste Sites	Seeks to safeguard and retain the capacity of existing waste facilities to maintain the existing waste management capacity and address the Black Country's resource and infrastructure needs.
Policy W3 – Preferred Areas for New Waste Facilities	Sets out the identification and delivery of new waste management facilities will make a significant contribution towards meeting new capacity requirements.
Policy W4 – Locational Considerations for New Waste Facilities	Promotes the direction of waste management facilities towards locations where they are likely to generate maximum benefits in terms of co-location, provide supporting infrastructure for other uses and minimise potential harmful effects on the environment and local communities.
Policy W5 – Resource Management and New Development	Sets out the need for managing material resources – including waste - in a responsible way as an important element of sustainable development.
Policy MIN1 - Mineral Production – Requirements	Identifies the requirements for production of aggregate minerals and industrial minerals over the plan period, having regard to national policy guidance, the likely demand, the constraints to working them, and the contribution from imports of them from other areas.
Policy MIN2 - Minerals Safeguarding	Sets out how the most important mineral resources in the Black Country, and sites that are expected to be producing, processing or transporting minerals and mineral products, will be protected from other types of development that could compromise their continued operation.
Policy MIN3 - Preferred Areas for New Mineral Development	Identifies the preferred areas for mineral extraction and other types of mineral development in the Black Country.
Policy MIN4 - Managing the Effects of Mineral Development	Sets out the requirements that planning applications for mineral working and minerals infrastructure will be expected to address.



## APPENDIX B – Town Centre Boundaries



### Bearwood Town Centre

Scale  NORTH

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**Blackheath Town Centre**

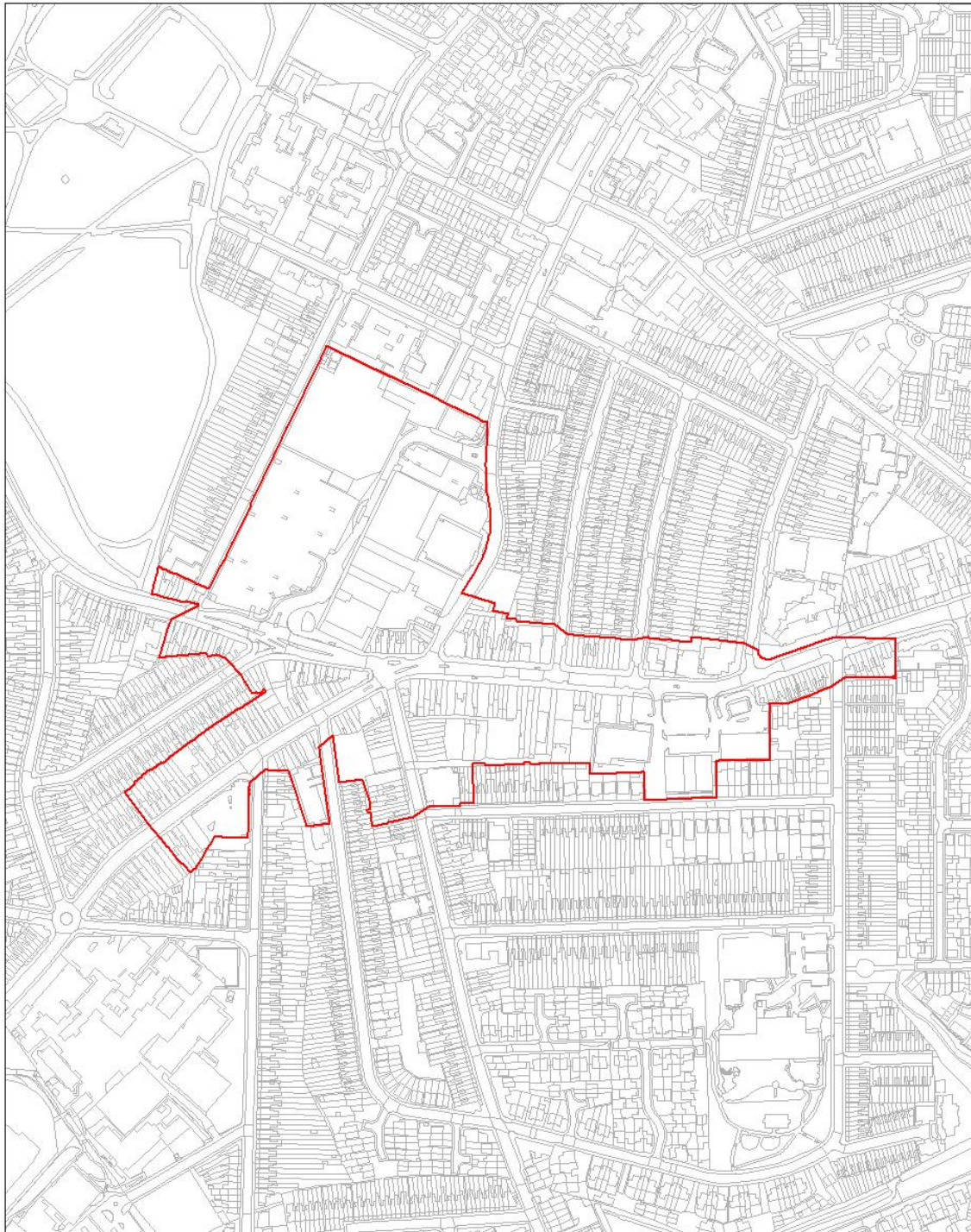
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**Cape Hill Town Centre**

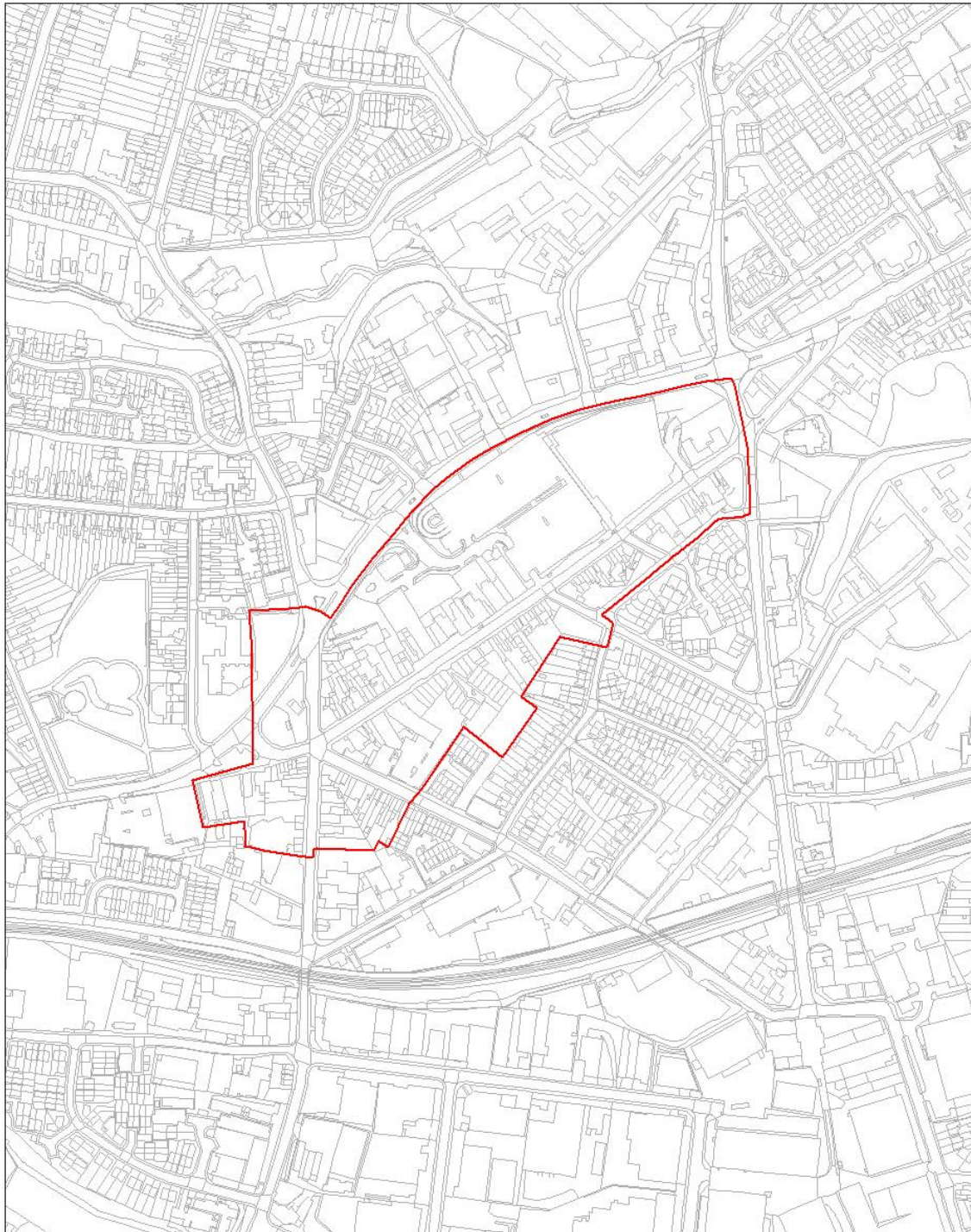
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**Cradley Heath Town Centre**

Scale

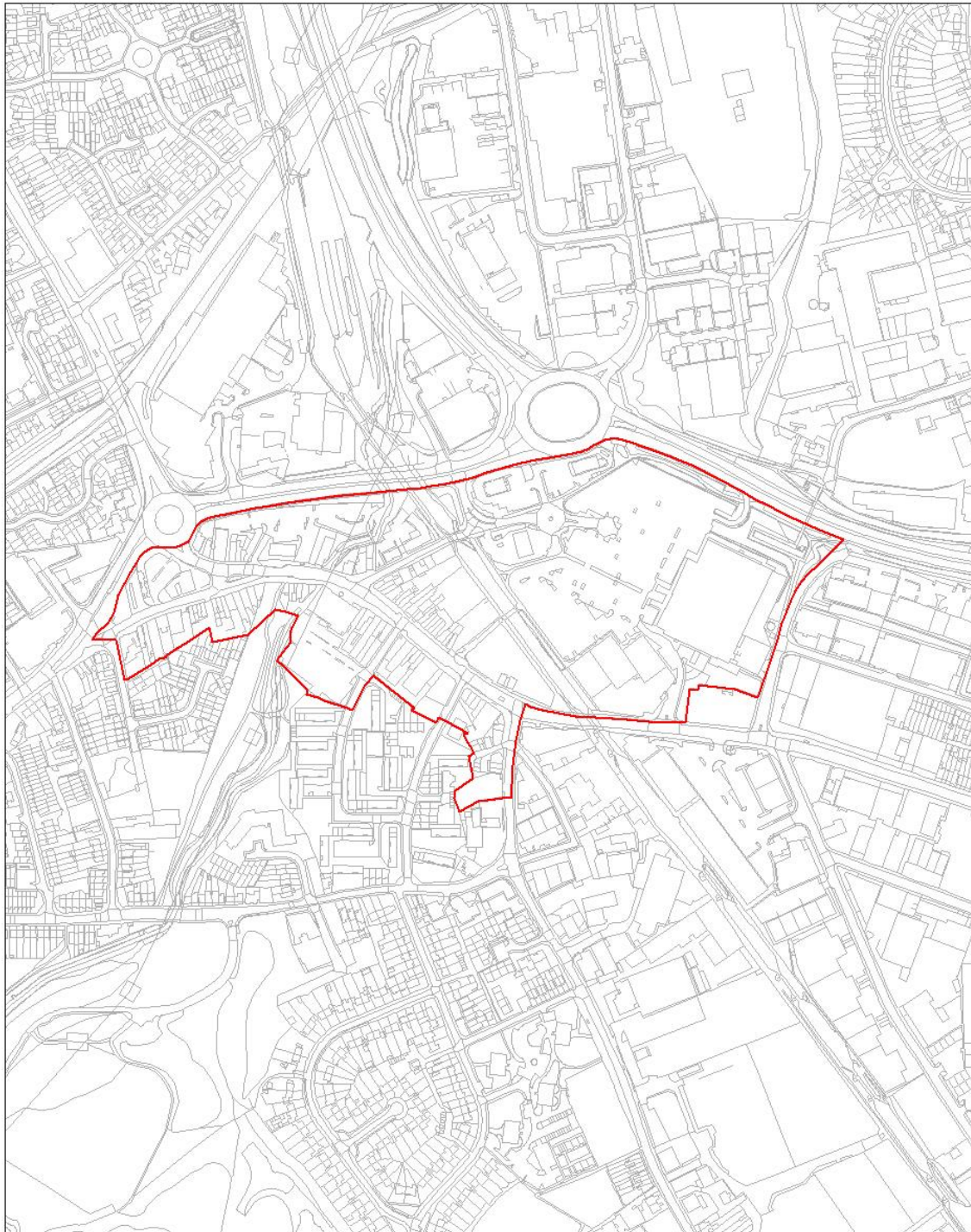


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**Great Bridge Town Centre**

Scale 

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**Oldbury Town Centre**

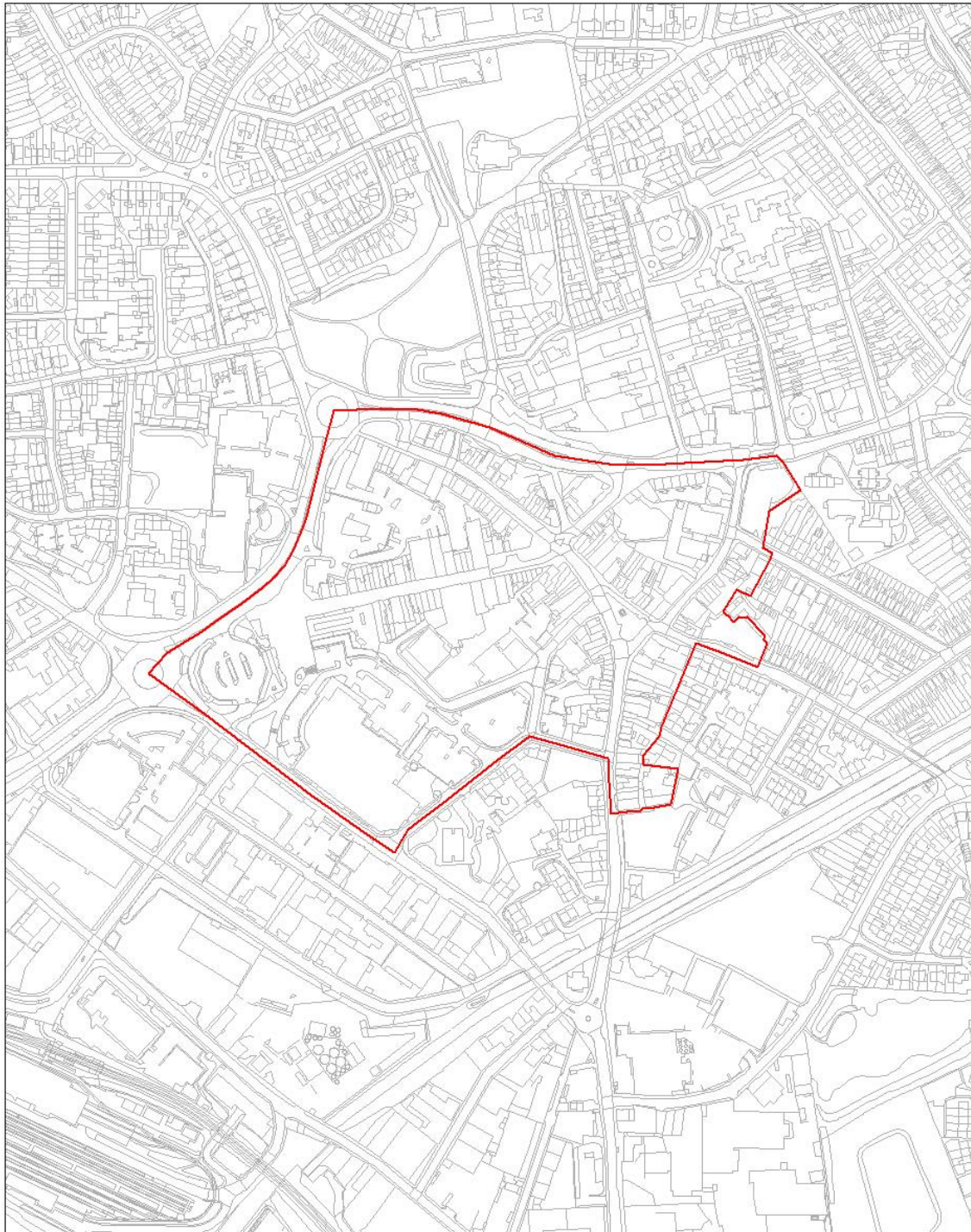
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**Wednesbury Town Centre**

Scale

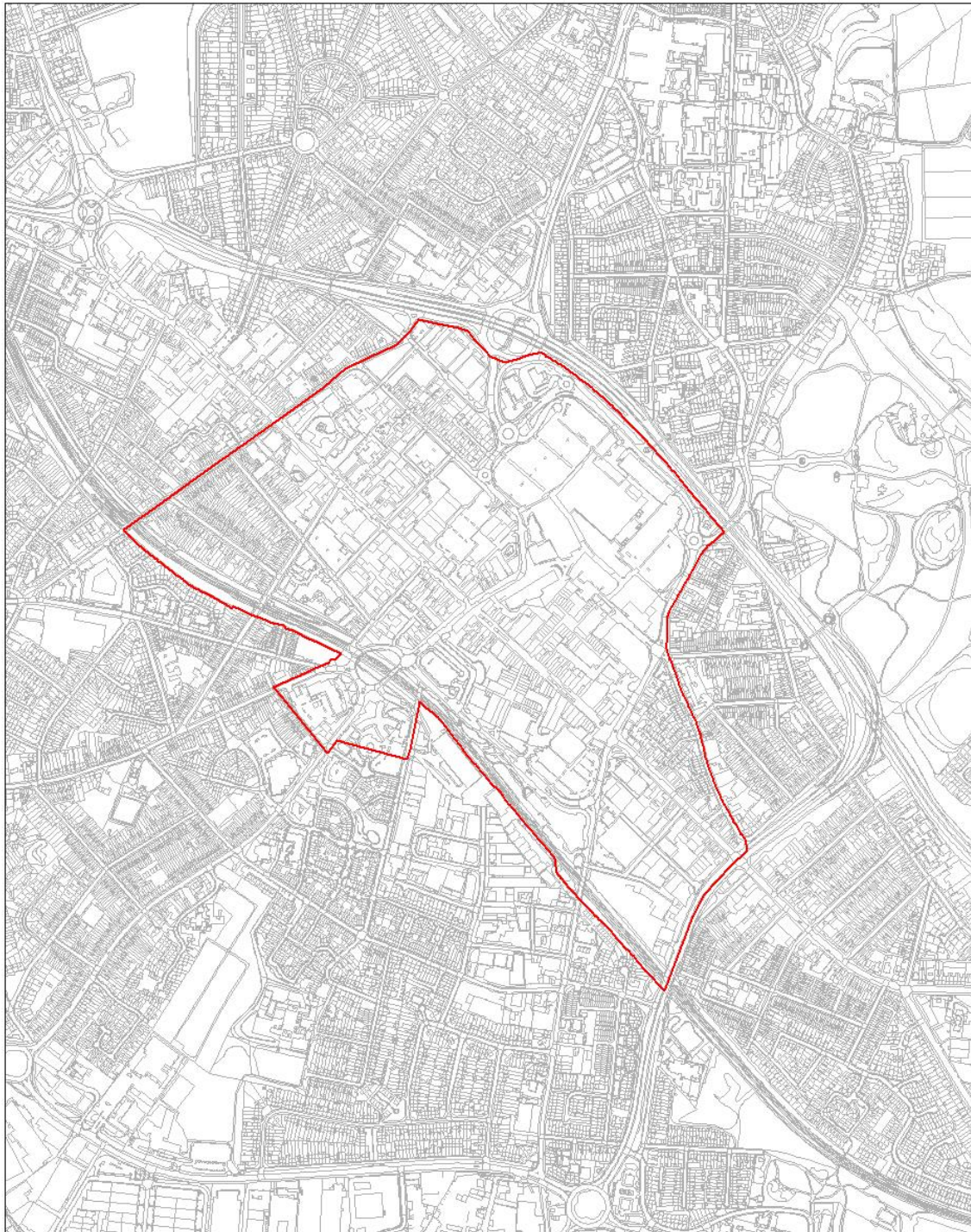


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**West Bromwich Town Centre**

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# Sandwell Development Plan – Draft Consultation and Engagement Action Plan

Consultation Stage	Target Audience	Consultation Methods to be used	Who to Action	Timescale/Target Date
<b>Issues &amp; Options</b> 6 <sup>th</sup> February to 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2023				
Member briefings prior to Cabinet meeting	Elected Members	Member briefings on key elements of Issues & Option Plan and consultation	Planning Officers Comms Team	January
Members of Parliament briefings	Members of Parliament	Briefings on key elements of Issues & Option Plan and consultation	Planning Officers	January
West Midlands Mayor briefing	West Midlands Mayor	Briefing on key elements of Issues & Option Plan and consultation	Planning Officers	January
Update website, ready to go 'live' with Issues & Options consultation post Cabinet /Council decision	All stakeholder	Web content – to include Issues & Options Document and supporting information, online consultation details and summary documents and FAQs	Planning Officers Comms Team	Late January/early February
Public consultation launched Six weeks 6 <sup>th</sup> February to 20 <sup>th</sup> March. (indicative dates).  Publish Issues & Options Consultation document, summary document and supporting documents, evidence base on website and roll out public communication's campaign	All stakeholders	Launch press release, plus 2-3 reminder releases	Planning Officers Comms Team	February
	Duty to Cooperate Bodies/Statutory Bodies	Email to Duty to Cooperate Bodies	Planning Officers	February
	Residents	Articles to be included in Sandwell Herald newspaper and Sandwell Social Media platforms - Digital/social media comms plan	Comms Team	February
	Businesses	Business engagement through business organisations and Sandwell Social Media platforms - Digital/social media comms plan	Planning Officers	February
	Land Owners	Letters and Sandwell Social Media platforms - Digital/social media comms plan	Planning Officers	February
	Internal Directorates	Email to Internal Directorates		
	ESTE Scrutiny Board Planning Committee	Presentation Presentation plus Q&A	Planning Officers Planning Officers	9 <sup>th</sup> March 2023 16 <sup>th</sup> February 2023
Press release /ebulletin to announce deadline for responses to Consultation	All Stakeholders	Press release /ebulletin to announce deadline for responses to Consultation  Press and ebulletin Email to Members	Comms Team	13 <sup>th</sup> March
End of Consultation	All Stakeholders	Press release /ebulletin to announce end of consultation	Comms Team	
<b>Call for Sites</b> 6 <sup>th</sup> February to 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2023				
Open Call for Sites – submit sites through the online map	Elected Members	Email to Members to inform them of the Call for Sites and whether they know of any sites within their wards they would like to put forward	Planning Officers Comms Team	6 <sup>th</sup> February
	Residents	Articles to be included in Sandwell Herald newspaper and Sandwell Social Media platforms - Digital/social media comms plan	Planning Officers Comms Team	6 <sup>th</sup> February
	Businesses	Business engagement through business organisations	Planning Officers	6 <sup>th</sup> February
	Land Owners	Letters and Sandwell Social Media platforms - Digital/social media comms plan	Planning Officers	6 <sup>th</sup> February
	Internal Directorates	Emails	Planning Officers	6 <sup>th</sup> February
Press release /ebulletin to announce deadline for responses to Consultation	All Stakeholders	Press and ebulletin Email to Members	Comms Team	13 <sup>th</sup> March
End of Consultation	All Stakeholders	Press release /ebulletin to announce deadline for responses to Consultation	Comms Team	20 <sup>th</sup> March
<b>Post Issues &amp; Options Consultation and Call for Sites</b>				

Consultation Stage	Target Audience	Consultation Methods to be used	Who to Action	Timescale/Target Date
<b>21<sup>st</sup> March to August 2023</b>				
Press release /ebulletin to confirm closure for Consultation and next steps	All Stakeholders	Press release /ebulletin to confirm closure for Consultation and next steps and update website to confirm end of consultation	Planning Officers Comms Team	Late March/early April
<b>Draft Plan</b>				
<b>October – December 2023</b>				
Member briefings prior to Cabinet meetings and agendas being released	Elected Members	Briefings on key elements of Reg 18 Draft Plan and consultation	Planning Officers Comms Team	September
Member briefings/drop-in sessions as consultation rolls out	Elected Members	Member briefings on key elements of the Reg 18 Draft Plan and consultation	Planning Officers Comms Team	October
MP Briefings to be held	Members of Parliament	Briefings on key elements of Reg 18 Draft Plan and consultation	Planning Officers	October
West Midlands Mayor briefing	West Midlands Mayor	Briefings on key elements of Reg 18 Draft Plan and consultation	Planning Officers	October
Prior (10 days) before publication of the cabinet papers, press release to go out stating Reg 18 Draft Plan to be considered by Cabinet ahead of consultation. Followed by reactive press management	All Stakeholders	Press Release to be issued  Reactive press management to be prepared.	Comms Team	October
Update website, ready to go 'live' with Plan consultation post Cabinet decision	All stakeholders	Web content – to include Draft Plan and supporting information, online consultation details and summary documents and FAQs	Planning Officers Comms Team	October
Public consultation launched Six weeks October to December. (indicative dates).  Publish Publications Plan Consultation document, summary document and supporting documents, evidence base on website and roll out public communication's campaign	All Stakeholders inc Public Members MPs DtC/Statutory Consultees.	Launch press release, plus two to three releases  Update Sandwell MBC website with details of consultation  Articles to be included in Sandwell Herald newspaper and Sandwell Social Media platforms - Digital/social media comms plan  Display Pop up exhibitions in vacant retail units in town centres (to be agreed with Shopping Centre owners) as well as key council buildings  Details to be circulated on residents ebulletin  Internal campaign - staff ebulletin  Consultation events to be held in each of the six towns	Planning Officers Comms Team	October
Press release /ebulletin to announce deadline for responses to Consultation	All Stakeholders	Press and ebulletin Email to Members	Comms Team	December
Press release /ebulletin to announce deadline for responses to Consultation	All Stakeholders	Press and ebulletin Email to Members	Comms Team	December
Press release /ebulletin to confirm closure for Consultation and next steps	All Stakeholders	Press and ebulletin Email to Members Update Website to confirm end of consultation	Comms Team	December

Consultation Stage	Target Audience	Consultation Methods to be used	Who to Action	Timescale/Target Date
<b>Post Draft Plan Consultation</b>				
December 2023 – June 2024				
Feedback on process/next steps via website/media/ebulletins		ebulletin Email to Members Update Website	Planning Officers Comms Team	December/January
<b>Submission Plan</b>				
September – October 2024				
Member briefings prior to Cabinet meetings and agendas being released	Elected Members	Briefings on key elements of the Submission Pan	Planning Officers Comms Team	August/September
Member briefings/drop-in sessions as consultation rolls out	Elected Members	Member briefings on key elements of Submission Plan and consultation	Planning Officers Comms Team	September
MP Briefings to be held	Members of Parliament	Briefings on key elements of Submission Plan and consultation	Planning Officers	September
West Midlands Mayor briefing	West Midlands Mayor	Briefings on key elements of Submission Plan and consultation	Planning Officers	September
Prior (10 days) before publication of the cabinet papers, press release to go out stating Submission Plan to be considered by Cabinet ahead of consultation. Followed by reactive press management	All Stakeholders	Press Release to be issued  Reactive press management to be prepared.	Comms Team	September
Update website, ready to go 'live' with Plan consultation post Cabinet decision	All stakeholders	Web content – to include Submission Plan and supporting information, online consultation details and summary documents and FAQs	Planning Officers Comms Team	September
Public consultation launched Six weeks September to October. (indicative dates).  Publish Publications Plan Consultation document, summary document and supporting documents, evidence base on website and roll out public communication's campaign	All Stakeholders inc Public Members MPs DtC/Statutory Consultees.	Launch press release, plus two to three releases  Update Sandwell MBC website with details of consultation  Articles to be included in Sandwell Herald newspaper and Sandwell Social Media platforms - Digital/social media comms plan  Display Pop up exhibitions in vacant retail units in town centres (to be agreed with Shopping Centre owners) as well as key council buildings  Details to be circulated on residents ebulletin  Internal campaign - staff ebulletin  Consultation events to be held in each of the six towns	Planning Officers Comms Team	September
Press release /ebulletin to announce deadline for responses to Consultation	All Stakeholders	Press and ebulletin Email to Members	Comms Team	October
Press release /ebulletin to announce deadline for responses to Consultation	All Stakeholders	Press and ebulletin Email to Members	Comms Team	October
Press release /ebulletin to confirm closure for Consultation and next steps	All Stakeholders	Press and ebulletin Email to Members Update Website to confirm end of consultation	Comms Team	October/November

Consultation Stage	Target Audience	Consultation Methods to be used	Who to Action	Timescale/Target Date
<b>Submission to Secretary of State</b>				
November 2024				
To be determined				
<b>Examination In Public</b>				
December 2024 – Summer 2025				
To be determined				
<b>Post EIP and Inspector's Report</b>				
Summer 2025 – Autumn 2025				
To be determined				
<b>Adoption</b>				
Late 2025 – Early 2026				
To be determined				

## Report to Cabinet

**7 December 2022**

<b>Subject:</b>	Re-Commissioning of the Pre-& Post Dementia Diagnostic Support Service
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cabinet Member for Adults, Social Care & Health Cllr Suzanne Hartwell
<b>Director:</b>	Rashpal Bishop Director - Adult Social Care
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Maxine Groves Senior Commissioning Manager – Dementia <a href="mailto:Maxine_groves@sandwell.gov.uk">Maxine_groves@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

### 1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Director Adult Social Care be authorised to allocate a sum of £376k exclusive of VAT per annum of Better Care Fund (BCF) investment in a two plus one-year contract for a Pre-& Post Dementia Diagnostic Support Service for Sandwell and to award the contract to the successful tenderer.
- 1.2 That the Director Adult Social Care be authorised to award the Service Funding and contract following a competitive tender process to the successful organisation.
- 1.3 That the Director Adult Social Care be authorised to work jointly with partners to implement the agreed model which will be overseen by the Sandwell Joint Partnership Board.
- 1.4 That the Director of Law and Governance be authorised to execute any documents necessary to give effect to the proposals in recommendation



1.2 for the provision of a Pre- & Post Dementia Diagnostic Support Service and enter into a contract with the successful organisation.

1.5 That Cabinet approve variations to the Contract up to a maximum of 10% of the contract value, should they be necessitated, and that authority to approve such variations be delegated to the appropriate Chief Officer in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member.

1.6 Approve an exemption to rule 8.8 (and any other applicable parts) of the Contract Procedure Rules July 2022 to allow the contract to be awarded to the successful tenderer in the event that the required minimum number of tenders are not received.

## 2 Reasons for Recommendations

2.1 The business case to deliver Sandwell “Better Lives Strategy 2019 – 2024” within the available budget was agreed by the Joint Partnership Board in July 2020 and authorised by Cabinet in October 2020. The strategy provided the mandate to commission a pre and post diagnostic support service based on a lead provider collaborative approach.

2.2 A formal tender process was undertaken from April 2021 resulting in a contract being awarded to Sandwell Crossroads in July 2021 with the service going live in August 2021. In December 2021 Sandwell Crossroads informed the Council of its intention to hand back the contract in December 2021, constituting a breach of that contract. In February 2022 Cabinet approved a direct award for a period of twelve months with a possible three month extension period.

2.3 A partnership of local dementia providers nominated a new lead provider Murray Hall pursuant to a due diligence process which enabled the Council to direct award a new contract for the service.


2.4 The service transferred to Murray Hall on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022 and will terminate on 28 June 2023 or 28 September 2023 if the extension is required.

2.5 To ensure continuity of service and retention of a skilled workforce following the conclusion of this contract a formal competitive process needs to be undertaken.





- 2.6 The Sandwell community dementia support service and pathway is viewed as the national gold standard. The model has been evidenced in the Department of Health and Social Care's new 10-year dementia plan which is awaiting publication. The model was showcased at the Alzheimer's Society national conference in May 2022 and will be presented at the Kings Fund National Conference and the National Dementia Congress in November 2022.
- 2.7 To ensure continued access to this valued service for local people living with the effects of dementia and provide stability for the service it is recommended that contract length should be for two years with the option to extend for a further year.

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

	<p>People live well and age well</p> <p>“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.”</p> <p>The Service will continue to deliver the following benefits for adults in Sandwell by helping to: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve health, well-being and confidence, supporting people to live longer within their communities with a good quality of life.</li> <li>• Enable people to contribute more to local community life</li> <li>• Support people to maintaining their independence at home</li> <li>• Strengthen social networks</li> <li>• Reduce social isolation</li> <li>• Improve resilience for individuals and communities</li> </ul>
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	<p><b>Strong resilient communities</b></p> <p>The Service will continue to work in partnership with the Council, NHS and voluntary and community sector partners to ensure that our most vulnerable citizens feel safe, protected and supported at home and in the community. Making best use of community assets</p>
	<p><b>A strong and inclusive economy</b></p> <p>“Sandwell has a national reputation for getting things done, where all local partners are focused on what really matters in people’s lives and communities.”</p> <p>The Service model and pathway has been held up nationally by NHSE as the gold standard for pre and post dementia diagnostic support.</p> <p>The Service will continue to enhance and improve the reputation of Sandwell as a regional and national leader in promoting the wellbeing and independence of its vulnerable citizens, helping people to have choice and control, live well and reduce the risk of crisis.</p>

#### 4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 Dementia presents a significant and urgent challenge to health and social care both in terms of the number of people affected and the cost of care. It is also a major personal challenge to anyone experiencing symptoms of dementia and to families and carers of people living with dementia. The limited availability of local high quality pre and post-diagnosis support services increases the risk of vulnerable people entering crisis. In turn this results in poorer outcomes for people living with dementia and their families and increased costs for health and social care.

4.2 The evidence supports early diagnosis and intervention as a means of improving quality of life and delaying or avoiding admission to hospital or





care homes.<sup>1</sup> The benefits of this approach set out in the National Dementia Strategy 2009<sup>2</sup> include:

- Reduction in care home placements of up to 28% by providing carer support and counselling at diagnosis.
- Reduction in hospital admissions.
- Improvement in the quality of life for people with dementia following early diagnosis and intervention. Enabling them to feel confident to live well in their own communities.
- Positive effects on the quality of life of family and carers following early diagnosis and intervention, enabling them to feel supported and to live well in their own communities.

## Commissioning Intentions

4.3 Evidence suggests that programmes of this type can reduce future cost pressures resulting from demographic growth of our ageing population. The evidence is very clear about the positive impact on individuals' well-being, enabling them to continue to live well within their local communities.

4.4

4.5 The tender time line and activity align with the necessary procurement processes and requirements, ensuring that the new service will go live in September 2023.

## Service Model

4.6 The new service will be available for those with a memory concern as well as those living with the effects of dementia, including carers, and will provide:

- Access seven days per week from 8am possibly until 10pm [to be finalised prior to tender being published in October 2020]
- A single point of access
- Information, advice (including benefits advice) and signposting to other services, e.g. the new Community Offer
- Care and advanced care planning

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.clahrc-cp.nihr.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/RU\\_2-Screening-for-dementia-Final4Oct121.pdf](https://www.clahrc-cp.nihr.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/RU_2-Screening-for-dementia-Final4Oct121.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/living-well-with-dementia-a-national-dementia-strategy>



- Initial screening and safe and well at home checks on behalf of Primary Care
- A regularly maintained and updated Sandwell Dementia Roadmap.
- Appropriate training for people with memory concerns, and those living with the effects of dementia to meet identified needs. This will also include carers and professionals.

4.7 The referral pathways are inclusive to all with a Sandwell post code. This includes carers who may not have a Sandwell post code but care for a person who does.

## Consultation

4.8 The Better Care Fund Programme team carried out an extensive programme of engagement with a wide range of stakeholders during 2019 to support the development of the dementia strategy. A variety of approaches to maximise reach were implemented, resulting in the strategy having a comprehensive delivery plan. Please see Appendix 1.

## 5 Alternative Options

5.1

## 6 Implications

<p><b>Resources:</b></p>	<p>The service will be fully funded from the Better Care Fund. However, this funding is dependent upon the continued availability of iBCF (improved BCF) funding grant or its future equivalent from the national Better Care Fund programme. This is a risk that has been identified in the Council's strategic risk register which is currently assessed as red. The annual cost will be £376K exclusive of VAT with a total cost for the service of £1,128,000 exclusive of VAT over the three-year period.</p> <p>Following the conclusion of Brexit, high-value notices from the UK are no longer advertised on the OJEU</p>
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	<p>and will instead be advertised on Contracts Finder and Find a Tender Service to ensure compliance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015.</p> <p>There are no implications for council managed property or land.</p>
<p><b>Legal and Governance:</b></p>	<p>The proposed Competitive Tender Process will comply fully with the Council's contract and procurement requirements.</p> <p>The service will be funded from the Sandwell Better Care Fund. The proposed use of these funds to finance the service is entirely consistent with the national conditions for the use of BCF and improved BCF (iBCF) funding.</p> <p>Data used, stored and transferred as part of the delivery of the new service will comply with all current data protection legislation, regulations and Council policies and procedures.</p>
<p><b>Risk:</b></p>	<p>The new service will build strong links with the local communities, working effectively with the Police, NHS and Voluntary and Community Sector organisations, and will ensure that the Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board priorities and practice standards are promoted and followed.</p> <p>The Corporate Risk Management Strategy has been complied with throughout in identifying and assessing the significant risks associated with this proposal. An initial risk register has been produced with no strategic risks identified and minimal project risks.</p> <p>If approved, the recommendations in this report will contribute to the mitigation of the directorate risk in respect of Delayed Transfers of Care (DTC) which is currently assessed as green (Performance with acceptable parameters) and was previously included</p>



	in the strategic risk register. The risk register will be monitored and refreshed on a quarterly basis.
<b>Equality:</b>	An Equality Impact Assessment screening exercise has been carried out for the new service and a full Equality Impact Assessment was not considered to be required on the basis that all delivery partners will need to demonstrate compliance with the Equalities Act 2010 before they are awarded funding to deliver services. The new service is expected to have a positive impact on the local community and Lead Providers will be required by commissioners to ensure equal access to services for people and communities with protected characteristics.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	<p>Benefits to service users and community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced social isolation and increased community connectedness</li> <li>• Preventing or delaying the need for admission into hospital</li> <li>• Supporting people to return home to live as independently as possible</li> <li>• Flexible person-centered services enabling people to have choice and control while continuing to live full and active lives within their communities for longer</li> <li>• Improved mental health and well-being</li> <li>• Income maximisation</li> <li>• Increased carer support</li> <li>• Community cohesion</li> <li>• Supporting community resilience</li> <li>• Improved mental health and well-being services</li> </ul> <p>Benefits to the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative multi-agency partnership working</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing the number of people supported to live well and independently at home within their community and reducing admissions into hospital and care homes</li> <li>• Improved high quality, person centered support</li> </ul>
<b>Social Value</b>	<p>The service specification requires a collaboration of provider organisations to deliver services in each of Sandwell six towns.</p> <p>The service will provide employment opportunities and local volunteers will be recruited to support the service, including young people.</p> <p>The service will make best use of existing community assets.</p>

## 7. Appendices



Dementia

1. Engagement Report feedback\_final 2019.p

## 8. Background Papers

See previous Cabinet reports of 14 October 2020 and 9 February 2022



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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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## Report to Cabinet

7 December 2022

<b>Subject:</b>	Uplands Manor Primary School Making significant changes (prescribed alternations) consultation outcomes
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cabinet Member for Children and Education, Councillor Simon Hackett
<b>Director:</b>	Director of Children and Education, Michael Jarrett
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Rachel Hill, Project Officer School Organisation and Development <a href="mailto:rachel_hill@sandwell.gov.uk">rachel_hill@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

### 1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given for the significant alternation to provide 20 Focus Provision places at Upland Manor Primary School, Addenbrooke Road, Smethwick B67 6HT, following the four-week statutory consultation.


### 2. Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 In June 2022 a report was presented to the Director of Children and Education, and Director of Finance: 'Evolve Programme – Minor Works at Uplands Manor Primary School to provide a Focus Provision Unit (FP)'. The report sought approval for the allocation of the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation grant funding be allocated to fund a Focus Provision Unit at Uplands Manor Primary School.
- 2.2 The Focus Provision Unit will increase the pupil numbers by providing 20 places for children with severe learning disabilities and associated needs. The DfE 'Making Significant Changes (Prescribed Alternations)



to Maintained Schools' requires that when the Local Authority is proposing a significant alteration, i.e. altering a school's existing SEN provision it must consult upon the proposal and make a formal decision to make the alteration permanent.

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

	<p><b>Best start in life for children and young people</b></p> <p>The recommendation in this report supports the desire of the council to focus resources on the specific needs and aspirations of the community. This contributes to the Council's Vision 2030 Ambition 1 – Raising aspirations and resilience, Ambition 3 – Young people to have skills for the future, Ambition 4 – Raising the quality of schools.</p>
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### 4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 As the population of Sandwell grows so does the demand for school places which also includes the demand for places in our special schools. Having undertaken an independent review (EVOLVE Review 2015-2016) of Special Educational Need (SEN) provision in Sandwell, the council and the Joint Executive Head Teacher Group (JEG) identified the need to increase SEN provision by using the full capacities of our schools, including special schools.
- 4.2 This proposal will change the school's current resource base (or Focus Provision) for pupils with Specific Language Disorders to an SEN Unit for children with Severe Learning Difficulties. Over a number of years there has been a reduction in pupils requiring places for Specific Language Disorders within the resource base as these children can now ordinarily have their needs met within their mainstream schools with additional support provided through their Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP). However, there has been a growth in the numbers of primary aged children who have severe learning needs and other associated difficulties requiring provision across Sandwell. A change in designation will accommodate children with more complex SEND needs having a specialist placement within a mainstream school environment. This is a better use of the resource available at the school and will benefit more children.



- 4.3 Building upon the good focused provision already provided by the school, educational standards are expected to be maintained / improved for children who would otherwise be placed in mainstream primary schools, where all their specific needs may not be fully met.
- 4.4 Making significant changes (prescribed alternations) to maintained schools requires the council to conduct a clear and transparent statutory consultation. Consultation must last for 4 weeks from the date of publication.

The local authority is the decision maker and will need to be satisfied that the appropriate fair and open local consultation and/or representation period has been carried out and that the proposer has given full consideration to all the responses received.

Decision-makers should not simply take account of the numbers of people expressing a particular view. Instead, they should give the greatest weight to responses from those stakeholders likely to be most affected by a proposal – especially parents of children at the affected school(s).

Decisions must be made within a period of two months of the end of the representation period or they must be referred to the Schools Adjudicator to

- Reject the proposal
- Approve the proposal without modifications
- Approve the proposal with modifications
- Approve the proposal with or without modifications subject to certain conditions.

Details of the consultation process can be found below.

- 4.5 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) initial screening has been undertaken.

#### 4.6 Consultation (Customers and other Stakeholders)

The consultation was published on 14 September 2022 via the council's consultation page on the council's website. The school informed its school community, parents, carers, staff and governors. It was



published on the school communication on 16 September 2022. It was advertised in the Express and Star on the 27 September 2022.

Consultation ended on 14 October 2022. Responses received from 5 staff members, 5 governors, 1 parent governor and 1 staff governor. All responses were in support of the proposal;

*“This is a much-needed provision, with many pupils with special educational needs struggling to find suitable places. More SEN places are needed within Smethwick and in Sandwell as a whole.”*

*“As an educational provider we need to ensure that children with SEN have the same and best opportunities in life as children without difficulties and disabilities. The local area now has a higher need for this provision, and with our experienced staff this will maximise life chances and offer them opportunities equal to their peers.”*

*“Much needed provision for our area. We are well equipped to run this provision and it will also be of benefit to other SEND children in our school through increased expertise.”*

*“Fantastic provision for children across Sandwell. Much needed.”*

*“It is very much something that is needed to provide the best education for children with additional needs in our community.”*

*“A much-needed facility for the pupils with additional needs.”*

## **5 Alternative Options**

- 5.1 The pupil admission number remains the same and the former children’s centre remains empty. This would leave a shortage of special educational need places in the borough.
- 5.2 There is no alternative accommodation in the borough that could provide the places required for 2022/2023.



## 6 Implications

<p><b>Resources:</b></p>	<p>Financial implications: Capital investment of £249,000 from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation was approved by the Director of Children and Education and Director of Finance in June 2022.</p> <p>Staffing implications: No staffing implications</p> <p>Land implications: No land implications.</p> <p>Building implications: Internal refurbishment of the building by an approved contractor.</p>
<p><b>Legal and Governance:</b></p>	<p>The School Organisation (Prescribed Alternations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013; In relation to provision for special educational needs in a mainstream school -</p> <p>(a)the establishment of a provision that is recognised by the local authority as reserved for children with special educational needs;</p> <p>(b)a change in the type, or types of special educational provision that is recognised by the local authority as reserved for children with special educational needs; or</p> <p>(c)the discontinuance of provision which is recognised by the local authority as reserved for children with special educational needs.</p>
<p><b>Risk:</b></p>	<p>The Corporate Risk Management Strategy has been complied with – to identify and assess the significant risks associated with this decision / project. This includes (but is not limited to) political, legislation, financial, environmental and reputation risks.</p>



	The risk is that the school cannot increase its admission number to provide the focus provision for children with severe learning disabilities and associated needs. Those children would not have a school place and the council would be in breach of its statutory responsibility to provide places.
<b>Equality:</b>	An Equality Impact Assessment initial screening has been undertaken and a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required for this report.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	This proposal ensures that children can attend a school in Sandwell from September 2022 that meets their needs as planned.
<b>Social Value</b>	Ensuring every child has access to a school place, and that parents / carers continue to be able to indicate their individual preferences for school places.

**7. Appendices**

**8. Background Papers**

*None*



# Report to Cabinet

7 December 2022

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Q2 Budget Monitoring 2022/23</b>
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Bob Piper, Finance & Resources
<b>Director:</b>	Simone Hines, Director of Finance
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Rebecca Maher – Assistant Director - Finance <a href="mailto:Rebecca_Maher@sandwell.gov.uk">Rebecca_Maher@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

## 1 Recommendations

### That Cabinet:

- 1.1 Note the financial monitoring position as at 30 September 2022 and refer the report to the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board for consideration and comment.
- 1.2 Approve the following budget virements above £1m in line with the revised delegated limits for Cabinet Members and Directors: -

Virements above £1m for Cabinet Approval	£'000	£'000
Law & Governance - Removal of Legal fee income	1,300	
Corporate - Removal of legal fee income		1,300
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,300</b>	<b>1,300</b>

- 1.3 Approve an allocation of £356,634 Covid funding to Sandwell Children's Trust to cover pressures relating to the pandemic experienced by them during 2021/22.

## 2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Section 151 of the 1972 Local Government Act requires the Chief Financial Officer to ensure the proper administration of the council's financial affairs. Budgetary control, which includes the regular monitoring



and reporting of budgets is an essential element in discharging this statutory responsibility. The recommended treatment of the year end variances supports the financial sustainability of the council.

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

The Council's financial status helps to underpin the Council's Corporate Plan and the associated aspirations.

### 4 Context and Key Issues

#### General Fund Outturn

4.1 The overall projected outturn position for the General Fund is an overspend of £1.927m. The overall projected net directorate outturn variance, excluding the HRA, is an overspend of £4.200m following the use of reserves. The variance for each directorate is summarised in the following table and analysed in more detail within Appendix 1.

Area	Appendix	Total Budget £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Variance from Budget £'000	(Use of) Reserve & RCCO £'000	Corporate Funding of COVID Pressures £'000	Projected Variance Q2 £'000
Corporate Management	1A	(200)	(29)	171	0	0	171
Borough Economy	1B	64,026	68,721	4,695	(4,655)	(40)	0
Adult Social Care	1C	80,421	87,990	7,569	(6,024)	(905)	640
Regeneration & Growth	1D	9,572	13,232	3,660	(2,505)	0	1,155
Housing	1E	2,209	3,184	975	(587)	0	388
Children's Services	1F	88,548	92,134	3,586	(2,563)	0	1,023
Business Strategy & Change	1G	12,078	13,359	1,281	(1,084)	0	197
Finance	1H	9,755	13,995	4,240	(3,311)	(442)	487
Law & Governance	1I	3,597	4,126	529	(390)	0	139
<b>Net Service Expenditure (ex PH)</b>		<b>270,006</b>	<b>296,712</b>	<b>26,706</b>	<b>(21,119)</b>	<b>(1,387)</b>	<b>4,200</b>
Public Health	1J	64	1,318	1,254	(1,254)	0	0
<b>Total Net Service Expenditure</b>		<b>270,070</b>	<b>298,030</b>	<b>27,960</b>	<b>(22,373)</b>	<b>(1,387)</b>	<b>4,200</b>
Capital Charge Adjustment		(26,461)	(26,461)	0	0	0	0
External Interest Payments		16,555	16,755	200	0	0	200
Interest/Dividend Receipts		(3,753)	(4,999)	(1,246)	0	0	(1,246)
West Midlands Transport Levy		13,117	13,117	0	0	0	0
West Midlands Magistrates Court		41	41	0	0	0	0
Environment Agency (Flood Defence)		88	88	0	0	0	0
<b>Net Service Expenditure before use of balances</b>		<b>269,657</b>	<b>296,571</b>	<b>26,914</b>	<b>(22,373)</b>	<b>(1,387)</b>	<b>3,154</b>
Use of Balances/RCCO/Central Items		(32,614)	(27,994)	4,620	(22,819)	0	(18,199)
Collection Fund Deficit		16,972	16,972	0	16,972	0	16,972
Council Tax		(117,967)	(117,967)	0	0	0	0
Business Rates		(136,049)	(136,049)	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Net General Fund Expenditure (inc Central Items and use of balances)</b>		<b>(1)</b>	<b>31,533</b>	<b>31,534</b>	<b>(28,220)</b>	<b>(1,387)</b>	<b>1,927</b>
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	1K	(317)	(907)	(590)	(480)	0	(1,070)
Individual Schools Budgets (ISB)	1L		(1,040)	(1,040)			(1,040)
<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>		<b>(318)</b>	<b>29,586</b>	<b>29,904</b>	<b>(28,700)</b>	<b>(1,387)</b>	<b>(183)</b>





- 4.2 Directorates have held a number of vacancies during quarter one and quarter two and the savings from these have been moved into a corporate budget to be used to offset the overall overspend against the General Fund. A piece of work is ongoing to identify if any of these vacancies can be taken as long-term savings, whilst being mindful of the impact that recruitment difficulties is having in several service areas.
- 4.3 The cost of living crisis is having a significant impact across the council both in terms of inflationary pressures and an increase in the agreed pay award compared to the amount included in the original budget which adds approximately £8.3m to the pay bill for 2022/23.

### Savings Monitoring

- 4.4 Directorates planned to make a number of savings in order to balance the budget for 2022/23. Progress against achieving these savings is being monitored regularly by Leadership Team. Any overspends because of these savings not being achieved are included within projections for 2022/23. However, unachieved savings may also have an impact on the budget position for future years.
- 4.5 The following savings are currently delayed and are therefore of concern: -

		£000
Adults	Undertake best value reviews on 50 cases where the weekly commitment of care and support is £2,200+ per week	442
Adults	Undertake asset / strength based reviews on 412 cases where the weekly commitment of care and support is under £100.00 per week	256
Adults	Develop an alternative approach to double handed care calls.	655
Adults	To use 18 current vacant lets at Walker Grange for people with dementia rather than placing in market.	355
Adults	To ringfence 15 current vacant lets at Willow Gardens for placement of people with dementia rather than placing them in the market.	296
Adults	Decommission non-statutory Community Advocacy Services	25
Borough Economy	SLT	186
Regen & Growth	Ending of Court House lease in July 2022	130
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,345</b>



4.6 The shortfall against 'double handed care calls' is due to a later implementation of this and therefore only a part-year saving is possible in 2022/23. It is anticipated that a full-year saving will be achieved in 2023/24. Alternative savings of £0.490m have also been identified by Adult Social Care to replace some of those above but this still leaves a shortfall of approximately £1.100m across all directorates. Directors will need to identify savings to replace any that are judged to be unachievable rather than delayed. Alternatively, these unachievable savings will need to be included as part of budget planning for 2023/24.

#### 4.7 **Corporate Management (1A)**

4.8 The projected outturn for Corporate Management is an overspend of £0.171m. The main reason for this is the cost of the external commissioners for which there is currently no budget.

#### **Borough Economy (1B)**

4.9 The projected outturn variance against budget for Borough Economy (prior to reserve transfers) is an overspend of £4.695m. The main reasons for this overspend are an underachievement of licensing income and inflationary pressures relating to utilities costs in Highways and the waste contract.

4.10 The directorate is planning to use £3.321m of directorate earmarked reserves and £1.334m of corporate reserves as outlined in Appendix 3. The corporate reserves being used are the Commonwealth Games reserve (£0.202m) and the Financial Planning reserve (£1.132m). The revised projected outturn after this use of reserves is breakeven.

4.11 The Financial Planning Reserve was established as part of the 2022/23 budget process to manage in-year pressures, with rising inflation noted as a particular risk to the Council's budget position.

#### **Adult Social Care (1C)**

4.12 The projected variance against budget for Adults Social Care (prior to reserve transfers) is an overspend of £7.569m. The main reasons for this are the increased cost of placements, increased care rates for complex care and supported living packages, and the impact of the additional pay award of 7% across the directorate.

4.13 The directorate is planning to make use of £2.736m of the additional Social Care Grant, reserve approved for increase in care rates of £2.6m and other smaller Adult Social Care reserves. This has resulted in a forecast overspend of £0.640m. The main reason for this movement in



forecast position is due to increasing the pay award forecast from 5% to 7%.

### **Regen & Growth (1D)**

- 4.14 The projected variance against budget for Regen and Growth (prior to reserve transfers) is an overspend of £3.660m. The main reasons for this are the impact of the additional pay award and utilities inflation. The directorate also has a number of one-off projects that are planned to be funded from the carry forward reserve which was created at the end of 2021/22. Other pressures include a continuing pressure on markets income and business rates costs for void properties.
- 4.15 The directorate is planning to use £2.414m of the directorate earmarked reserves, predominantly the carry forward from 2021/22 as outlined above. In addition, the directorate will be drawing down £0.091m of the corporate Commonwealth Games reserve. The revised projected outturn following this use of reserves is an overspend of £1.155m.

### **Housing General Fund (1E)**

- 4.16 The projected variance against budget for Housing (prior to reserve transfers) is an overspend of £0.975m. The main reasons for this are the impact of the additional pay award together with a review of floating support and transformation work which will be funded from the carry forward reserve. There are also pressures arising from additional security requirements at Granges and an under-achievement of income for garages.
- 4.17 The directorate is planning to use £0.587m of directorate reserves which results in a revised projected overspend of £0.388m.

### **Childrens Services (1F)**

- 4.18 The projected variance against budget for Children's Services is an overspend of £3.586m before applying reserves. The main reasons for this are the impact of the pay award for the service and Sandwell Children's Trust and also the cost of exit packages as a result of restructuring within the directorate.
- 4.19 Sandwell Children's Trust is also experiencing pressures from exceptionally high cost placements as well as recruitment and retention issues and is forecasting a shortfall of £2.517m as at its latest financial position against its budgeted surplus of £1.900m. The projected deficit against the contract sum is therefore £0.570m. This is due to a



combination of factors, including an increase in the number of children with complex needs and a substantial increase in the weekly cost of placements compared to the MTFP assumptions.

- 4.20 The Council and SCT have discussed the current financial position and options to take corrective action. The Trust already has a savings target of £2.3m to achieve in 2022/23, with some risks around the ability to fully deliver the savings in relation to placements. SCT are considering a range of innovative ways to source and retain social workers and have developed a Workforce Strategy to take this forward. The Trust has also commissioned external support to undertake a review of the Trust Workforce Strategy and approach to recruitment and retention.
- 4.21 A number of non-operational vacancies are being frozen and in year savings targets for the remainder of the organisation have been increased to partly compensate for increased operational costs.
- 4.22 The Trust also has a Transformation Programme in place which is currently focussing on a review of Edge of Care services, with the objective of improving service delivery so that families are supported early enough and with the appropriate level of intervention to prevent the need for expensive statutory intervention, and a reorganisation of the Front Door to improve the application of thresholds and reduce the number of inappropriate referrals that waste time and resources whilst still managing safe-guarding risks effectively.
- 4.23 The annual Contract Sum agreement with Sandwell Children's Trust provides for the Council to fund the cost of the pay award each year. As this was estimated at 2% when the Contract Sum was agreed, in line with the Council's assumption in its budget, the Council will need to fund the increased costs of £2.400m.
- 4.24 Following the use of reserves, the projected outturn position for Children's Services is an overspend of £1.023m.

### **Business Strategy & Change (1G)**

- 4.25 The projected variance against budget for BSC (prior to reserve transfers) is an overspend of £1.281m. This will be offset by the use of reserves to fund one-off projects of £0.468m. Corporate reserves of £0.342m are planned to be used to fund exit packages for staff and £0.274m for the corporate improvement plan work. The revised projection following this is an overspend of £0.197m.



## Finance (1H)

- 4.26 The projected variance against budget for Finance (prior to reserve transfers) is an overspend of £4.240m. One of the main reasons for this is expenditure relating to the upgrade to Oracle Fusion which is being funded from an earmarked corporate reserve. There are also agency staff working on corporate improvement projects that are being funded from the Corporate Improvement Plan reserve.
- 4.27 Following the use of reserves, the projected outturn for Finance is an overspend of £0.487m, which is largely due to the increased pay award and additional interim posts.

## Law & Governance (1I)

- 4.28 The projected variance against budget for L&G (prior to reserve transfers) is an overspend of £0.529m. However, £0.390m expenditure is planned to be drawn down from the directorate's general reserve to cover one-off projects, some linked to the Corporate Improvement Plan. Additionally, there is a revenue contribution to capital expenditure of £0.237m. This results in a projected overspend of £0.139m.

## Public Health (1J)

- 4.29 Public Health is a ringfenced grant and therefore any over or underspend has to be transferred into a specific Public Health Reserve. The forecast outturn variance is currently an overspend of £1.254m before application of reserves. As stated above, this overspend will be funded from existing PH reserve. Therefore, the end of year forecast, after reserve utilisation, is a nil variance.

## Housing Revenue Account (1K)

- 4.30 The projected variance against budget for the HRA (prior to reserve transfers) is an underspend of £0.590m. This is due to a number of vacancies across the services areas funded from the HRA account.

## Dedicated Schools Grant (1L)

- 4.31 The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is forecasting to underspend by £1.040m. The surplus DSG reserve at the end of 2021/22 is £4.070m which means the surplus DSG at the end of this year is forecast to be £5.110m. The entire in-year underspend is in High Needs Block.

## Central Items/RCCO/Use of Balances

- 4.32 The council has several centrally held budgets. The nature of these is such that they are not within a specific directorate's control. The council



also makes use of balances towards one-off expenditure and as Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay.

- 4.33 The net projected outturn variance against these budgets is an underspend of £16.199m and more detail is provided in Appendix 2. The main reason for this is the additional Section 31 grant that was received to fund the Collection Fund deficit of £16.972m that was brought forward from 2021/22. This deficit arose mainly as a result of the additional Business Rates reliefs that were granted to businesses by Central Government to assist with the continuing impact of the COVID pandemic.

### Use of Reserves

- 4.34 At the end of 2021/22 £154.971m was held in earmarked reserves. Three new reserves have been created, and adjustments made to the accounting treatment for some grants, which increased the opening balance to £166.019m. During the year, it is projected that £45.429m of these balances will be used leaving a remaining balance of £120.590m. A significant proportion of the use of reserves is the Business Rates S31 grant reserve, which is maintained due to timing differences in the accounting treatment for business rates income. Further detail is provided in Appendix 3.

### Capital

- 4.35 Expenditure on the Council's capital programme is forecast to be **£171.601m** during 2022/23. Appendix 4 provides a detailed breakdown of the programme.
- 4.36 The main changes that have taken place since the 2021/22 outturn are as follows: -
- An increase of £0.236m in the Law & Governance budget in respect of the introduction of a Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO) in relation to the Rowley Cemetery scheme.
  - An increase of £4.567m in the Borough Economy budget mainly in respect of the introduction of a £3.147m budget for Highways Inflation Pressures in relation to Infrastructure (£2.147m Main Programme & £1.000m RCCO from Reserves) this is subject to the approval of a report going to Cabinet in November 2022. Also, the introduction of a £1.420m Street Lighting SON to LED budget funded by Prudential Borrowing (Spend to Save) which is also subject to approval at Cabinet in November 2022.



- An increase of £6.467m in the Regeneration & Growth budget in respect of monies received from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) in respect of several Towns Fund Major schemes.
- A decrease of £7.082m in the Housing & Assets budget in respect of slippage into future years in relation to the Disabled Facilities Grant schemes for Private Disabled Adaptations in homes across the borough.
- An increase of £0.306m in the Children & Education budget mainly to reflect the use of Basic Need & School Condition resources to continue various school improvement schemes.
- A decrease of £18.082m in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget mainly in respect of the re-profiling of New Build (£7.4m) and High-Rise projects (£10.7m) into 2023/24, due to COVID and Procurement delays effecting start on site

### **Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

- 4.37 Section 106 monies are paid by developers towards the cost of providing community and social infrastructure but must be used for specific purposes. The Council currently holds £3.390m in Section 106 monies and is forecasting to spend £0.667m of this leaving a remaining balance of £2.723m.
- 4.38 The Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge that local authorities can set on new development to raise funds to help fund the infrastructure, facilities and services which are needed to support new homes and businesses in the areas. The Council currently holds £2.787m in the Capital 80% pot CIL monies and is not forecasting any expenditure against this.

## **5 Conclusion**

- 5.1 The Council is facing a challenging financial position for 2022/23, largely due to the impact of inflation. The additional forecast cost from the increased pay award and inflation on key services is in the region of £10m.
- 5.2 Leadership Team and the Finance Team have carried out a review of underspends from 2021/22 and vacant posts in order to mitigate the inflationary increases, and the result of these reviews are reflected in the forecast outturn position. Work is ongoing to identify further corrective action to reduce the budget deficit as the Council does not have sufficient unallocated reserves to cover the current forecast overspend.



## 6 Alternative Options

- 6.1 There are limited alternatives to the recommendations included in this report. Cabinet could decide not to allow the proposed use of reserves by directorates, but this would increase the projected overspend and result in a further reduction in the council's general fund balance.

## 7 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	Resource implications are contained within the main body of the report.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	No direct implications arising from the recommendations.
<b>Risk:</b>	This information is contained within the main body of this report.
<b>Equality:</b>	No direct implications arising from the recommendations.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	No direct implications arising from the recommendations.
<b>Social Value</b>	No direct implications arising from the recommendations.

## 8 Appendices

- App 1 Outturn Summary for Directorates
- App 2 Central Items
- App 3 Reserves
- App 4 Capital
- App 5 CIL and S106 Funding

## 9 Background Papers

None





2022/23 Revenue Monitoring Summary

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Area	Appendix	Total Budget £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Variance from Budget £'000	(Use of) Reserve & RCCO £'000	Corporate Funding of COVID Pressures £'000	Projected Variance Q2 £'000
Corporate Management	1A	(200)	(29)	171	0	0	171
Borough Economy	1B	64,026	68,721	4,695	(4,655)	(40)	0
Adult Social Care	1C	80,421	87,990	7,569	(6,024)	(905)	640
Regeneration & Growth	1D	9,572	13,232	3,660	(2,505)	0	1,155
Housing	1E	2,209	3,184	975	(587)	0	388
Children's Services	1F	88,548	92,134	3,586	(2,563)	0	1,023
Business Strategy & Change	1G	12,078	13,359	1,281	(1,084)	0	197
Finance	1H	9,755	13,995	4,240	(3,311)	(442)	487
Law & Governance	1I	3,597	4,126	529	(390)	0	139
<b>Net Service Expenditure (ex PH)</b>		<b>270,006</b>	<b>296,712</b>	<b>26,706</b>	<b>(21,119)</b>	<b>(1,387)</b>	<b>4,200</b>
Public Health	1J	64	1,318	1,254	(1,254)	0	0
<b>Total Net Service Expenditure</b>		<b>270,070</b>	<b>298,030</b>	<b>27,960</b>	<b>(22,373)</b>	<b>(1,387)</b>	<b>4,200</b>
Capital Charge Adjustment		(26,461)	(26,461)	0	0		0
External Interest Payments		16,555	16,755	200	0		200
Interest/Dividend Receipts		(3,753)	(4,999)	(1,246)	0		(1,246)
West Midlands Transport Levy		13,117	13,117	0	0		0
West Midlands Magistrates Court		41	41	0	0		0
Environment Agency (Flood Defence)		88	88	0	0		0
<b>Net Service Expenditure before use of balances</b>		<b>269,657</b>	<b>296,571</b>	<b>26,914</b>	<b>(22,373)</b>	<b>(1,387)</b>	<b>3,154</b>
Use of Balances/RCCO/Central Items		(32,614)	(27,994)	4,620	(22,819)	0	(18,199)
Collection Fund Deficit		16,972	16,972	0	16,972		16,972
Council Tax		(117,967)	(117,967)	0			0
Business Rates		(136,049)	(136,049)	0			0
<b>Total Net General Fund Expenditure (inc Central Items and use of balances)</b>		<b>(1)</b>	<b>31,533</b>	<b>31,534</b>	<b>(28,220)</b>	<b>(1,387)</b>	<b>1,927</b>
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	1K	(317)	(907)	(590)	(480)	0	(1,070)
Individual Schools Budgets (ISB)	1L		(1,040)	(1,040)			(1,040)
<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>		<b>(318)</b>	<b>29,586</b>	<b>29,904</b>	<b>(28,700)</b>	<b>(1,387)</b>	<b>(183)</b>

Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of) Reserves/ RCCO	Corporate Funding of COVID-19 Pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Chief Executive	376	551	175	0	0	175
Corporate Management	(576)	(580)	(4)	0	0	(4)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(200)</b>	<b>(29)</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>171</b>

# Borough Economy

# APPENDIX 1B

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Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of) Reserves/ RCCO	Corporate Funding of COVID-19 Pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Contracts, Projects, Strategy & Policy	35,788	37,177	1,389	(3,759)	0	(2,370)
Highways Services	16,448	17,776	1,328	(128)	0	1,200
Green Spaces, Greens	3,095	3,995	900	(607)	(40)	253
Public Protection and Community	3,270	3,994	724	(51)	0	673
Libraries, Archives and Heritage	4,819	5,244	425	(110)	0	315
Directorate Management	606	535	(71)	0	0	(71)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>64,026</b>	<b>68,721</b>	<b>4,695</b>	<b>(4,655)</b>	<b>(40)</b>	<b>0</b>

Adult Social Care

APPENDIX 1C

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Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of) Reserves/ RCCO	Corporate Funding of COVID-19 Pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Management Team	1,499	1,747	248	(145)		103
Business Management	589	511	(78)			(78)
Social Work & Therapy	4,585	6,243	1,658	(43)	(905)	710
External Placements	64,059	68,848	4,789	(5,701)		(912)
Integrated Hub	663	1,450	787	(60)		727
Direct Services	6,203	6,747	544	(158)		386
Commissioning	2,821	2,525	(296)	0		(296)
Better Care Fund	2	(81)	(83)	83		0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>80,421</b>	<b>87,990</b>	<b>7,569</b>	<b>(6,024)</b>	<b>(905)</b>	<b>640</b>

Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of) Reserves/ RCCO	Corporate Funding of COVID-19 Pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Growth and Spatial Planning Service	2,444	3,166	722	(1,121)	0	(399)
Development Planning and Building	662	793	131	(114)	0	17
Strategic Assets and Land Service	5,557	8,208	2,651	(1,149)	0	1,502
Management	909	1,065	156	(121)	0	35
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9,572</b>	<b>13,232</b>	<b>3,660</b>	<b>(2,505)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,155</b>

## Housing & Assets

## APPENDIX 1E

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Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of) Reserves/ RCCO	Corporate Funding of COVID-19 Pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Community Partnerships and Housing Solutions	1,060	1,412	352	(200)	0	152
Income Management and Money	1,252	1,748	496	(387)	0	109
Tenancy & Estate Management	202	241	39	0	0	39
Management	(767)	(568)	199	0	0	199
	462	351	(111)	0	0	(111)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,209</b>	<b>3,184</b>	<b>975</b>	<b>(587)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>388</b>

# Children's Service

# Appendix 1F

Page 5/3

Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of) Reserves/ RCCO	Corporate Funding of COVID-19 Pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Director of Children's Services	8,668	9,663	995	(164)		831
Education Support Services	550	525	(25)			(25)
Inclusive Learning	753	728	(24)			(24)
Children & Education Support Services	8,938	9,035	97			97
Commissioning, Partnerships & Improvement	8,644	8,789	145			145
Sandwell Children's Trust	60,995	63,394	2,399	(2,399)		0
Children's Social Care	0	0	0			0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>88,548</b>	<b>92,134</b>	<b>3,586</b>	<b>(2,563)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,023</b>

Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of) Reserves/ RCCO	Corporate Funding of COVID-19 Pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Director	(24)	162	186	0		186
ICT	5,434	5,479	45	(90)	0	(45)
Human Resources	3,776	4,198	422	(355)	0	67
Strategy and Performance	989	1,145	156	(99)	0	57
Communications and Corporate Affairs	940	848	(92)	0	0	(92)
Corporate Customer	963	1,144	181	(157)	0	24
Corporate Transformation	0	383	383	(383)	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,078</b>	<b>13,359</b>	<b>1,281</b>	<b>(1,084)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>197</b>



Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of) Reserves/ Corporate Resources/ RCCO	Corporate Funding of COVID-19 Pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Directorate	192	189	(3)	0	0	(3)
Financial Management	4,063	7,797	3,734	(3,243)	(312)	179
Revenues and Benefits	2,583	2,946	363	(68)	(30)	265
Business Management	2,917	3,063	146	0	(100)	46
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9,755</b>	<b>13,995</b>	<b>4,240</b>	<b>(3,311)</b>	<b>(442)</b>	<b>487</b>

Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of) Reserves/ Corporate Resources/ RCCO	Corporate Funding of COVID-19 Pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Directorate	82	417	335	0	0	335
Governance Services	2,145	2,075	(70)	(62)	0	(132)
Registration Services	(1,752)	(1,558)	194	(133)	0	61
Legal	3,121	3,191	70	(195)	0	(125)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,597</b>	<b>4,126</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>(390)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>139</b>

## Public Health

## APPENDIX 1J

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Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of) Reserves/ RCCO	Corporate Funding of COVID-19 Pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Communicable Disease	3,313	3,043	(270)			(270)
Long Term Conditions	3,048	2,743	(305)			(305)
Childrens	10,429	10,536	107			107
Substance Misuse & Smoking	3,747	3,808	61	(92)		(31)
Wider Determinants	4,364	4,546	182	(151)		31
Public Health Management	2,345	2,458	113	(112)		1
Public Health Grant	(25,816)	(25,816)	(0)			(0)
Public Health Savings Target	(1,366)	0	1,366	(899)		467
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>1,318</b>	<b>1,254</b>	<b>(1,254)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

# Housing Revenue Account

# APPENDIX 1K

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Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of) Reserves/ RCCO	Corporate Funding of COVID-19 Pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Asset Management & Maintenance	39,674	39,854	180	(180)		0
Business Excellence	3,305	4,055	750	(750)		0
Services in Borough Economy	3,555	3,580	25			25
Corporate HRA	48,901	48,885	(16)			(16)
Housing Management	14,395	13,746	(649)			(649)
PFI	(594)	(1,044)	(450)	450		0
Rents & Other Charges	(117,153)	(117,583)	(430)			(430)
SLA's	7,600	7,600	0			0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(317)</b>	<b>(907)</b>	<b>(590)</b>	<b>(480)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(1,070)</b>

Directorate Individual Schools Budget

APPENDIX 1L

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Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of) Reserves/ RCCO	Corporate Funding of COVID-19 Pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Individual Schools Budget		(1,040)	(1,040)			(1,040)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(1,040)</b>	<b>(1,040)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(1,040)</b>

Central Items Monitoring

Appendix 2

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Central Item	Annual Target Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of) Reserves/ RCCO	Corporate Funding of COVID-19 Pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Local Authority Subscriptions	104	124	20			20
Wolverhampton: WMCC and WMRE	45	26	(19)			(19)
Combined Authority	1,660	1,660	0			0
External Audit Fee	144	316	172			172
New Homes Bonus Grant	(786)	(786)	0			0
No Recourse to Public Funds	531	1,148	617			617
Business Rates Compensation Grant	(28,253)	(28,253)	0	(17,100)		(17,100)
Corporate Projects	1,000	1,020	20			20
Insurance	(395)	(395)	0			0
Bank Charges	335	353	18			18
Airport Rent Income	(100)	(100)	0			0
Apprenticeship Levy	480	480	0			0
Past Service Pension Costs	5,178	5,178	0			0
Local Welfare Provision	0	0	0			0
Housing Benefits	501	606	105			105
Pensions General	4,560	4,560	0			0
Coroners	352	399	47			47
Members Allowances	1,474	1,450	(24)			(24)
Public Law Fees	366	336	(30)			(30)
Special Events	25	0	(25)			(25)
Templink	(429)	(429)	0			0
COVID-19 Facilities	0	0	0			0
COVID-19 Emergency Funding	0	5,719	5,719	(5,719)		0
COVID-19 Containing Outbreak	0	0	0			0
COVID-19 Local Council Tax	0	0	0			0
COVID-19 Restart Grant	0	0	0			0
COVID-19 Local Restriction Support	0	0	0			0
COVID-19 Business Support Grants	0	0	0			0
COVID-19 Test and Trace	0	0	0			0
COVID Funding - Collection Fund	(1,900)	(1,900)	0			0
COVID Funding - Airport Dividends	(1,488)	(1,488)	0			0
Building Schools for the Future	400	400	0			0
Lower Tier Services Grant	(596)	(596)	0			0
New Services Grant 2022/23	(7,015)	(7,015)	0			0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(23,809)</b>	<b>(17,189)</b>	<b>6,620</b>	<b>(22,819)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(16,199)</b>

This will be used to populate the Central Items Appendix.

## Reserves

## Appendix 3

Earmarked Reserve	Balance as at 31 March 2022	Projected use / (addition to) in year	Projected Balance as at 31 March 2023
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Corporate Management</b>			
Kickstart Revaluation (NEW 2022/23)	(1,553)		(1,553)
	<b>(1,553)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(1,553)</b>
<b>Borough Economy</b>			
Portway Lifestyle Centre	(730)	(72)	(802)
Physical Activity Board	0		0
Borough Economy General Reserve	(1,652)	1,354	(298)
Dartmouth Park HLF	(265)	40	(225)
Aquatics Centre UOW	(100)	0	(100)
SERCO Waste Commitments	(3,816)	1,999	(1,817)
BE Grant Carryforward Reserve	(11)	0	(11)
	<b>(6,574)</b>	<b>3,321</b>	<b>(3,253)</b>
<b>Adults</b>			
Adult Social Care General Reserve	(3,745)	777	(2,968)
Better Care Fund	(10,660)	(89)	(10,749)
	<b>(14,405)</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>(13,717)</b>
<b>Regen &amp; Growth</b>			
R&G General Reserve	(2,302)	2,139	(163)
Sinking Fund Central 6th Building	(1,096)	0	(1,096)
Forge Mill Farm Demolition	(230)	0	(230)
School Repair Reserve	(120)	84	(36)
R&G Grant Carryforward Reserve	(404)	140	(264)
R&G Capital Project Support	(6,777)	51	(6,726)
	<b>(10,929)</b>	<b>2,414</b>	<b>(8,515)</b>
<b>Housing</b>			
H&A General Reserve	(442)		(442)
H&A Grant Carryforward	(1,146)	587	(559)
	<b>(1,588)</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>(1,001)</b>
<b>Childrens Services</b>			
Children's Services General Reserve	(1,589)		(1,589)
SCT Reserve	(2,636)	1,899	(737)
CS Grant Reserve	(14)		(14)
	<b>(4,239)</b>	<b>1,899</b>	<b>(2,340)</b>
<b>Business Strategy &amp; Change</b>			
BSC General Reserve	(715)	273	(442)
ICT Refresh	(1,747)	0	(1,747)
	<b>(2,462)</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>(2,189)</b>
<b>Finance</b>			
Finance General Reserve	(2,171)	68	(2,103)
Sandwell Children's Trust	(45)	33	(12)
	<b>(2,216)</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>(2,115)</b>
<b>Law &amp; Governance</b>			
L&G General Reserve	(1,236)	565	(671)
POCA	(833)		(833)
	<b>(2,069)</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>(1,504)</b>
<b>Public Health</b>			
Learning for Public Health	(502)	112	(391)
Public Health Grant Reserve	(9,481)	899	(8,582)
Public Health Earmarked Reserves	(572)	244	(328)
	<b>(10,555)</b>	<b>1,254</b>	<b>(9,301)</b>
<b>Total Directorate Reserves</b>	<b>(56,590)</b>	<b>11,102</b>	<b>(45,488)</b>
<b>Finance - Central Items</b>			
Insurance Reserve	(7,232)		(7,232)
COVID Emergency Funding	(16,931)	5,719	(11,212)
S31 Relief Grant	(30,896)	17,100	(13,796)
Finance Grant Reserve	(11,875)		(11,875)
	<b>(66,934)</b>	<b>22,819</b>	<b>(44,115)</b>
<b>ISB</b>			
BSF FM Sinking Fund	(3,365)		(3,365)
BSF PFI Sinking Fund	(4,680)		(4,680)
Post LAC Pupil Premium Grant	(114)		(114)
	<b>(8,159)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(8,159)</b>
<b>Corporate Items</b>			
General Capital Reserve	(4,000)		(4,000)
New Asset System	(500)		(500)
Exit Packages	(2,052)	942	(1,110)
Pay Award	(1,000)		(1,000)
Oracle Fusion	(3,231)	1,946	(1,285)
Business Rates Volatility Reserve	(7,000)		(7,000)
Invest to Save Reserve	(3,000)	195	(2,805)
Corporate Improvement Plan	(1,436)	600	(836)
Commonwealth Games	(1,393)	293	(1,100)
Cemetery RCCO Reserve	(1,446)		(1,446)
Social Care Grant (NEW 2022/23)	(6,178)	6,000	(178)
Financial Planning Reserve (NEW 2022/23)	(2,500)	1,532	(968)
Climate Change (NEW 2022/23)	(600)		(600)
	<b>(34,336)</b>	<b>11,508</b>	<b>(22,828)</b>
<b>Total Non-Directorate Reserves</b>	<b>(109,429)</b>	<b>34,327</b>	<b>(75,102)</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(166,019)</b>	<b>45,429</b>	<b>(120,590)</b>

## SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## CAPITAL MONITORING 2022/2023 - PERIOD 6 SEPTEMBER

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SUMMARY	Original Budget 2022/23 (Main Programme)	Additional Approvals / Adjustments	Re-Profile to Future Years	Revised Budget 2022/23 (Main Programme)	Self Financing	Total Budget 2022/23	2022/23			(Surplus) / Deficit for the Year
							Actual Spend to Date	Remaining Spend	Total Forecast Expenditure	
SEPTEMBER 2022/23	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Director of Finance	6,000	(6,000)	0	0	0.00	0	-	0	0	0
Law & Governance	4,401,000	234,000	0	4,635,000	0.00	4,635,000	786,066.45	3,848,934	4,635,000	0
Business Strategy & Change	3,756,000	(65,000)	0	3,691,000	0.00	3,691,000	1,099,782.66	2,591,217	3,691,000	0
Adults Social Care	3,966,000	(10,000)	0	3,956,000	268,000.00	4,224,000	3,611,852.79	612,147	4,224,000	0
Borough Economy	4,319,000	4,816,000	0	9,135,000	13,783,000.00	22,918,000	4,952,980.31	17,965,020	22,918,000	0
Regeneration & Growth	13,723,000	(15,000)	0	13,708,000	36,772,000.00	50,480,000	13,882,692.70	36,597,307	50,480,000	0
Housing & Assets	1,621,000	0	0	1,621,000	4,394,000.00	6,015,000	2,419,182.34	3,595,818	6,015,000	0
Children & Education	81,000	(1,000)	(80,000)	0	9,260,000.00	9,260,000	2,614,703.94	6,645,296	9,260,000	0
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	80,992,000	4,831,000	(15,445,000)	70,378,000	0.00	70,378,000	21,495,199.01	49,545,956	71,041,155	663,155
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>112,865,000</b>	<b>9,784,000</b>	<b>(15,525,000)</b>	<b>107,124,000</b>	<b>64,477,000.00</b>	<b>171,601,000</b>	<b>50,862,460.20</b>	<b>121,401,695</b>	<b>172,264,155</b>	<b>663,155</b>



Section 106 - Capital							
Section 106 Scheme (Target Site)	Town	Development Agreement	Service Area	Description of Project	Balance Available @ 01/04/22 £	Expenditure for 2022/23 £	Balance Remaining @ 31/03/23 £
Wednesbury Town centre	Wednesbury	DC/04/42399	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	C.C.T.V.	96,294.71	-	96,294.71
Wednesbury North ward (Wednesbury Memorial and Brunswick Park)	Wednesbury	DC/06/45826	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure and Public realm.	3,947.23	-	3,947.23
Wednesbury South ward	Wednesbury	DC/12/55176	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Maintenance, improvement or enhancement of open space.	47,434.63	-	47,434.63
Willingsworth linear park/Hydes Road Pool, Hill Top park	Wednesbury	DC/07/48874 & DC/05/45542	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Maintenance, improvement or enhancement of open space.	3,237.83	-	3,237.83
River Tame corridor north (Wednesbury)	Wednesbury	DC/10/52930	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Improvements to Public Open Space area.	16,417.73	-	16,417.73
Princes End ward	Tipton	DC/06/46907	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - For the provision of offsite public open space and play area.	2,083.87	-	2,083.87
Victoria Park	Tipton	DC/11/53708	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - For the provision of offsite public open space and play area.	21,890.30	-	21,890.30
Jubilee Park	Tipton	DC/11/53027	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Provision of offsite public open space and play area.	29,632.19	-	29,632.19
Jubilee Park	Tipton	DC/13/55690	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Improvement of open space and play areas.	2,664.39	-	2,664.39
Jubilee Park	Tipton	DC/13/55690	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Improvement of open space and play areas.	21,377.35	-	21,377.35
Great Bridge Ward	Tipton	DC/13/55558	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Maintenance, improvement or enhancement of open space.	15,733.66	-	15,733.66
Wednesbury Oak Road, Tipton	Tipton	DC/14/57003	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - enhancement and maintenance of the Public Open Space	10,000.00	-	10,000.00
Wednesbury Oak Road, Tipton	Tipton	DC/14/57003	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - enhancement and maintenance of the Public Open Space	10,000.00	-	10,000.00
Wednesbury Oak Road, Tipton	Tipton	DC/14/57003	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - enhancement and maintenance of the Public Open Space	18,764.76	-	18,764.76
Borough wide	Tipton	DC/15/58921	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	167,168.40	-	167,168.40
Borough wide	Tipton	DC/15/58921	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	122,851.20	-	122,851.20
Borough wide	Tipton	DC/10/52848	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	26,459.22	26,459.22	-
Borough wide	Tipton	DC/10/52848	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	193,069.00	193,069.00	-
Borough wide	Tipton	DC/10/52848	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	230,568.00	20,388.96	210,179.04
Alexandra Rd/Upper Church Lane (On application site)	Tipton	DC/09/50926	Planning (Alex Oxley)	Planning - Maintenance of new open space	32,229.45	-	32,229.45
Doorstep Green & Marsh Lane open space (as plan)	West Bromwich	DC/04/43353	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - For the provision of offsite public open space and play area.	54,762.40	-	54,762.40
Greets Green & Lyng ward	West Bromwich	DC/05/45555	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Provision, maintenance, enhancement of public open space.	14,516.72	-	14,516.72
100 Birmingham Road (Vicinity of site)	West Bromwich	DC/05/45586	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Towards the maintenance, improvement or enhancement of open space and play areas (vicinity of the site)	17,170.96	-	17,170.96
Yew Tree scheme	West Bromwich	DC/11/54129	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Offsite provision and maintenance of public open space/play space.	6,626.88	-	6,626.88
Kendrick Park	West Bromwich	DC/13/56603	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - on the provision and improvement an maintenance of open space.	104,398.00	-	104,398.00
Charlont playing fields	West Bromwich	DC/14/56717	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Remodelling or extension of sports and leisure provision.	99,202.95	-	99,202.95
Greenside Way (Vicinity of site)	West Bromwich	DC/14/56717	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Open space contribution.	132,760.80	-	132,760.80
Borough Wide	West Bromwich	DC/05/44045	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	430.34	-	430.34
Air Quality consultant	West Bromwich	DC/10/52747	Public Health (Andy Thorpe)	Environmental health - Towards the creation of a project consultant post to review and assess air quality.	20,000.00	-	20,000.00
Grace Mary Estate Open Space	Rowley Regis	DC/09/51300	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Provision of offsite public open space and play area	22,393.42	-	22,393.42
Bury Hill Park	Rowley Regis	DC/09/51606 & DC/10/52460	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Provision of offsite public open space in respect of the enhancement of Youth facilities	5,666.90	-	5,666.90
Mary Macarthur Gardens	Rowley Regis	DC/10/51793	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Provision, enhancement and maintenance of offsite public open space and play area	4,117.32	-	4,117.32
Tividale Ward	Rowley Regis	DC/12/55027	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Provision of offsite public open space and play area	16,477.62	-	16,477.62
Blackheath Ward	Rowley Regis	DC/06/45692	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Open space	16,988.00	-	16,988.00
Blackheath Ward	Rowley Regis	DC/09/51104	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Maintenance, improvement or enhancement of open space	28,153.64	-	28,153.64
Borough Wide	Rowley Regis	DC/15/58342	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	596,295.00	-	596,295.00
	Rowley Regis	DC/18/62111	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	75,000.00	-	75,000.00
Brades Green Open Space	Oldbury	DC/05/43995	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure -Enhancement to open space (as plan)	4,750.75	-	4,750.75
Norman Road Dams	Oldbury	DC/05/45598	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Off-site public open space & play area	2,976.64	-	2,976.64
Langley Ward	Oldbury	DC/09/51660	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Off-site public open space & play area	46,106.45	-	46,106.45
Broadwell Park & Ward	Oldbury	DC/13/56684	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Open space	32,835.00	-	32,835.00
Borough Wide	Oldbury	DC/08/49007	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	90,600.00	90,600.00	-
Borough Wide	Oldbury	DC/14/57470	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	336,217.00	336,217.00	-
Borough Wide	Oldbury	DC/14/57737	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	210,000.00	-	210,000.00
Air Quality Consultant	Oldbury	DC/10/52897	Public Health (Andy Thorpe)	Environmental Health - Towards the creation of a project consultant post to review and assess air quality.	23,642.44	-	23,642.44
Victoria Park	Smethwick	DC/04/42703	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Towards improvement & enhancement	21,631.23	-	21,631.23
War Memorial - Cape Hill site	Smethwick	DC/04/42703	Highways (Simon Chadwick)	Highways - Maintenance contribution	7,261.16	-	7,261.16
St Pauls Ward	Smethwick	DC/12/55069	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Improvement or enhancement of open space	38,308.03	-	38,308.03
West Smethwick Park	Smethwick	DC/08/49405	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Open space and play space	112,451.31	-	112,451.31
Smethwick Hall Park	Smethwick	DC/09/51635	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Offsite public open space and play space	45,148.75	-	45,148.75
Smethwick Ward	Smethwick	DC/12/54411	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Provision of open space.	8,763.50	-	8,763.50
	Smethwick	DC/15/58384	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - to carry out the Canal Enhancement Works in accordance with the Canal Improvement Works Brief	122,380.59	-	122,380.59
<b>Total Section 106</b>			Regeneration & Growth		<b>3,389,857.72</b>	<b>666,734.18</b>	<b>2,723,123.54</b>

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - Capital Element (80%)							
CIL Scheme	Town	Development Agreement	Service Area	Description of Project	Balance Available @ 01/04/22 £	Expenditure for 2022/23 £	Balance Remaining @ 31/03/23 £
Balance in CIL fund to date - not allocated to individual projects			Regeneration & Growth		2,846,584.48	-	2,846,584.48
<b>Total Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - Capital Element</b>					<b>2,846,584.48</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,846,584.48</b>

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - Revenue Element (15%)							
CIL Scheme	Town	Development Agreement	Service Area	Description of Project	Balance Available @ 01/04/22 £	Expenditure for 2022/23 £	Balance Remaining @ 31/03/23 £
Oldbury			Regeneration & Growth	Various Schemes	99,653.84	5,686.84	93,967.00
Rowley			Regeneration & Growth	Various Schemes	80,921.00	1,409.47	79,511.53
Smethwick			Regeneration & Growth	Various Schemes	67,758.00	7,280.93	60,477.07
Tipton			Regeneration & Growth	Various Schemes	29,719.38	5,294.60	24,424.78
Wednesbury			Regeneration & Growth	Various Schemes	53,673.22	9,126.50	44,546.72
West Bromwich			Regeneration & Growth	Various Schemes	99,941.20	4,309.55	95,631.65
<b>Total Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - Revenue Element</b>					<b>431,666.64</b>	<b>33,107.89</b>	<b>398,558.75</b>

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## Report to Cabinet

7 December 2022

<b>Subject:</b>	Performance Management Framework – Q2 Monitoring
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources, Cllr Bob Piper
<b>Director:</b>	Director of Business Strategy and Change, Neil Cox
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Kate Ashley – Strategic Lead: Service Improvement Jane Alexander – Senior Lead: Service Improvement Rebecca Jenkins – Senior Lead: Service Improvement Sarah Sprung – Senior Lead: Service Improvement Narinder Phagura – Business Partner Audit Services

### 1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That Cabinet consider progress on the further development of the Corporate Performance Management Framework and approve the Q2 monitoring reports.








### 2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Council approved a corporate Performance Management Framework (PMF) on 12 April 2022, to address the recommendations of the Governance Value for Money Review by Grant Thornton and as a key element of the Council's Improvement Plan.



2.2 Since April, the corporate PMF has been further refined and built into business processes. Reporting on Q1 was presented to Cabinet on 28 September 2022. The report on Q2 seeks to build on the intelligence gathered for Q1 and offers the opportunity to assess in year progress.

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

	The corporate PMF includes measures under all strategic objectives in the Corporate Plan to monitor progress in these key areas. The PMF also includes elements that measure the council's use of its resources to ensure delivery of the strategic objectives.
	
	The Strategic Risk Register details the key strategic risks that need to be managed to ensure that they do not negatively impact on the successful delivery of the Corporate Plan objectives.
	
	
	
	

### 4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 The updated Improvement Plan was approved by Council in June 2022. In regard to progressing the PMF, commitment was given to the following actions:

- Develop and embed a corporate performance management framework that provides Leadership Team and members collective oversight of progress on the Corporate Plan, key operational level intelligence, organisational health and improvement activity;
- Ensure public consultation results are incorporated into performance management framework, including on budget development;



- Build organisational health metrics into performance management framework, including 'pulse' checks on organisation's wellbeing;
- Embed management of key corporate contracts within the performance management framework to ensure oversight of performance and link to the Corporate Plan;
- Build benchmarking of financial and service performance into performance management framework;
- Develop, implement and monitor progress of Directorate and Service level plans to deliver the Corporate Plan;
- Embed regular budget monitoring reporting to Leadership Team and Cabinet within corporate performance management framework; and
- Explore implementation of a corporate performance management system.

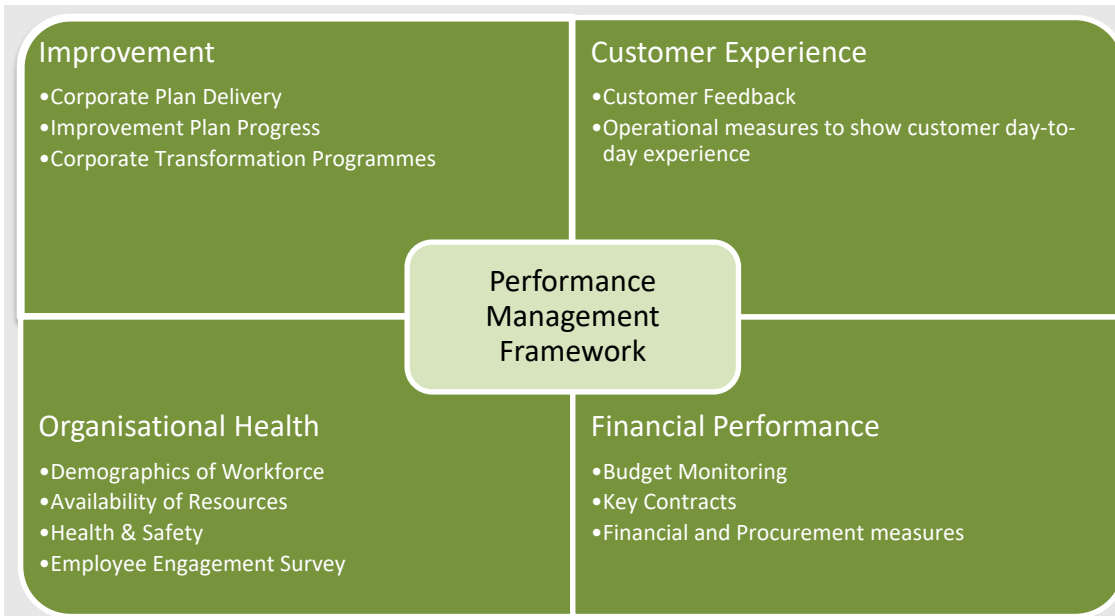
4.2 Good progress has been made against many of the commitments in this list. This report sets out the progress we have made against establishing the Corporate Performance Management Framework and building its monitoring into the Council's business processes. This report signifies a major step forward in providing consolidated performance and risk reporting for Cabinet. Further reports will be brought to Cabinet on the remaining commitments in due course.

4.3 Progress in relation to the Q2 budget monitoring report, and the Improvement Plan are the subject of further reports on Cabinet's agenda.

## 5 Corporate Performance Management Framework

5.1 There are four key components to the Corporate PMF. Combined, these provide the oversight and intelligence the council needs to determine progress in delivering the Corporate Plan and how the organisation is performing in key areas.





5.2 A suite of performance information was identified and agreed for each element of the PMF and this forms the basis of monitoring progress. The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of progress against each element of the PMF for Q2 of 2022/23. The detailed Q2 reports are included as appendices to this report.

## 6 Financial Performance

### 6.1 Budget Monitoring

6.1.1 The Council's financial position as at the end of October (Q2) is subject to a separate report on this agenda.

6.1.2 In summary, the forecast outturn for the year for the General Fund is an overspend of £1.9m. This is being driven predominantly by inflationary pressures on pay, contracts and supplies and services. The Council budgeted for a 2% pay award. The Q1 forecast assumed a 5% pay award. However, the recent pay offer from the Local Government Employers is a fixed sum for all spinal points which averages 7% and has now been accepted. This equates to an additional £8.3m payroll costs.

6.1.3 There are also inflationary pressures on non-pay budgets, including utilities costs, exceptionally high social care placement costs and contractual increases.



- 6.1.4 The additional cost pressures have been mitigated by a review of 2021/22 underspends to identify ongoing savings that can be achieved for 2022/23 as well as a review of vacant posts. There is also some use of earmarked reserves to mitigate pressures, including £1.1m from the Financial Planning reserve which was established as part of the 2022/23 budget process specifically to cover risks associated with increased inflation during the year. Leadership Team are continuing to identify further corrective action that can be taken for the remainder of the year to reduce the forecast overspend.
- 6.1.5 The Housing Revenue Account is currently forecasting an underspend of approximately £1.1m as although the HRA is also experiencing inflationary pressures, there are a high level of vacancies which are offsetting the increased costs.
- 6.1.6 The other key performance measures for finance relate to the collection of debt and processing of claims. See Appendix 1 – Q2 Finance report.
- 6.1.7 Processing time for new Housing Benefit Claims continues to be at 19 days, which is better than the national average of 20 days.
- 6.1.8 Compared to Q1 performance, Council Tax and Sundry Debt collection rates have improved and have met their targets this quarter.
- 6.1.9 A summary of KPIs that did not meet their performance target is as follows:
- In relation to the number of days taken to process Housing Benefit Changes in Circumstances, performance has not met target for Q1 or Q2 due to a backlog of work. There has been good progress in addressing the backlog and performance should start to improve.
  - In relation to Adult Social Care Financial Assessments, performance has not met the quarterly targets. It should be noted that as the targets are set at 100% it is unlikely to be achieved. Therefore these targets need to be reviewed. Performance for Non-residential care financial assessments taking place within 3 weeks of a care package being approved is at 57% for Q2. The reason for the reduced performance is due to a focus on outstanding cases and moving customer billing from statements to invoices
  - Rent collected is slightly below target due to rising cost of living pressures. We are working with partners to provide information



and advice to tenants to prevent them getting into arrears as far as possible.

## 6.2 Key Contracts - Sandwell Children's Trust

6.2.1 Since April 2018, children's services have been delivered by Sandwell's Children's Trust on behalf of the Council. The contract sum for 2022/23 was £70.47m. Following subsequent agreements to additional sums, that are related to pressures around staffing and placements, the total contract sum is £71.7m.

6.2.2 Sandwell Children's Trust delivers the following range of services:

- Children's Social Care
- Fostering
- Targeted Early Help

6.2.3 The contract is managed through a well-established governance framework. Grant Thornton, in their Value for Money Governance Review (December 2021) commented that *'There is a robust governance framework in place for the Council and other stakeholders to monitor of the performance of SCT'* and recommended the continuation of these arrangements.

6.2.4 There is a requirement to undertake a contract review after four years of operation and the review was presented to Cabinet in September 2022. Cabinet agreed that they do not recommend to the Secretary of State for Education that the break clause is invoked. As set out in the Service Delivery Contract, the Contract Review will be presented to the Operational Partnership Board and the Strategic Partnership Board, following which, the reviews will be sent to the Secretary of State.

6.2.5 Performance is monitored through a monthly review of 15 KPIs within the contract, and a monthly review of performance within agreed tolerances. As part of the contract review, the Director of Children and Education has been authorised to agree with Sandwell Children's Trust revised contractual key performance indicators, to commence on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.

6.2.6 In May 2022, the Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services improved the rating from 'inadequate' to 'requires improvement to be good'.





6.2.7 The Q2 Performance Report is attached at Appendix 2 and is summarised as follows:

6.2.7.1 Recruitment and Retention of Social Workers:

- There continues to be significant issues in recruiting and retaining social workers and the Trust has been working to ensure that no child remains unallocated for longer than 5 days.
- Three project teams are in place providing interim capacity whilst the Trust continues to recruit to the workforce
- Three cohorts of AYSE social workers (assessed and supported year in employment) have joined the Trust.

6.2.7.2 The Trust were able to bring the number of children unallocated for longer the 5 days figure down to zero in September 2022. This was a red rated KPI at Q1.

6.2.7.3 Numbers of Children in Care:

- The total number of children in care, as of September 2022, is 818. This is a significant reduction against the March 2022 position when 844 children were in care. The target for March 2023 is 796.
- At the end of September 2022, Sandwell was performing well at a rate of 98.6 children in care per 10,000, compared with a March 2022 rate of 101.7. Comparator data is not yet available for Q2, but at the end of quarter 1, Sandwell was performing well against WM statistical neighbours, with some work still required to match the whole statistical neighbour average.
- The general trend across statistical neighbours for the last 12 months has been an increase in the rate of children in care, whereas in Sandwell the rate has fallen.

6.2.7.4 Report on the 15 Contract KPIs:

- Improvement in performance against the KPIs since the last quarter, with 10 out of the 15 KPIs now green
- The current red rated KPIs are:
  - Percentage of Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) in 15 working days
  - Out of the total number of open Single Assessments, the percentage of assessments completed within 45 working days
  - Vacancy rate of social workers



- The KPIs that are red as of September 2022 can be directly linked to the national workforce issues.

#### 6.2.7.5 Finances:

- The 2022/23 financial performance is being measured against the agreed 2022/23 Contract Sum as approved by Cabinet in February 2022.
- The high cost of placements, as well as recruitment and retention issues, means that SCT are forecasting an overspend, against the MTFP, of £570k as at the end of Quarter 2. This is in addition to the savings target of £2.3m.
- The council and SCT have discussed options to take corrective action including reviewing the Trust's Workforce Strategy, freezing non-operational vacancies and an increase of in year savings targets.
- In September 2022, Cabinet agreed to fund additional costs to recruit additional project teams. It is estimated that this will cost £750K for the year. The funding of this additional cost will, in part, be offset slightly by a saving of approx. £250k in the costs of paying market supplements due to vacant posts – agreed by Cabinet in March 2022. The Council maintains a risk reserve for the Trust and it is proposed to use a combination of Social Care Grant and the reserve to offset the remaining £500k.
- The annual Contract Sum provides for the Council to fund the cost of the pay award each year. This was estimated at 2% in line with the Council's assumption in its own budget, the Council will need to fund the actual costs once confirmed.

### 6.3 Key Contracts - Serco

6.3.1 The Council's contract with Serco was awarded in 2010 and runs until 2035. It has a contract value in the region of £30m per annum.

6.3.2 The contract covers the following services:

- Weekly residual waste kerbside collection for all households in Sandwell (121,000)
- Weekly recycling kerbside collection for all households in Sandwell
- Optional green waste collection service (fortnightly - seasonal)
- Optional food waste collection service (weekly)
- Household Recycling Centre management
- Other recycling offered including batteries



- Street cleansing including fly tip collection, annual cleansing including weed spraying and collection, leaf collection
- Fleet management and renewal - SMBC undertakes the fleet servicing through a contractual arrangement with Serco

6.3.3 The Council has been focusing on improving the overall performance of the Serco Contract and the management of this contract is a component of the Council's Improvement Plan. Key achievements to date have been:

- Agreement of the Contract Monitoring Framework
- Agreement of standardised agendas for contract monitoring meetings
- Implementation of the Waste and Recycling Recovery Plan
- Approval of the Street Cleansing Recovery Plan (which is due for implementation from October)
- Approval of and delivery of Fleet Replacement as per the agreed schedule
- Contract initial review

6.3.4 Q2 performance was reported to Leadership Team in November and included information around governance and contract management arrangements, quarterly contract performance, SMBC contract monitoring and penalties issued, HR issues, stakeholder management, improvement focus, and an example of improvement activity that has taken place in relation to gully cleansing.

6.3.5 Key points over quarter 2 were:

- Governance and contract management arrangements are in place and over this quarter, all contract meetings have taken place.
- Regular cross channel communication takes place between the SMBC and Serco teams
- Performance reporting has been significantly improved. Key Performance Indicators have been introduced for areas of concern and annual plans and schedules are being provided for the Council's review
- Performance over Q2 has decreased for missed bins which reflects Summer disruptions
- Contract deductions are being applied to reflect underachievement against Key Outcome Targets

6.3.6 The ongoing focus for improvement is across 3 key work streams:



- Street cleansing improvements:
  - Street cleansing plan due to be implemented from October
  - SMBC identifying location in 6 towns for storage of new “street hoover” type machines
  - Serco purchasing initial 3 “street hoovers” at £20,000 each
  - Gully work underway to improve data capture and risk based approach
- Data / reporting / systems
  - Contract management software research undertaken by SMBC
  - Contract management module for Intend procurement system being progressed for integrated contract support
  - Whitespace back office system for waste is being improved (upgrade to most recent version) by Serco to support crews uploading images
  - Whitespace integration to My Sandwell or the Council website being reviewed by SMBC to consider upload of annual schedules such as weed spraying and clearance
  - Further KPIs being added to monthly reporting. SMBC now receives a member’s scorecard, a KOT performance pack & a service slide pack on a monthly to review and understand service delivery. Enables more regular touch points.
- Annual plans are now meeting contractual compliance

## 6.4 Key Contracts – Sandwell Leisure Trust

6.4.1 Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT) manages the following leisure centres in Sandwell:

- Haden Hill Leisure Centre
- Hadley Stadium
- Harry Mitchell Leisure Centre
- Langley Swimming Centre
- Portway Lifestyle Centre
- Smethwick Swimming Centre
- Tipton Leisure Centre
- Tipton Sports Academy
- Wednesbury Leisure Centre



- 6.4.2 As part of the Council's resolution of the issues identified, Cabinet at their meeting 9 February 2022 terminated the Management Funding Agreement (MFA) with SLT; SLT will formally cease to deliver services on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023.
- 6.4.3 Cabinet at their meeting 22 June 2022 decided that SLT will be replaced by a Local Authority Trading Company (LATC). The formation of the LATC is ongoing. Bevan Brittan are providing advice on the process for terminating the MFA and legal settlement with SLT; details will be provided in the Q3 performance report.
- 6.4.4 A key workstream in the preparation for the LATC is the development of a comprehensive services specification, which will govern how the LATC will operate, deliver services and interact with the Council. The specification will include a detailed framework for governance, contract and performance management.
- 6.4.5 As an interim measure, a schedule of monthly contract review meetings has been implemented. A separate series of meetings with SLT has been scheduled to support the transition of the operation to the LATC. This agenda includes contract novations, staff transfer and data access.
- 6.4.6 Interim contract management measures are in place which include:
- Schedule of monthly contract review meetings in place
  - Series of meetings to support transition
  - Revised KPIs in place
- 6.4.7 Q2 performance was reported to Leadership Team in November and this included information around the revised KPIs. Sport and Leisure is a traded service and performance was particularly impacted by Covid lockdowns; the last financial year unaffected by pandemic-related restrictions was 2018-19. As such, pending the implementation of the revised suite of KPIs, interim contract performance monitoring has focused on financial performance and is summarised below. Retrospective reporting on KPIs for Q1 and Q2 will be available for future performance reports.
- 6.4.8 SLT financial performance to 31<sup>st</sup> August is stable and £123K better than budget. Consisting of trading income £2.85m (budget £2.75m), and expenditure £3.96m (budget £3.98m).
- 6.4.9 The current improvement focus consists of 3 strands:



- Trading - identifying how SLT's post-Covid trading is rebounding in comparison to national and statistical comparators
- Supporting the transition to LATC
- Supporting the preparation for the public opening of Sandwell Aquatics Centre

## 6.5 Key Contracts – Places for People Leisure

6.5.1 A 25-year contract is in place with Places Leisure to operate West Bromwich Leisure Centre and an annual management fee of £20K is paid to the Council. It has a contract value of £18,500pa.

6.5.2 Q2 performance was reported to Leadership Team in November and included performance information around governance performance, activity programming and sports development, participation, service planning delivery and control, building maintenance and housekeeping, customer feedback, health and safety, marketing overview, and corporate social responsibility).

6.5.3 Monthly operational reporting and quarterly Contract Management Meetings are in place and well-established. There has been 100% compliance of meetings across Q1 and Q2.

6.5.4 In terms of Q2 participation:

- Total visits to date: 32,000
- Participation to Date: 205,000 (up from 108,000 Sep 2021; down from 235,000 Sep 2019)
- Memberships Year to date: Fitness Live (increase from Sep 2019), Swimming (decrease from Sep 2019)

## 7 Organisational Health

7.1 The majority of organisational health indicators are reported annually and were included in the Q1 PMF report. Sickness absence is reported on a quarterly basis along with a set of 6-monthly indicators, as outlined below. Quarterly reports on Health and Safety are made to Leadership Team.

### 7.2 Sickness Absence

7.2.1 Sickness absence is reported on a quarterly basis to Leadership Team and Directorate Management Teams. A detailed breakdown for Q2 is included at Appendix 3.



- 7.2.2 At Q2, an average of 5.29 working days per employee were lost due to sickness against a target of 3.86. An increase from Q1. Figures are cumulative for the financial year to quarter end.
- 7.2.3 The largest cause of sickness absence is stress, depression and mental health, followed by infection and muscular-skeletal problems. The primary cause of “infection” absence is coronavirus.
- 7.2.4 Over forthcoming months, a detailed review is being undertaken to analyse causes and trends in sickness absence, and to review sickness absence management processes.

### 7.3 6-monthly Indicators

7.3.1 6-monthly indicators are set out in Appendix 4. The percentage of leavers and starters to the Council along with the current number of apprentices is lower than the year end position. For starters and leavers the direction of travel is influenced by many variables and will reflect overall business and workforce plans. At this point in the year recruitment is pending for further apprentice intakes so this figure is not an indication of the final year out turn. Our new workforce strategy will include future talent plans, including apprenticeships and graduates, seeking to build back post-pandemic.

### 7.4 Employee Engagement

- 7.4.1 The Q1 performance report included details of the Employee Engagement Survey that was completed in April 2022. Messages from the survey included views from staff that:
- the Council is not harnessing all the strengths of our staff because there is not a culture of inspiring staff to innovate and do things differently
  - the visibility and accessibility of Senior Leaders needs to improve
  - Council Leaders do not live the Council’s values
  - customer focus is not improving
  - recognition of hard work and dedication needs to improve
  - action will not be taken as a result of the survey
- 7.4.2 Actions to respond to the survey have been embedded in the Improvement Plan, and Directorate-level actions agreed.



## 7.5 Health and Safety

- 7.5.1 Overall accountability for health and safety rests with the Chief Executive and the Leadership Team. The current Corporate Health and Safety Policy 2021-2023 sets out the communication and monitoring approach to ensure that health & safety information is considered at the right level.
- 7.5.2 Quarterly Health and Safety Performance Reports are made to the Leadership Team as part of regular performance conversations. This includes management information around accidents and incidents, proactive tasks undertaken by the Health and Safety Unit (such as audits and TU representative's queries), and an update on training and development.
- 7.5.3 Each of the nine Directorates receives its own quarterly Health and Safety report which are presented via the appropriate forums (e.g. Directorate JCC / Health and Safety Committee Meeting) for discussion, action and dissemination.
- 7.5.4 A quarterly Corporate Health and Safety Board is in place to assist the Chief Executive Officer and Leadership Team in the discharge of their health & safety responsibilities. The purpose of the board is to consider corporate matters affecting the health and safety of council employees, and others affected by the council's activities via formal consultation and review of our health and safety management system, monitoring activities and referrals from employee representatives. The board is chaired by the Director of Business Strategy and Change and involves one member of each Directorate Management Team along with Trade Union representatives, the Head of Health and Safety.

## 8 Improvement – Corporate Plan Delivery

### 8.1 Progress on Corporate Plan PMF

- 8.1.1 Since the approval of the PMF at Council on 12 April 2022, progress has continued in developing the Corporate Plan PMF. There are now 170 measures across the seven strategic outcomes, owned across our nine directorates. Work has taken place with each directorate to further refine measures, to understand the intricacies of the measures and when data can be made available. A summary of the activity that has taken place is set out below:





- 8.1.2 Achievements July to September 2022
- We have conducted a lessons learned exercise and have embedded the learning from this into Q2.
  - We have continued to work with Research and Intelligence to develop the intelligence offer, particularly around the Corporate Plan PMF, with a view to publication of data on the Sandwell Trends website.
  - We have strengthened relationships with directorates and sought to put in place a more structured approach to Q2 to improve understanding and clarity.

8.1.3 Our journey needs to continue to collectively develop a fully functioning performance management culture across the organisation.

8.1.4 The indicators chosen as part of the Corporate Plan PMF include metrics that are available either quarterly, annually, biannually and in some cases termly. This provides a challenge for quarterly reporting as not all the measures are available at the same point. With those measures that are available quarterly, reporting for many of them has at least a 3 to 4-week lag following the quarter end.

## 8.2 Progress against the seven strategic outcomes of the Corporate Plan

8.2.1 To provide assurance in our progress delivering the Corporate Plan each directorate has submitted a return outlining actions that have been taken during Q2 that contribute to Corporate Plan delivery. This intelligence together with those measures that are currently available for the Corporate Plan PMF have been brought together to provide corporate oversight of progress.

8.2.2 Summaries of progress for each of the seven strategic outcomes are set out below. Appendix 5 contains a more in-depth overview.

## 8.3 Best Start in Life for Children and Young People

8.3.1 Overall there has been good progress in education and support for young people in Sandwell through Q1 & Q2. The reach of children's centres in Sandwell for community outreach programmes has increased by 20% compared to the Q1 figure. The percentage of children who have a repeat care plan within two years of ceasing on a care plan has also improved from Q1.



8.3.2 By working in partnership with partners such as West Midlands Police to tackle youth violence and sharing good practice with early years teams in Warwickshire and Hampshire, Sandwell is striving to ensure that every child and young person in Sandwell gets the best start in life.

8.3.3 No actions have been RAG rated red across this strategic outcome.

#### 8.4 **People live well and age well**

8.5 On the whole under people that live well and age well there has been progress in terms of putting the building blocks in place to help people to live healthily and independently for longer and many of the key deliverables are on track, for example the Healthy Sandwell Advice and Referral Service is working well, work has advanced on establishing the LATC to take over SLT managed facilities and various operational reviews are on track.

8.6 There has been some slippage under each theme, but actions are in place to address this.

8.6.1 There are no red RAG rated actions in this strategic outcome.

#### 8.7 **Strong Resilient Communities**

8.7.1 We are reflecting on and learning from events run over the summer and have put in place our programme for Autumn/Winter 2022/23.

8.7.2 We continue to work collaboratively with key partners in relation to community safety to deliver better outcomes for our residents, taking a more intelligence led approach to tackling key issues.

8.7.3 There are also several areas where an amber rating has been applied, generally these relate to areas where we are trying to secure funding, and areas where we are experiencing difficulties in recruiting.

8.7.4 Two actions in this strategic outcome have been RAG rated red, these relate to the governance arrangements and budgets for grants to the voluntary sector and capital funding for the replacement of 4,000 high energy street lights with low energy LED lighting.

#### 8.8 **Quality Homes in Thriving Neighbourhoods**

8.8.1 Overall, there has been good progress in developing quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods with many corporate plan actions being on



track. There does continue to be issues in sourcing sufficient resource to manage the volume of repairs to council stock.

8.8.2 Importantly, it should be highlighted that we are performing well in relation to supporting our residents in the cost of living crisis, as demonstrated by the number of individuals assisted by our Welfare Rights Service. We know that this support really matters to our residents, as captured in the results of our residents survey where 67% of respondents said the issue that most concerned them was the cost of living.

8.8.3 There is one action that has been RAG rated red where there is significant slippage and uncertainty. This is in relation to delivery of the Black Country Plan.

## 8.9 A Strong Inclusive Economy

8.9.1 We continue to make good progress in developing an inclusive economy across Sandwell and in maximising funding opportunities and local investment.

8.9.2 Monitoring of the Regeneration Strategy and pipeline indicates that the vast majority of the 66 projects are on track or amber, meaning they are progressing through the delivery stages. 23 projects remain at the concept stage and are therefore identified as red risks.

8.9.3 There is one action that has been RAG rated red in this Strategic Outcome this relates to the development of a borough plan that feeds into the Black Country Plan.

## 8.10 A Connected Accessible Sandwell

8.10.1 Overall there has been good progress on key infrastructure pipeline projects such as the Metro extension and Blackheath Interchange which are at various stages of delivery.

8.10.2 The ULEV charging scheme has progressed from business case to delivery stage. Phase I will deliver 75 Charging points, future phases will look to deliver 250 charging points by 2025. This is a clear indicator showing that Sandwell is making strides in becoming more connected and accessible.



- 8.10.3 There has been some slippage on projects due to recruitment difficulties and also budget pressures related to inflation. If not addressed these slippages could cause further issues/delays for the projects.
- 8.11 **One Council, One Team**
- 8.11.1 Recruitment campaign for permanent CEX launched to provide stability in leadership and continuity of style and approach. An appointment was made in November
- 8.11.2 Progress made on implementing systems that will enable a modern, outstanding council: New Systems Integrator procured for Oracle Fusion and in final stages of agreeing implementation plan to move, and data collection in progress to determine future telephony requirements.
- 8.11.3 Performance in customer services impacted by increased demand for face-to-face contact and additional responsibilities, e.g. energy rebate. Focus on improving customer journey – Customer Commitments drafted and feedback to be sought from customers. Progress made on digital inclusion with funding of Digital Dens agreed and recruitment of co-ordinator underway.
- 8.11.4 Wellbeing provision has continued to be developed with appointment of wellbeing specialist. Resources identified to undertake HR policy review in support of best practice, effective and efficient people management policy and procedure.
- 8.11.5 Progress in listening and accountable – residents wellbeing and perception and budget consultation surveys conducted and initial results shared and will be embedded in business planning. Consultation on proposed changes to election cycle conducted to help inform Council’s decision in November. Development of proposal for cross-council resident engagement - to be presented to LT in Q3.
- 8.11.6 Corporate performance reporting aligned with financial and risk reporting to provide Leadership Team and Members with oversight of key information to support decision making.
- 8.11.7 MTFS has been reviewed and progress made across all aspects of Making the Most of our Resources. Options paper on charging for green waste developed for discussion at Cabinet in Q3, improving rating from Red to Amber.



8.11.8 Two actions in this strategic outcome remain RED rated this quarter: the refresh of the Council's Storage Area Network is dependent upon delivery on hardware which has now been shipped; the Corporate Data Strategy remains delayed due to resources being focused on the council's Improvement Plan and corporate performance framework.

8.11.9 Whilst some slippage of targets is inevitable when managing the number of actions that underpin our Corporate Plan, it should be noted that there are a higher number of amber actions in this strategic outcome than in others. In total there are 20 amber actions in the One Council Strategic outcome.

## 8.12 Resident Wellbeing and Perception Survey & Resident Budget Consultation

8.12.1 In May 2022 the Council commissioned Enventure, a market research agency, to conduct a borough-wide residents' survey to support evidence-based policy, service delivery and performance management. This was a large-scale quantitative survey covering several themes and particularly aligned to LGA Benchmarking resident satisfaction surveys (June 2022 was used).

8.12.2 The survey was undertaken by telephone, with an adult sample that was designed to be representative of the wider borough by gender, age, ethnicity, employment status and geography. Provision was made for communicating with typically under-represented, or 'hard-to-reach' groups and respondents whose first language is not English through community groups and networks and the use of translators and interpreters.

8.12.3 The residents' survey secured 1,062 responses, which is a sample large enough to provide statistically highly reliable findings at the borough level and sufficient responses to examine the results by sub-groups including at town level. These will be analysed in detail by the Research & Intelligence Team to inform a programme of dissemination within the Council and more widely.

8.12.4 The Council simultaneously commissioned Enventure to undertake a budget consultation survey with residents to inform the budget setting process. The representative budget consultation was conducted via



telephone and face-to-face with quotas set on age group, gender, disability, ethnic group and area of the borough. In addition, some interviews were undertaken face-to-face on-street and in local community groups to consult with hard to reach residents.

8.12.5 Alongside the representative survey was an online survey open to all Sandwell residents. In total, 1,070 responses were received to the representative resident survey and 577 responses to the open online survey.

8.12.6 Appendix 6 details the key findings from the Resident Wellbeing and Perception Survey and the Budget Consultation.

## **9 Improvement Plan**

9.1 The Council's Improvement Plan was agreed in June 2022 and responds to the Statutory Directions from the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and the findings of three external reviews.

9.2 The Improvement Plan focuses on the governance arrangements of the council and areas of improvement across the organisation. The deliverables set out in the Improvement Plan will achieve long-term sustainable improvements in how the council operates and is able to make effective decisions focused on improving outcomes for residents and experiences of service users. The underpinning objective of the Improvement Plan is to ensure that the council is able to deliver on the aims and priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan.

9.3 Progress of the Improvement Plan is monitored monthly by Directors and Cabinet Members and is reported to Cabinet Quarterly. The next report to Cabinet will be made alongside this Q2 performance report.

9.4 Audit & Risk Assurance Committee and Scrutiny Committees will be used for maintaining oversight of the actions and implementation of the Improvement Plan. The Improvement Plan Risk Register and overall progress is reported to the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee regularly. The next report will be made on 15 November 2022. Budget & Corporate Management Scrutiny Board has included several elements of the Improvement Plan on their work programme as well as regular reports on overall progress. The next report to Budget & Corporate Management Scrutiny Board will be made on 29 November 2022.



9.5 External assurance will continue to play a part in our improvement journey. Grant Thornton, CIPFA and the LGA have been conducting reviews over Autumn 2022 to monitor our progress in addressing the recommendations in their reviews. They will produce further review reports for the council's consideration.

## 10 Corporate Transformation

10.1 An Assistant Director for Transformation, a Corporate Transformation Manager and two Business Analysts have recently been appointed. Their initial focus is on a review of all Transformation activity across the Council, and bringing forward proposals for a Corporate Transformation Programme, with the required Governance and Resources to ensure its delivery.

10.2 A Framework for Corporate Transformation was approved in October 2022. The represents a key milestone in Sandwell Council's maturity towards Portfolio, Programme and Project Management (P3M). The Framework sets out how P3M will be carried out, what standards we expect and functionally, how we carry out Programme and Project Management. It will help meet the Strategic Objectives of the Council's Corporate Plan and Improvement Plan including Service Improvement Plans and other strategic objectives.

10.3 The Project, Programmes and Portfolio Management Methodologies adopted by Sandwell Council are a blend of best practice and formal industry recognised approaches within the Public Sector. The main Methodologies adapted by Sandwell Council are PRINCE2, MORE Framework, ADKAR and Systems Thinking.

10.4 The Portfolio will have a Benefits Framework which sets out how we are going to measure success of the Portfolio and how we report progress to Elected Members.

10.5 Corporate Transformation will assure that risks are being identified documented and escalated where necessary. CTO will report on risk at



Programme and Portfolio Boards and be responsible for escalation of risks.

## 11 Strategic Risk Register

- 11.1 Effective risk management is a key element of good corporate governance, as noted in the council's [Code of Corporate Governance](#), and is essential to the overall performance of the council in meeting its corporate plan objectives. Good risk management will ensure that resources are used efficiently and effectively and that assets and resources are protected against risk in the most efficient way.
- 11.2 The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) receive the Council's Strategic Risk Register on a regular basis for review and comment. The role of the ARAC is to provide assurance to the Council that it has a system of governance, risk management and internal control in place and that the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements continue to inform decision making
- 11.3 The Strategic risk register does not include all of the risks faced by the Council. Other risks are captured within directorate, programme and project risk registers in line with the Council's risk management framework. The SRR as at August 2022 was presented to ARAC on 22 September 2022 and was also included in the Q1 PMF report to Cabinet.
- 11.4 Following their consideration of the SRR, ARAC requested and has received further details and assurances in respect of the impact that the high levels of inflation are having on the council's finances and the spending control measures being implemented to assist in the mitigation of this risk. In addition, ARAC have in place a programme to receive directorate-level risk registers.
- 11.5 The next update on the Strategic Risk Register will be provided to Cabinet as part of the Q3 PMF report and to ARAC in March 2023.

## 12 Customer Experience

- 12.1 Since Q1, work has taken place to establish a Customer Journey Programme which will be governed within the Corporate Transformation Programme. The programme will consist of 5 workstreams as follows: Service Backlogs, Customer Experience Strategy, One Stop Shop/Community Hubs, Contact Centres, and Technology.





12.2 The Q2 Customer Experience performance report is attached in Appendix 7 and summarised below.

### 12.3 Channel Shift

12.3.1 In terms of channel shift (the ways that customers choose to contact the council), Q2 performance has followed the trends from Q1. In Q2, the majority of contact was made via MySandwell (53%) and by telephone (40%). The amount of contact in Q2 was lower than Q1 across all channels.

### 12.4 Contact Centre Performance

12.4.1 The Council operates three contact centres. Over Q2 all contact centres have experienced reduced performance. The common reasons for the reduced performance are due to staff vacancies and recruitment problems which will continue to impact on performance at Q3.

12.4.2 The Adults Social Care Contact Centre has been experienced reduced performance across all KPIs since Q1 and targets have not been met for the average wait measure and the average call time. At Q2 customers were waiting an average of 1minute (against a target of 30seconds), and call time exceeded the target by 30 seconds. The main reasons for this performance are due to staffing issues and some specific issues with Blue Badge payments which have led to repeat calls and longer call times.

12.4.3 The Revenues and Benefits Contact Centre has experienced reduced performance across two of the three KPIs since Q1 and targets have not been met for the abandonment rate or the average call time. At Q2 the abandonment rate of 19.93% was above the quarterly target of 15% and slightly higher than the Q1 rate of 19.2%. The average call time was 9 minutes, in line with Q1 performance but a minute over target. The average wait was nearly 15minutes at Q2, a minute increase on Q1. The reasons for this performance were due to staffing issues, demand for annual leave during the school holiday, re-introduction of Council Tax recovery, high demand linked to the energy rebate and the customer base requesting more support with household expenses. Over this quarter, some vacancies have been recruited to and training will be complete in December.

12.4.4 The Corporate Contact Centre, which receives general enquiries, housing and children's safeguarding calls, has experience reduced performance since Q1 across all 3 KPIs and the abandonment rate and



average wait measure did not meet their targets. The abandonment rate increased to 10.5% in Q2 from 5.9% at Q1 and was 2.5% above target. The average wait increased by 2 minutes from Q1 to 4.5 minutes at Q2. The reasons for this performance were due to staff vacancies and absence, recruitment difficulties, and pressures caused by staffing the OSS.

## 12.5 Information Requests

12.5.1 The number of Subject Access Requests (SARs) received at Q2 (46) has reduced from Q1 (66). Compliance against timescales for responding is significantly below the 95% for Q2, however, some system limitations have been identified which impacts on the data validity.

12.5.2 Legislation and guidance from the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) allows us to 'stop the clock' on the statutory timescale where we need to go back to the customer for clarity on the request, to request identification, to extend the timescale for complex requests or where we are waiting for the customer to confirm how they want to receive the information. The system doesn't allow the compliance timescales to be amended accordingly which means that there will be several requests that have been answered in line with statutory requirements but the system and therefore the performance outcome will be reflecting these as non-compliant.

12.5.3 In order to produce validated data on SARs for future quarter, a manual data analysis has commenced. Work is also underway to identify a new system which will allow for improved reporting.

12.5.4 The number of FOIs received at Q2 is slightly lower than at Q1. The compliance against the statutory timescales for responding is significantly below 95% target at 68%, but this has improved by 2% since Q1. Work has now concluded to manage a backlog of FOIs within the system which is allowing officers to focus on keeping on top of incoming requests. Steps continue to be taken to bring performance in line with the target including regular meetings with Directorates and Directors to discuss performance, improved reporting, Governance Team Case Workers being allocated to Directorates to give more dedicated support, and training being provided across the Council. It is expected that these actions will continue to improve performance.



## 12.6 Customer Feedback

12.6.1 Q2 figures show a decrease in complaints compared to Q1, however, the total number of stage 1 is still an increase of 26% for the same quarter last year. Around 95% of Stage 1 complaints do not progress any further and are resolved at the stage 1 phase. There has been a decrease in the number of Stage 1 complaints upheld, but a slight increase in Stage 2 upheld complaints, however numbers are small. 7 Stage 2 complaints were upheld in Q2 compared with 4 at Q1.

12.6.2 The number of MP enquiries received has reduced since Q1 but is still higher than the quarterly average for last year. Positive feedback has been received on the new MP process that was implemented last year and the quality of responses that are now being received.

12.6.3 The number of compliments received has reduced since Q1 with 68 received in Q2.

12.6.4 Work is currently underway to resolve a backlog of complaints and this is expected to be completed in early 2023. In addition, analysis is taking place to look more closely at the types of complaints; trends and lessons learnt, initially focusing on Housing.

## 13 Alternative Options

13.1 The Directions issued by the Secretary of State, including the requirement to have a performance management framework in place, are a statutory requirement and the council has a legal obligation to respond appropriately. Failure to do so would likely result in further intervention measures.

13.2 The council had various options on what type of performance management framework to establish. Our approach has been developed through understanding the needs of the organisation and drawing on best practice from other local authorities. As we continue our improvement journey, the PMF will evolve to meet our changing requirements.



## 14 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	There are no direct financial implications to this report.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	A corporate performance management framework was identified as a key gap in the council's governance arrangements by Grant Thornton in 2021. The establishment of the corporate performance management framework was a key action in the council's Improvement Plan agreed by Council in January 2022 and updated in June 2022. The PMF will enable officer and political leadership to improve oversight and corporate grip of the council's performance.
<b>Risk:</b>	Should the council not implement a robust performance management framework, then it will not have the corporate oversight and intelligence to inform decision making and effectively manage risks to achieving service delivery and the strategic objectives identified in the Corporate Plan. These risks and the associated mitigations are noted in the SRR. The corporate performance management framework is a key mechanism to report progress and performance to the Government appointed Commissioners.
<b>Equality:</b>	Equality measures are included in the PMF, including the Organisational Health workforce indicators and the progress of the Corporate Plan.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	The measures to track progress of the Corporate Plan include a series of health and wellbeing indicators. This enables the council's leadership to see at a high level the direction of travel of the borough's health and wellbeing and seek to continue good practice or identify mitigating actions to address issues.
<b>Social Value</b>	Measures in the PMF include looking at percentage of spend in the local area.



## 15 Appendices

1. Finance Q2 Performance Report
2. Sandwell Children's Trust Q2 Performance Report
3. Sickness Absence Q2 Report
4. Organisational Health 6 monthly report 2022-2023
5. Corporate Plan Q2 Monitoring Report
6. Residents Survey and Budget Consultation – Key Findings
7. Customer Experience Q2 Performance Report

## 16 Background papers

16.1 Report to Council 21 April 2022:

- [Performance Management Framework for the Council](#)
- [Appendix 1-3 – Organisational Health, Customer Experience and Finance & Contract Measures](#)
- [Appendix 4 – Corporate Plan PMF](#)

16.2 [Report to Cabinet 28 September 2022](#)

16.3 [Report to Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board 13 October 2022](#)



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Finance Performance Monitoring			2022 / 2023			Quarter 1			
Area	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Data Owner	Data Collected By	2022-2023 Year End	Q1 Target	Q1 Performance	Q1 Target Met	Q1 Commentary
Financial Performance	Council Tax Collection	Monthly	Ian Dunn	Linda Tolley	98%	28.81%	<b>28.30%</b>	no	Collection is comparable to same time last year when it was 28.31%.
Financial Performance	Business Rates Collection	Monthly	Ian Dunn	Linda Tolley	98%	23.06%	<b>32.87%</b>	yes	Compared to 22.56%, over 10% up which has been helped by the Covid additional relief fund (CARF) payments being made to businesses
Financial Performance	Sundry Debt Collection	Monthly	Ian Dunn	Linda Tolley	98%	65.89%	<b>41.43%</b>	no	Some large invoices raised in schools has affected collection rate. Collection rates will improve in future months
Financial Performance	Prior year Council Tax collection	Quarterly	Ian Dunn	Linda Tolley	96%	93%	<b>93.68%</b>	yes	small improvement on May.
Financial Performance	Prior year Business Rates Collection	Quarterly	Ian Dunn	Linda Tolley	98%	95	<b>96.36%</b>	yes	Improvement on May.
Financial Performance	Prior year Sundry Debt Collection	Quarterly	Ian Dunn	Linda Tolley	97%	91%	<b>91.91%</b>	yes	Over 10% increase on May.
Financial Performance	Housing Benefit Overpayment	Monthly	Ian Dunn	Linda Tolley	£1.4m	412K	<b>322K</b>	no	The figure is lower than same point last year when it was £413k. This will vary based on overpayments being raised and payments being received
Financial Performance	Number of days taken to process Housing Benefit New Claims	Monthly	Ian Dunn	Linda Tolley	19	20	<b>19</b>	yes	This is the average number of days for the first quarter. The target figure is the DWP national average figure
Financial Performance	Number of days taken to process Housing Benefit Changes in Circumstances	Monthly	Ian Dunn	Linda Tolley	5	3	<b>11</b>	no	This is the average number of days for the first quarter. The target figure is the DWP national average figure. Performance has been affected by the impact of dealing with Household support fund over winter 21/22 and catching up with work
Financial Performance	% of invoices paid on time	Monthly	Rebecca Maher	Linda Tolley	95%	95%	<b>77%</b>	n/a	Work is ongoing to identify delays in the process and implement quick-wins whilst Oracle Fusion is being implemented.
Financial Performance	Variance from budget - General Fund	Monthly	Rebecca Maher	Linda Tolley	0	within 1% of budget (<£2.5m)	£2.2m overspend	Yes	Corrective action has been taken to mitigate inflationary pressures and this is a high risk area to be monitored for the rest of the year
Financial Performance	Variance from budget - Housing Revenue Account	Monthly	Rebecca Maher	Linda Tolley	0	within 1% of budget (<£2m)	£0.8m underspend	Yes	To be populated once Q1 budget monitoring report available
Financial Performance	% of spend in contract	Quarterly	Rebecca Maher	Linda Tolley					Under development
Financial Performance	% of spend spent locally	Quarterly	Fiona McLaughlin	Linda Tolley	n/a	n/a (to be determined)	<b>44%</b>	n/a	Under development
Financial Performance	% of ASC payments made on time in accordance with contract terms	Monthly	Kay Murphy	Linda Tolley	100%	100%	<b>86%</b>	No	Performance dipped due to SBS payment issues in May
Financial Performance	% of NRC Financial Assessments / re - assessments within 3 weeks (21 days) of CPLI approval	Monthly	Kay Murphy	Linda Tolley	100%	100%	<b>75%</b>	No	New measure - June figure provided
Financial Performance	% of Residential Financial Assessments within 8 weeks (56 days) of CPLI approval	Monthly	Kay Murphy	Linda Tolley	100%	100%	<b>88%</b>	No	New measure - June figure provided
Financial Performance	% of DP's with Financial review within the first 6 months	Monthly	Kay Murphy	Linda Tolley	100%	100%	<b>n/a</b>	n/a	n/a - Working on data collection methodology
Financial Performance	% of DP's with annual Financial review	Monthly	Kay Murphy	Linda Tolley	100%	100%	<b>n/a</b>	n/a	n/a - Working on data collection methodology
Financial Performance	SI66a - Rent collected as a % of rent due	Monthly	Manjit Rai	Karen New	95.93%	95.30%	<b>95.21%</b>	no	Customers continue to be under financial pressures due to the increasing costs of living and this will only increase during the financial year. The recent service review will enhance service delivery and allow officers to support our most vulnerable tenants.

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## Performance

There has been an improvement in performance against the KPI's since the last quarter, with 10 out of the 15 KPI's now green. While there continues to be significant issues in recruiting and retaining social workers, the Trust has been working to ensure that no child remains unallocated for longer than 5 days. They were able to bring this figure down to zero in September.

The Trust has three interim project teams in place to help alleviate the pressure linked to recruitment and retention funded by the LA. It is expected that as the staffing situation stabilises these teams will be exited from the service. Three cohorts of AYSE's have joined the Trust (there are 57 AYSE's as of Sept 2022) and while they hold a smaller case load than fully qualified social workers, their introduction will help to ensure children are not left unallocated, as the short term project teams are exited, and that the timeliness of assessments improves.

The total number of children in care, as of Sept 2022, is 818. This is a significant reduction against the March 2022 position when 844 children were in care. The target for March 2023 is 796.

The rate per 10,000 of children in care in Sept 2022 is 98.6, this is a significant improvement against the rate in March 2022, 101.7. Quarterly comparator data for September is not yet available however at the end of quarter 1 (June 2022) Sandwell was performing well against WM statistical neighbours, with some work still required to match the whole statistical neighbour average.

	<b>July 2022</b>
<b>Sandwell Rate per 10,000</b>	<b>102.17</b>
<b>Statistical Neighbour average (5 WM Authorities)</b>	<b>103.93</b>
<b>Statistical Neighbour average (all 10 comparators)</b>	<b>96.57</b>

The general trend across statistical neighbours for the last 12 months has been an increase in the rate of children in care. It rose from 95.67 to 96.57, whereas in Sandwell the rate has fallen, from 104.83 to 102.17.

		Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr - 22	May - 22	June - 22	Jul-22	Aug-22	S
PI.No	DESCRIPTION OF KPI															
1	Percentage of contacts to MASH referral timeliness	83.4%	77.2%	83.3%	72.3%	80.7%	71.3%	78.7%	75.0%	81.9%	78.1%	77.6%	74.9%	67.5%	73.2%	81.9%
2	Rate of Children on a Child Protection Plan per 10,000 CYP population	52.2	50.3	47.7	45.3	45.2	48.7	47.6	51.6	49.3	46.5	46.3	45.5	48.8	50.5	48.6
3	Percentage of Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) in 15 working days	89.8%	78.3%	88.6%	68.2%	93.5%	77.3%	87.8%	94.0%	59.5%	33.3%	84.0%	59.1%	81.5%	72.0%	52.6%
4	Out of the total number of open Single Assessments, the percentage of assessments completed within 45 working days	90.00%	80.20%	72.30%	71.00%	82.60%	78.50%	59.70%	56.50%	69.40%	67.40%	68.30%	68.10%	62.30%	60.40%	66.90%
5	Number of Children in need, including LAC & Children on Child Protection plan who have been unallocated for longer than five working days	65.0	57.0	27.0	0.0	3.0	17.0	4.0	57.0	20.0	0.0	112.0	258.0	215.0	0.0	0.0
6a	Percentage of young people with Child Protection Plans where 4 weekly visits have taken place	91.40%	87.50%	87.30%	93.10%	92.30%	91.30%	85.80%	88.20%	84.60%	80.10%	74.00%	74.10%	66.70%	75.40%	82.38%
7	% CP Plans in place and completed within six monthly intervals	87.40%	88.00%	90.80%	93.10%	90.40%	99.30%	97.00%	98.40%	100.00%	99.70%	97.90%	98.70%	99.80%	97.60%	94.30%
8	Percentage of 4 weekly supervisions on Child Protection cases	77.20%	56.10%	65.40%	71.50%	85.30%	61.10%	47.80%	62.80%	60.60%	74.60%	69.80%	63.00%	67.70%	77.30%	83.10%
9	% of Missing children return interviews within 72 hours	97.1%	87.5%	84.8%	81.6%	80.9%	80.6%	81.8%	87.2%	100.0%	84.4%	81.3%	76.5%	75.6%	81.1%	91.8%

10	% Children in Need Visited in the last 20 working days	63.8%	65.5%	65.8%	64.7%	69.2%	63.3%	57.6%	52.7%	60.4%	57.8%	61.1%	57.4%	42.8%	57.3%	80.3%
11	Percentage Looked After Children visited in timescale according to statutory requirements.	80.5%	82.4%	85.3%	84.6%	86.8%	85.7%	83.1%	80.1%	86.1%	86.4%	89.2%	80.4%	84.7%	87.3%	86.4%
12	% LAC reviews within timescales -	97.6%	96.9%	94.0%	91.1%	91.5%	87.9%	87.0%	86.4%	89.0%	93.6%	93.6%	91.8%	90.5%	87.0%	86.6%
13	Vacancy rate of social workers	36.90%	36.90%	35.90%	37.20%	36.20%	36.50%	36.10%	37.90%	39.64%	42.30%	43.60%	45.05%	45.05%	44.02%	37.80%
14	Average overall caseloads across Children's Services	17.94	15.39	14.93	17.00	17.36	18.19	19.74	20.63	21.07	20.94	20.85	19.61	18.64	18.51	16.52
15	Number of random monthly case file audits rated RI and above	93.8%	92.9%	85.7%	88.2%	90.9%	81.8%	80.0%	100.0%	81.8%	77.8%	100.0%	100.0%	83.3%	N/A	100.0%

## Finances

The 2022/23 financial performance is being measured against the agreed 2022/23 Contract Sum as approved by Cabinet in February 2022.

The expectation of SCT was to achieve a surplus of £1.9m in 2022/23, however they are experiencing pressures from exceptionally high cost placements due to a combination of factors; including a difficulty in identifying suitable placements, an increase in the number of children with complex needs and a substantial increase in the weekly cost of placements compared with assumptions made in the 2021 MTFP. It is now expected that the deficit from earlier years will not be reduced. The high cost of placements, as well as recruitment and retention issues, mean they are forecasting an overspend, against the MTFP, of £570k as at the end of Quarter 2 in addition to not being able to meet the savings target.

The Trust has also recruited additional interim project teams funded by the LA, these are a relatively new phenomenon and are at enhanced rates, to fulfil the statutory requirements of the service and to mitigate the difficulties in recruitment and retention of permanent staff. It is estimated that this will cost £750k for the year, however this is subject to review between Council and Trust. The funding of this additional cost is, in part, offset slightly by a saving of approx. £250k in the costs of paying market supplements due to vacant posts (the payments of market supplements was agreed by Cabinet in March 2022, in addition to the base contract sum). It was agreed by Cabinet on the 28<sup>th</sup> September to fund these additional costs to ensure the Trust can continue to meet statutory responsibilities. The Council maintains a risk reserve for SCT and it is proposed to use a combination of Social Care Grant and the reserve to offset these additional costs.

The Council and SCT have discussed the current financial position and options to take corrective action. The Trust already has a savings target of £2.3m to achieve in 2022/23, with some risks around the ability to fully deliver the savings in relation to placements. SCT are considering a range of ways to source and retain social workers and have developed a Workforce Strategy to

take this approach forward. The Trust has also commissioned external support to undertake a review of the Trust's Workforce Strategy and approach to recruitment and retention.

A number of non-operational vacancies are being frozen and in year savings targets for the remainder of the organisation have been increased to partly compensate for increased operational costs.

The Trust also has a Transformation Programme in place which is currently focussing on a review of Edge of Care services, with the objective of improving service delivery so that families are supported early enough and with the appropriate level of intervention to prevent the need for expensive statutory intervention, and a reorganisation of the Front Door to improve the application of thresholds and reduce the number of inappropriate referrals that waste time and resources whilst still managing safe-guarding risks effectively. The transformation programme is addition to the 'invest to save' activity already being funded by the Council.

The annual Contract Sum agreement with Sandwell Children's Trust provides for the Council to fund the cost of the pay award each year. As this was estimated at 2% when the Contract Sum was agreed, in line with the Council's assumption in its own budget, the Council will need to fund the actual costs once confirmed.

## **Contractual Matters**

There is a requirement in the Service Delivery Contract (SDC) to undertake a contract review after four years of operation. The review was presented to Cabinet on 28<sup>th</sup> September and Cabinet agreed that:

- i) they do not recommend to the Secretary of State that the break clause is invoked
- ii) authorise the Director of Children and Education, in consultation with the Chief Executive of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Children and Education, to agree with Sandwell Children's Trust revised contractual key performance indicators, to commence on 1st April 2023
- iii) the requirement to achieve a judgement of 'Good' as per the ILACS framework be revised from within four years of contract commencement (March 2022) to the next standard ILACS inspection by Ofsted (within three years of the previous inspection).

As per the process laid out in the Service Delivery Contract the Contract Review will be presented to the Operational Performance Board and the Strategic Partnership Board, following which, the reviews will be sent to the Secretary of State with an agreed recommendation in respect of the break clause.

SCT attended Children and Education Scrutiny Panel on 10 October 2022 to provide a performance update, this is a contractual requirement twice per year.

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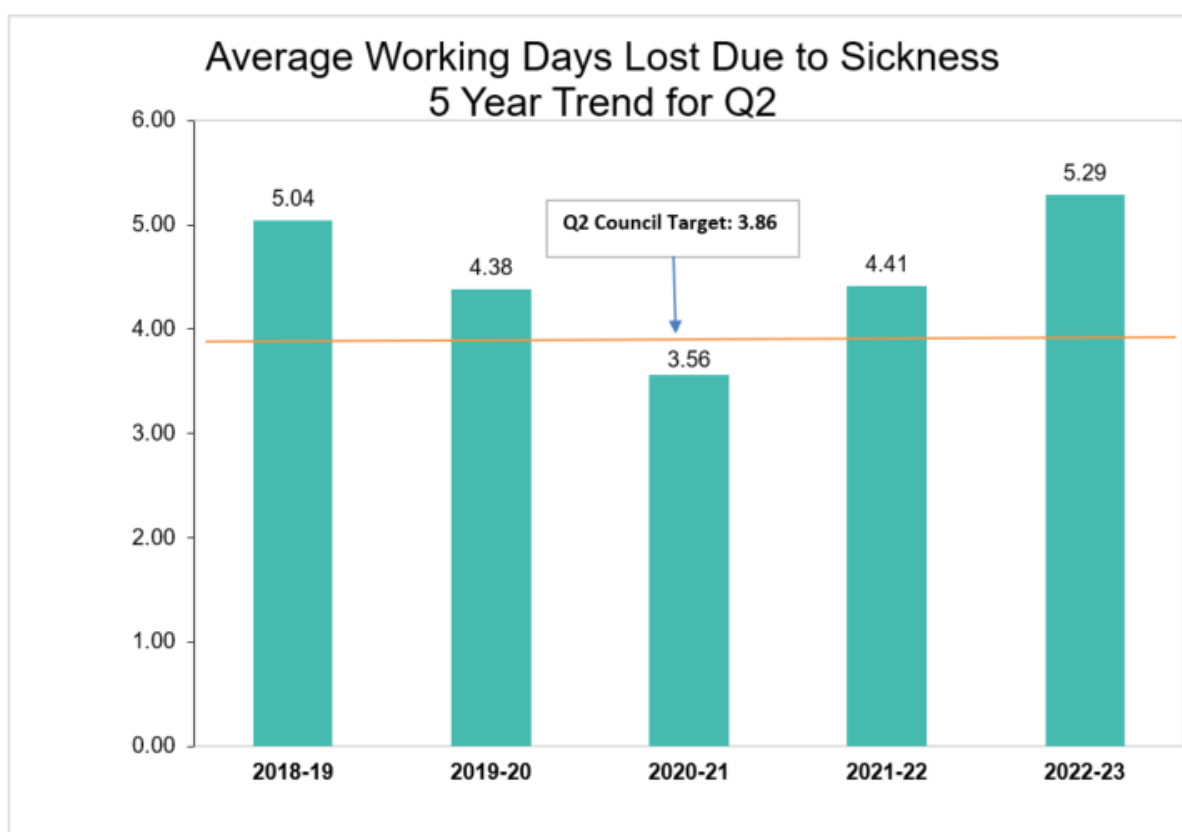


# Quarterly Sickness Absence Monitoring

Leadership Team (25-Oct-22)

## Headline Q2 Outturn

An average of **5.29** working days per employee were lost due to sickness at the end of Q2 this year compared to **4.41** days during Q2 last year. This represents an increase of **0.88** days and is the highest Q2 outturn for the last 5 consecutive years. An average of **2.74** working days per employee were lost due to sickness during Q1 in comparison to the council target 2.24. Q1 was 0.50 days above the threshold:



## Performance compared to Q2 target

The corporate cumulative quarterly sickness target was last reviewed in 2018-19 and is still ongoing and is as follows:

Quarter 1 = 2.24 days

Quarter 2 = 3.86 days

Quarter 3 = 6.21 days

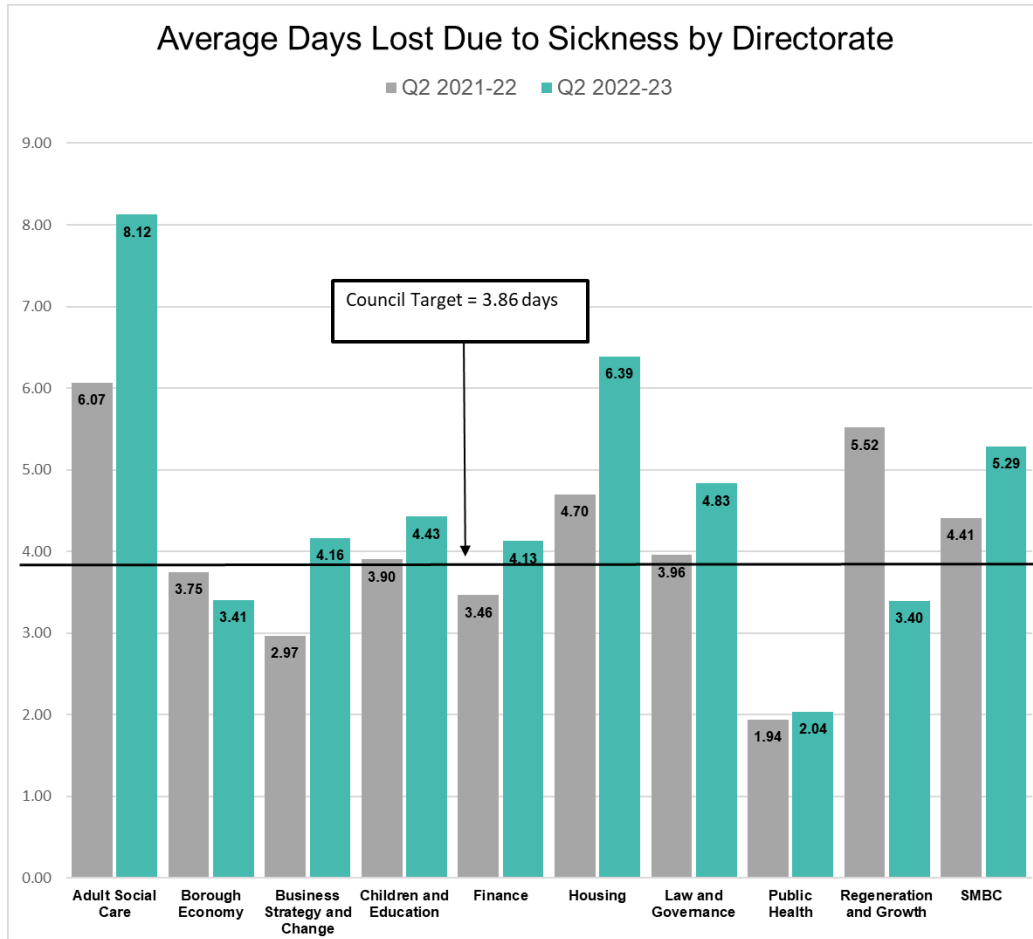
Quarter 4 = 8.70 days

Performance at the end of Q2 this year was **1.43** days above the threshold for the quarter. There are currently no Directorate level targets in place. Directorates, should aim to be within the corporate target. If this is not in reach, then Directorates

should set their own targets/ aim for continuous improvement when compared to the same period last year.

## Outturn by Directorate

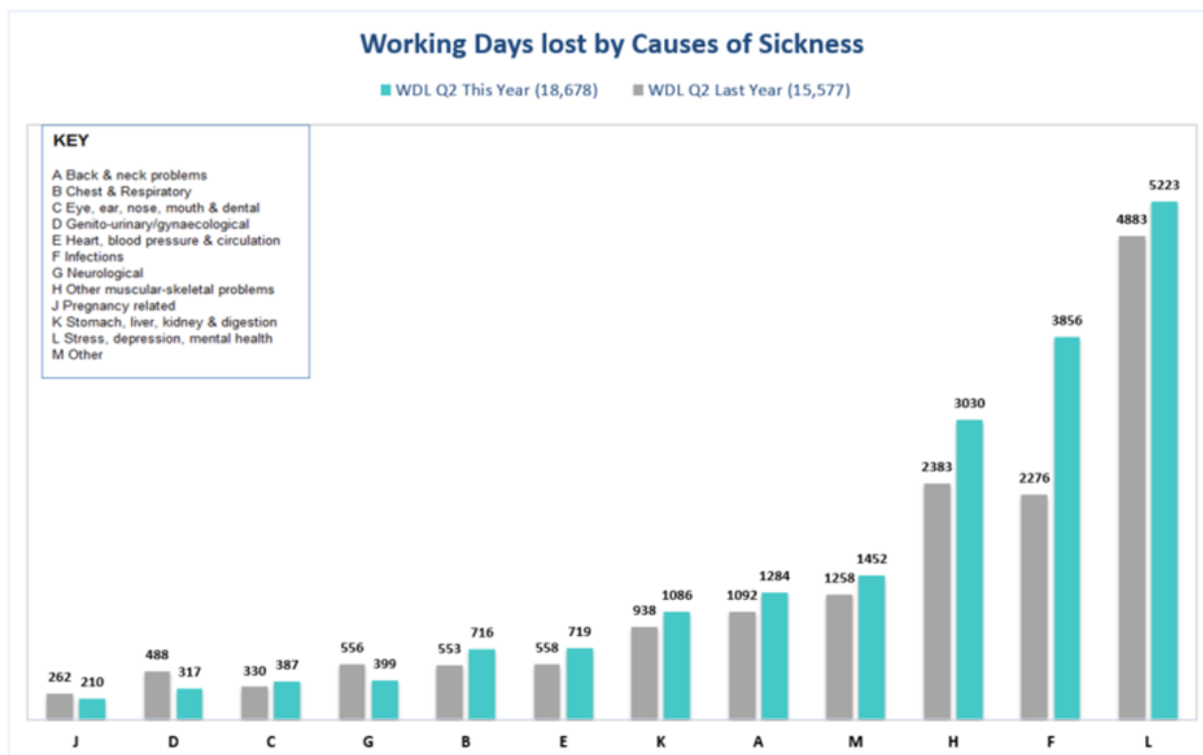
Outturn by Directorates this year compared to Q2 last year shows that all Directorates, except Regeneration and Growth and Borough Economy have seen an increase in sickness levels:



Directorate	Trend Compared to Q2 last year
Adult Social Care	2.06
Borough Economy	-0.34
Business Strategy and Change	1.20
Children & Education	0.52
Finance	0.66
Housing	1.69
Law and Governance	0.87
Public Health	0.10
Regeneration and Growth	-2.12
<b>Sandwell Council</b>	<b>0.88</b>

## Total Working Days Lost by Cause of Sickness

The total working days lost at the end of Q2 this year was **18,678** compared to **15,577** for the same period last year. This represents an increase of just over **3,100** days (**19.9%**). The underlying data by causes of sickness, shows an **increase in Infections by 1,580 (69%)** working days lost. This significant increase moved Infections from third to the second leading cause of sickness. **Stress, depression, mental health increased by 340 working days (7.0%)** and remains as the leading cause of sickness. **Other muscular skeletal problems increased by 647 (27%)** and moved down to the third leading cause behind Infections.



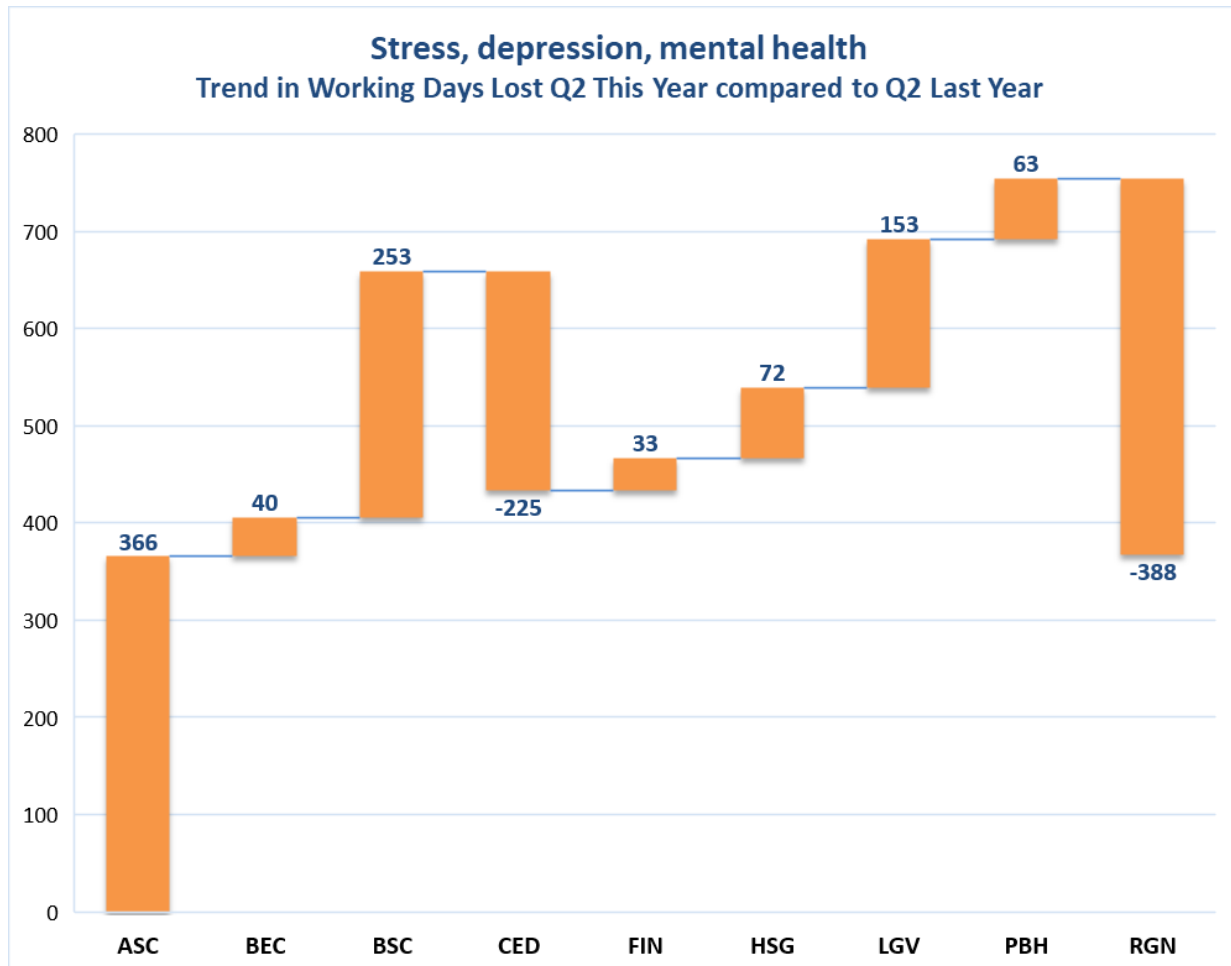
A heatmap summary of the total working days by Directorate is as follows:

Directorate	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	J	K	L	M	All Causes
Adult Social Care	460	178	130	134	260	889	145	756	6	230	1635	367	5191
Borough Economy	71	160	62	32	18	415	13	350		82	363	25	1591
Business Strategy and Change	20	12	24	12	11	230	29	64	58	163	604	137	1365
Children and Education	119	24	34	33	160	488	38	209	16	144	269	416	1950
Finance	41	118	39	52		239	18	167	19	113	446	122	1373
Housing	413	217	53	32	192	1239	113	1272	109	268	1278	265	5451
Law and Governance	30		11	17	20	156	17	74	1	65	367	46	804
Public Health			10			26	4			7	63	15	125
Regeneration and Growth	130	6	23	6	57	174	24	138		14	197	59	829
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1284</b>	<b>716</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>3856</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>3030</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>1086</b>	<b>5223</b>	<b>1452</b>	<b>18678</b>

The red, amber, green coding is auto-generated in Excel and is dependent upon the set of values in each row (Directorate). The higher the value the deeper the strength of the colour coding.

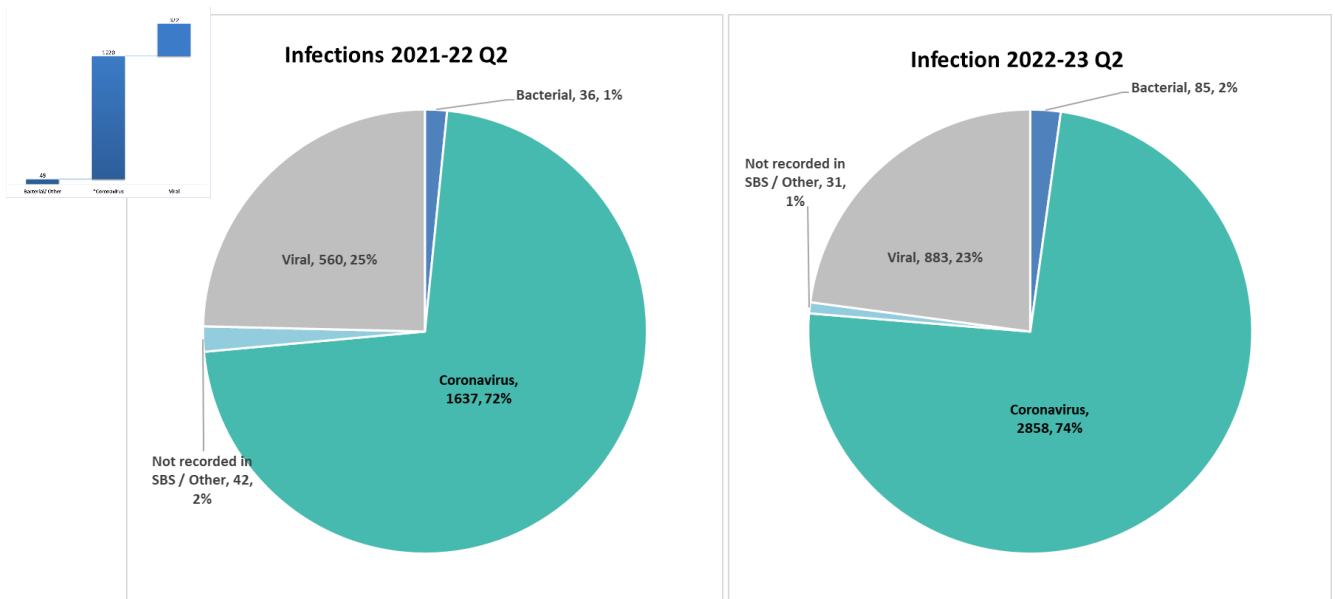
## Trend in Stress, Depression and Mental Health by Directorate

Regeneration and Growth and Children and Education were the only directorates with a reduction in working days lost due to stress, depression and mental health. All other directorates had seen an increase compared to Q2 last year:



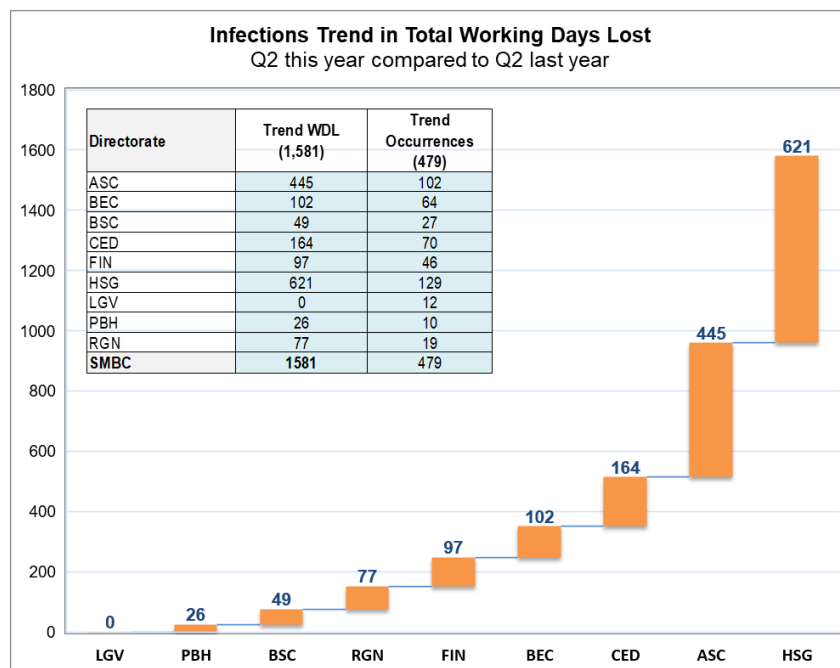
## Breakdown and trend for Infections

Coronavirus was the biggest cause of the increase in Infections and accounts for over 70% of the working days lost due to Infections:



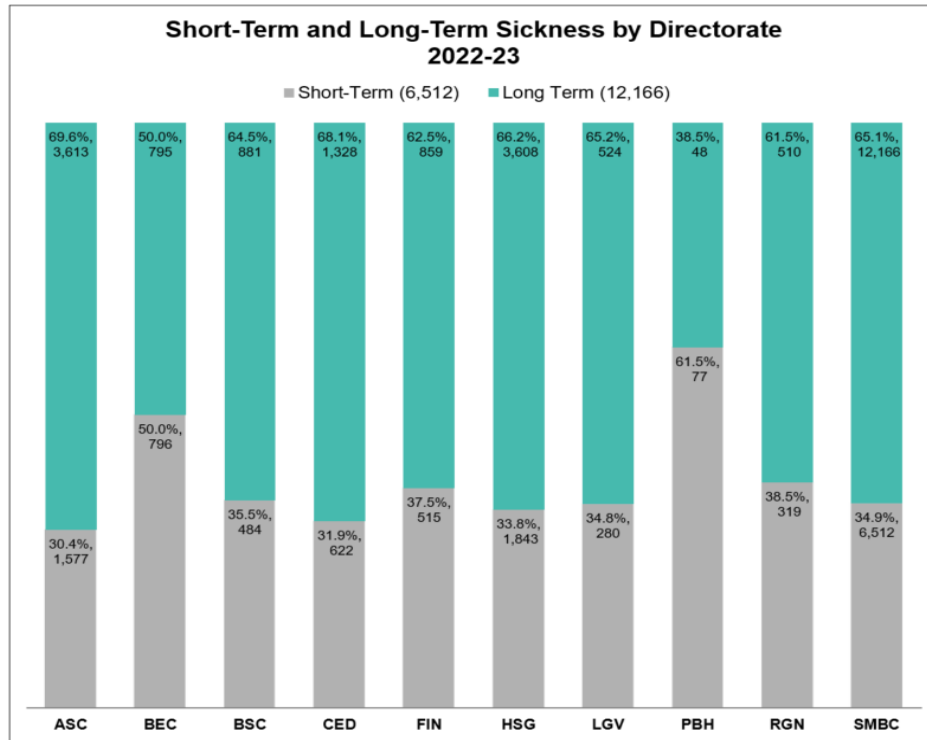
## Breakdown of Infections by Directorate

The most significant increase in working days lost due to Infections was for the Housing Directorate followed by Adult Social Care:

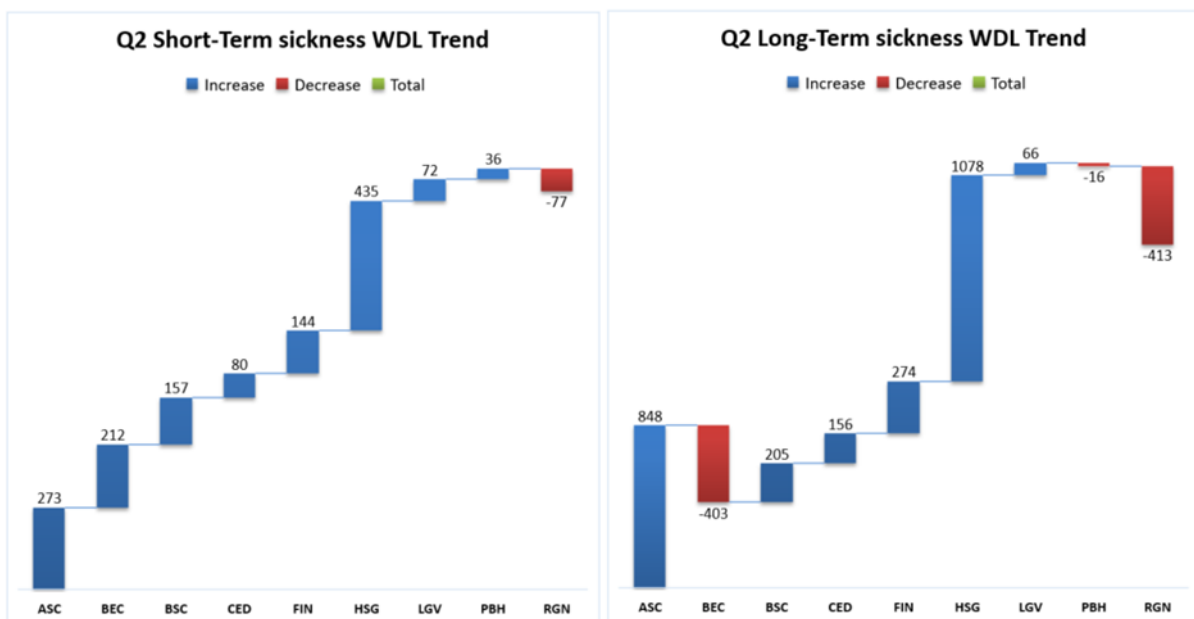


## Short-Term / Long-term Sickness by Directorate

Just over one third (35%) of all sickness to the end of Q2 this year was short-term and two-thirds (65%) long-term. Long-term sickness is continuous absence of 20 working days or more. A summary of short-term and long-term sickness by Directorates is as follows:

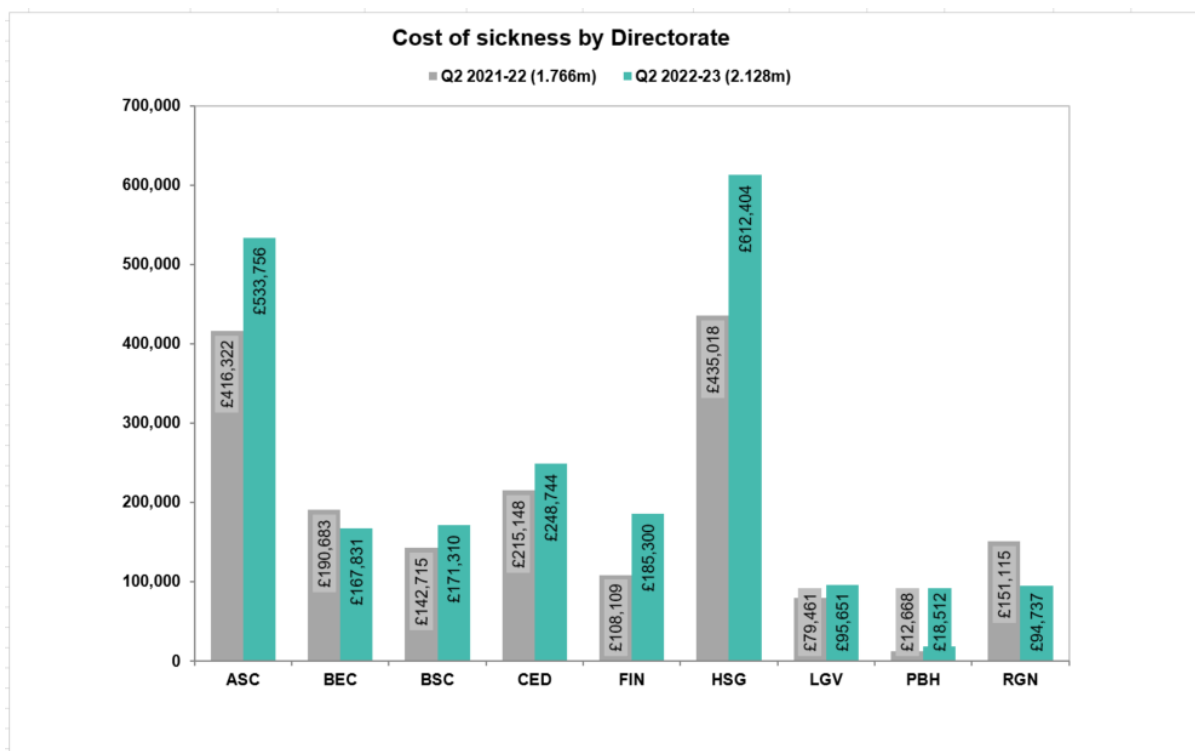


Total working days lost due to **short-term sickness have increased by 1,333 (26%)** and **Long-term by 1,769 (17%)**. The trend by Directorate is as follows:



## Cost of sickness by Directorate

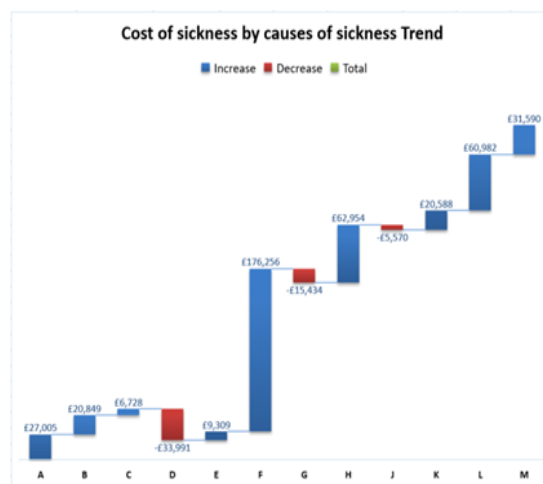
The cost of sickness is measured as loss of productive time for each absence due to sickness. At the end of Q2 this year the **cost of sickness was £2.128m compared to £1.766m for the same period last year**. This is an increase of **£361K** and is summarised by Directorates as follows:



## Cost of sickness by Cause

The cost of sickness by cause at the end of Q2 for the last two years is as follows and shows a significant increase due to **Infections**:

Cause of Sickness	Q2 2021-22	Q2 2022-23	Trend
A Back & neck problems	£115,860	£142,865	£27,005
B Chest & Respiratory	£58,243	£79,092	£20,849
C Eye, ear, nose, mouth & dental	£36,123	£42,850	£6,728
D Genito-urinary/gynaecological	£68,879	£34,888	-\$33,991
E Heart, blood pressure & circulation	£64,147	£73,456	£9,309
F Infections	£263,834	£440,090	£176,256
G Neurological	£62,517	£47,083	-\$15,434
H Other muscular-skeletal problems	£250,319	£313,272	£62,954
J Pregnancy related	£28,697	£23,127	-\$5,570
K Stomach, liver, kidney & digestion	£101,321	£121,909	£20,588
L Stress, depression, mental health	£574,168	£635,150	£60,982
M Other	£142,872	£174,463	£31,590
<b>SMBC</b>	<b>£1,766,980</b>	<b>£2,128,245</b>	<b>£361,266</b>



## Further Q2 Sickness Data/ Dashboards

Directorate level sickness absence summaries are now available to Directorates via their HR Business Partners. Sickness Dashboards will follow at the end of October.

**Vickie Lee, Head of Human Resources**

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# Organisational Health Indicators – 6 monthly update

\*compared to the previous year

Last updated: 14-Oct-2022

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Description	2020/21 Outturn	2021/22 Outturn	2022/23 Outturn	Direction of Travel*	Reporting Cycle	Target (2021/22)	Benchmark	Benchmark Sources
The percentage leavers from Sandwell Council <i>(aligned to WME definition from 2021/22 onwards)</i> .	6.6%	9.0%	5.7% (Apr-Sep)	Not Applicable	6 Monthly	TBC	7.9% (8.7 All WM Authorities)	Infinistats 2020/21 Median for West Midland MET Authorities (4 out of 7)
The percentage new starters to Sandwell Council <i>(amended to include apprentices)</i>	5.6%	6.2%	5.6% (Apr-Sep)	Not Applicable	6 Monthly	TBC	N/A	Benchmark data not available
Number of apprentices as at year end <i>(see note 3)</i>	71	69	48		6 Monthly	TBC	N/A	Benchmark data not available
The number of graduates on the Sandwell Management Graduate Programme as at year end <i>(see note 4)</i>	8	1	Recruitment to the Trainee Management Graduate Programme has been on hold since the start of the Coronavirus Pandemic		6 Monthly	TBC	N/A	

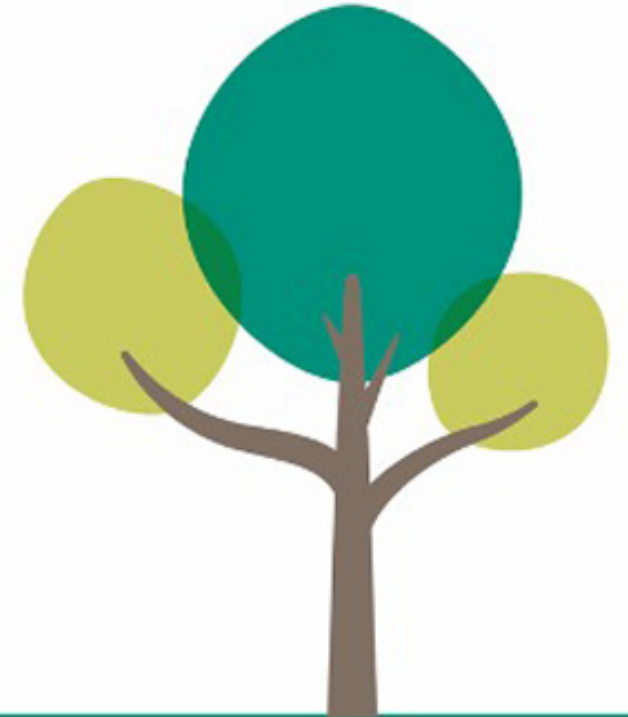
**Note 3** - This metric is mainly limited to entry level apprenticeships recruited externally as a possible future talent pipeline. Higher level Apprentices (Level 4-7) who are internal employees are excluded.

**Note 4** - Recruitment to the Trainee Management Graduate Programme has been on hold since the start of the Coronavirus Pandemic. Funding of graduate salaries will be required from individual Directorates budgets to move this initiative forward in the future. There may be technical / specialist graduates across the Council that have been recruited and are managed within individual service areas.





# Corporate Plan Quarter 2 Progress





# Overview

- Our Corporate Plan contains seven strategic outcomes that our nine directorates deliver on.
- This report details the progress made during quarter 2 (July to September 2022) in delivering the actions that underpin our strategic outcomes.
- Each action in directorate business plans that contributes to a corporate plan action has been RAG rated using the following categories:









# RAG Definitions

<b>On Track</b>	Progress against the action is good and there is i) a low level of risk and/or issues; and/or ii) progress is in line with the delivery date with no/ minor slippage (e.g. less than 2 months); and/or that iii) there is no or minor concern around the measures of success being fulfilled.
<b>Medium issues/risks/slippage</b>	Progress on the action is being made but there is i) a medium level of risk and/or issues and/or ii) slippage (actual / projected) of less than 3 months; and/or iii) there is a medium level of concern that the measures of success will not be achieved
<b>Significant issues/risks/slippage</b>	There is a significant level of risk, issues and/or slippage (e.g. more than 3 months) or significant concern around the measures of success being fulfilled





# Q1 > Q2 – Direction of Travel

	Q1		Q2
Actions on Track	252		258
Medium issues/risks/slippage	85		91
Significant issues/risks/slippage	7		9
No update available	66		53



# Headlines – Corporate Plan Monitoring Q2

	Best Start in Life for Children & Young People	People who Live Well and Age Well	Strong Resilient Communities	Quality Homes in Thriving Neighbourhoods	A Strong and Inclusive Economy	A Connected & Accessible Sandwell	One Council One Team	Totals
No of Corporate Plan Actions	17	20	21	20	22	18	27	145
No of directorate actions contributing	46	127	63	33	41	28	73	411
On Track	42(39)	77 (74)	40 (44)	20 (21)	24 (17)	15 (16)	40 (41)	<b>258 (252)</b>
Medium issues/risks/slippage	3 (3)	42 (36)	7 (10)	6 (3)	4 (8)	3 (4)	26 (21)	<b>91 (85)</b>
Significant issues / risks/slippage	0 (0)	0 (0)	4*(1)	1 (1)	1 (1)	1 (1)	2 (3)	<b>9 (7)</b>
No update available	1 (4)	8 (17)	12 (8)	6 (8)	12 (14)	9 (7)	5 (8)	<b>53 (66)</b>

\*3 of the 4 red actions relate to the same issue, but as it contributes to three separate actions in the Corporate Plan it appears three times.





# Direction of Travel Red Actions – Corporate Plan Monitoring Q1 - Q2

Strategic Outcome	Red Action from Q1		Q2 Update
<b>Strong Resilient Communities</b>	Bring together governance arrangements and budgets to ensure VCS grants are aligned to corporate objectives.		Still a red action in Q2. Team continues to support the commissioners with grant reviews as part of the council's 2022/23 savings programme. No formal decision on implementing a centralised approach to grant management made. The team continues to operate at less than full capacity due to sickness absence.
<b>Quality Homes in Thriving Neighbourhoods</b>	We will have a current strategic plan for the Borough that feeds into the Black Country Plan and ensures we allocate appropriate development land to meet our future needs for housing, employment opportunities, amenities and community facilities.		The Leader of Dudley Council announced that he would be withdrawing the Council from the Plan. The three remaining Councils have taken the decision to develop their own individual plans to continue to shape the development needs of their areas at the earliest opportunity. Proposals to develop these local plans are to be discussed by each Council at future Cabinet meetings between October and December 2022.
<b>A Strong &amp; Inclusive Economy</b>	We will continue to progress the review of the Black Country Plan to ensure the policy base is robust and meet the needs of Sandwell and the Black Country.		See above update.
<b>A Connected &amp; Accessible Sandwell</b>	Deliver the capital programme for 2022/23 of annual maintenance schemes to renew or repair highway infrastructure prioritised in red risk condition (HIAMP) £4.741 Million capital budget.		Still a red action in Q2. Budget Pressures associated with inflation and escalating red risk conditions and delays in Cabinet approval of capital funding.
<b>One Council One Team</b>	The refresh of the Council's Storage Area Network (SAN).		Still a red action in Q2. New hardware has now been shipped by the vendor and delivery arrangements are being made. Once onsite there will be approximately 3 months of work to install, migrate data and decommission old system. A new data backup system will also go live at the same time.
	Development of the Corporate Data Strategy to define and deliver our approach to Business Intelligence.		No further progress on this area. Resources continue to be dedicated to delivering Improvement Plan.
	Delivery of income generated from chargeable garden waste Option B through spend to save proposal.		Action has been reduced to amber. An options paper has been prepared and is to be presented to Cabinet in Q3.







# New Red Actions Q2

Strategic Outcome	Red Action Q2	Commentary
<b>Strong Resilient Communities</b>	Replace 4,000 high energy street lighting lanterns with low energy LED lighting and computer management, providing the same lighting levels.	Capital funding report will be considered by Cabinet in Q3.



# Best Start in Life for Children and Young People

## Quarter 2 Progress





# Director Insight – Director of Children’s Services & Education

- Ofsted – ILACS outcome: out of inadequacy first time in over a decade
- Education Investment Area – 1 of 55 LAs / Priority Investment Area – 1 of 24 LAs
- Education Attendance – new multi agency priority setting across all agencies
- Strategy development and launches: Early Help and Corporate Parenting
- Safeguarding in Education – whole system engagement / vulnerable children
- Emotional health and well-being: whole system support for CYP mental health
- SEND transport – procurement and implementation; new framework
- System-wide agreement with six strategic priorities.





# Summary

- Overall there has been good progress in education and support for young people in Sandwell through Q1 & Q2. The reach of centres in Sandwell for community outreach programmes has increased by 20% compared to the Q1 figure. The percentage of children who have a repeat care plan within two years of ceasing on a care plan has also improved from Q1.
- By working in partnership with partners such as West Midlands Police to tackle youth violence and sharing good practice with early years teams in Warwickshire and Hampshire, Sandwell is striving to ensure that every child and young person in Sandwell gets the best start in life.
- No actions have been RAG rated red across this strategic outcome.





# First 1000 Days

- The Black Country Early Years Outcomes team from all 4 black country LAs are currently working with the National Literacy Trust to launch First Words Together across the Black Country. The Early Years Team have been contacted by the early years teams in Warwickshire and Hampshire for support with their speech, language and communication development. Sandwell's pathway has been shared to support the strategic thinking and visits to Sandwell are being planned.
- A key priority is to establish a community outreach programme to further improve the community reach. The reach of centres in Sandwell is showing a 20% increase in Q2 (against Q1 figures).





# Ready for School / Education

- The children's services Ofsted rating (ILACS) has improved from Inadequate to Requires Improvement to be Good for the first time in over a decade
- 92% of Early Years providers are rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' with Ofsted
- 91.58 % success of achieving 1st, 2nd or 3rd preference for state Secondary school places. This is higher than the 91.02 % of Q1.
- Sandwell scores better than the Region and England average on the Key Stage 4: Attainment 8 indicator, which looks at the points gap between the LA disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.





# Ready for School

- The Council continues to maintain a safeguarding oversight via, The MASH safeguarding team including direct work with schools, MARAC and LADO. The Children Missing Education and Elective Home Education teams focus on suitable education
- The September update to the Education and Children’s Services Scrutiny review confirms the enhancement of support for EHE families
- In the academic year 2021/22 Sandwell successfully completed more than 90% of intended delivery objectives, including the use of Covid funds to enhance community engagement via the delivery of a series of community events during half terms 5 and 6
- Sandwell has less % of pupils with persistent absence in secondary and special schools than the Regional and England average. However, in primary schools it has the highest % of persistent absence compared to the Regional and England average. This has been prioritised for action in the autumn term: Attendance is Everyone’s Business event 29.9.22.

% of pupils with persistent absence (> 10% absence)			
	Primary %	Secondary %	Special %
Sandwell	21	23.7	34.8
Regional	20.5	28.1	39.6
England	19.5	27.7	39.4





# Children & Young People that need more Support

- The vulnerable children's group (VCG) continues to meet weekly in Q2 with a focus on the following priority themes:
  1. Violence reduction (WMP / VR Partnership)
  2. Afghan and Ukraine resettlement programmes
  3. Emotional health and well-being (CYP mental health)
- All VCG partners have supported Trust colleagues to embed the early help strategy re-launched by SMBC and the Trust with VCS in March 2022
- Sandwell children who have a repeat care plan within two years of ceasing on a CP Plan is at 11.2% and in line with regional comparison of 10.6%. This is an improvement from Q1 (11.7%). This represents a good measure to ensure we have closed children open to the service safely and robustly without further the need for statutory intervention.







# Children & Young People that need more Support

- Referrals for Education and Health Care Plan needs assessments continue to rise, and all agencies including the Council's Inclusive Learning Service report capacity and staff recruitment issues
- Statutory compliance in relation to the timelines is impacted due to increase workload and staffing shortages
- Child Mental Health action plan has now been submitted and adopted by the SEND strategic board.





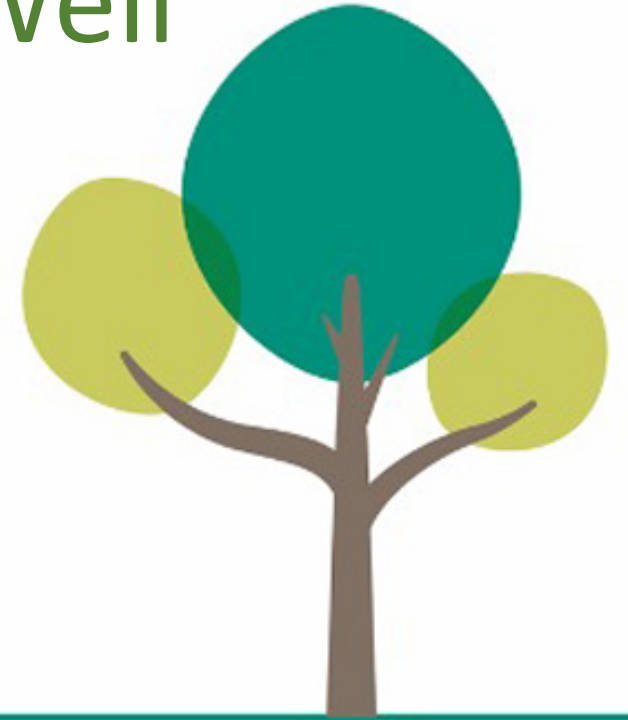
# Children & Young People that need more Support

- Our rate of Children in Care at 98.6 per 10,000 is the fourth highest in our Statistical Neighbour Group and 3rd highest in the West Midlands. Our rate of CIC is higher compared to Statistical Neighbour Average of 94.8 per 10,000 and have 38 more Children in Care compared to SN average. The rate has improved from the Q1 rate of 102.2 per 10,000
- 55.3% of Children in care who have left school are engaged in training, employment, further education (up to the age of 21). The current performance is 7.7% below Regional and 9.7% below national average this is primarily due to lower number of young people EET at 19-21 which is just above 48% EET compared to 75 % for our 17 and 18-year olds.



# People that Live Well and Age Well

## Quarter 2 Progress





# Director Insight – Director of Public Health

Our recent focus in Public Health has been on cost of living work. This has included the launch of the Cost of Living Champion Programme, the VCS & Faith Sector Warm Spaces and the Winter Wellness Guide.

Joint working with NHS colleagues has secured over £1m in extra funding for health inequalities work (from NHSE) as well as England's first Joint Council and ICS Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

Focused work on mental health has led to several new projects in the community. An evaluation study showed significant MH improvement.





# Director Insight – Director of Adult Social Care

- We have made some positive steps towards the measures identified in the corporate plan – namely in terms of the preparations to open Harvest View in November and in preparing for ground work to progress the workstreams in regards to embedding Strength Based Practice into everyday practice. We have sought support from SCIE in developing our programme for SBP.
- Housing have agreed the funding via the DFG for the refurbishment of 16 homes in Walker Grange. The STAR review is being finalised and will be shared with health colleagues to agree next steps.
- We will also continue to focus on recruiting sufficient Navigators to deliver the 12 week assessment programme for people with learning difficulties.





# Summary

- On the whole under people that live well and age well there has been progress in terms of putting the building blocks in place to help people to live healthily and independently for longer and many of the key deliverables are on track, for example the Healthy Sandwell Advice and Referral Service is working well, work has advanced on establishing the LATC to take over SLT managed facilities and various operational reviews are on track.
- There has been some slippage under each theme, but actions are in place to address this.
- There are no red RAG rated actions in this strategic outcome.





# Rebuilding

- The Healthy Sandwell advice and referral service average number of contacts is well above the monthly target at 1,633; both the stop smoking support with maternity units and community based are on track.
- The engagement of the Faith Sector in Public Health work is also on track, with a Faith Board established and 200 organisation engaged.
- Development of LATC to take over operation of SLT managed facilities on track
- Draft plans in place for successful operation of new Sandwell Aquatic Centre





# Healthy Lives

- Promoting healthy lives – a number of schemes are on track – the inclusive cycling programme; the Sandwell Stride programme (volunteer led walking scheme) and digital app-based walking offer; physical activity in parks and open spaces
- Programme of 1612 cultural events and activities across all libraries and museums including at Sandwell Live Site for Commonwealth Games
- Strength based practice framework approach to developing a Stronger Sandwell- developing scope an workstreams with partners
- Investment and support of community mental health programmes, including pre and post natal support groups, parenting programme and anti bullying campaign – are on track







# Choice and Independence

- Draft operating model for Harvest View in place and continuing to recruit staff. Sufficient resources for phased opening on 8 November
- Options appraisal on STAR service has been drafted
- Review and option appraisal of in-house day services offer underway – 12 week assessment pilot started plus recruitment, goes live in January 2023
- Restructure and implementation of social work and therapy underway and on track
- Walker Grange – feasibility information and briefing paper for the upgrade has been drafted





# Choice and Independence

- The proportion of adults with a learning disability that live in their own home or with their family was 86% in 2021/22 compared with 85% the previous year and remains at 86% in Q2
- Carers provided with support per 100,000 carer population was 2,541 in 21/22, and is 605 in Q2
- Quality of care homes - % of CQC registered locations in Sandwell rated as good/outstanding was 72% in Q2, compared with 79% regionally and 80% nationally





# Choice and Independence

Ensuring safeguarding processes are effective – the following areas are on track :

- embedding the learning from safeguarding adults reviews (SARs) and internal audits;
- adult safeguarding improvements in practice and performance – completion of quality assurance audits, developments included in action plan;
- falls prevention service;
- delivery plan for new burdens funding for support in safe accommodation – dedicated monitoring officer for this;
- Draft Prevention of Violence Exploitation (PoVE) plan and strategy shared with partners.

Making safeguarding personal - % of safeguarding Section 42 Enquiries concluded during the period where the individuals desired outcomes had been fully or partially met was 97% in 21/22 and is 96% in Q2





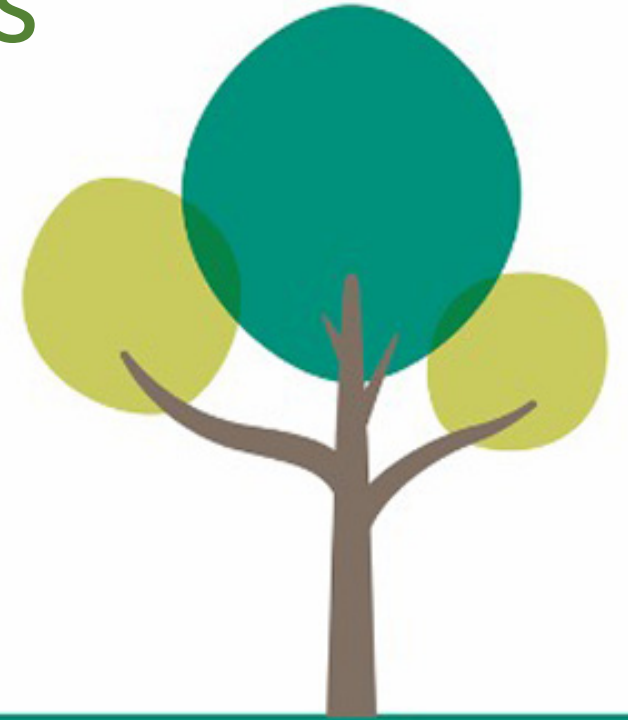
# Joined Up Health and Social Care

- High level workforce strategy with partners in place and sub strategies for specific service areas is next step.
- Proportion of older people (65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/rehabilitation services in 20/21 was 60% compared with 75% regionally and 79% nationally. The opening of Harvest View should further improve this measure.
- Sandwell continues to build a historically strong performance on Delayed Transfer of Care – stronger than the Black Country and England average. Transformation of out of hospital community services, including Harvest View, will further strength this performance.





# Strong Resilient Communities Quarter 2 Progress





# Director Insight – Director of Borough Economy

- Numerous areas of progress are now evident with some delay in respect of key reports due to the Purdah impact on October Cabinet – this included LED replacement programme for street lighting
- Key projects continue to be developed and delivered including Master Planning tender for Sandwell Valley and Library +
- Forthcoming focus remains in place for major contracts and Q2 saw the recruitment to the Assistant Director - Contracts role (Leisure / Waste) following the departure of the waste contract manager
- LATC work continues in partnership with SLT and the appointed advisors





# Summary

- We are reflecting on and learning from events run over the summer and have put in place our programme for Autumn/Winter 2022/23.
- We continue to work collaboratively with key partners in relation to community safety to deliver better outcomes for our residents, taking a more intelligence led approach to tackling key issues.
- There are also several areas where an amber rating has been applied, generally these relate to areas where we are trying to secure funding, and areas where we are experiencing difficulties in recruiting.
- Two actions in this strategic outcome have been RAG rated red, these relate to the governance arrangements and budgets for grants to the voluntary sector and capital funding for the replacement of 4,000 high energy street lights with low energy LED lighting.





# Vibrant Communities

- The £67.5m Towns Fund Programme has successfully secured all funds from DLUHC for all 16 projects. 15 of the projects have now progressed to either Delivery Stage, On Site or Complete.
- West Bromwich Quarter (Town Hall and Central Library) Project – confirmation of successful grant funding from DLUHC, building work procurement has commenced.
- We have secured additional resource through the Violence Reduction Partnership for additional detached sessions and youth work training.
- We have also been successful in securing additional detached resources through the Safer Streets Fund for work in Lightswood Park. The review of the Youth Offer is ongoing.
- In relation to work bringing together governance and budget arrangements for voluntary sector grants, the action is currently red as there has been limited staffing resource to progress this workstream; however the team continues to support commissioners with grant reviews as part of the 2022/23 savings programme. No formal decision on implementing a centralised approach to grant management has been made.







# Culture

- We are on track with implementing our Commonwealth Games Health and Wellbeing legacy plan, multiple work strands are underway including our community sport plan.
- Delivery of Library+ is on track with a libraries strategy being developed.
- Programme of autumn events in place for the rest of the year, including Christmas lights switch ons, support to civic events such as remembrance Sunday, October half term, and Fireworks and Illuminated Garden Weekend at Dartmouth Park
- Procurement process underway to award contract for the development of a Sandwell Valley Masterplan.





# Safe

- During Q2 there have been 15 compliance visits undertaken for taxi operators and their bases.
- 57 compliance visits have been carried out to licenced premises and a further two joint operations with Police and Trading Standards.
- One premises licence has been revoked as a result of enforcement activity.
- 14 cases have been referred to our anti social behaviour response pilot and deployable cameras assigned to hotspot areas.
- A new Implementation Oversight Group that reports to the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership has been established to support the delivery of the Domestic Abuse Strategy.
- In Q2 2056 DA crimes / non crimes were recorded (slightly above the Q1 figure of 2034) MARAC figures are not yet available and will be reported in Q3.
- In Q2 there were 9,627 incidence of crime, this is a reduction of 324 compared to Q1.
- We have reviewed the Road Safety Plan but have experienced delays in rolling out initiatives to support reductions in road traffic accidents due to recruitment difficulties.





# Clean

- We are developing options for the introduction of recycling services for high rise residential buildings - Initial scoping undertaken with Serco / Borough Economy / Housing Management – a list of pilot intervention options is being prepared.
- The Serco fleet replacement programme 2022/23 has been agreed and is on track. We are working with Serco to identify smaller fleet vehicles to switch to electric together with the charging infrastructure required to support this.
- A street cleansing plan has been provided to SMBC by Serco, to improve standards of street cleansing across the Borough. Serco are to provide services and deliver this plan, this is due to be considered by the Waste Board in October 2022.



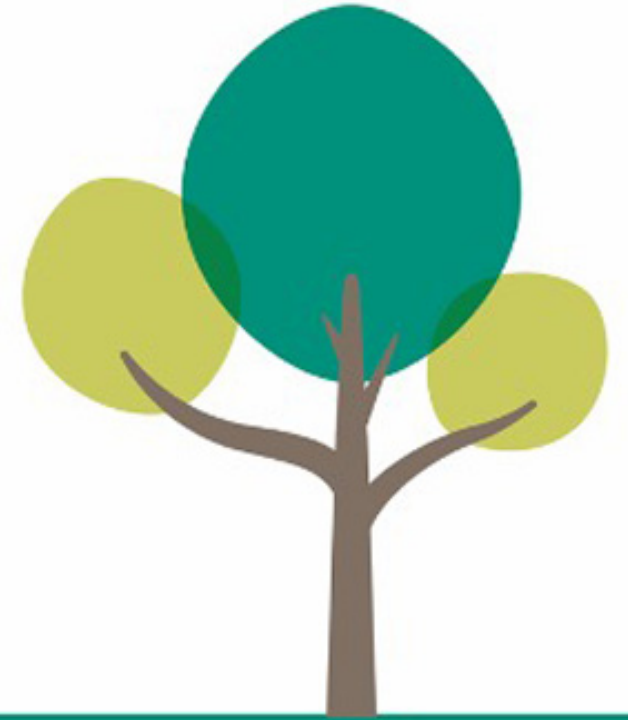


# Green

- Delivery has commenced in relation to Carbon Literacy training
- We still need to secure capital funding to replace 4,000 high energy street lighting lanterns with low energy LED lighting, report due to be considered by Cabinet in November 2022.
- Whilst we continue to tackle environmental crime, the underspend we were hoping to utilise to boost capacity in this area is no longer available, alternative means to support this activity are being investigated.
- Our long term trees strategy has been drafted and is scheduled for consideration by Cabinet in November 2022.



# Quality Homes in Thriving Neighbourhoods Quarter 2 Progress





# Director Insights – Director of Housing

- The Housing Needs Assessment has been produced and shows the demand for affordable housing in Sandwell is rising, including accessible housing for disabled people. This Assessment is informing the new Housing Strategy that will be adopted early 2023.
- More people are seeking help because of the risk of homelessness and this is reflected in increased numbers of households in temporary accommodation (98). We are opening more in-house temporary accommodation to avoid families being in hotels.
- We are focussing on preparation for the new social housing and building safety regulations to ensure full compliance by April 2023.





# Summary

- Overall, there has been good progress in developing quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods with many corporate plan actions being on track. There does continue to be issues in sourcing sufficient resource to manage the volume of repairs to council stock.
- Importantly, it should be highlighted that we are performing well in relation to supporting our residents in the cost of living crisis, as demonstrated by the number of individuals assisted by our Welfare Rights Service. We know that this support really matters to our residents, as captured in the results of our residents' survey where 67% of respondents said the issue that most concerned them was the cost of living.
- There is one action that has been RAG rated red where there is significant slippage and uncertainty. This is in relation to delivery of the Black Country Plan.





# Building New Homes

- 251 new affordable homes delivered (figure based upon planning applications)
- 194 Disabled Facilities Grants approved, supporting people to remain independent in their own homes.
- Willow Gardens fully open operationally and filling current voids
- Walker Grange plan to upgrade and refurbish some flats to be dementia friendly has been approved for implementation
- Project to deliver 54 affordable flats for young people through Live and Work Scheme is progressing with contractor starting on site January 2023







# Regeneration & Resources

- The Lovell Housing site at Fountain Lane, Oldbury is now on site with the construction of 246 homes underway. The site is a pilot for ‘First Homes’ which are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing and should be considered to meet the definition of ‘affordable housing’ for planning purposes.
- Hall Green Lane, West Bromwich – developer, Countryside Properties, now on site delivering 223 homes, anticipated completion date of September 2024.
- It has been agreed that Black Country authorities will complete separate strategic plans. The impact on the delivery of the SDP is a significant risk as it could mean that we are without an up to date local plan. A report will be considered by Cabinet in November 2022 proposing a way forward.





# Existing Estate

- The review of the current housing renewal and adaptations policy is underway and is not limited to major adaptations, it will encompass a wider set of interventions across private housing e.g. improving the warmth of disabled people's homes.
- The 30 year HRA Business Plan has been prepared and is going through the democratic process for adoption in February 2023. Proposals for rent setting in 2023 are being considered.
- 4,405 properties have not had external improvements with the next major refurbishment of a high rise block starting at Darley House in November 2022.
- Home checks fully operational with 1,654 being completed and resulting in follow up actions e.g. safeguarding referrals, welfare rights referrals.
- Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Group fully operational with agreed 12 month work plan. The Chair of the Tenant Scrutiny Group has been co-opted on to the Council's Stronger Neighbourhoods and Communities Scrutiny Board.
- A new Tenant Engagement Officer (TEO) is now in post to help deliver activities relating to the Tenant Engagement Framework and 5 Tenant Auditors have been recruited to look at the quality and safety of our council housing.





# Existing Homes

- 97% of emergency and urgent repairs were completed within target timescale. Additional contractors engaged to work through backlog of repairs.
- 15.5 days was the average time taken to complete a repair. There are ongoing issues sourcing sufficient resource to manage the volume of repairs that is a legacy of the pandemic. 2 new contracts started 1/10/22 to help address this.
- Number of private sector properties reported to be in state of disrepair where Housing intervened with a positive resolution – 325 cases in last 6 months.
- Additional Licencing Scheme went live in West Bromwich 1st July with 13 small HMOs licensed under this scheme voluntarily by landlords. Enforcement plans are being developed to identify and take action in relation to unlicensed properties.
- The Empty Homes Strategy 2023-28 was considered by Scrutiny Board and will go to Cabinet for approval, with a full-time officer and funding being allocated to support implementation.





# Vulnerable People, Homelessness and Community Engagement

- Homelessness Strategy is in place and a delivery plan is being developed with partners to ensure that the strategy is delivered. We are achieving a 62% homelessness prevention rate with 2,181 households seeking help in 6 months.
- Total monetary value of benefits awarded to residents assisted by Welfare Rights Service was £8.65m with 6,919 people helped.
- The expectation of Welfare Rights is to see 2,750 clients per quarter, however higher numbers have been assisted in Q2, due to the increased need for the service because of the cost of living crisis.
- Rent collection rate dipped slightly to 95% and we have plans to create a hardship fund for tenants struggling with arrears who do not qualify for discretionary housing payments.
- We are working with 44 hosts to maintain accommodation and support for Ukrainian refugees.



# A Strong and Inclusive Economy Quarter 2 Progress





# Summary

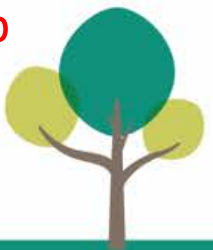
- We continue to make good progress in developing an inclusive economy across Sandwell and in maximising funding opportunities and local investment.
- Monitoring of the Regeneration Strategy and pipeline indicates that the vast majority of the 66 projects are on track or amber, meaning they are progressing through the delivery stages. 23 projects remain at the concept stage and are therefore identified as red risks
- There is one action that has been RAG rated red in this Strategic Outcome this relates to the development of a borough plan that feeds into the Black Country Plan.





# Spend Our Money and Invest Locally

- £400m project for a new Waste to Energy Plant commenced construction – creating c.400 construction jobs and exploring feasibility of local heat network using plant's energy
- Negotiation with WMCA to achieve best UKSPF allocation for Sandwell to deliver Inclusive Recovery action Plan
- Legacy Build phase of the Sandwell Aquatic Centre to add local leisure facilities has now commenced and working towards refreshing the Games Legacy Plan – increasing opportunities for residents to increase physical activity
- Project for new health centre in Wednesbury being funded and delivered by SMBC for NHS commenced construction, plus 5 new council homes on site
- Sandwell's expression of interest for a new Investment Zone has been submitted to DLUHC via the WMCA- focused on sites in the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill metro extension corridor
- DfE have brought forward a proposal for a new Academy (George Betts Academy) in West Bromwich
- It has been agreed that Black Country authorities will complete separate strategic plans. The impact on the delivery of the SDP is a significant risk as it could mean that we are without an up to date local plan.





# Jobs and Training

- We are working with schools and employers to improve opportunities for young people to access apprenticeships and permanent employment.
- Events schedule in place to showcase apprenticeship opportunities available in Council
- Employers regularly engaged to showcase benefits of apprenticeships. A new supported internship programme established with DPD
- Work experience taking place in Council but opportunities remain limited in service areas
- Negotiation with WMCA to achieve best UKSPF allocation for Sandwell to deliver employment and skills agenda





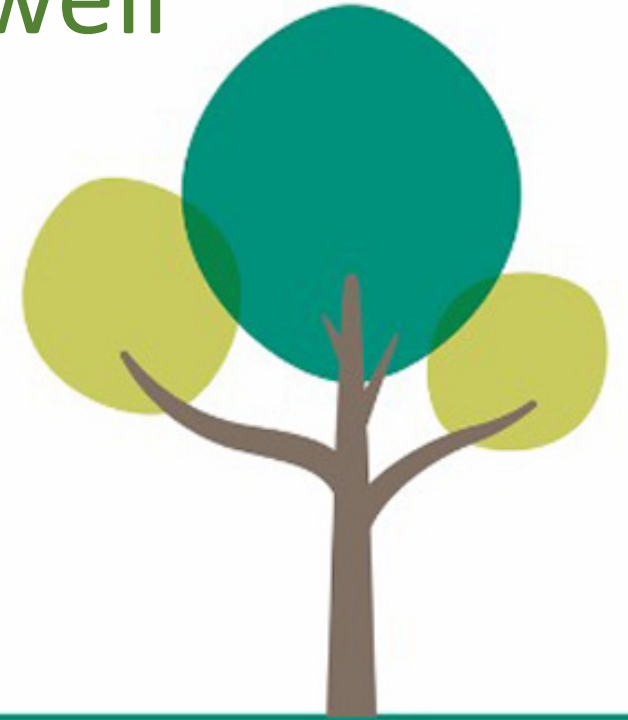


# Working with Businesses

- The Business Growth Team secured funding through COMF to provide business activities, supporting the inclusive Recovery Action Plan. Recruitment is underway for the required personnel resources.
- The Business Growth Team is working with WMCA to align Sandwell's Inclusive Recovery Plan to that of the proposed Regional Business Support offer to maximise the benefit for the borough



# A Connected and Accessible Sandwell Quarter 2 Progress





# Summary

- Overall there has been good progress on key infrastructure pipeline projects such as the Metro extension and Blackheath Interchange which are at various stages of delivery.
- The ULEV charging scheme has progressed from business case to delivery stage. Phase I will deliver 75 Charging points, future phases will look to deliver 250 charging points by 2025. This is a clear indicator showing that Sandwell is making strides in becoming more connected and accessible.
- There has been some slippage on projects due to recruitment difficulties and also budget pressures related to inflation . If not addressed these slippages can cause further issues/delays for the projects.



# A connected and accessible Sandwell

- Wednesbury to Brierly Hill Metro Extension comprises of 2 phases. Phase I from Sandwell to Dudley Town Centre is funded. Phase II from Dudley to Merry Hill is currently unprogrammed and unfunded. Phase I commenced in 2018 and is scheduled for completion 2024.
- The £16m capital programme of improvement works is underway at 48 locations in the borough. These will deliver improvements to road safety, congestion, town centres, street lighting, speed reduction, bridge refurbishment, cycling, walking, major route signing. However, progress on this project is constrained by recruitment difficulties and delayed approval of the workforce plan.



# A connected and accessible Sandwell

- The Local Plan and the Local Transport Plan show that projects relating to the improvement of the highway network are to be delivered during their respective plan periods. This will support the local economy and the movement of goods and people across the borough.
- There is a significant budget risk to the delivery of the capital programme for 2022/23 of annual maintenance schemes to renew or repair highway infrastructure (£4.741 Million capital budget) Forecast budget pressures associated with escalating inflation mean that this is now a red risk, an overspend is likely is if the Council is to deliver its planned works.





# Key Infrastructure Projects

- All key infrastructure projects are in various stages of delivery, detailed updates to be reported annually.
- Birchley Island is at detailed design phase, the outline business case is complete/approved. Full Business Case will not be approved until CPO has been undertaken. This will take approx. 2 years to complete. Anticipated start on site August 2024 complete November 2027.
- Funding is secured and the route from Dudley Port Railway Station to Great Bridge is currently in detailed design stage. Outline Business Case submitted by TfWM.
- Blackheath Interchange is at a prelim design stage. This is a Towns Fund project, consultation is to commence November 2022.





# Key Infrastructure Projects/ Digital

- The ULEV charging scheme has progressed from business case to delivery stage. Phase I is on site and will complete during 2023 (75 Charging points). Future phases to be completed by 2025 (250 charging points).
- Teams are embedding the positive changes made during COVID to improve service delivery and accessibility giving service users greater opportunities to self-help. Children's directorate are working to revise School Self Evaluation Forms in line with new draft Local Area SEND inspection.
- Sandwell are currently working with WM5G to ensure that we maximise opportunities for 5G infrastructure.





# Clean & Green

- TfWM and service providers are ensuring all public transport options available locally are as green as possible.
- We are currently working with partner organisations to identify opportunities for infrastructure improvements throughout the borough and neighbouring LAs, so that we can maximise Government funding opportunities.
- Schemes within the Sandwell's Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan are in various stages of delivery. Rowley Regis, West Bromwich and Smethwick have progressed from business case stage to on site.







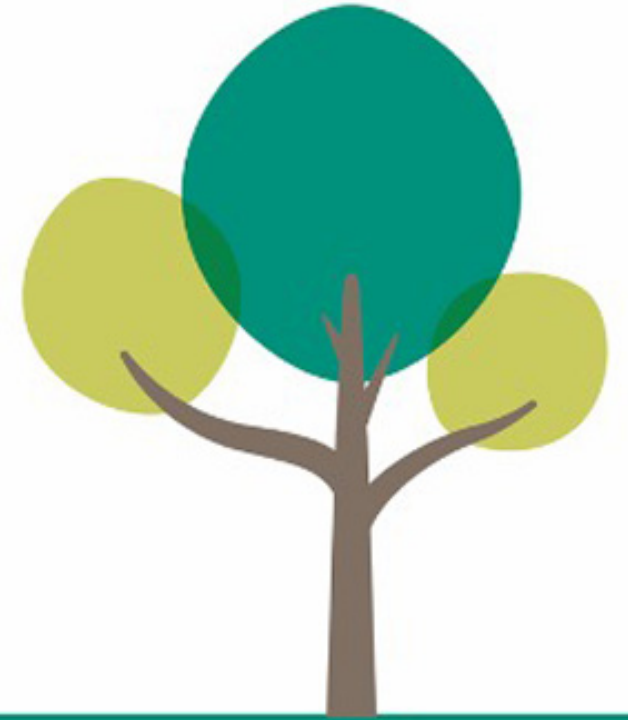
# Connected Travel & Partnerships

- Towns Funding has been secured for a Canal and River Trust project in Rowley Regis. The project has progressed from business case stage to on site as of October 2022. Scheduled to complete 2023.
- We are currently on track to deliver towpath and access improvements on Dudley No2 Canal, Birmingham Old Line Canal and Midland Metropolitan University Hospital canal.
- Progress has been constrained by onerous approval processes with National Highways for the programme of works scheduled for 2022/23 of the £30m Birchley Island major junction improvement.





# One Council One Team Quarter 2 Progress





# Director Insights – Director of Finance

- Work continues in all areas of the plan, with some slippage in reporting timelines to Cabinet due to the pre-election period
- The Medium Term Financial Strategy review has been completed and will be reported to Cabinet in November alongside a report on the draft budget for 2023/24 and savings options
- A Corporate and Transformation Savings Plan has been developed to underpin the MTFS for 2023/24 onwards, although more work is needed to develop specific project plans for the each of the transformation workstreams
- There has also been a focus on Cost of Living initiatives and the Revenues and Benefits Team will be administering the next round of Household Support Fund which has just been launched





# Director Insights – Director of Law & Governance

- Constitution Review is progressing well with engagement through the cross-member working group and wider member group sessions – Phase 2 of the review will be presented to Full Council on 8 Nov for approval. Phase 2 includes -

Council Procedure Rules	Executive Procedure Rules
Access to Information Rules	Articles 7 and 13 – Executive and Decision Making
Officer Employment Rules	Scheme of Delegation to Officers
Member Officer Protocol	Officer Code of Conduct

- Phase 3 has commenced and will report to Dec Council which will focus on the remaining elements of the constitution. A review of committee structures and their terms of reference fall outside the Gov Review.
- Member Development Plan has been reviewed again in year. The MDP is a dynamic programme and is reviewed periodically throughout the Municipal Year. Member PDPs are underway and will feed into the next MDP review. The revised MDP will be considered by the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee on 1 Nov.
- Scrutiny Review has been completed and improvement made. The outcome of the review is to be reported to Full Council on 8 Nov.
- The Council’s Equality Policy has been reviewed and will be progressing to Cabinet for approval on 16 Nov, along with approval of using the LGA Equality Framework to progress the EDI Agenda.
- Training and guidance re: decision making and the new constitutional updates (once approved) is planned during Nov and Dec. Further development work will continue into the new year.





# Director Insights – Director of Business Strategy & Change

- Significant progress has been made on a number of key areas of the plan, however, the competing priority of managing the improvement plan continues to limit the resource available to move forward in some areas. Temporary resource has been identified and therefore we hope to rectify this position across the remainder of the year.
- The delivery of the Residents Well Being and Perception survey has been a highlight of this quarter, and along with the continued work to embed the corporate performance management framework provides another step towards becoming more intelligence led in our organisational decision making. To build on this work we now need to focus on the development of our business intelligence strategy which is one of the main areas to suffer as a result of the pressure on resources highlighted above
- We have continued to lay the foundations on key pieces of work which will support our wider workforce and organizational development, and in quarter 3 expect to be able to share proposals for a new set of organisational values and behaviors along with a proposed workforce strategy which supports their delivery.
- Whilst we have continued to progress the development of our Customer Access strategy, we are having to respond to immediate operational corporate wide challenges in respect of customer service which will be a key focus as we move through the next quarter of the financial year.





# Summary

- Recruitment campaign for permanent CEX launched – appointment anticipated end October to provide stability in leadership and continuity of style and approach
- Progress made on implementing systems that will enable a modern, outstanding council: New Systems Integrator procured for Oracle Fusion and in final stages of agreeing implementation plan to move, and data collection in progress to determine future telephony requirements.
- Performance in customer services impacted by increased demand for face-to-face contact and additional responsibilities, e.g. energy rebate. Focus on improving customer journey – Customer Commitments drafted and feedback to be sought from customers. Progress made on digital inclusion with funding of Digital Dens agreed and recruitment of co-ordinator underway.
- Wellbeing provision has continued to be developed with appointment of wellbeing specialist. Resources identified to undertake HR policy review in support of best practice, effective and efficient people management policy and procedure.
- Progress in listening and accountable – residents wellbeing and perception and budget consultation surveys conducted and initial results shared and will be embedded in business planning. Consultation on proposed changes to election cycle conducted to help inform Council's decision in November. Development of proposal for cross-council resident engagement - to be presented to LT in Q3.
- Corporate performance reporting aligned with financial and risk reporting to provide Leadership Team and Members with oversight of key information to support decision making.
- MTFS has been reviewed and progress made across all aspects of Making the Most of our Resources. Options paper on charging for green waste developed for discussion at Cabinet in Q3, improving rating from Red to Amber.
- **Two actions in this strategic outcome remain RED rated this quarter: the refresh of the Council's Storage Area Network is dependent upon delivery on hardware which has now been shipped; the Corporate Data Strategy remains delayed due to resources being focused on the council's Improvement Plan and corporate performance framework.**
- Whilst some slippage of targets is inevitable when managing the number of actions that underpin our Corporate Plan, it should be noted that this strategic outcome has the second highest number of amber actions. In total there are 25 amber actions in the One Council Strategic outcome.





# Council Organisational Structure

- Recruitment campaign for permanent Chief Executive launched, with appointment anticipated for end October 2022.
- New directorate structure implemented in Children's & Education directorate to ensure resources are aligned to corporate priorities.
- Continued progress in cross-council working and embedding of One Council One Team ethos, including Housing, ASC and R&G working together to improve the offer to vulnerable adults
- Oracle Fusion – New Systems Integrator procured and in final stages of agreeing implementation plan. Business Case being developed showing benefits and cashable/non-cashable savings. Planned to be reported to December Cabinet.
- Further data capture and analysis required to determine future needs for telephony system; lessons learned captured from other LAs to feed into scope and requirements





# Access to Services

Corporate approach to improve both the accessibility of Council services and the quality of service:

- Customer Access Strategy development - Draft Customer Commitments and Strategic Objectives shared with Leadership at Away Day on 22 September 2022. Feedback on draft Commitments obtained from OSS Customers throughout Customer Services Week.
- Performance in customer facing services impacted by external demands (e.g. Energy Rebate Bills) and an increase in face-to-face visits – cross-council actions to address backlog/high demand being developed
- Exploring options for co-location and close working with key partners as part of discussion on community hubs and what the council offers
- Digital Inclusion Strategy – continued funding of Digital Dens agreed, and recruitment of Digital Inclusion Co-Ordinator underway
- Supplier identified for new case management system for Coroner’s service, but delays likely due to in year budget pressures
- Mod.gov implementation is on track with final phase aligned to Governance Review







# Organisational Development

Invest in a range of opportunities, qualifications and experiences for our workforce: –

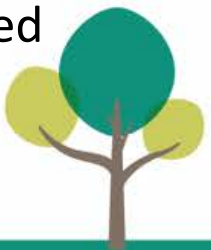
- Workforce planning toolkit is available for use at Service Manager level. To be used to identify med-long term workforce actions plans that will require input from cross functional teams within HR.
- Continuing to identify, develop and deliver wellbeing interventions and initiatives to help support managers and employees recognising the hybrid working styles of employees. Successfully recruited to the Wellbeing Specialist role who commences in November 22 and will be will launching/promoting the dedicated Wellbeing Hub space
- Resources identified to undertake HR policy review in support of best practice, effective and efficient people management policy and procedure
- Development and experience opportunities for local people (e.g. work experience, apprenticeships, etc.) to be incorporated into Workforce Development Strategy (due 2023). Funding for future graduate placements to be identified within the Strategy.





# Making the Most of Our Resources

- Medium Term Financial Strategy – a fundamental review of the MTFS has been undertaken to update assumptions and forecast budget pressures. This will be reported to Cabinet in November 22, along with a set of savings proposals to meet the anticipated budget gap. A series of Star Chamber sessions were held with all directorates to identify opportunities for alternative approaches for financing services.
- Review of Fees and Charges has been completed with the development of a Cost Recovery model and Charging Strategy
- Social Value Policy embedded within the new Contract Procedure Rules approved by Council in July 2022 and included in corporate governance training to managers in September 2022.
- The Corporate Commercial Strategy is in draft form, and a report has been completed on potential business streams and high level savings estimates.
- Cyber Security Investment Programme developed and presented to Leadership Team
- Corporate Asset Management System - Some modules may have to be implemented after December deadline due to tight timescales. Vital modules expected to be implemented on time.
- Options paper drafted on charging for green waste for consideration by Cabinet in Q3 – improved from Red in Q1 to Amber in Q2.





# Listening Learning & Accountable

- Sandwell Wellbeing and Perception Survey (June 2022), Budget Consultation (August 2022) and SHAPE Survey (Summer 2022) results disseminated to Leadership Team, Service Managers and Cabinet in September 2022. Focus groups to be planned on key themes, including customer experience to support improvements to the customer journey
- Corporate approach to consultation and engagement with residents developed by cross-council working group - to be presented to LT for adoption/approval in November 2022 for implementation from Q3/4.
- Focused project on analysing customer feedback and lessons learned in Housing to identify good practice and inform Customer Access Strategy
- The Vulnerable Children Group led on highly successful 'Attendance is Everyone's Business' conference with partners. Continue to work with and listen to parents from parent/carer groups in relation to SEND transport.





# Systems and Governance

New hardware for the refresh of the council's Storage Area Network has been shipped, and once delivered the work will take approximately 3 months. This is within the delivery date in the Corporate Plan, but RED rated due to uncertainty of delivery date of hardware. This impacts the ability to refresh the VMWare hosting platform

Corporate performance management framework further embedded through a lessons learned review of Q1 monitoring approach to inform Q2 process, and reporting of performance to Cabinet and Scrutiny. Dedicated resources to be appointed in Q3.

- Corporate Data Strategy to define and deliver our approach to Business Intelligence continues to be rated Red. Resource focused on embedding the Improvement Plan, Corporate Performance Management Framework, and performance against delivery of the Corporate Plan. Due to recruitment issues to increase capacity, there is delay in determining how the information being generated via these routes informs the design and implementation to a strategic approach for utilising business intelligence.
- Corporate Governance Review – Council agreed changes to Constitution in July 2022 to support efficient and effective decision making including revised Key Decision Thresholds, Contract Procedure Rules and Land & Asset Disposal Protocol. Phase two of the review of governance arrangements is currently being considered by members, with final recommendations to be considered by Council in November 2022. Best practice has been built into the review, and wide-ranging consultation with officers and members has taken place to inform the changes. Cross-party working group has been involved at all stages of the review.
- The Equality Policy is being updated and due to be considered at Cabinet in November 2022. This will then lead to the development of a single framework Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy.
- Corporate Governance Training Programme for Officers and Members was delivered in September 2022 in conjunction with the LGA. -delay to the Corporate Governance training was due to Council not approving the revised CPRs until July (original target date was April). Now this has been approved the finance and procurement elements of the training will be delivered during September (Amber risk).
- Internal communication channels were refreshed in August 2022 to ensure they are set up to engage staff in the improvement plan and support organisational culture change. The corporate affairs function was established in September 2022, creating new channels to deliver messages to members and stakeholders.



## Sandwell Resident Wellbeing & Perception Survey Sandwell Resident Budget Consultation Key Findings

In May 2022 the Council commissioned Enventure, a market research agency, to conduct a borough-wide residents' survey to support evidence-based policy, service delivery and performance management. This was a large-scale quantitative survey covering several themes and particularly aligned to LGA Benchmarking resident satisfaction surveys (the latest one being in June 2022). The survey was undertaken by telephone, with an adult sample that was designed to be representative of the wider borough by gender, age, ethnicity, employment status and geography. Provision was made for communicating with typically under-represented, or 'hard-to-reach' groups and respondents whose first language is not English through community groups and networks and the use of translators and interpreters.

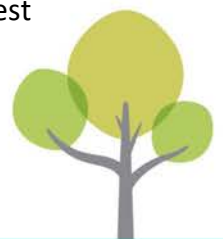
The residents' survey secured 1,062 responses, which is a sample large enough to provide statistically highly reliable findings at the borough level and sufficient responses to examine the results by sub-groups including at town level. These will be analysed in detail by the Research & Intelligence Team to inform a programme of dissemination within the Council and more widely.

The Council simultaneously commissioned Enventure do undertake a budget consultation survey with residents to inform the budget setting process. The representative resident survey was conducted via telephone and face-to-face with quotas set on age group, gender, disability, ethnic group and area of the borough. In addition, some interviews were undertaken face-to-face on-street and in local community groups to consult with hard to reach residents. Alongside the representative survey was an online survey open to all Sandwell residents. In total, 1,070 responses were received to the representative resident survey and 577 responses to the open online survey.

### Key Findings: Resident Wellbeing and Perception Survey

#### Living in Sandwell

- 78% of respondents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live, with Tipton was lowest on this measure, at 74%.
- Four in five (82%) say they feel strongly about belonging to their local area, ranging from 79% in Smethwick to 85% in Oldbury.
- 77% agree their local area is a place where people from different ethnic backgrounds get on well together, with Rowley Regis highest (80%) and Wednesbury lowest (68%).
- Three in five (56%) agree that people in the local area pull together.



### Satisfaction with Sandwell Council

- Satisfaction with the Council is slightly higher than the national average (66% compared to 62%) with Wednesbury lowest at 63%.
- Three in five (60%) think Sandwell Council acts on the concerns of local residents, compared with 52% nationally.
- Three in five (60%) think Sandwell Council keeps residents informed about services and benefits it provides, compared with 57% nationally
- Trust in the Council is higher amongst Sandwell residents than nationally (67% and 58% respectively).

### Council interaction and communications

- Just over a quarter (27%) of respondents had been in contact with Sandwell Council recently.
- Housing, missed bin collections, reporting anti-social behaviour, and council tax queries are the most common reasons for contacting the Council.
- The most common ways of receiving news and information about Sandwell is via family and friends, Sandwell Herald Council newspaper, Sandwell Council Facebook page, and Sandwell Council's newsletter.

### Satisfaction with Council services

Services where satisfaction is higher amongst Sandwell residents when compared nationally:

- Waste: 88% compared with 81% nationally.
- Street cleaning: 67% compared with 66% nationally.
- Road maintenance: 50% compared with 37% nationally.
- Pavement maintenance: 61% compared with 49% nationally.
- Sport and leisure services: 56% compared with 55% nationally.
- Services and support for children and young people: 41% compared with 39% nationally.

Services where satisfaction is lower amongst Sandwell residents when compared nationally:

- Library services: 49% compared with 60% nationally.
- Services and support for older people: 36% compared with 41% nationally.
- Parks and open spaces: 70% compared with 82% nationally.

### Crime and Anti-social behaviour

- Half (50%) say they feel safe in their local area after dark, but this is lower than the national average of 76%.



- Almost nine in ten (87%) say they feel safe in their area during the day, which is slightly lower than the national average of 95%.
- Respondents believe the worst anti-social problem is people using or dealing drugs, identified by 45%, with Tipton having the most concerns.
- Rubbish or litter lying around was also seen as a particular problem.

### Digital connectivity

- The majority have access to the internet (home broadband, cellular devices, at work).
- 9% do not have access to the internet (mainly those aged 65 and older) and a further 19% say their digital skills are limited, an issue particularly affecting people with health problems.

### Climate emergency

- The majority of respondents already reduce waste/recycle at home although 17% do not.
- 31% have not reduced energy use at home.
- Half say they use public transport, walk or cycle where possible.

### Resident concerns

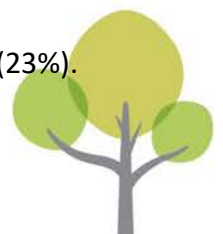
- Respondents are most concerned about the cost of living increases and inflation (67%), NHS waiting lists (39%) and having a family that is healthy (35%). Issues spontaneously raised include community safety, street-based services and the local environment.

### Loneliness and social isolation

- Three in five (31%) say they have experienced loneliness at least on occasion, with 6% saying they experience it often or always.
- 11% say they have some social contact with people, but not enough, and a further 6% have little social contact and feel socially isolated.

### Access to healthcare

- 28% indicated a long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses.
- Yet almost two-thirds (65%) said they did not have any barriers to accessing healthcare or social care.
- Not being able to get a doctor's appointment is the most common problem (23%).



In most respects, the residents survey is encouraging for the Council and its partners. Neighbourhood satisfaction, commitment to the area and community cohesion is notably strong. Crime and anti-social behaviour emerge though as key concerns. The cost of living crisis is obviously topical, but the climate emergency seems less so, with a minority taking no steps to recycle, reduce waste or energy use.

Responsibility for public health was passed to local authorities in 2010 and wellbeing issues were explored in this survey. The level of illness and disability and reported loneliness and social isolation are concerning. Linked to this, is the degree of digital exclusion.

The Council emerges well from the residents' survey for service delivery and customer and public engagement, generally scoring above national (LGA) averages. This is a positive finding given austerity and the improvement journey the Council is on. It will be important to unpack these issues for key groups and at town level to understand differing experiences of Council activity.

### Key Findings: Budget Consultation Survey

Note: For brevity, this summary covers the representative survey responses, not the online sample.

#### Closing the budget gap

- The option most supported by respondents was *sell/develop Council buildings* (34%).
- *Introduce more charging for non-essential services* and *stop or reduce non-essential services* were also frequently mentioned (29%).

#### Most valued services

##### Theme 1: The best start in life for children and young people

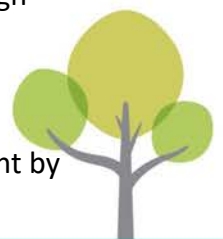
- *Preventative help for vulnerable children* was selected as the most important area of work, chosen by half (50%).
- *Early years education* (37%) and *children's social care* (35%) were next most frequently selected.

##### Theme 2: People live well and age well

- *Helping older people live independently for longer* was viewed as important by over half (55%).
- *Providing day centres for older people* (44%) and *encourage exercise and better health by maintaining parks and open spaces* (37%) were also selected by high proportions of respondents.

##### Theme 3: Strong resilient communities

- *Community safety and tackling anti-social behaviour* was chosen as important by 64%.





- Over half of respondents also selected *maintaining our parks and open spaces* (51%).
- A quarter (26%) said that *providing social hubs and community centres* was important.

#### **Theme 4: Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods**

- The most frequently mentioned area was *accessible affordable housing*, mentioned by 58% of respondents.
- *Tackling homelessness and rough sleeping* was viewed as important by 47%.
- A minority said that *more energy efficient housing* was important (35%).
- One third (33%) suggested *working with private landlords to bring empty homes back into use*.

#### **Theme 5: A connected and accessible Sandwell**

- *Maintaining roads and pavements* was selected as important by high proportions of respondents (72%).
- Almost half mentioned *improving transport options and transport links* (47%) while 30% acknowledged *improved partnership working with local authorities and West Midlands Combined Authority*.

#### **Theme 6: A strong and inclusive economy**

- Over half (55%) said that *creating more jobs for local people* was important and half (51%) said the same about *creating apprenticeship opportunities for young people*.
- Around one third (31%) mentioned *improving Sandwell's town centres*.

#### **Service provision**

- *Adult social care services* were expected to be provided at no cost by the majority of representative (58%).
- Respondents were most willing to contribute financially towards *public shows and events* (74% representative) and *sports and leisure facilities* (71%).
- Over 50% indicated that they would be willing to contribute towards *pest control services, car parking, cultural services and bulky waste item collections*.

#### **Accessing services online**

- Over half indicated that they would be *happy to contact the Council/use MySandwell account for all services* (56%).
- However, over three in ten (31%) said that they would prefer to access *all council services* in-person or by telephone.
- Of those who preferred to contact the Council in-person or via telephone for any service, the majority said this was because they *simply prefer to speak to someone* (40%) and the next most frequent response was related to the *convenience of speaking to someone* (18%).



### Doing things differently

- The most common suggestion for other things the Council could do to help with making the required savings was *to work more efficiently* (16%).
- *No unnecessary spending/cut back on non-essentials* was suggested by 13%.
- Other common responses included *reduce staff/managers/salaries* (11%) and *sort problems quickly/more prevention* (6%).



Customer Performance Monitoring		2022 / 2023			Quarter 1					
Area	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Data Owner	Data Collected By	2021-2022 Year End	Q1 Performance	Direction of travel from previous quarter (to arrow = improvement Down arrow = reduced performance)	Q1 Target	Q1 Target Met (nb/ tolerances for RAG to be established)	Q1 Commentary
Channel Shift	Numbers of Contact by Channel	Quarterly	Helen Green & Digital Transformation Team	Digital Team / BE	634,834 - Telephone 528,726 - MySandwell 25,895 - Face to Face 51,024 - E-mail	152,894 - Telephone 202,331 - MySandwell 13,056 - Face to Face 10,656 - E-mail	n/a	n/a	n/a	Contact Centre - 106,310, Repairs - 8379, Repairs OOH - 2048. The total figure for the CCC, includes calls taken by the Repairs Out of Hours (OOH) and the Repairs Team, both of which are not managed / monitored by the Corporate Contact Centre
	% Contact by channel	Quarterly	Helen Green & Digital Transformation Team	Digital Team / BE	51.26% - Telephone 42.52% - MySandwell 2.09% Face to Face 4.12% - Email	40.07% Telephone 53.02% MySandwell 4.10% Face to Face 2.79% - Email	n/a	n/a	n/a	Increase in Face to Face % Contact since Year end
	Adults Contact Centre Abandonment Rate	Quarterly	Charlotte Leadbeater	Ross Bailey	1.57% (1205 Calls)	1.57% (825 Calls)	↔	5%	Yes	The previous quarter was 1.55%. Performance exceeds expectations, 3.43% below our 5% target. This is an average of 5 calls per day.
Adults Contact Centre Average Wait Measure	Quarterly	Charlotte Leadbeater	Ross Bailey	31 seconds	31 seconds	↔	30 seconds	1 Second over	The previous quarter was 00:00:30. We only just came in over our target by 1 second.	
Adults Contact Centre Average Call Time	Quarterly	Charlotte Leadbeater	Ross Bailey	530 seconds	532 Seconds	↓	540 Seconds per call	8 Seconds below target	The previous quarter was 544. Our agents have a target of 540 seconds (9mins) in which we measure talk time, hold time and wrap time to total to 540secs we have done very well on this front coming in 8 seconds under.	
Revs and Bens Contact Centre Abandonment Rate	Quarterly	Ian Dunn	Theresa Shrigley	5.20%	19.20%	↓	15.00%	No	Council Tax recovery being re introduced along with administering the energy rebate have contributed to the huge change between the first quarter last year and this year. RSCs are also running with long term sickness and 6 vacancies which in the last month has increased to 8. We are currently in the process of recruitment.	
Revs and Bens Contact Centre Average Wait Measure	Quarterly	Ian Dunn	Theresa Shrigley	3mins 55seconds	14 mins	↓	n/a	n/a	Target is Variable as our Stakehold line does not come through Inform 360 so this looks out our timing but the average wait we aim for is approximately 30 minutes. Council Tax recovery being re introduced along with administering the energy rebate have contributed to the huge change between the first quarter last year and this year. RSCs are also running with long term sickness and 6 vacancies which in the last month has increased to 8. We are currently in the process of recruitment.	
Revs and Bens Contact Centre Average Call Time	Quarterly	Ian Dunn	Theresa Shrigley	8mins 27seconds	9mins 04seconds	↓	8mins	No	Council Tax recovery being re introduced along with administering the energy rebate have contributed to the huge change between the first quarter last year and this year. RSCs are also running with long term sickness and 6 vacancies which in the last month has increased to 8. We are currently in the process of recruitment. Although the talk time is longer, this is expected due to the complexity of grants and funds we are currently awaiting to Sandwell residents and the current economic climate.	
Corporate Contact Centre Abandonment Rate	Quarterly	Helen Green / Tracy Causar	Theresa Smith	16.96%	5.96%	↑	8%	Yes	Contact Centre - 3.95%, Repairs - 32.16%, Repairs OOH - 4.72%. The overall Abandonment rate includes Repairs Out of Hours (OOH) and the Repairs Team, both of which are not managed / monitored by the Corporate Contact Centre. Performance remains positive in relation to AR and below the 8% target.	
Corporate Contact Centre Average Wait Measure	Quarterly	Helen Green / Tracy Causar	Theresa Smith	6mins 19 seconds	2mins 37 seconds	↑	2mins 30 seconds	7 seconds below target	Contact Centre - 00:02:14, Repairs - 00:08:49, Repairs OOH - 00:02:14. The overall Average Wait Measure includes the Repairs Out of Hours (OOH) and the Repairs Team both of which are not managed / monitored by the Corporate Contact Centre. Performance remains positive in relation to average wait times, and much improved on previous years figures. When only the Corporate CC figures are included, the Q1 target has been met.	
Corporate Contact Centre Average Call Time	Quarterly	Helen Green / Tracy Causar	Theresa Smith	6mins 50 seconds	6mins 14 seconds	↑	n/a	n/a	Contact Centre - 00:06:10, Repairs - 00:07:57, Repairs OOH - 00:02:43. The overall Average Call Time includes calls taken by the Repairs Out of Hours (OOH) and the Repairs Team both of which are not managed / monitored by the Corporate Contact Centre. Performance in this area is positive and in line with expected call durations. Staff Performance in relation to this and other indicators are monitored and reported on locally on a monthly basis.	
Information Requests	Ombudsman Numbers Upheld	Quarterly	Helen Green / Tracy Causar	Theresa Smith	13 upheld	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Quarter 1 - 5 still awaiting outcome for 3 cases. Year End: 38 in total, awaiting outcome for 10 cases. Out of the 13 Ombudsman cases upheld, 7 were investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman. The remaining 6 cases were investigated by the Housing Ombudsman.
	SARs volumes	Quarterly	Vanessa Mahersmith	Dave Molinoux	257	66	n/a	n/a	n/a	There are no performance targets against the number of SARs received as this can't be controlled.
	SARs compliance with timescales	Quarterly	Vanessa Mahersmith	Dave Molinoux	Unable to provide	56.00%	n/a	95.00%	No	The timescale for completing a SAR is one calendar month and this is a statutory timescale. We have been unable to provide Year End figures due to system issues which have now been fixed but dont allow us to retrospectively report. Steps are being taken to bring performance in line with the target including improved reporting of performance, Governance Team Case Workers being allocated to Directorates to give more dedicated support, and training being provided across the Council. Together with the clearance of the backlog, it is expected that these actions will start to improve performance.
	FOI volumes	Quarterly	Vanessa Mahersmith	Dave Molinoux	1050	298	n/a	n/a	n/a	There are no performance targets against the number of FOI requests received as this can't be controlled.
FOI compliance with timescales	Quarterly	Vanessa Mahersmith	Dave Molinoux	Unable to provide	66.00%	n/a	95.00%	No	The timescale for completing a FOI request is 20 working days and this is a statutory timescale. We have just completed a piece of work to ensure that there is no new backlog of FOI requests within the system. Work will continue to ensure that a backlog does not build up again however this will require the continued support from all teams across the Council to ensure that timescales are met. Other steps are being taken to bring performance in line with the target including improved reporting of performance, Governance Team Case Workers being allocated to Directorates to give more dedicated support, and training being provided across the Council. Together with the clearance of the backlog, it is expected that these actions will start to improve performance.	
Customer Feedback	Numbers of complaints received	Quarterly	Helen Green / Tracy Causar	Theresa Smith	2593 Stage 1 Complaints, 135 Stage 2 Complaints	951 Stage 1 Complaints, 45 Stage 2 Complaints	↓	n/a	n/a	Qtr: 1 Figures show that there is an increase in complaints. Further investigation is required to understand the cause.
	Numbers of stage 1 and stage 2 Complaints upheld	Quarterly	Helen Green / Tracy Causar	Theresa Smith	846 Stage 1 Upheld, 20 Stage 2 Upheld	374 Stage 1 Upheld, 4 Stage 2 Upheld	↓	n/a	n/a	Qtr: 1 Figures show that there is an increase in stage 1 complaints upheld. Further investigation is required to understand the cause.
	Number of MP Enquiries received	Quarterly	Helen Green / Tracy Causar	Theresa Smith	2127	620	n/a	n/a	n/a	
	Numbers of compliments received	Quarterly	Helen Green / Tracy Causar	Theresa Smith	382	111	n/a	n/a	n/a	
	Lessons learnt from Complaints	Quarterly	Tracy Causar	Tracy Causar						This is currently being looked at by the customer feedback team focusing on
Views from Residents' Panel / Survey	Quarterly	Kate Ashley	Iba						Residents' Survey Reported separately	

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