

Agenda Cabinet

Wednesday, 13 September 2023 at 3.30 pm
in the 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 7 - 52)

To confirm the minutes of the meetings held on 21 June and 12 July, 2023 as a correct record.

4 Additional Items of Business

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



5 **Levelling Up Partnership** (Pages 53 - 108)

To seek approval to the Sandwell Levelling Up Partnership and to commence delivery of interventions.

6 **West Midlands Combined Authority Devolution Deal** (Pages 109 - 226)

To consider proposals in relation to the West Midlands Combined Authority Devolution Deal.

7 **Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring 2023/24** (Pages 227 - 280)

To consider the quarter 1 budget monitoring position for 2023/24.

8 **Additional Licensing and Article 4 - Options Appraisal** (Pages 281 - 432)

To consider proposals on the expansion of additional licensing across Sandwell.

9 **Hamstead Infant School and Hamstead Junior School - Proposed Closure and Expansion** (Pages 433 - 456)

To seek approval to formally close Hamstead Infant School, Great Barr and to increase the age range of Hamstead Junior School, Great Barr.

10 **Temporary Accommodation - award approval** (Pages 457 - 500)

To consider proposals to appoint providers for the provision of Bed and Breakfast and temporary accommodation for homeless households.

11 **Moat Farm Infant School - Making Significant Changes (Prescribed Alternations) Consultation Outcome for Change of Age Range** (Pages 501 - 516)

To consider proposals to change the age range of Moat Farm Infant School, Oldbury from 2 – 7 years old to 0 – 7 years old.

12 **Adoption of Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy** (Pages 517 - 596)

To approve the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy.

13 **Schools Capital Programme - Shenstone Lodge School, The Brades Lodge, City Road, Tividale, Oldbury - Proposed Expansion** (Pages 597 - 610)

To consider proposals to expand Shenstone Lodge School, The Brades Lodge, City Road, Tividale, Oldbury.

14 **Contract for the provision of temporary agency workers to the council** (Pages 611 - 616)

To consider proposals for the provision of temporary agency workers to the council.

15 **Information Governance- Records Retention** (Pages 617 - 744)

To consider and approve the Council's Corporate Retention Schedule.

16 **Professional Services Partnership 4** (Pages 745 - 750)

To seek approval to continue with membership of the Midland Highways Alliance Professional Services Partnership Framework.

17 **Improvement Plan Quarterly Performance** (Pages 751 - 832)

To consider the latest Improvement Plan quarterly performance update.

18 **Recommendations from Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board in response to Sickness Absence Outturn 2022-23** (Pages 833 - 836)

To consider a recommendation from the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board in relation to Sickness Absence Outturn 2022-23.

19 **Contract award for the provision of Digital Autopsy services on behalf of the Black Country Coroner** (Pages 837 - 842)

To award a contract for the provision of Digital Autopsy services on behalf of the Black Country Coroner.

20 **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.

21 **West Bromwich Indoor Market Funding Package** (Pages 843 - 850)

To consider proposals relating to West Bromwich Indoor Market Funding Package.

Shokat Lal
Chief Executive
Sandwell Council House
Freeth Street
Oldbury
West Midlands

Distribution

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

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Minutes of Cabinet

**Wednesday 21 June 2023 at 3.30pm
in the Council Chamber, Sandwell Council House**

Present: Councillor Piper (Vice-Chair in the Chair);
Councillors Hackett, Hartwell, Khatun, Padda and Rollins.

In attendance: Councillors Fenton, Lewis, Moore and Owen.

Also present: Shokat Lal (Chief Executive), Surjit Tour (Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer), Gillian Douglas (Director of Housing), Tony McGovern (Director of Regeneration and Growth), Simone Hines (Director of Finance), Elaine Newsome (Service Manager – Democracy), Connor Robinson (Democratic Services Officer), Anthony Lloyd (Democratic Services Officer) and Suky Suthi-Nagra (Democratic Services Manager).

60/23 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors Carmichael and Taylor.

61/23 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.

62/23 **Additional Items of Business**

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

63/23 **2022/23 Financial Outturn**

Approval of the Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay (RCCO) and reserve transfer of £32.388m was sought.

£33m of reserves had been used, some of which were planned and some of which were used to address budgetary pressures. The main variance to budget was the way in which the Council managed debt; this provided a saving of approximately £3.7m. The cost of living crisis and pay award offer to Council staff had a significant impact on the budget. SEND transport costs were also noted as significantly contributing to costs.

Following questions from the Vice Chair of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Board, on behalf of the Chair of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Board, the following responses were provided:-

- underspend was held in reserves and distributed by Leadership Team upon request;
- there was a significant increase in the number of Education and Healthcare Plans and as a result, more children were using services outside of the borough due to inadequate local provisions within Sandwell;
- cheaper options such as public transport, parent mileage payments, multi occupancy mini-buses and taxis were considered on a process of elimination when transporting pupils;
- the Council received income from the Airport totalling £100k per annum.

Reason for Decision

Section 151 of the 1972 Local Government Act required the Chief Financial Officer to ensure the proper administration of the council's financial affairs. Budgetary control, which included the regular monitoring and reporting of budgets, was an essential element in discharging this statutory responsibility. The recommended treatment of the year end variances supported the financial sustainability of the council.

Alternative Options Considered

Cabinet could have varied the proposed treatment of the year end variances from budget.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the financial outturn reports of each directorate service area ([Appendices 1A to 1J](#)), the Housing Revenue Account ([Appendix K](#)) and the ISB ([Appendix L](#)) be referred to the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board for consideration and comment;

- (2) that approval is given to the Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay (RCCO) and reserve transfers of £32.388m set out in [Appendix 1](#) and [Appendix 3](#).

64/23

Adoption of Housing Strategy 2023-28

Approval of the Housing Strategy for Sandwell 2023-28 was sought.

The housing strategy detailed the Council's ambitions, priorities and objectives and how the Council planned to address the key housing challenges across Sandwell. The strategy covered the period leading up to 2028 and was formed using housing need data and feedback from residents to help build sustainable and cohesive communities across the borough. Actions including delivering new Council-build housing, regeneration schemes and initiatives to improve housing standards within the strategy.

Following questions from both the Vice Chair of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board, on behalf of the Chair of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board and the Chair of the Safer Neighbourhoods and Communities Scrutiny Board, the following points and clarifications were made:-

- across housing directorate team had been created in December 2022 comprising of surveyors, housing officers and trade operatives to ensure that the Council could respond quickly to reports of damp and mould in tenant's homes;
- the team was shaping a strategy to help ready the Council to respond to the likely increase of damp and mould reported inside tenant's properties in the winter months;
- work was underway that assessed the scale of the damp and mould problems in order to set out a longer-term strategy that would include more substantial measures;
- although vital information had been received, it was acknowledged that only a modest number of responses had been received following consultation. Future use of Citizenspace for consultation via the Council's website would be used to help stimulate greater interest in future surveys;
- the assessing officer, as part of the assessment, would consider adaptations to meet the needs of the tenant, including wheelchair users.

Reasons for recommendations

The report set out the Council's housing vision and ambitions for the 5-year period to the end of 2028, showing how the Council intended to address the key housing challenges affecting the community. It set out the Council's priorities and objectives for meeting housing need and working with tenants and residents to build sustainable and cohesive communities across the borough.

In addition, the document would outline how Sandwell Council planned to meet the current and future forecasts of housing need in the Borough, including specific household groups such as those with care and support needs and people from diverse equalities groups.

Alternative options considered

The Local Government Act 2003 required all local housing authorities to publish a Housing Strategy setting out a vision for housing in its area, including objectives, targets and policies on how the authority intended to manage and deliver its strategic housing role.

Resolved that approval be given to the Housing Strategy for Sandwell 2023-28 as set out in [Appendix 1](#).

65/23

Application For and Adoption Of Moving Traffic Contraventions Enforcement Powers

Approval was sought to authorise the Director of Borough Economy to make an application to the Department for Transport for powers to enable the enforcement of Moving Traffic Contraventions (MTCs) in accordance with Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 across the whole of Sandwell Council adopted road network. Acquiring these powers would allow Sandwell Council to be more proactive in improving road safety, air quality, congestion and network management. Enforcement would be undertaken by number plate recognition cameras and would be prioritised at locations where events were taking place regularly. Enforcement would be cost-neutral, and consultation was planned to commence in July 2023.

Following questions from Scrutiny Chairs, it was highlighted that the new powers would be extremely beneficial for the Council regardless of the current policies and circumstances facing the West Midlands Police Force. Enforcement would take place through static cameras that could be deployed and moved between different

locations and static speed cameras in the borough would continue to operate under the control of the Police.

Reasons for Decision

With the exception of Bus Lane enforcement, only West Midlands Police had the legal authority to fine drivers for contravening moving traffic offences. Poor compliance with Traffic Regulation Orders for certain moving offenses had a detrimental effect on road safety and network efficiency, Sandwell Council wished to apply to the Department for Transport for Moving Traffic Contravention enforcement powers under Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004.

Acquiring these powers would allow Sandwell to be more proactive in improving road safety, air quality, congestion, and network management. In addition, having these powers would provide an effective tool to respond to resident, school, and councillors' concerns in a more positive and proactive manner, as currently all issues related to non-compliance were referred to the local police who had limited resource available for moving traffic enforcement.

Alternative Options Considered

Business as usual (Do Nothing) was not recommended as enforcement of moving traffic contraventions would remain the sole responsibility of West Midlands Police. Due to limited police resource, ongoing effective enforcement of moving traffic contraventions was unlikely, and this had the potential to impact the safety and efficiency of the highway network at the worst identified locations.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the Director of Borough Economy be authorised to make an application to the Department for Transport for powers to enable the enforcement of Moving Traffic Contraventions (MTCs) (listed in [Appendix A](#)) in accordance with Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 across the whole of Sandwell Council adopted road network;
- (2) that the Director of Borough Economy be authorised to set Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) to be issued with Moving Traffic Enforcement (MTE) at the higher level of (£70) for moving traffic contraventions (reduced to £35 if paid within 14 days) in line with existing civil enforcement activities undertaken in the borough;

- (3) that the Scheme of Delegations to Officers (Executive side function) be amended to enable the Director of Borough Economy, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways, to make decisions on moving traffic offences as follows:
- the development and management of operational policy regarding enforcement, site selection and operation;
 - approval of future enforcement sites and their operation;
 - to undertake the required consultation process with any unresolved objections to be heard by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways;
- (4) that subject to Resolutions (1) – (3) above, the Director of Law and Governance be authorised to amend the Scheme of Delegations to Officers (executive side function) in relation to Director of Borough Economy.

66/23

Asset transfer of Charlemont Community Centre, Beaconview Road, West Bromwich

Approval was sought to authorise the Director of Housing to transfer of Charlemont Community Centre, Beaconview Road, West Bromwich asset to Sandwell African Caribbean Mental Health Foundation (SACMHF) based on a full repairing lease for 99 years with a rental of £1 per annum.

Reasons for decision

As part of this process, Asset Transfer of sites had been considered as an option that had the potential to deliver both stability and future investment in facilities. Since the Council's current Asset Transfer Policy had been in place, a successful asset transfer of Brasshouse Community Centre had taken place and two further asset transfers were agreed by Cabinet in 2022/23.

Following an extensive consultation and negotiation period with local voluntary organisations and all relevant stakeholders, the authority had identified SACMHF as a preferred partner for Charlemont Community Centre.

Alternative options considered

To retain Council operational management, the site would require significant investment which would potentially be a financial

pressure on Asset Management. Revenue budgets would also have had to be identified for SMBC to operationally manage the site. This would not have signalled to the wider voluntary and community sector that the Council value their contribution as partners and wanted 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.

Resolved:-

- (1) that approval be given to authorise the Director of Housing to transfer the Charlemont Community Centre, Beaconview Road, West Bromwich, B71 3PJ asset to Sandwell African Caribbean Mental Health Foundation based on a full repairing lease for 99 years with a rental of £1 per annum for a multi-purpose community facility and office space;
- (2) that, in relation to Resolution (1) above, approval be given to authorise the Director Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer to enter into or execute under seal if necessary, a formal lease for Charlemont Community Centre.

67/23

Asset transfer of Hurst Road Community Centre, Oldbury

Approval was sought to authorise the Director of Housing to transfer the Hurst Road Community Centre, Oldbury asset to Sandwell Asian Family Service (SAFS) based on a full repairing lease for 99 years with a rental of £1 per annum for a multi-purpose community facility and office space.

The Chair of the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board sought clarification on the abilities of either party to terminate the lease. In response, it was confirmed that the agreed statement between parties was being maintained and reviewed regularly. If the nature of the organisation's model was to change so that it could no longer deliver services, then the lease would allow the Council to charge a commercial rent on the premises. If the organisation was unable to meet the commitment, the Council retained the right to break the lease. Additionally, it was highlighted that due diligence would be taken to ensure that any funding applications made by the organisation was sustainable and deliverable.

Reasons for decision

Since June 2022, the Housing Directorate had been actively exploring long-term options to secure the future of three of its community centres.

Following an extensive consultation and negotiation period with local voluntary organisations and all relevant stakeholders the Authority had identified SAFS as a preferred partner for Hurst Road Community Centre.

Alternative options considered

To retain Council operational management, the site would require significant investment which would potentially be a financial pressure on Asset Management. Revenue budgets would also have had to be identified for SMBC to operationally manage the site.

This would not have signalled to the wider voluntary and community sector that the Council value their contribution as partners and wanted 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.

Resolved:-

- (1) that approval be given to authorise the Director of Housing to transfer the Hurst Road Community Centre, Oldbury, B67 6ND asset to Sandwell Asian Family Service based on a full repairing lease for 99 years with a rental of £1 per annum for a multi-purpose community facility and office space;
- (2) that, in relation to Resolution (1) above, approval be given to authorise the Director Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer to enter into or execute under seal if necessary, a formal lease for Hurst Road Community Centre.

68/23

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Commission

Approval was sought to the establishment of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Commission (EDI Commission). The Council, over recent months, had delivered many EDI initiatives ranging from promoting and celebrating PRIDE, Black History month, Disability History month, International Women's week as well as Supporting the Queen's Baton Relay. The Council recently refreshed the

equality policy and a new EDI learning module had been launched. Staff networks had been revised and EDI bulletins had been released.

The Council recognised Sandwell's rich and diverse communities and were keen to celebrate; it was highlighted that these celebrations were key to achieving a strong healthy and prosperous borough. The equalities commission played a crucial role in and outside of the Council for EDI. The commission focussed on being a critical friend and would raise Sandwell's profile regionally and nationally. The board would be chaired by the Leader of the Council and would include members from various backgrounds with differing views and opinions. Establishing the EDI commission was important for the infrastructure of the Council. The Council's five staff networks: Disability Network, LGBTQ+ Network, Ethnic Minority Network, Women's Network and the Age Smart Network would all be represented on the Board.

Reasons for decision

The Equalities Commission (EC) Terms of Reference expired on 31 March 2023. Refreshing the EC was a key strategic deliverable in the Sandwell Improvement Plan.

Alternative options considered

The alternative option would be to do nothing and not to have the Equalities Commission. The council was not legally obliged to have an Equalities Commission.

Resolved:-

- (1) that approval be given to the establishment of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Commission (EDI Commission);
- (2) that approval be given to the Terms of Reference for the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Commission (EDI Commission) as set out in [Appendix 1](#).

69/23

Feasibility of establishing a Council Owned Housing company

This item was deferred for consideration at a future meeting.

Rolfe Street Masterplan – Approval

Approval of the revised Rolfe Street Masterplan was sought. The masterplan proposed over 600 new homes, with a mixture of apartments and family housing with links to the Canal Network and additional open space areas. The masterplan suggested reduced parking provision, however, further reasoned justification and evidence would be needed for future proposals. Consultation with the public had taken place through a variety of mediums which produced positive results with many in favour of the vision of the masterplan.

In response to questions from scrutiny members, assurance was provided that the Council's social value team would engage with the developers of the scheme to encourage the creation of job opportunities for local people. This team would also ensure that local businesses would be represented in the supply-chain.

Reasons for decision

Authority to undertake community consultation on the Draft Rolfe Street Masterplan was granted by Cabinet on 18 January 2023. The Masterplan had been prepared following engagement with officers, members, members of the public and stakeholders.

The period of consultation was undertaken between 6 February 2023 and 20 March 2023. From the consultation process, 41 responses were received on the online questionnaire with additional letters received from other stakeholders. The Masterplan had subsequently been amended, wherever possible, to reflect local views.

Alternative options considered

Not progressing with a Masterplan for the area would result in taking away development opportunities in the area or provide a strong base to bid for further funding. The continued regeneration envisioned for this area would not be achieved and it would prevent the potential development of up to 660 much needed homes, within one of the most deprived areas of Sandwell.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the results of the public consultation undertaken on the Draft Rolfe Street Masterplan during February to March 2023 as set out in the Consultation Report be considered;

- (2) that, in relation to Resolution (1) above, approval be given to the Rolfe Street Masterplan, as amended.

71/23

Parking Charges Policy with Hybrid Working Benefits

Approval was sought to revise and update the schedule of fees and charges for parking in Sandwell that relate to on-street and off-street locations.

The proposed changes had been advertised from 18 August 2022 until 30 September 2022 on social media and the Council's website. Representations received from public consultation were considered by the previous portfolio holder at a public meeting. Individuals making representations were invited to the meeting to speak about their response to the public consultation.

Assurance was sought by the Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board on what assessment had been made of the impact that the newly introduced charges would have on local businesses. The Cabinet Member for Highways and Environment highlighted that the new charges were consistent with rates across the Black Country. Although free parking was considered for shorter stays, this was not feasible due to the subsequent need to increase long stay charges to off-set the cost. This would have greatly impacted residents working within the borough's town centres.

Reasons for decision

Adjustments were proposed to mitigate the major concerns raised during public consultation from 18 August 2022 to 30 September 2022 and at a public meeting on 1 February 2023. The recommendations sought to realign parking charges to support the objectives of Climate Change Policy, Carbon Reduction, Air Quality, sustainable transport choices, balancing available parking with demand and to meet the cost of providing and maintaining car parks, parking related services and sustainable transport projects.

Alternative options considered

To alternatively fund parking and traffic related services from the general fund would partly rely on subsidy from 30% of Sandwell households that did not have access to a car or van and had less ability to pay.

To leave parking charges unchanged was not recommended as it would have missed the opportunity to support the strategic response to the declared Climate Change Emergency. It also would

have missed the opportunity to make the most of changes in travel behaviour as experienced during the pandemic, it would have failed to address supply and demand problems, would miss the opportunity to mitigate against the future increases in demand and associated impacts on safety, the environment, trade for small businesses and local economy and would fail to take the opportunity to encourage working from home and modal shift in transport choice.

A further option, in response to concerns about town centre trade was to make a 30-minute stay, free for pay and display parking, to encourage passing trade. This was not a recommended option as it would increase enforcement costs. This option would still have required a no cost pay and display ticket to be issued and displayed (to record time of arrival) to avoid a penalty charge, leading to misunderstanding and an escalation of appeals. The total impact was difficult to estimate but could reduce income by £50,000 to £100,000 per year.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the decisions of the Cabinet taken on 20 July 2022 in relation to the review of parking charges policy be updated to include the decisions below following representations at public consultation to accommodate the most significant concerns (see Minute No. 148/22);
- (2) that future reviews of the appropriate documents that make up the Sandwell Local Plan consider the appropriate level of parking provision in centres for the future, taking into account the level of redevelopment planned and implemented since the last review, climate change policy and facilitating modal shift through parking management;
- (3) that the proposed scales of parking charges are not applied to Sandwell Valley car parks;
- (4) that for off-street car parking, the scale of charges is reset including a new low cost 30 minute charge, removing the previous proposals for 2026 and 2027 (subject to the review) as follows:-

Outside West Bromwich

Up to No. of Hours	2016 To 2023	2023	2024	2025
30 mins	40p	20p	30p	40p
1 hr	40p	50p	60p	70p
2 hrs	80p	£1.00	£1.10	£1.20
3 hrs	£1.20	£1.50	£1.60	£1.70
4 hrs	£1.60	£2.00	£2.10	£2.20
Day	£4.00	£4.00	£4.50	£5.00

Within West Bromwich

Up to No. of Hours	2016 to 2023	2023	2024	2025
30 mins	40p	40p	60p	80p
1 hr	40p	£1.00	£1.20	£1.40
2 hrs	80p	£2.00	£2.20	£2.40
3 hrs	£1.20	£3.00	£3.20	£3.40
4 hrs	£1.60	£4.00	£4.20	£4.40
Day	£4.00	£8.00	£8.50	£9.00

- (5) that parking shall be free of charge at the following times with increased concessions over Christmas:-
- On Sundays,
 - Overnight between the hours of 18.00 and 08.00.
 - For Blue badge holders and
 - For all Saturdays in December (except Sandwell Valley)
 - Every Saturday for season ticket holders (except Sandwell Valley)
- (6) that short stay on-street parking charges will remain unchanged;
- (7) that all long stay season tickets are valid for use at Sandwell Valley car parks on the nominated days covered by the season ticket;
- (8) that West Bromwich long stay Season Tickets are valid for all Council long stay car parking on the nominated days;
- (9) that the annual charges for long stay season tickets that operate on nominated days of the week be set, on the basis of one season ticket per vehicle, removing the

previous proposals for 2026 and 2027 (subject to the review) and based on the representations received that the proposed increases within West Bromwich are reduced and aligned more closely with charges across the Black Country Authorities as follows:

Outside West Bromwich

No, of Days per Week	2015	2016 to 2023	2023	2024	2025
1	£175	£140	£40	£45	£50
2	£175	£140	£100	£115	£125
3	£175	£140	£200	£225	£250
4	£175	£240	£300	£330	£350
5	£175	£240	£400	£450	£500

Within West Bromwich (also valid outside West Bromwich for the same nominated days)

No, of Days per Week	2015	2016 to 2023	2023	2024	2025
1	£390	£140	£60	£70	£80
2	£390	£140	£150	£170	£190
3	£390	£140	£300	£330	£360
4	£390	£240	£450	£490	£530
5	£390	£240	£600	£650	£700

- (10) that for all zero emission electric vehicles, a 50% reduction in season ticket prices will apply;
- (11) that the monthly scales of season ticket charges will be levied at 10% of the annual scales of season ticket charges for car parks either within West Bromwich or outside West Bromwich as appropriate;
- (12) that at the few locations where long stay on-street parking charges are necessary, charges will be set to correspond with the off-street scale of hourly parking charges;

- (13) that the Off-Street Parking Places order is updated with the following changes;
- remove Bull Street Multi Storey, West Bromwich and Morrisons car park and Market Place car park, Wednesbury;
 - include wording for paying by other means advertised where there is no functioning ticket machine, no refunds for season tickets and spaces marked for electric vehicle recharging to only be used when actively recharging a vehicle;
 - include West Bromwich Street and Causeway Green Road car parks in the main Off Street Order and revoke the two individual orders;
 - change the operating times for New Street Disabled car park, West Bromwich. At present it is Monday to Saturday 8am to 6pm. New time 7 days a week at any time. This is to keep spaces available for blue badge holders in the evening;
 - include Roway Lane car park, Oldbury;
 - include wording so that bays marked for recharging electric vehicles, disabled badge holders and motorcycles operate at all times. This is to prevent others parking in these bays after 6pm;
- (14) that the income from parking charges is used to meet the cost of car park maintenance, electricity for lighting, business rates, parking management, operation and enforcement, implementation of Traffic Regulation Orders, traffic management and associated statutory road safety functions, to include parking enforcement in front of schools and working with schools to promote road safety and inform parents concerning inconsiderate parking and that the improvement work to car parks scheduled in [Appendix A](#) is completed by the end of 2024 and in the event that income exceeds these costs, that any remaining funding would contribute to public passenger transport projects or the provision of electric charging points on car parks or active travel projects;
- (15) that the Director of Borough Economy, in consultation with the Head of Human Resources and Chief Executive, consider mitigations for any employees that

are identified as being impacted to a significantly greater extent than others due to the requirements of their job;

- (16) that the Director of Borough Economy be authorised to undertake the necessary public and statutory consultation required to introduce and amend the necessary Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) for additional on-street parking restrictions where necessary;
- (17) that the Cabinet Member for Highways and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, the Director of Borough Economy and the Director of Finance be authorised to review the benchmarking of parking charges against the prevailing rates across the Black Country in 2025 and either confirm that the increases scheduled for 2025 will continue at that level, or require public consultation on increased rates for 2026 and 2027 to inform a further report to Cabinet for decision;
- (18) that the Director of Borough Economy be authorised to implement the approved scales of parking charges and approved recommendations as soon as possible and to implement the approved further increases at the earliest practical opportunity in January of each subsequent calendar year;
- (19) that the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to undertake the necessary statutory procedures to bring the approved recommendations into effect.

72/23

Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund – Wave 1 Delivery

Approval was sought to extend the external improvement works contract with Vinci Construction Ltd to 30 September 2023 to enable the delivery of the works awarded under the Grant for Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Wave 1.

Reasons for decision

Approval was granted by Cabinet on 23 February 2022 to accept the grant funding and to authorise the Director of Housing to instruct the Council's delivery partner, Vinci Construction Ltd, to deliver energy improvement works under the existing contract.

While orders for delivery of this project were placed with Vinci Construction Ltd prior to the end of the original contract, delays in mobilisation had been experienced due to price and supply chain volatility which has prevented works being delivered within the existing contract term.

Following engagement with Legal Services and Corporate Procurement, the recommendation was to extend the term of the contract with Vinci Construction Ltd from 31 December 2022 for a further 9 months to 30 September 2023 in order to allow sufficient time to deliver the positive impacts that this programme would bring.

This initiative clearly supported the drive towards a greener, low-carbon economy and a need to address Climate Change priorities. It would also help to address high levels of fuel poverty in the Sandwell area.

Alternative options considered

Option 1 – Commence new procurement exercise specifically for SHDF Wave 1 works. This would cause delays in the delivery of works and the delivery would extend beyond the DESNZ deadline.

Option 2 – Access an alternative OJEU complaint framework to deliver energy improvement works. This would cause delays in the delivery of works and the delivery would extend beyond the DESNZ deadline.

Option 3 - Return the grant funding back to the West Midlands Combined Authority and DESNZ. This would have been a reputational and financial risk, with grant funding being lost and the full cost of future works would need to come from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

Resolved:-

- (1) that the Director of Housing be authorised to extend the External Improvement Works contract with Vinci Construction Ltd to 30 September 2023 to enable the delivery of the works awarded under the Grant for Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Wave;
- (2) that the Director of Housing be authorised to grant a contract variation to the External Improvement Works contract with Vinci Construction Ltd under Regulation 72

of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 in order to allow up to £5m of works to be delivered under the SHDF Wave 1 programme.

73/23

Wednesbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan; Approval to carry out public consultation

Approval was sought to authorise the Director of Regeneration and Growth to undertake public consultation on Wednesbury's Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. Wednesbury Marketplace was designated as a conservation area in 1980 due to its special architectural and historical interest.

The Chair of the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board reflected concerns around the low consultation feedback recently experienced in Sandwell. Re-assurance was sought on what strategy would be used to ensure maximum participation within this consultation period.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and WMCA expressed that the following strategies would be implemented or considered:-

- external consultants may be involved in the appraisal process;
- a database of immediate societies would be used to draw down information;
- an e-flyer would be prepared to promote the review;
- town and ward members would be actively encouraged to promote the consultation;
- pop up sites would be constructed in the area to receive feedback from the public;
- promotional material would be prepared to support the event;
- a social media campaign would be conducted by the Council's communications team;
- Citizenspace, a resident engagement platform, could also be used to improve the Council's consultation going forward.

Reasons for decision

The conservation area appraisal and associated proposals augment heritage focussed regeneration works carried out as part of Wednesbury's High Street Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) scheme.

Although there was no statutory requirement to consult the public, it was good practice to do so; by consulting local communities and owners on new designations, and when appraising and reviewing

conservation areas, helping to ensure decisions were robust. Local communities and owners would also be helpful in providing proactive assistance in identifying the general areas that merit conservation area status and defining the boundaries.

Alternative options considered

The option exists to not consult on the appraisal and management plan.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth be authorised to undertake public consultation on Wednesbury's Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan as set out in [Appendix A](#);
- (2) that Cabinet receive a further report, if and when necessary, setting out the responses to the consultation and any changes that result from them.

Meeting ended at 4.15pm

Contact: democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk

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Minutes of Cabinet

**Wednesday 12 July 2023 at 3.30pm
in the Council Chamber, Sandwell Council House**

Present: Councillor Carmichael (Chair);
Councillors Hackett, Hartwell, Khatun, Padda, Piper and
Rollins.

In attendance: Councillors Fenton, E Giles, Lewis, Moore and Taylor.

Also present: Shokat Lal (Chief Executive), Surjit Tour (Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer), Gillian Douglas (Director of Housing), Michael Jarrett (Director of Children's Services), Tony McGovern (Director of Regeneration and Growth), Simone Hines (Director of Finance), Suky Suthi-Nagra (Democratoc & Member services Manager), Connor Robinson (Democratic Services Officer and Ant Lloyd (Democratic Services Officer).

74/23 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors Hughes, Millard and Owen.

75/23 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Taylor declared an interest in relation to Minute No. 91/23 (West Bromwich Heat Network – Approval for final development) on the basis that she had met with the managers of the privately owned large Energy from Waste Plant, Kelvin ERF.

76/23 **Minutes**

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2023 be approved as a correct record.

77/23 **Urgent Item of Business - Local Authority Housing Fund**

An additional item of business was considered as a matter of urgency.

Approval was sought to draw down the offer of £1.8m of Capital Grant Funding from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). Due to limited funds and financial pressures from the Council's responsibility to maintain and update existing properties, including the need to address damp and mould conditions.

Concern was expressed that the required matched-funding that the Council was required to make was not realistic. The purchase of 19 properties was deemed too large a task with the funding available and therefore, the Cabinet Member for Housing and Built Environment moved a recommendation that officers relay the concerns around finances to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

In response to questions from Scrutiny Chairs, the Cabinet Member for Housing and Built Environment confirmed that as part of Sandwell's journey to become a borough of sanctuary, the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Partnership had been set up in 2020 between Sandwell Council, local organisations and residents who wanted to play a part in making Sandwell a more welcoming place for migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers.

Reason for Decision

Sandwell Council had been offered the opportunity to draw down £1.8m of Capital Grant Funding in return for the provision of 19 units of accommodation, 17 for settled accommodation and 2 units of temporary accommodation. A further £20,000 per property was also available to account for other costs (including refurbishment).

Alternative Options Considered

Sandwell Council was not required to draw down the capital funding offered. Alternatively, Sandwell could have requested to draw down part of the funding.

Resolved:-

- (1) that approval be given to draw down the offer of £1.8m of Capital Grant Funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC);
- (2) that the Director Housing be authorised to match fund £2.195m from unallocated Housing Revenue Account reserves and/or through prudential borrowing for the purpose of acquiring 19 units of accommodation to support the resettlement of families supported by the Home Office's Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS);
- (3) that the Director of Housing be authorised to contact the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities expressing concern that the Council can only draw down 40% of the capital spend and is expected to find the majority funds to support this approach.

78/23

Award of Contract for use of Enforcement Agents

Approval was sought to award a contract for the use of Enforcement agents following a compliant procurement process from 1 December 2023.

It was highlighted that the Council could employ their own enforcement agents, but this would prove costly and difficult to manage. Very few local authorities used their own enforcement agents as it was believed that it was good practice for agents to be independent from the Council to avoid any unnecessary challenges.

By jointly awarding a contract with neighbouring local authorities, the Council would ensure a consistent approach was taken whilst also gaining the benefits of reduced costs.

Reason for Decision

The contract for the use of enforcement agents would end on the 30 November 2023. Sandwell was committed to ensuring effective collection of unpaid Council Tax, Business Rates, High Court and County Court judgements, Commercial Rent arrears, Business Improvement District (BID) charges and sundry debts, including housing benefit overpayments. The use of enforcement agents was

crucial in ensuring the Council maintain and improve current levels of performance and was always used as a last option.

Alternative Options Considered

If a contract was not in place to provide additional assistance with the recovery of unpaid Council Tax, Business Rates, High Court and County Court Judgements, Commercial Rent arrears, Business Improvement Districts (BID) charges and sundry debts, including Housing Benefit overpayments, the recovery actions available to the Council would be limited. Recovery rates would reduce affecting income available to the Council to provide services.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the Director of Finance – Section 151 Officer, in consultation with Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, be authorised to award a contract for use of Enforcement Agents for a 5-year period (3 + 2), following a successful competitive exercise in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules;
- (2) that the Director of Law and Governance – Monitoring Officer be authorised to execute any documentation necessary to enable the action referred to in Resolution (1) above to proceed.

79/23

Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board – Customer Journey Scrutiny Review

On 22 March 2022, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities announced an intervention package and a set of Directions to ensure the council was able to comply with its best value duty under Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1999. These Directions were in-part influenced by the Grant Thornton report following their Value for Money Governance Review of December 2021. In response, the Council developed an Improvement Plan which included proposed mechanisms for governance and assurance.

One of the objectives within the Plan was to improve the customer journey experience to meet residents' needs and demands. This was a corporate priority for the authority. Subsequently, in 2022, the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board agreed to undertake an in-depth Scrutiny Review into the Customer Journey

to analyse how customers, residents and service users were navigating Council services.

Consideration of the recommendations made by the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board was sought. The Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board expressed that the Council's customer services were not quite where the Council should be. The recommendations and accompanying report were designed to be helpful and constructive and it was highlighted that despite the concerns raised, good examples of excellent customer service had been realised and experienced during the review.

The Cabinet Member for Adults, Social care and Health, on behalf of the Cabinet, thanked members of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board for undertaking scrutiny work and welcomed the recommendations provided. Whilst the Cabinet Member for Adults, Social Care and Health moved the recommendations of scrutiny, recommendation 1.2(10) was not moved due to a lack of resources to enable the reduction in wait time for responses. Despite this, it was stated that a wider remit of work was underway to review timescales.

Reasons for recommendations

In 2022, the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board agreed to investigate the experience of Sandwell residents when accessing or requesting Council services; this would be referred to as the "Customer Journey". This was in response to:-

- concerns raised by residents about response times to queries;
- member's experiences when trying to contact services/individual officers (e.g. delayed/no response);
- addressing the objectives of the Council's Improvement Plan to improve the customer journey experience;
- to improve communication between residents and the council.

The Board recognised that significant improvements needed to be made in order to help the Council leave intervention. Customer services was of public interest and aligned with the Council's corporate priorities.

The Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board subsequently conducted a scrutiny review, establishing a Working Group to carry out the review and ascertain an understanding of the

current customer journey experienced by residents and users of Sandwell Council's services.

Alternative options considered

There are no alternative options. The Cabinet may approve all, some, or none of the recommendations.

Resolved that the following recommendations arising from the Customer Journey Scrutiny Review of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board be approved:-

- (1) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth/Assistant Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, be authorised to agree a customer care standards/charter, and staff responsibilities in relation to those standards to ensure;
 - a) that "back-office" staff take ownership and accountability of customer requests received via Contact Centre Agents;
 - b) a standard approach is taken to making officer contact numbers available on Outlook and to customers to prevent additional calls being made to the Contact Centre;
 - c) a standard approach to the complaints process and deadlines for responding to complaints are clear and accessible across all Council services;
 - d) that key contacts are identified within each service area to aid Customer Service Agents in their enquiries;
 - e) that residents are regularly updated and informed about the current process of their request/query.

- (2) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth/Assistant Chief Executive be authorised to commission/develop a customer training package that incorporates the following topics:-
 - a) The completeness of response letters
 - b) Methods to manage customer expectations and awareness around the Council's remit and responsibilities.

- (3) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth/Assistant Chief Executive ensure that all members of staff undertake training around customer care standards as identified in Resolution (2) and that staff performance against these standards be incorporated within the appraisal process;
- (4) that mandatory corporate customer service training be included as part of the induction process for all staff;
- (5) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth/Assistant Chief Executive, in consultation with the Director of Finance, investigate options for procuring a single joint Customer Relations System across the Council;
- (6) that the Director for Director of Regeneration and Growth/Assistant Chief Executive considers the introduction of automated feedback surveys and that regular feedback on Council enquires/complaints are analysed and shared with Directorates;
- (7) that the Director for Director of Regeneration and Growth/Assistant Chief Executive introduces corporate guidelines in relation to the use of Council contact numbers to ensure that all officers are contactable and that contact details are updated regularly;
- (8) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth/Assistant Chief Executive considers the feasibility of amalgamating the current three contact centres (Corporate Contact Centre, Revenues and Benefits Contact Centre and Adult Social Care Care) into a single contact centre number with staff specialising in various areas;
- (9) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth/Assistant Chief Executive, as part of the refresh of the Council's website, ensures the Council continues to promote the use of Sandwell Digital First and the Council's website as the first point for accessing information and raising an issue/request.

Octopus Affordable Housing Scheme

Approval was sought to authorise the Director of Regeneration and Growth to utilise a recently formed affordable housing scheme by Octopus. If successful, the land would be sold to Octopus who would then deliver the scheme. The Council would benefit from capital receipt from the land as well as nomination rights. Delivery of the scheme would kickstart the Rolfe Street area regeneration.

Emerging evidence had highlighted that housing delivery was slowly improving. Financial constraints and market conditions had limited the methods that could be utilised by the Council to deliver affordable housing. It was explained that an increasing number of private funders were now working with public landlords to deliver housing schemes to meet ever-increasing demand.

In response to questions from the Chair of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board, reassurance was provided that both of the parties involved were subject to regulatory requirements which included assessments of financial governance; this had been undertaken by the Regulator of Social Housing. Although the prospect of liquidation for either organisation was low, appropriate financial suitability checks would be carried out.

In the event that liquidation was to take place, the regulatory framework would have permitted an application to Court for a Housing Administration Order, which resulted in the affairs, business and property being managed by an Housing Administrator.

Reasons for Decision

There was a significant regeneration priority to increase the level of supply of housing of all tenures in the Borough. Specifically, the shortfall in the supply of Affordable Housing needed to be overcome in order to meet identified need.

Alternative Options Considered

The alternative options to provision were as follows:

- **Do Nothing:**
In this scenario, the provision of affordable housing, utilising more traditional models of s106 obligations and delivery through the provision of Registered Providers Development Programmes was likely to continue on a similar trajectory to previous years, with identified need going unmet.

- Seek an Alternative provider:
Octopus Real Estate was not the only private sector providers in the market, and the Council could have sought to establish relationships with alternative operators. However, it was not clear how long it would take to find such an alternative operator, and whether they would invest on the same basis as Octopus.

Resolved:-

- (1) that approval be given to authorise the Director of Regeneration and Growth to seek investment opportunities to deliver affordable housing provision working in partnership with Black Country Housing Group and Octopus Real Estate;
- (2) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth be authorised to progress a scheme at the former Rolfe St Baths site in partnership with Black Country Housing Group comprising sufficient information to enable the submission of an Initial Business Case for consideration by Octopus Real Estate;
- (3) that, in the event that the Initial Business Case is approved by Octopus Real Estate, the Director of Regeneration and Growth, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Growth and WMCA and the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, be authorised to enter into a formal agreement with Black Country Housing Group to enable them to progress the delivery of the scheme, specifically including the following areas of responsibility:

Black Country Housing Group

- Obtaining all necessary consents (including planning, network rail consents and other permits/licences deemed necessary) to enable the scheme to proceed;
- Procurement of contractors;
- The Construction Contract and its implementation
- Financial control of the project overall
- The Development Agreement with Octopus Real Estate
- Reimbursement of SMBC costs incurred at the Initial Feasibility stage

- The Management Agreement with Octopus Real Estate
- Providing SMBC with appropriate nomination rights for future occupants
- Underwriting of any cost overrun after contingency allowances on a 50/50 basis, subject to a maximum sum.

SMBC

- Progress the disposal of the Rolfe St Baths site to Octopus Real Estate, subject to further Cabinet approval.
 - Underwriting of any cost overrun after contingency allowances on a 50/50 basis subject to a maximum sum.
 - Obtain 100% nomination rights
- (4) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth be authorised to progress detailed negotiations on the disposal of the former Rolfe St Baths site, and to present a further report on those negotiations to Cabinet prior to disposal.
- (5) that a sum of £800,000 is allocated from the s106 contributions for Affordable Housing to under-write any potential construction cost overruns, subject to confirmation that a matching amount is provided from Black Country Housing Group;
- (6) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth be authorised to allocate resources from the Regeneration and Growth budget to support the progression of Resolution (1) – (5) above.

81/23

Regeneration Programme & Towns Fund Bi-Annual Update

Approval of the proposed amendments to the Regeneration Project Pipeline was sought.

The regeneration pipeline brochure was published in May 2023 alongside a new bespoke website which showcased the pipeline. In total, the pipeline contained 67 live projects with 24 in concept stage, 10 in business case stage, 8 in delivery stage, 25 on-site and 20 sites with planning permission.

Clarification was requested if any regeneration projects were planned for Greets Green and Lyng in the coming years. In response, it was confirmed that the West Bromwich Masterplan presented a long-term 20-year growth strategy for the town, Phase 4 of the masterplan (2034-38) proposed the Lyng as a long term mixed use development zone which supports the potential delivery of homes should the economic picture change significantly across the site.

Reasons for decision

On the 23 March 2022, Cabinet approved the Regeneration Strategy, Regeneration Project Pipeline and the Inclusive Recovery Action Plan for Business. Taken together, they set out the corporate regeneration priorities for the period 2022 to 2027. The pipeline was a live document, and Cabinet resolved for it to be monitored via a report submitted to Cabinet every 6 months. In addition, Cabinet resolved that approval be sought to make additions to the project pipeline and for updated pipelines to be published on the council website and the Regenerating Sandwell website.

Alternative options considered

This was a bi-annual update requested by Cabinet on 23 March 2022. In accordance with the Cabinet Decision, Cabinet were to consider additions to the project pipeline. There was no alternative option.**Resolved:-**

- (1) that the progress made on projects within the Regeneration Project Pipeline Performance Report, including Towns Fund Programme, be received;
- (2) that the following amendments to the Regeneration Project Pipeline be approved:-
 - Archives Centre, Smethwick project be added to the pipeline;
 - Netomnia Full Fibre project be added to the pipeline;
 - Brownfield Land One Public Estate (OPE) sites (if approved) be added to the pipeline;
 - Breakdown of programmes to articulate individual sites/projects (where appropriate);

- (3) that in connection with Resolution (2) above, the Director of Regeneration and Growth be authorised to implement the amendments to the Regeneration Project Pipeline and for this to be published on the council website.

82/23

Appointment of a non-executive director of Sandwell Children's Trust

Approval was sought to the appointment of Councillor Pam Randhawa as Council appointed member non-executive director of Sandwell Children's Trust. No objections had been received from the Secretary of State regarding the appointment.

Reasons for decision

On 22 March 2017, Cabinet agreed that the Council would consider only elected members or officers for the non-executive director roles on the board. Furthermore, the Cabinet recommended to the Council, and it was agreed, that one elected Member and one officer be identified as the two Council appointed non-executive directors, and that the identification of the officer (Council appointed non-executive director) be delegated to the Chief Executive.

Alternative options considered

The alternative option was to reject the recommendation. However, in line with the Governance Side Agreement with the Department for Education (DfE) and the Trust's Articles of Association there would have been a vacancy on the board that would still need to be filled. An alternative candidate would need to be nominated to Council and the process of consulting with the Secretary of State would need to be undertaken again. This would have left a potential gap in the governance arrangements of the Trust for a period as at least one of the Council appointed NED are required for Trust board meetings to be quorate.

Resolved that Cabinet, on behalf of the Council as the sole owner of Sandwell Children's Trust:

- a) notes the completed sequence of events that are contractually required to appoint a non-executive director of Sandwell Children's Trust;

- b) notes and takes into account in its decision-making, the response from the Secretary of State for Education; and
- c) approves the appointment of Councillor Pam Randhawa as Council appointed Member non-executive director of Sandwell Children's Trust.

83/23

Children's Social Worker recruitment and retention

Approval to increase the contract sum to Sandwell Children's Trust was sought to improve recruitment and retention and reduce reliance on agency workers and project teams.

Following questions from the Chair of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board, it was confirmed that Sandwell Children's Trust had a series of key priorities as part of their transformation plan including a priority around people. A comprehensive programme of support ranging from financial support coupled with opportunities for professional development, career progression and a focus on wellbeing had been created.

It was also highlighted that although there were no guarantees to overseas social workers being recruited, the funding would be used to provide an extensive package of wrap around support to attempt to convince those recruited to remain long-term. Members were minded that Sandwell Children's Trust were continuing to pursue "grow your own" with a new cohort of newly qualified social workers commencing in autumn.

Reasons for decision

In line with many other councils and Trusts across the country, Sandwell Children's Trust (SCT) faced workforce challenges regarding the recruitment and retention of social workers. Discussions with the Department for Education and regional colleagues had shown that the demand for talented and experienced social workers outweighed the supply. Additional funding was being sought to implement the Sandwell Deal with a view to improve recruitment and retention and reduce the overall reliance on more expensive agency workers and project teams

Alternative options considered

Option 1 – Continuation of the Market Supplement

A market supplement payment was a payment made to hard to fill roles to improve the base salary primarily due to the current salary

not being competitive compared to other Local Authorities/Trust. The analysis had indicated that the current market supplement of £2,500, had placed SCT in a more favourable position within the region with regard to Social Workers.

Option 2 – Introduction of a Retention Payment over Three Years

A retention payment was a lump sum payment outside of an employee's base pay that was offered as an incentive to retain an employee within SCT for a certain period of time. It would be payable dependent on the period of time the social worker remained with the Trust i.e. after 12 months, 24 months and 36 months. The analysis had indicated that the payment of a retention payment would assist in securing a more stable permanent workforce if offered over a period of time.

Option 3 – Recruitment of International Social Workers

Alongside the Sandwell Deal the Trust was considering the recruitment of International Social Workers. International Social Workers had been sourced by a significant number of local authorities to help fill their permanent vacancies. The Trust was proposing the recruitment of up to 12 qualified international social workers for financial year 2023/2024.

The recruitment would involve a package of support for the sponsorship fees and relocation and agency fees at a cost of £46k per worker. The maximum cost of recruiting 12 workers was £556k, the total cost would have been reduced if fewer than 12 workers were recruited.

Resolved:-

- (1) that approval be given to increase the contract sum to Sandwell Children's Trust by a maximum of £260,000 to continue the payment of a market supplement of £2,500, plus on costs, for 2023/24 to all permanent case holding social workers;
- (2) that approval be given to Sandwell Children's Trust adopting a retention payment policy for all permanent case holding social workers and permanent team managers, payable based on length of service at a maximum additional cost to the Council of £310,000 in year 1, £585,000 in year 2 and £1.136m in year 3;

- (3) that approval be given to authorise Sandwell Children's Trust to recruit up to 12 International Social Workers in 2023/24 at a maximum additional cost of £556k;
- (4) that in connection with Resolutions (1) – (3), approval be given for the total maximum cost of £1.126m for 2023/24 to be funded from the Social Care Earmarked Reserve;
- (5) that the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Director of Children's Services, review the Sandwell Deal Policy in December 2023 to evaluate its effectiveness in recruiting and retaining social work employees and consideration given to funding ongoing costs through the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

84/23

Green Spaces Annual Report 22/23 and Programme of Works 2023/24

Approval of the planned programme of works for green spaces for the financial year 2023/24 was sought.

The 2022/23 programme of works had aimed to improve the quality and value of Sandwell's green spaces whilst also retaining green flag status for those parks that had. 90% of the works scheduled for 2022/23 were completed. 41 play areas had been improved, 1 new play area had been established, 9 outdoor gym sites had been refurbished, all zip slides and swing baskets had been replaced and repaired and 33 allotments had been brought back into use. 160 sites had been cleared and work had been completed on West Smethwick Park. 30 new cricket pitches had also been created.

The 2023/24 programme had been created based on urgent improvements to sites that were of the highest priority. Work was underway to better understand the future needs for green spaces and to develop a funding plan for the next 5 years to continue sustained improvements. A safer parks strategy and allotment strategy was also under consideration.

In response to questions from the Chair of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board, it was confirmed that there had not yet been any consideration given to bringing outsourced allotments back into the Council, however, these issues would be addressed when the allotment plan was developed. Additionally, in relation to nuisance bikes across Sandwell,

Sandwell Council had partnered with West Midlands Police to address the issue.

Further questions were asked by the Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board. In response, the following comments were provided:-

- the programme of works was decided on site assessments completed by parks officers or play area inspectors, prioritising health and safety issues first. Quality scores from 2018 had been validated by improvement plans that were completed for 202 sites in May 2023;
- the quality scores for green spaces aligned mostly with deprivation levels across the borough. The green flag parks with the highest scores were often surrounded by houses from high income groups with more vocal participants. As a result, resources had been focussed on green spaces with the lowest scores;
- ward members and members of the public had been able to nominate hot spots for consideration for this teams work since March 2023 via email.

Reasons for decision

The Green Spaces Strategy 2022 – 25 set out an approach for Cabinet to approve and publish an annual report and an annual programme of planned works for green spaces. The planned programme of works included all funding sources, whether Council funded or externally funded.

Alternative options considered

To not approve the programme of works for 23/24. This would have required a new set of works to be drafted, with a new criterion for selecting these works determined.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the annual report for the programme of green spaces works in 2022/23 be noted and that approval be given to carry over any outstanding works to 2023/24 as set out in [Appendix A](#) and [Appendix A1](#);
- (2) that approval be given to the planned programme of works for green spaces for the financial year 2023/24, as set out in [Appendix B](#), [Appendix C](#), and [Appendix D](#);

- (3) that the Director of Borough Economy, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Tourism, be authorised to approve further works for green spaces, if additional funding becomes available, to spend during the financial year, based on the priority works identified in the green space improvement plans;
- (4) that the Director of Borough Economy be authorised to approve additional works, when required, to rectify immediate health and safety issues.

85/23

Commonwealth Games Legacy Plan

Approval of the Commonwealth Games Legacy Plan was sought. The legacy plan detailed how the Council would deliver against three key strategic objectives that spanned multiple directorates:-

- improve health, wellbeing and physical activity;
- inspire community engagement and collaboration;
- support growth in economy and place.

The plan had been in development since 2019 and was created by a legacy working group. The group comprised of officers from across Sandwell Council. The plan was a key opportunity to reflect and capitalise on the games.

Reasons for decision

The Commonwealth Games was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to promote Sandwell, attract investment and engage the community through sport. It was imperative that SMBC implement a framework of Legacy activity to ensure the benefit of the games did not stop at the end of the competition in August 2022. Sandwell Council's Commonwealth Games Legacy Plan aimed to capitalise on the benefits created by being a host venue at the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

Alternative options considered

Do nothing - Sandwell was currently the only delivery partner that has not published a CWG Legacy Plan. Failure to capitalise on the Legacy benefits of the CWG would represent a missed opportunity.

Resolved that the SMBC Commonwealth Games Legacy Plan, as set out in [Appendix 1](#), be approved.

Performance Management Framework – Q4 Monitoring

Approval of the Quarter 4 monitoring report was sought. The monitoring report was part of a series of regular updates to Cabinet on progress against the performance management framework, following the Grant Thornton external review.

Continued growth within the authority had been realised and the overall plan was on track. Highlights from 2022/23 included the improvement in Children's Services as seen in the Ofsted reports, town investment plans, conclusion of the Sandwell Aquatics Centre and success of the commonwealth games.

Following questions in relation to waste services, it was confirmed that garden waste collection subscriptions continued to grow and fewer crews were needed. Further collection efficiencies were to be made once the service had reached maturity. Additionally, the opening time at the household waste recycling centre had been an hour earlier, 7am, during the summer months.

In response to a query from scrutiny embers, the Cabinet member for Finance and Resources endeavoured to consider the feasibility of extending the opening times further to enable those who work during the day to attend the site later on.

Reasons for decision

Since April 2023, the corporate Performance Management Framework had been further refined and built into business processes. The report on performance during Quarter 4 (Q4) of 2022/23 (January-March 2023) sought to build on the intelligence gathered for previous quarters of the financial year and offered the opportunity to assess end of year progress.

Alternative options considered

The Directions issued by the Secretary of State, including the requirement to have a performance management framework in place, were a statutory requirement and the council had a legal obligation to respond appropriately. Failure to do so would have likely resulted in further intervention measures.

Resolved that Cabinet receive details of the progress on the further development of the Corporate Performance Management Framework and approve the Quarter 4 monitoring reports.

Recommendations from Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board in response to quarter 3 budget monitoring report 2022/23

Consideration of the recommendations arising from the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board in relation to the Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring Report 2022/23 was sought.

Reasons for decision

The Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board had considered the quarter 3 budget monitoring report for 2022/23 and expressed concern that:-

- significant overspends in a number of budget areas and looking at introducing additional control measures to ensure there was authorisation obtained to approve transactions on general spend and recruitment;
- the year on year increase in costs associated with children's placements and SEND and looking at the feasibility of in house provision to reduce costs, including those associated with adult social care placements;
- considering current outstanding section 106 spend, including details of deadline for spend and how ward members are consulted;
- meeting with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services to understand the high cost associated with Sandwell Children's Trust.

Alternative options considered

In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, Cabinet was requested to respond to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Management Board within two months, setting out any approved recommendations, and how they will be implemented.

Resolved:-

- (1) that Directors review and update any pages they hold on the Council's website;
- (2) that the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and the Director for Finance consider the introduction of additional financial controls on general spend, in particular, matters relating to recruitment and day to day spend where necessary;

- (3) that the Director of Children's Services, Director of Adult Social Care and Director of Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Young People, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, be authorised to explore the feasibility of providing in house care for young people in care, SEND placements and adult social care placements;
- (4) that, in connection with Resolution (1) – (3) above, a further report be submitted to the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board, within 2 months' time, on the decision of Cabinet.

88/23 **Exclusion of Public and Press**

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

89/23 **Cashless Strategy**

Approval was sought to introduce the phased removal of cash, cheque and postal order payments at Oldbury Council House. A further report would be provided to Cabinet in due course regarding the phased removal of cash and cheque postal order payments at all Council establishments. 1.1% of all transactions were carried out via cash transaction. It was deemed that the cost of administering these payments far outweighed the benefits. Pay points and post offices were still available to be used throughout the borough for those who wished to make any cash transactions. The resulting footfall to post offices would also be a benefit. If fully implemented, savings of £250k would be realised.

An appropriate Equality Impact Assessment and subsequent consultation would take place following approval. If requested, outcomes of the consultation and a copy of the Equality Impact

Assessment would be circulated to Cabinet and Scrutiny Chairs. The vast majority of all transactions were already via Direct Debit, online or bank transfers and the Council's current and future systems were resilient.

Reasons for decision

If all cash and cheque handling transactions were stopped, staff savings in the cashier's office would have been between £200k - £250k per annum. The savings would be phased over the project timeline in line with the recommendation to stop taking cash and cheques at Oldbury Council House first, followed by a phased approach across other Council locations. Savings would be confirmed as the Project Plan progressed.

Alternative options considered

Do nothing, continue as is.

Implement non-acceptance of cash and/or cheques & postal orders only at Council House, Oldbury, with other council services such as libraries and Sandwell Valley remaining out of scope. A decision would also be required whether to retain the internal kiosks.

Adopt a longer-term phased approach, commencing with implementation at Council House, Oldbury, followed by other council services and establishments, such as libraries and neighbourhoods within an agreed timeframe.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the principle of 'Going Cashless' at all Council establishments is approved and endorsed;
- (2) that the Director of Finance – Section 151 Officer be authorised to introduce the phased removal of cash, cheque and postal order payments as follows:
 - i) stop accepting cash, cheques and postal orders at Oldbury Council House, including through the kiosks;
 - ii) consider the opportunity to stop accepting cash, cheques and postal orders in all council locations and a further report be brought back to Cabinet once further consultation has been undertaken;
 - iii) cease the use of cheques for payments to suppliers and customer refunds;

- iv) where Council locations do require continued acceptance of cash & cheques, arrange direct banking collections and deposits and authorise the Director of Finance to undertake the appropriate procurement arrangements for the provision of this service;
- (3) that Phase One of the Project Implementation Plan as seen in Appendix 1 be approved including carrying out appropriate consultation and Equality Impact Assessments;
- (4) that a further report be brought back to Cabinet prior to the implementation of Phase 2 of the Project Plan.

90/23

Procurement of a Strategic Delivery Partner for the Regeneration Pipeline

Approval of the scope of a strategic delivery partner was sought. Due to supply chain issues and high costs associated with low carbon developments, the Council was facing multiple challenges in delivering projects as seen in the regeneration pipeline. Expertise provided by a procurement partner would help advise the Council on the best use of its assets. Procurement of a single delivery partner, rather than individual development procurement partners would allow the Council to deliver projects more efficiently in terms of cost, outcomes and social value.

Reasons for decision

The Council needed to take a longer-term approach to delivering key strategic projects in the approved Regeneration Pipeline by procuring a suitable partner to work with rather than the multiple single fixed price procurements and one-off relationships. Construction cost inflation had a major impact on the Regeneration Pipeline as bidders built in large elements to cover unknown risk. A longer-term approach would enable the Council to maximise private sector expertise, share risk more equally in a cost-effective way; increase social value and local spend benefits and generate more opportunities for apprenticeships.

Alternative options considered

The alternative option was to continue procuring delivery partners as per current practice.

Resolved:-

- (1) that approval be given to the scope of a Strategic Delivery Partner for the following:-
 - West Bromwich Masterplan
 - Grove Lane Masterplan
 - Rolfe Street Masterplan (subject to Cabinet approval)
 - Delivery of the Housing Revenue Account Council Home Newbuild programme (All sites and to include MMC)
 - Transport Pipeline – three CRSTS Schemes (Birmingham to Smethwick Inclusive Growth Corridor; A4123: Multi Modal; A461: Multi Modal totalling circa £40m)
 - Delivery of all Retrofit programmes in HRA homes
 - Asset Rationalisation and Surplus Assets
 - Other Residential Sites – some or all of the Friar Park Masterplan site; Council owned sites suitable for residential development.
 - Tipton Town Regeneration Scheme
 - Regeneration Sites in proposed Sandwell Levelling Up Zone (Wednesbury to Birmingham Rd, Tipton) – subject to approval
 - Other projects added to the Pipeline as determined by Cabinet

- (2) that approval be given to authorise the Director of Regeneration and Growth to accept a contract period of up to 15 years with break points at three, seven, ten and fifteen years for a long-term partnership subject to value for money and acceptable performance;

- (3) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth be authorised to commence a Pagabo Framework procurement process for a Strategic Delivery Partner;

- (4) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth is authorised to award a contract for the procurement of external legal advisers from existing budgets to advise on the procurement, the contract documentation and drafting of Joint Venture legal agreements and structures in connection with Resolution (1) above;

- (5) that in connection with Resolution (1) above, the Director of Regeneration and Growth be authorised to procure a commercial adviser from existing budgets to advise on the procurement, the proposed partnership and Joint Venture agreements as appropriate;
- (6) that details of the risks in relation to the procurement and the delivery partner of this approach be received;
- (7) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth submit a further report in 2024, after the Pagabo procurement process has completed, to determine which Strategic Delivery Partner should be selected and any other issues requiring Cabinet approval.

91/23

West Bromwich Heat Network – Approval for final development

Approval of a single preferred West Bromwich Heat Network business model was sought.

The government was targeting just under 20% of heat demand by 2050 and was supporting delivery by providing financial support and introducing new regulation. The Energy Security Bill which was moving through Parliament was expected to introduce obligations on councils to plan and support the implementation of heat networks. It would also place obligations on owners and developers of large buildings to actively consider connection to existing or developing heat networks.

Following a Heat Mapping and Master Planning exercise during 2017, West Bromwich was identified as the focus for a feasibility study which looked at potential for a heat network. The Council also recognised an opportunity for future expansion to the Cape Hill area of Smethwick, with connection to the Midland Metropolitan University Hospital and proposed new housing development sites.

Reasons for decision

A heat network was a system of pipes that takes heat from a central source and delivers it to multiple buildings. These systems were a cost-effective way of reducing carbon emissions related to heating as they could be used to exploit low carbon energy sources, including recovered heat from industrial processes. Heat networks could also incorporate energy storage potential, which was

important given the highly variable nature of demand for heat across a typical year. It may also have been plausible to integrate cooling and power supply into the heat network project.

At a local level, the development of heat networks would provide various benefits including substantial inward investment, job creation and reduced energy costs for businesses and residents. In addition, heat networks could demonstrate a firm commitment towards achieving carbon reduction targets and climate change initiatives.

Alternative options considered

All options had been considered for decision. There were no other known alternatives.

Resolved:-

- (1) that approval be given to the following preferred West Bromwich Heat Network business model:

Joint Venture ESCO (50/50) at an estimated capital cost of £18.1m (or £15.5m if GHNF grant is successful)

- (2) that approval be given to:
 - a) give retrospective approval for submission of a Green Heat Network Fund (GHNF) grant application as agreed with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and WMCA;
 - b) fund the associated revenue implications as reflected in Appendix 1 from earmarked reserves for 2023/24 and future years be considered as part of the budget setting cycle and the medium-term financial plan;
 - c) create a capital budget for 2023/24 (per Appendix 2) for the cost of equity (plus up to £940k of commercialisation costs in the event that the application for GHNF funding be unsuccessful) and to be fully funded through prudential borrowing:

Joint Venture ESCO – Capital Budget £6.41m (max' requirement).

- d) commission an external contractor to deliver the Commercialisation stage of work in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules;
 - e) establish and resource appropriate governance arrangements and a project management team within the Council;
 - f) connect relevant Council buildings, including high-rise blocks, to a heat network, subject to consultation and feasibility;
 - g) include plans for network connection within the redevelopment proposals for West Bromwich Town Centre;
- (3) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and WMCA and the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, be authorised to:
- a) sign any contractual arrangements associated with a successful GHN application to ensure receipt of funding;
 - b) procure and appoint a contractor to undertake Commercialisation in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules;
 - c) establish internal governance and project management arrangements;
- (4) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth submit a further report to Cabinet in due course to set out the detail of the preferred option and any relevant funding strategy and procurement arrangements.

Meeting ended at 4.47pm

Contact: democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk

Report to Cabinet

13 September 2023

Subject:	Levelling Up Partnership
Cabinet Member:	Leader Councillor Kerrie Carmichael
Director:	Director of Regeneration and Growth Tony McGovern Director of Borough Economy Alice Davey Director of Finance Simone Hines Director of Law and Governance Surjit Tour Interim Director of Public Health Liann Brookes-Smith
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Senior Lead Officer Rebecca Jenkins rebecca_jenkins@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to the geographical focus for Sandwell LUP as Wednesbury Town (Wednesbury North, Wednesbury South and Friar Park)
- 1.2 That the Director of Regeneration and Growth and S151 Officer in consultation with the Leader be authorised to review and formally accept the LUP offer / grant conditions from DLUHC



- 1.3 That approval be given to commence delivery of Levelling Up Partnership interventions (paragraph 2.5), subject to S151 Officer authorisation and acceptance of grant conditions from DLUHC as set out in recommendation 1.2.
- 1.4 That approval be given for the Council to act as the Accountable Body for the Levelling Up Partnership Programme, adopt programme governance arrangements (paragraphs 4.20-4.24) and establish a Wednesbury Levelling Up Partnership Board and associated Terms of Reference (appendix 3).
- 1.5 That the Director Law and Governance in consultation with the Director of Regeneration and Growth and the Leader be authorised to make any changes to the Wednesbury Levelling up Partnership Board Terms of Reference to respond to any Government guidance or requirements.
- 1.6 That the Director of Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Leader be authorised to invite expressions of interest and conduct any necessary selection processes to make appointments to the Wednesbury Levelling Up Partnership Board.
- 1.7 That subject to acceptance of grant conditions as per recommendation 1.2, that in relation to Levelling Up Partnership interventions, that the following capital expenditure be approved and added to the Capital Programme for 2023/24 and 2024/25:
 - 1.7.1 In relation to Friar Park Urban Village project, that capital expenditure of up to £11.5m be authorised to bring forward the Friar Park Urban Village Scheme, as per the recently approved Masterplan for this site and that officers are authorised to re-negotiate the current Joint Venture Agreement (JVA) with West Midlands Combined Authority to reflect the nature of this significant investment and to deal with related commercial matters that impact on the JVA now that the Council is the primary funder using LUP resources.
 - 1.7.2 In relation to Wednesbury Town Centre Improvement project, that capital expenditure of up to £4.45m be approved for site improvement, acquisition and public realm improvement works
 - 1.7.3 In relation to the Wednesbury Community Safety project that capital expenditure of up to £0.4m be approved for CCTV



scheme improvements, mobile cameras for flytipping and installation of low level bike inhibitors as deterrents to ASB and crime

- 1.7.4 In relation to the Greenspaces project that capital expenditure of up to £1.65m be approved for improvements to green spaces in Wednesbury
- 1.7.5 In relation to the Friar Park Millennium Centre extension, approval is requested for an appropriate scheme to be designed; planning consent to be obtained; procurement of a construction partner to deliver the scheme; capital expenditure of up to £2m be authorised for the scheme to be delivered; and all relevant agreements and actions be taken to ensure this project is delivered that enhances the community offer (this approval updates the previous Cabinet approval for this scheme of 15/03/2023).
- 1.8 That subject to acceptance of grant conditions as per recommendation 1.2, that approval be given to expend up to £100,000 revenue in relation to the Wednesbury Community Safety Project and up to £250,000 revenue in relation to Wednesbury Masterplanning and Levelling Up Partnership Programme Management and that the appropriate budget virements are actioned, funded from Levelling Up Grant.
- 1.9 That the Director Regeneration and Growth, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and WMCA be authorised to approve public consultation in relation to Wednesbury Masterplanning for the purposes of Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations (2012).
- 1.10 That the Director Regeneration and Growth, in consultation with the S151 Officer and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and WMCA, be authorised to approve:
- 1.10.1 a decrease/ increase of grant funds to be drawn down by individual projects of up to £250,000 within the overall Levelling Up Partnership capital allocation
 - 1.10.2 Any decrease to mandatory indicators of outputs and outcomes of the Levelling Up Partnership projects.
 - 1.10.3 Slippage of outcomes and/ or grant claim profile up to £1m requiring re-profiling across future financial years with no overall material change to project outcomes



- 1.11 That the Director Regeneration and Growth, in consultation with Director Law and Governance, be authorised to undertake all necessary steps/actions, to acquire relevant sites in Wednesbury and Friar Park in line with the Council's land and property portfolio.
- 1.12 That the Director Regeneration and Growth, Director Borough Economy and Director Law and Governance in agreement with the Section 151 Officer, be authorised to enter into any necessary legal agreements, submit any necessary planning applications/agreements, undertake all necessary procurement processes (including entering into contracts for the provision of goods and services and any direct contract awards), and undertake/exercise all other necessary action/powers necessary to deliver the Levelling Up Partnership interventions.
- 1.13 That subject to acceptance of grant conditions as per recommendation 1.2, that the capital allocation to the Council from the Levelling Up Partnership be managed within the Council's overall capital programme to allow carry forward of other funding sources into 2024/25 for delivery of the Levelling Up Partnership Interventions.
- 1.14 That Cabinet approve the Wednesbury Town Centre Improvement project to be added to the Regeneration Project Pipeline
- 1.15 That Cabinet receive a report on the performance of the Levelling Up Partnership Programme after 6 months

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 In March 2023, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that Sandwell was one of 20 places to be invited to form a Levelling Up Partnership (LUP).



- 2.2 Levelling Up Partnerships are targeted interventions designed to identify practical, tangible actions to support priority places to 'level up' and to help government develop a more holistic understanding of place. Up to £20m capital funding is available for the 20 places.
- 2.3 The development of a LUP between Government and Sandwell has been led by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC). An initial deep dive has been conducted including place engagement, field work and developing priority actions.
- 2.4 The initial deep dive activity included joint exploration between DLUHC and Cabinet Members of the target geographical area for Sandwell's LUP taking into account a range of factors including the indicators used to select major opportunities for capital spend to deliver against the levelling up missions. The geographical area focused on during the initial deep dive has been Wednesbury with a focus on Friar Park and this is proposed for Cabinet's approval.
- 2.5 A series of priority interventions have been discussed and agreed between Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council and DLUHC for the LUP and a funding offer of £20m capital and £350K revenue is agreed. A Grant Funding Agreement is expected to be made imminently to Sandwell to confirm the delivery of 5 interventions as follows:
- Friar Park Urban Village
 - Wednesbury Community Safety Scheme
 - Wednesbury Town Centre Improvements
 - Wednesbury Greenspaces Improvements
 - Friar Park Millennium Centre expansion
- 2.6 The proposed interventions will enable:
- 630 new homes (157 affordable)
 - Land acquisition for future housing delivery
 - New and upgraded CCTV and environmental cameras
 - Nuisance bike inhibitors
 - Improvements to 4 green spaces and 10ha new public open space for sport and recreational use
 - An extended community centre offer in Friar Park
 - Improved public realm
- 2.7 Indication of the contents of the formal offer / grant conditions from DLUHC are that the capital allocation to Sandwell is predominantly for




expenditure in financial year 2023-24. In order to deliver the LUP interventions within the two-year delivery timetable, as set out in the Chancellor’s announcement for the Levelling Up Programme, the grant will be managed within the Council’s overall capital allocation. Existing schemes in the Council’s Capital Programme have been identified that can be funded from the LUP grant in 2023/24 and Council resources will then be used to deliver the remaining LUP projects in 2024/25.






- 2.8 A formal LUP offer and/or grant conditions have not yet been received from DLUHC but are expected imminently. Indications have been given to the amount of funding and interventions that will be supported by DLUHC. In order to prevent delays to the establishment of the LUP programme and the delivery of interventions to the ambitious timescale, Cabinet approval is sought to delegate approval of the grant conditions to the S151 Officer, and Director of Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Leader.
- 2.9 The establishment of the LUP and delivery of its interventions is an ambitious programme within a short delivery period. Delivery of the LUP interventions will be managed as a programme. To bring partners together to oversee the LUP programme, and to develop a shared understanding of the Levelling up needs in Wednesbury to shape future planning, the proposal is for a LUP Board to be established. This is based on learning from the Towns Fund Programme governance model. Terms of Reference and Membership are set out in appendix 3.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

The formation of a Levelling Up Partnership and delivery of the interventions within the LUP will contribute to all objectives of the corporate plan

	<p>The Best Start in Life for Children and Young People</p> <p>Opportunities for children and young people will be strengthened through an extended offer at Millennium Centre, Friar Park; a significant number of new homes and improved quality and safety of public spaces and greenspaces in Wednesbury.</p>
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	<p>People Live Well and Age Well</p> <p>The interventions proposed for inclusion within the LUP will strengthen the quality and safety of greenspaces and public spaces in Wednesbury; encouraging physical activity. The interventions will enable a significant number of new quality homes.</p>
	<p>Strong Resilient Communities</p> <p>The interventions proposed for inclusion within the LUP will strengthen the deterrents for crime and ASB in Wednesbury.</p>
	<p>Quality Homes in Thriving Neighbourhoods</p> <p>The interventions proposed for inclusion within the LUP will enable a significant number of new homes to be delivered and will improve the quality of neighbourhoods through improvements and enhanced safety measures in green spaces and public spaces.</p>
	<p>A Strong and Inclusive Economy</p> <p>The interventions proposed for inclusion within the LUP will increase the adult skills offer in Wednesbury and will improve the quality of public spaces in Wednesbury Town Centre; helping the town to thrive and retain and attract businesses.</p>
	<p>A Connected and Accessible Sandwell</p> <p>The interventions proposed for inclusion within the LUP will enable better connections through green spaces for walking and cycling and improvements to routes between Wednesbury Town Centre and the Metro.</p>



4 Context and Key Issues

Background to Levelling Up Partnerships (LUP)

- 4.1 The Chancellor of the Exchequer made several new announcements as part of the Spring Budget on 15th March that are intended to benefit local government and local communities as part of the Government's Levelling Up agenda. These included:
- Two Devolution Deals - with West Midlands MCA and Greater Manchester MCA. The centrepiece of these Deals are beneficial agreements for business rates retention with the benefits shared between LA's and the MCA.
 - Twelve Investment Zones across the U.K. including one guaranteed for the West Midlands. These will be focused on promoting growth and will normally be based around a research institution / university. (location unknown at this stage and will be decided by WMCA).
 - A Regeneration Fund of £211m to fund 16 local projects which includes confirmation that the £20m for the regeneration of Tipton will be funded (previously unsuccessful bid in Round 2 of the Levelling Up Fund).
 - Confirmation that there will be a Round 3 of the Levelling Up Fund bidding process.
 - Twenty places in England selected as a Levelling Up Partnership area
- 4.2 Levelling Up Partnerships are targeted interventions designed to identify practical, tangible actions to support priority places to 'level up' and to help government develop a more holistic understanding of place. The aim is to develop a deeper understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities in priority areas, and via a partnership approach harness collective powers to tackle the most pressing issues.
- 4.3 The LUP approach is to put place at the heart of levelling up by;
- **Understanding local barriers and opportunities including;** local performance against levelling up indicators/ local growth potential and a place's unique selling points
 - **Aligning cross Government activity in place;** to ensure that central government, local government and private resources are used most efficiently.



- **Unlocking powers, resources, or flexibilities;** to empower local leaders to drive progress against the missions and secure local growth.

4.4 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council is one of the twenty places in England selected to have a Levelling Up Partnership.

4.5 The twenty places were selected based on the following four indicators using a three-year average generally across January 2019 to December 2021:

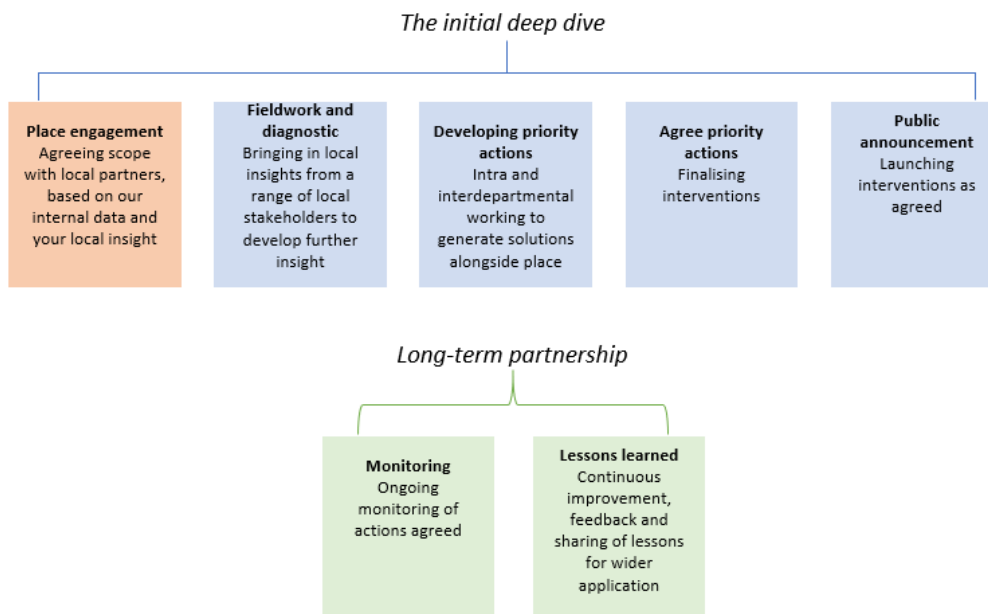
- NVQ Level 3+ (% of total population)
- Healthy Life Expectancy
- Median Gross Weekly Pay (£)
- Gross Value Added (GVA) per Hour Worked (ONS 2018 to 2020)

4.6 The priority list of twenty places were selected as they are all in the bottom quartile for three or more of the four indicators above. £400m has been set aside to support the 20 LUP areas so on average, each place could expect to secure up to £20m (capital) for in financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Developing the Partnership

4.7 The development of a Levelling Up Partnership (LUP) between Government and Sandwell has been led by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC). The development of the LUP has been set out in two phases.





- 4.8 Civil Servants have been active in Sandwell engaging with a range of key stakeholders, partners, SMBC Cabinet Members and Officers to support the initial deep dive activity.
- 4.9 The initial deep dive activity included joint exploration between DLUHC and Cabinet Members of the target geographical area for Sandwell's LUP taking into account the indicators used to select Levelling Up Partnership areas, areas that may require cross government support to successfully deliver positive outcomes, major opportunities for capital spend to deliver against the levelling up missions, LUP funding criteria and local insight. The geographical area focused on during the initial deep dive has been Wednesbury with a focus on Friar Park.
- 4.10 To shape emerging thinking around the priority actions for the LUP, a set of themes and a long list of interventions was produced by council Officers taking into account the levelling up challenges for Wednesbury with a focus on Friar Park, the Council's strategic priorities, work already underway the likely amount of capital available and the ambitious two year LUP delivery programme.
- 4.11 Public Health programmes that contribute to levelling up are set out in appendix 1 and include a focus on:
- Life expectancy: healthy aging app and anticipatory care
 - Infant mortality: healthy pregnancy
 - Obesity: reception age and year 6 obesity



- Economic wellbeing – Worklessness: preventing and tackling economic inactivity and Sandwell Language network
- Mental wellbeing of children: Wellbeing in vulnerable groups and wellbeing in children with SEND

4.12 Sandwell's 7 Family Hubs were launched in 2023. They aim to help families to thrive by providing the right support, in the right place, at the right time so that parents and carers can nurture their babies and children, improving health and education outcomes for all. This offer will contribute to a reduction in inequalities in health and education outcomes for babies, children and families across England by ensuring that support provided is communicated to all parents and carers, including those who are hardest to reach and/or most in need of it.

4.15 In Wednesbury, the Family Hub already offers a wide range of services including access to Health visitors, welfare rights, benefit advice, parenting and many groups for families to attend. A satellite site in North Wednesbury is also delivering services to families and there are lots of opportunities to develop this site further to become a Levelling up Family Hub spoke.

4.13 A formal offer and/or grant conditions are expected to be issued to the Council following DLUHC's internal business case processes. It is expected to include an offer of £20m capital and £350,000 revenue for 5 interventions that build on current approaches to levelling up in Wednesbury. The interventions are summarised below and contained in appendix 2.

LUP Priorities

4.14 The LUP offers a unique partnership between Government and local stakeholders in Sandwell to build on current interventions and approaches being undertaken to level up. The opportunity through the 5 identified interventions is for the LUP, with the active support of stakeholders to facilitate:

- Good quality housing in Friar Park and be en-route to delivering more
- Improvement to long-standing derelict land in Friar Park and create new green spaces



- Improved residents' perceptions of crime and safety through reducing crime, and strengthening partnerships to address ASB and crime issues into the future
- Better health outcomes through revitalised green spaces in Wednesbury
- Improvements in residents' skills and attainment through increasing the skills offer to Wednesbury residents
- More capacity for community facilities to support a growing population

4.16 5 interventions are expected to be included in DLUHC's offer to Sandwell which are proposed for Cabinet's approval.

	Summary	LUP Funding Offer
Friar Park Urban Village	Fund land remediation viability gap to deliver Friar Park Urban Village Scheme enabling c.630 new homes.	£11.5m
Community Safety Scheme	Build on partnership work to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour by increasing the deterrents to crime and anti-social behaviour in Wednesbury. This will include installing new and upgrading CCTV infrastructure in Wednesbury Town Centre and Friar Park, providing deployable cameras to tackle fly-tipping across Wednesbury, implementing a radio link scheme, and installing nuisance bike inhibitors.	£0.4m
Friar Park Millennium Centre Expansion	Extend the existing community centre in Friar Park to meet the demands from extended community (as a result of proposed development of Friar Park Urban Village) and enhance the skills delivery offer. Tackling the skills challenges in the Friar Park ward, current position of 32.6% residents with no qualifications compared to a national rate of	£2m



	15%. Increasing higher level skills which are 11.1% at Level 4 and above than the national rate at 29.7% (Nomis 08.23)	
Wednesbury Town Centre Improvements	Building on HAZ improvements to further enhance the public realm in Wednesbury Town Centre Following a masterplanning process, the project will enable long standing derelict sites to be improved.	£4.35m
Greenspaces Improvements	Enhancing 4 existing green spaces in Wednesbury to improve safety measures, quality scores, accessibility and provide additional activities.	£1.65m

4.14 The proposed interventions will enable:

- 630 new homes (157 affordable)
- Land acquisition for future housing delivery and regeneration opportunities
- New and upgraded CCTV and environmental cameras
- Nuisance bike inhibitors
- Improvements to 4 green spaces and 10ha new public open space for sport and recreational use
- An extended community centre offer in Friar Park
- Improved public realm

4.15 This will deliver on Levelling Up outcomes of:

- Boosting productivity, pay, jobs and living standards through increasing skills and attainment levels and enabling new housing
- Spreading opportunity and improving public services through tackling crime and ASB hotspots and increasing skills and attainment levels and enabling new housing delivery
- Restoring a sense of community, local pride and belonging through improving perceptions of safety and the quality of built environment and green spaces
- Empowering local leaders and communities through creating long term plans to revitalise Wednesbury Town Centre



Financial Resources

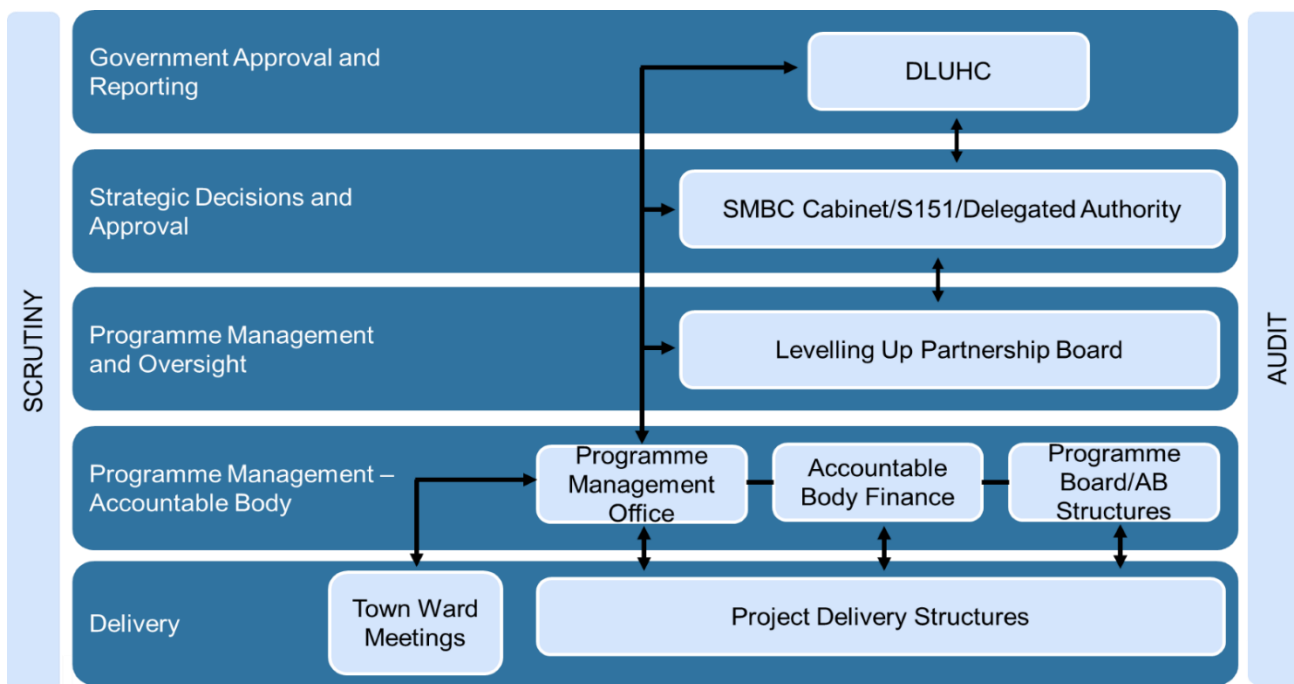
- 4.18 Civil Servants have advised that the LUP capital allocation is predominantly for 2023-24 with up to £5m carry forward allowed to 2024-25. This presents a significant delivery risk for the council. At the start of the LUP development process, indication was given to the council that funding would be available to Sandwell to be spent in financial years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025, in line with the public announcement around Levelling Up Partnerships.
- 4.19 To manage this delivery risk, authorisation is expected to be given to the Council from DLUHC to manage the LUP grant flexibly within Sandwell's capital programme. This will enable LUP projects to be delivered over the two-year period.

Governance and Delivery Arrangements

- 4.20 Sandwell Council will be responsible for the delivery of the LUP Programme following Sandwell Council's standard arrangements for procurement, project delivery and delegations. All of the proposed interventions will be led by the Council in partnership with others.
- 4.21 The establishment of the LUP and delivery of its interventions is an ambitious programme within a short delivery period. As part of the revenue allocation from DLUHC, a Programme Manager will be appointed to oversee and manage the LUP Programme reporting to a new post of Assistant Director for Levelling Up.
- 4.22 Based on learning from the Towns Fund governance model, the proposal is for a Wednesbury Levelling Up Partnership Board to be created to bring partners together to oversee the programme and to:
- develop a shared understanding of the Levelling up needs in Wednesbury and add to the evidence base (informing future plans for Wednesbury)
 - Input to and steer the development of LUP interventions
 - Act as critical-friend challenge through project delivery
 - Agree project change requests (within agreed limits); and
 - Review monitoring and evaluation of project impact



4.23 The governance model is set out as follows:



4.24 Proposed Terms of Reference for the board and membership (including voting rights / participatory roles) are included at appendix 3. Subject to Cabinet’s approval for the Terms of Reference and membership, Elected Member appointments to the Levelling Up Partnership Board will be appointed by Full Council. Partner organisations will be invited to make appointments in line with their governance arrangements. Expressions of interest will be sought for other representatives and the Independent Chair.



5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 Alternative geographical areas could be put forward for the focus of Sandwell's LUP. The selection of Wednesbury Town is the result of joint exploration between DLUHC and Cabinet Members taking into account the indicators used to select Levelling Up Partnership areas, areas that may require cross government support to successfully deliver positive outcomes, major opportunities for capital spend to deliver against the levelling up missions, LUP funding criteria and local insight through the initial deep dive activity conducted by DLUHC Civil Servants. The geographical focus area of Wednesbury is acceptable to DLUHC and therefore presents the best chance of Sandwell securing the LUP investment to deliver the shortlisted projects and achieve the outcomes for the LUP.
- 5.2 Alternative interventions were put forward to DLUHC for consideration as part of the initial deep dive activity. These included proposals for an increase of SEND provision in Sandwell, exploration of alternative measures to divert nuisance bike activity and additional regeneration proposals that have viability barriers to proceeding. These schemes were discounted by DLUHC as part of the initial deep dive activity. The selected shortlist of projects present the best chance of Sandwell securing the LUP investment.
- 5.3 Alternative governance arrangements could be put in place for the Levelling Up Partnership. The proposed arrangements reflect learning from the Towns Fund Programme governance arrangements and propose adoption of a similar model of governance.



6 Implications

Resources:	<p>The proposals within this report represent a funding opportunity of £20.35m.</p> <p>Approval is sought to £20m capital and £350K revenue expenditure to deliver the Levelling Up Programme.</p> <p>Capacity is required to oversee the LUP Programme and meet reporting requirements of DLUHC. A LUP Programme Manager, and Assistant Director for Levelling Up will be recruited to.</p> <p>The Council will be the lead delivery organisation for all proposed interventions.</p> <p>The capital allocation for LUP will allow a maximum carry forward of £5m into 2024-25. Based on the proposed interventions, the majority of spend is profiled to take place in 2024-2025.</p> <p>Existing schemes in the Council's Capital Programme have been identified that can be funded from the LUP grant in 2023/24 and Council resources will then be used to deliver the remaining LUP projects in 2024/25.</p> <p>Delivery of the projects will be managed through the Wednesbury Levelling Up Partnership Board and a specific project group will be established. Spend will also be monitored through the Council's Corporate Asset Management Board.</p>
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<p>Legal and Governance:</p>	<p>The Council will be the lead delivery organisation for all proposed interventions.</p> <p>Legal agreements/MoUs may be required to deliver specific projects and will follow standard council process e.g. for CPO.</p> <p>The Levelling up Partnership will be managed as a programme. The development of a Wednesbury Levelling up Partnership Board is being proposed to oversee the programme and partnership.</p>
<p>Risk:</p>	<p>The LUP programme is an ambitious £20m programme.</p> <p>There is a significant programme risk identified that if programme delivery can not be completed by 2024-25, there is a risk of grant clawback, reputational damage, and missed opportunities to deliver the benefits of the programme. Detailed project delivery plans are being prepared setting out key milestones. Any issues relating to the spend profile or delivery timeline will be escalated through LUP governance arrangements.</p> <p>Risks and issues will be reported to DLUHC when financial / legal implications could lead to a breach of grant funding conditions / other agreements e.g. MoUs with Government.</p> <p>A risk register will be maintained for the LUP programme. At project level, LUP projects will be required to identify, assess and control risks on an ongoing basis. Major (red) project risks will be reported to programme level.</p>



Equality:	The proposed interventions are in development stage. Through the project development process, consideration will be given to the impact on and improvements that can be made for residents with protected characteristics. Equality Impact screenings and EqlAs will be conducted, as appropriate.
Health and Wellbeing:	The underpinning objective of the LUP is to ‘level up’ and reduce inequalities. The proposed interventions focus on tackling health inequalities in a multi-faceted way and compliment public health programmes
Social Value:	The proposed interventions will be delivered in accordance with the Council’s Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules and will deliver social value in line with the council’s requirements.
Climate Change:	<p>The proposed interventions include a range of improvements to the quality of green spaces and public spaces in Wednesbury; making a contribution to biodiversity.</p> <p>Proposals will also enable the delivery of a significant number of new homes and a range of construction work. Options for energy efficiency measures and reducing carbon through the construction process will be considered as part of the detailed design phase and procurement.</p>
Corporate Parenting:	The voice of the child will be incorporated within the LUP governance arrangements through the inclusion of young people’s representative(s) on the LUP board. Where consultation is being undertaken as part of the LUP Programme, young people’s views and opinions will be sought.



	The intervention focusing on the extension of the Friar Park Community Centre will include consideration of youth opportunities.
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7. Appendices

1. Public Health Programmes of Work Contributing towards Levelling up.
2. Levelling Up Partnership Scope and Intervention Descriptions
3. Levelling Up Partnership Board Terms of Reference and Membership

8. Background Papers

[Levelling Up Partnerships Methodology Note](#)



Public Health Programmes of Work Contributing towards Levelling up.

Introduction

Levelling Up aims to reduce local disparities and promote equality in economic, social, and health outcomes across the nation. Public health interventions are critical for achieving these goals, as they address the root causes of health inequalities and contribute to overall societal well-being.

Detailed below will be key areas in which public health will contribute to the Levelling Up agenda.

Areas addressed will be:

- Life expectancy: healthy aging app and anticipatory care
- Infant mortality: healthy pregnancy
- Obesity: reception age and year 6 obesity
- Economic wellbeing – Worklessness: preventing and tackling economic inactivity and Sandwell Language network
- Mental wellbeing of children: Wellbeing in vulnerable groups and wellbeing in children with SEND

Life expectancy:

In 2021, the life expectancy in Sandwell was lower than the national average. For men, the life expectancy was 75.5 years in Sandwell, compared to 78.7 years in England. For women, the life expectancy was 80.4 years in Sandwell, compared to 82.8 years in England. This represents a gap of 3.2 years for men and 2.4 years for women in 2021.

When considering healthy life expectancy (HLE), which measures the average number of years a person is expected to live in good health, the figures are as follows: In Sandwell, HLE for men is 61.6 years, and for women, it's 60.5 years. In comparison, the HLE for men in England is 63.1 years, and for women, it's 63.9 years. This results in a gap of 2.1 years for men and 3.4 years for women, highlighting the difference in healthy years of life between Sandwell and the national average (2018-2020 data).

Upon reviewing Table 1 and Table 2, it becomes evident that the Rowley Regis and Wednesbury have the higher number of wards which exhibit the poorest self-reported health status among residents and the highest proportion of individuals registered as disabled in these wards report high limitations in their daily activities.

Table 1: Life expectancy by town (ONS Data 2016-2020)

Town	Men	Women
Oldbury	77.9	82.0
Rowley Regis	77.2	81.9
Smethwick	76.0	80.9
Tipton	74.3	78.7
Wednesbury	75.2	80.3
West Bromwich	77.1	81.9
England	79.5	83.2

Table 2: Census data on disability and level of health (ONS 2021)

		Disabled under the Equality Act		Level of Health			% Long-term Sick/
		% with Day-to-day activities limited a lot	% with Day-to-day activities limited a little	% Good or Very Good	% Fair	% Bad or Very Bad	Disabled ¹
West Brom	Charlemont with Grove Vale	7.8	9.7	80.3	14.2	5.5	22.9
	Great Barr with Yew Tree	7.6	8.6	81.4	13.3	5.4	21.4
	Greets Green & Lyng	9.2	8.1	78.7	13.9	7.5	21
	Newton	7.2	8.7	80.9	13.9	5.3	21.5
	Hateley Heath	10.1	9.5	77.8	14.7	7.5	24.1
	West Bromwich Central	9	8.3	77.9	15	7.1	22
Oldbury	Bristnall	9.4	9.7	78.1	14.8	7.1	24.2
	Langley	9.5	10.1	78	14.8	7.1	24.7
	Old Warley	8	10.4	80.1	13.7	6.1	24.4
	Oldbury	7.1	7.6	81.5	13	5.5	19.1
RowleyRegis	Cradley Heath & Old Hill	9.5	10.8	77.3	15.1	7.6	26.6
	Blackheath	10.2	11.1	75.7	17	7.2	28.1
	Tividale	8	9.2	80.4	14	5.6	22.7
	Rowley	8.7	10.6	78.7	14.6	6.7	25.4
Tipton	Great Bridge	9.2	9.4	77.7	14.9	7.4	23.2
	Princes End	9.8	9.8	77.1	15.2	7.7	24.4
	Tipton Green	9.7	9.5	77.8	14.9	7.3	24.1
Smeton	Abbey	6	9.4	83.4	11.8	4.7	22.3
	Smethwick	8.8	8.4	78.6	14.3	7.1	21
	Soho & Victoria	6.4	6.6	82.4	12	5.6	16
	St. Pauls	7.1	6.9	81.3	13.2	5.6	16.9
Wednesbury	Friar Park	10.4	10.6	76.4	15.6	8.1	26
	Wednesbury North	10.4	9.9	76.9	15.8	7.3	25.7
	Wednesbury South	9.6	9.9	77	15.6	7.4	24.2
OLDBURY		8.5	9.3	79.5	14	6.4	22.9
ROWLEY REGIS		9.1	10.4	78.1	15.1	6.8	25.7
SMETHWICK		7.1	7.6	81.3	12.9	5.8	18.6
TIPTON		9.6	9.6	77.6	15	7.5	23.9
WEDNESBURY		10.1	10.1	76.8	15.7	7.5	25.3
WEST BROMWICH		8.5	8.8	79.3	14.2	6.4	22.2
SANDWELL		8.7	9.2	79.1	14.3	6.6	22.8

Levelling up work to tackle premature death:

Public health is progressing two programmes of work, a voluntary sector lead anticipatory care programme and will soon release the healthy Aging app.

1) Anticipatory care programme:

SCVO will work with local partners to create an environment where residents have the confidence, capability and support for their health needs within the community this will include:

Holistic Programmes:

1. Wellness programs: Good nutrition and regular exercise can help prevent or manage many health conditions. Programs that promote healthy eating and physical activity, such as community-based fitness classes and healthy meal delivery services, can help older adults stay healthy and reduce the need for medical care.

2. Nutritional support: Proper nutrition is essential to maintaining good health, but some older adults may struggle with preparing meals or accessing healthy food options. The voluntary sector can provide nutrition education, meal delivery, or assistance with grocery shopping to help older adults maintain a healthy diet.
3. Community-building and cultural activities: Social connectedness and a sense of belonging are important for the mental and physical health of older adults. The voluntary sector can provide cultural activities, recreational programs, and community-building events to help older adults stay engaged and connected with others.
4. Respite care and caregiver support: Many older adults are cared for by family members or other unpaid caregivers, who may experience significant stress and burnout. The voluntary sector can provide respite care, counselling, and other support services to help caregivers manage their responsibilities and maintain their own health and well-being.
5. Mental health services: Mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and dementia can have a significant impact on the quality of life of older adults. The voluntary sector can provide counselling, therapy, and support groups to help older adults manage their mental health.

Skilled Voluntary sector

6. Technology training and support: Many older adults may struggle with using technology, which can make it difficult for them to stay connected with family and friends or access online services. The voluntary sector can provide training and support to help older adults become more comfortable with using technology.
7. Advocacy and information services: Navigating the healthcare system can be challenging for older adults and their families. Advocacy and information services can help older adults understand their healthcare options, access the resources they need, and advocate for their rights.

2) Healthy aging App

Health fabric and Sandwell Public health put forward a bid for the Innovate UK fund to build a new platform which is AI enabled self-management app to address health inequalities. This is a multilingual self-management platform, that supports BAME communities as well as the wider Sandwell population to self-manage multiple long-term conditions such as diabetes and hypertension.

Due to launch in the next 6 months, the platform was created as the next iteration of the previous platform from Health Fabric, which won several awards, including those from the HSJ and EHI digital in 2017. The previous app was also fully accredited by the NHS and was available on the NHS apps library.

This platform is being co-created between Sandwell Public health and GP Practices, tested with members of the community from different ethnicities, with support from their families. Initial outcomes included an increase in patient activation measures with 50 patients managing Hypertension, Asthma, Diabetes, COPD, depression, and anxiety. The intent is now to scale this across more than 1000 patients over 2 years with a focus on additional health and wellness themes such as stopping smoking, mental health, ageing well and run alongside health check.

This app has further potential to expand and add other functionality to support residents of sandwell in the longer term once proven to support the health of the community.

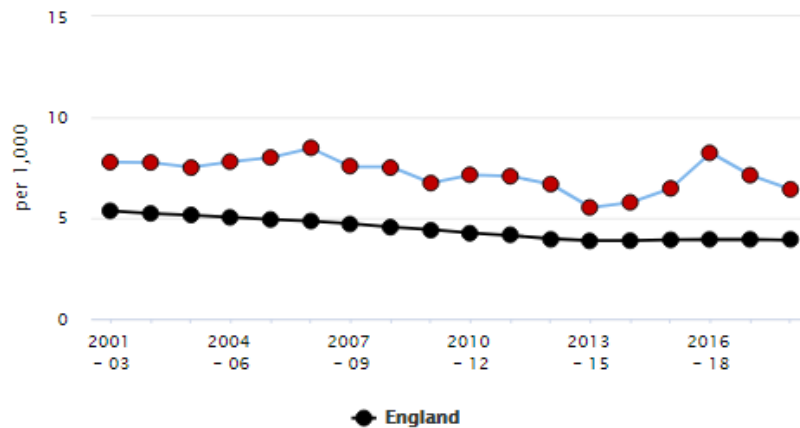
Infant mortality

Infant mortality (Infant deaths under 1 year of age per 1000 live births) is significantly higher for Sandwell than England. Sandwell death are 5.7 per 1,000 live births;

England 3.9; West Midlands 5.6. Deaths during the neonatal period (first 28 days) are the largest contributors to the infant mortality rate.

We currently do not have these data broken down by town.

Figure 1: Infant Mortality 2001-2021 – two year rolling average (ONS data)



The Midlands NHS recently completed a report on neonatal mortality stating that the high rates of infant mortality (which includes neonatal mortality), highlighting the modifiable factors of smoking, lack of breast feeding, prematurity, low birth weight, extremes of maternal age at delivery, domestic abuse, congenital anomalies, ethnicity, social deprivation, lack of maternal education, sudden infant death syndrome and infection.

Levelling up work to tackle infant mortality

Healthy Pregnancy service

The overarching aim of this service is to improve the health and wellbeing of women who are pregnant, helping them enter into and maintain healthier pregnancies and give their children the best possible start in life.

Note that Healthy Start Vitamins are already being distributed universally in sandwell.

The overarching objectives for this services are to;

- Increase the number of women having a smokefree pregnancy
- Increase women being supported by alcohol and substance misuse services.
- Increase initiation of breastfeeding and the number of babies breastfed at 6-8 weeks
- Support women to gain only the appropriate amount of weight during pregnancy
- Increase uptake of Healthy Start Vitamins
- Embed public health and prevention across the maternity pathway – including enhanced support for maternal heart conditions, preeclampsia, diabetes and high risk placental issues.
- Improve planning and preparation for pregnancy
- Improve the transition from midwifery to health visiting
- Reduction in low birth weight babies, preterm, still births and infant mortality.
- Reduce the burden of perinatal mental illness

Infant mortality deep dive for Sandwell:

In Sandwell, we want to develop an Infant Mortality Reduction Strategy which will explore patterns of need, services available and any gaps/opportunities to do more, the best evidence for programmes for our populations and system-wide recommendations for action.

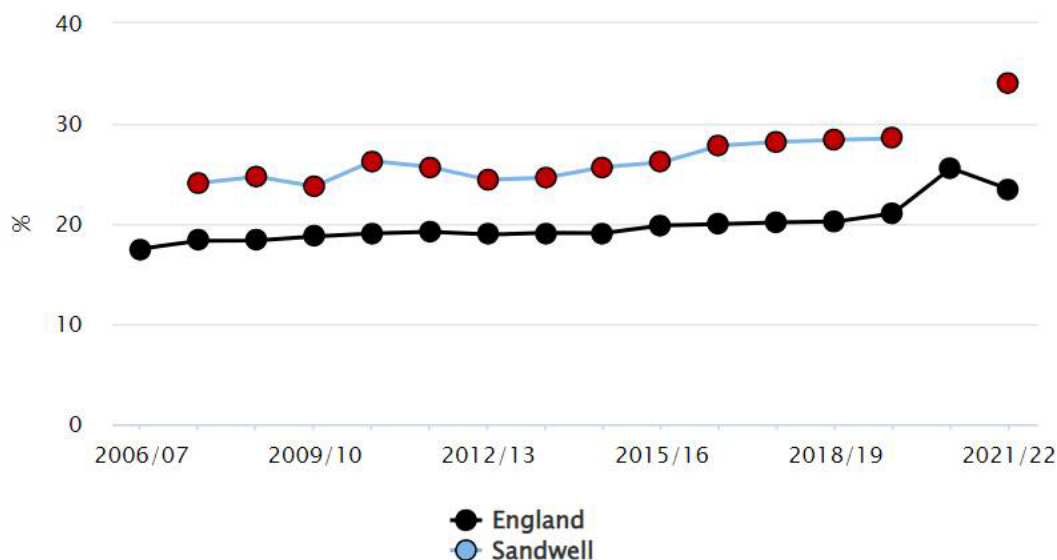
The first part of this work will be to explore patterns of need and service use, drawing on comparable Hospital Episode Data to review where the most need is, and mapping the demographics of when Infant mortality is highest in Sandwell.

This work is being commissioned with the Health Economics Unit and will support our understanding of needs in Sandwell.

Obesity

Sandwell has the worst childhood obesity in the country at 34% compared to a national average of 23.4. This means we need to bring the number of children who are obesity down by 10%. Children who are obese having a tenfold risk of being an obese adult, there is national concern about the rise of childhood obesity. The risk of obesity in adulthood increases with age, an obese child at 13 is more likely to become an obese adult than an obese 5 year old. The health consequences of childhood obesity include; glucose intolerance, Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, exacerbation of conditions such as asthma and psychological problems such as social isolation, low self-esteem, teasing and bullying.

Figure 2: Year 6 Obesity 2006-2022 (NCMP data)



Levelling up work to tackle childhood obesity

Weight loss programme for families.

There are also a number of funded activity programmes across schools encouraging healthy lifestyles including healthy food choices, increasing physical activities such as free swimming and many sporting events to encourage children and young people into sports and activities.

On top of the intensifying of the public health programmes to support those schools which are reporting the highest proportion of overweight children we will embark on a pilot a small programme similar to that of the Better Health pilot programme in Wolverhampton, where by families will be financially incentivised to cook healthy meals, eat healthy meals, take

exercise as a family. the small trial will evaluate what type of nudges families need to remain healthy and what types of incentivisation works.

Birmingham University have offered to evaluate based on their priority to generate evidence into economic impacts on obesity. Plan to interlink with the HDRC bid (should we be successful) for long term evaluation.

Economic wellbeing

There are approximately 216,203 working age adults in Sandwell which is 63.3% of the population (16-64yrs in 2021 – Nomis data) this is the similar to Regional and National proportion at 61.9% and 62.9% respectively. The occupation, health and lifestyles of working age adults impacts their health going into old age, impacting healthy life and life expectancy. These will also influence the lifestyles, habits and occupations of their children.

Of these 68% are economically active (147,400 people), which is lower than the regional and national figures of 77.5% and 78.5% respectively. Of these 63.9% (138,600 people) in Sandwell are in employment, again lower that regional and national figures.

These figures have massively decreased from a peak in March 2021 dropping down to figures seen in 2017 and some of the lowest in 15 years. This does not follow the regional or national trend. This is likely linked to post COVID Furlough measures reducing from July 2021 and coming to an end in September 2021. This could be highlighting that the types of employment in Sandwell were disproportionately affected by COVID due to health, caring needs or employment types.

Economically active decreased by 10% 16,400 over this period and of those economically active, those in employment decreased by 10% 15,500.

The numbers of people who are self employed have increased to just short of the highest rates seen in 2019, but is the highest number on record at 17,900 people, increasing by over 1500 between its low in 2021.

There are a number of benefits to supporting people with long-term conditions and carers responsibilities to work. These benefits include:

- Increased financial security for individuals and families
- Improved health and well-being for individuals and families
- Reduced social isolation
- Increased productivity in the workplace
- Reduced costs for the healthcare system

There are several challenges to supporting people with long-term conditions and carers responsibilities to work. These challenges include:

- Lack of awareness of the challenges that these people face
- Lack of access to flexible working arrangements
- Unable to flex their universal credit or work and improve their circumstances
- Lack of training and support
- Lack of an inclusive workplace culture

Despite these challenges, there are a number of things that can be done to support people with long-term conditions and carers responsibilities to work. By supporting them to access flexible working arrangements, training and support, and an inclusive workplace culture, we can help these people to achieve their full potential

Figure 3 – Economically active population in employment Dec 2004 – Dec 2022 (Nomis data)

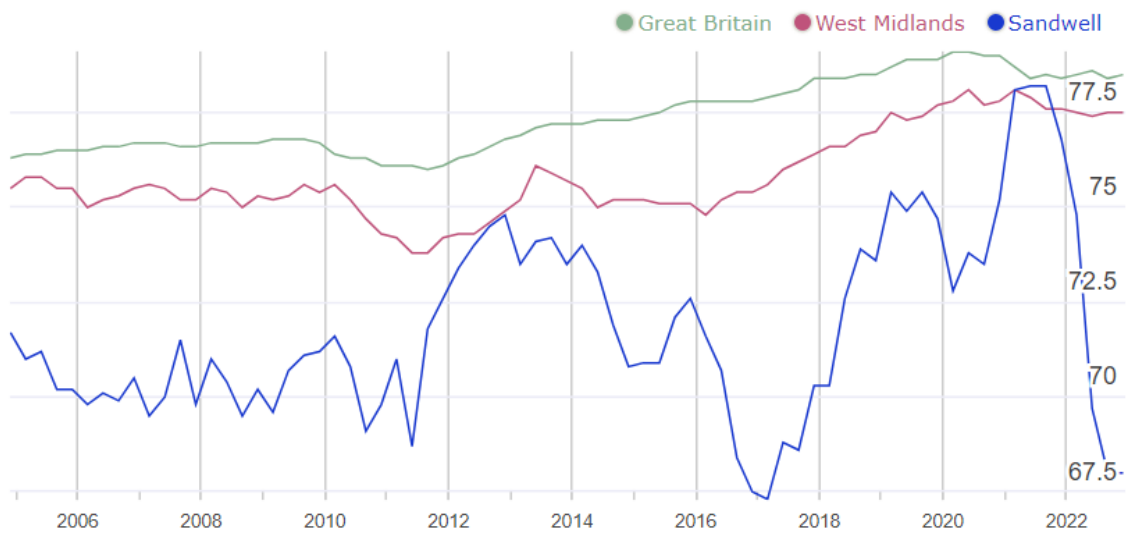


Figure 4 –Population in employment Dec 2004 – Dec 2022 (Nomis data)

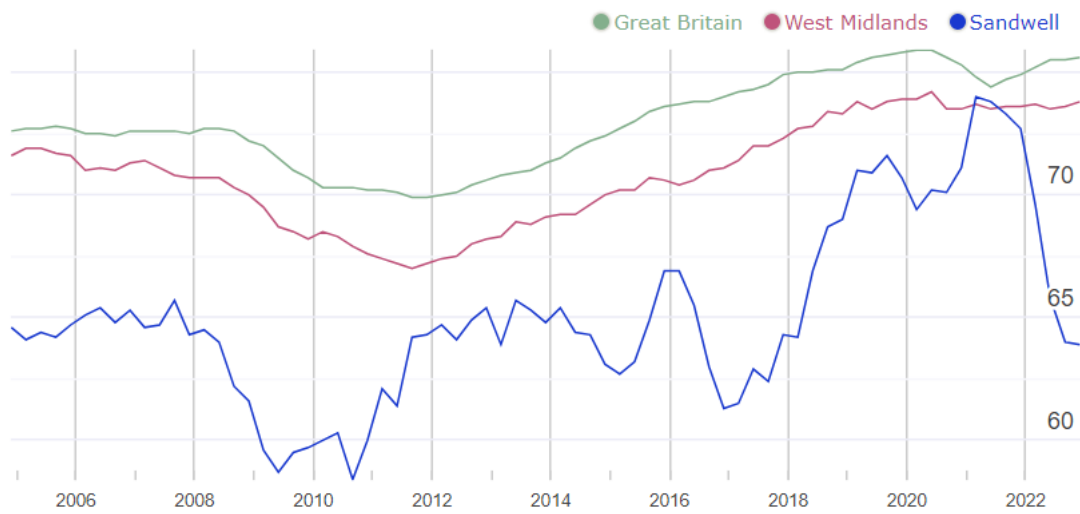
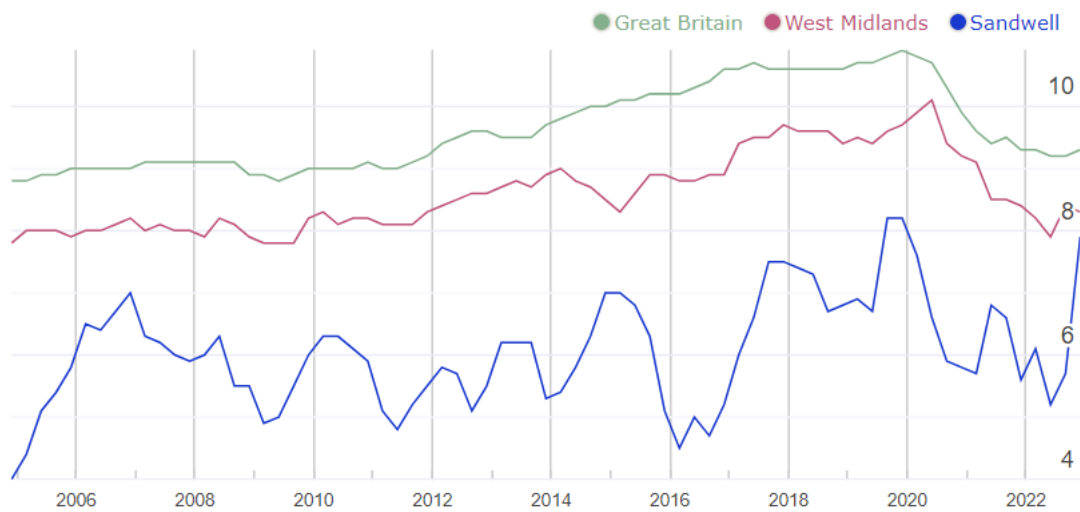


Figure 5 –Population self-employed Dec 2004 – Dec 2022 (Nomis data)



Barriers to work

Sandwell is home to vibrant, diverse communities and offers a place of welcome for new migrants. In the 2021 Census, almost one in four (23.6%) Sandwell residents were born outside the UK, compared with 1 in 6 nationally. The 2021 Census identified the challenges facing our new migrant communities and established ethnic minority communities with 88% of Sandwell residents who speak English as their main language compared to 92.3% nationally. Of those residents who do not have English as their main language, 24.8% cannot speak English well and 5.5% cannot speak English at all. In 5 wards of Sandwell less than 70% of residents speak English as their main language.

Table 3: Census data on Country of birth and Household language (ONS 2021)

		Country of Birth						Household Language			
		UK		EU		Other		All in HH have English as main language		None in HH have English as main language	
				(incl. Ireland)							
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
West Brom	Charlemont with Grove Vale	10,237	80.5	652	5.1	1,823	14.4	4,332	84.6	337	6.6
	Great Barr with Yew Tree	11,088	82.1	439	3.2	1,981	14.6	4,376	85.4	232	4.5
	Greets Green & Lyng	9,422	64	1,270	8.6	4,028	27.5	3,536	67.4	822	15.7
	Newton	9,504	78.3	654	5.4	1,987	16.3	4,124	84.9	295	6.1
	Hateley Heath	11,444	75.7	1,150	7.6	2,526	16.7	4,478	80.3	537	9.6
	West Bromwich Central	9,168	59.4	1,556	10.1	4,702	30.5	3,946	65.4	1,104	18.3
Oldbury	Bristnall	10,261	82	458	3.7	1,790	14.3	4,091	85.9	240	5
	Langley	11,271	80	722	5.1	2,095	14.8	5,036	85.8	394	6.7
	Old Warley	10,699	84.1	590	4.6	1,432	11.3	4,563	89.1	189	3.7
	Oldbury	11,054	70.8	1,064	6.8	3,500	22.4	4,425	75.5	628	10.7
Rowley	Cradley Heath & Old Hill	13,420	89.7	344	2.3	1,202	7.9	5,803	93	153	2.5
	Blackheath	10,818	89.7	362	3	884	7.3	4,791	93	138	2.7
	Tividale	11,223	85.8	567	4.3	1,294	9.8	4,507	88.7	265	5.2
	Rowley	12,414	90.8	375	2.7	888	6.5	5,135	93.7	131	2.4
Tipton	Great Bridge	11,467	79.5	984	6.8	1,974	13.6	4,556	83.5	450	8.2
	Princes End	12,497	88.3	689	4.9	960	6.7	5,122	91.3	252	4.5
	Tipton Green	12,390	79.6	898	5.8	2,272	14.6	4,942	82.3	481	8
Smetwick	Abbey	9,256	75.9	1,166	9.6	1,766	14.5	4,275	83.2	409	8
	Smethwick	9,818	63.5	1,039	6.7	4,607	29.8	3,529	66.1	879	16.5
	Soho & Victoria	9,840	50.1	1,909	9.7	7,886	40.1	3,386	54	1,256	20
	St. Pauls	9,424	56.3	1,021	6.1	6,286	37.6	2,558	51	1,037	20.7
Wednesbury	Friar Park	11,512	90	461	3.6	821	6.5	4,571	92.2	168	3.4
	Wednesbury North	11,469	86.1	523	3.9	1,326	10.2	4,383	87.5	247	4.9
	Wednesbury South	11,515	75.6	916	6	2,796	18.4	4,780	81	519	8.8
OLDBURY		43,285	78.8	2,834	5.2	8,817	16.1	18,115	83.8	1,451	6.7
ROWLEY REGIS		47,875	89	1,648	3.1	4,268	7.8	20,236	92.2	687	3.1
SMETHWICK		38,338	59.9	5,135	8	20,545	32.1	13,748	63.1	3,581	16.4
TIPTON		36,354	82.4	2,571	5.8	5,206	11.8	14,620	85.6	1,183	6.9
WEDNESBURY		34,496	83.4	1,900	4.6	4,943	11.9	13,734	86.6	934	5.9
WEST BROMWICH		60,863	72.8	5,721	6.8	17,047	20.4	24,792	77.6	3,327	10.4
SANDWELL		261,213	76.4	19,806	5.8	60,814	17.7	105,246	80.8	11,164	8.6

Levelling up work to tackle economic inactivity

Worklessness review:

Sandwell really need to understand what has happened since COVID regarding the workforce. There has been a massive number who have become economically inactive as a council we need to understand why and how to best support these resident either to ensure they have the full support to understand what they are eligible for or to help them return to work.

As part of a Health Determinants Research collaboration, we intend to undertake a series of research consultation to better understand what happened between summer 2021 up to now and what has happened within our economically inactive population.

Sandwell Language Network:

The need to improve health literacy within our ethnic minority communities and the demand for community language learning is increasing. To prevent a gap in this provision Public Health Commission the Sandwell Language Network (SLN).

SLN aims to tackle health and economic inequalities, reduce isolation, and promote community cohesion through language learning. SLN contributes to achieving our strategic outcomes, building resilient communities in which people live well and children have the best start to life. SLN works in partnership with our community and wider health system to build resilience in our ethnic minority communities and deliver a positive impact on health outcomes.

The current 2022-23 programme has seen great achievement and we look to increase these as the programme grows.

- 524 learners on the programme, representing 19 ethnicities, 53 nationalities and 39 different main languages
- 75 local volunteers recruited and trained
- 64% of participants in receipt of benefits, unemployed, or from low socio-economic backgrounds
- 88% of learners achieved progression and/or take up of additional support services
- 92 learners into formal education
- 184 moved into other informal learning such as digital
- 26 SLN learners into work

Mental wellbeing of children

The mental health of children and young people has been an area of focus for some time, however since the COVID pandemic, there have been numerous studies and reports of the general mental health of most children and young people further declining and numbers of children missing school, needing intensive support or reaching crisis is the highest it has ever been^{1, 2, 3}.

Children being mentally unwell in childhood, will likely impact school attainment and has the potential to impact their life trajectory, affecting wellbeing and productivity of the resident population of Sandwell as a whole. Anxious and mentally unwell children will become the anxious and mentally unwell adult population; our anxious and unwell parents and workforce.

For Sandwell to become prosperous, the children who become young adults need to achieve in school or work placement, and be supported to develop wider skills and aspirations, leading to being healthy both physically and mentally. To enable Sandwell as a community to nurture these aspiring young adults, there needs to be good quality support and enabling environments against risk factors

Estimated probable mental disorders: Mental health of children were measured in 2021 and compared to 2017 (table 4). It was found that probable mental disorders (such as Depression, anxiety disorders, obsessive compulsive disorders, bipolar disorders, PTSD, personality disorders and schizophrenia) had increased from 1 in 9 to 1 in 6. When applied

¹ <https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/well-being/mental-health-statistics>

² <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/about-us/media-centre/mental-health-statistics/>

³ <https://www.health.org.uk/news-and-comment/charts-and-infographics/children-and-young-people-s-mental-health>

to the population of Sandwell, we would expect to see 10,905 children in Sandwell with probable mental disorders (8913 aged 6-16yrs and 1992 aged 17-19 years)

Reported decline in mental health: The experience of mental health decline was measured with 39.2% of 6-16yr olds reporting a decline, 52.5% of 17-23yr olds (table 3). However, 21.8% and 15.2% also reported an improvement respectively. From this we can project that 36,657 children experienced a decline in mental health.

Crude estimates of levels of need: Based on the thrive model, Image 1, we can create some crude estimates, therefore that 42,000 children are within “Thriving”, 36,657 may be “Getting Advice” around the decline in mental health or moving all children within this group is moving between thriving and getting advice. A total of 10,905 children maybe moving between the levels of “Getting help”, “Getting more help” and “Risk support”.

Possible eating problems: The mental health of children report also estimated that around 10,167 have possible eating problems (table 4).

Probable Mental Disorders

Assessed against completion of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), the rates of probable mental disorders have increased since 2017; in 6 to 16 year olds from one in nine (11.6%) to one in six (17.4%), and in 17 to 19 year olds from one in ten (10.1%) to one in six (17.4%). Rates in both age groups remained similar between 2020 and 2021⁴.

Table 4: Projected numbers of children with mental disorders

	2017 pop'n	2017%	Est No. with probable mental disorder	2020 pop'n	2020 %	Est No. with probable mental disorder	Change
6-16yrs old	77,485	11.6	6139.2	78,179	17.4	8913.3	2774.1
17-19yrs	11,383	10.1	1149.7	11,449	17.4	1992.1	842.4
Total	88,868		7288.9	89,628		10,905	3616.5

Reported decline in mental health

39.2% of 6 to 16 year olds had experienced deterioration in mental health since 2017, and 21.8% experienced improvement. Among 17 to 23 year olds, 52.5% experienced deterioration, and 15.2% experienced improvement.

Table 5: Projected numbers of children experiencing deterioration in mental health

	2020 pop'n	2020 %	Est No. experiencing deterioration
6-16yrs	78,179	39.2	30,646
17-19yrs	11,449	52.5	6,011
Total	89,628		36,657

Possible eating problems

⁴ Mental Health of Children and Young People in England 2021 - wave 2 follow up to the 2017 survey, Sept 2021

The proportion of children and young people with possible eating problems increased since 2017; from 6.7% to 13.0% in 11 to 16 year olds, and from 44.6% to 58.2% in 17 to 19 year olds.

Table 6: Projected numbers of children with eating problems

	2017 pop'n	2017 %	Est No. with eating problem	2020 pop'n	2020 %	Est No. with eating problem	Change
11-16yrs old	24,561	6.7	1645.6	26,953	13.0	3503.9	1858.3
17-19yrs	11,383	44.6	5076.8	11,449	58.2	6663.3	1586.5
Total	35,944		6722.4	38,402		10167.2	3444.8

Levelling up work to tackle poor mental wellbeing:

Grants to support Mental wellbeing of children with highest need.

The aim is to target groups not covered in wider CYP mental health programmes. in Sandwell to access support that enables them to address challenges with their emotional well-being and mental health which develop personal strategies that build confidence and resilience. To target those children and young people who are identified as requiring the additional support or access to specialist services where such support is currently not provided

This is in four areas;

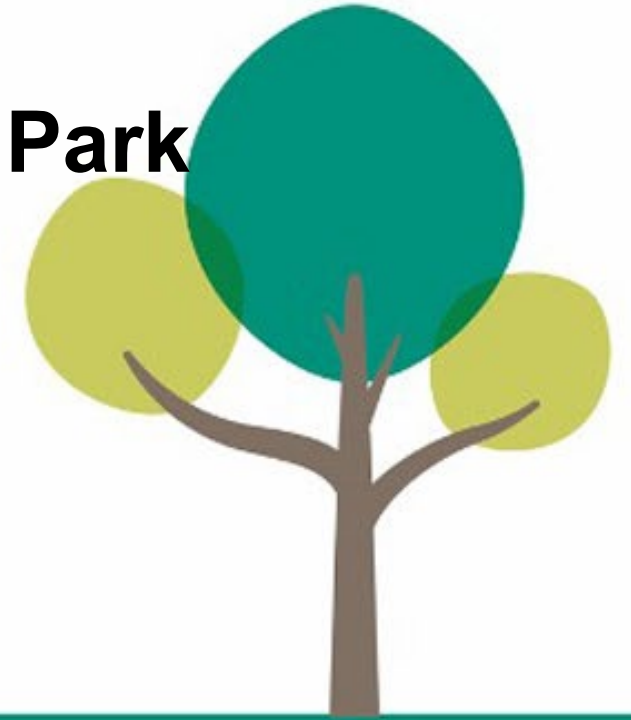
- Black Boys (linking in with the Youth Justice),
- 16-25-year olds
- Family support – supporting and understanding emotional wellbeing and Mental health (Pilot)
- Children with SEND Needs

This programme, led by SCVO, on behalf of the wider Early Help Partnership (EHP), Public Health and the ICB, will focus on engagement with children, young people and families targeted primarily through education settings, however, this also includes those who are not within education such as on roll, home educated or access alternative provision or the Justice system.

For special schools - grants have been awarded for supporting children in these settings and to create training packages. These are being launched in Westminster school in 2022/23.

Sandwell Levelling up Partnership

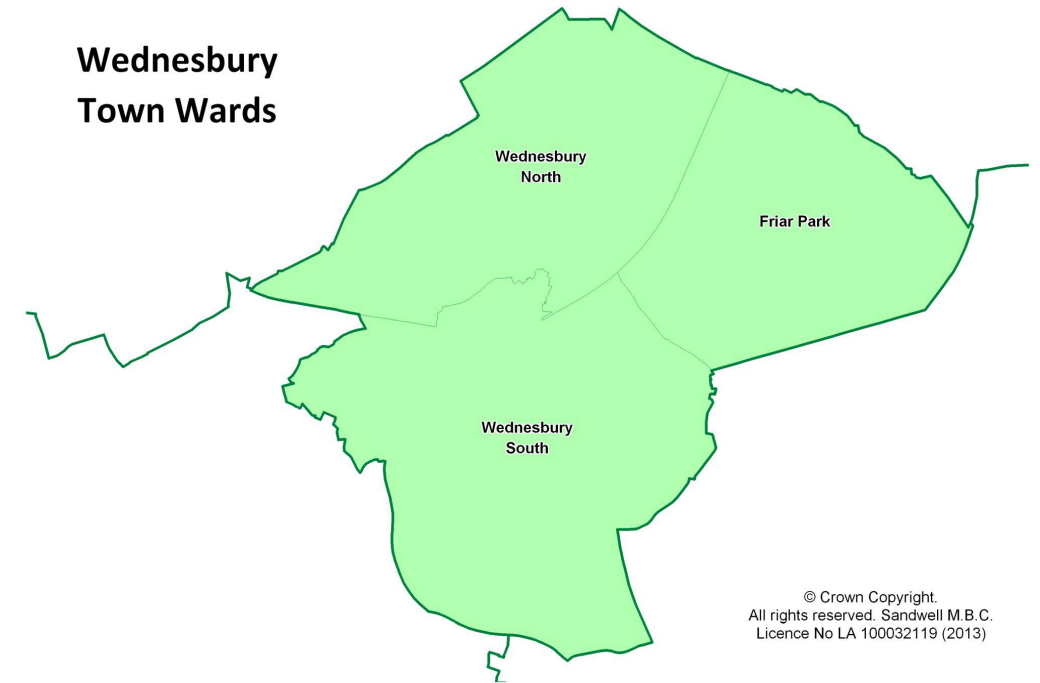
Wednesbury with a focus on Friar Park



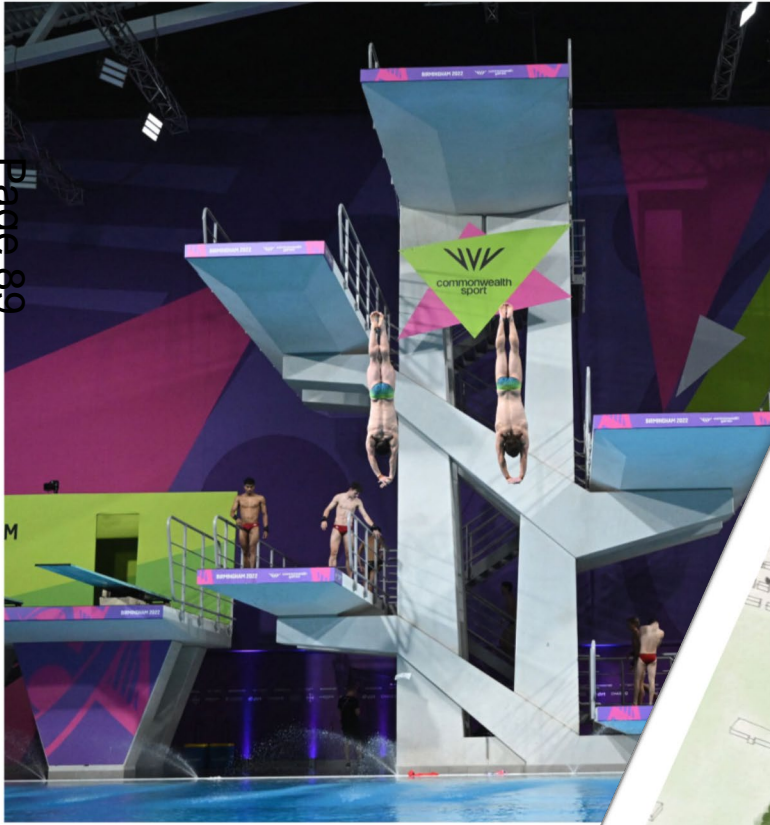


Levelling up Challenges - Wednesbury with a focus on Friar Park

- Wednesbury suffers from high levels of **deprivation** and Friar Park is one of the most deprived wards in Sandwell
- Residents of Friar Park ward have **low healthy life expectancy** and **high levels of residents with no qualifications** (33% in Friar Park)
- Wednesbury has the highest proportion of residents who are **economically inactive** across Sandwell's Towns
- **Safety and perceptions of safety** are an issue for residents and young people
- **Large unmet housing need** across Sandwell – **land viability**. Largescale opportunity to deliver Friar Park Urban Village



Sandwell's exciting future





The LUP Opportunity: A unique partnership between Government and local stakeholders in Sandwell

In 2 years time, with the active support of stakeholders, the LUP will facilitate:

- Good quality housing in Friar Park and be en-route to delivering more
- Improvement to long-standing derelict land in Friar Park and create new green spaces
- Improved residents' perceptions of crime and safety through reducing crime, and strengthening partnerships to address ASB and crime issues into the future
- Improvements in residents' skills and attainment through increasing the skills offer to Wednesbury residents
- Better health outcomes through revitalised green spaces in Wednesbury linked to existing plans for a range of health interventions
- More capacity for community facilities to support a growing population





How we will measure our success - LUP Programme Outcome Measures

1. Number of new homes enabled
2. Resident satisfaction with their local area as a place to live
3. ha new open space enabled
4. Business vacancy rate in Wednesbury Town Centre/ Business Growth Measure / equiv.
5. Residents Perception of Crime and Antisocial behaviour
6. Recorded crime and ASB in Wednesbury
7. Number of nuisance bike reports in areas with new inhibitors installed
8. Quality score for green spaces
9. Skills/qualifications gained / equivalent measure
10. Numbers of participants in community activities / equivalent measure





Summary of LUP Interventions

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	Summary	Output Measures
1. Friar Park Urban Village	Fund land remediation viability gap to deliver Friar Park Urban Village Scheme enabling c.630 new homes.	1. ha land remediated
2. Community Safety Scheme	<p>Build on partnership work to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour by increasing the deterrents to crime and anti-social behaviour in Wednesbury.</p> <p>This will include installing new and upgrading CCTV infrastructure in Wednesbury Town Centre and Friar Park, providing deployable cameras to tackle fly-tipping across Wednesbury, implementing a radio link scheme, and installing nuisance bike inhibitors.</p>	<p>1. Number of new /upgraded cameras delivered</p> <p>2. Business Radio Link Scheme Implemented</p> <p>3. Number of locations with new inhibitors installed</p>
3. Friar Park Millennium Centre Expansion	Extend the existing community centre in Friar Park to meet the demands from extended community (as a result of proposed development of Friar Park Urban Village) and enhance the skills delivery offer.	<p>1. Sqm extension to Friar Park Millennium Centre</p> <p>2. Amount of Library space created</p>





Summary of LUP Interventions

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	Summary	Output Measures
4. Wednesbury Town Centre Improvements	<p>Building on HAZ improvements to further enhance the public realm in Wednesbury Town Centre</p> <p>Following a masterplanning process, the project will enable long standing derelict sites to be improved.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Completion of Masterplan for Wednesbury Town Centre2. No. of problem sites-improved.3. Amount of public realm improvement
5. Greenspaces Improvements	<p>Enhancing 4 existing green spaces in Wednesbury to improve safety measures, quality scores, accessibility and provide additional activities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. m2 of footway lit with street lighting2. m2 footpath improvement works3. m2 planting / re-wilding4. number of organised sports pitch bookings (annually)



Intervention 1 – Friar Park Urban Village

This project will fund land remediation viability gap to deliver Friar Park Urban Village Scheme enabling c.360 new homes.



Friar Park Urban Village site is the most challenging brownfield site in the West Midlands.

With an agreed masterplan in place, the [Friar Park Urban Village scheme](#) is currently the largest Council-led residential development opportunity in the borough and the indicative proposals suggest that c.630 homes could be achieved on the site as well as significant areas of landscaping and open space.

The site is highly constrained and suffers not only from the low land values shared across other areas of Sandwell, but also acutely suffers from high levels of land remediation required to bring forward development. Primarily this is a result of the former uses of the site which included a former sewage works. Costs to remediate these works are significant.

The LUP presents an opportunity to bridge these viability issues through LUP funding and enable the Council and its partners to bring forward this major development.





Intervention 2 – Community Safety Scheme

This project will Build on partnership work to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour by increasing the deterrents to crime and anti-social behaviour in Wednesbury.

Perceptions of safety are an issue in Wednesbury with the lowest proportion of residents across all Sandwell Towns feeling unsafe at daytime, and more than 1/3 of Wednesbury residents feeling unsafe at night-time (Sandwell Residents Survey 2022). Assaults and thefts from shops and stores have been consistently the highest recorded offences in Wednesbury.

Resident feedback identified common themes of concerns around ASB and crime, including drug use and dealing, off-road bikes, more police presence/visibility, improved safety at the bus station, groups hanging around the streets. In the Young People's Corporate Plan a commitment has been made to have more CCTV cameras and to have detached youth workers in key public spaces to help young people feel safe. (Residents' Survey, SHAPE young people's survey, and specific engagement around crime and safety issues.

The project will include installing new and upgrading CCTV infrastructure in Wednesbury Town Centre and Friar Park, providing deployable cameras to tackle fly-tipping across Wednesbury, implementing a radio link scheme, and installing nuisance bike inhibitors.





Intervention 3 – Friar Park Millennium Centre Expansion

This project will extend the existing community centre in Friar Park to meet the demands from extended community (as a result of proposed development of Friar Park Urban Village) and enhance the skills delivery offer.

The Friar Park Millennium Centre currently provides a range of activities and facilities for local community use.

The proposed development of the Friar Park Urban Village means that the future capacity of the centre is likely to restrict its ability to meet extended community needs. This has been raised as a key concern amongst existing residents through the public consultation exercises undertaken in relation to the proposed development. In addition, key service providers have identified the potential to extend the existing services to meet existing and new demands from the community.

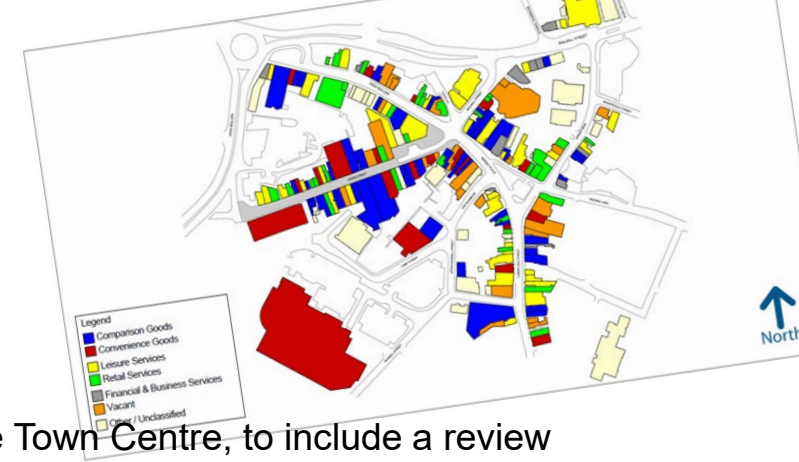
The aim would be to extend the Centre to accommodate a range of new facilities for community use, as well as the provision of a permanent library.





Intervention 4 – Wednesbury Town Centre Improvements

This project will build on the Heritage Action Zone improvements in the Town Centre to further enhance Wednesbury Town Centre.



Wednesbury Town Centre does not currently have a Masterplan in place. A strategic review of the Town Centre, to include a review of its current uses and future opportunities would provide a solid base for future intervention.

Wednesbury Town Centre is structured similar to a traditional market town centre, with a Market Place and Clock. A large Morrison's supermarket anchors the centre with traditional shops aligning the Town Centre pedestrian and highway networks.

The Town Centre has recently benefitted from public realm improvements and the relocation of an outdoor market to the traditional Market Place. However, this investment (Heritage Lottery Fund) was geographically constrained to the Conservation Area, which is a small area around the Clock Tower on Market Place. The appearance of Wednesbury Town Centre is also impacted by a number of long term derelict sites and some poor-quality buildings which are unoccupied.

One of the key strategic benefits of Wednesbury Town Centre is its connectivity; with a Bus Station in the centre, and a Metro Station a few minutes' walk away. Some improvements have already been implemented to improve the quality of the access arrangements from the Town to the Metro, including a new cycle way. However, the main route remains isolated and somewhat unwelcoming.

Intervention to improve this route via urban greening and other measures will be explored further (via a Masterplan). The Masterplan would also provide an urban realm strategy identifying the best locations for urban greening initiatives and pocket parks. Funding from the LUP would be used to implement the proposals in the masterplan.





Intervention 5 – Wednesbury Greenspaces Improvements

This project will enhance 4 existing green spaces in Wednesbury to improve safety measures, quality scores, accessibility and provide additional activities.

Much of the investment into Green Spaces within Sandwell has been focussed on the Main Town Parks. All of these Town-level sites have achieved the Green Flag award to highlight their quality and success.

Other green spaces in Sandwell have not seen similar investment and are lagging behind. Neighbourhood and local level green spaces, such as the ones identified for funding within this proposal serve the more deprived residents without daily access to travel to borough level parks.

This project will see a host of improvements across four Green Spaces with the lowest quality scores in Wednesbury (Hydes Road Playing Fields, Balls Hill Open Space, Wytnor Lane Open Space, Lakeside and Norbury Road Open Space).

This will bring physical and mental health benefits for residents by providing a better quality and improved access to green spaces. The green spaces will benefit from improved safety measures to improve safety and perceptions of ASB and safety in Wednesbury.



Wednesbury Levelling up Partnership Board Terms of Reference

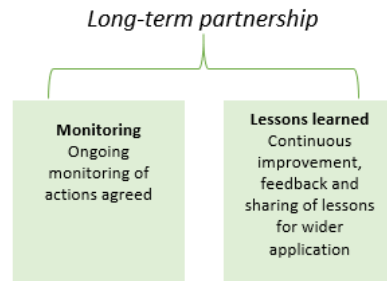
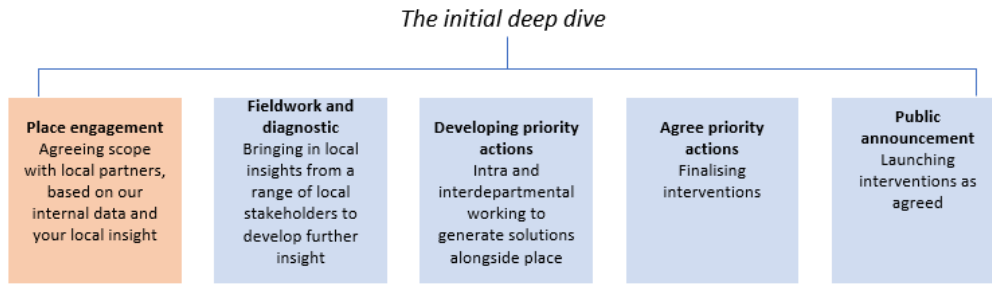
V1 September 2023

1. Purpose of Document

- 1.1. The purpose of this document is to outline the governance arrangements for Sandwell's Levelling up Partnership (LUP).
- 1.2. The governance arrangements are based on learning from the Towns Fund Governance arrangements and reflect the requirements of the Levelling up Partnership from the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC).
- 1.3. The document includes Roles and Responsibilities, Code of Conduct for Board Members, Decision Making arrangements, Scrutiny arrangements, Transparency and Accountability and a list of Members of the Wednesbury Levelling up Partnership Board (WLUP Board).

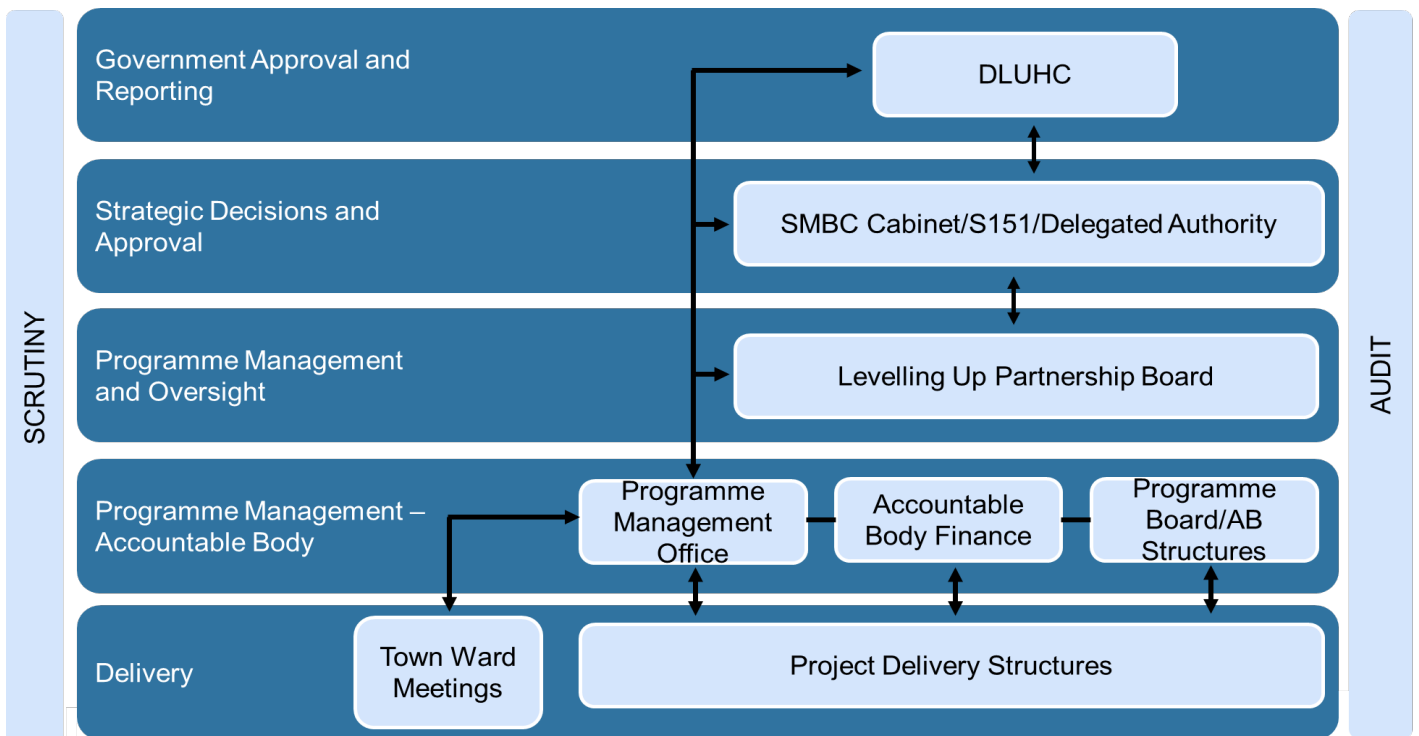
2. Context

- 2.1. Levelling Up Partnerships are targeted interventions designed to identify practical, tangible actions to support priority places to 'level up' and to help government develop a more holistic understanding of place. The aim is to develop a deeper understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities in priority areas, and via a partnership approach harness collective powers to tackle the most pressing issues. Sandwell is one of the twenty places in England selected to have a Levelling Up Partnership.
- 2.2. Given the nature of the Levelling up Partnership and its focus on co-production, any governance arrangements need to take into account stakeholder input and views not only to the project development process, but to harness stakeholder energy to come together to address the levelling up issues faced by the Town.
- 2.3. The Levelling up Programme stages are set out by DLUHC as follows:



2.4. A bespoke governance board referred to as the Wednesbury Levelling Up Partnership Board (WLUP Board) will be established to oversee the delivery of the LUP programme and bring partners together. The Board will be established towards the end of the Initial Deep Dive activity.

3. Governance Model



4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1. Wednesbury Levelling Up Partnership Board (WLUP Board)

4.1.1. The WLUP Board will be responsible for:

- Leadership/ Direction - Provide strategic direction across the LUP
- Coherent Governance - Ensure a coherent approach to governance within the town (managing interfaces with the Town Tasking Boards and Town Member Meetings)
- Consistency - Ensure interventions are not competitive and act to build the local economy
- Alignment to Strategic Priorities - Ensure alignment of projects to Local, Regional and National strategies
- Stakeholder Engagement – ensuring that communities' voices are involved in shaping design and decision making and ensuring diversity in its engagement with local communities and businesses
- Upholding the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)
- Ensure compliance with any Heads of Terms Agreements / Grant Conditions / other Agreement issued by DLUHC
- Have sight of and be consulted over project change requests
- Act as a critical friend throughout the programme
- Fulfil any other duties and responsibilities required of the WLUP Board by Central Government

4.1.2. The Chair of the WLUP Board will be responsible for: -

- Upholding the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)
- Leading the Board to achieve its objectives, maintaining an overview of activity, and championing the supporting partnership working
- Ensuring that decisions are made by the Board in accordance with good governance principles
- Signing the submissions to Government on behalf of the Board, where applicable

4.2. Sandwell Council

4.2.1. Sandwell Council is the Accountable Body for Sandwell's LUP Programme.

4.2.2. Sandwell Council is responsible for: -

- Upholding the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)
- Developing a delivery team, delivery arrangements and agreements
- Ensuring that decisions made by the WLUP Board is in accordance with good governance principles.
- Ensuring transparency through the publication of agendas and minutes of the WLUP Board on Modern.Gov
- Developing agreed projects in detail and undertaking any necessary feasibility studies
- Undertaking any required Environmental Impact Assessments or Public Sector Equality Duties

- Monitoring and evaluating the delivery of LUP projects and impact
- Submitting monitoring reports to Central Government, as required
- Receiving and Accounting for the LUP grant
- Engage with the WLUP Board regarding project changes
- Proactively consult the DLUHC representative on any potential changes to approved plans
- Ensure that all templates submitted to DLUHC are accurate and complete representations of current circumstances

5. Board Vacancies

- 5.1. **WLUP Board** - Vacancies occurring within the WLUP Board are for the identified organisations to make an appointment to in line with their own governance procedures. Where no such representation is provided, the Board will review the membership to decide whether alternative organisations or community representation are to be invited.
- 5.2. **Elected Members** – SMBC Full Council nominates Councillors and Cabinet Members to represent on the WLUP Board on an annual basis (Appointments to other Bodies). Where the appointed nominees for the WLUP Board does not represent the appropriate Town/wards for the funding programme, an additional elected member can express their interest, to ensure all Wards are covered. The Chair and Town Lead will make the decision should there be more than one elected member expressing interest for the same Ward. WLUP Board members will cast votes where a decision cannot be agreed.
- 5.3. The Town Lead Member is responsible for reporting progress back to Ward Members via Town Member Board Meetings.
- 5.4. **Young People’s Representatives** - Vacancies occurring in young people’s representation at WLUP Boards will be identified and appointed to via Sandwell Council Youth Service in consultation with the Chair of the WLUP Board, as appropriate.

6. Code of Conduct

- 6.1. All Members of the WLUP Board will sign the Councillor Code of Conduct which is based on the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles) and contained within Article 13 of the Council’s constitution.
- 6.2. Members of the WLUP Board will be required to declare and register any gifts and/ or hospitality which will be maintained by the Council.

7. Decision Making – WLUP Boards

- 7.1. The Council’s Principles of Decision Making will apply to the WLUP Board, as laid out in article 13 of the Council’s Constitution. ‘Elected Member’ is taken to refer to WLUP Board member: -

7.1.1. Article 13.02 Principles: -

- Proportionality (i.e. the action taken is proportionate to the desired outcome);
- Decisions are taken on the basis of due consultation and professional advice from officers (Decisions taken by elected members will be based on information provided in a written report prepared by the responsible officer/s);
- Respect for human rights and giving due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty;
- A presumption in favour of openness (Reports will only be considered in private where they contain exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) (see Part 4 Access to Information Rules – Rule 10);
- Clarity of aims and desired outcomes (The written reports submitted to elected members will contain a clear recommendation of the professional officer for every decision they are asked to take)

7.2. **Quorum** – the WLUP Board will be considered quorate with one quarter of voting members present.

7.3. **Voting** – any matter will be decided upon by a simple majority of those members present in the room and eligible to vote. Where a decision cannot be concluded by a vote, the Chair will have the final decision making authority.

7.4. **Confirmation of minutes** - The Chair presiding shall put the question that the minutes submitted to the meeting be approved as a correct record.

7.5. **Declarations of Interest**

7.5.1. Members shall be required to declare interests in accordance with any relevant statutory provisions and the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Part 5 of the Constitution.

7.5.2. Where a WLUP Board member has a disclosable pecuniary interest or pecuniary interest in the business of the authority he/ she must withdraw from the room or chamber where the meeting considering the business is being held unless the member has obtained a dispensation from the Council's Monitoring Officer.

7.5.3. Where a WLUP Board Member is nominated as the Lead Officer for a project and/ or is involved in project delivery, they may attend the WLUP Board discussion relating to the project in the capacity of providing and presenting information but they may not participate in any deliberations or decision by the WLUP Board concerning that project.

7.6. In the event that WLUP Board wishes to move to a vote, any matter will be decided upon by a simple majority of those members present in the room and eligible to vote.

7.7. The Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

8. Scrutiny

- 8.1. Scrutiny of the Levelling Up Partnership Programme will be provided by the Council's Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board and/or Economic, Skills, Environment and Transport Scrutiny Board, as required by scrutiny and through the critical friend challenge that will be provided by the WLUP Board.

9. Transparency and Accountability

9.1. WLUP Board Agendas and Minutes

- 9.1.1. The Council will publish WLUP meeting agendas on Modern.gov 5 clear days before the meeting.
- 9.1.2. Draft minutes of the WLUP Board meetings will be published within 10 clear working days or a meeting and
- 9.1.3. Approved minutes of the WLUP Board meetings will be published within 10 clear working days of formal approval.

9.2. Member profiles

- 9.2.1. Profiles of WLUP Board Members will be published on Modern.gov.uk

9.3. Conflicts of Interest

- 9.3.1. Members of the WLUP Board will be required to declare any conflicts of interest (commercial, actual and potential). This will be maintained by the council in a declaration of interest register which will be managed by Sandwell Council.
- 9.3.2. WLUP Board Members should take personal responsibility for declaring their interests before any decision is considered by the WLUP Board. These will be formally noted within the published minutes of meetings of the WLUP Board including action taken in response to any declared interest.
- 9.3.3. WLUP Board Members should take personal responsibility for declaring their interests prior to an item being discussed. These will be noted within the minutes including action taking in response to any declared interest. If any Member has any queries about their interests and the disclosure thereof, they should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer.

10. The Board's relationship with Sandwell Council

- 10.1. The Board will have sight and endorse Accountable Body decisions in the delivery of the Levelling Up Partnership Programme. Sandwell Council is the Accountable body for any LUP funding that is received, or any match funding received in relation to LUP projects.

- 10.2. These Terms of Reference do not change, replace, substitute for or amend in any way the statutory powers or duties or other responsibilities of any of the people or organisations represented on the WLUP Board.
- 10.3. The procurement policies of Sandwell Council will apply. Where external professional advice is required, consultants will be identified using the procurement policies of Sandwell Council and contracts will be entered into between Sandwell Council and the relevant organisation in accordance with Sandwell Councils policies and procedures including its contract procedure rules.
- 10.4. Where applicable, Sandwell Councils Cabinet will receive regular reports on progress of activities through regular performance monitoring.
- 10.5. Board Members shall make themselves available from time to time to meet Cabinet and / or Portfolio Holder and to attend meetings of the Council's Scrutiny Committee if invited.
- 10.6. The council's Data Protection Officer and the PMO will support the Board in dealing with any data protection questions. The councils framework can be found at Information Governance and Data Protection.

11. Membership

- 11.1. The Council has responsibility for establishing the WLUP Board for the development and implementation of the Sandwell Levelling Up Partnership.
- 11.2. Membership will be reviewed annually and seek to continue to be representative of a diverse range of sectors, skills and interests in Sandwell in order for the Sandwell LUP drawn on at all stages of the LUP implementation.
- 11.3. The updated membership will be reported to Cabinet at least on an annual basis to align with Annual appointments.
- 11.4. All Board members are expected to attend at least a minimum of 50% of the annual meetings held, unless exceptional circumstances which have been agreed by the Chair.
- 11.5. Advisors – Advisors are invited by Board Members and participate in the meetings but will have no voting rights or ability to make decisions on behalf of the Board.
- 11.6. S151 Officer – Sandwell Council is the Accountable Body for the LUP. The Council's S151 Officer or substitute will have a standing invite on the LUP Board to ensure compliance with all necessary financial regulations.
- 11.7. These terms of reference may be reviewed and modified at any time in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, Director of Law and Governance.

12. Scheme of Delegation

- 12.1. The Scheme of delegation in decision making is included as an annex to these Terms of Reference. It will be reviewed, and if necessary, updated, following receipt of Government LUP Grant other grant conditions.
- 12.2. A decision which is made in contravention of the process will be invalid based on non-compliance unless the WLUP Board has given prior approval for variation in the decision-making process.
- 12.3. Any financial decision must be signed off by Sandwell's S151 Officer as the Accountable Body. The Council's S151 Officer will ensure compliance with all necessary financial regulations, in order to protect the Accountable Body and ensure proper administration of all financial affairs.
- 12.4. The Chair of the WLUP Board can decide to convene a meeting where decisions need to be considered by the WLUP Board which does not fit within the timeframe of the scheduled meetings. Where possible, the standard notice period will apply for any such meeting.
- 12.5. Where a meeting cannot be convened, urgent decisions can be endorsed by the WLUP Board through a written procedure.
- 12.6. Only in the most exceptional circumstances might it be considered necessary and appropriate for a matter of strategic importance usually reserved to the Main Board to be decided through this procedure. This will apply where a project cannot continue without a decision being approved, therefore posing a significant risk to project deliverability. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - (a) Time limited reallocation of funding
 - (b) Changes to Heads of Terms / Grant Conditions
 - (c) Changes to Mandatory Indicators and financial profiles
- 12.7. Written/Urgent Procedure: -
 - 12.7.1. Following consideration by Director of Regeneration and Growth/S151, a report in the usual meeting format and including reasons for urgency, will be circulated to the Chair/Vice chair to consider whether, due to the urgent nature of the decision to be made, it is necessary and appropriate for the decision to be made before the next meeting.
 - 12.7.2. The Chair/Vice Chair may consult with Director of Regeneration and Growth /S151 or other officers to provide further information where required.
 - 12.7.3. Within 5 working days of the report being presented, the Chair/Vice Chair will inform whether the decision is endorsed on behalf of the Board.
 - 12.7.4. For transparency the report, reasons for urgency, and decision will be presented to the next Town Deal Board meeting.

13. Objections following Consultations

- 13.1. Project Leads will present any objections that have been received following consultation on Levelling up Partnership projects to the WLUP Board. The WLUP Board will consider the objections and alternative options prior to making a decision in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet member.
- 13.2. In the event that a decision cannot be agreed between WLUP Board and Cabinet member, a separate meeting will be held with the Leader, Cabinet Member, Chair of WLUP Board and Director of Regeneration and Growth to discuss/resolve difference of view.
- 13.3. The project will not proceed in the delivery phase until a decision has been made

ANNEX 1 WLUP Board Membership List

Voting Members
Independent Chair
Elected Members x4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cabinet Member representative - Town Lead Member - Deputy Town Lead Member - One Member from each Ward (Friar Park, Wednesbury North, Wednesbury South) not covered by Town Lead and Deputy Town Lead appointments
Business Community Representatives x1
Voluntary and Community Sector Representative x2 <i>To include Chair of the Friar Park Millennium Centre as one of the LUP projects</i>
Organisations in Wednesbury representing residents with protected characteristics and of different faiths x3
Public Sector Organisations x3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Homes England - West Midlands Police - TfWM
Young People's Representative x1
MPs x2 <i>MPs relevant to Wednesbury Town geography (Wednesbury North, Wednesbury South and Friar Park)</i>
Non-Voting Board Members
DLUHC Representative x1 <i>To be identified by DLUHC</i>
Accountable Body Representatives S151 Officer Director Regeneration & Growth Director Public Health Director Borough Economy Monitoring Officer Or their nominated deputies

ANNEX 2

Type of Variation	Scale of Variation	Requires LUP Board endorsement ?	Delegated Authority to approve	Approval required from DLUHC
Financial	A decrease/increase of grant funds to be drawn down by the project which is less than £250,000	Yes	Director of Regeneration & Growth in consultation with Cabinet Member and S151 Officer	TBC – dependent on grant conditions / DLUHC processes
	A decrease/increase of grant funds to be drawn down by the project which is greater than £250,000			
	Any decrease of match funding			
	An increase in the match funding cost of the project without impact to the agreed funding for the project, the outputs/ outcomes or project completion			
Time/ Schedule	Slippage of milestones with no effect on total grant, completion date, outputs/outcomes	No	LUP Programme Manager	
	Slippage of outcomes and/ or grant claim profile, requiring re-profiling across future financial years with no overall change to project	Yes	Director of Regeneration & Growth in consultation with S151 Officer	
Outcomes/Outputs	An increase in the outputs and outcomes of the project	No	LUP Programme Manager	
	Any decrease to outputs and outcomes of the project	Yes	Director of Regeneration & Growth, in consultation with S151 Officer and Cabinet Member	
	Any decrease to Local Measures	Yes	Director of Regeneration & Growth	
Other	Changes to project contact information, administrative errors and others which have no impact to approved outcomes, outputs or grant.	No	LUP Programme manager	

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Report to Cabinet

13 September 2023

Subject:	West Midlands Deeper Devolution Deal
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member – Regeneration and WMCA Councillor Peter Hughes
Director:	Director – Regeneration and Growth Tony McGovern
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Tony McGovern Tony_McGovern@sandwell.gov.uk

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to the West Midlands Deeper Devolution Deal as set out in this report and attached Appendices, which includes the in-principle award of the Bus Operator’s Grant as a Mayoral function.
- 1.2 That the Leader of the Council is authorised to vote in favour of the Deeper Devolution Deal when it is considered at the West Midlands Combined Authority Board.
- 1.3 That any views of Cabinet on the draft Governance Review and Scheme for the devolution of Bus Services Operator Grant (BSOG) are submitted to WMCA by Wednesday 27 September 2023.
- 1.4 That the Director of Regeneration and Growth, Director of Finance and Monitoring Officer are authorised to engage on the detailed implementation of the agreed elements of the Deeper Devolution Deal.
- 1.5 That further reports are received by Cabinet (and Council if appropriate) on specific issues relating to the detail of the Deeper Devolution Deal such as opt-outs and approval of the making of the Statutory Instruments following the receipt of a draft order for BSOG.



- 1.6 That the Director of Regeneration in consultation with the Leader of the Council, Monitoring Officer and Director Finance, undertakes such actions and exercises all necessary powers required to give effect to the Deeper Devolution Deal where it is considered expedient and necessary to do so.
- 1.7 That the financial benefits and risks as set out in Section 8 are noted.

2. Reasons for Recommendations

2.1 The Deeper Devolution Deal provides additional funding to the West Midlands Region and some additional powers to make local rather than national decisions.

2.2 The additional funding at high level can be summarised as follows:

Fund	Value	New Money
Growth Zones	c.£0.5bn (minimum)	Yes
Business Rates Retention	c.£450m	Difficult to Assess
Affordable Housing Programme	£200-400m	Yes
Single Regen' Fund	£100m	Yes
Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension	£60m	Yes
Smart City Region	£10m	Yes
Air Quality Sensors	£0.5m	Yes
Digital Devices	£4.0m	Yes
Industrial Decarb	£10.5m	Yes
Natural Environment	£1m	Yes
Cultural Infrastructure Fund	£5m	Yes

2.3 The benefits that could flow from this Deeper Devolution Deal for residents and businesses in Sandwell include the following:

A. Greater certainty over retaining business rates growth locally.

B. Growth Incentives arising from the Sandwell Levelling Up Zone from Wednesbury to Tipton based around the new Metro extension.



- C. Further investment in the Wednesbury to Brierly Hill Metro extension so that Sandwell residents can access employment opportunities more easily.
- D. Higher level of investment in affordable homes as Sandwell is only meeting 50% of the social housing need in the Borough.
- E. Housing regeneration funding for the derelict Chances Glassworks site that has important heritage monuments on site (expression of interest submitted for £20.8m gap funding) and to acquire and remediate brownfield land around the new Midland Metropolitan Hospital in Smethwick to facilitate new homes.
- F. Further funding to combat digital exclusion in the Borough – Sandwell has one of the highest levels of digital exclusion in the Region.
- G. Funding to support business to decarbonise their operations as part of the commitment to Net Zero.
- H. Investment in public realm technology through Smart sensors that could assist Sandwell in multiple ways.
- I. The devolution of the Bus Service Operators Grant opens an opportunity to transition to low carbon / EV buses in Sandwell – currently there is very little low carbon buses in the Borough despite Sandwell having the poorest air quality in the West Midlands region.
- J. Funding to improve the Cultural Offer in Sandwell which is a priority area for Arts Council funding due to low spend baseline on cultural facilities.

2.4 A detailed audit trail of benefits arising from Deeper Devolution Deal for Sandwell residents and businesses will be developed in conjunction with the West Midlands Combined Authority linked to the Implementation Plan. Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council will need to work proactively with the Combined Authority and a wide range of local and regional stakeholders to maximise the benefits from this Deeper Devolution Deal.



3. Background on West Midlands Deeper Devolution Deal

- 3.1 The West Midlands and Greater Manchester Combined Authorities were identified in the Government's Levelling Up White Paper published on 2 August 2022 as the two areas for significant devolution of powers and resources as part of a Trailblazer Devolution Deal, now known as the Deeper Devolution Deal (DDDD). Detailed work and negotiations has been in progress over the last year since then with West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) setting up 20 Workstreams to identify proposals to be included in the DDD. There has also been continuous dialogue between WMCA officers and civil servants. Senior Local Authority (LA) officers and WMCA officers have been meeting very regularly to review the issues and in particular, to emphasise that whilst devolution from Government to WMCA is important, it is just as important that there is Double Devolution from WMCA to LA's on appropriate matters. There is also a Devolution Strategy Group which consists of all eight Chief Executive Officers of LA's and WMCA and regular briefings have been provided to Mayor and Leaders during this period to ensure political input into the negotiations on specific matters.
- 3.2 The outcome of these negotiations resulted in a final deal proposal from Government in March 2023. Whilst the offer on the table from Government does not meet the original ambitions of the WMCA and LA's, it is still a deal worth taking with potentially wide-ranging benefits.
- 3.3 On 10 March 2023 at the Mayor and Portfolio Leaders' (MPL) Group, local authority Leaders agreed in principle to the trailblazer deeper devolution deal (the deal) announced at Spring Budget. MPL does not have formal status within the WM Combined Authority's governance structure, so it was always recognised that there would need to be a formal process to ratify the deal at a later point. This formal decision has been scheduled for WMCA Board on 13th October 2023. A two-thirds majority decision is required at WMCA Board to ratify the deal. Before Leaders vote on the ratification of the deal at WMCA Board, each is engaging with their own governance structures on deal ratification.
- 3.4 Since MPL on 10 March, a collective decision was taken at WMCA Board **not to pursue** the statutory process to provide WMCA with the 'health improvement duty' offered through the deal. The potential health








improvement duty, therefore, does not form part of the deal that local authorities are being asked to ratify.

- 3.5 The decision to submit the Governance Review and Scheme to the Secretary of State will require a unanimous decision of all the Constituent Authority members under the terms of the Constitution.
- 3.6 Following the receipt of a draft Statutory Order each of the Constituent Councils will be asked to give formal consent to the making of the Order.
- 3.7 After the deal is ratified at WMCA Board in October, there will be further decisions for local authorities on key workstreams. The most important of these are:
 - A. The Single Settlement: WMCA officers, with support from local authority senior officers and Finance Directors, are working collaboratively to prepare for negotiations with Treasury and DLUHC to agree a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on the design of the single settlement. The negotiations on the MoU are unlikely to have concluded before October Board, however there will be a decision-point at a future WMCA Board to seek local authority agreement to the MoU; and
 - B. 10-year business rate retention. It is possible that insufficient detail on the workings of the 10-year business rate retention scheme offered through the deal will be available for October Board. If this is the case, there will be a further decision-point at a future WMCA Board to seek local authority approval to enter this arrangement.
- 3.8 WMCA Board will be engaged in other decisions on deal implementation; the accompanying implementation plan (Annex B) highlights a number of these instances. This is additional to the extensive engagement underway or scheduled across the region between Combined Authority and LA officers on the more detailed aspects of deal implementation.
- 3.9 This means there will be further decision-points for local authorities after the ratification decision at WMCA Board in October, particularly (but not exclusively) on the funding and financial elements of the deal.



4. How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>The Best Start in Life for Children and Young People</p> <p>Opportunities for children and young people will be strengthened through the delivery of new homes in the Borough, better transport connectivity via the Metro extension and support to address digital exclusion for families.</p>
	<p>People Live Well and Age Well</p> <p>Opportunities for people to live and age well through more localised bus services, new homes, and opportunities for digital connectivity.</p>
	<p>Strong Resilient Communities</p> <p>The housing and regeneration funding provides an opportunity to develop a place-based approach in the Borough that supports the needs of specific communities.</p>
	<p>Quality Homes in Thriving Neighbourhoods</p> <p>The commitments in the deal provide a mixture of new funding streams of a value of £200-400m Affordable Housing Programme for the region which provides the opportunity for the delivery of an increased number of new and quality homes in the Borough.</p>
	<p>A Strong and Inclusive Economy</p> <p>The Deal provides a more stable arrangement for retaining business rates growth in the Borough to support the delivery of local services. The potential value of the deal to the region is, to a large extent, influenced by the region's ability to establish Growth Zones (formerly known as 'Levelling Up Zones') as intended, and the retained revenue which will flow back to local authorities through the business rates system.</p>





A Connected and Accessible Sandwell

New monies of £60m for the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension plus the benefits that should arise by local decision making and allocation of the Bus Service Operators Grant will make the Borough more connected in conjunction with the £168m CRSTS transport investment over the period 2022 – 2027 already secured in principle.

5. Context and Key Issues

5.1 The deal contains over 190 commitments of different types. These include:

- A. Commitments to provide new funds to the Combined Authority and its constituent authorities, such as for housing and regeneration.
- B. Commitments to increase flexibility and local decision-making power over existing and future funds, particularly though the single settlement.
- C. Commitments to new partnerships and co-working with government to design and deliver programmes, such as employment support, culture and heritage and working with Great British Railways; and
- D. Commitments to undertake further work with government on regional priorities, including transport innovation.

Taken together, the deal represents a significant step forward for the region's multi-year financial stability, particularly over local government revenue retention. This will help to reduce financial risks, de-risk investment decisions, provide new funding to deliver affordable housing, regeneration and transport schemes and give the region an influential role in shaping government policy in line with our shared inclusive growth agenda. The detail of the Devolution Deal is set out in the attached Appendix documents to this report.

5.2 At MPL on 10 March 2023, there are a number of commitments in the deal where even if the requisite number of local authorities ratify the deal at October WMCA Board, individual local authorities will still be able to opt out of these functions being exercised in their areas. These are as follows:



- A. Growth Zones
- B. Local area energy planning
- C. High street rental auctions

Once the detail is fully available on these issues, Cabinet will consider in future whether to opt in or out of these.

6. Overview of the Deeper Devolution Deal

- 6.1 The process to commence a 'Trailblazer Devolution Deal' for the West Midlands and for Greater Manchester was announced as part of the Levelling Up White Paper on 2 February 2022.
- 6.2 Following this, the WMCA, working with constituent authorities, instituted a complex programme with multiple workstreams to develop proposals for the deal, which were taken through various working groups and engagement with the constituent authorities and other partners such as the Office for the Police & Crime Commissioner. Alongside were ongoing negotiations with government. The constituent authorities were involved at various levels including Chief Executives, Finance Directors, the Senior Local Authority Officers Group, forums with subject leads (for example transport or public health), and the political leadership including the Met Leaders and Portfolios holders and WMCA Board.
- 6.3 The devolution deal was agreed in principle by the Mayor and Portfolio Leaders on 10 March 2023 and announced in the Chancellor's Budget on 15 March (with the Trailblazer Devolution Deal rebadged as the Deeper Devolution Deal). The health duty provisions in the deal were not agreed in-principle on 10 March and it was determined that these would be subject to further assessment and discussion between the constituent authorities and WMCA and would come back to a future meeting.
- 6.4 *Implementation:* Following the publication of the deal, the in-principle agreement (bar the health duty) was reaffirmed by the Mayor and Portfolio Leaders alongside the need for a more detailed implementation plan. This has been developed over the past months and is an ongoing live process.
- 6.5 The deal has around 190 paragraphs with different elements and activity mostly enhancing the existing functions of the WMCA, setting up new partnerships and unlocking around £1.5bn of new funds for the region. Almost all elements require further work to determine how they will be



implemented (hence the implementation plan), including double devolution and local delivery arrangements. Some elements require further negotiation with government, with the deal setting a headline aim and the detailed policy requiring further in-depth discussion and agreement.

6.6 The implementation is guided by a set of principles:

- A. The most should be made of every commitment in the deal, to derive as much value from the deal commitments ahead of the next general election and spending review.
- B. Local and regional engagement and collaboration is maximised through the implementation process, ensuring that delivery is driven at the most effective level with reporting on progress.
- C. Activity in different workstreams is integrated within mainstream work programmes so that devolved powers become business-as-usual for regional partners.
- D. A clear focus is retained on the need for more inclusive growth in the region in all aspects of deal implementation.

6.7 The deal elements are being monitored and progressed by the WMCA through a detailed 'tracker system'. In more general terms, the implementation plan is being structured around more than 20 different workstreams and looking at:

- A. How is implementation or further negotiations being conducted for the workstream i.e. which WMCA structure / group / local authority leads are determining this.
- B. How it is envisaged that the deal provisions will be administered, delivered, and decided upon (where this is needed).
- C. Key milestones and deliverables.
- D. Outstanding issues and questions.
- E. The implementation plan will also look at what the key outputs and outcomes that the deal elements should secure.



6.8 Deal elements: More significant areas of the deal include:

- A. Levelling Up Zones (aka Growth Zones) provision to establish up to six Levelling Up Zones with business rate growth retention for 25 years to fund infrastructure and other priorities.
- B. Up to £400m affordable homes funding to 2026 and £100m brownfield regeneration funding.
- C. Investment Zones - these were not technically part of the deal but were announced at the same time and are applicable to other Mayoral Combined Authority areas. The LUZ/IZ process is being developed in an interconnected way as they both cover growth and tax incentives for specific sites in the West Midlands.
- D. Business rate retention for 10 years.
- E. Measures to tackle digital exclusion including greater influence over high-speed broadband investment across the region and a £4 million fund for devices and data to get more people online.
- F. Greater local responsibility for developing and delivering careers advice and a partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions to target employment support.
- G. Devolution of the bus service operators grant and a new partnership with Great British Railways to offer greater local oversight and control of public transport services.
- H. The UK's first formally designated transport sandbox to deliver cleaner and safer vehicles and innovative transport services and supporting new jobs and investment.
- I. Single departmental-style settlement for the WMCA from 2025 at the next spending providing multi-year period covering five pillars: local growth & place; local transport; housing and regeneration; adult skills; and retrofit. The single settlement corresponds with new accountability arrangements and a single outcomes framework.



J. Within the single settlement is a commitment to devolve retrofit funding from 2025, to allow the WMCA, and partners, to set priorities for investment in insulation and green energy for homes.

- 6.9 *Single settlement and place plans:* The single settlement is the most significant reform with wide implications including how the WMCA may operate ahead. There are currently multiple sources of funding for the WMCA (and for local authorities) that are secured via competitive bids and with a range of requirements and criteria to follow. The idea of the single settlement is that instead of these arrangements there would be pillars or functions, with funding provided by government within these through a departmental-style, multi-year settlement. This should afford greater flexibility and therefore benefit and give certainty of funding. In turn, an outcomes framework would be agreed. The single settlement is part of a wider set of funding arrangements through the DDD. The emerging idea is for 'place plans' - plans draw up by local authorities including for growth corridors and key regeneration areas where funding can be applied in a more co-ordinated way including the single settlement. Both the form and operation of the single settlement and the place plans will require detailed work ahead and co-creation between the WMCA and constituent authorities. A Memorandum of Understanding on the single settlement is set to be agreed with government in January 2024.
- 6.10 *Affordable Homes Funding and Brownfield Regeneration Funding:* £100m Single Regeneration Fund will be deployed flexibly across the region, and for the first time, brownfield land funding will support commercial, employment land and mixed-use development, as well as delivering 4,000 homes in the region.
- 6.11 The commitment of up to £400m Affordable Housing Programme (AHP) funding to the region, and greater influence for the WMCA over affordable housing delivery and strategy acts a precursor to full devolution of the AHP, and additional extra funding to the region from 2026. This is the first time this has happened outside Greater London. The delivery of the AHP will be dependent on the appetite from providers and the development of joint pipeline and delivery plan, developed as part of the new Strategic Place Partnership as part of the deal. The Strategic Place Partnership will be established between Homes England and WMCA to support the WMCA on housing supply, investment, and urban regeneration and to bring new housing supply and regeneration



sites forward. The WMCA will work collaboratively with Homes England, constituent local authorities, and local delivery partners to develop a joint pipeline and delivery plan.

- 6.12 Should the concept of 'place plans' be agreed, the AHP and brownfield funding would likely form part of the suite of funding to underpin the plans.
- 6.13 *Levelling Up Zones/Investment zones*: LUZs and the IZs have been following an accelerated timetable given the government desire to move forward with IZs as quickly as possible. They are technically outside of the DDD and are being taken forward in other Mayoral Combined Authority Areas across the country too.
- 6.14 *Accountability*: A streamlined, overarching single accountability framework coordinated by DLHUC rather than multiple frameworks administered by different government departments is being developed. This will include the data sets used to monitor and chart outcomes. The WMCA will be held to account for delivering outcomes using the settlement funding and areas associated with devolved functions set out in the DDD and previous devolution deals.
- 6.15 The deal made provision for enhanced accountability arrangements. The WMCA governance team is looking at these and engaging with the WMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee members with any changes brought to the WMCA Board for approval.
- 6.16 Additional scrutiny involves the Mayor and portfolio leads attending a full council meeting each year for each constituent council, if requested by the council, or if a Parliamentary select committee invites attendance. There will also be 'Mayor's question time', where the Mayor visits all parts of the region to take questions from the public, with an independent chair. The portfolio holders will present reports to the WMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the WMCA will arrange public, broadcasted sessions where Members of Parliament representing West Midlands parliamentary constituencies will be able to scrutinise the Mayor and other portfolio leads.
- 6.17 The government is set to publish a scrutiny protocol and the WMCA has committed to reviewing the scrutiny arrangements and reporting on them as part of the implementation plan. This will work through the details of



the arrangements and implications such as Parliamentary scrutiny of the WMCA's work and in turn the relationship with the constituent local authorities and their scrutiny arrangements and constitutional requirements.

- 6.18 The ability for Mayoral Combined Authorities to financially remunerate their Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Audit Committee members is being taken through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. A WMCA Board paper on 21 July 2023 outlines the payments that would be available should the legislation be passed. *Health duty removal from the deal*: Following the publication of the DDD, and as agreed by the Met Leaders and Mayor, further discussions took place on the potential adoption of the WMCA public health duties within the deal. The decision was that these duties were not to be pursued and these are now no longer part of the deal.
- 6.19 *Bus service operators grant (BSOG) devolution and scheme and governance review*: The devolution of the BSOG to the WMCA is considered by the WMCA to be a public authority function, which can be dealt with under section 105B of the Local Democracy, Economic and Construction Act 2009 but requires a scheme, governance review and the consent of the constituent authorities to the laying of the order by government. The scheme and governance review are attached to this paper. An in-principle agreement of the devolution of the BSOG is part of this paper and further formal agreement will be needed after the WMCA Board in October, which will be considering this.
- 6.20 Warwickshire: There has been a proposal for Warwickshire to potentially join the WMCA as a constituent member. If Warwickshire had become a constituent member it would have led to implications for the DDD in relation to the new funding and powers. However, given the proposal is not moving forward the implications are no longer live considerations.
- 6.21 Timetable: The WMCA is developing a detailed timetable on the deal elements. The latest draft is included as appendix.



7. Alternative Options

- 7.1 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council could decide not to support the final Devolution Deal at WMCA Board on 13th October 2023. However, this alternative option is not recommended as the Council would not be able to benefit from significant financial commitments from Government as set out in the Deal and this could lose some of the confidence that Government Ministers and officials have in the West Midlands and key local and regional partners. There are no specific reasons why Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council should consider this alternative option.

8. Implications

- 8.1 The deal is a non-statutory agreement between different Government departments and WMCA and its constituent authorities. Therefore, if the necessary two-thirds agreement at Board to ratify the deal is not obtained, the consequences are at the discretion of the SoS for DLUHC. Should the necessary agreement not be obtained, there is a risk that all or some of the commitments in the deal, and their benefits to the region, may be withdrawn or modified. There is recent precedent for this outcome in other parts of England that are in the process of seeking (non-deeper) devolution deals.
- 8.2 The financial implications of the DDD as a whole are still subject to further discussion and analysis, and specific elements, such as the Single Settlement, will require a further decision-making process. At this stage it is not anticipated that any elements of the DDD will bring any negative financial impact for the Council. The commitment to 10-year Business Rates Retention across the region is estimated to be worth £450m over the period and will drive confidence in public sector borrowing, de-risk investment modelling and accelerate delivery. It will also remove the uncertainty of the current pilot scheme, boosting public financial sustainability and local authority spending power. However, it should be noted that the deal text does refer to this being subject to future Spending Reviews.
- 8.3 Through its 'Single Settlement', the Government commits to giving WMCA single capital and revenue funding certainty, equivalent to government departments – increasing regional autonomy and the ability to prioritise decisions locally in the areas of:



- local growth and place
- local transport
- housing and regeneration
- adult skills
- housing retrofit

8.4 These settlements will cover an entire spending review period. In addition, Government has committed to a £25m capital fund to support business decarbonisation, culture, environmental programmes, and the West Midlands' Smart City Region initiative.

<p>Resources:</p>	<p>There are no direct financial implications that arise through this report. Any financial implications flowing from elements of the DDD will be reported to and approved through the governance structures of the WMCA and where necessary via the Cabinets of constituent authorities. This will form part of the implementation plan.</p> <p>The Single Settlement is the element of DDD with potentially wide funding implications, but this requires further detailed work which is ongoing.</p> <p>The commitment to 10-year Business Rates Retention is the continuation of the current pilot arrangement whereby all the business rates growth generated is retained locally. This would mitigate a significant risk in the Council's current Medium-Term Financial Strategy, although the DDD text does state that this is still subject to future Spending Reviews.</p>
<p>Legal and Governance:</p>	<p>Sandwell Council is one of seven constituent metropolitan local authority members of the West Midlands Combined Authority. Each local authority member (including Sandwell) has two votes, and the Metro Mayor has one, for a total of 15 votes on the Board.</p> <p>The WMCA advice is that the new powers in relation to the Bus Service Operators Grant are considered to be public authority functions, which can be dealt with under section 105B of the Local Democracy,</p>



	<p>Economic and Construction Act 2009 but require a scheme, governance review and the consent of the Constituent Authorities to the laying of the order by the government. An in-principle agreement of the devolution of the BSOG is part of this report and further formal agreement will be needed after the WMCA Board in October, which will be considering this.</p>
Risk:	<p>There are significant risks relating to the Devolution Deal – especially in relation to the further detail relating to implementation of the Deal and the risk that Government changes some of the parameters of the Deal. There is also a risk that Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council does not realise the full benefits of the Devolution Deal due to capacity and other priorities.</p>
Equality:	<p>The proposed interventions are in development stage. Through the project development process, consideration will be given to the impact on and improvements that can be made for residents with protected characteristics. Equality Impact screenings and EqlAs will be conducted, as appropriate.</p> <p>The WMCA advice is that the development of the DDD has been undertaken with reference to an equalities lens and reflects a range of WMCA goals and commitments including to inclusive growth. WMCA officers have reviewed provisions and recommended alternative approaches to, or reinforcement of key aspects, which were incorporated. Ahead, through the implementation of the deal, there will an opportunity to further assess DDD elements and their delivery in relation to equalities.</p>
Health and Wellbeing:	<p>One of the underpinning objectives of Regeneration is to ‘level up’ and reduce inequalities. Job growth and</p>



	transport connectivity should improve health and wellbeing
Social Value:	Any investment from the Devolution Deal into Sandwell needs to create local employment opportunities and local spend so that the local SME supply chain can benefit from new homes and transport connectivity.
Climate Change:	The funding for industrial decarbonisation will contribute to the net zero agenda. Housing and regeneration funding will need to deliver low carbon homes.
Corporate Parenting:	The Devolution Deal should create opportunities for the LA to deliver its responsibilities as a Corporate Parent by providing apprenticeship opportunities, digital devices, and an increase in the supply of affordable homes for care leavers.

9. Appendices

Appendix 1A - Governance Review– a requirement of the statutory process needed to implement the devolution of the Bus Service Operator Grant commitment in the deal.

Appendix 1B – Scheme – a requirement of the statutory process needed to implement the devolution of the Bus Service Operator Grant commitment in the deal.

Appendix 2 – Detailed Implementation Plan with thematic summaries.

Appendix 3 – DDD Implementation Plan

10. Background Papers

WM Devolution Deal Agreement with Government.



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APPENDIX 1A

West Midlands Combined Authority Draft Governance Review

The Transfer of functions in relation to Bus Service Operator's Grant under section 154 (1) of the Transport Act 2000 to WMCA as a Mayoral function

The Transfer of functions in relation to Bus Service Operator's Grant under section 154 (3) of the Transport Act 2000 to WMCA

Proposal for the Making of an Order under sections 105A of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 as amended by the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016

Introduction

This report has been prepared by the West Midlands Combined Authority in consultation with the Leaders of Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton Local Authorities. The report sets out the findings of the governance review undertaken across the whole geography of the WMCA area in accordance with section 111 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 as amended by the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 (the 2009 Act) to consider how the transfer of the delivery of Bus Service Operators Grants (BSOG) from the Secretary of State to WMCA as a Mayoral function would impact on the effectiveness of service delivery. As outlined in the deal, this is an administrative function to be exercised by the Mayor, with decisions from WMCA Board inputting into the policy of allocation taken by a two-thirds majority subject to consultation on National reforms.

The Governance Review has been undertaken as part of the overall review of functions which was carried out by WMCA to support the Trailblazer Devolution Deal negotiated between the WMCA and the Government.

Executive Summary

The West Midlands has been at the forefront of devolution in England. In November 2015, the government and WMCA agreed an ambitious devolution deal, including a directly elected mayor and powers to improve transport, skills, housing and to drive growth in the region. In 2017, devolution was deepened, and new funding agreed, including significant further investment in transport. The West Midlands has seized these opportunities, demonstrating what local leaders can achieve when empowered with the tools they need. Local leaders have increased investment in transport from £38 million in 2016/17 to £363 million in 2021/22, pioneered new approaches to brownfield development and net zero homes and delivered the c. £130 million Adult Education Budget, securing an over 10% increase in 2020 alone in the portion of the population with Level 3 skills.

The West Midlands is now embarking on a new phase by bringing greater investment, control over investment and powers to the region.

The new deal is estimated to be worth in the region of £1.5bn and it is hoped that this will reboot the economy, provide vital housing, jobs and skills, bolster our

existing strengths in transport and Smart City Region innovation, and drive our net zero ambitions. The deal looks to create a more prosperous and better-connected West Midlands which is fairer, greener and healthier.

In February 2022, Government announced, in its Levelling Up White Paper, new devolution deals for the West Midlands, along with Greater Manchester. Since then, the region and its partners have been working closely with Government to secure the best deal for the region, its economy and its communities.

The Deal recognises that the WMCA currently lacks the key levers and flexibility to 'unleash the potential of devolution' and goes on to address this through a range of new powers, responsibilities and resources.

WMCA Leaders agree that in order to fulfil local economic priorities and provide the best services for the citizens of the West Midlands, there is a need to draw down significant additional powers and funding from the Government through a deeper devolution deal. There is consensus that powers and funding should sit at the lowest feasible level of governance and that they should be drawn down from government and not drawn up from local authorities.

The WMCA has therefore commissioned this Governance Review to look at whether transferring responsibility for the proposed new functions - the distribution of Bus Service Operator's Grant (BSOG) to WMCA and subject to national reform, policy making powers in relation to BSOG allocation - is likely to improve the delivery of the service in the WMCA area.

This Review seeks to evidence how the deal will deliver significant new responsibilities and investment that will benefit our communities and businesses across the region.

When referring to WMCA as the decision-making body in this document, it means the WMCA Board made up of those members appointed by the seven constituent councils, the ten Non- Constituent Councils and the Mayor, taking decisions in accordance with statutory voting rights.

Section 1: Summary of the Wider Deal

This section sets out the wider deal including those non-statutory powers that do not require formal consultation, but which provide the wider context for the deeper devolution deal.

Governance and Accountability

The WMCA will be held accountable through the mechanisms set out in the Local Government Accountability Framework, English Devolution Accountability Framework and enhanced scrutiny measures. The Mayor and WMCA will be expected to present to Parliamentary Select Committees as requested, in conjunction with Mayor's Question Time and quarterly engagement with West Midlands MPs.

Administration of the Bus Service Operators Grant would be treated as a part of the normal business operations of the Combined Authority and would be subject to the same accounting, auditing and transparency requirements as other income and expenditure.

Fiscal Devolution, Funding and the Single Settlement

The commitment to 10-year Business Rates Retention across the region is estimated to be worth £450m over the period and will drive confidence in public sector borrowing, de-risk investment modelling and accelerate delivery. It will also remove the uncertainty of the current pilot scheme, boosting public financial sustainability and local authority spending power.

Through its 'Single Settlement', the Government commits to giving WMCA single capital and revenue funding certainty, equivalent to government departments – increasing regional autonomy and the ability to prioritise decisions locally in the areas of:

- local growth and place
- local transport
- housing and regeneration
- adult skills
- housing retrofit

These settlements will cover an entire spending review period.

In addition, Government has committed to a £25m capital fund to support business decarbonisation, culture, environmental programmes and the West Midlands' Smart City Region initiative.

Transport

Building on the West Midlands' strengths in transport innovation, as the country's first future transport zone, and its close partnership working with Government, the Deeper Devolution Deal provides:

- Devolution of the Bus Service Operators Grant to improve services and incentivise net zero transition;
- A pioneering Local Transport Plan approach which embeds 'quantifying carbon reductions' (QCR);
- Leading a collaborative research and learning programme through an 'influencing transport lab' (ITL);
- Establish the UK's first transport sandbox to test new innovations and inform national policy, while boosting global investment and cluster growth;

- Closer partnership with Great British Railways to deliver a rail service closer to the standards of London;
- Additional £60m to Wednesbury-Brierley Hill Metro extension
- Supporting development of the region's ambitious Very Light Railway scheme in Coventry.

Housing, Land and Regeneration

A £100m Single Regeneration Fund will be deployed flexibly across the region, and for the first time, brownfield land funding will support commercial, employment land and mixed-use development, as well as delivering 4,000 homes.

The commitment of up to £400m Affordable Housing Programme ('AHP') funding to the region, and greater influence over affordable housing delivery and strategy acts a precursor to full devolution of the AHP, worth billions of pounds in funding, to the region from 2026, this is the first time this has happened outside Greater London.

The WMCA will be involved in decisions on major UK government land disposals and reconfiguration, this will help in driving regeneration and unlocking private investment through repurposing and redeveloping publicly owned land.

The region will also be able to designate 'Levelling Up Zones': priority areas that would benefit from enhanced and targeted fiscal measures. These 'growth zones' will attract 25 year Business Rates Retention (with no reset).

Skills and Employment Support

Further areas of post-19 education and skills will be devolved to WMCA along with greater oversight of post-16 technical education and skills, and careers, including a crucial role to ensure the local skills system responds to the Local Skills Improvement Plan ('LSIP'). This will include, from the next Spending Review, greater devolution of non-apprenticeship adult skills functions and funding, and greater freedoms around Free Courses for Jobs and Bootcamps. WMCA will also become the 'central convenor' for careers advice in the region, working closely with Government to ensure provision meets the economic needs of the West Midlands.

Alongside establishing a Regional Labour Market Partnership Board, WMCA will be able to co-design contracted employment support programmes with DWP to ensure they are the aspirations of the region, supported by enhanced data-sharing agreements and in the longer term may commission such services on behalf of the DWP.

Business Productivity and Innovation

WMCA will adopt a new role in integrating and promoting business support services across the region, this will be powered by a new Strategic Productivity Partnership with departments across Government, greater involvement in the governance of the

British Business Bank's UK funds, and collaboration with the UK Investment Bank on commercial arrangements for infrastructure finance.

Building on the West Midlands' participation in the £100m Accelerator funding, through a Strategic Innovation Partnership WMCA will be able to present regional innovation opportunities to inform UKRI's future funding strategies. This will include working collaboratively to bolster regional R&D growth and pilot new initiatives, such as the UK Further Education Innovation Fund, place-based knowledge transfer programmes, and public procurement flexibilities.

Trade and Investment

The Department for Business and Trade ('DBT') will recognise the West Midlands Growth Company as the lead agency for investment in the region and work with them to develop a WM International Strategy, enhance data sharing routes and undertake a review of key account management with the region's major employers.

DBT will also support WMCA to boost West Midlands' presence in trade missions and dedicate support from the UK Export Academy to increase trade opportunities.

Net Zero and Environment

From 2025, Government will pilot with the West Midlands the devolution of housing retrofit funding. This will remove uncertainty and inefficiencies in the existing funding system and inform future models for Government net zero funding.

There is recognition of the region's involvement in wider energy system management and planning, and responsibility for heat zone designation, energy efficiency advice and attracting private sector finance. In addition, funding from the £25m capital pot is anticipated for industrial decarbonisation programmes for regional businesses, natural environment finance models and air quality monitors to support the region's wider environment and net zero ambitions.

Digital and Data

The Department of Science and Technology ('DSIT') will work proactively with WMCA through a Digital Infrastructure Leadership Group to accelerate broadband roll-out and connectivity, and through a £4m fund, provide 20,000 devices to boost digital inclusion.

Government will agree a new Data Partnership with WMCA, which will streamline WMCA's negotiations with individual government departments over access to specific datasets and support timely access to data particularly around: skills, careers and labour markets; business support, trade and investment; and energy and climate resilience.

Alongside this, Government will work with WMCA and its public body partners across the region to improve routes for data-sharing to enable WMCA to undertake regional analysis of data to better inform strategic decision-making locally.

Culture, Social Economy and Tourism

To maximise the Commonwealth Games Legacy Fund, a new Regional Culture and Heritage Framework will seek to align and maximise funding from arm's length bodies, including opportunities for co-investment and greater collaboration. Local authorities will be closely involved in the development of the Framework and continue to engage directly with funding bodies.

Recognising WMCA's commitment to double the size of the social economy, Government will work with the Combined Authority to develop a pioneering Social Economy Accelerator Programme and Growth Fund.

DCMS and Visit England will work with WMCA and WMGC to create England's second Destination Development Partnership pilot and the associated merits of establishing WMGC as a Local Visitor Economy Partnership ('LVEP').

Section 2: Purpose of the review

The purpose of this governance review, undertaken in accordance with Section 111 of the 2009 Act is to look at the exercise of statutory functions in the West Midlands with a view to deciding whether the new function contained in the deal would be likely to

- Improve the exercise of statutory functions in the area of the WMCA;
- Secure more effective and convenient local government for the area; and
- Reflect the identities and interests of our local communities

If the Review demonstrates that transfer of the new function to WMCA would improve service delivery, the WMCA will prepare and publish a scheme with the new function and changed constitutional arrangements. Under section 105B of the 2009 Act, the review needs to demonstrate that the exercise of the power to make an Order under section 105A in the West Midlands area would be likely to improve the exercise of statutory functions in relation to the West Midlands area.

Given that the implementation for the new function will be under Section 105A of the 2009 Act, a public consultation will not be required. The Secretary of State will be provided with a copy of the agreed scheme and governance review and will need to consider whether a new order should be made under the 2009 Act to provide the WMCA with the new function suggested by the deal.

Only the new powers and duties contained within the deal require consideration as part of the statutory process. However, in order to provide the context within which these powers and duties will be exercised, a summary of all the proposals, has been included. The full Deal text can be accessed here [West Midlands Combined Authority: "Trailblazer" deeper devolution deal - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444444/West_Midlands_Combined_Authority_-_Trailblazer_deeper_devolution_deal_-_GOV.UK.pdf)

The new function requiring agreement under the requirements of the 2009 Act relates to the paying of the **Bus Service Operators Grant**. Under sections 154 (1) and 154 (3) of the Transport Act 2000

Background

Commercial Bus Service Operator's Grant (BSOG) is existing funding which Government currently pays directly to operators. BSOG is directly linked to bus fuel consumption, and this can undermine environmental objectives, with a reduced incentive on operators to invest in more zero emission buses. Circa £26m per annum was paid to bus operators across the WMCA area (pre-pandemic).

With a unique bus market, with one commercial operator operating over 95% of the West Midlands bus network, ensuring that value for money is achieved locally from public subsidy and planning an effective recovery for bus services post pandemic is difficult. This has been further exacerbated by a reduction in local bus market competition, with five local bus operators ceasing operations since March 2020, and ongoing bus industry pressures such as driver shortages, wage, and fuel cost inflation. The WMCA needs new levers to incentivise and influence the direction and navigation of a modern and responsive bus network but importantly to stimulate private sector competition back into our bus market.

Proposal

Subject to national reform, and through greater local control and design of policy, the WMCA would look to incentivise bus operators to use the grant to ensure investment in bus services aligns with WMCA policy outcomes. WMCA priorities for BSOG would seek to target: -

- Incentivising greener vehicle fleet investment and maximising our position as the UK investment leader in decarbonising bus fleets. Further boosting over £150m of fleet investment between public and private partners.
- Incentivising and working with private bus operators to expand bus services into areas of poor accessibility. This would place greater focus on where bus route mileage is delivered, compared to the current approach focused on total quantum. This would help to tackle the issue of 'overbussing' on certain routes to maintain a dominate commercial position at the expensive of more marginal, socially beneficial services, thus helping to deliver greater benefits with the same level of public funding.

The WMCA is directly managing two additional bus support funding grants, which are Network Stability Fund and Network Planning Fund (Bus Recovery Grant extension). The local management of this grant (on behalf of DfT) has delivered a stable bus network throughout 2022, supporting the most successful Commonwealth Games ever, and allowed for close working with bus operators to plan and improves services from January 2023.

Administering the Bus Service Operators Grant will support WMCA early engagement with bus operators in the West Midlands, ahead of the further devolution of powers in relation to policy and BSOG. This may mitigate against unpredictable and potentially disruptive market behaviour and may act to encourage high levels of professional conduct in the market being maintained during this period. These powers would assist being able to gain valuable insight and the additional scrutiny provided by WMCA may be able to encourage more efficient practices by the operators.

Section 3: New Statutory Responsibilities

This section sets out the formal statutory process of the governance review in relation to the new statutory function that will be taken on by the WMCA.

Legal context

The Government and the WMCA have reached agreement in relation to the devolution to the WMCA of a further range of powers.

To give effect to certain elements of the Deal, it is necessary for the WMCA to comply with the requirements of sections 105B and has chosen to carry out this Governance Review under sections 111 and 112 of the 2009 Act which set out the procedure to be followed in order to make changes to existing combined authority arrangements.

However, it should be noted that many aspects of the Deal do not require legislative change to implement. The power outlined below is the only one that is expected to require legislative or regulatory change before it can be exercised by Mayor and therefore follow the process outlined:

1. **Bus Service Operators Grant** - The government will devolve powers for the payment of the bus service operators grant to WMCA as a general function of the Mayor. This is in line with the commitment in the National Bus Strategy and the government is currently working on the reform of the grant. WMCA will provide support to identify the funding for bus services entirely within the WMCA boundary that is paid to commercial operators and would be suitable to be devolved to WMCA, both currently and subject to national reform.

The reform of the grant, and subsequent devolution to the WMCA Board of policy making powers, will enable the grant to support the government's and WMCA's shared priorities to support important local bus services and reduce environmental impacts through facilitating the transition to zero emission buses. This devolution will also be supported by the WMCA delivering commitments set out on in its adopted Enhanced Bus Partnership (EP) Plan and Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).

It is proposed that there be a three-stage process to achieve these ambitions:

1. Immediate devolution of powers under Section 154 (1) of the Transport Act 2000 to the WMCA to administer BSOG
2. WMCA to then administer its share of the BSOG funding according to current Department for Transport (DfT) policy.
3. That the proposed Statutory Instrument include a commitment to further devolve policy powers to the WMCA Board under Section 154 (3) of the

Transport Act 2000 subject to the conclusion of national consultation and guidance being issued by the Secretary of State.

WMCA will work with DfT once the consultation period has concluded to finalise the design of a national BSOG reform package using the evidence generated through the consultation to present options to ministers that set out the impacts on and acceptability to key stakeholders, including WMCA.

If national reforms are delayed significantly, the exploration of alternatives including full BSOG policy devolution for the WMCA, may be brought forward.

Process to be followed

105B - Section 105A orders: procedure

Section 105A(1)(a), (1) (b), (2) and (3)(b) of the 2009 Act (other public authority functions): provides for the Secretary of State to make provision by order for a function of a public authority that is exercisable in relation to a combined authority's area to be a function of the combined authority and to make provision by order conferring on a combined authority in relation to its area a function corresponding to a function that a public authority has in relation to another area.

The Secretary of State may make an order under section 105A only if a proposal for the making of the order in relation to the combined authority has been made to the Secretary of State by the appropriate authorities, or the appropriate consent is given and the Secretary of State considers that the making of the order is likely to improve the exercise of statutory functions in the area or areas to which the order relates.

For the purposes of subsection (1)(b), the appropriate consent is given to the making of an order under section 105A only if:

- in the case of an order in relation to an existing combined authority, each appropriate authority consents;
- in any other case, each constituent council consents.

Section 111 of the 2009 Act

Section 111 of the 2009 Act allows combined authorities to undertake, in relation to an existing combined authority (such as the WMCA), a review of one or more "combined matters". For the purposes of section 111 of the 2009 Act a "combined matter" is defined at subsection 111(3) as being:

a. a matter in relation to which an order may be made under any of sections 104 to 107;

b. in relation to the combined authority or any executive body of the combined authority, where that body exists at the time of the review, a matter concerning the combined authority or the executive body that the combined authority has power to determine.

Insofar as sub-section 111(3)(a) of the 2009 Act is concerned, sections 104 to 107 of the 2009 Act set out the range of matters that the Secretary of State may include within an order concerning a combined authority. These include power for the Secretary of State to:

- make in relation to a combined authority any provision that may be made in relation to an Integrated Transport Authority under certain provisions of the Local Transport Act 2008;
- make in relation to a combined authority any provision that may be made in relation to an Economic Prosperity Board (EPB) in relation to the exercise of local authority functions;
- make provision for a function of a public authority that is exercisable in relation to a combined authority's area to be a function of a combined authority;
- make provision for conferring on a combined authority in relation to its area a function corresponding to a function that a public authority has in relation to another area;
- make provision for any function of a combined authority which has an elected mayor (a "mayoral combined authority") to be a function only exercisable by the elected mayor;
- make provision for the costs of an elected mayor for the area of a combined authority that are incurred in, or in connection with, the exercise of "mayoral functions" to be met from precepts issued by the authority under section 40 of the Local Government Act 1992.

Section 112 of the 2009 Act

Where a combined authority that has undertaken a review under section 111 of the 2009 Act concludes that the exercise of the power by the Secretary of State to make an order under any one or more of sections 104, 105, 105A, 106 and 107 would be likely to improve the exercise of statutory functions in relation to an area of a combined authority, it may prepare and publish a 'scheme' relating to the exercise of the power or powers in question.

In addition to the above requirements, the Secretary of State cannot make an order under sections 104, 105 or 105A of the 2009 Act without the consent of the constituent councils or the WMCA.

Section 4: Governance options, Conclusions and Recommendation

- Option 1 – To endorse the findings of the governance review and proceed with the scheme.
- Option 2 – Not to endorse the findings of the governance review and only implement those parts of the deal that do not constitute new powers or duties.

As previously stated, any new powers or functions would need to be devolved to the Combined Authority via secondary legislation, and therefore would require Government (and local) approvals to make the relevant order.

Conclusion

The review has found that the evidence shows that the Deeper Devolution Deal will maximise the WMCA's current role and responsibilities and revolutionise how Government funding is implemented leading to more effective delivery of statutory functions. The deal represents a significant step forward in delivering more and better jobs to the area. It delivers significant new responsibilities and investment that will benefit our communities and businesses across the region. It means that decisions previously taken centrally can now be taken closer to the people affected and gives the area greater financial freedom and flexibility to manage our investment choices according to local priorities.

Administering the Bus Service Operators Grant will support WMCA early engagement with bus operators in the West Midlands, ahead of the further devolution of powers in relation to policy and BSOG. This may mitigate against unpredictable and potentially disruptive market behaviour and may act to encourage high levels of professional conduct in the market being maintained during this period. These powers would assist being able to gain valuable insight and the additional scrutiny provided by WMCA may be able to encourage more efficient practices by the operators.

The further devolution to WMCA of the policy element of Bus Service Operators Grant, would provide WMCA with flexibility as to its application and would allow WMCA to deploy the grant to incentivise operators to move to zero emission vehicles thus providing environmental benefits to air quality locally and also incentivise operators to expand services to areas of under-provision providing economic and social benefits to those who live and work in the area.

Recommendations:

1. To improve the effective exercise of statutory functions across the area of the WMCA, adopting the new power under Section 154 (1) and duty contained within the deal (Option 1) is considered optimal for the reasons detailed below.
2. To improve the effective exercise of statutory functions across the area of the WMCA, adopting the new power under Section 154 (3) subject to national consultation and guidance from the Secretary of State is considered optimal for the reasons detailed below.
3. That a governance scheme is published (a draft scheme is included at Appendix A) that confirms the adoption of the new powers and duties detailed in this report.

The reasons are summarised below:

a. The deal delivers significant new responsibilities and investment that will benefit our communities and businesses across the region.

b. Bus Service Operators Grant

Section 154 (1) of the Transport Act 2000:

Administering the Bus Service Operators Grant will support WMCA early engagement with bus operators in the West Midlands, ahead of the further devolution of powers in relation to policy and BSOG. This may mitigate against unpredictable and potentially disruptive market behaviour and may act to encourage high levels of professional conduct in the market being maintained during this period. These powers would assist being able to gain valuable insight and the additional scrutiny provided by WMCA may be able to encourage more efficient practices by the operators.

Section 154 (3) of the Transport Act 2000:

Devolving section 154 (3) of Bus Service Operators Grant to WMWCA will improve the exercise of this statutory function in the West Midlands by enabling WMCA to deploy the grant to incentivise a move to zero emission vehicles and also an expansion of services to areas which are underprovided for. This new function will support the government's and West Midlands' shared priorities to support important local bus services and reduce environmental impacts through assisting the change to zero emission buses.

c. The proposals will build on established regional governance arrangements which represent the views of local communities

d. The proposals will secure more effective and convenient local government by reducing complexity and streamlining the delivery of public services within the area.

e. The statutory criteria for preparing and publishing a scheme are met, i.e., the making of an order under S104 and S105A to enable the adoption of the new powers and duties for the area of the WMCA is the best option and will be likely to improve the exercise of statutory functions in that area.

f. In addition, adoption of the new powers and duty will:

- **have a positive impact on the interests and identities of local communities** by securing environmental benefits through low emission vehicles and by expanding bus services to areas with low accessibility.

- **secure more effective and convenient local government** by reducing complexity and streamlining the delivery of public services within the area.

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APPENDIX 1B

West Midlands Combined Authority

Draft Scheme for the transfer of functions in relation to Bus Service Operator's Grant under section 154 (1) of the Transport Act 2000 to WMCA as a Mayoral function

Draft Scheme for the future transfer of functions in relation to Bus Service Operator's Grant under section 154 (3) of the Transport Act 2000 to WMCA

Proposal for the Making of an Order under sections 105A of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 as amended by the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 (the 2009 Act)

This scheme has been prepared by the West Midlands Combined Authority in consultation with the Leaders of Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton Local Authorities.

The scheme sets out proposals for conferring on WMCA of the function of the Secretary of State of administering Bus Service Operator's Grant under sections 154 (1) of the Transport Act 2000 as a Mayoral function.

The scheme also sets out proposals for the future conferring on WMCA of the function of the Secretary of State in relation to the making of policy for the administration of Bus Service Operator's Grant under section 154 (3) of the Transport Act 2000. It is proposed that this function be conferred to be exercisable subject to the the conclusion of consultation on national BSOG reform and the publication of guidance by the Secretary of State.

If national reforms are delayed significantly, the exploration of alternatives including full BSOG policy devolution, may be brought forward.

Introduction

The West Midlands has been at the forefront of devolution in England. In November 2015, the government and WMCA agreed an ambitious devolution deal, including a directly elected mayor and powers to improve transport, skills, housing and to drive growth in the region. In 2017, devolution was deepened, and new funding agreed, including significant further investment in transport. The West Midlands has seized these opportunities, demonstrating what local leaders can achieve when empowered with the tools they need. Local leaders have increased investment in transport from £38 million in 2016/17 to £363 million in 2021/22, pioneered new approaches to brownfield development and net zero homes and delivered the c. £130 million Adult Education Budget, securing an over 10% increase in 2020 alone in the portion of the population with Level 3 skills.

The West Midlands is now embarking on a new phase by bringing greater investment, control over investment and powers to the region.

The new deal is estimated to be worth in the region of £1.5bn and it is hoped that this will reboot the economy, provide vital housing, jobs and skills, bolster our existing strengths in transport and Smart City Region innovation, and drive our net zero ambitions. The deal looks to create a more prosperous and better-connected West Midlands which is fairer, greener and healthier.

The WMCA have conducted a Governance Review under Section 111 of the 2009 Act (the Review) in relation to the delegation to the Combined Authority of additional functions and duties relating to:

- Bus Service Operators Grants (under section 154 (1) of the Transport Act 2000)
- Bus Service Operators Grants (under section 154 (3) of the Transport Act 2000)

Governance Review and Proposal

Background

Commercial Bus Service Operator's Grant (BSOG) is existing funding which Government currently pays directly to operators. BSOG is directly linked to bus fuel consumption, and this can undermine environmental objectives, with a reduced incentive on operators to invest in more zero emission buses. Circa £26m per annum was paid to bus operators across the WMCA area (pre-pandemic).

With a unique bus market, with one commercial operator operating over 95% of the West Midlands bus network, ensuring that value for money is achieved locally from public subsidy and planning an effective recovery for bus services post pandemic is difficult. This has been further exacerbated by a reduction in local bus market competition, with five local bus operators ceasing operations since March 2020, and ongoing bus industry pressures such as driver shortages, wage, and fuel cost inflation.

The WMCA needs new levers to incentivise and influence the direction and navigation of a modern and responsive bus network and to stimulate private sector competition back into our bus market.

Proposal

Administering BSOG will support WMCA early engagement with bus operators in the West Midlands, ahead of the anticipated further devolution of powers in relation to policy and BSOG. This may mitigate against unpredictable and potentially disruptive market behaviour and may act to encourage high levels of professional conduct in the market being maintained during this period. These powers would assist WMCA in being able to gain valuable insight and the additional scrutiny provided by WMCA may be able to encourage more efficient practices by the operators.

Subject to national reform, and through greater local control and design of policy, the WMCA would look to incentivise bus operators to use the grant to ensure investment

in bus services aligns with WMCA policy outcomes. WMCA priorities for BSOG would seek to target: -

- **Incentivising greener vehicle fleet investment and maximising our position as the UK investment leader in decarbonising bus fleets.** Further boosting over £150m of fleet investment between public and private partners.
- **Incentivising and working with private bus operators to expand bus services into areas of poor accessibility.** This would place a greater focus on where bus route mileage is delivered, compared to the current approach focused on total quantum. This would help to tackle the issue of 'overbussing' on certain routes to maintain a dominant commercial position at the expensive or more marginal, socially beneficial services, thus helping to deliver greater benefits with the same level of public funding.

The WMCA has direct experience in managing bus funding support grants, such as Local Transport Fund (up to July 2023), BSOG+ (up to 2025) and local raised funding through the WMCA's Transport Levy (for subsidies services).

With significant investment made to support bus services across the West Midlands, the devolution of BSOG funding to the WMCA would support this continued improved local planning of bus services. As stated above and subject to national reforms, WMCA requires flexibility in the way in which the grant is distributed to support its aim of incentivising a move to zero emission buses and an expansion of services into areas with poor accessibility. WMCA can also act as a trailblazer area for the early delivery of national BSOG reforms, working in partnership with DfT.

Overall, these reforms would help to achieve our wider network expansion plans that match the Government's Levelling Up mission and the aim to increase bus use outside of London, bringing us much closer to London standards. This aligns with the WMCA's Local Transport Plan outcomes to improve accessibility, electrify the transport system and reduce traffic to drive behaviour change.

Bus services are important for those who lack access to a private vehicle, those on the lowest incomes, and for those living in the most deprived communities. The WMCA area has some of the most deprived wards in England and circa 25% of households do not have access to a car, with this increasing to 40% in some of our most deprived communities.

The devolution of BSOG administration and anticipated policy making powers to WMCA would enable WMCA to deliver economic, social and environmental benefits through the distribution of the grant and to improve the effectiveness of service delivery.

Conclusion

Having considered the findings of the Review, the WMCA concluded that an Order by the Secretary of State to make the changes considered in the Review, including delegating additional functions to the Combined Authority, would be likely to improve the exercise of statutory functions in relation to the Combined Area. The WMCA have therefore resolved to prepare and publish this Scheme under section 112 of the 2009 Act.

Functions exercised by the Mayor

Bus Service Operators Grant (Public Authority Function) (Section 105A of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009)

It is proposed that the Government will devolve powers for the payment of the bus service operators grant to WMCA to be a general function of the Mayor under section 154 (1) of the Transport Act 2000.

It is further proposed that the Government will devolve powers, at a future date to be agreed with WMCA, following the conclusion of nation consultation and guidance being issued by the Secretary of State in relation to bus service operators grant to WMCA under section 154 (3) of the Transport Act 2000.

Since the award of Bus Service Operators Grant is a public function of the Secretary of State the Order will be made under section 105A of the 2009 Act. The procedural requirements under Section 105B do not include a requirement for public consultation before the making of an Order and in this case it is not thought necessary for a public consultation exercise to be carried out.

WMCA will provide support to identify the funding for bus services entirely within the WMCA boundary that is paid to commercial operators and would be suitable to be devolved to WMCA, both currently and following national reform.

Governance and constitutional matters

Governance Arrangements

A decision in relation to the conferring of a new function on WMCA would require a unanimous vote of the members representing the Constituent Authorities at the WMCA Board.

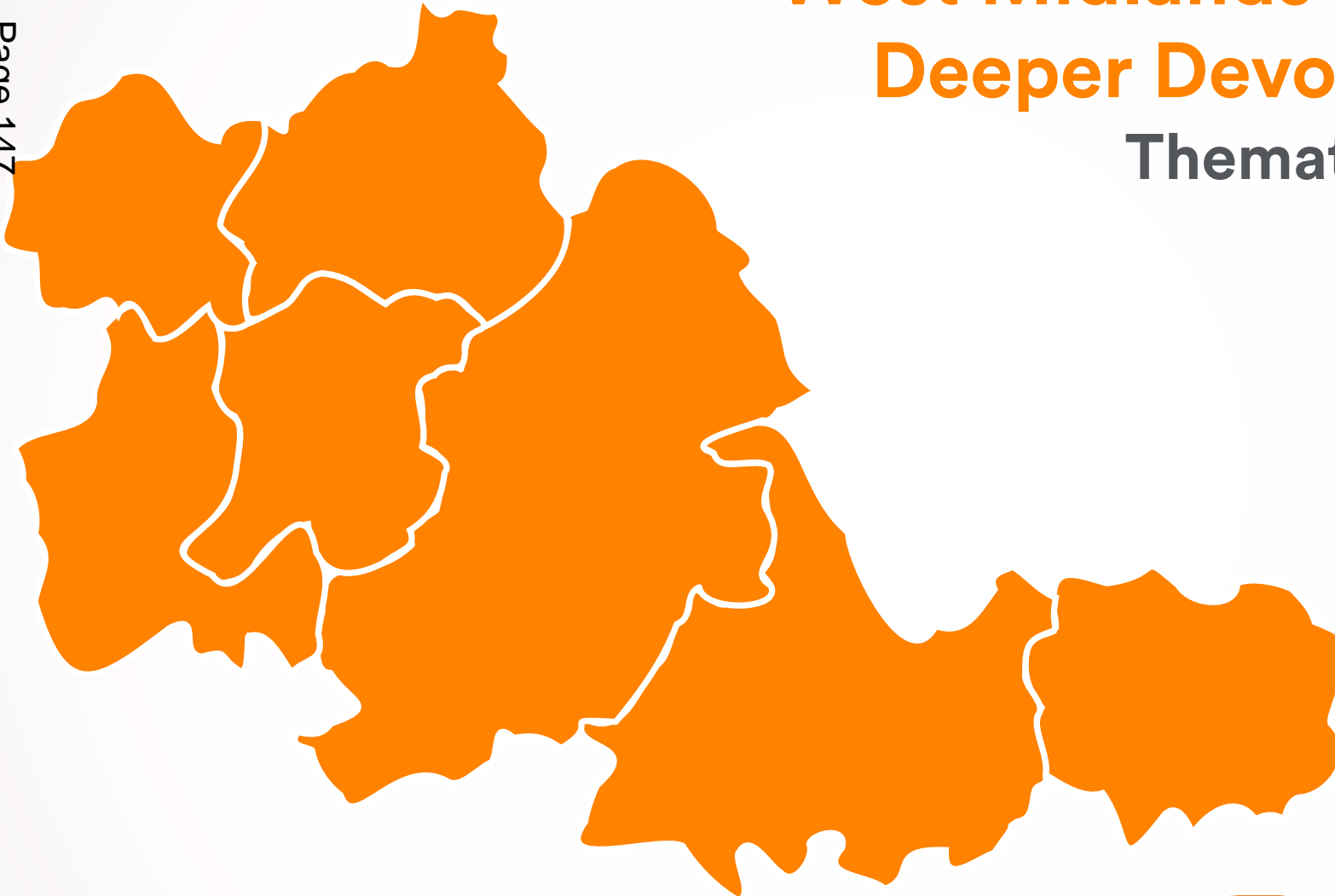
The Award of Bus Service Operator's Grant will need to be included as a Mayoral function in the definition of Mayoral general functions set out in Article 22(5) of the West Midlands Combined Authority Functions and Amendment) Order 2017

Review and Scrutiny

The operation of the function of the award of Bus Service Operators Grant will be subject to review and Scrutiny in accordance with the Constitution and the Scrutiny Protocol.

West Midlands ‘Trailblazer’ Deeper Devolution Deal: Thematic Summaries

August 2023



West Midlands
Combined Authority



4	Introduction
6	Operating more effectively
9	Special Feature: Single Settlement
10	Economy
12	Employment and skills
14	Special feature: A transport network closer to the standards of London
16	Transport
18	Supporting clusters
20	Net Zero and Environment
24	Special Feature: Unlocking Regeneration through Levelling Up Zones
26	Transforming Places
28	Pride in Place



Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide local authorities (LAs) an overview of the trailblazer deeper devolution deal (the deal) between the region and Government. It sets out how the commitments in the deal will be implemented, how LA partners will be engaged in decision-making, LAs roles in delivery and indicative timescales for commitments to be progressed and implemented. A more detailed breakdown of deal implementation activities is set out in the fuller implementation plan that follows these summaries. The different policy areas in the deal have been grouped into the following themes:

- Operating more effectively. This covers governance and accountability, data and the single settlement;
- Economy. This covers business support and finance, innovation, trade and investment and visitor economy;
- Employment and skills. This covers adult skills, careers and employment support;
- Transport. This covers rail, buses, transport innovation, transport planning and infrastructure capital support;
- Supporting clusters. This covers digital, social economy and Places for Growth;
- Net zero and environment. This covers energy efficiency, industrial decarbonisation, heat zoning, natural capital, local area energy planning and air quality;
- Transforming places. This covers housing, regeneration, Levelling Up Zones and business rate retention;
- Pride in place. This covers homelessness, anti-social behaviour and early years.

In addition, there are three further special features that cover areas of the deal in more detail. These are:

- Single settlement;
- Transport;
- Levelling Up Zones.

Plans on a page

For every thematic summary, a 'plan on a page' is provided to show indicative timescales for implementation activities.

A bar like the below with a single diamond is used to indicate a deadline:



A bar like the one below with a diamond at either end is used to indicate the duration of an activity:



- Operating more effectively
- Economy
- Supporting nascent clusters
- Pride in Place
- Transforming places
- Adult Skills and Employment Support
- Net Zero and Environment
- Transport

Overview of the deal

There are over 190 different commitments in the deal. The commitments are of different kinds, including:

1. Commitments to provide new funds to the region;
2. Commitments to increase flexibility and local decision-making power over existing and future funding;
3. Commitments to new partnerships to plan and manage the delivery of government programmes; and
4. Commitments to enable the region to co-design new policy initiatives with Government.

The highest number of commitments relate to the themes of economy, operating more effectively and transport. Taken together, these commitments, the policy levers and funding they include, represent a step-change in our ability to realise our collective vision of a better connected, more prosperous, fairer, greener and healthier West Midlands.

Financial value of the deal to the region

The total value of the deal in fiscal terms to the region is estimated at c£1.5 billion. This estimate is to a large extent influenced by the ability of the region to establish Levelling Up Zones as intended, and the economic growth in the region which will flow back to LAs through the Business Rates system.

Fund	Potential Value	New Money?
Levelling Up Zones ¹	c.£0.5bn Minimum	Yes
10-year Business Rates Retention	c.£450m	Difficult to assess
Affordable Housing Programme	£200-400m	Yes
Single Regeneration Fund	£100m	Yes
Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension	£60m	Yes
Smart City Region	£10.0m	Yes
Air Quality Sensors	£0.5m	Yes
Digital Devices	£4.0m	Yes
Industrial Decarb	£10.5m	Yes
Natural Environment	£1.0m	Yes
Cultural Infrastructure Fund	£4.0m	Yes

¹ Estimate based on incremental Business Rate Retention if all 6 LUZs are given Government consent and delivered.

Operating more effectively

Inclusive Growth Fundamental: Power and Participation

Page 152
Exec Lead: Ed Cox

Governance, Scrutiny and Accountability

What will the deal achieve?

A condition set by government for the region to receive the benefits of the deal is strengthening existing WMCA scrutiny arrangements and introducing new processes to enhance our accountability, both to central government and to our residents.

What will we deliver?

- Quarterly MPs/Mayor/Portfolio Leader sessions.
- Review of WMCA overview and scrutiny arrangements.
- Revised outcome reporting to Government.
- Publication of a Scrutiny Protocol by Government.
- Enhanced Mayoral Question Times.
- Enhanced resources and profile for WMCA scrutiny committee chairs.

How will local authorities be involved?

- The Terms of Reference for MPs Quarterly Sessions will be shared with Regional Chief Legal Officer and Senior Local Authority Officer Group for feedback;
- LAs will have the opportunity to vote on a resolution to implement the MPs Quarterly Sessions at WMCA Board;
- Through the Regional Chief Legal Officers Meeting, local authorities will be consulted on the recommendations of the review of WMCA overview and scrutiny practices by DLUHC and the Centre for Local Governance and Scrutiny.

Data

What will the deal achieve?

The deal will increase the range of central government data that WMCA and partners have access to, improve data sharing within the region and support our ability to use outcomes evidence in decision making. Improvements in the region's data sharing capability are key to supporting the realisation of benefits across multiple other elements of the deal, for example, partnership agreements in housing and adult skills.

What will we deliver?

- Changes to WMCA data governance;
- Access to the Chief Data Officer's Council;
- A Data Partnership with Government;
- Data sharing gateways with Government departments.

How will local authorities be involved?

LA leaders will be asked to agree proposed changes to enhance WMCA Data Governance and get WMCA ready for enhanced data sharing and agree new data sharing practices and principles at a regional level.

The West Midlands Insights on Society and Economy group with local authorities will develop proposals for local data sharing and scope out what data is held within local authorities and WMCA and what data would be beneficial from central government. Together, they will build on the process used to create the Birmingham Data Charter and lead to the co-creation of a West Midlands Data Charter.

Single settlement

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Exec Lead: Linda Horne

What will the deal achieve?

The deal offers the region the opportunity to receive government department-style multi-year financial settlements. This will reduce the amount of competitive bidding for government funding, provide more certainty over levels of funding and enable joined-up, strategic funding delivery. The single settlement will also streamline reporting and evaluation processes associated with bidding to multiple competitive pots. The single settlement will provide us with greater power over investment decisions locally, and greater ability to fund our priorities.

What will we deliver?

- A Memorandum of Understanding covering the design principles for the single settlement.
- Reduction in competitive bidding for government funding.
- Streamlined monitoring, evaluation and assurance processes.
- Funding from central government with fewer prescribed spending conditions.
- Greater funding certainty for greater time periods, enabling simpler financial planning.

How will local authorities be involved?

- The decision on whether or not to sign the MoU will be taken to WMCA Board for agreement.
- The Senior Local Authority Group (SLAOG) will be used to co-develop negotiating positions to be communicated to DLUHC and Treasury. Finance Directors and other subject matter experts from local authorities will also be engaged.
- Special sessions with Leaders will be arranged over Summer and early Autumn to update them on negotiations and refine negotiating positions.
- After the MoU has been developed, there will be further engagement through Chief Execs on the changes that are required to WMCA governance and decision-making structures to make most of single settlement funding.
- As part of our approach to funding delivery, we currently expect place-based plans to set out local funding priorities and strategies that join up the multiple functions – and funding streams – of the single settlement.

Operating more effectively

	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	2024	2025
Governance and Scrutiny	◆ Develop <u>ToRs</u> for Mayor/MPs Sessions ◆					◆ WMCA Board resolution			◆ First session	
				◆ Publication of Scrutiny Protocol		Publication of Plain English Guidance			◆	
	◆ Review of WMCA/GMCA governance and scrutiny with DLUHC									
Single Settlement	◆ Negotiate MoU with GMCA, HMT and DLUHC ◆						◆ MoU to Board		◆ Assumed SR	
	◆ Co-develop MoU with Local Authority partners ◆									
							◆ Review WMCA decision making ◆		◆	
							◆ Develop data, M&E capability ◆		◆	
							◆ Develop assurance and scrutiny ◆		◆	
Data	◆ Improvements to WMCA data governance ◆									
	◆ Develop Data Partnership with Government ◆									
	◆ Establish data sharing Gateway(s) ◆									
	◆ Build Local Data Sharing Network ◆									
	◆ Attend Chief Data Officer's Council ◆									
									◆ Data Symposium ◆	



Special Feature: Single Settlement

Challenge & Opportunity

The region has proved its capability to deliver large-scale funding programmes that make a real difference to people, communities and businesses.

Whether it's the 100 derelict sites that have been unlocked, the 200 transport projects the region will deliver by 2026 or the tens of thousands of adult learners who have received support to boost their skills – we have shown we can work in partnership to deliver change at scale.

With the right tools, the region could do more. We receive funding from government through a myriad of funding streams, each with a separate delivery timetable, different output prescriptions and overlapping reporting and accountability arrangements. This gets in the way of our ability to take joined up, strategic decisions drawing on all our resources in the round.

How the deal addresses it

The commitment to a single department-style settlement for the region will change this.

It will allocate a single capital and revenue settlement to the region spanning multi-year Spending Review periods, supporting medium-term, strategic planning.

It will allow us to realise the benefits of delivering local growth and place, local transport, housing and regeneration, adult skills and net zero functions in parallel, generating more impact for the region.

It will give the region greater flexibility and more control to deliver projects and initiatives aligned to local needs and place-based opportunities.

It will significantly reduce pressures on officer time from having to make repeat bids into national funding competitions, with decisions routed through regional decision-making structures instead.

Why that's different from pre-deal

The single settlement represents a significant step forward relative to the status quo.

The single settlement will change the way the region works with and receives funding from government for the better, underpinned by new accountability arrangements and a jointly agreed outcomes framework.

It will see new ways of working between partners across the region, with more local control over decisions routed through local decision-making and accountability structures.

When things will happen

- Summer 2023: Early engagement within the region on the design of the single settlement;
- Autumn 2023: A memorandum of understanding between the region and government;
- 2024: Further work across the region to prepare for single settlement implementation, working towards an allocation at the next Spending Review (timing tbc, but assumed to be Autumn 2024);
- 2025 (tbc): Following the next Spending Review, the first single settlement would be allocated to the region.

Economy

Inclusive Growth Fundamental: Inclusive economy

Exec Lead: Ed Cox

Trade and investment

What will the deal achieve?

The deal will help to bring greater foreign direct investment into the region and help more businesses to export by strengthening the region's influence over the Department for Business and Trade, increasing the region's visibility to overseas investors, securing support from the Office for Investment and better connecting businesses to sources of export and investment support.

What will be delivered?

An International Strategy, joint agreement of future High Potential Opportunities and joint delivery with the Department for Business and Trade.

How will local authorities be involved?

Directors of Economic Development will work with the WMCA and West Midlands Growth Company to progress the commitments in the deal, feeding into the Economic Growth Board and Combined Authority Board.

Innovation

What will the deal achieve?

The deal gives the region greater influence over national innovation funding and makes a number of commitments that will help businesses across the region to innovate and adopt new technologies, building on the region's status as an Innovation Accelerator and the recently-published WMCA – Innovate UK Action Plan.

What will be delivered?

A new Strategic Innovation Partnership, bi-annual meetings with HMG Science Ministers and a knowledge transfer partnership with Innovate UK.

How will local authorities be involved?

LA officers will be engaged via Business Support Officers Group and Directors of Economic Development. Directors of Economic Development are, with Innovation Board and universities, shaping the direction of the Partnership, with the Economic Growth Board and Combined Authority Board in decision-making roles.

Visitor Economy

What will the deal achieve?

The deal strengthens the West Midlands Growth Company's role in coordinating the region's visitor economy.

What will be delivered?

West Midlands Growth Company to be granted Destination Development Partnership pilot 2 status and support more LAs to achieve Local Visitor Economy Partnership status.

How will local authorities be involved?

As have been engaged in the development of SPP proposals through signing off the Growth Hub Company's Business Plan, while two LAs have already received LVEP status. LAs will be engaged through ongoing quarterly meetings.

Business support and finance

What will the deal achieve?

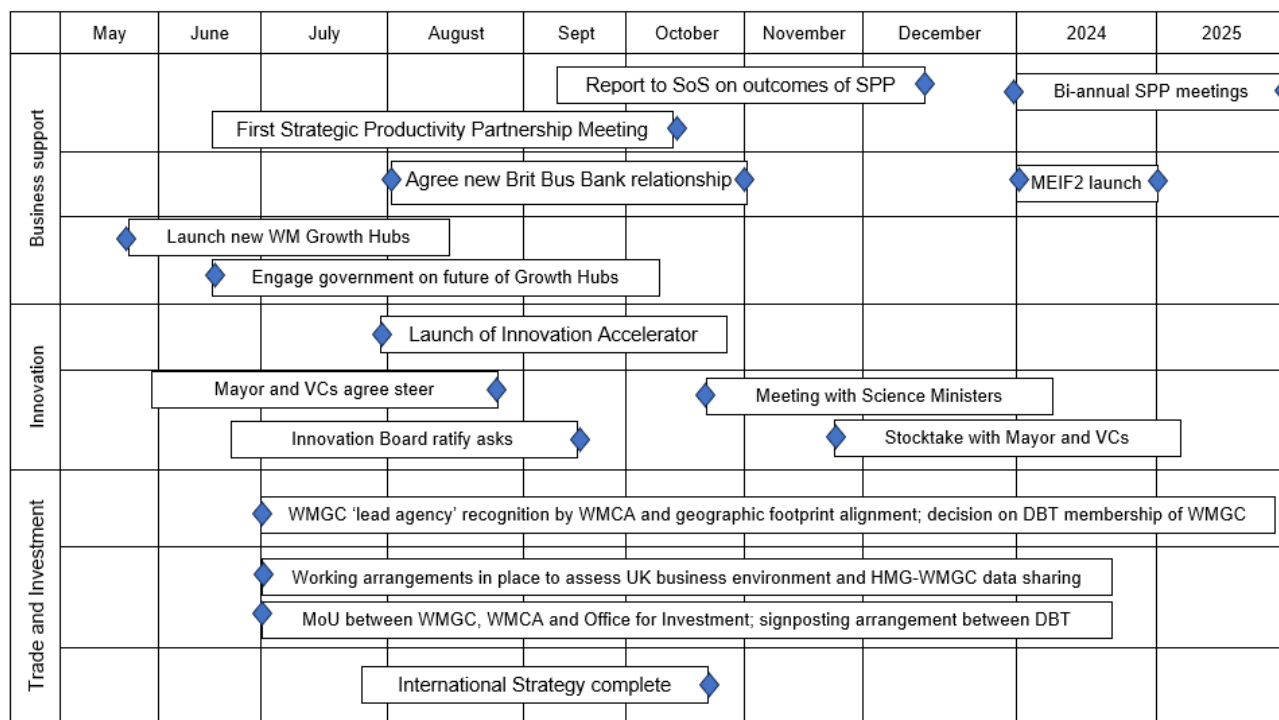
The deal gives the region greater influence over national business support programmes now and the ability to make the case for devolved business support in future. The deal will also help to better align sources of SME finance and infrastructure investment with regional opportunities.

What will be delivered?

A new Strategic Productivity Partnership, regional engagement in the future of Growth Hubs, a role for the region in the governance of the British Business Bank's regional fund (MEIF2).

How will local authorities be involved?

With input from the Business Support Officers Group and Business Insights Forum, Directors of Economic Development are shaping commitments in this section of the deal to feed into Economic Growth Board and CA Board. Across this theme, data and intelligence gathered through the Business Growth West Midlands Service will be used to inform policy design in the economy and skills partnership.



Employment and skills

Inclusive Growth Fundamental: Education and Learning

Exec Lead: Clare Hatton

Adult skills and employment

What will the deal achieve?

Although the deal has separate chapters on adult skills and employment support, we continue to advocate to Government that these are complimentary and should be treated as one workstream. This will ensure adult skills and employment support are properly integrated and mutually reinforcing.

In adult skills, the deal commits to the creation of a joint governance board to provide oversight of post-16 technical education and skills in the WMCA area, ensuring our training offer is aligned to local skills needs, providing strategic oversight of the Local Skills Improvement Plan, supporting better data sharing and providing oversight for the development of an all-age careers strategy. The deal offers greater flexibility over how existing adult skills funding (Free Courses for Jobs and Skills Bootcamps) can be spent and a commitment to fully devolve these funds as part of the single settlement. The deal recognises WMCA as the central convenor of careers provision, with joint governance of the current National Careers Service contract and a commitment to co-designing future careers provision for all ages in the region.

On employment support, the deal commits to the creation of a new regional Labour Market Partnership Board to oversee the development and implementation of a regional labour market strategy. It provides a new role in co-designing future contracted employment programmes for young people and adults, which the CA will commission on behalf of DWP on a WMCA footprint.

We continue to push for the Joint Governance Board for Adult Skills and the Labour Market Partnership Board to be combined into one.

What will be delivered?

- Terms of reference for an integrated adult skills and employment support board;
- Sign-off of the Local Skills Improvement Plan and of the application for the Local Skills Improvement Fund that supports LSIP implementation;
- An all-age careers strategy;
- Co-design of future contracted employment support programmes, on a WMCA footprint (N.B. no new contracted employment support programmes expected during this SR period);
- Free Courses for Jobs and Skills Bootcamps expanded to create a stronger training offer that meet labour market and skills needs across the economy;
- Better access to data that supports planning and delivery of adult skills provision and demonstrates outcomes and impact;
- Joint governance of the current National Careers Service contractor and role in shaping future specifications.

How will local authorities be involved?

LAs will have a key role in new governance structures for skills and employment support programmes within the WMCA area. These are currently in development. In the interim, we will engage with LAs via Directors of Economic Development, with governance decisions taken at Economic Growth Board;

The CA will also work closely with individual LAs and our LA Employment & Skills Officers Group to understand and respond to employment and skills needs in their area – to inform adult skills procurement in each area;

- Adult skills provision will continue to be delivered through an ecosystem of LAs, FE colleges, independent training providers, universities and the VCS. LAs will continue to receive grant funding for community learning provision;
- The CA will also work closely with individual LAs and our LA Employment & Skills Officers Group to understand and respond to employment and skills needs in their area – to inform commissioning of employment support provision.

	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	2024	2025
Adult Skills and employment	Develop new governance structures – with agreed Terms of Reference - for employment and skills									
	Deploy greater flexibility in Adult Skills funding									
	MoU signed with HMT and DLUHC on Single Settlement								Assumed SR	



Special feature: A transport network closer to the standards of London

Challenge

After decades of underinvestment, our region is beginning to turn our transport network around. But significant challenges remain in tackling the defining issues of our time, such as climate change, air quality, our health, and now the cost of living and energy pressures facing our citizens.

To enable Inclusive Growth means improving people's access to opportunities. But the pandemic and the cost of living crises have resulted in problems to overcome. Public transport costs have gone up whilst demand to travel has dropped, this has put levels of service at risk. And although people are driving less as fuel has increased in cost, this has not resulted in a proportionate uptick in travel by other modes; people are less socially and economically active.

Progress has been made to strengthen the West Midlands' transport since the first two devolution deals in 2015 and 2017: the next five years will see at least 40% more investment in transport capital compared to the last five years. Moreover, the region remains a world leader in the future of transport.

Connectivity reduces production costs, enables businesses to reach customers more effectively, links employers to a wider pool of potential employees and ultimately encourages business development. Without an integrated network, our progress on levelling up and economic standing relative to other regions will be constrained.

How the deal addresses it

- The deal commits to explore a fully integrated, multi-modal fares and ticketing structure alongside pay as you go ticketing infrastructure pilots and co-development of a regional branding proposition for rail – key tenets of regional transport integration;
- A formal partnership between the West Midlands Rail Executive and Great British Railways (GBR) will increase local, democratic accountability over the region's railway;
- The deal unlocks an additional £60 million for the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension;
- With the devolution of the Bus Service Operators Grant, we can change the mechanisms for providing public subsidy to private bus operators to improve accessibility across the region and support the decarbonisation of bus fleets.

Why that's different from pre-deal

We have made great improvements to our network since the first devolution deal was agreed. However, the pandemic has shifted patterns and behaviours, with patronage remaining below pre-pandemic levels. The bus industry, in particular, is facing acute challenges.

The deal gives the region a greater set of tools to face these challenges and create an integrated transport system that is fit for the future. In line with our Local Transport Plan, we will use the provisions of the deal to deliver a network with improved accessibility, reduced traffic and decarbonised public transport.

When things will happen

- 2024/2025: Reformed commercial BSOG devolved;
- January 2025 onwards: WMRE – GBR Partnership goes live;
- 2027 onwards: Full very light rail routes could form part of the second round of the City Region Sustainable Transport Scheme.



Inclusive Growth Fundamental: Connected Communities

Exec Lead: Anne Shaw

Rail

What will the deal achieve?

The deal will lead to a partnership agreement between West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE) and Great British Railways (GBR). This will enhance local accountability and influence over the regional rail network. It will increase our ability to influence rail planning with local growth and social priorities, better integrate rail with other modes of transport and support the roll out of integrated smart ticketing.

What will we be delivered?

A new partnership agreement between WMRE and GBR and a pilot for fully integrated fares and ticketing.

How will local authorities be involved?

The partnership agreement will be approved through the WMRE Board.

Infrastructure and planning

What will the deal achieve?

The deal will drive further investment in the regional transport network, alleviate cost pressures on existing schemes and support regional transport planning. This is additional to the announcement of a further round of funding through the City Region Sustainable Transport Scheme.

What will be delivered?

£60m of additional funding towards the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension and additional transport planning resources for the Combined Authority implement new data and analytical tools.

How will local authorities be involved?

The Senior Transport Officer's Group will support the development and oversight of relevant business cases, with strategic decisions taken by the Combined Authority Board. Coventry City Council is leading the development of very light rail infrastructure.

Buses

What will the deal achieve?

The deal hands more power to the region over payments to bus operators; commits to investigate additional powers to tackle anti-social behavior on the transport network; and to further work to obtain pavement parking powers for local authorities.

What will be delivered?

Devolution of the Bus Services Operator Grant (BSOG).

How will local authorities be involved?

Transport Support Group will test and refine advice to DfT on the design of the BSOG scheme and its appropriate boundaries. The BSOG Governance Review and Scheme is provided alongside this document for local authority feedback and will be approved at WMCA Board in October.

Transport innovation

Page 163

What will the deal achieve?

The deal will enable the region to test and demonstrate new, innovative technologies to drive behaviour change in transport usage, including through low-emission and autonomous vehicle trials.

What will be delivered?

Funding and sponsorship from the Department for Transport to develop proposals and evidence.

How will local authorities be involved?

The Senior Transport Officer's Group will support policy development, with strategic decisions taken by the Combined Authority Board.

	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	2024	2025	
Rail	Negotiate MoU with GBR					Design pilot operating model			Begin Pilot		
									Full Partnership begins		
Innovation	VLR options appraisal				SOBC production						
	VLR concept designs on East Bham/N Solihull corridor										
	Prepare use cases and then for operation of passenger carrying automated service										
	Trial with Coventry CC on DRT										
Buses					LA feedback on Governance Review and Scheme						
					DfT prepare statutory instrument			Statutory process managed by DfT			
	Submit advice on ASB to DfT										
Inf Funding					Re-baseline CRSTS finances						
					Revise WBH Business Case			Expected Govt approvals			

Supporting clusters

Inclusive Growth Fundamental: Health and Wellbeing, Inclusive Economy

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Exec Lead: Ed Cox

Digital

What will the deal achieve?

The commitments in the deal recognise West Midlands 5G's contribution to mapping and closing digital connectivity gaps in the region. The deal includes a commitment from government to engage with the WM Digital Infrastructure Leadership Group to accelerate broadband roll-out, provides funding to purchase devices to boost digital inclusion and provides funding for the Smart City Region project. This will introduce a network of sensors in healthcare settings to enable remote monitoring and the deployment of 5G technology to underpin remote health diagnosis.

What will we deliver?

- £4m fund for digital inclusion to roll out 20,000 devices;
- £10.1m for Smart City Region project;
- Greater high speed broadband coverage across the region.

How will local authorities be involved?

Accelerating broadband roll out will be coordinated by WM5G, but local authorities will be essential in managing the delivery of broadband through intelligence on forthcoming works and use of planning powers to deliver works.

The Smart City Region project will be project managed by WM5G and delivered by NHS partners in each local.

For digital inclusion, local authorities will take receipt of the purchased devices and distribute them to their networks of voluntary sector organisations, who, in turn, will distribute them to vulnerable residents.

Social Economy

What will the deal achieve?

Recognising WMCA's commitment to double the size of the social economy, the deal will enable WMCA to provide specialist business support to social economy organisations to grow their trading activity. It will also enable local areas develop their own circular, inclusive local social economies.

What will we deliver?

The £1.75 million Social Economy Business Support programme will provide an opportunity for social enterprises, community-owned businesses, co-ops and trading charities, the opportunity to gain the business skills and confidence needed to grow their businesses. This programme will provide incentive grants to encourage increased trading income, leading to more employment, volunteering and beneficiary impact.

The local place-based Cluster development will provide £50,000 each to 8 localities – one per constituent LA and one identified by Power to Change.

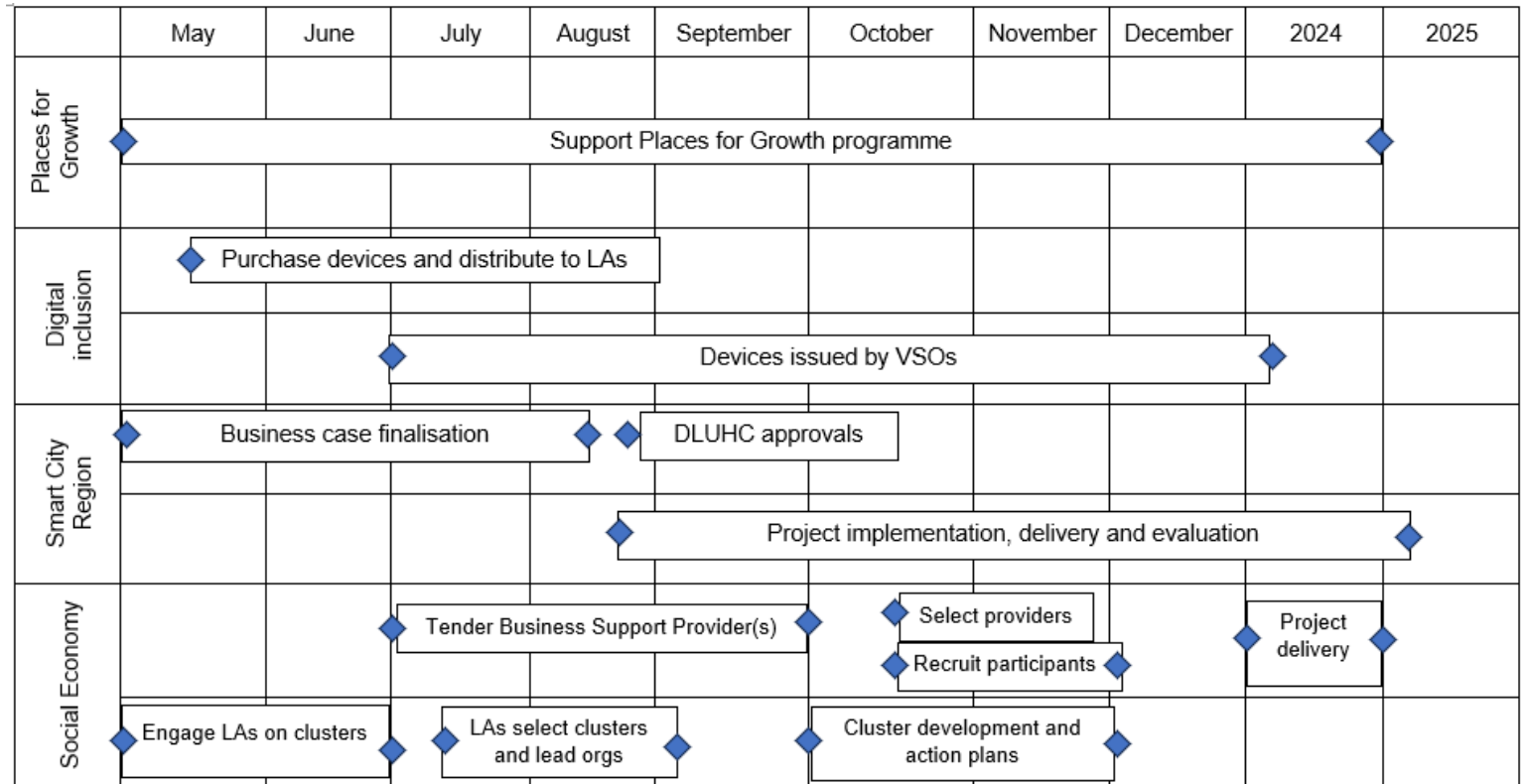
How will local authorities be involved?

For the Business Support programme, local authorities will be asked to help recruit participants from their area. For the place-based cluster development, local authorities will identify and offer their support for place-based economy clusters.

Places for Growth

What will the deal achieve?
 Recognition of the region's growing skills clusters such as in transport and infrastructure a new West Midlands Fast Stream pilot will set a blueprint for establishing long term career pathways for people in the region by delivering a pipeline of civil service talent and skills

What will we deliver?
 We will support Government to relocate 2,100 civil service roles to the West Midlands by 2025.



Net Zero and Environment

Inclusive Growth Fundamental: Climate resilience

Exec Lead: Ed Cox

Domestic retrofit and minimum energy efficiency standards

What will the deal achieve?

The deal secures a greater role for the region in measures that will support retrofit and net zero delivery through the devolution of retrofit and potentially other net zero funding. The deal also opens up the opportunity for local authorities to adopt additional powers to enforce tighter minimum energy efficiency standards (MEES); and commits to further work to bring more private investment into energy efficiency upgrades.

What will be delivered?

Aside from the delivery of retrofit and market enabling activity through the single settlement, the deal provides the opportunity to strengthen MEES with enhanced energy efficiency requirements, allowing the region to maintain its trajectory regardless of national policy decisions in this area. However, this needs to be considered within the context of adequately resourcing existing, as well as any additional, standards.

How will local authorities be involved?

The Local Authority Retrofit Officers Group meeting provides the opportunity to explore how these opportunities should be taken forward in partnership with LAs, with senior level engagement through the Net Zero Directors group.

Industrial decarbonisation

What will the deal achieve?

The deal will support efforts to increase businesses' energy efficiency and resilience to high energy costs, identified through the work of the Mayor's Industrial Energy Taskforce. The deal also re-affirms the greater role the region will be able to play in coordinating the roll-out of clean heat infrastructure, which will further support industrial and domestic heat decarbonisation.

What will be delivered?

The deal provides an additional £10.5m from DLUHC to compliment the £14.1m from DESNZ for businesses to undertake energy efficiency audits and invest in energy efficiency measures, agreed as a result of the groundbreaking work of the Black Country Industrial Cluster.

How will local authorities be involved?

The WMCA has worked with partners to align this funding with other publicly and privately funded programmes already in place, such as the recent Decarbonisation Net Zero programme tendered by WMCA using UKSPF funding. The WMCA will coordinate the monitoring and evaluation of the outputs delivered through these programmes.

Local Area Energy Planning

What will the deal achieve?

The deal encourages the WMCA to use its convening power and partnerships to drive local area energy planning across the region, and to use Energy Capital's expertise to inform approaches to energy system investment and management. This is backed in the deal by the expectation that National Grid will engage with the WMCA to ensure their investments will meet local needs and encouragement to engage with OfGEM on their future systems and network regulation workstream, focusing on network investment.

What will be delivered?

The WMCA will develop a Local Area Energy Planning programme in partnership with local authorities and industry across the region to provide partners with data, tools, expertise, resources and influence to support local area energy planning and investment. Collaborative decision-making structures are being established, which bring together private sector energy system investors, to consider energy infrastructure investment from a multi-vector perspective and feedback will be provided to OfGEM and government. This will ensure that the offer in the deal and its underlying intent are achieved.

How will local authorities be involved?

The Local Area Energy Planning-Coordination Group will oversee this programme, working closely with an industry Net Zero Infrastructure Delivery Panel. Additional workshops will be led by LAs to drill down into specific issues in specific areas. Energy Collaboration Days will also continue to be held monthly to enable joint working between energy officers across both the public and private sector.

Heat Zoning Network Pilot

What will the deal achieve?

Heat networks will be an important element of our energy infrastructure going forward and form important anchor projects in the delivery of local net zero solutions. The deal commits to heat network zoning as a national programme and identifies the WMCA and its constituent authorities as heat network zone coordinators (by 2025), with the ability to require buildings, within designated zones, to connect to heat networks.

What will be delivered?

Heat Network Zones are currently being scoped and piloted by Birmingham and

Coventry. This will lead to the identification of potential heat network zones across the region, supported by LAEP, providing the necessary scale to engage key partners, including commercial investors, to bring schemes forward that meet local needs. For the new role established by Government for Heat Zone coordinators, this role will be scoped with Local Authorities and resources sought to enable implementation.

How will local authorities be involved?

Where local authorities have the potential for heat networks, they will be approached directly to collaborate with the WMCA. LA's will remain central to the development and delivery of heat networks and associated zone(s) but may choose to work collaboratively with the WMCA to share resources and expertise to drive the delivery of these networks and zones.

Net Zero and Environment

Natural capital

What will the deal achieve?

The region will enable the region to attract more investment in natural capital schemes, supporting the development of the region's Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

What will be delivered?

£1m to the region through the Local Investment in Natural Capital (LINC) Programme to boost regional capacity.

How will local authorities be involved?

The Natural Capital Officers group is supporting the development of the LINC Programme and will work to develop and bring forward projects from the constituent authorities to the LINC project pipeline. The pipeline will attract significant private investment into the region to help delivery of our targets for nature recovery, climate adaptation and mitigation and connecting people with nature. This will be fed into both the Environment and Energy and WMCA Boards.

Air Quality

What will the deal achieve?

The deal provides £0.9m in capital funding to install air quality monitors across the region in areas where there are gaps in coverage. The data from these sensors will be fed into a web-based dashboard accessible to the public.

What will be delivered?

Air quality sensors and a live web-based dashboard.

How will local authorities be involved?

Officers working on air quality in the different local authorities will help decide where the low-cost sensors provided through this funding are located, ensuring that they are being placed in areas with no coverage currently. Data from the sensors will be published on an air quality web platform that will be developed in collaboration with local authorities through the West Midlands Environment Protection Group. This work will support the aims and outcomes identified in the West Midlands Air Quality Framework, currently out for consultation following consideration by the WMCA Environment and Energy Board.

	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	2024	2025	
MEES						LA engagement on MEES					
LAEP		LAEP development & implementation									
Industrial Decarb	DESNZ and DLUHC Develop Business Case										
						Project delivery					
Heat Zoning	Government to have established Heat Zoning Coordinators										
Air Quality	Develop Business Case										
			DLUHC approvals			Project delivery					
Natural Capital	Create and manage pipeline of investable projects										
		Create Natural Asset Register									
							Setup Fund				



Special Feature: Unlocking Regeneration through Levelling Up Zones

Challenge & Opportunity

The West Midlands has a strong track record of regenerating brownfield land, unlocking over 100 derelict, stalled and contaminated sites across the region and delivering thousands of new homes, workspaces and jobs.

However, the speed of delivery and breadth of outcomes that could be achieved have been hindered by the complexity, prescriptive measures and cyclical nature of funding streams.

The trailblazer deal presents an opportunity to overcome these barriers to high-impact regeneration.

How the deal addresses it

Through our pioneering Levelling Up Zones, the region will be able to bring together multiple regeneration levers – funding simplification, optimisation of publicly owned land and greater influence over affordable housing provision – and pursue a joined-up approach to the design and delivery of regeneration programmes, aligned to regional priorities and complementing existing activity.

As part of this package, the deal allows the region to establish areas that could attract 100% business rate growth retention for 25 years. This greater degree of revenue retention certainty will support local authorities to make longer-term, strategic investments in infrastructure and regeneration projects.

Taken in conjunction with the single settlement, the Zones represent a game-changer for the region, its financial position and the economic prospects of some of its most deprived communities.

Investment Zones

In addition, in March 2023 Government also announced the West Midlands as one of 8 Investment Zones – innovation-led economic clusters offering both tax incentives and business rate retention.

In the West Midlands, our approach will be to ensure Investment Zones complement and add value to Levelling Up Zones.

This will give the region an expansive toolkit to drive growth and investment across the region and build its comparative economic advantage over other parts of the country.

Why that's different from pre-deal

Instead of fragmented, output-driven funding approaches, the deal puts the region in a position to adopt a strategic and empowered approach to regeneration that meets the needs of, and opportunities for, local communities.

The package of measures will ensure the West Midlands is a beacon for private sector investment.

When things will happen

- Autumn 2023: Levelling Up Zone proposals are submitted to Government in line with the national Investment Zone programme;
- April 2024: It is anticipated that Levelling Up Zones – particularly those that contain business rate retention powers – will commence, aligned to the Investment Zone programme.



Transforming Places

Inclusive Growth Fundamental: Affordable and Safe Places

Exec Lead: John Godfrey

Regeneration

What will the deal achieve?

The deal will give the region more influence over Homes England policy and funding decisions, ensuring different programmes align for maximum impact and better reflect our priorities; more influence over the disposal of government owned land in the region, to help unlock land assembly opportunities for regeneration schemes; and a flexible source of funding to support commercial, employment and mixed-use development on brownfield land.

What will we deliver?

A Strategic Place Partnership between Homes England, government departments and arm's length bodies; a Public Land Partnership with the Cabinet Office; and a £100m Single Regeneration Fund, which will deliver 4,000 homes across the region.

How will local authorities be involved?

The pipeline of sites for the Single Regeneration Fund will be co-produced by LAs and the Combined Authority. Projects will be approved via the existing SAF process, with local authority leaders and deputies approving funding via Investment Board.

Housing

What will the deal achieve?

The deal gives the region increasing levels of influence and direction over Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) funding and spending decisions, beginning with an Affordable Homes Partnership with Homes England between 2023 and 2026 and leading to the devolution of AHP to the region at the next Spending Review. In addition, the region will now, for the first time, be able to use AHP funds for estate regeneration purposes.

What will we deliver?

At least £200m, and up to £400m, will be spent in the region via the Affordable Homes Programme between 2023 and 2026. This delivery will inform the negotiations for the successor programme post-2026.

How will local authorities be involved?

Local authorities will be key in identifying suitable sites for AHP, informing the joint pipeline and supporting the delivery of sites through coordination of planning processes and social housing development plans. Local authorities are still able to bid for AHP funding separately and can leverage the region's improved access to Homes England to escalate and resolve issues.

Business rates retention and Levelling Up Zones (see special feature)

Exec Lead for BRR: Linda Horne

What will the deal achieve?

The deal provides local authorities with certainty that they will be able to retain 100% of their business rates for the next 10 years, a marked improvement on the one year rolling arrangement at present and estimated to be worth £450 million to the region. This certainty will help to underpin additional, longer-term investment decisions where business rates incomes are likely to be stable.

The deal also allows the region to bring together regeneration levers to drive joined up investment and regeneration up to 6 Levelling Up Zones – including, for example, areas that could attract 100% business rate growth retention for 25 years – complementing the national Investment Zones programme.

What will we deliver?

Retained business rates would flow to local authorities. Once operational, the Zones would have local management structures with some outcome reporting to the Combined Authority.

How will local authorities be involved?

Constructive engagement across the region is already underway to co-design the designation of Levelling Up Zone sites, as presented to Board in August.

	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	2024	2025
Growth Zones	◆ Negotiate Zone criteria with DLUHC ◆									
	◆ Co-develop Zone proposals with LAs ◆		◆ WMCA Board approval for Zone proposals ◆							
			◆ negotiate interventions with DLUHC ◆				◆ Sites announced at assumed SR ◆			
SRF	DLUHC Bus Case to HMT ◆◆		Negotiate Fund T&Cs ◆◆		Funding begins for projects up to FY 25/26					
AHP	◆ Engage LAs to ensure pipeline is <u>uptodate</u> ◆									
	◆ Create joint AHP team with HE ◆◆		◆ Develop strategy, joint pipeline ◆◆						◆ Full devo of AHP from assumed ◆	
Partnerships	◆ Negotiate Strat Place Partnership, Public Land Reform, AHP agreements with Govt ◆									
					◆ Consult LAs on emerging proposals ◆		◆ WMCA Board approval ◆			
BRR	Negotiation with DLUHC on design of 10yr BRR ◆						◆ Scheme announced at assumed SR ◆			
	Consult LAs on DLUHC proposals ◆								◆ Beginning of 10 Year BRR ◆	

Pride in Place

Inclusive Growth Fundamentals: Affordable and Safe places, Connected Communities

Page 174
Exec Lead: Ed Cox

Homelessness

What will the deal achieve?

The deal commits to further work between the WMCA, Homes England and DWP to secure investment and systems change to join up the homes and jobs agenda for young people across the region. Additionally, in Birmingham, investment has been secured to enable homeless families living in Temporary Accommodation to move into the private rented sector.

What will be delivered?

An expansion of the Live and Work model in additional localities across the region and a Rent Simplification pilot for young people in supported accommodation to enable transition into work. Birmingham City Council will use the £3.8m secured to lease good quality private sector accommodation for homeless families living in Temporary Accommodation.

How will local authorities be involved?

For the Live and Work expansion and Rent Simplification pilot local authority partners will be engaged regularly via the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce and the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce Members Advisory Group. The Rent Simplification pilot proposal is being developed in partnership with DWP and local authority benefits teams. As we progress the feasibility of the model and establish mechanisms for delivery, we will work with our local authority partners to establish how this could be delivered across local authorities within commissioned supported accommodation for young people. The investment to lease good quality private rented sector properties in Birmingham for homeless families, supporting Birmingham City Council's ongoing work to end the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for families, will be managed and delivered directly by Birmingham City Council and overseen by DLUHC.

Early Years

What will the deal achieve?

The deal invites engagement with government to explore pilot opportunities in relation to early years provision.

How will local authorities be involved?

The Combined Authority has encouraged the Regional Directors of Children's Services to take forward this opportunity.

Anti-social behaviour

What will the deal achieve?

The deal commits to further work between the region and Department for Transport (DfT) to explore how devolution could help to address anti-social behaviour on the public transport network. The deal also recognises the street-based anti-social behaviour issues facing local authorities.

What will be delivered?

Engagement between local authorities, the Combined Authority, central government and the Police and Crime Commissioner to explore ways to address these issues.

How will local authorities be involved?

Further engagement is needed to understand the policy options that could be available to the region.

What will the deal achieve?

The deal provides the means to coordinate and strengthen our cultural and heritage offer. The Regional Culture and Heritage Framework will align and maximise funding from arm’s length bodies, such as the Arts Council, including opportunities for co-investment and greater collaboration. DLUHC will also fund a Cultural Infrastructure programme to extend, refurb and improve cultural venues to better support our places, communities and citizens.

What will be delivered?

- A new partnership agreement with between the region and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and its arm’s length bodies, to align different funding streams and a Regional Cultural and Heritage Framework to guide its work;
- £4 million capital funding to support regional culture projects, building on the £4.1 committed through the Commonwealth Games Legacy Fund for culture.

How will local authorities be involved?

- Local authorities will be engaged in the development of the Culture and Heritage Framework through the Local Authority Cultural Officers Group;
- Each of the seven constituent authorities will receive a grant through the Cultural Heritage Infrastructure Fund.

	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	2024	2025
Partnership Agreement	Develop Regional Culture and Heritage Framework									
	Develop Arm's Length Body Partnership Agreement and Forward Plan									
Cultural Infrastructure	Business case finalisation					DLUHC approvals				
	Project implementation, delivery, evaluation									
Homelessness				monthly discussions with DWP to consider simplifying benefits systems, develop and design pilot						
	Follow-up with Homes England on LAs and RPs' bid development									
	Support DWP developed Shared Outcomes Fund bid									



West Midlands
Combined Authority

West Midlands ‘Trailblazer’ Deeper Devolution Deal: Implementation Plan

August 2023



West Midlands
Combined Authority



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Introduction

This document contains high-level implementation plans for each of the workstreams in the trailblazer deeper devolution deal (the deal), updated where relevant from the Implementation Plan shared with West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Board in June and complemented by the summary above. The deal was agreed in principle by the WMCA and His Majesty's Government (HMG) in March 2023. The purpose of this document is to provide WMCA Board with an overview of the implementation activities that are underway and scheduled.

Overview of the Deal

The deal contains over 190 separate commitments from Government to: fund specific projects; give the region greater influence over policies and programmes; confer a new function onto WMCA; and strengthen ways of working with Government across a range of policy areas.

For some of these commitments, there are deliverables or activities with set deadlines, which means the implementation plan can be relatively definitive in these areas. For other commitments, particularly those that commit to further co-production of policy, the outputs and attendant deadlines are less tightly defined. The implementation plans provided here therefore reflect the heterogeneity of the commitments.

The implementation of commitments will be an iterative and dynamic process, responding to new information from government and external events, further deliberations within the region and interdependencies between policy areas.

For example, any outcomes and metrics that the WMCA is required to report against to satisfy the scrutiny protocol (see section on Governance and Accountability) will have to respond to developments in negotiations over the single settlement (see section on Single Settlement, Fiscal devolution and Capital Funding), which are proceeding to different timescales. For this reason, it is not possible to write a definitive, single implementation plan that captures all of the relevant information. Where plans change, WMCA will work with regional partners to re-calibrate and evolve its response, such as through existing local authority reference groups. Deal implementation is necessarily an ongoing process and will require continued engagement and further detail to be added on to each workstream over time.

The rest of this Implementation Plan is divided into 25 different workstreams covering the different aspects of the deal. The sections are organised in the order of the deal text with cross-referencing to the relevant pages and paragraphs of the deal Text. Each section follows a similar format.

Governance and Accountability

Page 182

Deal text reference

Pages 9 to 14

Summary of deal commitments in this area

The deal:

- makes clear that the trailblazer commitments in general, and the single settlement commitment in particular (see page 6) are conditional on stronger scrutiny arrangements. There is also a move to standardise scrutiny processes across mayoral combined authorities (MCAs) through the publication of the English Devolution Accountability Framework;
- states that the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) will engage WMCA, and other MCAs, on the development of a 'scrutiny protocol' that sets out the relationship between the Mayor, the MCA and its scrutiny and audit functions. The scrutiny protocol will focus on ensuring that each institution has a sustained culture of scrutiny;
- includes measures to enhance the profile and quality of scrutiny committees within MCAs;
- builds on existing Mayor's Question Time, where the Mayor visits all parts of the region to take questions from the public and chaired by an independent person;
- suggests that where appropriate and only if requested, the Mayor and Portfolio Holders could attend up to one constituent council meeting a year;
- introduces quarterly broadcasted sessions with the Members of Parliament (MPs) representing West Midlands parliamentary constituencies where MPs will be able to scrutinise the Mayor; and
- reinforces existing practices at the WMCA where the Mayor and portfolio leads attend, when appropriate, WMCA Overview and Scrutiny committee meetings.

Legal or financial implications

- The scrutiny protocol and internal review of scrutiny function have potential legal and governance implications. The requirement to design and deliver new MPs sessions will need new, dedicated, resource.
- The deal requires an unspecified amount of funding support for communications and research to be given to chair of scrutiny committees.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Bob Sleigh

Exec Lead: Helen Griffiths

SRO: Julia Cleary

Reference Group: Via Overview & Scrutiny

How will this work be administered?

- WMCA Governance Team will lead the administration of new accountability and scrutiny arrangements.

How will this work be delivered?

- WMCA Governance Team will be responsible for delivering the MPs' sessions in collaboration with the Mayor's Office and Portfolio Holders.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Local authorities will be engaged on the development of terms of reference for new MPs' sessions through the overview and scrutiny process.
- Local authorities will be engaged on developments in the English Devolution Accountability Framework (EDAF), and will be consulted where the scrutiny protocol calls for action on the part of portfolio holders.
 - Local authorities will be engaged on the outcome of the internal review of scrutiny functions and will have a decision-making role on any proposed changes that are brought to WMCA Board.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Scrutiny protocol to be written – by summer 2023.
- Terms of reference for MPs' sessions – by summer 2023.
- 'Plain English guidance' to increase awareness across the region of the roles of the Mayor, MCA, local authorities and the government – expected by summer 2023.
- Review of Independent Review of Greater Manchester Combined Authority scrutiny arrangements and consider implementation - by March 2024.
- WMCA resolution to introduce the MPs' sessions – to be confirmed.

Outstanding issues and questions

- The relationship between the outcomes and metrics in the EDAF and those required for the single settlement is unclear.

Single Settlement, Fiscal Devolution and Capital funding

Page 184

Deal text reference

- Pages 17 to 18 for business rates retention
- Pages 21 to 23 for single settlement
- Page 69 for Digital, cultural and environmental projects
- Page 32, para 104, for the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- **Business rates retention (BRR).** over ten years will enable constituent authorities to retain 100% of the rates generated in their respective areas. This replaces the rolling BRR arrangements that have been in place as an annual pilot since 2017. Government has reserved the right to re-set (full or in part) the growth baseline and the ‘no detriment’ protection mechanism in the pilot has been removed. The ‘no detriment’ protection mechanism has not been used in over six years of the pilot so the absence of ‘no detriment’ protection in the deal is considered to be low risk.
- **Single settlement.** WMCA currently manage in the region of 100 individual grants from Government, all with their own declaration requirements and monitoring and reporting requirements ranging from light touch to considerably onerous. The implementation of a “single settlement” will simplify the overall funding landscape. The main characteristics of the single settlement will mean WMCA manages funding to correspond with five ‘functional pillars’: local growth and place, local transport, housing and regeneration, adult skills and net zero. The settlements are intended to cover an entire Spending Review period of typically 5 years. The region will no longer need to bid into specific competitive funding rounds but will instead receive future funding lines through allocation in exchange for agreeing a series of outputs and outcomes, with funding decisions to be taken via the region’s governance infrastructure.

- **Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension.** DLUHC committed to provide £60m to help address cost pressures on the Metro Extension project, subject to approval of a business case.
- **Digital, cultural and environmental projects.** DLUHC has committed to provide £25m capital funding for green and innovative projects, subject to approval of their respective business cases. The projects that will be, and are being, submitted to DLUHC for approval are: additional Air Quality monitors; a Cultural Heritage Infrastructure Fund, capital support for West Midlands Industrial Decarbonisation and Smart City Region.

Legal or financial implications

- **Business rate retention.** The deal does not provide any guidance on how retained business rates should be apportioned between local authorities and WMCA, but WMCA financial plans assume the existing arrangements will be maintained. This will be subject to local agreements and consents in due course. The outcome of this agreement has implications for the financial sustainability of WMCA. It is likely that local arrangements where local authorities pool gains to ‘bail out’ individual local authorities who suffer a detriment, as per the current pilot, could remain in the amended ten-year scheme, subject to local consents.

Single settlement. Until the scope of the settlement is agreed, which we are exploring within the region and engaging with Government on, it is not possible to firmly assess the quantum of funding that WMCA will receive through the settlement. WMCA has the option to not agree to an MoU on the terms of the single settlement with Government, should we consider it to be detrimental to the region. If the implementation of the single settlement lives up to its full potential, there are significant implications for how WMCA makes investment decisions and the governance, outcomes and data structures needed to support local decision making.

- **Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension.** None, as the business case for this project has already undergone significant development with the Department for Transport.
- **Digital, cultural and environmental projects.** None, as the business cases for each project have been under development for some time, some of which have gained approval from WMCA Executive Board and are ready to be submitted to DLUHC.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Bob Sleigh

Exec Lead: Linda Horne

SRO: Carl Pearson

Reference Group: LA Finance Directors

How will this work be administered?

- **Business rate retention.** This will be administered via the pre-existing mechanisms between LAs, WMCA and Government that have been in place since 2017.
- **Single settlement.** The single settlement will be administered by WMCA. The principles for how decisions will be taken is the subject of collaborative, on-going work across the region between the CA and LAs.
- **Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension.** This will be administered through the existing structures for the first phase of the Metro extension project.
- **Digital, cultural and environmental projects.** Each business case for these projects contains a management case that sets out how WMCA, and partner organisations in some instances, will administer these projects. See the relevant plans below for more detail

How will this work be delivered?

- **Single settlement.** The different projects or services funded through the single settlement will be delivered through a range of mechanisms, which can include direct delivery by a constituent authority. The purpose of the single settlement is to free the region from the top-down control and pre-definition of delivery arrangements associated with the grant making process, with greater trust and flexibility locally to deliver against 'outcomes' agreed between the region and HMT. The arrangement gives far more scope for the region to decide collectively how funding should be delivered.
- **Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension.** This will be delivered through contract structures already put in place by Transport for the West Midlands (TfWM) for these works.
- **Digital, cultural and environmental projects.** Each business case for these projects contains a management case that sets out how WMCA, and partner organisations in some instances, will administer these projects. See the relevant plans below for more detail.

Single Settlement, Fiscal Devolution and Capital funding

Page 186

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

WMCA is engaging across the region with LAs and with HMT/DLUHC on the design of single settlement. The single settlement MoU will go to a WMCA Board meeting in the autumn.

- The Finance Directors' group will be informed of single settlement and business rate retention developments and have the opportunity to advise and influence accordingly.
- Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Stakeholder Board will continue to engage Dudley and Sandwell representatives about progress with Metro.

Key milestones and deliverables

- **Single settlement.** We are working towards agreeing an MoU for the single settlement in the autumn, most likely linked to the Autumn Statement. The date for the Autumn Statement is yet to be formally confirmed but November is a possibility.
- **Digital, cultural and environmental projects.** The 4 projects to be funded from the £25m allocation have been designed to be initiated and deliver benefits over the next one, or in some cases two, financial years. The next milestone is to ensure these refreshed business cases complete the WMCA internal assurance and governance process as soon as possible, so they can be submitted to DLUHC for final approval. We would hope to have achieved this by mid-summer.
- **Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Extension funding.** a refreshed business case is required for DLUHC. The business case is already well developed and had challenge from DfT. In order to de-risk the delivery of this project, it is essential this proceeds through WMCA governance processes as soon as possible. WMCA are in dialogue with Government with respect to developing an appropriate timeline for submitting the business case to secure the funding.
- **Digital, cultural and environmental projects.** Each project business case sets out how the projects will be administered, which varies in each case. See the plans below (for example, culture and digital).

Outstanding issues and questions

- The region is working collaboratively through the range of policy and delivery implications of the single settlement, which we expect will require significant further engagement over the coming year and beyond.



Data

Page 188

Deal text reference

Pages 15 to 16 for Data

Summary of deal commitments in this area

The deal commits the Government and WMCA to transform its approach to accessing, using, sharing, and reusing data. It does so through:

- **Legal:** a legal gateway for the safe sharing of data;
- **Accountability:** a data partnership for timely access to data at right geographical level;
- **Engagement:** representation on the Chief Data Officers Council and the establishment of a Local Chief Data Officers Council; and
- **Innovation:** working with the Spatial Data Unit, hosting a data symposium, and the training and development of data experts

These advances in data capability should then be used to support decision making, evaluation and monitoring of the Single Settlement (see below).

Legal or financial implications

- We need to understand the extent to which: the WMCA is compliant with Government Functional Standards on data / data maturity, information security, and assured organisational connectivity, whether the WMCA has appropriate information governance arrangements in place and platforms to store shared data.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Bob Sleight

Exec Lead: Ed Cox

SRO: Si Chun Lam

Reference Group: New LA data officers group

How will this work be administered?

- There is an existing Research, Intelligence, Analysis and Data (RIAD) Steering Group in place, with a Terms of Reference refreshed in November 2022.
- A task-and-finish group reporting to the Steering Group will be best placed to lead on the data workstream, in line with the WMCA's RIAD Implementation Plan (and the Data & Analytics Development Plan)

How will this work be delivered?

- This is set out in the existing RIAD (and Data & Analytics Development Plan).
- The work will be delivered by a series of task-and-finish groups reporting to the WMCA Steering Group, led by the Head of Research, Intelligence, and Inclusive Growth.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Constituent local authorities will be engaged on the development and content of the Data Partnership through a new LA officers data group - West Midlands Insights on Society and Economy. .

Key milestones and deliverables

The work will be delivered as follows:

Legal:

- Data audit: as soon as possible, the WMCA should commission and independent data audit to ensure that the WMCA is fully compliant with those standards.
- Data partnership: alongside this, the WMCA will need to identify appropriate people to negotiate a data partnership.

Accountability:

- Compliance: the WMCA will need to ensure we have a process in place for information security and assurance, research compliance.
- ‘Conway’ data platform: develop a data platform for storing data from different sources.

Engagement:

- Representation: a standing item on our research and intelligence journey on the WMCA Exec Board.
- Partnership: establishment of a Local Authority Data Group with constituent local authority insight leads.

Innovation:

- People: developing job families aligned to civil service digital, data analysis and technology roles; developing expectations and standards for data literacy across all internal roles,
- Influence: develop partnerships and networks with constituent local authorities, research partners and private sector to fully maximise opportunities with SDU and the data symposium.
- Data symposium: hold a data symposium (tentative plan for late-2024).

Outstanding issues and questions

WMCA

- Governance arrangements: no timescales or details established yet.
- Appropriate resourcing: no approved funding for the delivery of these programmes of work as of yet.
- Health: the health element specifically looks at working with Health and Wellbeing Boards, and NHS bodies.

Government

- Timescales and /or further details needed from Government regarding the Chief Data Officers Council, the Local Chief Data Officers Council, the Spatial Data Unit, the Data symposium and the accountability framework.

Levelling Up Zones

Page 190

Deal text reference

Pages 16 to 19 on Levelling Up Zones

This section excludes discussion of Investment Zones, which were not formally part of the deal offer

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- The deal commits Government to work with WMCA to designate a number of specific 'Levelling Up Zones' (up to 6) within which 100% of business rates growth above an agreed baseline will be retained for 25 years, subject to a business case. Retained rates would not be subject to reset at any national reset within this period. WMCA is encouraged to support the success of sites by aligning other investments with them.
- Investment Zones were announced as part of the 2023 Spring Budget outside of the formal Devolution Deal: and more detailed guidance on these has been published for these than is currently available for Levelling Up Zones.

Legal or financial implications

- The Business Rate Retention commitment within Levelling Up Zones requires a statutory instrument, similar to the process for designating Enterprise Zones
- Fiscal/financial incentives – although HMG has not identified additional government funding/fiscal streams, designation of Levelling Up Zones could act as a catalyst for coalescing other local and regional funding streams, which will be identified according to the specific needs and opportunities of each Levelling Up Zone.
- Governance – to be confirmed but initial discussions with DLUHC have indicated that as Levelling Up Zones were identified as 'locally led', the governance structures are likely to incorporate: an overarching West Midlands/DHLUC Levelling Up Zones Programme Board with Individual Levelling Up Zones Boards for each area designated.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Sharon Thompson

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Executive Director for Strategy, Integration and Net Zero

SRO: Jonathan Skinner

Reference Group: LA DSG, SLAOG and Directors of Economic Development Officers' groups

How will this work be administered?

- Programme Board to be advised, but likely to report to WMCA Board.
- Individual Levelling Up Zones to have dedicated Board & governance agreed by LA(s).
- Designated local authority areas will have responsibility for administering the delivery of their respective areas, while the WMCA will be responsible for liaison with DLUHC to ensure compliance with Devolution Deal expectations.

How will this work be delivered?

- The delivery of Levelling Up Zones will be led by respective local authorities, who will be accountable for the delivery of expected outcomes, with support from WMCA where required. The designation process is still to be confirmed, based on work already undertaken with local authority partners in the development of the initial round of Investment Zones (under the Truss government) which has established a portfolio of development and regeneration opportunities.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

Levelling Up Zones– require a Designation framework to be developed with DLUHC. WMCA will work closely with its local authority partners both bilaterally and through the DSG during this process to ensure designation mechanisms are fair and transparent.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Autumn 2023: LUZ proposals are submitted to Government in line with the national Investment Zone programme.
- April 2024: It is anticipated that LUZs – particularly those that contain business rate retention powers – will commence, aligned to the Investment Zone programme.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Designation process – liaison with DLUHC underway
- Governance – outline timeline in development
- Administrative & delivery arrangements etc to be agreed with local authority partners

Transport Planning, Innovation and Mass Transit

Page 192

Deal text reference

Pages 24 to 27 for transport planning and innovation, page 30 for mass transit

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- WMCA to deliver a pioneering Local Transport Plan (LTP) approach which embeds quantifying carbon reductions.
- TfWM to establish a transport ‘sandbox’ with government with associated use cases and other innovation activity.
- TfWM to deliver an influencing transport lab.
- WMCA to develop a proposal for the West Midlands to bid to host the 2027 World Intelligent Transport Systems Congress.
- WMCA to develop a local, last mile freight and logistics programme.
- Supporting the development of the Very Light Railway in Coventry.

Legal or financial implications

- The LTP and ITL programmes have resources secured from the Transport Levy and DfT grants respectively.
- Transport sandbox scope will be subject to detailed discussion with DfT. The individual use cases will need to be assessed for legal, equalities and financial implications.
- A funded World Intelligent Transport Systems Congress bid will need to be developed with DfT including detailed financial case.
- VLR development is subject to Single Assurance Framework.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Mike Bird

Exec Lead: Anne Shaw, Executive Director, TfWM

SRO: Mike Waters, Director of Policy Strategy Innovation, TfWM

Reference Group: STOG

How will this work be administered?

- Some approvals required by WMCA Board, oversight by Strategic Transport Board.
- Delivery implementation monitoring by Senior Transport Officers Group and TfWM Strategy Board.

How will this work be delivered?

- The Sandbox requires a new relationship with government, and local authorities are a key part of that approach. This also applies to the ITL programme and possible local, last mile freight and logistics programme. The freight programme can enhance Plan for Growth implementation and the sandbox kerbside management use case.
- Last mile freight logistics will be delivered by Local Authorities within a regional framework
- Local Transport Plans continue to be developed and delivered by Local Authorities within an agreed regional framework



Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

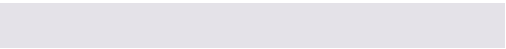
These areas are complex in nature therefore require a combination of engagement, codesign, consultation and delivery between authorities and TfWM, and other regional partners.

- For example, Coventry City Council continues to lead R&D and the testing of VLR technology. TfWM working with Birmingham City Council and Solihull MBC, have commissioned a future mass transit study, including investigating future VLR opportunities for East Birmingham and North Solihull Corridor (aligning to the Levelling Up Zone for that area).

Key milestones and deliverables

- Winter 2022/23 – 2025: ITL programme
- Spring 2023 Operational transport sandbox begins.
- Autumn 2023: Developed use cases.
- Winter 2023: Published LTP QCR targets.
- 2023-2026: Proven VLR technology and city demonstrator delivered.
- 2025 onwards: Research and development helps to update the current TWA Order processes and regulations.
- 2027 onwards: Full VLR routes could form part of a CRSTS2 programme.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Uncertainty on national legislation and policy reforms, especially for new low speed zero emission vehicle categories.
- 

Bus and Bus Services

Page 194

Deal text reference

Page 27

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Devolving Commercial BSOG to the WMCA following a national reform policy consultation process.
- Implementing a further set of Bus Bye Laws, with TfWM having the ability to enforce bye laws on bus vehicles to help improve safety.

Legal or financial implications

- Commercial BSOG: Transfer of powers from the Transport Secretary of State (s154 (1) of Transport Act 2000) to the Mayor (on behalf of the WMCA). This is subject to formal public consultation and a legislative process.
- WMCA resource implications will need to be assessed as the detail of statutory instrument develops and be considered alongside other bus transformation work. Resources will need to be allocated to fully administer BSOG, once devolved.
- Further bus bye laws would be subject to detailed EqIA and public consultation. This will be progressed through a scoping exercise – the expectation is that this can be funded via existing resources.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Mike Bird

Exec Lead: Anne Shaw, Executive Director, TfWM

SRO: Pete Bond, Director of Integrated Transport Services, TfWM and Mark Corbin, Director of Network Resilience

Reference Group: STOG

How will this work be administered?

- Schemes approvals will be required by WMCA Board, with oversight by Strategic Transport Board, TDC and Bus Alliance Board. Scrutiny sessions may also be required.
- Delivery implementation monitoring by STOG and TfWM Strategy Board.

How will this work be delivered?

TfWM reform priorities for commercial BSOG are: -

- Incentivising greener vehicle fleet investment and maximising our position as the UK investment leader in decarbonising bus fleets.
- Incentivising and directing private bus operators to expand bus services into areas of poor accessibility.

TfWM and DfT have already begun to identify cross boundary bus service issues around BSOG devolution.

TfWM will undertake a full scoping exercise with DLUHC and DfT on how to speedily enact a further set of bye laws including on the bus vehicles.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- TfWM reform priorities for devolved commercial BSOG will be subject to engagement with authorities through STOG, EP reference group and the Bus Alliance Board.
- Engagement and codesign will be required for bus bye laws/ASB powers implementation. This will involve partners such as local authorities, DfT, DLUHC, West Midlands Police/OPCC/BTP and transport operators.

Key milestones and deliverables

Summer 2023: TfWM to respond to national policy consultation process for BSOG reform.

Summer 2023: WMCA to respond to forthcoming consultation on national ASB Action Plan.

- 2023/2024: DfT to enact BSOG reforms and future bus bye laws for TfWM.
- 2024/2025: Reformed commercial BSOG devolved.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Uncertainty on when DfT will formally consult on national policy reforms and how we fully influence that to meet our desired outcomes.

Roads

Page 196

Deal text reference

Page 30

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Government will work with the WMCA to explore opportunities for traffic officers on the Key Route Network.
- Government is considering options for tackling pavement parking and will work with WMCA to explore appropriate powers for mayoral combined authorities and their constituent authorities in this area.

Legal or financial implications

- Supporting resources would need to be secured and funding identified, and necessary legal permission in place for allowing traffic officers on the Key Route Network.
- Pavement parking powers require national legislation changes.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Mike Bird

Exec Lead: Anne Shaw, Executive Director, TfWM

SRO: Mark Corbin, Director of Network Resilience

Reference Group: STOG

How will this work be administered?

- Approvals will be required from WMCA Board, with oversight by Strategic Transport Board.
- Delivery implementation monitoring by STOG and TfWM Strategy Board.

How will this work be delivered?

- Pavement parking powers would be sought on behalf of constituent local authorities. It would be a decision for individual authorities to decide whether they wanted to enact these powers. TfWM would potentially support authorities to prepare schemes (similar to Moving Traffic Offence powers applications).

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- There will be commitment to engagement and the codesign of the traffic officer pilot
- Pavement parking enforcement would be a decision for individual authorities to decide whether they wanted to enact and deliver these powers (subject to national legislation and following guidance).

Key milestones and deliverables

- Summer/Autumn 2023: TfWM to develop a full business case with relevant partner organisations.
- 2024 onwards: approved business case and live trial operational.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Uncertainty on when DfT will publish its formal response to the 2020 pavement parking powers enforcement consultation and outlining next steps. Powers require national legislation changes.

Rail partnership with Great British Railways

Page 197

Deal text reference

Page 27 to 28

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- New partnership agreement between West Midlands Rail Exec (WMRE) and Great British Railways (GBR). WMRE is currently negotiating this agreement with the Great British Railways Transition Team (GBRTT) on behalf of the West Midlands region.

Legal or financial implications

- Short term resource is in place within WMRE. Additional medium-term resource may be required, subject to joint scoping and project planning with GBRTT.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Mike Bird

Exec Lead: Anne Shaw, Executive Director, TfWM

SRO: Mal Drury Rose, Executive Director (WMRE), Director of Rail (TfWM)

Reference Group: STOG

How will this work be administered?

- Approvals required by WMRE Board, and WMCA Board. Delivery implementation monitoring by WMRE Officers Group, STOG and TfWM Strategy Board.

How will this work be delivered?

- This partnership deal will outline WMRE's role in the future West Midlands rail industry and the commitments will be embedded in the outcomes that the partnership will achieve.
- The partnership will deliver greater local accountability and influence over rail services in the region.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- There is ongoing commitment to engagement with constituent authorities, through existing WMRE member and officer representation.

Key milestones and deliverables

- April 2023 – Sep 2023: Joint implementation teams.
- October 2023 – March 2024: Joint development of partnership.
- April 2024 – December 2024: Pilots underway as partnerships embedded into GBR regions.
- January 2025 onwards: Go-Live.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Although a GBR transition team has been established within Network Rail, GBR reforms are subject to a supporting Transport/Rail Bill, which has not been laid before Parliament yet. This means there is uncertainty about fundamental questions such as the exact role, responsibilities and timescales for establishing a functioning GBR

Affordable Homes Programme

Page 198

Deal text reference

Pages 33 to 36

Summary of deal commitments in this area

Phase 1: 2023-26

- WMCA will set the overall strategic direction for the deployment of the AHP in the region for the first time outside of London.
- Homes England will invest at least £200 million of AHP funding within the WMCA area by March 2026 with a clear ambition for WMCA, local partners and Homes England to work together to invest up to £400 million to build more social and affordable homes by 2026.

Phase 2: Post 2026

- AHP funding will be devolved to WMCA – empowering WMCA to take many of the decisions currently taken by Homes England (around sites, providers and standards) – while continuing to partner with local authorities and HE. In this new ‘trailblazing’ model of delivery, the WMCA will make the key strategic decisions over local investment and spend of Affordable Homes Programme in the WMCA area in line with its strategic framework.

Legal or financial implications

- Subject to review & amendment of existing Homes England governance processes for current programme (2021-26): administration of funds will continue to sit with HE, with oversight & direction from WMCA. The implementation plan will explore the options for this process in discussion with HE and DLUHC, and in consultation with LA partners.
- There are no revenue funding inclusions within the deal for this workstream, which is currently being managed through existing resources. The scale of capital funding will be dependent upon the region providing a strong pipeline and delivery performance.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Ian Courts

Exec Lead: John Godfrey, Interim Executive Director for Housing, Property & Regeneration

SRO: Rob Lamond

Reference Group: LA DSG and SLAOG officer groups

How will this work be administered?

- Through the Housing & Land Delivery Board reporting to WMCA Board for Phase 1. Early discussions are commencing with DLUHC and HE to ensure an appropriate agreement is in place by Autumn 2023.
- Phase 2 will require further governance arrangements to be agreed with DLUHC and HE.

How will this work be delivered?

Delivery of the AHP up to 2026 will continue to be administered by Homes England but with a stronger strategic role for WMCA, with delivery of new affordable homes coming from investment into schemes with local authorities, registered providers and other providers.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- LA partners will be closely consulted through DSG and SLAOG groups as greater clarity emerges from discussions with DLUHC and HE colleagues. The deal is clear that existing relationships and agreements will be preserved through the new arrangements and that the deal should represent nil detriment to partners in the region.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Outline agreement DLUHC-HE-WMCA in place Autumn 2023.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Joint scheme pipeline & opportunities need to be developed with constituent members.
- Phase 2 details still to be developed.

Land Reform & Public Land

Page 200

Deal text reference

Pages 36 to 37

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- A formal public land reform partnership with the government led by Cabinet Office will be signed which provides WMCA with new strategic leadership, and clarity on Government Department/agency land and buildings, centring on decisions on disposals/development in the Government estate in the region.
- The new partnership with Cabinet Office will include a joint plan to anticipate where there may be potential upcoming disposals and reconfiguration of government land and buildings within the West Midlands to drive regeneration outcomes.

Legal or financial implications

- Legal & governance process for WMCA involvement in HMG decision making procedures to be developed in collaboration with Cabinet Office (and in accordance with WMCA existing decision-making governance).
- Funding to support this will need to be considered further through discussions with Cabinet Office.
- Financial implications from decisions ultimately made in the joint approach to Government land and assets will need to work through the partnership agreement to ensure appropriate protections are in place.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Ian Courts

Exec Lead: John Godfrey, Interim Executive Director for Housing, Property & Regeneration

SRO: Rob Lamond

Reference Group: LA DSG and SLAOG officer groups

How will this work be administered?

- Joint working with the Cabinet Office, LGA and WMCA is currently in place with the Place Pilots programme. This programme will build upon these existing mechanisms and report via Housing & Land Delivery Board to WMCA Board.

How will this work be delivered?

- Partnership Plan will be co-developed by WMCA with the Cabinet Office.
- Individual land disposals/asset work will include a wide range of local and national bodies.
- WMCA will also work closely with local authority partners to understand if they have ownerships that they would like to identify as part of any comprehensive development scheme.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Local authorities will be engaged through the DSG and SLAOG groups to keep them informed of progress with Government during the negotiations with Cabinet Office. Clearly, once the agreement is in place and assets or land proposals are developing, LA partners will be invited to participate and co-design and delivery solutions if they wish to put forward their own land/assets.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Indicative target for a draft agreement with Cabinet Office is Autumn 2023.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Legal, Metrics and Evaluation and partnership plan TBD

Single Regeneration Fund

Page 201

Deal text reference

Pages 31 to 32

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- The government will devolve £100 million brownfield funding to WMCA to administer and deploy to drive placemaking, housing and urban regeneration across the whole region within this spending review period, supporting WMCA to deliver an output of 4,000 homes, as well as (for the first time) commercial and mixed-use development. This is subject to an internal business case between DLUHC- HMT, which WMCA have contributed to.
- WMCA will deploy the funds at scale and pace to de-risk stalled and challenging housing, urban and commercial development sites ensuring the overall programme delivers the outputs agreed with HMG.

Legal or financial implications

- The SRF will require a new Programme Business Case to be developed under the SAF process.
- Legal agreements of T&CS required with HMG
- Financial M&E will be undertaken on programme and individual schemes
- There is currently no identified revenue funding available to WMCA to administer this programme
- Profiling of the devolution of the £100m is currently under discussion with DLUHC with a regional preference for a single lump sum from the outset.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Ian Courts

Exec Lead: John Godfrey, Interim Executive Director for Housing, Property & Regeneration

SRO: To be confirmed

Reference Group: LA DSG officer group

How will this work be administered?

- Funds will be deployed by WMCA via the Single Assurance Framework consistent with the criteria and approach used for existing Housing & Land funds.

How will this work be delivered?

- Schemes will be promoted by public and private sector partners who will deliver the outputs and outcomes.
- Key priority schemes are identified through regular engagement by WMCA with LAs and the private sector to identify and remove barriers to regeneration and development and achieve agreed outcomes from funding.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Local authorities will be able to submit schemes to the SRF under existing procedures.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Devolution of funding anticipated Summer 2023 subject to HMG business case processes and profiling of allocation.
- Target of 4,000 new homes set to accompany this fund
- Other targets to be confirmed.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Clarification on T&Cs is ongoing with DLUHC.
- Internal HMG funding approval process and allocation profiling agreement.

Skills

Page 202

Deal text reference

Pages 39 to 43

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Creation of a joint governance board to provide oversight of post 16 technical education and skills in West Midlands. Our current intention is to build on our existing Skills Advisory Board, and to integrate with the Board referenced as part of the employment support workstream.
- WMCA to have strategic oversight of post-16 skills offer linked to delivering the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), including a role in signing off the application for the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF).
- Free courses for jobs: WMCA will have additional flexibility in how they can spend this existing budget in 23/24; Once 80% of the budget has been delivered in year, funds will be devolved. Funding will move into a single settlement in next SR.
- Careers: joint governance of careers in the West Midlands; WMCA to have a role in oversight of current contract, and work with DfE to shape and manage performance of future contracts. New pilot funding to respond to career priorities for those at risk of being NEET.

Legal or financial implications

- WMCA are already in receipt of Bootcamp and FCFJ funding. There will be no new monies for these programmes, though there will be greater flexibility in how funds can be used.
- There will be a small amount of pilot funding for careers, value to be confirmed.
- At present, we plan for a Skills function to form part of the formal public consultation and legislative approvals process. However, we are confirming with DfE to what extent the new Skills commitments in the deal amount to a new function.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr George Duggins

Exec Lead: Clare Hatton, Director of Employment and Skills

SRO: Fiona Aldridge

Reference Group: LA Employment & Skills Officers Group

How will this work be administered?

Funds will be deployed through existing granted and procured arrangements with LAs, colleges and other training providers. Priorities for new or flexible investment will be identified through:

- Engagement with Skills Advisory Board (advisory) and Economic Growth Board (decision making). LAs are represented on both Boards.
- Discussions will also be held with LA employment & skills officers group, that meets on a monthly basis.
- We are currently exploring the role and remit of the new Board – and its integration with the Board out in the employment support strand.

How will this work be delivered?

FCFJ and Bootcamp funding will be delivered through existing mechanisms – via our grant funded and contracted providers. In addition to the groups/Boards identified above, we will be holding bi-laterals with each LA in which we will discuss priorities for new flexibilities in each area.

- We are currently in discussions with DfE as to how wider commitments will be delivered. We have met with relevant senior staff and are establishing regular meetings to ensure progress. Further detail is not currently available, but we will update as the work progresses.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Local authorities will be consulted on local need and priorities for investment.
- As grant-funded learning providers, LAs in many parts of the region are also delivery partners.
- WMCA will work with LAs to co-develop the all-age carers strategy and the NEET pilots.

Key milestones and deliverables

Ongoing. A series of key milestones and deliverables to be developed.

- LSIP/LSIF – Skills Advisory Board, June 23

Outstanding issues and questions

- We are awaiting further information and engagement from DfE.

Employment Support

Page 204

Summary of deal commitments in this area

Creation of a regional Labour Market Partnership Board. Our current intention is to build on our existing Skills Advisory Board, and to integrate with the Board referenced as part of the skills workstream.

- The deal commits to a co-design approach to all future contracted employment support programmes, with delegated delivery on a CA footprint.

Note – while there are no new contracted employment programmes expected in this SR, we will be working with DWP to shape the Universal Support Offer that was announced in the budget alongside the deal.

Legal or financial implications

- WMCA will be commissioning contracted employment programmes on behalf of DWP, on a CA footprint. Details and processes to be agreed with DWP.
- This may require legislative change, as well as changes to DWP wider commercial model.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr George Duggins

Exec Lead: Clare Hatton, Director of Employment and Skills

SRO: Fiona Aldridge

Reference Group: LA Employment & Skills Officers Group

How will this work be administered?

Priorities for contracted employment programmes in the WMCA area will be identified through:

- Engagement with Skills Advisory Board (advisory) and Economic Growth Board (decision making). LAs represented on both.
- Discussions will also be held with LA employment & skills officers group, that meets on a monthly basis, and is already considering UKSPF employment support investment.
- We are currently exploring the role and remit of the new Board

How will this work be delivered?

- Discussions with DWP are on-going as to how this work will be delivered, with key contacts now identified.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Local authorities will be consulted on local need and priorities for investment, to inform co-design with DWP. This will ensure alignment with UKSPF investment on employment support.

Key milestones and deliverables

- A series of key milestone and deliverables to be developed.

Outstanding issues and questions

- We are awaiting further information and engagement from DWP. In addition to DDD arrangements, this will also involve opportunities to shape wider budget announcements including the Universal Support Offer and Work Well Partnerships.



Innovation

Page 206

Deal text reference

Pages 47 to 49

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Strategic Innovation Partnership with Government
- Working in partnership to grow innovation clusters (innovation pilots & programmes):
 1. Innovation accelerator (already funded and being delivered/evaluation underway)
 2. Innovate UK regional action plan
 3. Innovation adoption & diffusion pilot/s
 4. FE Innovation pilot
 5. Locally led place-based knowledge transfer programmes
 6. Innovative procurement pilot
- As far as possible any work on these commitments will align with the priority spatial areas (Investment Zone, LUZs, etc.), and the work of Business Growth West Midlands, using each place's innovation priorities.

Legal or financial implications

- No legal implications at this stage.
- Ref commitment 2-6, new pilot programmes will require Innovate UK programme board approval and possibly DSIT & HM Treasury spending approvals.

Where these commitments involve new spending for or by the region, key decisions will be taken via the Economic Growth Board, Investment Board and WMCA Board (as with Innovation Accelerator).

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: TBC

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Executive Director, SINZ

SRO: Jonathan Skinner

Reference Group: LA Directors of Economic Development group

How will this work be administered?

- Within the West Midlands, direction will be steered by the WM Innovation Board, working in an advisory capacity to the Economic Growth Board who take any strategic decisions. A representative of City of Wolverhampton Council is invited to the Innovation Board in their capacity as Portfolio Lead for Economy & Innovation to strengthen local authority links.
- Supported directly by WMCA officers, the Innovation Board's direction will be developed in conjunction with:
 - o WM Directors of Economic Development
 - o University leaders, with research-intensive universities providing specialist advice on relevant areas.

How will this work be delivered?

- At a national level, a senior Partnership will be put in place to provide the opportunity to articulate its research and development priorities to UK Research and Innovation and Science Ministers.
- This will be supported by joint work on the analysis of public research and development investment, working most closely with those organisations that do most research.
- Government and the WMCA will develop measures to evaluate impact.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

Local authorities will be consulted about innovation priorities and the proposed content of joint innovation plans with Government agencies through the Directors of Econ Dev group (advisory), along with the Innovation Board. Decisions will be via the Economic Growth Board and WMCA Board/Investment Board (whether policy or financial matters).

Key milestones and deliverables

- First meeting of the ministerial-level Strategic Innovation Partnership sought for autumn 2023.
- Innovation Accelerator is live, with 5 projects receiving £33m in total to March 2025.
- Innovate UK regional action plan launched on 20 July with milestones for particular commitments within that plan being overseen by the Innovation Board.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Nationally:
 - the degree of alignment between DSIT, UKRI and its research councils and agencies.
 - Government's timelines for commitments, particularly the various pilots in the DDD and their procurement routes.
- Within the region, R&D institutions like universities and catapults need to forge a clear understanding about their priorities for boosting research and innovation income, linked to wider economic objectives.
- Ensuring strong connections with complementary agendas – particularly on FDI, skills, land supply and business support which all can help nurture strong place-based innovation clusters.

Business Productivity

Page 208

Deal text reference

Pages 50 to 52

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Establish a Strategic Productivity Partnership between WMCA and DBT, DLUHC, DCMS to bring greater coherence to business support and finance landscape to boost enterprise, business growth and jobs.
- This is based upon WMCA's role as the lead institution for integrating business productivity interventions at the city region level and discrete roles in respect of national programmes and agencies (e.g. Help to Grow; British Business Bank, etc.).
- Closer relationship with the British Business Bank.

Legal or financial implications

None

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: TBC

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Executive Director, SINZ

SRO: Jonathan Skinner

Reference Group: LA Business Support Officers group

How will this work be administered?

- WMCA and Government to initiate the Strategic Productivity Partnership.
- Regional direction to be steered by the Economic Growth Board.
- Fortnightly delivery meetings with local authority business support officers.
- External technical input via an expert panel.

How will this work be delivered?

Delivery is likely to continue to be through a mixed model, albeit with stronger coordinate and coherence within the region's economic strategy objectives (West Midlands Plan for Growth, Inclusive Growth Framework, etc.):

- National DBT schemes (Help to Grow, Made Smarter, Export Academy) and the potential to co-design new pilots.
- Business Growth West Midlands, funded by UK SPF and including local provision through a hub-and-spoke model with some specialist regional-wide commissioned programmes.
- Local authority 'spokes' provide opportunity to align with core statutory functions (planning, trading standards, etc.).
- Alignment with complementary regional offers (skills, net zero, energy & digital infrastructure, transport, inward investment).
- Greater coordination and collaboration with private sector (e.g. banks, accountants, consultants)

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Deliver – local authority-based delivery is at the centre of the Business Growth West Midlands hub-and-spoke model and will be developed through the fortnightly delivery meetings with local authority business support officers.

Key milestones and deliverables

Develop scope for Strategic Productivity Partnership with DBT and across Government (summer 2023) working towards the first meeting (October 2023).

- Exploration of the scope to include business support in the context of the single settlement (summer 2023).
- Agree closer relationship between WMCA and British Business Bank (by October 2023).
- Establish Expert Panel for technical insight, build the evidence base and logic chain with Government about the key issues to boost productivity across the region (by autumn 2023).
- Sharpen the interface with private sector providers, building upon the Business Growth West Midlands offer (by autumn 2023).
- Develop options for harnessing Help to Grow and Made Smarter alumni activity within the Business Growth West Midlands system (by autumn 2023).
- Monitoring and evaluation framework (ongoing).

Outstanding issues and questions

- Resolve representation of WMCA on British Business Bank governance bodies for Midlands Engine Investment Fund.
- Understand relevance of UK Infrastructure Bank for WMCA – particularly on region's infrastructure funding needs.

Trade & Investment and Places for Growth

Page 210

Deal text reference

Pages 53 to 56 for Trade and Investment, Page 70 for Places for Growth

Summary of deal commitments in this area

Trade & Investment (T&I) elements of the deal, DBT will:

- Recognise the West Midlands Growth Company (WMGC) as the lead agency and adopt the WMCA economic geography for T&I, co-developing an investment plan.
- Provide a convening role to increase the international profile of the region as an investment destination.

In partnership with WMCA/WMGC, DBT will:

- Co-develop a West Midlands international strategy and delivery plan spanning both trade and investment.
- Review key account management (with a view to a longer-term financial commitment) and share intelligence
- Support the recruitment and management of business focussed trade mission to accompany mayor-led visits
- Seek to improve the take up of significant WMCA-based companies in ministerial and high-profile trade missions
- Agree for a UK export academy.
- Jointly develop WMCA-specific events and other activity such as sector themed workshops, sub-regional initiatives and supply chain projects.

The region will:

- Provide signposting to public support
- Invest in skills pipeline development and the formation of a transport and infrastructure cluster.

In terms of Places for Growth, the Deal commits to:

- Continued relocation of civil and public service roles into the region, and the development of a transport and infrastructure cluster through investment into skills pipeline development.
- Government working with the WMCA to explore further opportunities for programmes to develop skills and career pathways into the civil service and public services linked to Transport & infrastructure cluster.
- Establishment of a West Midlands Fast Stream Pilot, to deliver a pipeline of civil servant talent and skills.

Legal or financial implications

NA

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: TBC

WMCA Executive Lead: Ed Cox, Executive Director, SINZ

WMGC SRO: Dan Storer

DBT lead for the T&I elements: TBD

Reference Group: LA Directors of Econ Dev Group

How will this work be administered?

- WMGC will ensure WMCA and LAs are consulted and informed as appropriate – including through the Directors of Economic Development meeting and the WMGC Board and will escalate key decisions to the Economic Growth Board.
- The Places for Growth work will require the creation of a working group with key partners. The groups and Board mentioned above will also be engaged and informed of developments as appropriate.

How will this work be delivered?

The T&I work will largely be delivered in partnership between WMGC and DBT, consulting and informing WMCA and the LAs as appropriate.

- The Places for Growth work will be led by WMGC and WMCA, working closely with Cabinet Office and the Places for Growth team, consulting and informing WMCA and the LAs as appropriate. A shared engagement plan to establish the West Midlands as Transport Infrastructure cluster by HMG is required. Corresponding commitments by the Government Property Agency are required, to provide further space for relocating agencies and departments through acquisitions of new space within the region. .

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

Upon securing express permission from WMCA and Local Authorities (LAs), WMGC will act as the lead agency for the region in liaison with DBT.

- Our expectation is therefore that WMGC will lead the development and delivery of most elements of this part of the deal. WMGC will engage with local authorities throughout, using existing channels such as quarterly bilaterals, the Directors of Economic Development meeting, and the Economic Growth Board.
- In some areas – such as key account management and the nascent Strategic Relationship Management piece – local authorities will be consulted through bilaterals, the Directors of Economic Development meeting, and the Economic Growth Board. On this piece specifically, WMGC expects there will be an element of co-design and co-delivery.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Secured permission from WMCA and each LA for WMGC to be recognised as the lead agency for matters related to T&I by DBT.
- WMGC ‘lead agency’ recognition by WMCA and geographic footprint alignment; decision on DBT membership of WMGC.
- Emerging thinking on the West Midlands International Strategy brought to the Economic Growth Board in July 2023 ahead of further work and consultation through to the Autumn.
- Places for Growth overall target is to deliver increased relocations into regions by 2025
- Working arrangements in place to assess UK business environment and HMG-WMGC data sharing.
- MoU between WMGC, WMCA and Office for Investment; signposting arrangement between DBT.

Outstanding issues and questions

- On-going development of the international Strategy.
- While the DDD refers to the WMCA geography, further work is on-going to determine what exactly this covers (e.g. the seven Metropolitan authorities; the non-constituent members; etc.)
- In relation to Places for Growth, appropriate governance and decision-making process to be fully scoped.

Energy and Retrofit

Page 212

Deal text reference

Pages 57 to 61

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Piloting the devolution of Net Zero funding, including for retrofit, through allocation (from 2025).
- Develop local area energy plans across the WMCA area, and WMCA continuing to work with central Government to explore how local area energy plans and spatial planning could be meaningfully integrated.
- Confirming that the WMCA may assume the role of heat network zoning coordinator and play a key role in the delivery of heat decarbonisation infrastructure.
- Agreement to explore a range of potential funding options to pilot a new approach to transitioning businesses and clusters to a net zero energy system.
- An option to put forward a case for the WMCA to set minimum energy efficiency standards that exceed the national standards for the private rented sector.
- Requirement by Ofgem for National Grid Electricity Distribution to engage with WMCA to inform its business plan.
- Recognition by Ofgem of the need to look further at roles and responsibilities at a sub-national level (potential for a pilot).
- Trialling of novel approaches to energy innovation zones to inform investment planning.

Legal or financial implications

- Details of a retrofit funding settlement are to be negotiated, however we would expect this to include admin and ancillary funding; we do not expect any of our proposals to require a change to legislation.
- The LAEP and energy infrastructure commitments did not have a funding or statutory responsibility assigned to them so at this point there are no additional legal or financial implications.
- In assuming the role of the heat network zoning coordinator and heat network delivery it is expected that there will be some additional legal and financial implications, but what that will be is not fully clear at present as this is a developing area for Government.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr John Cotton

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Executive Director, SINZ

SRO: Cheryl Hiles & George Simms

Reference Group: New LA Retrofit Steering Group / LA Net Zero Directors Group

How will this work be administered?

- Via a newly established Retrofit Steering Group.
- Regular Net Zero Directors' meetings.
- To embed LAEP as a core function the "Local Area Energy Planning Co-ordination Group" has been created to form a two-way working relationship with the "Net Zero Infrastructure Delivery Panel".

How will this work be delivered?

For retrofit, the government will facilitate work ahead of the 2025 period to develop a business case, and design a pilot and evaluation approach, harnessing local authority best practice.

- WMCA will work up input to proposals with partners and gather evidence through the SMART Hub programme and local authority retrofit working group.
- If the WMCA or LAs are to adopt the role of heat network zoning coordinator, it will require support from central government.
- For local area energy planning there is no government facilitation beyond their support for the programme, but engagement with DLUHC would be useful to share learnings.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Local authorities are closely involved in the LAEP development process (co-design/deliver) and workshops are taking place now to begin informing this process
- Local Authorities will be key consultees in the development of retrofit funding arrangements via the LA Retrofit Steering Group.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Retrofit – Ongoing
- LAEP/Energy Infrastructure – Ongoing (SIF dates: discovery 03/04/2023 – 30/06/2023, alpha 02/10/2023 – 29/03/2024, beta to be confirmed)

Outstanding issues and questions

- On the single settlement, what additional net zero funds beyond retrofit could be included within the single settlement process, in addition to retrofit?
- On heat network zoning, we are awaiting final details of the role and responsibilities around heat network zoning coordinators and associated support.
- The WMCA want to engage with government, including DLUHC and DESNZ on any future opportunities to support our LAEP programme and links to spatial planning.
- Will OfGEM and Government support the WMCA's proposal for a regional energy system governance pilot in the West Midlands?

Environment (including climate adaptation, natural environment and air quality)

Page 214

Deal text reference

Pages 61 to 62

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- A commitment to support the creation of a fund to support natural environment financing through increasing investment from the private sector.
- Recognition of the work the West Midlands is undertaking in relation to climate adaptation through a case study to be included in the National Adaptation Plan.
- Support for the regional monitoring of air quality through funding to support the deployment of additional low-cost sensors across the region.

Legal or financial implications

- None. The funding received to deliver the environment elements of the deal is being taken forward through the Single Assurance Framework, as it has come with grant funding and we will work with the conditions specified.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr John Cotton

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Executive Director, SINZ

SRO: Jackie Homan, Head of Environment

Reference Group: LA Net Zero Directors group and sub-groups

How will this work be administered?

- WMCA Environment and Energy Board.
- Net Zero Directors, Net Zero Officers Group and Natural Capital Officers Group.
- Regular catch-ups with the local Air Quality Officers through dedicated meetings as well as the regular WM Environmental Protection Group.

How will this work be delivered?

- The work on air quality and natural capital financing is set out in the grant applications, and Full Business Case, that we had to prepare to access the funding on offer. In order to deliver, we are committed to working with the local authorities as part of the project governance structure.
- On climate adaptation, we will continue to work with climate change strategy officers in each of the local authorities, through the Net Zero Officers Group, as well as with the Sustainability Working Group for Climate Adaptation.
- We will also work with civil servants at DEFRA on the wording to be included in the National Adaptation Plan as well as to continue our lobbying for additional resource to be made available to support climate adaptation at a sub-national level.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- This will take place primarily through the LA Net Zero Directors and LA Low Carbon Officers and Air Quality Officers groups.

Key milestones and deliverables

- All the funding provided through the deal for environment projects needs to have been spent by 31st March 2025. As a result, programme plans have been developed and signed off through the WMCA's SAF process.

Outstanding issues and questions

None.



Smart City Region Health & Care Programme (SCR) and Digital Infrastructure

Page 216

Deal text reference

Page 68 for Smart City Region, Pages 68 to 69 for Health and Care Programmes, Page 63 for digital infrastructure

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- **Smart City Region:** DLUHC has committed to invest up to £10.1m funding in scaling-up the technology trials that the West Midlands has successfully pioneered to deliver radically more effective health and social care services and boost productivity. There are five key spending objectives covering scaling-up Remote Monitoring, Community Diagnostics, Preventative Healthcare, Exemplar hospital and a Learning Network to share findings and built the region's knowledge base – working in partnership with the West Midlands NHS and social care integrated care boards (ICBs).
- **Digital Infrastructure:** DSIT has committed to share Open Market Review data – which relates to gigabit broadband coverage – with the WMCA/ WM5G and set-up a new governance group called the Digital Infrastructure Leadership Group (DILG) to explore new market interventions in urban regions, working with the GMCA.

Legal or financial implications

- **Smart City Region:** None. There is no financial commitment from the WMCA.
- **Digital Infrastructure:** No.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Patrick Harley

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Executive Director, SINZ

SRO for Digital infrastructure: Ian Martin

Reference Group: WM Digital Forum

How will this work be administered?

Smart City Region:

- Will be administered and delivered through a combination of WM5G and WMCA health & wellness staff, NHS ICB teams – including LA social care teams – as well as with human resources leads in local employers and private sector partners which will co-invest in technology solutions.
- In-house resources from WMCA will provide overarching project management and sourcing and be responsible for risk management, budget management and timely, quality delivery on individual project components.
- Nominated WMCA and ICB staff have the necessary skills and capabilities to comply with appropriate standards and procedures having previously worked on major projects with complex procurement and management requirements.
- An Advisory Board will be established with senior representation from the three regional ICBs and a Director level SRO from within WMCA.

Digital Infrastructure:

- Will be administered and delivered by the WM5G connectivity team led by Chris Hudson. We are working through the detailed terms of reference for DILG and also bringing on-board our broadband lead by end May to lead the engagement with DSIT regarding broadband data and initiatives.
- Progress will be reviewed at a working level through the Digital Forum which meets every month and includes the LA leads as well as at a senior level through the WM5G Board which also meets monthly.

How will this work be delivered?

Please see above.

Key milestones and deliverables

Smart City Region: The core delivery team will come together from across WM5G and WMCA's health experts and will adhere to our high standards in governance, managing, reporting and storing project documentation as well as any data and lessons learnt. (The governance structure is provided in the Commercial Case section). The project will be managed in accordance with PRINCE2 principles along with tools from Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) to allow consistency across teams and representatives.

Autumn 2023, Phase 1, Design and Mobilisation

- Funding and scope agreed and signed off (agreed at Investment Board 24 July)
- Funding drawn down (now expected to be drawn down from DLUHC in October)
- IG process agreed
- Resource requirements, comms and engagement strategy agreed
- Convening of relevant working groups

Autumn 2023 – Spring/summer 2024, Phase 2: Sourcing and Procurement

- Tech requirements co-designed
- Connectivity mapping, modelling, demonstrations complete
- Contracts awarded; contract signatures with preferred suppliers
- IG requirements met
- Training and support strategy developed
- Learning Network established with first members

July 2024-March 2025, Phase 3: Deployment and Build

- Testing complete
- First phase deployed
- First mobile diagnostic unit in operation
- First use of Thrive at Work Programme
- Smart Hospital working making progress
- Learning Network expansion evidenced

March 2025, Phase 4: Evaluation

- Digital infrastructure: TBC as part of set-up process with Govt for DILG.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- We will keep Local Authorities fully engaged directly and through their role on ICBs in workstreams that affect them.
- We will co-design the Learning Networks with Local Authorities to ensure they shape the content and events.
- Local Authorities will be consulted on the Remote Monitoring (with its links and reliance on social care) and Preventative Healthcare (with its connections to employers in the region) workstreams.

Outstanding issues and questions

- **Smart City Region:** Main dependency is that we achieve final business case approvals from DLUHC, WMCA and NHS ICBs by end June at the latest to ensure that we can mobilise, source and start delivery this year.

Culture

Page 219

Deal text reference

Pages 65 to 66

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Formal partnership – the Regional Culture and Heritage Framework – with arm’s length bodies of DCMS, including Arts Council England, Historic England, Sport England, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the National Lottery Community Fund and the British Tourist Association (trading as Visit England / Visit Britain).
- The government will support WMCA with £25 million of additional capital funding, £4m of which will be allocated towards cultural and heritage projects.

Legal or financial implications

- Capital funding is subject to approval of a suitable business cases (DLUHC, WMCA), which we are progressing. The staff capacity to deliver the work will come from existing allocations and the Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Patrick Harley

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Exec Director, SINZ

SRO: Salla Virman, Senior Policy Officer, Culture

Reference Group: LA Cultural Officers Group

How will this work be administered?

- WMCA will work with DCMS and the relevant arm’s length bodies in spring 2023 to establish terms of reference for the regional culture and heritage framework. WMCA Cultural Leadership Board will be consulted on these frameworks, and they should then be formally approved by the WMCA Board.
- Capital funds will be administered by WMCA and a separate business case will be produced for the SAF process and decision making.

How will this work be delivered?

- WMCA will work with DCMS and the relevant arm’s length bodies in spring 2023 to establish terms of reference for the regional culture and heritage framework and agree a forward plan over the coming year, before finalising the framework in 2024. Delivery of the capital investment will be through a contestable call based on EOI submissions from local authorities, with strands to support a few larger awards and a smaller capital awards programme.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

Partnership with arm’s length bodies:

- The WMCA has already undertaken consultation and will keep the local authorities engaged throughout the process. The WMCA will also consult local authorities on the development of the cultural strategy through the LA Cultural Officers Group.

Capital funding:

- WMCA’s £4m Cultural Infrastructure Fund will make a range of capital awards to support development of cultural & heritage infrastructure projects within the WMCA area. The programme is being co-designed with input from WMCA’s Cultural Leadership Board and will specifically focus on pride of place. It is anticipated that the programme will be launched in autumn 2023, with projects to be completed by 31 March 2025.

Key milestones and deliverables

Our aim is to share a draft outline for the Regional Culture and Heritage Framework with Board in February/early spring 2024.

- Once on-going business case development processes are complete, capital investment will be delivered by 31 March 2025.

Outstanding issues and questions

- In the process of developing and agreeing the business case with HMG to release the culture funding.

Tourism

Page 220

Deal text reference

Page 66

Summary of deal commitments in this area

Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) accreditation for Birmingham, Solihull and the Black Country (BSBC) (achieved) to deliver strategic regional priorities as per the WM Tourism Strategy and Recovery Plan.

Destination Development Partnership (DDP) pilot 2 to deliver:

- Demonstrable impact and return on investment
- Shared learnings
- Efficiencies across the wider DDP for the visitor economy
- research and insight
- digital innovation
- product development
- business support

Subject to:

- LVEP accreditation for Coventry & Warks (underway)
- WMGC Commonwealth Games Legacy funding (achieved)

Legal or financial implications

- WMGC will sign an agreement with VisitBritain that sets out the requirements for the DDP pilot. This will include spend, KPIs and governance.
- Funding will be secured through the WMGC Commonwealth Games legacy allocation with spend against the business case approved by the WMCA Investment Board.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Patrick Harley

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Exec Director, SINZ

SRO: Salla Virman, Senior Policy Officer, Culture

Reference Group: LA Directors of Econ Dev Group

How will this work be administered?

- The WMGC board will sign off progress against the LVEP and DDP agreements. All LVEP partners are represented on this board. VisitBritain will be invited to attend for the DDP / LVEP agenda items.
- Advice and oversight will come through the industry-led WM Tourism and Hospitality Advisory Board, which will also provide the leads for working groups.
- Updates will be reported to the Economic Growth Board of the WMCA through the WMGC report.
- The WMGC project management office will establish a risk register and monitor procurements, KPIs and evaluation.

How will this work be delivered?

- Local authority priorities are being agreed through the development of the Global WM Programme. These will inform the BSBC LVEP and DDP growth plans, which are co-signed by WMGC as the lead accountable organisation, and VisitEngland.
- Quarterly meetings will maintain LA destination engagement and record progress.
- The growth plans will include an agreement of deliverables by the DDP, and measurable KPIs, and set out governance, sign off the proposed budget allocation, and state targets and KPIs.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

Local authority partners to be closely consulted through existing WMGC relationship routes including the Directors of Economic Development group.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Formal announcement of DDP pilot by end July 2023.
- Set up of any additional governance needed for reporting into Visit England.
- Commissioning of monitoring and evaluation
- Mechanism to share learning.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Dependencies include the Coventry and Warwickshire LVEP accreditation which could go to panel in parallel with the DDP agreement.
- Final WMGC visitor economy budget allocation – staffing and 3rd party costs.

Homelessness

Page 222

Deal text reference

Page 37 on Live and Work, page 69

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Expand the Live and Work model in additional localities across the WMCA region.
- Pilot a Rent Simplification model for young people in supported accommodation to enable transition into work.

Legal or financial implications

- Live and Work: Dependent on Homes England funding and ability to secure investment for an evaluation.
- Rent Simplification: Dependent on DWP securing funding.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Kerrie Carmichael

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Exec Director, SINZ

SRO: Neelam Sunder, Homelessness Strategic Lead

Reference Group: Homelessness Taskforce

How will this work be administered?

- This work will be overseen by the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce and Members Advisory Group.

How will this work be delivered?

- The Live and Work proposal will primarily be delivered via Homes England. We will work with and support Homes England to engage Registered Providers to develop proposals to deliver Live and Work schemes. We will work with DLUHC, Homes England and Registered Providers delivering Live and Work schemes to capture the learning and build an evidence base for the model. We will support Homes England to form a task group to take this work forwards. This work will also align with the joint Affordable Homes Programme work agreed in the DDD, currently being taken forward by the WMCA HPR team and the Homes England regional affordable housing team.
- The Rent Simplification pilot proposal will be developed in partnership with DWP. As we progress the feasibility of the model and establish DWP mechanisms for delivery, we will work with our local authorities to establish how this could be delivered across local authorities within commissioned supported accommodation for young people. The delivery of the pilot would rely on local authorities, and they can choose to opt out of this pilot.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Live and Work: local authorities will be engaged throughout the lifecycle of this project through Homelessness Taskforce.
- Rent Simplification: local authorities will deliver this pilot with their commissioned supported accommodation services for your people.

Key milestones and deliverables

Live and Work:

- Meet with Homes England quarterly to contribute to plans on how the Live and Work model can be expanded – ongoing
- Organise online seminar for 7 LAs and Registered Providers to discuss opportunities for Live and Work model expansion – May 2023 - completed
- Follow up with Homes England on LA/ Registered Providers' bid development – June onwards
- Report progress to the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce (Feb, April, July, Sept, Nov) and the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce Members Advisory Group (Jan, April, July, October).

Rent Simplification:

- Meet with central DWP Housing Policy Team monthly and support to prepare business case for pilot – ongoing
- Facilitate contact between DWP Housing Policy Team and local authority benefits teams to feed into pilot design - ongoing
- Support DWP colleagues to develop a bid to the Shared Outcomes Fund – May – July 2023
- Support DWP colleagues to prepare a business case for autumn fiscal event (if Shared Outcomes Fund bid is unsuccessful) – September - December 2023
- Report progress to the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce (Feb, April, July, Sept, Nov) and the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce Members Advisory Group (Jan, April, July, October).

Outstanding issues and questions

- This area of work is ongoing and dependent on DLUHC, Homes England and DWP commitment and investment – we are in continued dialogue to progress.

Health

Page 224

Deal text reference

Pages 67 to 68

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Health Duty: Formal duty to improve public's health, concurrent with local authorities with associated potential public health pilot projects including Healthier Food Environment, Tobacco Alliance, Vaping as quit tool; regional disability strategy.
 - Note: Though this is a commitment in the deal, the region has resolved not to take it forward.
- Digital and Data Pilots: empower residents in the WMCA area through improving their understanding and use of health data through education and skills development; work with NHS England to develop artificial intelligence lab(s); regional linkages of shared care records within the West Midlands integrated care boards; sharing data across the public sector.
- Workforce: use of aligned budgets along with its adult education budget, to help tackle workforce shortages in the NHS and boost capacity within the voluntary and community sector.
- Development of a pan-disability needs assessment and a regional disability strategy.

Legal or financial implications

- None.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Izzi Seccombe

Exec Lead: Clare Hatton

SRO: Dr Mubasshir Ajaz

Reference Group: LA Directors of Public Health

How will this work be delivered?

- The CA will not proceed to take forward the health improvement duty but will continue to progress the commitments in the deal relating to disability and, working with Integrated Care System partners, the health workforce, Smart City Region, digital and data. The CA will also support constituent LAs to take forward work on tobacco and healthy eating if and where it can help to secure additional resources, which would be subject to further policy development work to take forward.

Early Years

Page 225

Deal text reference

Page 69

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- The deal text includes a commitment from DfE to discuss opportunities for early years pilots, consistent with the Government's wider early years strategy and policies

Legal or financial implications

- At present, meeting the loose commitment contained in the deal to engage DfE on Early Years strategy depends upon local authority capacity and appetite.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Kerrie Carmichael

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Exec Director, SINZ

SRO: Claire Dhami, Head of Social Change and Inclusion

Reference Group: LA DCS network

How will this work be administered?

- There would need to be a further conversation within the region about whether there is appetite to take forward any further work on early years, following initial engagement on proposal options.

How will this work be delivered?

- N/A

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- N/A

Key milestones and deliverables

- N/A

Outstanding issues and questions

- None

Anti-Social Behaviour

Page 226

Deal text reference

Page 69

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- The deal text includes a commitment to discuss emerging proposals for addressing anti-social behaviour with the Police and Crime Commissioner, and recognises the place-based anti-social behaviour powers facing LAs.

Legal or financial implications

- The commitment on anti-social behaviour does not require additional resource from within the WMCA, as engagement will be primarily through the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Kerrie Carmichael

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Exec Director, SINZ

SRO: Claire Dhami, Head of Social Change and Inclusion

Reference Group: LA DCS network

How will this work be administered?

- ASB provisions will depend on OPCC leadership and further LA engagement.

How will this work be delivered?

- As above.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- LA partners and the OPCC will drive these areas of work and draw in WMCA officers as required.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Milestones and deliverables subject to LA and OPCC discussions with departmental contacts.

Outstanding issues and questions

- There was enthusiasm from local authority partners and the OPCC for these provisions. It is up to them how to take this forward.





West Midlands
Combined Authority

Report to Cabinet

13 September 2023

Subject:	Q1 Budget Monitoring 2023/24
Cabinet Member:	Finance and Resources Cllr Bob Piper
Director:	Simone Hines, Director of Finance
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Rebecca Maher – Assistant Director Finance Rebecca_Maher@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 1.1 Note the financial monitoring position as at 30 June 2023 (Qtr 1) and refer the report to the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board for consideration and comment.
- 1.2 Approve the Treasury Outturn for 2022/23 and Qtr 1 position for 2023/24, both attached at Appendices 6 and 7.
- 1.3 Approve the following budget virements above £1m in line with the revised delegated limits for Cabinet Members and Directors: -

Virements above £1m for approval by Cabinet		£'000	£'000
Borough Economy	Correction to budget savings applied	1,000	
Contingency	Correction to budget savings applied		1,000
Social Care Grant - Income	External Placements – correction to Social Care Grant income budget	2,478	
Social Care Grant - Exp	External Placements – correction to corresponding expenditure budget relating to Social Care Grant		2,478




Creation of COMF budgets Inc	External Placements – increase in income budget for Contain Outbreak Management Fund income		3,397
Creation of COMF budgets Exp	External Placements – corresponding increase in expenditure budget for Contain Outbreak Management Fund spend	3,397	
TOTAL		6,875	6,875

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.
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4 Context and Key Issues

General Fund Outturn

- 4.1 The overall projected outturn position for the General Fund is an overspend of £2.188m.
- 4.2 The overall projected net directorate outturn variance, excluding the HRA, is an overspend of £4.373m following the use of reserves. The variance for each directorate is summarised in the following table and analysed in more detail within Appendix 1.



Service Area	APPX	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of/ Contribution to Reserves & RCCO for specific purposes	Projected Outturn Variance following use of reserves for specific purposes	Use of reserves to offset pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Corporate Management	1A	304	644	340	(380)	(40)		(40)
Borough Economy	1B	69,353	70,055	702	(75)	627		627
Adult Social Care	1C	86,016	89,929	3,913	(4,526)	(613)		(613)
Regeneration & Growth	1D	12,386	14,842	2,456	(2,239)	217	(80)	137
Housing	1E	2,336	3,135	799	(108)	691		691
Children's Services	1F	91,200	98,899	7,699	(3,558)	4,141	(240)	3,901
Business Strategy & Change	1G	15,145	14,423	(722)	(307)	(1,029)		(1,029)
Finance	1H	11,498	13,657	2,159	(1,431)	728		728
Law & Governance	1I	7,366	7,250	(116)	86	(30)		(30)
Net Service Expenditure (ex PH)		295,604	312,835	17,231	(12,538)	4,693	(320)	4,373
Public Health	1J	64	3,283	3,219	(3,219)	0		0
Total Net Service Expenditure		295,668	316,117	20,449	(15,757)	4,693	(320)	4,373
Capital Charge Adjustment		(26,461)	(26,461)	0		0		0
External Interest Payments		15,000	15,000	0		0		0
Interest/Dividend Receipts		(7,500)	(8,500)	(1,000)		(1,000)		(1,000)
West Midlands Transport Levy		13,977	13,977	0		0		0
West Midlands Magistrates Court		41	41	0		0		0
Environment Agency (Flood Defence)		88	88	0		0		0
Net Service Expenditure before use of balances		290,813	310,262	19,449	(15,757)	3,693	(320)	3,373
Use of Balances/RCCO/Central Items		26,811	40,070	13,259	(14,281)	(1,022)	0	(1,022)
Collection Fund Surplus		(102)	(102)	0		0		0
Council Tax		(127,008)	(127,008)	0		0		0
Business Rates		(109,560)	(109,560)	0		0		0
Business Rates Top-Up		(38,701)	(38,701)	0		0		0
Section 31 Grants		(38,188)	(38,188)	0		0		0
New Homes Bonus		(111)	(111)	0		0		0
Services Grant		(3,953)	(4,116)	(163)		(163)		(163)
Total Net General Fund Expenditure (inc Central Items and use of balances)		1	32,546	32,546	(30,038)	2,508	(320)	2,188

4.3 The cost of living crisis continues to have a significant impact across the council both in terms of inflationary pressures and an increase in the expected pay award compared to the amount included in the original budget. The position at the end of June has assumed a 7% pay award compared to 5% included in the budget when approved in February. It also includes additional superannuation costs. Both of these increase the Council's salary costs by approximately £5m. The other significant projected overspend relates to SEND Transport and is explained further in the Children's Services section below.



Corporate Management (1A)

- 4.4 The projected outturn for Corporate Management is an underspend of £0.040m relating to employee savings.

Borough Economy (1B)

- 4.5 The projected outturn for Borough Economy is an overspend of £0.627m. The main reasons for this forecast overspend are as follows:

- £0.510m unachieved savings relating to increased income in Visitor Services, staff turnover savings in Green Services, and the Heritage service review
- £0.424m overspend relating to the potential pay award and an increased rate of pension contributions
- Offset by:
 - (£0.235m) in year savings on supplies and services budgets in Green Spaces and Visitor Services in order to reduce forecast budget pressures
 - (£0.070m) in year vacancy management savings and other minor budget savings in Green Services, Public Protection and Libraries

Adult Social Care (1C)

- 4.6 The forecast variance against budget for Adults Social Care is an underspend of £0.613m. There are pressures from additional 2% pay award, 1.1% superannuation and external placements. These are wholly mitigated by staff vacancies and underspend in Direct Services.

Regen & Growth (1D)

- 4.7 The projected outturn for Regeneration and Growth is an overspend of £0.137m. The main reasons for this forecast overspend are as follows:
- £0.340m overspend relating to the potential pay award and an increased rate of pension contributions
 - £0.225m reduced income from rechargeable jobs, as a result of staff vacancies
 - £0.200m reduced income from planning application fees and building regulation fees, due to the economic downturn
 - £0.198m loss of income due to building closures and tenant vacancies
 - £0.100m unachieved saving relating to reduction of cleaning services
 - £0.080m budget pressure relating to production of the Sandwell Plan
 - Offset by (£0.926m) in year vacancy management savings and other minor budget savings



Housing General Fund (1E)

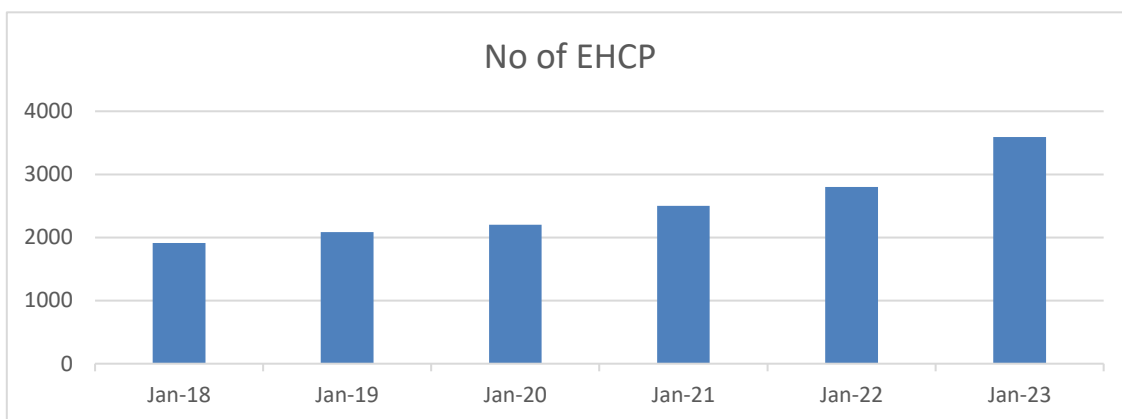
- 4.8 The projected outturn for Housing is an overspend of £0.691m. The main reasons for this forecast overspend are as follows:
- £0.283m overspend relating to the potential pay award and an increased rate of pension contributions
 - £0.210m unachieved savings relating to reduction in grants paid to other organisations, fees and charges income and review of the community centres delivery model
 - £0.202m income budget pressure relating to garage rental
 - £0.137m income budget pressure relating to the Home Improvement Agency
 - Offset by (£0.141m) in year vacancy management savings and other minor budget savings

Childrens Services (1F)

- 4.9 The forecast variance against budget for Children's Services is an overspend of £3.901m. The main reasons for this are SEND transport, the impact of the pay award for the directorate and Sandwell Children's Trust as well as loss of income in Sandwell Residential Education Service (SRES). These are partly mitigated by vacancy savings and additional social care grant.
- 4.10 SEND transport overspend is originally forecasted at £6.265m but was reduced by additional social care grant to £3.265m. The additional pay award pressure (of 2%) and superannuation (of 1.1%) in the directorate (totalling £0.787m) and similar pressure estimated for SCT (totalling £0.240m) further contributed to the overspend. Finally, SRES will not be able to achieve £0.514m of its income target. These pressures are partly offset by staff vacancies and one-off use of various grants.
- 4.11 The forecast increase in the SEND Transport service is due to a significant increase in demand over the years, particularly for complex and out of borough placements which have the highest cost.



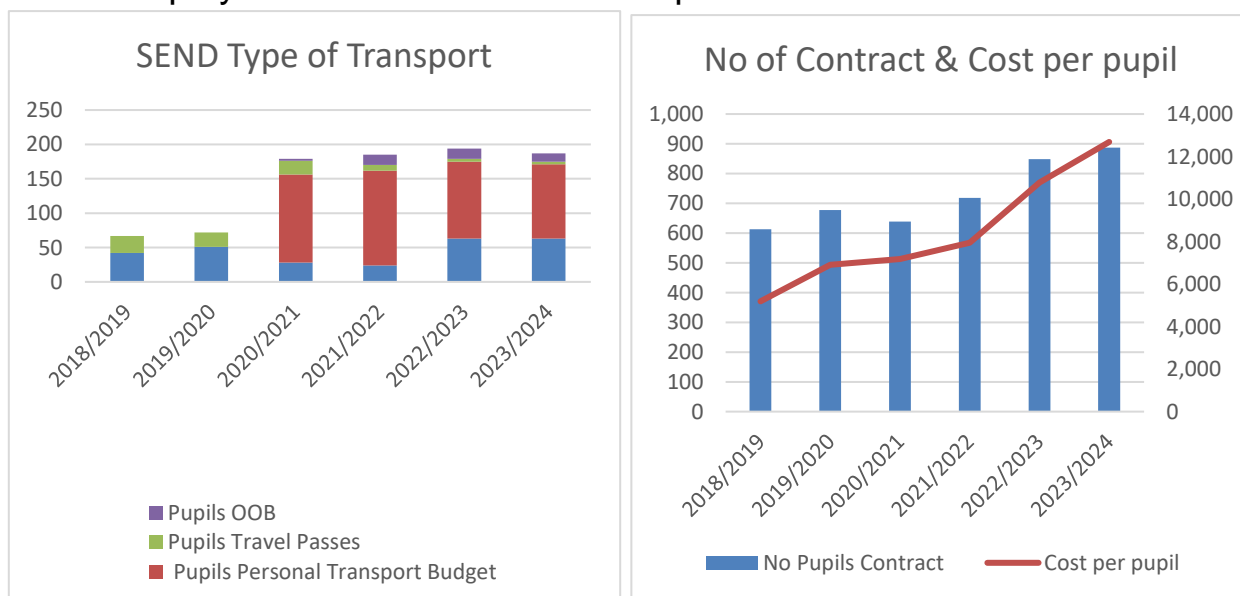
4.12 There has been an 88.8% increase in the Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) issued over the last 6 years as can be seen in the chart below. This has correspondingly resulted in increase in request for SEN transport.



4.13 As mentioned above, request for travel assistance has therefore increased significantly. Most importantly however, is the increased nature and complexity of need of these pupils that has led to:

- them being placed in out of Borough (OOB) schools
- reduction in use of multi-occupancy vehicles
- More children are now travelling alone with passenger assistant

The inter-play of these factors can be explained in the two charts below.



4.14 The result of this is a significant increase in the cost of travel per pupil as can be seen above. The cost rises sharply from 2021/22 and has been continuing ever since.



- 4.15 The recent framework procurement of SEND used pupil transport number as at April 2022 of 716. However, this figure has increased significantly to 887 at the beginning of this year.
- 4.16 The service is exploring a series of mitigations to include the consultation on wider use of public transport buses and mileage for secondary schools' users of SEND Transport and to add new entrants onto existing routes where possible. This will take effect through the school holidays in Q2 and results will be confirmed in the autumn term. Other mitigations being explored are:
- Review of all routes to ensure optimised efficiency and vehicle sizes
 - Options to reduce reliance on out of borough provision
 - Options to use existing fleet within Adult Social Care for some routes
 - Reviewing the Council's Travel Assistance Policy, although any changes are unlikely to take effect until 2024/25

Business Strategy & Change (1G)

- 4.17 The projected outturn for Business Strategy and Change is an underspend of (£1.029m). The main reasons for this forecast underspend are as follows:
- (£1.208m) one-off savings relating to cyber security, mainly as a result of a delay to the project, including a delay in recruiting to posts
 - (£0.496m) in year vacancy management savings and other minor budget savings
 - (£0.135m) forecast budget surplus relating to the employee benefits scheme
 - Offset by:
 - £0.362m overspend relating to the potential pay award and an increased rate of pension contributions
 - £0.448m unachieved savings relating to hybrid mail, ICT network support, printing and increased fees and charges income

Finance (1H)

- 4.18 The projected outturn for Finance is an overspend of £0.728m. The main reasons for this forecast overspend are as follows:
- £0.400m budget pressure relating to the loss of Housing Benefits subsidy due to increased demand for temporary accommodation



- £0.348m overspend relating to the potential pay award and an increased rate of pension contributions
- £0.075m unachieved saving relating to redesign of Business Support functions. There is still potential for this to be achieved this year so the position may improve.
- Offset by (£0.095m) in year vacancy management savings and other minor budget savings

Law & Governance (1I)

- 4.19 The projected outturn for Law and Governance is an underspend of (£0.030m). Although there is a forecast budget pressure of £0.216m relating to the potential pay award and an increased rate of pension contributions, this is more than offset by (£0.246m) in year vacancy management savings and other minor budget savings.

Public Health (1J)

- 4.20 Public Health is a ringfenced grant and therefore any underspend has to be transferred into a specific Public Health Reserve. The projected outturn variance is currently an overspend of £3.219m.

Housing Revenue Account (1K)

- 4.21 The overall forecast variance against budget for the HRA is nil, as any surplus or deficit at year end is offset by a corresponding transfer to/from the HRA reserve. Prior to transfers to reserves, the forecast outturn is an underspend of (£0.472m). The main reasons for this forecast underspend are as follows:

- (£4.383m) in year vacancy management savings and other minor budget savings

Offset by:

- £1.470m overspend relating to the potential pay award and an increased rate of pension contributions
- £1.023m budget pressure relating to vacant properties – Material and labour costs to bring properties up to a lettable standard
- £0.914m budget pressure relating to the backlog of tree works to be undertaken
- £0.270m budget pressure relating to increased PFI unitary charges
- £0.120m increased insurance recharges
- £0.112m provision for project feasibility expenditure



Dedicated Schools Grant – DSG (1L)

4.22 The overall forecast variance against budget for the DSG is nil, as any surplus or deficit at year end is offset by a corresponding transfer to/from the HRA reserve. Prior to transfers to reserves, the forecast outturn is an underspend of (£3.253m). The main reasons for this forecast underspend are as follows:

- High Needs Block underspend of £1.730m arising from Out of Borough placement, staffing vacancies and SEN development.
- Early Year's block underspend of £0.320m from 2 years old funding and disability access fund.
- £1.200m underspend in Pupil number growth fund due to bulge classes working their way out of secondary schools.

Central Items/RCCO/Use of Balances

4.23 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.

4.24 At Quarter 1 an overspend of £0.210m is forecast against Central Items. The reasons for this forecast overspend are as follows:

- £0.140m additional audit fee costs
- £0.070m additional bank charges

Use of Reserves

4.25 At the end of 2022/23 £126.187m was held in earmarked reserves and a number of new reserves and contributions to capital have been actioned as part of the budget setting process for 2023/24 which increased the opening balance to £127.455. During the year, it is projected that £27.755m of these balances will be used leaving a remaining balance of £99.700m. A significant proportion of the use of reserves is the use of the remaining COVID Emergency Funding and Contain Outbreak Management Fund. Further detail is provided in Appendix 3.

Capital

4.26 Expenditure on the Council's capital programme is forecast to be £91.7m within the General Fund and £101.093m within the Housing Revenue



Account for the financial year 2023/24. Appendix 4 provides a detailed breakdown of the programme.

4.27 The budgets that were approved in February 2023 have been updated to include slippage from previous years and additional approvals which require formal approval for inclusion in the Capital Programme. This is £21.1m for the General Fund slippage and additional programme allocation) and £19m for the HRA (slippage from 2022/23) The main areas of slippage are: -

- **Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)**

There has been slippage of £8.101m within the Housing and Assets directorate on this grant.

A new policy for adaptations and use of DFG was adopted by Cabinet on 7 June 2023. This streamlines the process for approval of grants, enabling higher cost adaptations to be progressed more quickly where eligibility criteria are met. The new policy also widens the offer in line with Government guidance meaning more people are eligible for a wider range of adaptations, including thermal improvements.

Full staffing complement for the Home Improvement Agency is now in place, except for a technical design function for major adaptations which is currently being recruited to. There is no backlog of customers and all referrals (vast majority from Adult Social Care) are being reviewed and progressed so workflow is good. Contract management has been strengthened and will improve completion dates, sign off of work and timely invoicing/payments.

- **Transport**

An additional £33m of City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) funding is available for major transport schemes (subject to successful business case approvals). It is estimated that this expenditure will be profiled over a number of years through to 2026/27. However, it is expected that £7m would be required in the current year (of which £4.2m is included in budgets through slippage from 22/23). Therefore £2.8m is required from this additional funding with the remainder to be included in budgets in future years as part of



the formal budget process. Spend cannot commence until Business Cases have been approved by WMCA and funding agreements accepted by the Council.

- **Towns Fund**

The Towns Fund Programme slippage has occurred on key projects where there have been delays following planning application submissions or where negotiations on land acquisitions have not progressed as expected. Financial forecasts are provided to DLUHC on a regular basis with details of issues and progress, to provide assurance that projects can still be completed within the Towns Fund Programme timeframe. Q2 returns from projects due in October 23, will provide further update on the financial profiles and will require approval from Towns Fund Board and S151 officer prior to being submitted to DLUHC for approval.

West Bromwich- Acquisitions for Queens Square has not progressed in Qtr1 and although negotiations have restarted recently, it is expected that any acquisition would now complete in 24/25. Contractors on the Town Hall Quarter are continuing to undertake preliminary works to determine the final cost plan with works due to start in October 23. As the project is a 12 month programme, c£4m funding has slipped to next financial year with a completion date of October 2024.

Smethwick Towns Fund - the Midland Met Learning Quarter submitted a planning application at the end of April 2023 with a determination expected in October 2023. This has caused c£9m slippage to future years as a contractor is now due to be on site early 2024 subject to planning approval. CPO proceedings are continuing for Grove Lane with funding slipped towards the end of the programme if CPO is successful.

Rowley Regis - The Satellite Education Hub profile has slipped to future years due to delays to the planning application decision following resident objections. Following approval in June 23, the



land transaction transfer from SMBC is currently underway with contractor expected on site in March 2024 after completion of the procurement process. The Blackheath Bus Interchange project is currently being reviewed following objections to the consultations earlier in the year.

Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 4.28 Section 106 monies are paid by developers towards the cost of providing community and social infrastructure but must be used for specific purposes. As at Quarter 1, £0.203m of these balances have been utilised, leaving a remaining balance of £2.615m.
- 4.29 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 is currently holding capital balances of £3.059m in relation to this levy and is not forecasting any expenditure against this.

Treasury Management Outturn and Q1 Update

- 4.30 Attached are two reports relating the Council's Treasury Management activities. Appendix 6 is the Treasury Management Outturn Report for 2022/23 as this was not available at the time of the previous report. Appendix 7 is the Quarter 1 Treasury Management Update.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 The Council is facing a challenging financial position for 2023/24, largely due to the projected overspend against SEND Transport. The potential increased pay award is in the region of £5m and may increase if the current pay offer is not accepted.
- 5.2 Leadership Team agreed that the vacancy controls that were in place for 2022/23 would be reinstated at their meeting on 8 August 2023 in order to reduce the projected overspend. Work is ongoing to identify other spending controls that may be needed to avoid reliance on use of reserves.



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

Resources:	Resource implications are contained within the main body of the report.
Legal and Governance:	No direct implications arising from the recommendations.
Risk:	This information is contained within the main body of this report.
Equality:	No direct implications arising from the recommendations.
Health and Wellbeing:	No direct implications arising from the recommendations.
Social Value	No direct implications arising from the recommendations.
Climate Change	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

App 6 Treasury Outturn Report 2022/23

App 7 Treasury Update Q1

9 Background Papers

None



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Service Area	APPX	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of)/ Contribution to Reserves & RCCO for specific purposes	Projected Outturn Variance following use of reserves for specific purposes	Use of reserves to offset pressures	Projected Outturn Variance	Previous Month	
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	Projected Outturn Variance	Difference
Corporate Management	1A	304	644	340	(380)	(40)		(40)	0	(40)
Borough Economy	1B	69,353	70,617	1,264	(637)	627		627	703	(76)
Adult Social Care	1C	86,016	89,929	3,913	(4,526)	(613)		(613)	(97)	(516)
Regeneration & Growth	1D	12,386	14,842	2,456	(2,239)	217	(80)	137	199	(62)
Housing	1E	2,336	3,135	799	(108)	691		691	429	262
Children's Services	1F	91,200	98,200	7,000	(2,859)	4,141	(240)	3,901	311	3,591
Business Strategy & Change	1G	15,145	14,423	(722)	(307)	(1,029)		(1,029)	(1,421)	392
Finance	1H	11,498	13,657	2,159	(1,431)	728		728	439	289
Law & Governance	1I	7,366	7,250	(116)	86	(30)		(30)	(183)	153
Net Service Expenditure (ex PH)		295,604	312,698	17,094	(12,401)	4,693	(320)	4,373	380	3,993
Public Health	1J	64	3,283	3,219	(3,219)	0		0	0	(0)
Total Net Service Expenditure		295,668	315,980	20,312	(15,620)	4,693	(320)	4,373	381	3,992
Capital Charge Adjustment		(26,461)	(26,461)	0		0		0	0	0
External Interest Payments		15,000	15,000	0		0		0	0	0
Interest/Dividend Receipts		(7,500)	(8,500)	(1,000)		(1,000)		(1,000)	(1,000)	0
West Midlands Transport Levy		13,977	13,977	0		0		0	0	0
West Midlands Magistrates Court		41	41	0		0		0	0	0
Environment Agency (Flood Defence)		88	88	0		0		0	0	0
Net Service Expenditure before use of balances		290,813	310,125	19,312	(15,620)	3,693	(320)	3,373	(619)	3,992
Use of Balances/RCCO/Central Items		26,811	33,289	6,478	(7,500)	(1,022)	0	(1,022)	1,136	(2,158)
Collection Fund Surplus		(102)	(102)	0		0		0	0	0
Council Tax		(127,008)	(127,008)	0		0		0	0	0
Business Rates		(109,560)	(109,560)	0		0		0	0	0
Business Rates Top-Up		(38,701)	(38,701)	0		0		0	0	0
Section 31 Grants		(38,188)	(38,188)	0		0		0	0	0
New Homes Bonus		(111)	(111)	0		0		0	0	0
Services Grant		(3,953)	(4,116)	(163)		(163)		(163)	0	(163)
Total Net General Fund Expenditure (inc Central Items and use of balances)		1	25,628	25,627	(23,120)	2,508	(320)	2,188	517	1,671
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	1K	(299)	(771)	(472)	472	0		0	0	0
Individual Schools Budgets (ISB)	1L	0	(3,253)	(3,253)	3,253	0		0	0	0
Total Net Expenditure		(298)	21,604	21,902	(19,395)	2,508	(320)	2,188	517	1,671

Corporate Management

APPENDIX 1AA

Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of/ Contribution to Reserves & RCCO for specific purposes RCCO for specific purposes £'000	Projected Outturn Variance following use of reserves for specific purposes £'000	Use of reserves to offset pressures £'000	Projected Outturn Variance £'000
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Chief Executive	884	1,224	340	(380)	(40)		(40)
Corporate Management	(580)	(580)	0	0	0		0
TOTAL	304	644	340	(380)	(40)	0	(40)

Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of)/ Contribution to Reserves & RCCO for specific purposes	Projected Outturn Variance following use of reserves for specific purposes	Use of reserves to offset pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Contracts, Projects, Strategy & Policy	39,080	39,247	167	0	167		167
Highways Services	19,867	19,942	75	0	75		75
Green Spaces, Visitor Services & Events	1,079	1,230	151	0	151		151
Public Protection and Community Safety	3,813	4,535	722	(590)	132		132
Libraries, Archives and Heritage	5,087	5,227	140	(47)	93		93
Directorate Management	427	437	10	0	10		10
			0	0	0		0
TOTAL	69,353	70,617	1,264	(637)	627	0	627

Adult Social Care

APPENDIX 1C

Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of) /Contribution to Reserves& RCCO for specific purposes	Projected Outturn Variance following use of reserves for specific purposes	Use of reserves to offset pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
					0		0
Management Team	1,776	4,227	2,451	(3,485)	(1,034)		(1,034)
Social Work & Therapy	5,765	5,239	(526)	0	(526)		(526)
External Placements	67,997	69,457	1,460	0	1,460		1,460
Direct Services	7,410	7,028	(382)	(41)	(423)		(423)
Commissioning	3,068	2,978	(90)	0	(90)		(90)
Better Care Fund	0	1,000	1,000	(1,000)	0		0
			0	0	0		0
			0	0	0		0
			0	0	0		0
			0	0	0		0
			0	0	0		0
TOTAL	86,016	89,929	3,913	(4,526)	(613)	0	(613)

Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of)/ Contribution to Reserves & RCCO for specific purposes	Projected Outturn Variance following use of reserves for specific purposes	Use of reserves to offset pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Growth and Spatial Planning Service	2,748	3,424	676	(765)	(89)	(80)	(169)
Development Planning and Building Control Service	755	914	159	(170)	(11)	0	(11)
Strategic Assets and Land Service	8,209	9,566	1,357	(1,043)	314	0	314
Management	674	938	264	(261)	3	0	3
			0	0	0		0
TOTAL	12,386	14,842	2,456	(2,239)	217	(80)	137

Housing

APPENDIX 1E

Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of)/ Contribution to Reserves & RCCO for specific purposes	Projected Outturn Variance following use of reserves for specific purposes	Use of reserves to offset pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Community Partnerships and Support Services	1,177	1,546	369	0	369		369
Housing Solutions	1,481	1,516	35	(35)	0		0
Income Management and Money Advice	345	433	88	(73)	15		15
Tenancy & Estate Management	(828)	(625)	203	0	203		203
Management	161	265	104	0	104		104
			0	0	0		0
TOTAL	2,336	3,135	799	(108)	691	0	691

Children's Service

APPENDIX 1

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Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of)/ Contribution to Reserves & RCCO for specific purposes	Projected Outturn Variance following use of reserves for specific purposes	Use of reserves to offset pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Director of Children's Services	8,543	8,585	42	0	42		42
Education Services	783	1,098	316	(217)	99		99
Inclusive Learning	2,593	2,647	54	0	54		54
Children & Education Support	8,888	12,152	3,264	0	3,264		3,264
Commissioning, Partnerships & Sandwell Childrens Trust	10,548	13,632	3,084	(2,642)	442		442
Children's Social Care	59,446	59,686	240	0	240	(240)	0
BSF FM Contribution	0	0	0	0	0		0
	400	400	0	0	0		0
			0	0	0		0
			0	0	0		0
			0	0	0		0
			0	0	0		0
			0	0	0		0
TOTAL	91,200	98,200	7,000	(2,859)	4,141	(240)	3,901

Service Area	Total Budget £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Variance £'000	(Use of/ Contribution to Reserves & RCCO for specific purposes £'000	Projected Outturn Variance following use of reserves for specific £'000	Use of reserves to offset pressures £'000	Projected Outturn Variance £'000
Director	255	495	240	0	240		240
ICT	7,345	6,532	(813)	0	(813)		(813)
Human Resources	3,442	3,351	(91)	0	(91)		(91)
Business and Corporate Services	4,103	4,045	(58)	(307)	(365)		(365)
			0	0	0		0
TOTAL	15,145	14,423	(722)	(307)	(1,029)	0	(1,029)

Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of)/ Contribution to Reserves & RCCO for specific purposes	Projected Outturn Variance following use of reserves for specific purposes	Use of reserves to offset pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Director	126	572	446	(40)	406		406
Oracle	711	1,402	691	(691)	0		0
Financial Management	3,717	4,347	630	(614)	16		16
Revenues and Benefits	3,675	3,890	215	(86)	129		129
Business Management	3,269	3,446	177	0	177		177
			0	0	0		0
TOTAL	11,498	13,657	2,159	(1,431)	728	0	728

Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of)/ Contribution to Reserves & RCCO for specific purposes	Projected Outturn Variance following use of reserves for specific purposes	Use of reserves to offset pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Director	(50)	156	206	0	206		206
Democracy	3,663	3,379	(284)	0	(284)		(284)
Registration Services	(183)	(173)	10	0	10		10
Legal and Assurance	2,857	2,861	4	86	90		90
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	515	563	48	0	48		48
Leaders Office	564	464	(100)	0	(100)		(100)
			0	0	0		0
TOTAL	7,366	7,250	(116)	86	(30)	0	(30)

Public Health

APPENDIX 1J

Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of)/ Contribution to Reserves & RCCO for specific purposes	Projected Outturn Variance following use of reserves for specific purposes	Use of reserves to offset pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Communicable Disease	3,237	2,956	(281)	0	(281)		(281)
Long Term Conditions	3,476	3,171	(305)	0	(305)		(305)
Childrens	11,530	11,340	(190)	0	(190)		(190)
Substance Misuse & Smoking	4,240	4,145	(95)	(30)	(125)		(125)
Wider Determinants	5,353	5,419	65	(12)	53		53
Public Health Management	2,932	2,910	(23)	(97)	(120)		(120)
Public Health Grant	(26,658)	(26,658)	0	0	0		0
Public Health Savings / Reserve	(4,048)	0	4,048	(3,079)	968		968
			0	0	0		0
			0	0	0		0
			0	0	0		0
			0	0	0		0
			0	0	0		0
TOTAL	64	3,283	3,219	(3,219)	0	0	0

Housing Revenue Account

APPENDIX 1K

Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of)/ Contribution to Reserves & RCCO for specific purposes	Projected Outturn Variance following use of reserves for specific purposes	Use of reserves to offset pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Asset Management & Maintenance	42,301	40,611	(1,690)	1,690	0		0
Business Excellence	1,947	1,538	(409)	409	0		0
Services in Borough Economy	4,152	4,997	845	(845)	0		0
Corporate HRA	48,193	49,195	1,002	(1,002)	0		0
Housing Management	16,454	15,948	(506)	506	0		0
PFI	(659)	(389)	270	(270)	0		0
Rents & Other Charges	(122,732)	(122,716)	16	(16)	0		0
SLAs	10,045	10,045	0	0	0		0
			0	0	0		0
TOTAL	(299)	(771)	(472)	472	0	0	0

Individual Schools Budget

APPENDIX 1K

L

Service Area	Total Budget £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Variance £'000	(Use of)/ Contribution to Reserves & RCCO for specific purposes £'000	Projected Outturn Variance following use of reserves for specific purposes £'000	Use of reserves to offset pressures £'000	Projected Outturn Variance £'000
Directorate Individual Schools Budget	0	(3,253)	(3,253)	0	(3,253)		(3,253)
			0	0	0		0
TOTAL	0	(3,253)	(3,253)	0	(3,253)	0	(3,253)

Virements above £1m for approval by Cabinet		£'000	£'000
Borough Economy	Correction to budget savings applied	1,000	
Contingency	Correction to budget savings applied		1,000
Social Care Grant - Income	External Placements	2,478	
Social Care Grant - Exp	External Placements		2,478
Creation of COMF budgets Inc	External Placements		3,397
Creation of COMF budgets Exp	External Placements	3,397	
TOTAL		6,875	6,875

This will be used to populate the Virements Appendix and should include new grants during the quarter.

Central Items

APPENDIX 2

Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of)/ Contribution to reserves & RCCO for specific purposes	Projected Outturn Variance following use of reserves for specific purposes	Use of Reserves to offset pressures	Projected Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Local Authority Subscriptions	104	104	0	0	0		0
Wolverhampton: WMCC and WMRE	45	45	0	0	0		0
Combined Authority	1,060	1,060	0	0	0		0
Special Events	25	25	0	0	0		0
External Audit Fee	246	386	140	0	140		140
Insurance	(395)	(395)	0	0	0		0
Past Service Pension Costs	2,616	2,616	0	0	0		0
Bank Charges	335	405	70	0	70		70
Airport Rent Income	(100)	(100)	0	0	0		0
Apprenticeship Levy	480	480	0	0	0		0
Pensions General	4,560	4,560	0	0	0		0
COVID-19 Emergency Funding	0	7,500	7,500	(7,500)	0		0
COVID-19 Containing Outbreak	0	0	0	0	0		0
TOTAL	8,976	16,686	7,710	(7,500)	210	0	210

Expenditure shown within directorates

This will be used to populate the Central Items appendix

Reserves

Appendix 3

Earmarked Reserve	Balance as at 31	Projected use /	Other Reserve	Projected Balance
	March 2023	(addition to) in	Movements	as at 31 March
	£'000	£'000	£'000	2024
				£'000
Borough Economy				
Portway Lifestyle Centre	(802)	0		(802)
Borough Economy General Reserve	(872)	75	(79)	(797)
Dartmouth Park HLF	(257)	0		(257)
Aquatics Centre UOW	(100)	0		(100)
SERCO Waste Commitments	(5,628)	0		(5,628)
BE Grant Carryforward Reserve	(191)	0		(191)
	(7,850)	75	(79)	(7,775)
Business Strategy & Change				
BSC General Reserve	(869)	0		(869)
	(869)	0	0	(869)
Corporate Management				
Kickstart Revaluation	(1,553)	0		(1,553)
	(1,553)	0	0	(1,553)
Finance				
Finance General Reserve	(503)	566		63
SCT Reserve	(13)	0		(13)
	(516)	566	0	50
Housing				
H&A General Reserve	(1,613)	35	(234)	(1,578)
H&A Grant Carryforward	(451)	73		(378)
	(2,064)	108	(234)	(1,956)
Children's				
CS General Reserve	(2,377)	788		(1,589)
SCT Reserve	(1,058)	240		(818)
	(3,435)	1,028	0	(2,407)
Adults				
Adult Social Care Reserve	(3,908)	41		(3,867)
Better Care Fund	(15,056)	1,000		(14,056)
	(18,964)	1,041	0	(17,923)
Law & Governance				
L&G General Reserve	(1,120)	0		(1,120)
POCA	(841)	(86)		(927)
	(1,961)	(86)	0	(2,047)
Public Health				
Learning for Public Health	(381)	97		(284)
Public Health Grant Reserve	(8,346)	3,079		(5,266)
Public Health Earmarked Reserves	(110)	42		(68)
	(8,837)	3,219		(5,618)
Regeneration and Growth				
R&G General Reserve	(1,681)	867	234	(814)
Sinking Fund Central 6th Building	(1,392)	500		(892)
Forge Mill Farm Demolition	(227)	227		0
School Repair Reserve	(120)	0		(120)
R&G Grant Carryforward Reserve	(147)	91		(56)
R&G Capital Project Support	(5,588)	935		(4,653)
	(9,155)	2,620	234	(6,535)
Total Directorate Reserves	(55,204)	8,571		(46,633)
Finance - Central Items				
Emergency Fund COVID 19	(8,665)	7,500		(1,165)
Insurance Reserve	(8,488)	0		(8,488)
Finance Grant Reserve	(9,062)	6,118		(2,944)
S31 Grant Reserve	(397)	0		(397)
	(26,612)	13,618	0	(12,994)
Corporate Items				
General Capital Reserve	(3,700)	0		(3,700)
New Asset System	(331)	101		(230)
Exit Packages	(1,452)	72		(1,380)
Pay Award	(1,000)	0		(1,000)
Oracle Fusion	(1,446)	691		(755)
Business Rates Volatility Reserve	(8,500)	0		(8,500)
Invest to Save Reserve	(2,342)	340		(2,002)
Corporate Improvement Plan	(1,055)	422		(633)
Commonwealth Games	(129)	89		(40)
Cemetery RCOO Reserve	0	0		0
Social Care Grant	(2,439)	0		(2,439)
Financial Planning Reserve	(4,288)	0	79	(4,209)
Climate Change	(600)	172		(428)
LATC Risk Cover	(1,700)			(1,700)
Cost of Living	(3,000)	14		(2,986)
	(31,980)	1,901	79	(30,079)
Total Non-Directorate Reserves	(68,592)	15,519	79	(43,073)
				0
TOTAL OF RESERVES	(113,796)	24,090		(89,706)
DSG	(5,500)	(3,253)		(8,753)
BSF FM Sinking Fund	(3,365)	0		(3,365)
BSF PFI Sinking Fund	(4,680)	0		(4,680)
Post LAC Pupil Premium Grant	(114)	0		(114)
	(13,659)	(3,253)		(16,912)
GRAND TOTAL	(127,455)	20,837	0	(106,618)

Capital Monitoring 2023-24

Scheme	Base Budget	Additional Approvals (incl' prior year slippage not incl' in Base)	Current Budget	Predicted Spend	Variance	Predicted Slippage	Final Variance
Adult Social Care Total	763	329	1,092	329	(763)	763	-
Borough Economy Total	19,387	11,439	30,826	25,904	(4,922)	4,922	-
Business Strategy & Change Total	8,046	1,292	9,338	9,338	-	-	-
Childrens Total	10,091	1,435	11,526	11,526	-	-	-
Housing & Assets Total	13,816	612	14,428	6,327	(8,101)	8,101	-
Law & Governance Total	3,671	36	3,707	3,783	76	-	76
Regeneration & Growth Total	53,822	5,959	59,781	34,533	(25,248)	25,248	-
Grand Total	109,596	21,102	130,698	91,740	(38,958)	39,034	76

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Scheme	2023/24						Final Variance £000
	Base Budget £000	Additional Approvals (incl' prior year slippage not incl' in Base) £000	Current Budget £000	Predicted Spend £000	Variance £000	Predicted Slippage £000	
Adult Social Care							
ASC Capital Grant	763	-	763	-	(763)	763	-
ASC System Development	-	260	260	260	-	-	-
Contaminated Land Grant	-	8	8	8	-	-	-
Swift Impress System	-	61	61	61	-	-	-
Adult Social Care Total	763	329	1,092	329	(763)	763	-
Borough Economy							
Total Birchley Island	1,213	1,977	3,190	2,360	(830)	830	-
Total Integrated Transport Block	1,798	1,969	3,767	1,511	(2,256)	2,256	-
Total Main Programme (Council Resources) (Excl Birchley Island)	9,481	432	9,913	8,077	(1,836)	1,836	-
Total Maintenance Block	4,741	28	4,769	4,769	-	-	-
Total Self Financing Schemes (Excl TT)	-	7,000	7,000	7,000	-	-	-
Environmental Improvements to Neighbourhoods	-	17	17	17	-	-	-
Forge Mill Farm	-	2	2	2	-	-	-
Lightwoods Park	-	16	16	16	-	-	-
Lightwoods Park HLF	403	(24)	379	379	-	-	-
Manor House - Phase 2	-	12	12	12	-	-	-
Manor House Conservation Plan	241	-	241	241	-	-	-
Oak Home Museum Roof Repairs	-	10	10	10	-	-	-
Oakhouse Barns Resoration Project	10	-	10	10	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vehicles	1,500	-	1,500	1,500	-	-	-
Borough Economy Total	19,387	11,439	30,826	25,904	(4,922)	4,922	-
Business Strategy & Change							
ICT - End User Computing	2,000	823	2,823	2,823	-	-	-
Oracle Fusion ERP System	6,013	469	6,482	6,482	-	-	-
Public Realm	33	-	33	33	-	-	-
Business Strategy & Change Total	8,046	1,292	9,338	9,338	-	-	-
Childrens							
BSF - ICT Element	80	-	80	80	-	-	-
Connor Education Centre (ESFA)	-	1	1	1	-	-	-
Devolved Formula Capital	-	1,300	1,300	1,300	-	-	-
Devolved Formula Capital - PRU's	-	80	80	80	-	-	-
Devolved Formula Capital - School Contribution	-	1,200	1,200	1,200	-	-	-
PLAY Pathfinder	6	-	6	6	-	-	-
Provisional Grant Allocation	10,000	(10,000)	-	-	-	-	-
Youth Centre Queens Way	5	-	5	5	-	-	-
Schools Capital Programme Schemes:							
Albright Centre	-	80	80	80	-	-	-
Brades Lodge	-	1,500	1,500	1,500	-	-	-
Bristnall Hall Academy	-	330	330	330	-	-	-
Causeway Green Primary	-	1,300	1,300	1,300	-	-	-
Contribution to SRA (23/24 only)	-	200	200	200	-	-	-
ESFA Shireland Primary Free school	-	61	61	61	-	-	-
Feasibility Work Expansion of Secondary	-	200	200	200	-	-	-
Grace Mary Primary FP	-	40	40	40	-	-	-
Great Bridge Primary	-	19	19	19	-	-	-
Health Futures UTC	-	2,776	2,776	2,776	-	-	-
Menzies/Phoenix	-	10	10	10	-	-	-
New Oldbury Primary - Lightwoods	-	174	174	174	-	-	-
Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy (OSCA)	-	400	400	400	-	-	-
Priory Primary Expansion	-	11	11	11	-	-	-
Q3 Langley Phase 3	-	4	4	4	-	-	-
School Condition - LifeCycle property maintenance	-	1,500	1,500	1,500	-	-	-
School Kitchen Repairs	-	1	1	1	-	-	-
Shireland Collegiate Academy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
St Matthews CE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tipton Green Junior School - Flood	-	1	1	1	-	-	-
West Bromwich Collegiate Academy - Phase 2	-	247	247	247	-	-	-
Childrens Total	10,091	1,435	11,526	11,526	-	-	-
Housing & Assets							
Charlemont Community Centre	37	-	37	37	-	-	-
DFG	11,882	579	12,461	4,360	(8,101)	8,101	-
Empty Properties	677	8	685	685	-	-	-
HMRA Ringfenced Receipts - Vulnerable Homeowners	373	-	373	373	-	-	-
Housing Stock Condition Survey	29	-	29	29	-	-	-
Self Service Customer Portal	91	24	115	115	-	-	-
The Public	341	-	341	341	-	-	-

Vulnerable Homeowners Improvements (Kick Start)	386	-	386	386	-	-	-
Warm Homes Healthy People	-	1	1	1	-	-	-
Housing & Assets Total	13,816	612	14,428	6,327	(8,101)	8,101	-
Law & Governance							
New Cemetery - West Bromwich	3,671	-	3,671	3,671	-	-	-
Rowley Cemetery	-	36	36	112	76	-	76
Law & Governance Total	3,671	36	3,707	3,783	76	-	76
Regeneration & Growth							
Access Fund	300	34	334	334	-	-	-
Blackheath Library - Fit Out Costs	-	56	56	56	-	-	-
Brindley II	21	-	21	21	-	-	-
BSF - Schools for the Future	-	73	73	73	-	-	-
Childrens Trust Accommodation Works	145	101	246	246	-	-	-
Coroners Court Refurbishment - Jack Judge House	-	434	434	434	-	-	-
Haden Hill LUF	-	8	8	8	-	-	-
King Street, Wednesbury Health Centre	-	1,467	1,467	1,467	-	-	-
Mobile Working	-	41	41	41	-	-	-
PMA - The Central Sixth Form Building Works	-	500	500	500	-	-	-
PMA Capitalisation	800	55	855	855	-	-	-
Property Refurbishment - WPV Sandwell Council House	1,712	216	1,928	1,928	-	-	-
PSDS Heat Pump Technology	1,000	191	1,191	1,191	-	-	-
Regeneration Reserve	1,100	9	1,109	1,109	-	-	-
Sandwell Aquatics Centre	2,640	2,963	5,603	5,603	-	-	-
Section 106 Schemes	2,578	(6)	2,572	203	(2,369)	2,369	-
UK Shared Property Fund	-	582	582	582	-	-	-
Towns Fund:							
Kings Square	5,000	(5,000)	-	-	-	-	-
Rowley Regis - Blackheath Bus Exchange	2,720	(140)	2,580	27	(2,553)	2,553	-
Rowley Regis - Britannia Park Community Hub	1,574	344	1,918	1,059	(859)	859	-
Rowley Regis - Canal and River Trust	673	(195)	478	315	(163)	163	-
Rowley Regis - Connected	718	61	779	768	(11)	11	-
Rowley Regis - Satellite Education Hub	8,074	(182)	7,892	500	(7,392)	7,392	-
Smethwick - Connected	2,172	987	3,159	3,242	83	(83)	-
Smethwick - Grove Lane Regeneration	-	-	-	9	9	(9)	-
Smethwick - Midlands Met Learning Campus	8,550	(259)	8,291	2,600	(5,691)	5,691	-
Smethwick - Rolfe Street Regeneration	537	835	1,372	862	(510)	510	-
Smethwick - Ron Davis Centre Expansion	-	26	26	15	(11)	11	-
West Brom - Connected	292	(11)	281	290	9	(9)	-
West Brom - Retail Diversification Programme	6,729	312	7,041	4,079	(2,962)	2,962	-
West Brom - Sandwell MEC	-	2,115	2,115	2,115	-	-	-
West Brom - Town Hall Quarter	6,217	421	6,638	3,668	(2,970)	2,970	-
West Brom - Urban Greening	270	(79)	191	333	142	(142)	-
Regeneration & Growth Total	53,822	5,959	59,781	34,533	(25,248)	25,248	-
Grand Total	109,596	21,102	130,698	91,740	(38,958)	39,034	76

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2023/24							
Scheme	Base Budget £000	Additional Approvals (incl' prior year slippage not incl' in Base) £000	Current Budget £000	Predicted Spend £000	Variance £000	Predicted Slippage £000	Final Variance £000
Housing Revenue Account:							
Prudential Borrowing - New build Unallocated	26,354	3,034	29,388	13,665	(15,723)	-	(15,723)
Prudential Borrowing - New build (Homes England)							
Moor Lane Extra Care	259	15	274	259	(15)	15	-
West Road	-	-	-	11	11	-	11
Strathmore Road	206	113	319	126	(193)	193	-
Reservoir Road	81	85	166	520	354	-	354
MMC (Coppice, Harvest & Railway)	2,021	-	2,021	5,784	3,763	-	3,763
Bull Street/Albion Road	7	33	40	22	(18)	18	-
Friardale/Carrington	6,181	596	6,777	3	(6,774)	6,774	-
Brittania	83	509	592	379	(213)	213	-
West End	1,458	1,236	2,694	2,390	(304)	304	-
Whitgreave	836	645	1,481	1,274	(207)	207	-
St Vincent Crescent	-	-	-	1,394	1,394	-	1,394
Crosswells	-	-	-	1,565	1,565	-	1,565
Garratts Lane	3,646	(31)	3,615	-	(3,615)	3,615	-
RCCO - New Build (Homes England)							
Hawes Lane	2,617	622	3,239	2,180	(1,059)	1,059	-
Higham Close	615	742	1,357	2,385	1,028	-	1,028
Beever	2,645	784	3,429	2,447	(982)	982	-
Prudential Borrowing - New build (LEP)							
King Street	23	-	23	248	225	-	225
Stanhope Road	3,797	688	4,485	3,250	(1,235)	1,235	-
Prudential Borrowing							
LAHF Acquisitions	-	-	-	4,000	4,000	-	4,000
Church Hill St	-	-	-	230	230	-	230
1-4-1 Property Purchases	-	-	-	1,800	1,800	-	1,800
RTB Receipts - 1-4-1 Replacement							
Church Hill St	-	-	-	153	153	-	153
1-4-1 Property Purchases	-	-	-	1,200	1,200	-	1,200
Total New Build	50,829	9,071	59,900	45,285	(14,615)	14,615	-
Adaptations for Disabled	3,000	40	3,040	3,040	-	-	-
Prudential Borrowing - High Rise							
High Rise - Unallocated	6,340	(200)	6,140	-	(6,140)	-	(6,140)
Allen House	1,925	55	1,980	-	(1,980)	1,980	-
Moorland & St Giles	6,926	32	6,958	4,300	(2,658)	2,658	-
The Lakes, Lion Farm	-	2,144	2,144	7,225	5,081	-	5,081
Darley House	-	651	651	9,147	8,496	-	8,496
Alfred Gunn House	-	3,290	3,290	8,325	5,035	-	5,035
Thorne Close	-	395	395	1,000	605	-	605
Emergency Cladding Works	-	-	-	50	50	-	50
High Rise - General	-	-	-	100	100	-	100
Soil Stack Replacement	-	-	-	1,000	1,000	-	1,000
Boscobel Avenue	-	248	248	248	-	-	-
Sprinklers	4,200	-	4,200	3,750	(450)	450	-
Prudential Borrowing - Other							
Refurbishment (Unallocated)	-	62	62	-	(62)	-	(62)
Boiler Replacement	3,000	(590)	2,410	3,000	590	-	590
ECO Projects	1,000	3,197	4,197	-	(4,197)	-	(4,197)
Estate Improvements	-	-	-	200	200	-	200
Replacement of CO and Smoke Detectors	-	693	693	693	-	-	-
RCCO : MRA/Ringfenced Approvals							
Refurbishment (Unallocated)	11,154	(1,085)	10,069	-	(10,069)	-	(10,069)

Single to Double Glazing & Composite Doors	-	-	-	1,500	1,500	-	1,500
Union Street	550	550	1,100	-	(1,100)	-	(1,100)
Internal Refurbishment	1,375	-	1,375	1,375	-	-	-
External Refurbishment (Inc Soil Stacks)	-	-	-	10,000	10,000	-	10,000
External Refurbishment (SHDF Wave 1)	-	-	-	5,000	5,000	-	5,000
External Refurbishment (SHDF Wave 2)	-	-	-	3,000	3,000	-	3,000
Stock Condition Surveys	-	-	-	150	150	-	150
CCTV Expansion	900	371	1,271	1,271	-	-	-
RCCO - Other							
Greenwood Avenue	-	21	21	21	-	-	-
Greenford House (additional flats)	-	91	91	91	-	-	-
Kenrick House (additional flats)	-	34	34	34	-	-	-
Riverside PFI	-	-	-	1,600	1,600	-	1,600
Oracle Fusion (Replaced Workplace Vision)	750	-	750	750	-	-	-
Total Other Schemes	41,120	9,999	51,119	66,870	15,751	5,088	20,839
Total Housing Revenue Account	91,949	19,070	111,019	112,155	1,136	19,703	20,839

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Annual Report on the Treasury Management Service and Actual Prudential Indicators for 2022/23

Purpose

The Council is required by regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 and the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the Prudential Code for Capital Finance to produce an annual treasury management review of activities and performance against the approved treasury indicators. This report meets these requirements.

The regulatory environment places responsibility on Members for the review and scrutiny of treasury management activities. This report is therefore important in that respect as it provides details of the outturn position for the treasury management function and highlights compliance with the Council's policies previously approved by Members in the Annual Treasury Strategy Report and Treasury Mid-Year Review.

Executive Summary

During 2022/23 the Council complied with its legislative and regulatory requirements. The actual prudential indicators for the year, along with prior year comparators are as follows:

	2021/22	2022/23
	£m	£m
Capital Expenditure		
General Fund	79.523	65.681
HRA	58.277	55.043
Total Capital Expenditure	137.800	120.724
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)		
General Fund	323.368	318.711
HRA	487.431	517.908
Total CFR - 31 March	810.799	836.619
Gross Debt		
General Fund - Treasury	138.720	143.007
General Fund - Other Long Term Liabilities	50.762	49.070
HRA - Treasury	336.868	327.801
HRA - Other Long Term Liabilities	17.763	14.715
Total Gross Debt - 31 March	544.113	534.593
Investments - 31 March	51.101	30.704
Net Debt - 31 March	493.012	503.889
Financing Costs as Proportion of Net Revenue Stream		
General Fund	4.9%	2.7%
HRA	16.6%	17.6%

The Actual Financing Costs as a Proportion of Net Revenue Streams indicator identifies the trend in the cost of servicing the capital debt costs of the council (Debt interest, MRP, other long term liability obligations [e.g. PFI], less investment income) against the Council's net revenue stream (General Fund: Council Tax, NDR and non ringfenced grants ; HRA : rent income and service charges).

Other Prudential and Treasury indicators are to found in the main body of this report. The Director of Finance can also confirm that borrowing was only taken for capital purposes and that the statutory borrowing limit (Authorised Limit) was not breached.

As at 31st March 2023, the Council's total external debt (including PFI and Finance Lease liabilities) was £534.593m (£544.113m as at 31st March 2022) and the investment balances totalled £30.704m compared to £51.101m the previous year.

The 2022/23 financial year reversed the historic low interest rate environment with increases commencing in May 2022 taking the opening Bank Rate position of 0.75% to 1.00% with regular increases thereafter taking Bank Rate to 4.25% by the end of the financial year. The rate of increase and the levels the rate were increased to were in excess of budgetary estimates and reflected the uncertainty in the UK economy.

Recommendations

The Council is recommended to:

- Approve the actual 2022/23 Prudential and Treasury Indicators within this report, and;
- To note this Annual Treasury Management Report for 2022/23.

1. The Council's Capital Expenditure and Financing for 2022/23

- 1.1. The Council undertakes capital expenditure on it's long term assets. These activities can either by finances immediately through the application of capital receipts, capital grants and contributions, or from revenue resources. This financing does not have an effect on the Council's underlying borrowing need.
- 1.2. If insufficient resources are available then the remaining expenditure can be serviced through Prudential Borrowing resulting in an increase in the Council's borrowing need (Capital Financing Requirement – CFR). For General Fund prudential borrowing this amount is charged to the Council's General Fund Revenue Account over a period of years linked to the life of the asset the borrowing funded (up to 40 years). This is known as the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). There is no legal requirement for an MRP to be charged to the Housing Revenue Account.
- 1.3. Actual capital expenditure is one of the Prudential Indicators and the table below provides a summary of information required and how this expenditure was financed:

	2021/22	2022/23	
	Actual £m	Estimate £m	Actual £m
Capital Expenditure			
General Fund	79.523	83.814	65.681
HRA	58.277	71.503	55.043
Total	137.800	155.317	120.724
Resources by:			
Capital Receipts	18.351	17.716	17.314
Grants and External Contributions	53.964	60.670	45.105
Revenue Contributions	9.779	12.860	6.010
Major Repairs Reserve (HRA)	15.944	16.875	16.834
Amounts to be financed by Prudential Borrowing	39.762	47.196	35.461
<i>being:</i>			
<i>General Fund Prudential Borrowing</i>	<i>9.381</i>	<i>6.549</i>	<i>3.628</i>
<i>HRA Prudential Borrowing</i>	<i>30.381</i>	<i>40.647</i>	<i>31.833</i>

2. The Council's Overall Borrowing Need

2.1. The Council's underlying need to borrow for capital expenditure is called the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR).

2.2. **Gross borrowing and the CFR** – In order to ensure that borrowing levels are prudent over the medium term and only for a capital purpose, the Council should ensure that its gross external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the Capital Financing Requirement as at the end of the previous financial year plus estimates for any additional prudential funding requirements in the current and the next two financial years. This essentially means that the Council is not borrowing to support its revenue activities. By including the following two financial years in this calculation does allow some flexibility to borrow in advance of need, although this Council has not utilised this option due to the economic uncertainty and the cost of debt which would create additional pressures on the Council's finances.

The table below highlights the Council's CFR and gross borrowing positions for 2022/23 and previous year and shows that the Council has complied with this Prudential Indicator:

	2021/22	2022/23	2022/23		
	Actual £m	Estimate £m	Actual General Fund £m	Actual HRA £m	Actual Total £m
Opening Capital Financing Requirement	796.767	809.121	323.368	487.431	810.799
plus Capital Expenditure financed by Prudential Borrowing	39.762	47.196	3.628	31.833	35.461
less Minimum/ Voluntary Revenue Provision (MRP/ VRP)	(22.345)	(6.593)	(6.593)	-	(6.593)
Movements in Other Long Term Liabilities	(3.385)	(3.361)	(1.692)	(1.356)	(3.048)
Appropriation of Assets	-	-	-	-	-
Closing Capital Financing Requirement	810.799	846.363	318.711	517.908	836.619
Treasury Debt Portfolio	475.588	471.016	143.007	327.801	470.808
Other Long Term Liabilities (PFI)	68.525	65.164	49.070	14.715	63.785
Gross Borrowing Position	544.113	536.180	192.077	342.516	534.593
(Under)/ Over Borrowing Position	(266.686)	(310.183)	(126.634)	(175.392)	(302.026)

2.3. The significant reduction in Minimum/ Voluntary Revenue Provision (MRP/ VRP) in 2022/23 compared to 2021/22 is due to the HRA no longer making a voluntary contribution as there is no regulatory requirement for the HRA to make such provision (£11m reduction), and a revision to the General Fund MRP Policy for 2022/23 reducing the amount charged by approximately £4m.

2.4. **The Authorised Limit** is the short term 'affordable borrowing limit' required by Section 3 of the Local Government Act 2003. Once this has been set, the Council does not have the power to borrow above this level.

The Operational Boundary is the expected borrowing position of the Council during the year. Periods where the actual borrowing is either above or below this value does not constitute a breach but is an guide for managing debt levels with the approved strategy.

The following table provides all the relevant values and shows that although actual debt holdings during the year remained below the Operational Boundary, and therefore also below the statutory maximum level of the Authorised Limit.

	2022/23 £m
Indicators:	
Authorised Limit	861.852
Operational Boundary	553.503
Actuals:	
Maximum Gross Borrowing in year	562.735
Average Gross Borrowing in year	538.821

The lower debt levels were due to the Council not taking levels of new debt as

originally expected due to the rapid increase in market rates. Therefore the overall under borrowed position increased.

3. Treasury Position at 31st March 2023

- 3.1. The Council's treasury management debt and investment position is managed by the internal treasury management service in order to ensure adequate liquidity for its revenue and capital activities, ensure security for its investments and to manage risks within all treasury activities. Procedures and controls to achieve these objectives are well established and relevant staff regular attend training services provided by Link (the Council's treasury advisory service) to ensure that staff are fully briefed and updated on any changes in the regulatory environment or best practice.
- 3.2. The figures in this report are based on the principal amounts borrowed and invested and so may differ from those in the Financial Statement of Accounts due to the accounting treatment of these items (e.g. accrued interest, fair value).
- 3.3. During 2022/23 the Treasury Team managed the debt and investment positions closing the financial year at £470.808m for borrowings and £30.704m for investments. The breakdown of these amounts compared to the end of the previous financial year are included in the table below (*Note: investment balances are held at full Council level and not split between General Fund and Housing Revenue Account*):

	31 March 2022				31 March 2023			
	General Fund £m	HRA £m	Total £m	Interest Rate	General Fund £m	HRA £m	Total £m	Interest Rate
Borrowing:								
Fixed Rate:								
PWLB	49.921	255.139	305.060	5.1%	49.410	246.072	295.482	5.1%
Market Loans	10.271	81.729	92.000	4.1%	10.271	81.729	92.000	4.1%
Local Authorities	28.283	-	28.283	1.7%	41.498	-	41.498	3.0%
Interest Free	2.503	-	2.503	0.0%	1.895	-	1.895	0.0%
Total Fixed Rate	90.978	336.868	427.846	4.6%	103.074	327.801	430.875	4.7%
Variable Rate:								
Other Temporary Loans (repayable on demand)	47.742	-	47.742	0.2%	39.933	-	39.933	1.9%
Total Debt	138.720	336.868	475.588	4.2%	143.007	327.801	470.808	4.4%
Investments:								
Money Market Funds			50.200	0.6%			19.834	4.2%
Bank (Cash Reserve Account)			0.651	0.0%			0.620	1.0%
Variable			-	0.0%			-	0.0%
Fixed Interest (Short [365 days or less])			-	0.0%			10.000	4.3%
Fixed Interest (Long [>365 days])			0.250	1.5%			0.250	0.0%
Total Investments			51.101	0.6%			30.704	4.1%
Net Debt (Treasury Management)			424.487				440.104	

- 3.4. The actual maturity structure of the fixed rate debt portfolio indicator is to reflect the potential re-financing risk associated with debt maturing in any particular year. The actual portfolio as at 31st March compared to the approved indicator is shown in the following table:

Fixed Rate Debt Maturity Profile	as at 31 March 2023		
	Indicator	Actual	Actual £m
Within 12 months	10%	11.7%	50.391
12 months - 2 years	10%	4.0%	17.254
2 to 5 years	20%	6.0%	25.958
5 to 10 years	20%	9.9%	42.500
10 to 20 years	20%	8.9%	38.203
20 to 30 years	30%	19.2%	82.646
30 to 40 years	40%	31.1%	133.923
40 to 50 years	50%	4.6%	20.000
Over 50 years	90%	4.6%	20.000
		100.0%	430.875

3.5. Levels of fixed rate debt maturing within 12 months are marginally above the approved indicator. This was due to a borrowing need late in the financial year and with borrowing rates at very high levels it was considered prudent to take short term debt (3 – 6 months) and seek to refinance for a longer period when borrowing rates return to more affordable levels. This approach avoided high debt interest costs being incurred for longer than necessary and was a strategy adopted by many Council's where a borrowing need was identified. At the time the original indicator was set and approved borrowing rates were not forecast to be at the levels they currently are.

4. The Investment Strategy for 2022/23

4.1. The priorities for the Council's investments are Security, Liquidity and Yield.

- Security – ensuring only suitable investment counterparties are used for investments
- Liquidity – Investment are placed for periods following cash flow considerations to ensure sufficient cash resources are available to meet expenditure commitments
- Yield – Only after the above two criteria have been addressed is the actual return on the investment considered to obtain optimum return.

4.2. For 2022/23 the strategy was to maintain investments short term to cover cash flow requirements, although consideration was to be given to place investments for periods up to 12 months with high credit rated institutions, in line with the approved counterparty selection criteria.

4.3. Bank Rate was predicted to remain low throughout the financial year, slowly increasing to 0.75% by March 2023. However, the turbulent economic position the UK faced during the year resulted in Bank Rate actually increasing to 4.25%. This inflated position did generate additional investment returns compared to the approved budget.

4.4. During the financial year a £10m deposit was placed for a period of 6 months with Lloyds Bank plc, in line with the strategy, which did create additional returns

compared to purely holding balances within Money Market Funds.

4.5. Investments held by the Council are proactively managed in-house on a daily basis, ensuring that the most effective use of cash resources is maintained. The table below details the average balances and returns by class of investment for the financial year with prior year information allowing comparison.

	2021/22		2022/23		Balance at 31 March 2023 £m
	Average Balance £m	Average Return	Average Balance £m	Average Return	
Liquid Investments (variable rate)					
Money Market Funds	87.280	0.06%	88.215	2.14%	19.834
Bank (Cash Reserve Account)	0.883	0.01%	1.011	0.55%	0.620
Other Variable Rate Deposits	-	0.00%	-	0.00%	-
Total Liquid Cash	88.163	0.06%	89.226	2.12%	20.454
Non Liquid Investments (fixed rates)					
Fixed Interest (Short [365 days or less])	-	0.00%	4.630	4.34%	10.000
Fixed Interest (Long [>365 days])	0.250	1.49%	0.250	0.93%	0.250
Total Non-Liquid Cash	0.250	1.49%	4.880	4.17%	10.250
Total Investments	88.413	0.06%	94.106	2.23%	30.704

4.6. As can be seen from the data above, average returns for the year increased from 0.06% to 2.23% reflecting the increasing investment returns available due to an increasing interest rate environment. The 2.23% returns achieved are equal to the comparable benchmark (7 day SONIA un compounded) reflecting an improved performance compared to the previous year with returns of 0.06% compared to the benchmark of 0.14%.

5. The Borrowing Strategy for 2022/23

5.1. The strategy was to maintain an under-borrowed position (internal borrowing) while cash resources allowed, but to monitor the debt markets to seek opportunities to externalise the internal borrowing position should there be a risk of a sharp rise in borrowing rates.

5.2. The expectations were for gradual increases in fixed borrowing rates during 2022/23 but by August it had become clear that inflation was rapidly increasing and the Monetary Policy Committee were committed to tackling this by aggressive tightening at every meeting either increasing rates by 0.25% or 0.5%. This resulted in a spike in fixed borrowing rates and therefore the opportunity to take longer term fixed rate borrowing had gone.

5.3. During the year £29.6m of fixed rate debt naturally matured with £35m of new debt being taken.

- April 22 - £20m maturity [0.1%] £20m new 1 year debt taken [1.11%]
- Sept 22 - £4.6m maturity [8.63%] Not replaced

- March 23 - £5m loan maturity [2.63%] £15m new loans 2-3 months [4.53%]

5.4. Towards the end of the financial year a borrowing need was identified to maintain sufficient cash flow resources. However due to the inflated long term borrowing rates it was not prudent to 'lock in' at those levels and create a long term cost burden on either the General Fund or the Housing Revenue Account. Therefore the £15m new borrowing taken was all very short term to allow time for the markets to settle and possibly refinance for longer periods later in the year. All new debt taken during the year was with other Local Authorities.

5.5. **Debt Rescheduling** : No rescheduling of debt was undertaken during 2022/23.

6. The UK Economy During 2022/23

6.1. Against a backdrop of stubborn inflationary pressures, the easing of Covid restrictions in most developed economies, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and a range of different UK Government policies, it is no surprise that UK interest rates have been volatile right across the curve, from Bank Rate through to 50-year gilt yields, for all of 2022/23.

6.2. Market commentators' misplaced optimism around inflation has been the root cause of the rout in the bond markets with, for example, UK, Eurozone and US 10-year yields all rising by over 200bps in 2022.

6.3. Q2 of 2022 saw UK GDP deliver growth of +0.1% quarter on quarter, but this was quickly reversed in the third quarter, albeit some of the fall in GDP can be placed at the foot of the extra Bank Holiday in the wake of the Queen's passing. Q4 GDP was positive at 0.1%. Most recently, January saw a 0.3% m/m increase in GDP as the number of strikes reduced compared to December. In addition, the resilience in activity at the end of 2022 was, in part, due to a 1.3% quarter on quarter rise in real household disposable incomes. A big part of that reflected the £5.7bn payments received by households from the government under the Energy Bills Support Scheme.

6.4. Nevertheless, CPI inflation picked up to what should be a peak reading of 11.1% in October, although hopes for significant falls from this level will very much rest on the movements in the gas and electricity markets, as well as the supply-side factors impacting food prices. On balance, most commentators expect the CPI measure of inflation to drop back towards 4% by the end of 2023. As of February 2023, CPI was 10.4%.

6.5. The UK unemployment rate fell through 2022 to a 48-year low of 3.6%, and this despite a net migration increase of c500k. The fact remains, however, that with many economic participants registered as long-term sick, the UK labour force shrunk by c500k in the year to June. Without an increase in the labour force participation rate, it is hard to see how the UK economy will be able to grow its way to prosperity, and with average wage increases running at over 6% the MPC will be concerned that wage inflation will prove just as sticky as major supply-side shocks to food (up 18.3% year on year in February 2023) and energy that have endured since Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 22 February 2022.

6.6. Bank Rate increased steadily throughout 2022/23, starting at 0.75% and finishing at 4.25%.

6.7. In the interim, following a Conservative Party leadership contest, Liz Truss became Prime Minister for seven weeks that ran through September and October. The markets did not react well to the unfunded tax-cutting and heavy spending policies put forward by her Chancellor, Kwasi Kwarteng, and their reign lasted barely seven weeks before being replaced by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Chancellor Jeremy Hunt. Their Autumn Statement of the 17th of November gave rise to a net £55bn fiscal tightening, although much of the “heavy lifting” has been left for the next Parliament to deliver. However, the markets liked what they heard, and UK gilt yields have reversed the increases seen under the previous tenants of No10/11 Downing Street, although they remain elevated in line with developed economies generally.

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Treasury Management Monitoring Q1 2023/24

Purpose

As required by the CIPFA 2021 Prudential and Treasury Management Codes, Cabinet are required to receive quarterly updates on the Treasury activities of the Council. This report meets those requirements.

Executive Summary

This report focuses on the treasury debt and investment activity of the Council and therefore excludes capital expenditure, as this is reported separately, and other long term liabilities as these are instruments for specific capital financing and do not impact on the day to day treasury portfolio.

The key movements in the debt and investment portfolios are summarised below with additional detail throughout this report.

	31 Mar 23	30 Jun 23
	£m	£m
Debt Portfolio		
General Fund	143.007	135.688
HRA	327.801	327.801
Total	470.808	463.489
Investments	30.704	84.062
Net Debt (Treasury)	440.104	379.427

The Director of Finance can confirm that there have been no breaches of the approved treasury and prudential indicators and all deposits have been placed in accordance with the approved counterparty selection criteria.

Recommendations

That Cabinet note the contents of this treasury monitoring report.

1. Investment Portfolio

- 1.1. The investment balances held have increased from £30.7m to £84.1m in line with expected cash flows. The large increase is primarily due to grants and contributions received at the start of the year in advance of expenditure being incurred. This compares to £72.0m held in investments at the same period last year.

- 1.2. A £10m 4.34% Fixed Term Deposit with Lloyds Bank matured in April. Cash flow forecasts only allowed for £5m of this to be re-invested and this was done at a rate of 4.97% for 6 months to lock in at rates higher than offered with Money Market Funds.
- 1.3. The majority of the Council's investment portfolio is held in Money Market Funds and these are proactively managed to ensure that sufficient liquid resources are available to service day to day expenditure commitments such as salaries, general creditor payments and housing benefit payments.
- 1.4. A summary of the treasury activity and portfolio by investment type is summarised in the tables below:

Investment Portfolio Movements	Cash Manager (Bank)	Money Market Funds	Fixed Interest	Total Invested	Portfolio Yield at Qtr End
	£m	£m	£m	£m	%
31 Mar 2023	0.620	19.834	10.250	30.704	4.15%
Q1 Activity					
Withdrawals/ Maturities	(4.623)	(161.918)	(10.000)		
New Deposits	4.707	220.192	5.000		
30 Jun 2023	0.704	78.108	5.250	84.062	4.34%

	Portfolio as at 30 June 2023		Average year to date	
	Investment	Yield	Average Investment	Average Yield
	£m	%	£m	%
MMFs	78.108	4.35%	43.249	4.39%
Cash Mgr	0.704	1.15%	0.651	1.08%
Variable	-	0.00%	-	0.00%
Fixed Interest (Short [365 days or less])	5.000	4.97%	5.385	4.80%
Fixed Interest (Long [>365 days])	0.250	0.00%	0.250	0.00%
Grand Total	84.062	4.34%	49.534	4.35%

- 1.5. The comparable benchmark (7 day SONIA) was 4.34% as at end June 2023 and therefore the performance achieved by the Treasury Services team is in line with this having achieved 4.35% for the first 3 months of the year with average investment balances of £49.5m.
- 1.6. The approved counterparty selection criteria as approved by Council in February 2023 is currently fit for purpose and no proposed amendments are therefore required.

2. Debt Portfolio

- 2.1. The Council's debt portfolio is mostly long dated fixed rate loans from PWLB or other markets. A small proportion of the debt portfolio consists of loans from other local authorities which assist with short term debt management

and cash flow requirements.

2.2. Another element of the debt portfolio consists of amounts deposited with the Council from the Fire Authority, Sandwell Leisure Trust and Children's Trust. These are at agreed variable rate terms in line with either actual Council treasury investment performance or Bank Rate as published by Bank of England. These amounts are held as liquid as they are repayable on demand as and when required.

2.3. The Council's loan portfolio has been split between the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account since 2012 when HRA Self Financing was introduced. The following table summarises the movements in the debt portfolios in the first quarter of the year:

	General Fund			HRA			Grand Total
	Fixed Rate	Variable Rate	Total GF	Fixed Rate	Variable Rate	Total HRA	
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	
31 Mar 23	103.074	39.933	143.007	327.801	-	327.801	470.808
Q1 Activity							
Fixed Rate Maturities	(35.297)			-			
New Fixed Rate Loans	25.000			-			
Net Movement in Variable Rate Loans		2.978			-		
30 Jun 23	92.777	42.911	135.688	327.801	-	327.801	463.489

2.4. £35m of the maturities relate to short term loans from other local authorities, £20m 1 year funding and £15m 2 to 3 months funding over year end to manage cash flows. The remaining £297k are scheduled repayments of interest free loans.

2.5. To ensure sufficient cash balances were maintained over the quarter, £25m of new short-term funding was taken, all from other Local Authorities:

- £5m 2 month at 4.56%
- £5m 6 month at £4.65%
- £5m 1 year at 4.85%
- £10m 1 year at £5.35%

2.6. The variation in 1 year rates above reflect the market volatility in the debt markets and a decision was taken to secure funding now before they spiked further as the cash flows identified a certain need for further funding later in the year.

2.7. The effect on the average interest rate on the fixed interest debt portfolio from the movements highlighted above is shown in the following table:

	31 Mar 23		30 Jun 23	
	Principal £m	Avg Rate	Principal £m	Avg Rate
Fixed Rate Debt				
General Fund	103.074	3.83%	92.776	4.62%
HRA	327.801	4.91%	327.801	4.91%
Total	430.875	4.65%	420.577	4.84%

2.8. Despite the sharp rise in the average debt rate on the General Fund, the lower debt levels mean that the revenue impact is not significant to give cause for concern. At the present time no variances are predicted on the debt costs to the council for 2023/24, but this will be closely monitored and reported accordingly to the Leadership Team and Cabinet.

2.9. The current strategy is to only take short dated debt due to market conditions and to refinance for longer periods at the appropriate time to prevent longer term cost burden on the council's revenue budgets.

3. Prudential Borrowing Indicators

3.1. The key prudential indicators in relation to the Council's borrowing are detailed below:

	£m
Authorised Limit (Debt)	844.617
Operational Boundary (Debt)	475.588
Maximum Treasury Debt to 30 Jun 23	476.547
Average Treasury Debt to 30 Jun 23	454.483

Note: The authorised limit and operational boundary shown above are for debt levels only and exclude other long term liabilities (as detailed in the Treasury Management Strategy Report) as these are PFI/ Finance Lease arrangements.

3.2. As can be seen from the table above treasury debt levels are within limits and no breaches have occurred.

4. Economic Update

4.1. The first quarter of 2023/24 saw:

- A 0.2% month on month rise in real GDP in April, partly due to fewer strikes;
- CPI inflation falling from 10.1% to 8.7% in April, before remaining at 8.7% in May. This was the highest reading in the G7;
- Core CPI inflation rise in both April and May, reaching a new 31-year high of 7.1%;

- Interest rates rise by a further 75bps over the quarter, taking Bank Rate from 4.25% to 5.00%;
- 10-year gilt yields nearing the “mini-Budget” peaks, as inflation surprised to the upside.

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Report to Cabinet

13 September 2023

Subject:	Additional Licensing and Article 4 – Options Appraisal
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Housing and Built Environment, Councillor Laura Rollins Cabinet Member for Regeneration Councillor Peter Hughes
Director:	Director for Housing, Gillian Douglas Director of Regeneration and Growth Tony McGovern
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Karl Robinson – Head of Housing Solutions Karl_robinson@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to the consultation on the expansion of additional licensing across Sandwell.
- 1.2 That the Director of Housing and the Director for Regeneration and Growth be authorised to carry out research into the distribution of small Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) (not currently subject to planning permission) to provide a robust dataset allowing the preparation of a non-immediate Article 4 direction which will be applied to relevant areas within the borough to remove permitted development rights for the change of use of dwelling houses (C3 use) to small houses in multiple occupation (C4 use).



1.3 That Cabinet considers and approve in full, approve in part, or do not approve the following recommendations of the from Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board:-

- (1) That the planned consultation endeavour to obtain at least 1,000 consultees per town in order to receive sufficient data to ensure an informed decision can be made;
- (2) That the Council works closely with external bodies, agencies and individuals, including West Midlands Police, West Midlands Fire Service, Councillors, Community Support Officers and other community facing organisations to identify un-registered Houses in Multiple Occupation.

1.4 That, in connection with 1.3 above, a further report be submitted to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board, within 2 months' time, on the decision of Cabinet.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

2.1 The private rented sector plays an important part in providing accommodation in the borough. The sector in Sandwell has grown from 5% in 2001 to 18.6% reported in the data from the 2021 census.

Whilst the 2021 census data suggests a private sector of 18.6% additional data from the Building Research Management limited - (BRE) report carried out on behalf of the council in 2018 estimated 34,386 properties in the sector, equating to 26%. This would suggest that the prevalence of PRS within Sandwell is greater than 18.6%. This is further addressed under section 4.



- 2.2 The borough has faced a major increase in private rented accommodation in some areas and it is recognised that there are landlords and agents who do not provide adequate accommodation or management of their properties. This poor management of properties has a significant impact on people's lives and on council and partner resources in tackling issues such as anti-social behaviour, fly tipping of domestic waste, concerns about property condition and harassment and illegal eviction. The council has implemented a range of powers and approaches to seek to address many of these issues including Additional Licensing within parts of West Bromwich but the on-going pressures are such that an expansion of this approach is considered necessary. Many privately rented properties are Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO), typically shared dwellings, or properties converted into flats. It is estimated that approximately 4200 privately rented homes are occupied by more than one household, and these multi occupied homes are found across the whole borough.
- 2.3 The Housing Act 2004 requires local housing authorities to mandatory licence Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) if they accommodate more than five people who form two or more households. The Act also gives authorities the power to introduce an additional licensing scheme for other smaller HMOs. This power can be considered if the authority believes they are not being managed sufficiently which gives rise or are likely to give rise to problems for the occupants or residents of the area.
- 2.4 The council seeks to ensure health and safety standards in the private rented sector, working with landlords to drive up compliance with appropriate legislation and professionalism within the sector, whilst using the full range of our legal powers against those who choose not to respond to formal approaches. The council seeks to target poor conditions in all HMOs through intelligence led interventions and enforcement. A key element of this approach will be to consider the expansion of an additional licensing scheme. The implementation of additional licensing schemes allow for these properties and their operation to be subject to proactive licensing requirements that would not otherwise be available. A fee is charged by the Council to the landlord for the duration of the licence which has clearly defined conditions which the landlord must satisfy. The introduction of additional licensing can contribute to:





- higher standards of HMO accommodation and ensuring effective management through more extensive control;
- protecting the health, safety and well-being of tenants and communities;
- neighbourhood improvement and the prevention and control of anti-social behaviour;
- easier identification of rogue landlords and enabling action to be taken to respond to this behaviour;
- completing a full suite of private sector licensing schemes, allowing for a consistent and robust approach to raising standards.

2.5 The Government re-categorised the change of use of C3 family housing to C4 small HMOs as permitted development in April 2010. This means that any such proposals do not require a planning application to be submitted to the council. Larger HMOs accommodating more than 6 people continue to require planning approval. The introduction of an Article 4 Direction will therefore only apply to the creation of smaller HMO's but it will allow a consistent approach to be applied for all HMO developments throughout the borough.



2.6 High concentrations of HMOs can present challenges to the future sustainability of neighbourhoods and impact on their character and residential amenity.

2.7 Local councillors and residents in a number of areas across the borough have expressed concern about the high concentration of HMOs in their area. Some of these comments have suggested that it may be appropriate to apply Article 4 directions, to enable the creation of new HMOs to be managed in these areas.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>The Best Start in Life for Children and Young People Improved quality of accommodation actively contributes to improved health outcomes. Additional licensing will reduce the impact that poor quality housing has on vulnerable individuals</p>
	<p>People Live Well and Age Well Improved quality of accommodation actively contributes to improved health outcomes. Additional licensing will reduce the impact that poor quality housing has on vulnerable individuals</p>



	<p>Strong Resilient Communities Additional licensing will contribute to reduced levels of anti-social behaviour.</p>
	<p>Quality Homes in Thriving Neighbourhoods The introduction of additional licensing will improve the condition of the private rented properties in the specific areas meaning the area is a more attractive place to live.</p>

4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 The Housing Act 2004, Parts 2 and 3, provides discretionary powers, subject to carrying out consultation, for Local Housing Authorities to licence all private landlords in a designated area with the intention of ensuring that HMOs meet a minimum standard of management and that all other private rented property within a designated area is managed by the landlord to a satisfactory standard.
- 4.2 The government has set out additional guidance to structure council decisions to introduce additional and selective licensing through the provision of updated legislation in April 2015 (via an Amended General Approval).
- 4.3 This guidance states that before any council can consider making a licensing designation it must ensure that the area in question has a high number of private rented properties occupied under assured tenancies or licences and that it meets one (or more) of the following criteria;
1. **Low Housing Demand** - It is, or is likely to become, an area of low housing demand; or
 2. **Anti-Social Behaviour** - It has a significant and persistent problem with anti-social behaviour where the inaction of private landlords is a contributory factor; or
 3. **Housing Conditions** - Following a review of housing conditions, it is believed that the area is suffering from significant housing condition problems and the council intends to inspect the dwellings concerned; or
 4. **Migration** - It has experienced a recent influx in migration, and where the migrants are primarily occupying privately rented accommodation; or



5. **Deprivation** - It suffers from a high level of deprivation which particularly affects the occupiers of privately rented accommodation; or

6. **Crime** - It suffers from a high level of crime that affects residents and businesses in the area.

4.4 Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) allows local planning authorities to make Directions withdrawing permitted development rights where the authority considers it expedient that development should not be carried out unless express planning permission has been obtained for the same. If Article 4 is approved a planning application will be required for any change of use from C3 (dwelling house) to C4 (small HMO). Permitted development rights will remain to change from C4 use to C3

4.5 Government Guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance advises that Article 4 Directions to remove national permitted development rights should be limited to situations where this is necessary to protect local amenity or the wellbeing of the area. The potential harm that the direction is intended to address should be clearly identified. There should be a particularly strong justification for the withdrawal of permitted development rights relating to a wide area (e.g. those covering the entire area of a local planning authority). Additionally, the NPPF emphasises that in all cases, a Direction must “be based on robust evidence, and apply to the smallest geographical area possible”.

4.6 There are two types of Article 4 direction: immediate and non-immediate. The recommended non-immediate direction would have the benefit of allowing all consultation views to be taken into account before the direction was confirmed. It would also reduce or eliminate the likelihood of compensation being payable to affected property owners. Such compensation claims can be made against the Council on the basis of abortive expenditure or losses directly related to the withdrawal of these permitted development rights. Once a non-immediate Direction comes into force, a planning application will be required for any change of use from C3 (dwelling house) to C4 (small HMO).



- 4.7 To ensure robustness, this report will consider the enhanced requirements and evidence base needed and will set out the options available to the council based on the findings and assessment against the relevant criteria.

Private Rented Sector prevalence in Sandwell

- 4.8 There are 130,246 households with residents in Sandwell – an increase of 7.2% from 2011 to 2021. Six wards have seen an increase of more than 10% in the number of households since 2011. The rise is particularly high in Soho & Victoria, Wednesbury South, and Greets Green & Lyng (at 21.6%, 18.8% and 18.0% respectively). Soho & Victoria also saw a large increase between 2001 & 2011.
- 4.9 Whilst the 2021 census data suggests 18.6% of the 130,246 households are in the private sector: (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E08000028/>) additional data from the Building Research Management limited (BRE) report carried out on behalf of the council in 2018 estimated 34,386 properties in the sector, equating to 26% (copy of the report can be found at Appendix 2). The two datasets suggest that the proportion of PRS in the borough is likely between these two figures.
- 4.10 This is further supported with drill down in to the 2021 census data around the private rented sector within Sandwell. The 2021 data suggests that there are only 262 HMO properties within Sandwell and the council (as at June 2023) has 221 HMO's licensed. This only includes large HMO's subject to Mandatory Licensing and less than 10 properties classified as small HMO's subject to Additional Licensing in West Bromwich. The BRE report estimated that there were over 3000 HMO's not subject to Mandatory Licensing. Based on the BRE estimate of total private rented sector this would account for just over 10% of the stock.
- 4.11 The BRE report was carried out as a wholly desk top exercise and as such, is also likely to carry a degree of inaccuracy in its estimations of the market. For the purpose of this options report, given the evaluation of the census data, BRE data and register of existing licensed HMO properties, the council is confident that the proportion of PRS properties is greater than the census estimate of 18.6% but less than the BRE estimate of 26%. There is currently no additional data available to determine a more accurate figure.



4.12 The lack of robust intelligence surrounding the location and volume of HMO properties within Sandwell makes it difficult to evidence that there are significant concentrations in particular areas of the borough, or within the borough as a whole. This could provide challenges to implementation of Article 4 given the prerequisite requirements of evidencing high concentrations of HMO's.

Evidence of need for Additional Licensing and Article 4

4.13 To inform the Council's consideration of the potential expansion of additional licensing, BRE were commissioned in early 2018 to undertake a series of modelling exercises on Sandwell's housing stock. These modelling exercises utilised sophisticated tools that incorporated local and national data to evaluate the make-up of local households. Due to the BRE data now being five years old, the council has also considered a range of contemporary datasets and updated some of the previous datasets.

4.14 All updated data sets are based on Lower Super Output Level (LSOA) which are output areas designed specifically for statistical purposes. They are 186 Lower Super Output Areas in Sandwell and they comprise of between 400 and 1,200 households and have a resident population between 1,000 and 3,000 persons.

4.15 When the range of available datasets are considered in relation to Sandwell the borough has sufficient data to support the potential expansion of additional licensing and, subject to identifying concentrations of HMO's, the introduction of Article 4 in some of or all of the borough. This section will demonstrate that a number of datasets meet the prevalence criteria set out, however, as alluded to in section 4.9 to 4.10, current available data around the exact location of PRS properties and HMO's is not at a sufficiently granular level to allow us to directly correlate and attribute each dataset to private rented accommodation. It is the view of this analysis that all area(s)/ towns meet at least one criteria for criteria's two through six (as set out in section 4.3).

4.16 The table below demonstrates a summary of the findings for each dataset by town. The full detail of each dataset and associated maps and findings can be found at appendix 1.



Dataset	Town					
	West Brom	Oldbury	Rowley	Tipton	Smethwick	Wednesbury
1 – ASB	Red	Amber	Red	Red	Amber	Amber
2 – Housing Conditions	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber
3 – Migration	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Red	Amber
4 – Deprivation	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
5 - Crime	Red	Amber	Amber	Red	Amber	Amber

Key: **Red** – Strong Evidence; **Amber** – Some Evidence; **Green** – Weak Evidence

4.17 **ASB** - There were 5183 ASB incidents reported to the police in 2021/22 and 2022/23. The heatmap shows that incidents of ASB were reported across the borough with only a small number of areas with no reports – these tended to be larger open spaces. Areas of higher ASB reports can be attributed to areas of higher population density. In addition to police reported ASB data, the council holds data on ASB instances reported to the Anti Social Behaviour Team. Similar to the police data, ASB affects all wards and towns within Sandwell. The related heat map correlates with the police data in most areas.

4.18 **Housing Conditions** - The 2018 BRE report estimated (through their Housing Stock Condition model database) that the private rented stock in Sandwell has higher levels of disrepair and fuel poverty (based on the ability of households to meet fuel costs) when compared to social housing and owner-occupied properties. This analysis is further evidenced through the inspection and enforcement activity of the Council’s Private Rented Sector and Housing Standards Team. When analysis further breaks down complaints and enquiries received by the service, the council supported 2252 cases with active intervention between 2013 and 2022. The distribution of cases covered 180 of the 186 LSOAs within Sandwell. The data can be further disaggregated to issues raised with HMO’s. There were 716 cases raised for HMO’s with the main reasons for casework being logged was due to poor standards and when aggregated accounted for 55% of the caseload.

4.19 **Migration** - In Sandwell, the 2021 Census found that almost one in four (23.6%) usual residents were born outside the UK compared to 15.9% in the 2011 census. The 2021 estimate compares with one in six nationally and this proportion puts the borough in the top 50 Local Authorities across England & Wales for this measure.



The West Midlands is currently the 4th largest of all 12 UK regions for welcoming asylum seekers and refugees. Individuals and families seeking asylum in Sandwell are living across a number of wards within the Borough, most commonly in the areas of St. Pauls, Smethwick and Soho and Victoria.

4.20 **Deprivation** – The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 shows Sandwell's average deprivation score as ranked 12th most deprived local authority in England, out of a total of 317. Previous IMD results for this measure show that Sandwell's position has declined slightly relative to other districts in England. Sandwell was 13th most deprived local authority in 2015. One in five of Sandwell's LSOAs fall into the most deprived 10% nationally in 2019. A further two-fifths fall into the most deprived 10-20%, so overall 60% of Sandwell's LSOAs fall within the worst 20% nationally, and 97% within the worst 60% nationally, clearly displaying the high levels of deprivation prevalent in large parts of Sandwell.

4.21 **Crime** – Similarly to the police ASB data, the council reviewed all police reported crime incidents from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023. The number of incidents that resulted in an intervention by the police is shown in appendix 1. There were 85,744 incidents reported to the police in 2021/22 and 2022/23. The heatmap shows that incidents were reported across the borough with only a small number of areas with no/few reports – these tended to be larger open spaces. Areas of higher crime reports can be attributed to areas of higher population density.

The current position – Additional Licensing

4.22 The report demonstrates that existing powers and activity, singularly or collectively, is insufficient to adequately improve standards within the HMO sector. Housing and five related enhanced datasets have been reviewed against key criteria for additional licensing.

4.23 As a result, this report proposes an additional licensing scheme is appropriate on the basis that a significant proportion of HMOs are being poorly managed and are giving rise, or are likely to give rise, to problems affecting the tenants or members of the public e.g. anti-social behaviour, poor standards, and that consultation should now take place regarding the pursuance of a borough wide additional licensing scheme.



- 4.24 In compliance with the General Approval, it is intended that consultation will be undertaken for a period of no less than ten weeks.
- 4.25 Section 56(3) of the Housing Act 2004 states that, when considering designating an area as subject to additional licensing, the Council must take reasonable steps to consult persons who are likely to be affected by the designation e.g. local residents, landlords, businesses within the proposed designation etc. and all representation must be considered.
- 4.26 If the recommendation to consult on a possible additional scheme is agreed, any consultation undertaken will be compliant with the requirements as set out in the Housing Act 2004 and General Approval. It is proposed that consultation is carried out through the same means as consultation for the current West Bromwich scheme.
- 4.27 To be compliant the approach will include consultation of local residents, including tenants, landlords and where appropriate their managing agents and other members of the community who live or operate businesses or provide services within the proposed designation. It will also include local residents and those who operate businesses or provide services in the surrounding area outside of the proposed designation that will be affected. The consultation will be widely publicised using various channels of communication.
- 4.28 As the proposed designation does not require the confirmation of the Secretary of State because of its extent the consultation on the proposed scheme will be for 10 weeks.
- 4.29 The consultation will be informative, clear and to the point, so the proposal is readily understood. It will inform local residents, landlords, letting agents and businesses about the proposed designation, giving the reasons for proposing it, why alternative remedies are insufficient, demonstrating how it will tackle specific problems together with other specified measures, and describing the proposed outcome of the designation.



It will also set out the proposed fee structure and level of fees the authority is minded to charge. Consultees will be invited to give their views, and these will all be considered and responded to.

4.30 Whilst providing an opportunity for consultees to provide their views, consultees will also be asked to validate the Council's understanding of the local housing stock, particularly around HMO status.

4.31 Once the consultation has been completed the results will then be published and made available to the local community. This will be in the form of a summary of the responses received and will demonstrate how these have either been acted on or not, giving reasons.

4.32 Should Cabinet approve the public consultation on additional licensing then such consultation will be constructed to meet the prescribed requirements set out above. The consultation will be based upon the following key approaches;

- Consultation notice on the council's website/ consultation pages – including webform for consultation feedback
- Engagement sessions with ward Councillors
- Engagement sessions with Landlord Steering Group and Forum
- Road shows across the borough
- Sandwell Herald advert
- Billboard advertising across the borough
- Local housing forums

4.33 The consultation will include details of the evidence base that supports the proposal, the proposed fee structure and the proposed licence conditions.



The current position – Article 4

- 4.34 With regards to the introduction of article 4, the five data sets evidence that there is a need to improve standards and effective tenancy management within the private rented sector. The challenge for the implementation of Article 4 is that the intelligence available cannot currently identify the prevalence and more importantly the concentration of smaller HMO's within specific areas of or across all of Sandwell. High concentration of HMO's in an area is a pre-requisite condition for approval of Article 4 whereas it is not so essential for supporting additional licensing.
- 4.35 It is proposed that the Housing Solutions Service implements Additional Licensing borough wide and the council utilises the register of licensed smaller HMO's to identify their location and areas of concentration to provide a solid evidence base for Article 4 designation.
- 4.36 This lead time is estimated at around 24 months from implementation of whole borough Additional licensing.
- 4.37 It is the view of this report that the council does not have sufficient data at present to meet the key requisite of “strong justification for the withdrawal of permitted development rights relating to a wide area (e.g. those covering the entire area of a local planning authority)” as at present cannot robustly demonstrate sufficient concentration of HMO's. Should the council proceed with designation of Article 4 there is a significant risk of successful challenge to the designation.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 This section details the alternative options that are in place to improve standards in the non-mandatory licensable HMO sector and it shows that singularly or collectively they are insufficient to adequately improve standards within this sector. Other courses of action to address the issues described in this report have been considered.



However, the Council does not believe that either individually, or collectively, they would prove sufficiently effective, or be as an effective means of tackling the issues highlighted, including anti-social behaviour and disrepair as an additional licensing scheme would.

5.2 Below are the alternative approaches and activities that have been considered or already carried out, and why this report recommends that they are not sufficient to meet the objectives.

5.3 The Housing Act 2004 states that additional licensing must be consistent with the local authority's housing strategy and should be coordinated with the authority's approach on homelessness, empty properties and anti-social behaviour with other activities to resolve issues. Below are the existing activities that the Council currently undertakes to respond to issues in this sector.

HMO Licensing

5.4 Prior to 2018, mandatory HMO licensing only applied to properties with three storeys or more. The removal of this condition saw an increase of licensable HMOs within Sandwell at the time of the change in legislation.

5.5 The Council currently enforces a statutory licensing scheme for certain types of House in Multiple Occupation where a property is;

- rented to 5 or more people who form two or more households and
- tenants share toilet, bathroom and/or kitchen facilities

5.6 There are approximately 221 licensed properties on the HMO licensing register. This does not include exempt accommodation which is excluded from licensing under the legislation.

5.7 It is predicted that there are circa 556 mandatory licensable HMOs in the borough (based on the BRE report 2018), however, data indicates that total HMO numbers are likely to be approximately 4200. Therefore, current enforcement powers that can be taken against licensable HMOs will not apply to the vast majority of HMOs in Sandwell. However, an additional licensing scheme would mean all HMOs would require a licence, including those to which the mandatory licensing scheme does not apply.



Civil Penalties

- 5.8 The Housing and Planning Act 2016 section 126 and Schedule 9 amended the Housing Act 2004 and introduced the ability for Local Housing Authorities to impose financial penalties (civil penalties) of up to £30,000 per offence.
- 5.9 Civil Penalties are an alternative to prosecution for the following offences under the Housing Act 2004:
- failure to comply with an Improvement Notice (Section 30);
 - offences in relation to licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Section 72);
 - offences in relation to licensing of houses under Housing Act 2004 Part 3,
 - contravention of an Overcrowding Notice, (Section 139(7));
 - failure to comply with management regulations in respect of HMOs. (Section 234);
- 5.10 The Council utilises Civil Penalties in accordance with its Enforcement Policy for the Regulation of Housing Standards and the Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation and has seen significant increases in the issuing of civil penalties over the previous two years.

Private Rented Sector Support and Housing Standards Enforcement

- 5.11 There is a Private Rented Sector Team that provides specialist advice on renting in the private sector under Call Before You Serve. They will intervene to prevent unlawful eviction and harassment and pursue, in appropriate cases, criminal prosecutions for offences under the Protection from Eviction Act 1977 and other relevant legislation. The Team, through education and encouragement, promotes good practice.
- 5.12 The council has recently enhanced the capacity within the team to ensure there is sufficient enforcement capacity where issues within the sector are identified. This report has highlighted a number of cases where the team have intervened within the HMO sector and worked to address standards issues.



Homelessness Prevention

5.13 The council has recently enhanced the capacity within the Housing Solutions team to increase the focus on homelessness prevention. Staffing was increased by 40% to help intervene and support people to remain in their current accommodation. This has led to more proactive communication with landlords and improved connectivity with the PRS and Housing Standards Team and in particular the Call Before You Serve team. This has led to increased identification of and intervention for issues with standards in the private rented sector.

6 Consultation

6.1 As part of the report, the service consulted with the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board (SNAC) on 31 August 2023. The Board requested that the following recommendations be considered by Cabinet:

Recommendation 1 - That the planned consultation aim to obtain at least 1,000 consultees per town in order to receive sufficient data to ensure an informed decision can be made. This is to ensure that the consultation process is thorough and secures a suitable number of responses to support the decision.

The deliverability of this recommendation will be a challenge as we are reliant on residents and those affected engaging in the consultation in all areas of Sandwell. Previous similar consultation for the West Bromwich area Additional Licensing resulted in a low turnout despite letters being sent to every property. Based on the recommendations of SNAC, we will ensure that all available avenues are explored to maximise participation in the consultation from those residents who will be most impacted by the proposals.

Recommendation 2 - That the Council works closely with external bodies, agencies and individuals, including West Midlands Police, West Midlands Fire Service, Councillors, Community Support Officers and other community facing organisations to identify un-registered HMOs. This is to make the best use of all resources across Sandwell to identify HMOs.



7 Implications

Resources:	<p>A consultation on the introduction of additional licensing as described within this report will have an estimated initial cost to the Council of £50,000.</p> <p>The following strategic resource implications would be associated with the implementation of additional licensing as described in this report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An estimated 3000 private rented properties within the designated area would require licencing. The fee structure provides the five-year licencing cost. The likely income generated by the introduction of the scheme will be validated through the proposed consultation. Before discounts are applied the following outline, fee levels are proposed. <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Property Type</th> <th>5 year License Fee</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Initial licence</td> <td>£938.02</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Renewal license</td> <td>£667.65</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income generated from the introduction of the scheme will cover the costs of operating the scheme. Additional staff will be required for the purposes of; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administering the licence application Enforcement against licence conditions Enforcement against the licensing conditions proposed in this report will result in the application of civil penalties for non-compliance. Such penalties will generate income for the Council. <p>Should the recommendations of this report be approved, then following completion of the consultation described above a further report will be brought to cabinet. This report will provide further</p>	Property Type	5 year License Fee	Initial licence	£938.02	Renewal license	£667.65
Property Type	5 year License Fee						
Initial licence	£938.02						
Renewal license	£667.65						



	<p>detail on estimated income generated by the scheme and clarity on the workforce requirements associated with its implementation and management.</p>
<p>Legal and Governance:</p>	<p>The Housing Act 2004 requires local housing authorities to mandatory licence HMOs if they accommodate more than five people who form two or more households. The Act also gives authorities the power to introduce an additional licensing scheme for other smaller HMOs.</p> <p>The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in exercise of powers under sections 58(6) and 82(6) of the Housing Act 2004 gives to all local housing authorities in England the following general approval in relation to areas designated for additional licensing.</p> <p>Section 58 Housing Act 2004 states that a designation of an area as subject to additional licensing cannot come into force unless it has been confirmed by the appropriate national authority. However, on 1 April 2015, the Housing Act 2004: Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Selective Licencing of Other Residential Accommodation (England) General Approval 2015 came into effect. The General Approval provides as follows:</p> <p>General Approval</p> <p>Section 3. Subject to the condition contained in paragraph 5, every local housing authority in England that designates an area of their district or an area in their district as subject to additional licensing in relation to a description of HMOs specified in a designation made under section 56(1) of the Act has the Secretary of State’s general approval of that designation for the purposes of section 58(1)(b) of the Act.</p>



	<p>Conditions to be satisfied</p> <p>Section 5. The general approval described in paragraphs 3 and 4 is not given in relation to a designation in respect of which the local housing authority has not consulted persons who are likely to be affected by it under section 56(3)(a) or section 80(9)(a) of the Act for not less than 10 weeks.</p>
Risk:	<p>There is a risk that should insufficient resources be allocated to the launch and provision of the expansion that the anticipated benefits will not be delivered. This will be mitigated through securing additional staff to carry out the licensing function in line with the expansion plan.</p> <p>If a scheme is implemented the main risk is that there is a low take up by landlords, as seen in the initial West Bromwich area, which would increase the cost of compliance and recovery of enforcement costs.</p> <p>There is a risk that landlords who disagree with the implementation of the scheme may take legal action to prevent its introduction.</p>
Equality:	<p>An Equality Impact Assessment will need to be completed as part of the final proposals and consultation, however, implementation will improve living conditions for vulnerable groups living in unlicensed HMOs</p>
Health and Wellbeing:	<p>Additional licensing is designed to benefit the local community and ensure that all private rented property within a designated area is managed by the landlord to a satisfactory standard prior to a licence being granted. Robust enforcement action is taken if license holders fail to comply with the licensing conditions. The introduction of additional licensing can contribute to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better housing conditions • Reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour • Reduction in domestic waste accumulations • A reduction in overcrowding



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased landlord engagement with the Council and partner organisations working in the area • A reduced ability for rogue/criminal landlords to enter the market • Increased ability to deal with rogue/criminal landlords • Improved relationships between landlords and tenants • Improved image and perception of the area making it a more desirable place for people to live.
Social Value:	No implications
Climate Change:	The requirements for licensing will support improving standards within the sector which will also incorporate ensuring properties meet the minimum legal requirement for EPC ratings
Corporate Parenting:	No implications

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 – evidence base
Appendix 2 - BRE report 2018



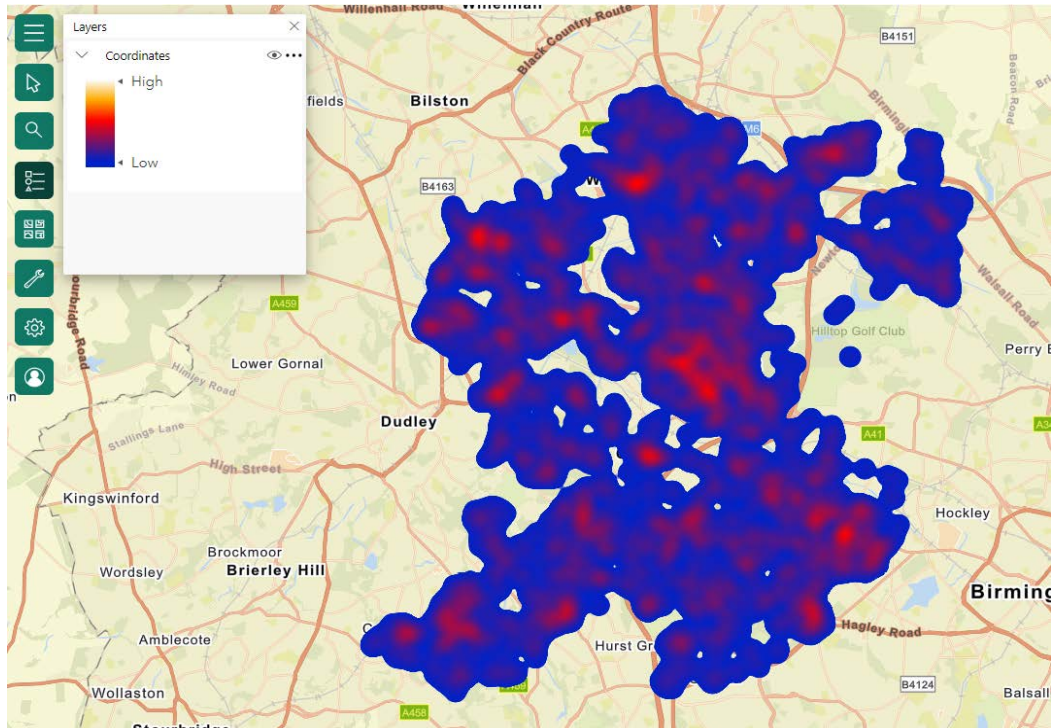
Additional Licensing and Article 4 – Evidence base

Datasets 1 – Anti Social Behaviour

To evidence criteria two, the council needs to demonstrate that the area within the proposed designation experiences persistent ASB, which is caused, in part, by private landlords failing to manage their properties (and their tenants) effectively. However, demonstrating the link between anti-social behaviour and private rental sector is not straightforward since there is no comprehensive source of information on whether a property is privately let, either divided into rental units or sub-let to tenants. There are a large number of councils who have carried out studies into ASB and the connection to the private rented sector (including Tower Hamlets, Lewisham, Cardiff, Birmingham, Oxford, York) and a paper published by the House of Commons Library “Anti-social neighbours living in private housing (England) – 27 August 2019” makes reference to the challenges posed by the PRS. The report states “The Home Affairs Select Committee’s 2004-05 inquiry into anti-social behaviour (ASB) noted that although the response to ASB was originally located in the context of social housing, “many nuisance neighbours are not social tenants but private tenants or owner-occupiers.”. The Northern Housing Consortium told the Committee that a “significant number of problems arise in the private sector that are ignored due to absentee landlords or landlords that do not have the skills or capacity to tackle the problems.” <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN01012/SN01012.pdf>

For the purpose of this evaluation, the council reviewed all police reported anti-social behaviour incidents from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023. The number of ASB incidents that resulted in an intervention by the police is shown below. They relate to ASB associated with both residential premises and in communal and public spaces. For example, the ASB data includes incidents investigated on a street corner that cannot be directly linked to a residential property.

It is important to note that ASB can be subject to recording issues and therefore results do not include all ASB incidents, for the purpose of this dataset only ASB incidents investigated by the police have been included.

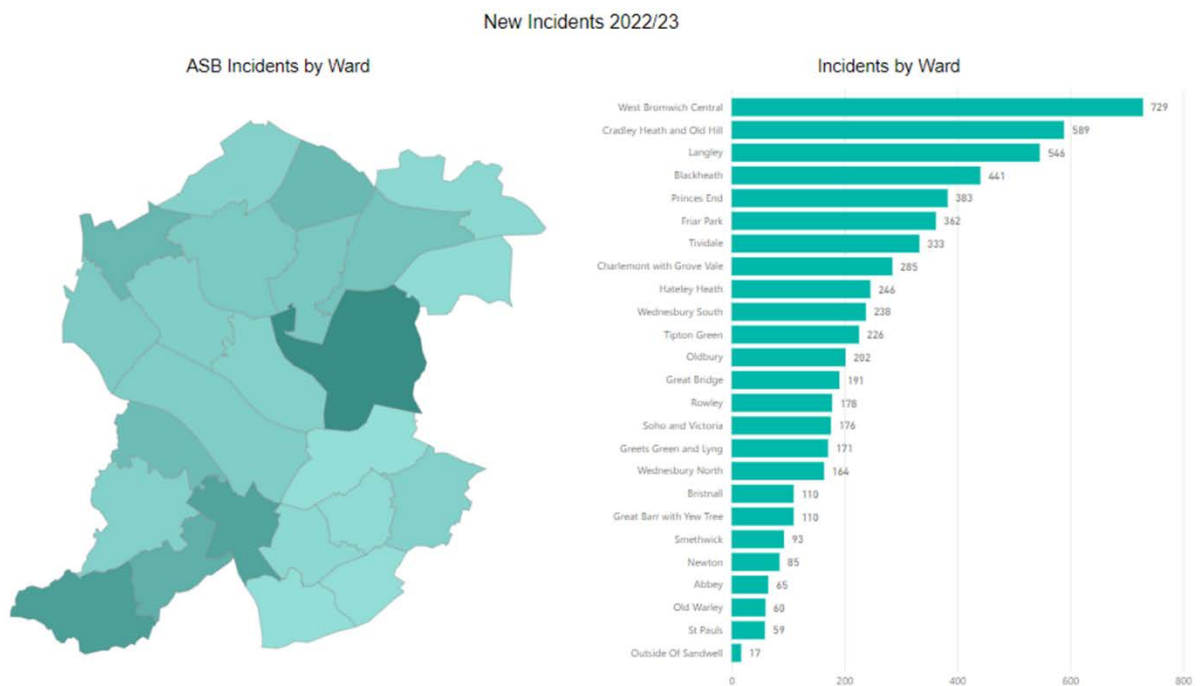


There were 5183 ASB incidents reported to the police in 2021/22 and 2022/23. The heatmap shows that incidents of ASB were reported across the borough with only a small number of areas with no reports – these tended to be larger open spaces. Areas of higher ASB reports can be attributed to areas of higher population density. The heat map shows the highest prevalence of ASB in the following areas:

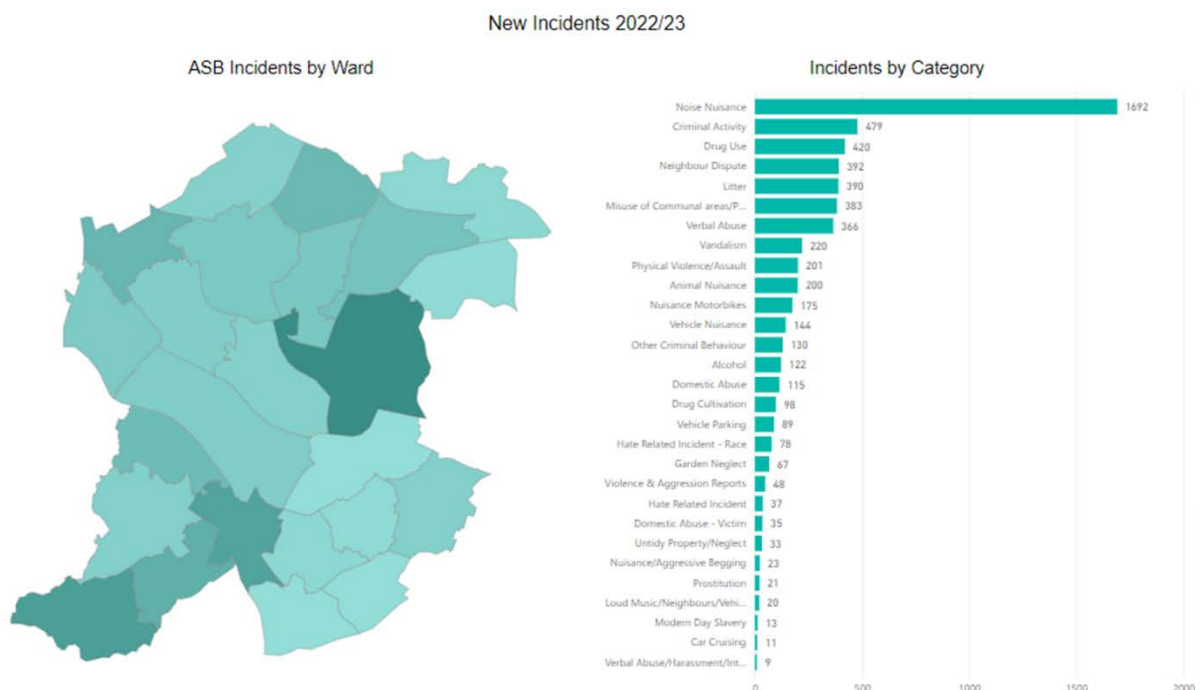
- Large proportions of West Bromwich
- Large proportions of Tipton
- Northern and eastern Smethwick
- Western Rowley
- Some areas of northern and central Oldbury
- Some areas of southern Wednesbury

In addition to police reported ASB data, the council holds data on ASB instances reported to the service. The charts below show the number of ASB incidents in each ward for 2022/23 and the nature of the issue:

Incidents by ward:



Incident type

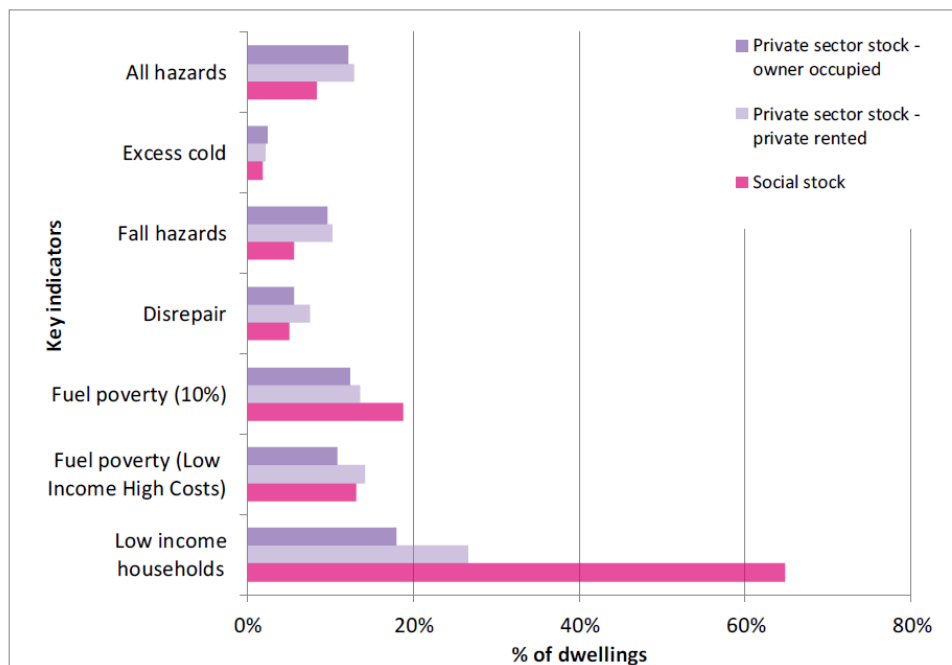


Similarly to the police data, ASB affects all wards and towns within Sandwell. The council data correlates with the police data in some areas and shows the highest proportion of cases are as follows:

- West Bromwich shows the highest concentration
- Rowley has the second highest concentration of ASB reports
- Tipton and Oldbury show similar levels
- Smethwick shows the second lowest proportion and Wednesbury receives the fewest reports

Dataset 2 – Housing Conditions

The 2018 BRE report estimated (through their Housing Stock Condition model database) that the private rented stock in Sandwell has higher levels of disrepair and fuel poverty (based on the ability of households to meet fuel costs) when compared to social housing and owner-occupied properties as detailed in the chart below:



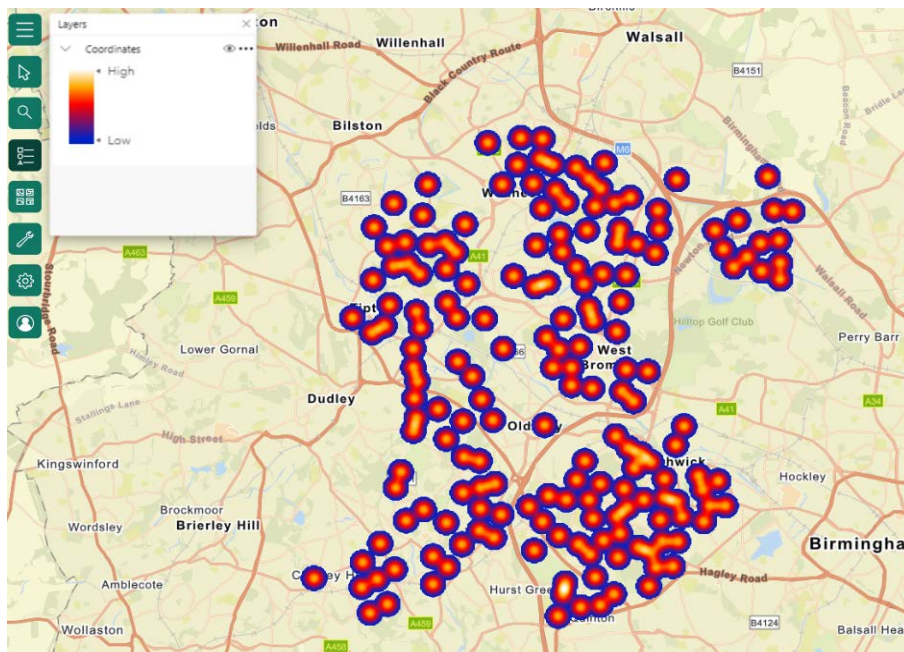
This analysis is further evidenced through the inspection and enforcement activity of the Council’s Private Rented Sector and Housing Standards Team. The team provide advice, assistance, support and signposting services as well as direct intervention for private tenants, landlords and owners of empty properties. Many of these customers are vulnerable or economically inactive and often require some form of assistance to either maintain or remain in their homes.

The table below shows the level of complaints / enquires received by the Private Rented Sector and Housing Standards Team into private rented housing. The table also depicts that whilst enforcement action has been undertaken it has not considerably reduced the level of

complaints, thus suggesting a need to move to the more proactive approach associated with additional licensing

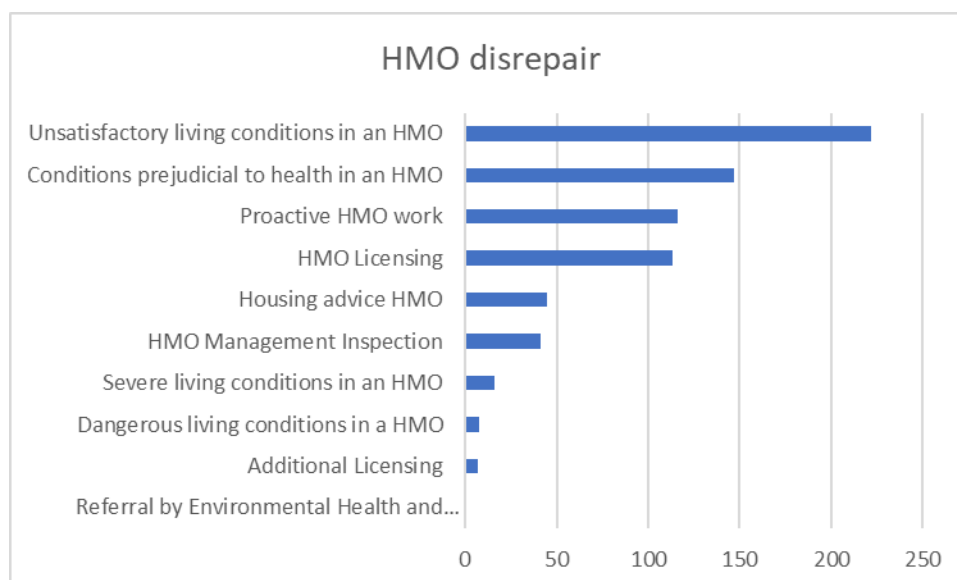
Year	Number of complaints / enquires received by HQT Triage system
2014/15	886
2015/16	810
2016/17	845
2017/18	887
2018/19	728
2019/20	866
2020/21	783*COVID impact
2021/22	859
2022/23	804

When we further break down complaints and enquiries received by the service, we supported 2252 cases with active intervention between 2013 and 2022. These interventions range from advice and guidance to enforcement including notices and civil penalties. The distribution of cases covered 180 of the 186 LSOAs within Sandwell and the map below shows where the largest volume of these cases were located:



The map shows a relatively even spread across Sandwell with all towns seeing some demand. The key exception would be the centre region of Oldbury where there are very few hotspots identified. This suggests that issues with disrepair in the PRS has an even geographic spread and affects all six towns.

The data can be further disaggregated to issues raised with HMO's. There were 716 cases raised for HMO's within the data show above. A summary of the reasons/ categories of casework can be seen in the chart below:



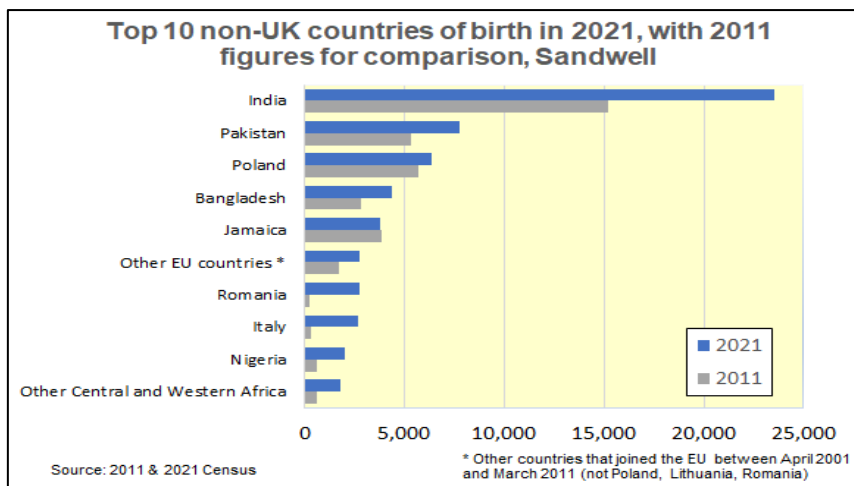
The chart shows that the main reasons for casework being logged was due to poor standards and when aggregated accounted for 55% of the caseload raised for HMO's.

Dataset 3 – Migration

In Sandwell, the 2021 Census found that almost one in four (23.6%) usual residents were born outside the UK compared to 15.9% in the 2011 census. The 2021 estimate compares with one in six nationally and this proportion puts the borough in the top 50 Local Authorities across England & Wales for this measure. In the last decade, this proportion has increased by 7.7%. The West Midlands is currently the 4th largest of all 12 UK regions for welcoming asylum seekers and refugees. Sandwell has been accommodating people through the Home Office's contracted dispersal programme for decades – most recent projects include the Afghanistan resettlement and Homes for Ukraine schemes. Sandwell has around 1,100 asylum seekers dispersed in the borough.

For the cohort of asylum seekers who have resettled in the past two and a half years, the most common country of origin was Iran with 31.1%, followed by Iraq with 19.8%. The remaining countries include Albania (9.3%), Afghanistan (7.1%), Syria (5.4%) Sudan (5.1%), El Salvador (4.5%), Eritrea (3.1%), India (2.3%) and Turkey (2.0%)

The table below gives some breakdown to migration in Sandwell and their country of origin:

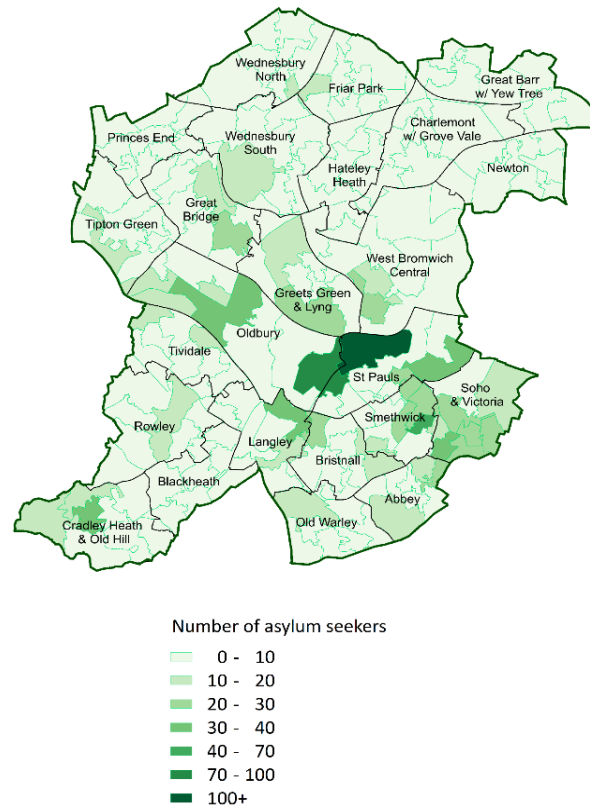


The chart shows that India remained the most common country of birth outside the UK in 2021 with 6.9% of the population. Relatively large proportions of Sandwell residents were born in Pakistan (2.3%) and Bangladesh (1.3%).

The number of people living in Sandwell who were born in Poland grew slightly at 0.1% since the previous census, from 1.8% in 2011 to 1.9% in 2021. Whereas the number born in Romania saw a fairly significant increase from 0.1% in 2011 to 0.8% in 2021.

13.9% of Sandwell residents owned a non-UK passport; the most common non-UK passport held was Polish (2.0% of the population).

Individuals and families seeking asylum in Sandwell are living across a number of wards within the Borough, most commonly in the areas of St. Pauls, Smethwick and Soho and Victoria. However, there are several wards within Sandwell where no asylum seekers are placed – including Great Barr, Newton, Princes End, Hateley Heath, Charlemont with Grove Vale and Blackheath. This suggests that there has been some disproportionate dispersal in the re-settlement of migrants in wards and towns in Sandwell. The map below shows dispersal in recent years:

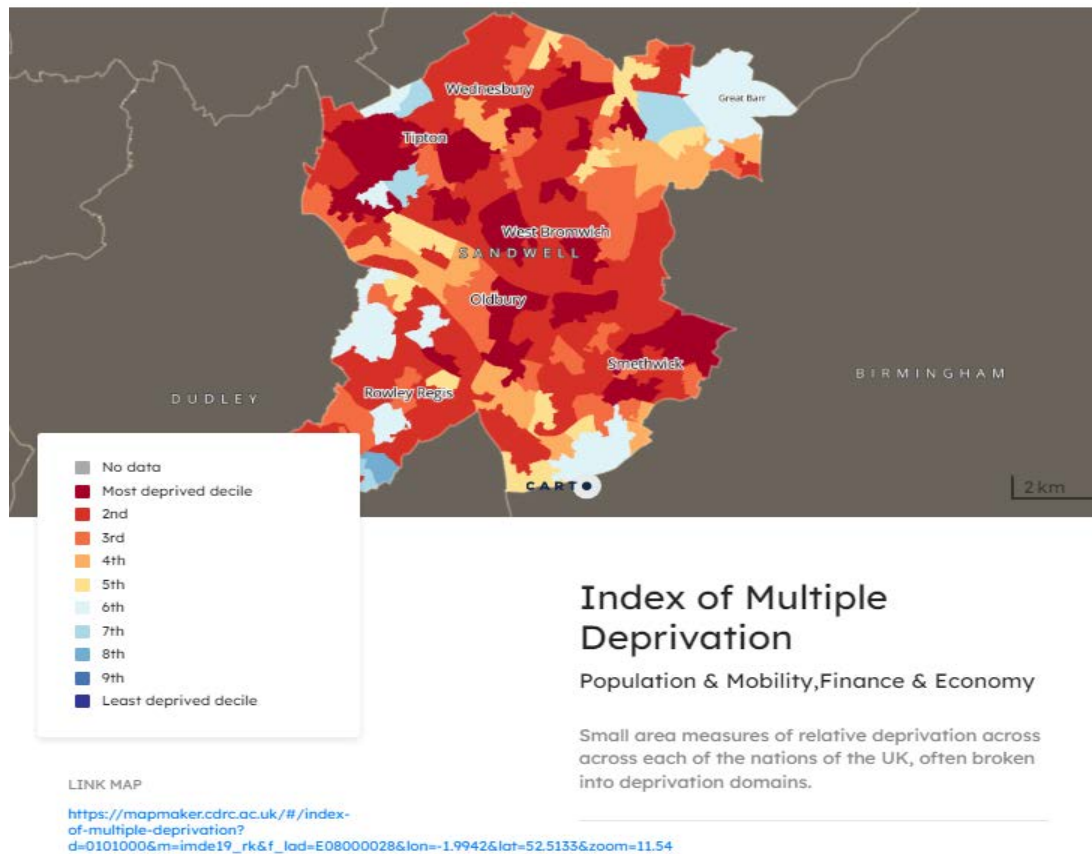


Dataset 4 – Deprivation

The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 shows Sandwell's average deprivation score as ranked 12th most deprived local authority in England, out of a total of 317. Previous IMD results for this measure show that Sandwell's position has declined slightly relative to other districts in England. Sandwell was 13th most deprived local authority in 2015.

Within the West Midlands conurbation there is a central corridor of severe deprivation that runs from Birmingham, through Sandwell, into Wolverhampton, parts of Walsall, and Dudley. The less deprived areas are around the extremities of the conurbation and within the adjoining district of Solihull.

Sandwell is the only metropolitan borough outside London that does not adjoin a Shire district. The levels of deprivation can be seen in the chart below:

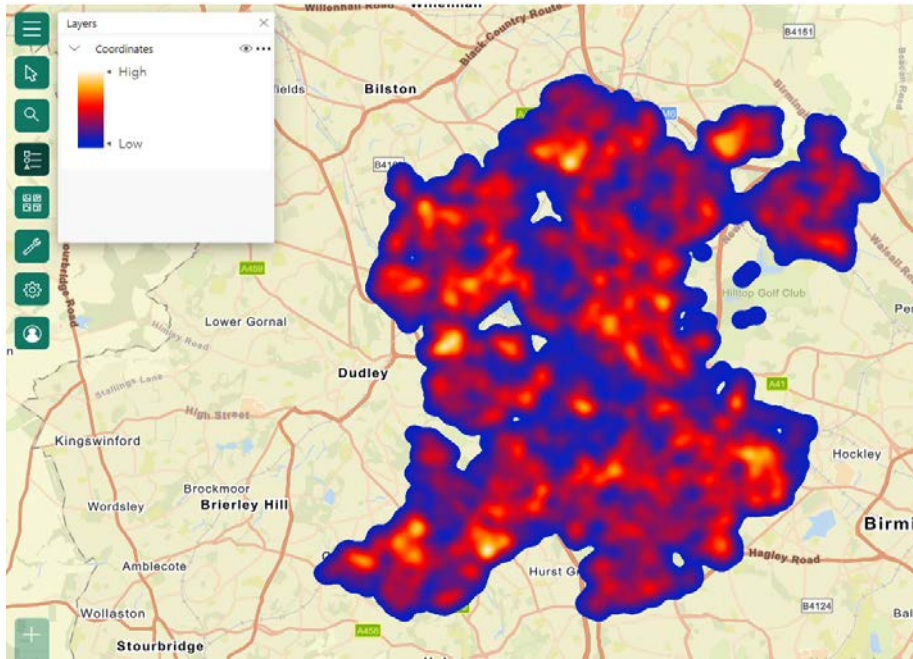


One in five of Sandwell's LSOAs fall into the most deprived 10% nationally in 2019. A further two-fifths fall into the most deprived 10-20%, so overall 60% of Sandwell's LSOAs fall within the worst 20% nationally, and 97% within the worst 60% nationally, clearly displaying the high levels of deprivation prevalent in large parts of Sandwell.

The BRE report suggested a direct correlation between deprivation and areas of high volume poor quality private rented accommodation.

Dataset 5 - Crime

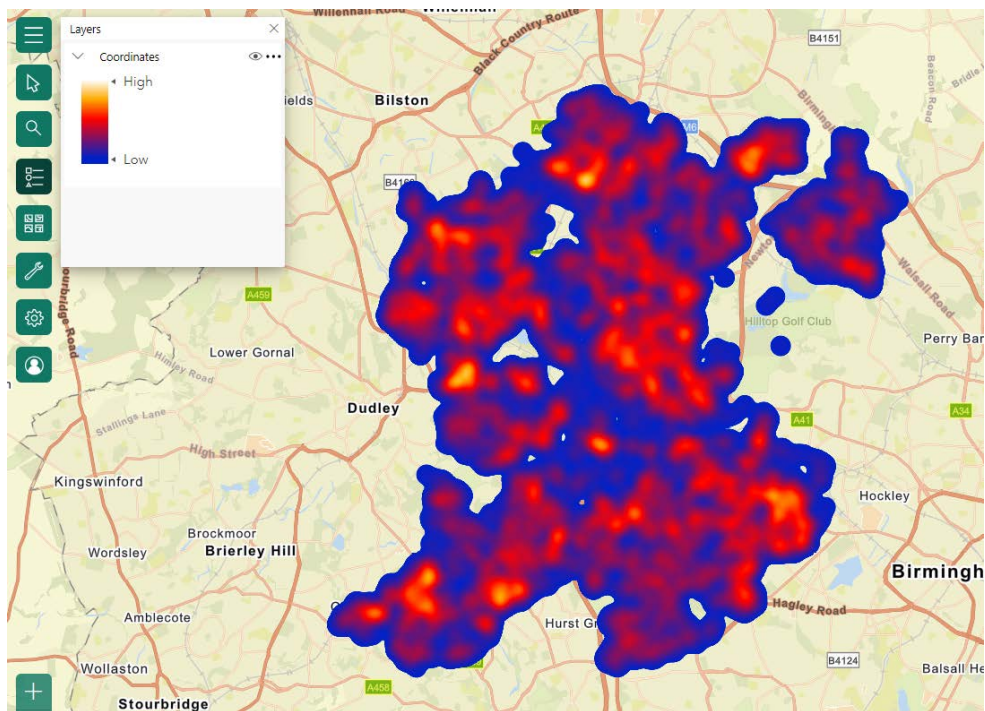
Similarly to the police ASB data, the council reviewed all police reported crime incidents from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023. The number of incidents that resulted in an intervention by the police is shown below. They relate to crime associated with both residential premises and in communal and public spaces. For example, the crime data includes incidents investigated on a street corner that cannot be directly linked to a residential or commercial property.



There were 85,744 incidents reported to the police in 2021/22 and 2022/23. The heatmap shows that incidents were reported across the borough with only a small number of areas with no/few reports – these tended to be larger open spaces. Areas of higher crime reports can be attributed to areas of higher population density. The heat map shows the highest prevalence of crime in the following areas:

- Large proportions of West Bromwich with a focus on the south eastern part of the town
- Large proportions of Tipton
- Eastern Smethwick
- Southern Rowley
- Some areas of northern and southern Oldbury
- Central Wednesbury

The highest proportion of reported crime type was “violence and sexual offences” which accounted for 44% of all reported crime. This compares to the second highest reason of “public order” accounting for 7884 cases or 9.19%. This comparison shows the significance of the gap between the highest and second highest reported crimes. The map below shows the distribution of “violence and sexual offences” correlates to the “all crimes” map.



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BRE Client Report

BRE Integrated Dwelling Level Housing Stock Modelling and Database for Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Prepared for: Richard Norton, Environmental Health Manager

Date: 31 July 2018

Report Number: P104088-1042 Issue: 2

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Prepared by

Name Ian Watson

Position Principal Consultant, Housing and Health

Date 31 July 2018

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'I. Watson', is written over a thin horizontal line.

Authorised by

Name Rob Flynn

Position Director, Housing and Health

Date 31 July 2018

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. Flynn', is written over a thin horizontal line.

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Executive summary

- Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council commissioned BRE to undertake a series of modelling exercises on their housing stock which required BRE to produce an integrated stock model which includes Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG), HMO, tenure and benefits data provided by the Council. The BRE models also integrate Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)¹ data. As a result of this, 61,495 addresses have had their imputed energy characteristics replaced with observed characteristics from the EPC data for the purposes of the energy model. The use of this observed data will lead to more accurate energy models for these cases, which account for 46.0% of the total stock in Sandwell.
- This report describes the work and the results obtained from the integrated model and Housing Stock Condition Database (HSCD). The database is also provided to the council to enable them to obtain specific information whenever required.
- The detailed housing stock information provided in this report will facilitate the delivery of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council's housing strategy and enable a targeted intervention approach to improving housing, particularly in the private rented sector. In addition to this there are also several relevant government policies – the Housing Act 2004, Housing Strategy Policy, Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS) and the Energy Companies Obligation (ECO).
- The main aims of this work were to provide estimates of:
 - The percentage of dwellings meeting each of the key indicators² for Sandwell overall and broken down by tenure and then mapped by Census Output Area (COA) (private sector stock only)
 - Information relating to LAHS reporting for the private sector stock - category 1 hazards and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) as well as information on EPC ratings
 - The council also requested additional analysis of data on the private rented stock to investigate the potential for licensing schemes in this sector.
- BRE Housing Stock Models were used to provide such estimates at dwelling level and focussing on private sector housing. The key indicators provide Sandwell with detailed information on the likely condition of the stock and the geographical distribution of properties of interest.
- A stock modelling approach has been developed and used by BRE for many years and the most recent 2017 models have been updated to make use of the results of the 2014 English Housing

¹ EPCs are an indication of how energy efficient a building is - with a rating from A (very efficient) to G (inefficient). They are required whenever a property is built, sold or rented.

² Presence of a HHSRS category 1 hazard, presence of a category 1 hazard for excess cold, presence of a category 1 hazard for falls, dwellings in disrepair, fuel poverty (10% and Low Income High Cost definitions), dwelling occupied by a low income household and SimpleSAP rating.



Survey (EHS)³. The models also make use of Experian and Ordnance Survey (OS) data. OS AddressBase Plus is used as a basis for the list of all dwellings in the authority, and applying improved geo-modelling⁴ is used to determine the dwelling type and floor area from OS Mastermap. The energy model that lies at the heart of the modelling process are based on the 2012 version of SAP, and the methods for imputing the inputs to this model incorporate information sources from additional sources. These include the age of postcodes (to improve dwelling age data) and data from Xoserve to determine whether the dwelling is on the gas network. These dwelling level models are used to estimate the likelihood of a particular dwelling meeting the criteria for each of the key indicators. These outputs can then be mapped to provide the authority with a geographical distribution of each of the key indicators which can then be used to target resources for improving the housing stock.

- Furthermore, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council provided various additional sources of “local data” – LLPG, tenure and benefits. Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) data is also integrated by BRE. These data sets were then incorporated into the BRE Housing Stock Model to produce an integrated Housing Stock Condition Database (HSCD).
- The headline results are provided on the following page:

³ 2014 is the latest available data. Prior to the 2017 models EHS 2012 data was used.

⁴ The OS data has been used to update a number of the model inputs – the main value of the OS data is the ability to determine the dwelling type with much greater confidence – see **Appendix B** for more information.



Headline results for Sandwell

There are 133,680 dwellings in Sandwell, 46% are owner occupied, 26% private rented and 28% social rented.

11,905 dwellings in the private sector have category 1 Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) hazards. This equates to 12% of properties. *See full results*

4,422 dwellings in the private rented sector have category 1 HHSRS hazards. This equates to 13% of properties in the private rented sector. *See full results*

The highest concentrations of all HHSRS hazards in the private and private rented sector are found in the wards of Abbey, Smethwick and St. Pauls. *See full results*

The highest concentrations of fuel poverty (Low Income High Costs definition) in the private sector are found in the wards of Smethwick, Abbey and St. Pauls, and in Abbey and Smethwick in the private rented sector. For excess cold the highest concentrations are in Old Warley, Abbey and Smethwick for private stock with the highest rate in the private rented sector in Tividale. *See full results*

The average SimpleSAP rating for all private sector dwellings in Sandwell is 60, which is the same as England but better than West Midlands (58). For owner occupied stock the figure is 59 and for private rented stock it is 61. *See full results*

Maps by Census Output Area (COA) have been provided for the above key indicators. *See maps*

The total cost of mitigating category 1 hazards in Sandwell's private sector stock is estimated to be £51.7 million – with £28.3 million in the owner occupied sector, and £23.4 million in the private rented sector. *See full results*

4.1% (3,926) of *private sector* dwellings and 3.8% (1,319) of *private rented* dwellings in Sandwell are estimated to have an EPC rating below band E. *See full results*



Headline results for Sandwell – HMOs and licensing

There are an estimated 4,247 HMOs in Sandwell, of which approximately 92 come under the mandatory licensing scheme using the current definition. Using the proposed new mandatory licensing scheme definition, there are 464 HMOs. *See full results*

HMOs in the private rented sector in Sandwell are generally in poorer condition than non-HMOs. The levels of category 1 hazards are notable higher for HMOs (16% compared to 12% for non-HMOs), especially for fall hazards (13% compared to 10%). Levels of disrepair are also higher for HMOs (11% compared to 7% for non-HMOs). HMOs have lower rates of low income households (24% compared with 27% for non-HMOs). However, they also have lower energy efficiency levels compared to non-HMOs (average SimpleSAP score of 59 compared to 61), leading to higher levels of fuel poverty using the current definition (LIHC) (17% compared with 14%). *See full results*

Selective licensing

Private rented dwellings

Overall the percentage of dwellings in the private rented sector across Sandwell is 26% compared to the national average of 20%. A large proportion of wards (15 out of 24 wards) in Sandwell have a percentage of private rented sector dwellings greater than the national average.

Three types of area within Sandwell were identified based on levels of private rented stock which were a) 3 wards in excess of 35%, b) 6 wards with 25-35% stock privately rented, and c) 6 wards between 20-25% (i.e. above the national average of 20%).

70% of all HMOs in Sandwell are contained within these three areas, with the 6 wards of 25-35% private rented stock containing 34% of all HMOs.

See full results

Dwelling conditions in the private rented sector

The proportion of dwellings with a category 1 hazard in the private rented stock for the areas identified are: >35% PRS - 15%, 25-35% PRS- 13%, and 20-25% PRS – 12% compared to Sandwell overall – 13%

Deprivation

56% of private rented dwellings in the 3 wards with over 35% private rented stock, and 58% in the 6 wards with 25-35% private rented stock are located in the 20% most deprived LSOAs in England. This is higher than the figure for Sandwell as a whole (54%). *See full results*

In depth analysis on specific areas

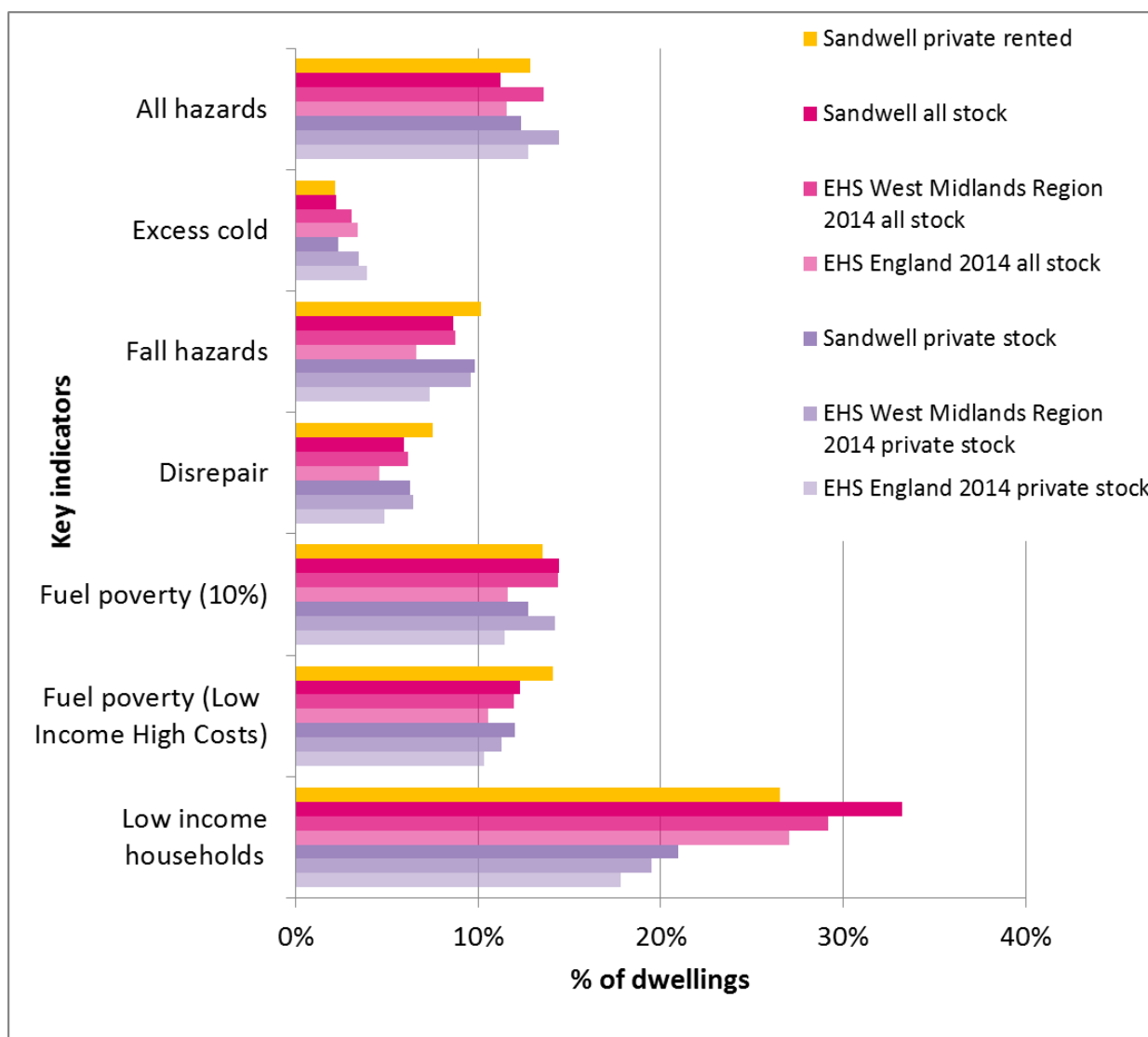
There are significant levels of HHSRS hazards and deprivation in some areas which could be considered targets for discretionary licensing. *See full results*



Key illustrations of headline results

- The table below shows the results for 7 of the key indicators in Sandwell compared to regional data and England (EHS 2014) - split into all stock and private sector stock. The data shows that the performance of the housing stock in Sandwell compared to the EHS England average is mixed with Sandwell performing slightly better for all hazards and excess cold, but worse for the remaining indicators. Compared to the regional average, there is a similar picture although Sandwell performs at a similar level to the regional average for fall hazards and disrepair. Looking at the private rented sector, there are higher rates of all hazards, falls hazards, disrepair and fuel poverty (LIHC) compared to all stock and private sector stock in Sandwell.

Estimates of the percentage of dwellings meeting the key indicator criteria assessed by the housing stock models and database for all stock and private sector stock – Sandwell compared to the West Midlands and England (EHS 2014)





- The table below shows the number and percentage of Sandwell's private rented stock falling into each of the EPC ratings bands (based on SimpleSAP). The number of private rented dwellings in Sandwell with a rating below band E (i.e. bands F and G), is estimated to be 1,319 (3.8%). Compared to England, there are a greater proportion of dwellings in band C to E, and lower proportions in bands F and G.

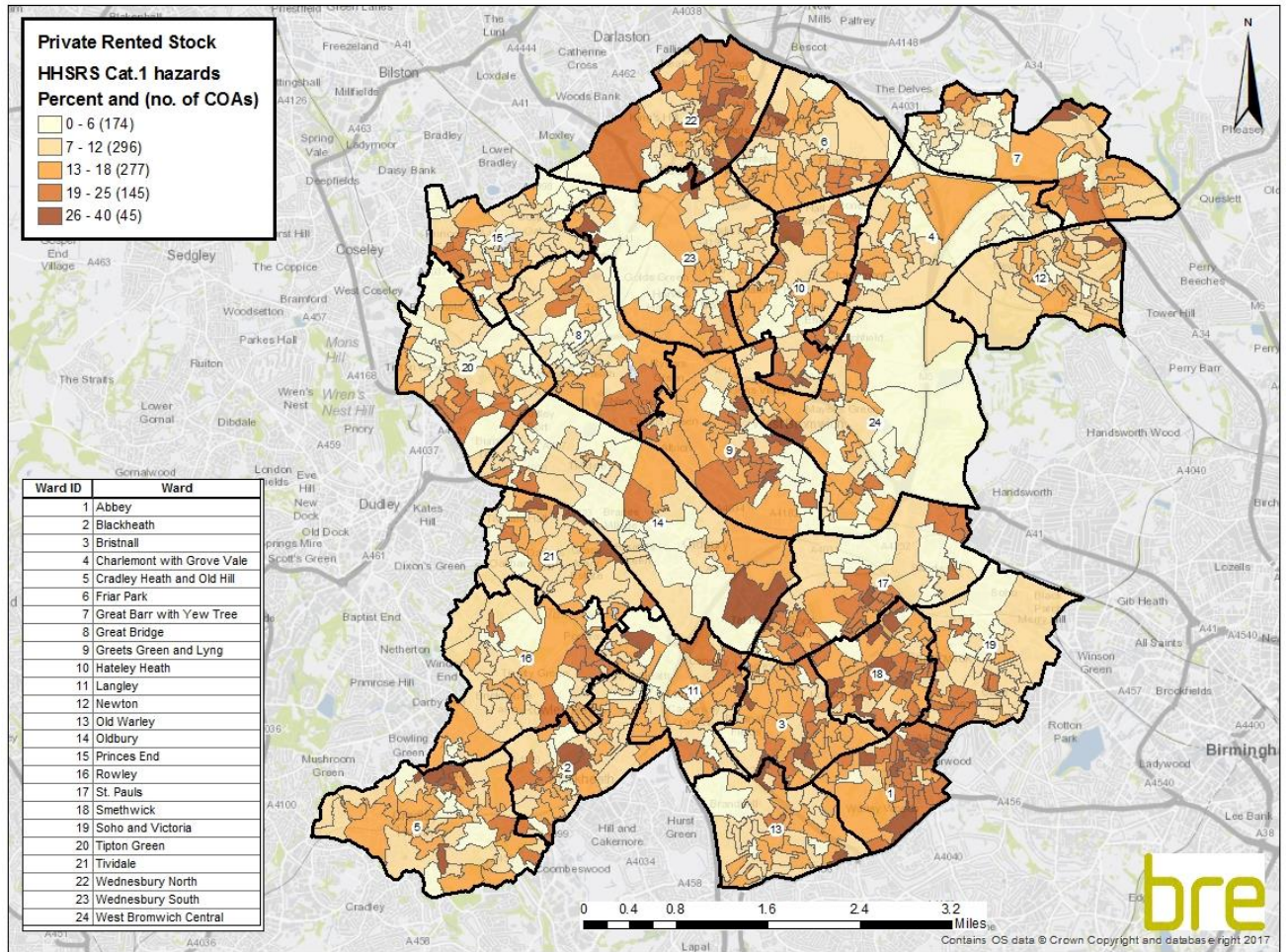
Number and percentage of Sandwell's private rented stock falling into each of the EPC ratings bands (based on SimpleSAP)

	Sandwell		2014 EHS England
	Count	Percent	Percent
(92-100) A	0	0.0%	1.4%
(81-91) B	211	0.6%	
(69-80) C	8,983	26.1%	23.8%
(55-68) D	16,854	49.0%	48.9%
(39-54) E	7,019	20.4%	18.3%
(21-38) F	1,068	3.1%	5.4%
(1-20) G	251	0.7%	2.1%

- The map overleaf shows the distribution of category 1 hazards in the private rented sector, as defined by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). The highest concentrations are scattered across the area, although the data behind the maps suggests the wards of Abbey, Smethwick and St Pauls have the highest concentrations.



Percentage of private rented sector dwellings in Sandwell with the presence of a HHSRS category 1 hazard





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1 Introduction

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council commissioned BRE to undertake a series of modelling exercises on the housing stock in Sandwell. BRE have integrated data provided by the authority into the models to produce an integrated database and corresponding report. This report describes the modelling work and provides details of the results obtained from the integrated dwelling level model and database.

This current report covers the BRE Integrated Dwelling Level Stock Models and Database. Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council provided Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG), HMO, tenure and benefits data. The BRE Model also integrates Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) data and as a result of this, 61,495 addresses have had their imputed energy characteristics replaced with observed characteristics from the EPC data for the purposes of the energy model. The use of this observed data will lead to more accurate energy models for these cases, which account for 46.0% of the total housing stock in Sandwell.

This report describes that work and the results obtained from the integrated model and database. The integrated database is also provided to the council to enable them to obtain specific information whenever required. This database is now in an online format.

The stock models and database provide the council with dwelling level information on various key housing indicators, focussing on private sector housing. The key indicators provide Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council with detailed information on the likely condition of the stock and the geographical distribution of properties of interest. These properties are likely to be suitable targets for energy efficiency improvements or other forms of intervention, such as mitigating Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) hazards. The key indicators are split into categories related to house condition, energy efficiency and household vulnerability as shown in **Table 1** (see **0** for full definitions).

**Table 1:** Key indicators split into categories

Indicator	House condition indicators	Energy efficiency indicators	Household vulnerability indicators
Presence of HHSRS cat 1 hazard	✓		
Presence of cat 1 hazard for excess cold	✓	✓	
Presence of cat 1 hazard for falls	✓		
Dwellings in disrepair	✓		
Fuel Poverty (10% and Low income, High cost definitions)			✓
Dwellings occupied by low income households			✓
SimpleSAP rating		✓	

N.B. Presence of category 1 hazard for falls does NOT include the hazard of falling between levels

The single indicators shown in **Table 1** can also be combined within the database to provide powerful information on the housing stock, for example dwellings suffering from excess cold and also occupied by households on a low income. The true potential of the database lies in its ability to produce combined indicators such as this, as it allows council officers to explore the stock and to assess the likely scope of any programmes they might wish to implement.

It is also possible to extract other information from the database which is of use to local authorities. This information includes estimates relating to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS) reporting of costs of mitigating hazards, numbers of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) as well as providing information relating to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings.

The key indicators and other information are derived from the Housing Stock Condition Database (HSCD) which is made up of a series of Dwelling Level Stock Models. The BRE Dwelling Level Stock Models have been used for many years to provide key housing indicators to local authorities. The most recent 2017 models have been updated to make use of the results of the 2014 English Housing Survey (EHS)⁵. The models also make use of Experian and Ordnance Survey (OS) data. OS AddressBase Plus is used as a basis for the list of all dwellings in the authority, and applying improved geo-modelling⁶ is used to determine the dwelling type and floor area from OS Mastermap. The energy model that lies at the heart of the modelling process is based on the 2012 version of SAP, and the methods for imputing the inputs to this model incorporate information sources from additional sources. These include the age of postcodes

⁵ 2014 is the latest available data. Prior to the 2017 models EHS 2012 data was used.

⁶ The OS data has been used to update a number of the model inputs – the main value of the OS data is the ability to determine the dwelling type with much greater confidence – see **Appendix B** for more information.



(to improve dwelling age data) and data from Xoserve to determine whether the dwelling is on the gas network. These dwelling level models are used to estimate the likelihood of a particular dwelling meeting the criteria for each of the key indicators. These outputs can then be mapped to provide the authority with a geographical distribution of each of the key indicators which can then be used to target resources for improving the housing stock.

As described above, in this particular case, the database was further enhanced by the addition of local data sources which were identified by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council. These local data sources were incorporated into the stock models to produce the integrated database.

The information in the database can be used to ensure the council meets various policy and reporting requirements. For example, local housing authorities are required to review housing conditions in their districts in accordance with the Housing Act 2004⁷.

Furthermore, having this information available will also help to facilitate the delivery of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council's housing strategy. It will enable a targeted intervention approach to improving housing – particularly in the private rented sector; therefore allowing the council to concentrate their resources on housing in the poorest condition or with the greatest health impact.

1.1 Project aims

The main aim of this project was to provide data on key private sector housing indicators for Sandwell. The main aims of this work were therefore to provide estimates of:

- The percentage of dwellings meeting each of the key indicators for Sandwell overall and broken down by tenure and then mapped by Census Output Area (COA) (private sector stock only)
- Information relating to LAHS reporting for the private sector stock - category 1 hazards and HMOs, plus information on EPC ratings
- The council also requested additional analysis of data on the private rented stock to investigate the potential for licensing schemes in this sector.

This report looks firstly at the policy background and why such information is important for local authorities. Secondly, it provides a brief description of the overall stock modelling approach and the integration of the local data sources. Finally, this report provides the modelling results for Sandwell covering each of the main aims above.

⁷ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/34/contents>



2 Policy background

The detailed housing stock information provided in this report will facilitate the delivery of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council's housing strategy and enable a targeted intervention approach to improving housing. This strategy needs to be set in the context of relevant government policy and legislative requirements. These policies either require reporting of housing-related data by local authorities, or the use of such data to assist in meeting policy requirements. The main policies and legislative requirements are summarised in the following sub-sections.

2.1 Housing Act 2004

The Housing Act 2004⁷ requires local housing authorities to review housing statistics in their district. The requirements of the Act are wide-ranging and also refer to other legislation which between them covers the following:

- Dwellings that fail to meet the minimum standard for housings (i.e. dwellings with HHSRS category 1 hazards)
- Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)
- Selective licensing of other houses
- Demolition and slum clearance
- The need for provision of assistance with housing renewal
- The need to assist with adaptation of dwellings for disabled persons

2.2 Key housing strategy policy areas and legislation

2.2.1 Private rented sector

In the report "Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England"⁸ Chapters 4 and 5 focus on the private rented sector and empty homes.

New measures are being developed to deal with rogue landlords and to encourage local authorities to make full use of enforcement powers for tackling dangerous and poorly maintained dwellings. The report encourages working closely with landlords whilst still operating a robust enforcement regime (e.g. Landlord Forums and Panels across the country).

There has been significant growth in the private rented sector in Sandwell in recent years from 5% of the total stock in 2001 to 15% in 2011⁹ - so that 10% of the stock has changed over that time period to be private rented. This is similar to the change of 9% seen in England as a whole. The analysis for this current report estimates that 26% of the stock in Sandwell is now privately rented, implying a further increase since 2011.

⁸ Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England, CLG, 2011

⁹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census#surveydataandbackground>



2.2.2 Health inequalities

The government's white paper "Choosing Health"¹⁰ states that the key to success in health inequalities will be effective local partnerships led by local government and the NHS working to a common purpose and reflecting local needs. Housing is a key determinant of health, and poor housing conditions continue to cause preventable deaths and contribute to health inequalities¹¹. An example in this area is the work carried out by Liverpool City Council in partnership with Liverpool Primary Care Trust – the "Healthy Homes Programme". This has identified over 3,800 hazards and led to an estimated £4.8 million investment by landlords, delivering sustainable health improvements and enhancing community wellbeing.

2.2.3 Integrated care

It has been recognised by central government that to fully address the health needs of the population, services need to become more integrated and there needs to be better communication between different providers. Housing is a key aspect of this:

"Many people with mental and physical disabilities, complex needs, long-term conditions and terminal illness also need to access different health care, social care, housing and other services, such as education, and often simultaneously"¹².

It is therefore essential that departments providing or regulating housing work with other council departments and health organisations to provide services that are integrated and take full account of the needs of the individual.

2.2.4 Public Health Outcomes Framework

The Public Health Outcomes Framework "Healthy lives, healthy people: Improving outcomes and supporting transparency"¹³ sets out desired outcomes for public health and how they will be measured. Many of the measurements have links to housing, some of the more relevant being:

- Falls and injuries in over 65's
- Fuel poverty
- Excess winter deaths

2.2.5 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies

The JSNA and joint health and wellbeing strategy allow health and wellbeing boards to analyse the health needs of their local population and to decide how to make best use of collective resources to achieve the priorities that are formed from these. The Department of Health document "Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and joint health and wellbeing strategies explained - Commissioning for populations" says

¹⁰ Choosing Health: Making healthy choices easier, Department of Health, 2004

¹¹ The health impacts of poor private sector housing, LACORS, 2010

¹² Integrated Care: Our Shared Commitment, Department of Health, 2013

¹³ Healthy lives, healthy people: Improving outcomes and supporting transparency, Department of Health, 2013



“This will ensure better integration between public health and services such as housing and education that have considerable impact on the wider determinants of health”¹⁴.

2.2.6 Energy Act 2011

The Energy Act 2011 requires that from 2016 reasonable requests by tenants for energy efficiency improvements will not be able to be refused. Furthermore, from 2018 it will be unlawful for landlords to rent out properties that do not reach a minimum standard of energy efficiency (set at Energy Performance Certificate rating E¹⁵). While there will be various caveats to these powers, they will provide a new minimum standard for rented accommodation. Part of this current project for Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council includes provision of a private rented sector variable that should assist in identifying such dwellings.

2.2.7 Empty homes

The need to bring empty private sector dwellings back into use is a key government objective that is part of a wider strategy to tackle housing affordability. It is generally accepted that in a time of housing shortage, empty dwellings represent a wasted resource.

Empty homes brought back into use will qualify for the New Homes Bonus where, for the following 6 years, the government will match fund the Council Tax on long term empty properties brought back into use. Between 2012-15, £100 million of capital funding was available from within the Affordable Homes Programme to tackle problematic¹⁶ empty homes. There is no longer any separate funding for empty homes under the 2015-18 Affordable Homes Programme, although they are legitimate forms of Affordable Rent provision that could be included in bids for the 2015-18 Affordable Homes Programme¹⁷.

There are a number of issues in dealing with private sector vacant dwellings including the transient nature of vacant dwellings and their difficulty of identification. Properties are being continually bought and sold, let and modernised, which means that at any given time a proportion of the stock will be naturally vacant. The only dwellings that tend to be of most interest to local authorities are those that are not turning over in the normal way.

Whilst the data provided by this project cannot necessarily assist with the actual identification of empty homes, the database provided would be the logical place for such information to be stored should it be gathered from other sources.

The latest available information for Sandwell for 2016, collected by MHCLG¹⁸, identifies 3,264 vacant dwellings across all tenures. In 2014 the number of vacant dwellings was 4,051. These figures represent a vacancy rate of approximately 3% in Sandwell. Furthermore, around 1,171 (0.9%) dwellings are long-term vacant (6 months or more) in Sandwell.

¹⁴ Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and joint health and wellbeing strategies explained: Commissioning for populations, Department of Health, 2011

¹⁵ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/962/contents/made>

¹⁶ Properties that are likely to remain empty without direct financial support from government.

¹⁷ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/343896/affordable-homes-15-18-framework.pdf

¹⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dwelling-stock-including-vacants>



2.3 Other policy areas

The following policy areas, whilst not directly relating to environmental health services, will have an effect on demand and local authorities will need to be aware of the possible impact in their area.

2.3.1 The Housing and Planning Act 2016

The Housing and Planning Act 2016¹⁹ introduces legislation for government to implement the sale of higher value local authority homes, starter homes, pay to stay and a number of other measures, mainly intended to promote home ownership and boost levels of housebuilding in England. Although many of the measures have yet to be implemented or come into effect, the following policy changes will have a significant impact on the way councils deliver their Housing Services:

- The introduction of Pay to Stay where households earning over £31,000 have to pay higher levels of rent for their social housing
- Extension of the Right-to-Buy scheme to housing associations through a voluntary agreement, funded by the sale of higher value council properties when they become vacant
- The ending of lifetime tenancies – all new tenants will have to sign tenancies for a fixed term up to 10 years although there will be exemptions for people with disabilities and victims of domestic abuse, and families with children under nine years old can have a tenancy that lasts until the child's 19th birthday
- Changes to planning measures so that the government can intervene where councils have not adopted a Local Plan
- To replace the need for social rented and intermediate housing on new sites with the provision of Starter Homes that are sold at a reduced cost to first time buyers
- Changing the definition of 'affordable homes' to include starter homes
- Increasing the site size threshold before affordable housing can be requested

The Act also includes a package of measures to help tackle rogue landlords in the private rented sector. This includes:

- Allowing local authorities to apply for a banning order to prevent a particular landlord/letting agent from continuing to operate where they have committed certain housing offences
- Creating a national database of rogue landlords/letting agents, which will be maintained by local authorities
- Allowing tenants or local authorities to apply for a rent repayment order where a landlord has committed certain offences (for example continuing to operate while subject to a banning order or ignoring an improvement notice). If successful the tenant (or the authority if the tenant was receiving universal credit) may be repaid up to a maximum of 12 months' rent
- Introducing a new regime giving local authorities an alternative to prosecution for offences committed under the Housing Act 2004, including all HMO offences. Effectively, local authorities will have a choice whether to prosecute or impose a penalty with a maximum fine of £30,000. The local authority can also retain the money recovered, which is not currently the case with fines imposed in the magistrates' court

2.3.2 The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 and the Welfare Reform Act 2012

The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016²⁰ gained royal assent in March 2016. The Act introduces a duty to report to Parliament on progress made towards achieving full employment and the three million

¹⁹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/22/contents/enacted/data.htm>

²⁰ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/7/contents/enacted>



apprenticeships target in England. The Act also ensures reporting on the effect of support for troubled families and provision for social mobility, the benefit cap, social security and tax credits, loans for mortgage interest, and social housing rents. These include the following:

- Overall reduction in benefits – a four year freeze on a number of social security benefits
- Benefit cap reduction – the total amount of benefit which a family on out of work benefits can be entitled to in a year will not exceed £20,000 for couples and lone parents, and £13,400 for single claimants, except in Greater London where the cap is set at £23,000 and £15,410 respectively
- Local Housing Allowance rent cap – this is the locally agreed maximum benefit threshold for a dwelling or household type within a defined geographical area. Therefore, if rises in rent outstrip growth in income, renters may find it increasingly difficult to pay
- A 1% reduction in social rents per year for 4 years to reduce the housing benefit bill

In addition, the Welfare Reform Act 2012²¹ (which is in parts amended by the 2016 Act discussed above) covers areas of environmental health services – in particular the sections relating to the under occupation of social housing, and the benefit cap. Whilst this will mainly affect tenants in the social rented sector it will undoubtedly have an impact on private sector services. Social tenants may find themselves being displaced into the private sector, increasing demand in this area, and the tenants of Registered Providers (RP's) and some private landlords may have greater trouble affording rent payments. If tenants are in arrears on their rental payments then authorities may be met with reluctance from landlords when requiring improvements to properties.

2.3.3 Localism Act 2011

The Localism Act allows social housing providers to offer fixed term, rather than secure lifetime, tenancies. As with the Welfare Reform Act, this has a greater direct impact on the social rented sector, however, there is some concern this may lead to greater turnover of tenancies meaning such that some traditional social tenants may find themselves in the private rented sector.

Both of these policy changes above may increase the number of vulnerable persons in private sector properties. If this occurs any properties in this sector in poor condition are likely to have a far greater negative impact on the health of those occupiers.

2.3.4 Potential increase in private rented sector properties

Policies such as the Build to Rent and the New Homes Bonus are aimed at increasing the supply of properties. As the private rented sector is already growing, it is reasonable to assume that many of the new properties being built will be rented to private tenants. Local authorities will need to be aware of the potential impact on the demand for their services and how their perception of their local area may have to change if large numbers of properties are built.

2.4 Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS)²² and EPC ratings

The purpose of these statistics is twofold – firstly to provide central government with data with which to inform and monitor government strategies, policies and objectives as well as contributing to national statistics on housing, secondly, to the local authorities themselves to help manage their housing stock. Local authorities are required to complete an annual return which covers a wide range of housing-related

²¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/5/contents/enacted>

²² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/completing-local-authority-housing-statistics-2012-to-2013-guidance-notes>



issues. Of particular relevance to this current project is “Section F: Condition of dwelling stock” which, amongst other things, requests the following information:

- Estimates of the number of HMOs and the number of mandatory licensable HMOs

Whilst the LAHS no longer requires reporting of total number of dwellings and number of private sector dwellings with category 1 HHSRS hazards and the estimated costs of mitigating these, this information is still of use to understand the extent of these hazards within a local authority.

The LAHS no longer requires reporting of average EPC ratings of the private sector stock and the proportion below a certain rating; however, this information remains pertinent due to the Energy Act 2011. Under this act new rules mean that from 2018 landlords must ensure that their properties meet a minimum energy efficiency standard - which has been set at band E - by 1 April 2018^{23, 24}. Furthermore, from 1 April 2016, tenants in F and G rated dwellings may legally request an upgrade to the dwelling to a minimum of a band E. Results relating to LAHS statistics and EPC ratings can be found in **Section 4.2**.

2.5 The Energy Company Obligation (ECO)

The Energy Companies Obligation (ECO) requires energy companies to assist in the installation of energy efficiency measures in Great Britain to low income and vulnerable households or those living in hard-to-treat (HTT) properties. Under the ECO, energy companies are obliged to meet targets expressed as carbon or costs saved. The 2 different ECO obligations are:

- Carbon Emissions Reduction Obligation (CERO)
- Home Heating Cost Reduction Obligation (HHCRO) or Affordable Warmth

The ECO obligation known as the Carbon Saving Community Obligation (CSCO) was terminated on 31st March 2017.

The first phase of the Energy Company Obligation (ECO), known as ECO1, ran from January 2013 to March 2015. The next obligation period, known as ECO2, launched on 1 April 2015 and ended on 31 March 2017.

In January 2017, following the ECO: Help to Heat consultation, it was announced that there would be an 18 month extension to the current ECO2 scheme until September 2018²⁵ as a transition (ECO2t²⁶) period between the end of ECO2 and a new scheme. Beyond ECO2t the government has confirmed that a supplier obligation will run until 2021-22 at least.

²³ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/962/contents/made>

²⁴ Although landlords will still be able to rent out F and G rated properties after this date they will not be able to renew or sign a new contract.

²⁵ Energy Company Obligation (ECO): Help to Heat: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/energy-company-obligation-eco-help-to-heat>

²⁶

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/586266/ECO_Transition_Final_Stage_IA__For_Publication_.pdf



An understanding of the ECO criteria is pivotal to building a local authority's strategy for leveraging in finance to improve the energy efficiency of the stock. Of particular interest under ECO2t are properties with solid walls. There is an expectation that around 32,000 solid wall properties will be insulated over the 18 month period of ECO2t. A new 'Rural Safeguard' requirement is also introduced to ensure that 15% of each Energy Company's CERO obligation is delivered in rural areas. From 1 April 2017 a deemed scoring system has been introduced²⁷ to determine the level of carbon and cost savings from ECO installations. Deemed scoring uses a matrix to estimate the carbon savings that can be achieved from energy efficiency improvements, replacing the previous system whereby RdSAP was used to produce an EPC. The deemed scores are "lifetime scores" which means that they include all applicable lifetimes, in-use factors, relevant HHCRO multipliers and a 30% uplift for all scores.

Other changes of note for ECO2t:

- The HHCRO funding stream will become the scheme's primary obligation and will account for 70% of all activity. Energy companies must collectively achieve £2.76 billion in life time savings.
- The CERO funding stream will account for the remaining 30% of activity. Energy companies must collectively achieve savings of 7.3MtCO₂.
- Local authorities will be able to refer certain vulnerable residents for support under HHCRO regardless of their benefit entitlements through 'Flexible Eligibility'.
- For solid wall insulation projects, local authorities can also refer non-vulnerable residents for support through HHCRO providing at least two thirds of the project consist of vulnerable residents.

The government recently issued a consultation document for ECO3 which is due to run from October 2018 to April 2022²⁸.

The results for the basic energy efficiency variables are covered in this report and assist in the identification of dwellings which may benefit from energy efficiency improvements. Such information also provides a valuable contribution to the evidence base increasingly being required to support competitive funding bids to central government for housing improvements.

²⁷ https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/system/files/docs/2016/05/deemed_scores_consultation_-_main_0.pdf

²⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/energy-company-obligation-eco3-2018-to-2022>



3 Overview of the BRE Dwelling Level Housing Stock Modelling approach

3.1 Overview

This section provides a simplified overview of the BRE dwelling level housing stock modelling approach. More detail on the methodology is provided in **Appendix B**.

A stock modelling approach has been developed and used by BRE for many years and dwelling level models are used to estimate the likelihood of a particular dwelling meeting the criteria for each of the key indicators (and other outputs of interest). These outputs can then be mapped to provide the council with a geographical distribution of each of the key indicators which can then be used to target resources for improving the housing stock. The process itself is actually made up of a variety of data sources, calculations and models.

The models are principally informed by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) English Housing Survey (EHS)²⁹. The survey is not used to supply data for the database, but rather it allows the identification of patterns in the housing stock, so that this knowledge can be applied, in the form of mathematical algorithms, to impute key indicators and energy characteristics from other data available at the national level. The particular approach for Sandwell, however, makes significant use of the Experian UK Consumer Dynamics Database of dwelling and household indicators as inputs to the models. One example is the BRE SimpleCO₂ Model which is based on dwelling level inputs from Experian and expands on these using imputation techniques to provide sufficient information to calculate the likely energy efficiency of each dwelling in the stock. Some of the key housing indicators, such as HHSRS excess cold category 1 hazards and BRE's SimpleSAP³⁰, can be directly inferred from this data.

Furthermore, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council provided additional sources of local data which were then incorporated into the BRE Housing Stock Model and Database, as well as EPC data, to produce an integrated housing stock model and database. The additional data provided and how it was used is as follows:

- **EPC data** – EPCs contain data on key dwelling energy characteristics (e.g. wall type and insulation, loft insulation, heating types etc.) and where these were available they were used in preference to the modelled data. It should be noted that to comply with bulk EPC data licencing requirements the EPC data is only used to inform the energy efficiency aspects of the model.
- **LLPG data** – the Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) from the LLPG was used to uniquely identify all properties, while the address details from the LLPG were used to merge the BRE Models and the EPC data using address matching.
- **HMO data** – the council provided a list of licensed HMOs which were used to inform the HMO Models.

²⁹ The most recent survey used in the housing stock models is 2014.

³⁰ A Simplified version of the SAP model that produces an output broadly comparable to SAP. The SimpleSAP model is distinct from both full SAP and RD SAP in that it uses a smaller, simplified set of inputs.



- **Tenure data** – the council provided lists of addresses from tenancy deposit schemes and this data was used to inform the tenure variable. In addition, the council provided a list of properties owned by Sandwell Homes and Riverside which were used to identify social properties. The licensed HMO list and the potential licensable HMO list were also used to update the tenure information.
- **Benefits data** – this provides a list of addresses in receipt of various benefits. This was matched into the BRE Model using the UPRN and these addresses were assigned to low income households. The BRE Low Income Households Model was then used to assign the remaining low income households since housing and council tax reductions are only a proportion of total low income households.

Figure 1 shows a simplified flow diagram of the overall BRE housing stock modelling approach and how the additional data is incorporated to produce the integrated Housing Stock Condition Database (HSCD).

The process is made up of a series of data sources and models which, combined with various imputation and regression techniques and the application of other formulae, make up the final database. The database is essentially the main output of the modelling and provides information on the key indicators and other data requirements (e.g. energy efficiency variables). More detailed information on the data sources and models is provided in **Appendix B**, but to summarise:

The data sources are:

EHS, EPC, Experian, Ordnance Survey (OS) MasterMap, other local data (if available)

The Models are:

SimpleSAP, Fuel Poverty, HHSRS (all hazards, falls hazards and excess cold), Disrepair and Low Income Households.

The data sources and models are linked as shown in the flow diagram and the modelling process itself can be divided into “energy inputs” and “other inputs”, which are summarised as follows:

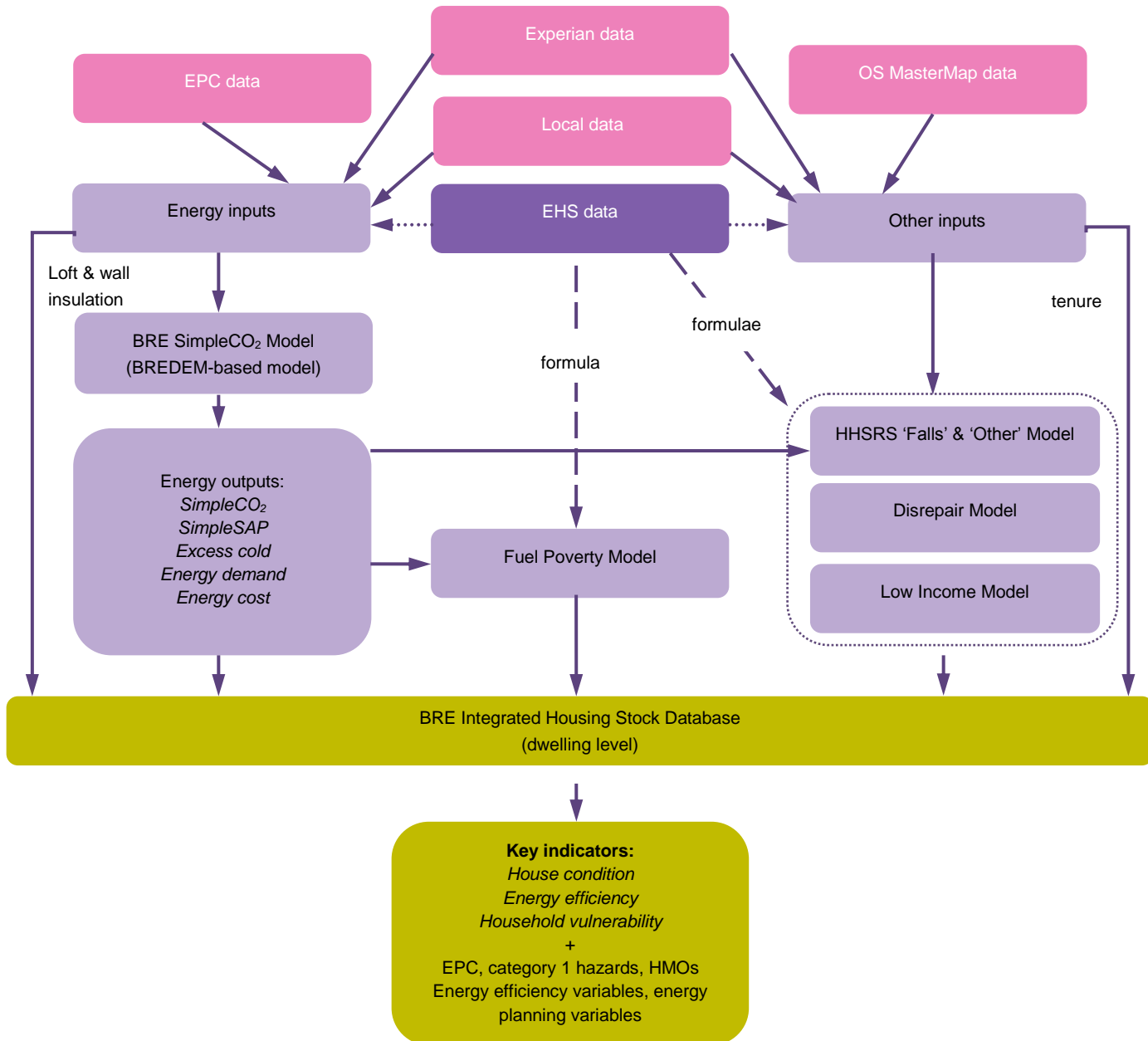
Energy inputs - are developed from Experian, EPC and other local data sources (if available). The EHS data is used to impute (using cold deck imputation³¹) and interpolate where there are gaps in the data. The “energy inputs” are then fed into the SimpleCO₂ Model to produce the “energy outputs” for the database plus information on excess cold for the HHSRS Model and information on energy costs for the Fuel Poverty Model.

Other inputs – are developed from Experian, OS MasterMap and other local data sources. The EHS data is used to impute (using cold deck imputation³¹) and interpolate where there are gaps in the data. The “other inputs” are then fed into the HHSRS, Disrepair, and Low Income Models (note that tenure data is fed directly into the database). Information from the EHS also feeds into the Fuel Poverty, HHSRS, Disrepair and Low Income Models.

³¹ Cold deck imputation is a process of assigning values in accordance with their known proportions in the stock.



Figure 1: Simplified flow diagram of overall BRE housing stock modelling approach (N.B. the EHS data is only used to inform the mathematical algorithms of the model – it does not provide data)



- BRE housing stock modelling process
- Integration of additional data
- Data used for imputation & interpolation
- Outputs
- Data
- Imputed (cold deck)
- Information



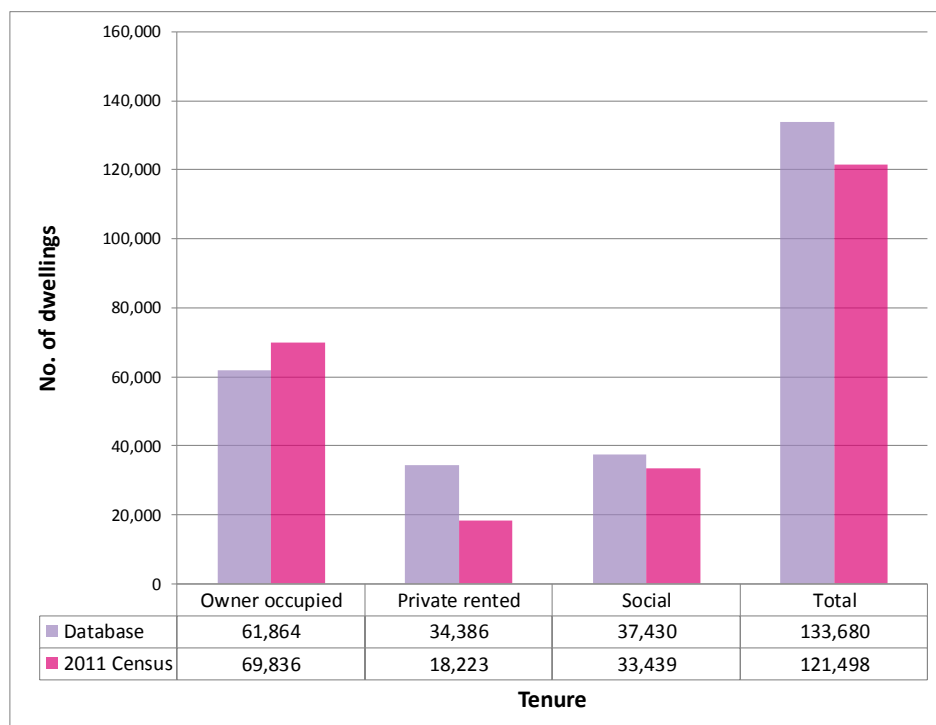
3.2 Breakdown of the housing stock by tenure - validation

Providing the results split by tenure is useful since it can have an effect on how resources and improvement policies are targeted. This report is particularly focussed on private sector stock which is made up of owner occupied and private rented dwellings. The remainder of the housing stock consists of social housing.

The total number of dwellings in Sandwell from the integrated housing stock condition database is based on LLPG data; therefore the model is based on this value. The tenure split within the integrated database is derived from the purchased Experian tenure variable for addresses where tenure has not been supplied by the council.

Since it is possible for private rented dwellings to become owner occupied and vice versa relatively easily, it is difficult to accurately predict the actual tenure split at any given point in time. A validation process was undertaken to compare the tenure split from the database to the 2011 Census figures³². The results of the validation exercise show the differences between the tenure split from the database compared to the Census figures. There has been a noticeable increase in the size of the stock, mainly comprised of increases in the size of the private rented and social tenures, whilst the owner occupied stock has decreased (see **Figure 2**). However, **Maps 1** and **2** show the geographical distributions of the private rented sector which look similar, again giving confidence that the integrated database provides a good overview of the housing stock in Sandwell.

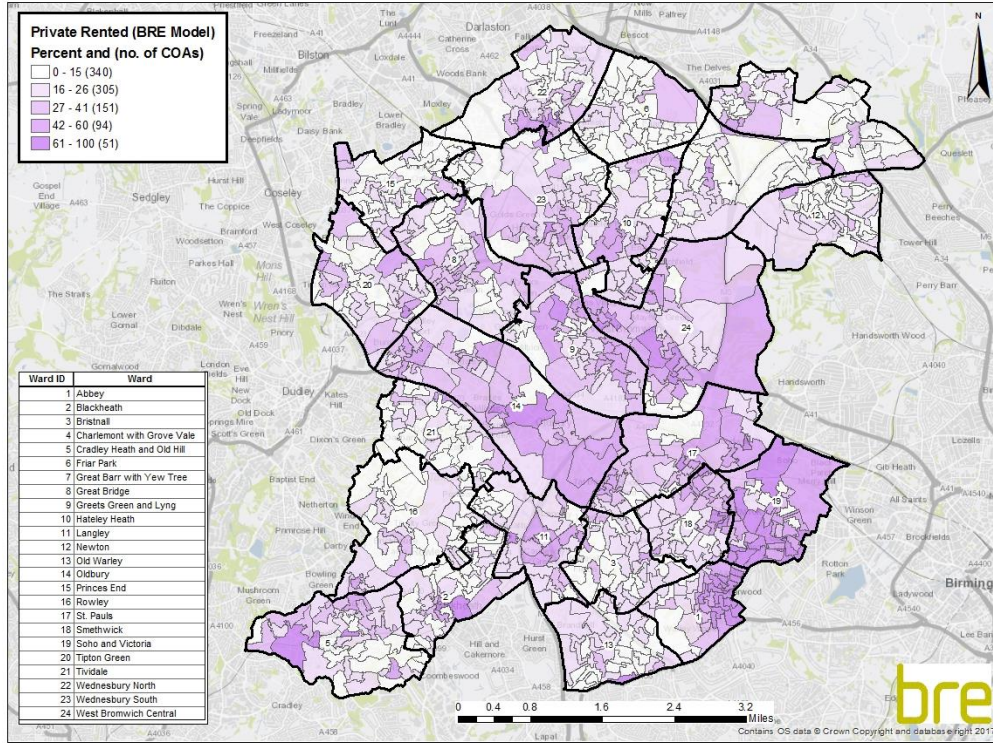
Figure 2: Tenure split – comparison of BRE Housing Stock Condition Database outputs with 2011 Census figures for Sandwell



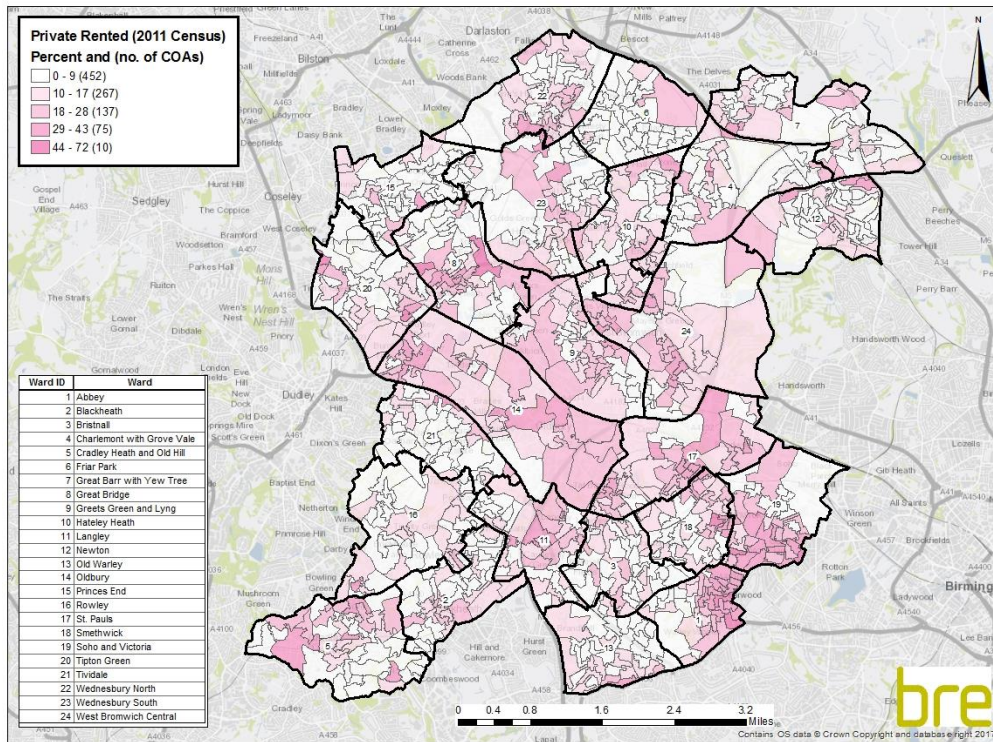
³² <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/datasets-and-tables/index.html>



Map 1: Distribution of estimated percentage of private rented dwellings in Sandwell – based on database



Map 2: Distribution of estimated percentage of private rented dwellings in Sandwell – based on 2011 Census Data (Neighbourhood Statistics)





3.2.1 Other national datasets relating to tenure

In addition to the Census data there are other national datasets available which provide information on tenure; these are MHCLG returns³³ and Office for National Statistics (ONS) data³⁴. These datasets are not used directly in the model but are reported here for the purposes of comparison.

The MHCLG returns provide estimates of the tenure split by private sector and social sector only, with the former being based on projections from the 2011 census as a starting point, and the latter being based on Local Authority Housing Statistics. The tenure split used in the BRE Housing Stock Model is compared to the most recent release of this at an early stage of the project in order to ensure the tenure split is consistent³⁵.

The ONS data provides subnational (local authority level) data on the dwelling stock broken down into tenure. The ONS split between owner occupied and private rented stock is based on their Annual Population Survey (APS)³⁶ which is then benchmarked to the MHCLG returns. The APS is based on “persons who regard the sample address as their main address and also those who have lived in the dwelling for more than 6 consecutive months, even if they do not regard this as their principal dwelling”. This methodology may under-estimate the proportion of private rented dwellings for several reasons:

1. By only including those people who have lived in a dwelling for more than 6 consecutive months, the number of private rented households may be under-estimated as there tends to be a higher turnover in this sector.
2. By only including persons who regard the sample address as their main address there are two groups where this may have an impact on the estimated figures:
 - a. Students renting away from home who assume their parents’ address to be their main residence.
 - b. Commuter areas where households may have a city flat during the week and also have a suburban family home which they class as their first residence. Commuter towns close to large cities may also have higher levels of private rented stock with a high turnover of tenants near rail stations for example.

In addition, the ONS dataset uses EHS data but this is limited to using the occupancy rate to allow for vacant dwellings as their APS is based on individuals and therefore does not account for vacant dwellings.

³³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants>

³⁴

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/articles/researchoutputssubnationaldwellingstockbytenureestimatesengland2012to2015/2017-12-04#methodology>

³⁵ This comparison is checked early on in the project through email correspondence with the authority.

³⁶

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/methodologies/annualpopulationsurveyapsqmi>



It is important to note that the ONS data is not an official statistic and that a disclaimer³⁷ must be used when reproducing the data (note that the “**dwelling stock by tenure**” in the disclaimer refers to the MHCLG returns data).

Table 2 shows the latest tenure splits for the DCLG and the ONS data for Sandwell. Since the ONS data is benchmarked to the MHCLG returns, the figures for the private sector stock match. Both the numbers, and the proportions, are very similar to the BRE Model estimates.

Table 2: Comparison of MHCLG, ONS and BRE Database figures on tenure split for Sandwell *N.B.* *DCLG data does not break down private sector into owner occupied and private rented and ONS data does not provide an estimate for social stock*

Tenure	Number of dwellings			% of all stock		
	2015 MHCLG	2015 ONS	BRE Database	2015 MHCLG	2015 ONS	BRE Database
Owner occupied	93,340	72,637	61,864	72%	56%	46%
Private rented		20,703	34,386		16%	26%
Social	36,360	-	37,430	28%	-	28%

³⁷ ONS Disclaimer: “We are producing these Research Outputs to provide the tenure breakdown of dwellings within the private sector at the subnational level, which are currently only available at the country level. However, these Research Outputs are not official statistics and must not be reproduced without this disclaimer. Research Outputs are produced to provide information about new methods and data sources being investigated. There are official statistics available on **dwelling stock by tenure**³³ for local authorities, which you should refer to if you require official statistics. These provide the total private sector stock for each area, but do not provide a breakdown of owner-occupied and privately-rented dwellings.”



4 Results from the BRE Dwelling Level Housing Stock Models and Housing Stock Condition Database (HSCD)

As described in the previous section, the housing stock modelling process consists of a series of different stock models with the main output being the database. The results in this section have been obtained from interrogating the database at the level of the local authority as a whole to give a useful overview for Sandwell. Information at ward level, however, is provided in the maps, in **Section 4.2.4** and can also be obtained from the database which has been supplied as part of this project (see **Appendix C** for instructions). The database can be interrogated at local authority, ward, medium super output area (MSOA), lower super output area (LSOA), census output area (COA), postcode or dwelling level.

The first sub-section below provides a map of the wards in Sandwell. The results are then displayed in the following sub-sections:

- Key indicators:
 - Sandwell – regional and national comparisons
 - Key indicators by tenure for Sandwell
 - Key indicators mapped by COA for Sandwell private sector stock
 - Ward level results for the key indicators

- Information relating to LAHS reporting and EPC ratings:
 - Category 1 hazards
 - HMOs
 - EPC ratings

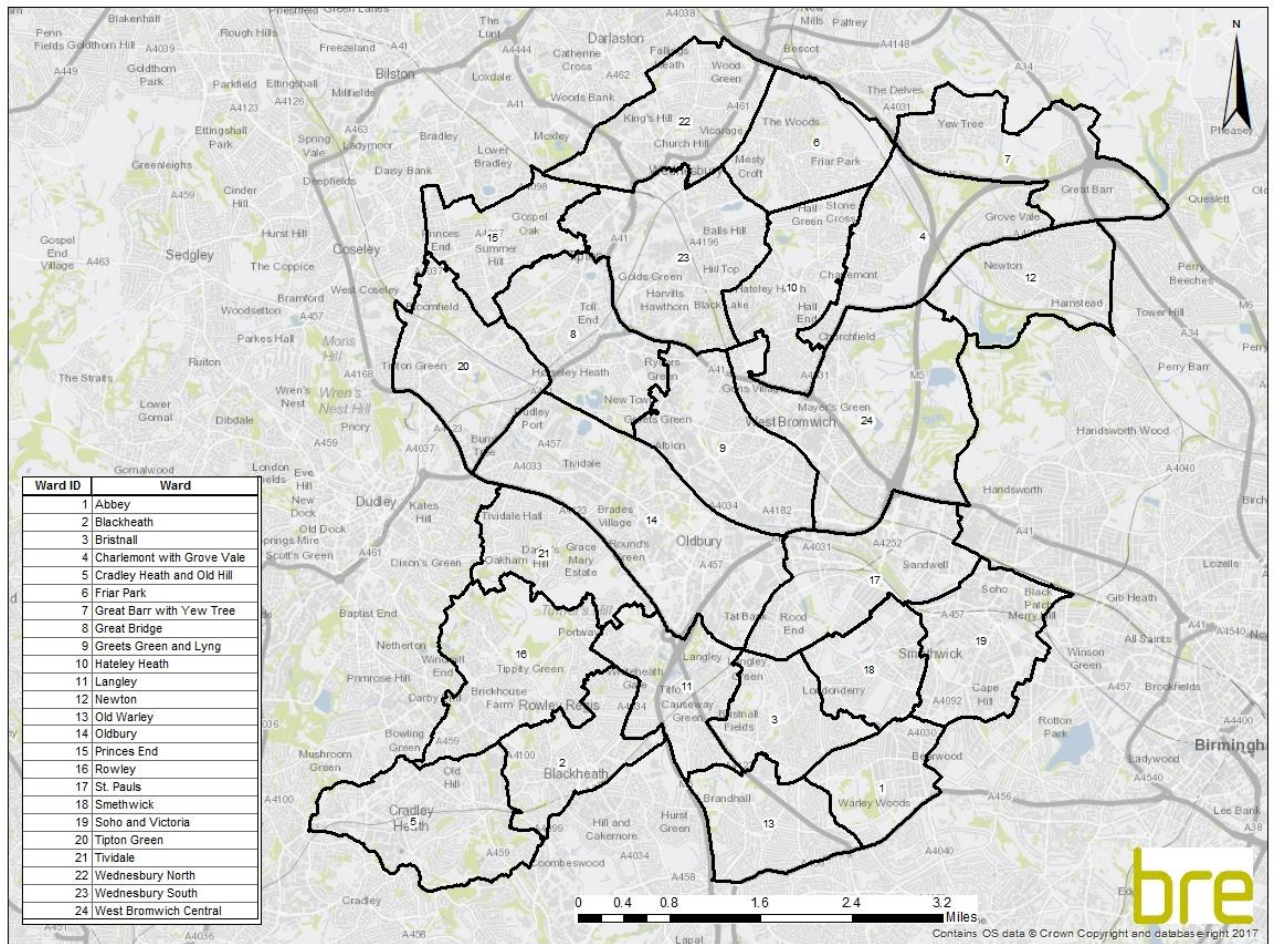


4.1 Overview of Sandwell

Map 3 below shows the 24 wards in Sandwell. The data in the report is separated into wards and then further divided into Census Output Areas (COAs). These typically comprise around 125 households and usually include whole postcodes, which have populations that are largely similar. Where the COAs are smaller in size on the map this typically represents a more densely populated area since each COA represents a similar number of dwellings.

It should be noted that some residential addresses are not considered suitable for modelling and these have been removed. These include caravans and house boats which, whilst covered by the EHS, are quite uncommon, and the energy models and other housing indicators were not developed with dwellings such as these in mind. Residential institutions (e.g. care homes) have also been removed as it is not entirely appropriate to apply the usual models to these dwellings. The removal of these addresses may result in a COA not appearing to contain any dwellings due to the fact that all c.125 households are made up of caravans for example.

Map 3: The wards in Sandwell





4.2 Key indicators

4.2.1 Sandwell – regional and national comparisons

Table 3 and **Figure 3** show the results for each of the key indicators in Sandwell compared to the West Midlands region and to England (EHS 2014) and split into all stock and private sector stock. **Figure 4** shows the results of the SimpleSAP ratings.

For all stock, the performance of the housing stock in Sandwell compared to the EHS England average is mixed. Sandwell performs slightly better for all hazards (11% compared to 12%) and excess cold (2% compared to 3%), but worse for the remaining indicators, in particular low income households (33% compared to 27%).

Compared with the regional average, Sandwell performs much better for all hazards, (11% compared with 14%), better for excess cold (2% compared with 3%), then comparable for all other indicators apart from low income households where Sandwell has higher rates (33% compared to 29%).

For private stock, comparing Sandwell to the EHS England average figures there is a very similar picture with Sandwell performing better for all hazards and excess cold, but worse for the other indicators.

Compared with the regional average, the picture is slightly different with Sandwell performing better for all hazards (12% compared with 14%), excess cold (2% compared with 3%) and fuel poverty (10% definition) (12% compared with 11%), similarly for falls hazards (10%) and disrepair (6%), and worse for fuel poverty (LIHC) (12% compared with 11%) and low income households (21% compared to 20%).

The average SimpleSAP ratings for all stock in Sandwell (**Figure 4**) are the same as the regional average and slightly lower than the England average. For the private stock, the average SimpleSAP rating in Sandwell is the same as the England average and slightly higher than the regional average.

Table 3: Estimates of the numbers and percentage of dwellings meeting the key indicator criteria assessed by the Housing Stock Models and Housing Stock Condition Database for all stock and private sector stock – Sandwell compared to the West Midlands and England (EHS 2014)

Indicator	All stock				Private sector stock				
	Sandwell (no.)	Sandwell (%)	2014 EHS Regional (%)	2014 EHS England (%)	Sandwell (no.)	Sandwell (%)	2014 EHS Regional (%)	2014 EHS England (%)	
No. of dwellings	133,680	-	-	-	96,250	-	-	-	
HHSRS category 1 hazards	All hazards	14,993	11%	14%	12%	11,905	12%	14%	13%
	Excess cold	2,920	2%	3%	3%	2,237	2%	3%	4%
	Fall hazards	11,556	9%	9%	7%	9,471	10%	10%	7%
Disrepair	7,905	6%	6%	5%	6,023	6%	6%	5%	
Fuel poverty (10%)	19,305	14%	14%	12%	12,275	13%	14%	11%	
Fuel poverty (Low Income High Costs)	16,426	12%	12%	11%	11,533	12%	11%	10%	
Low income households	44,428	33%	29%	27%	20,171	21%	20%	18%	

N.B. the information on hazards refers to the number of dwellings with a hazard of the stated type. Because of this there is likely to be some overlap – for example, some dwellings are likely to have excess cold and fall hazards but this dwelling would only be represented once under ‘all hazards’. The number of dwellings under ‘all hazards’ can therefore be less than the sum of the excess cold plus fall hazards.



Figure 3: Estimates of the percentage of dwellings meeting the key indicator criteria assessed by the Housing Stock Models and Housing Stock Condition Database for all stock and private sector stock – Sandwell compared to the West Midlands and England (EHS 2014)

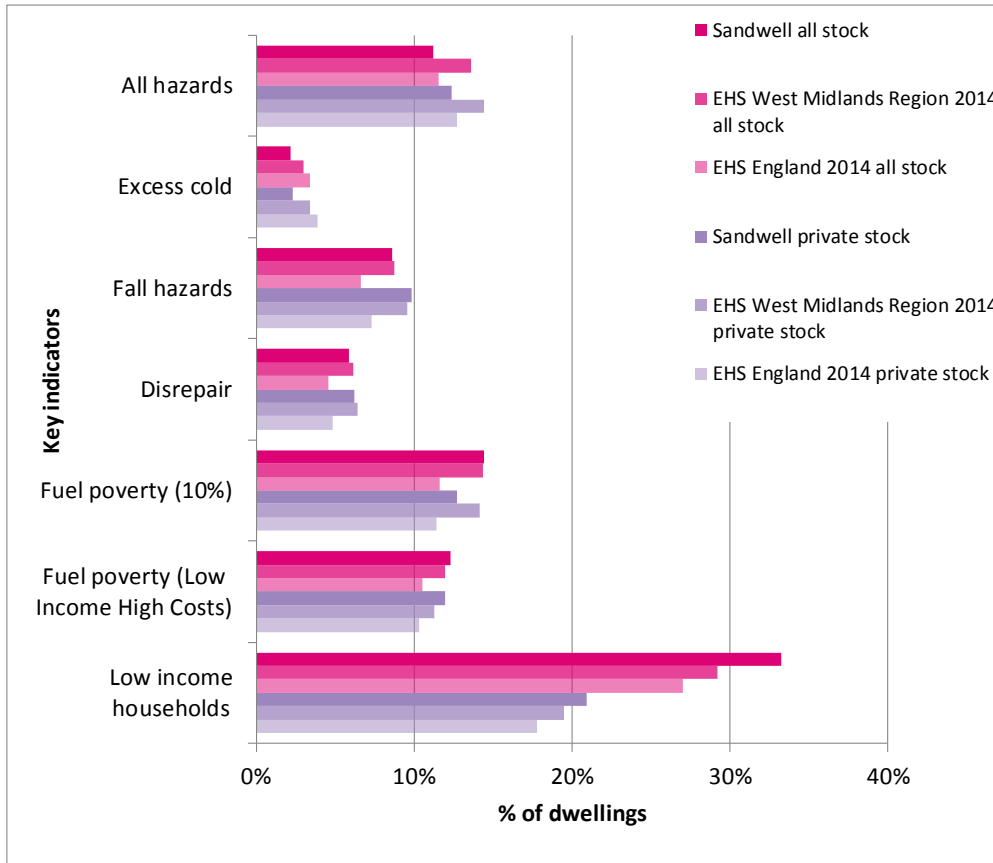
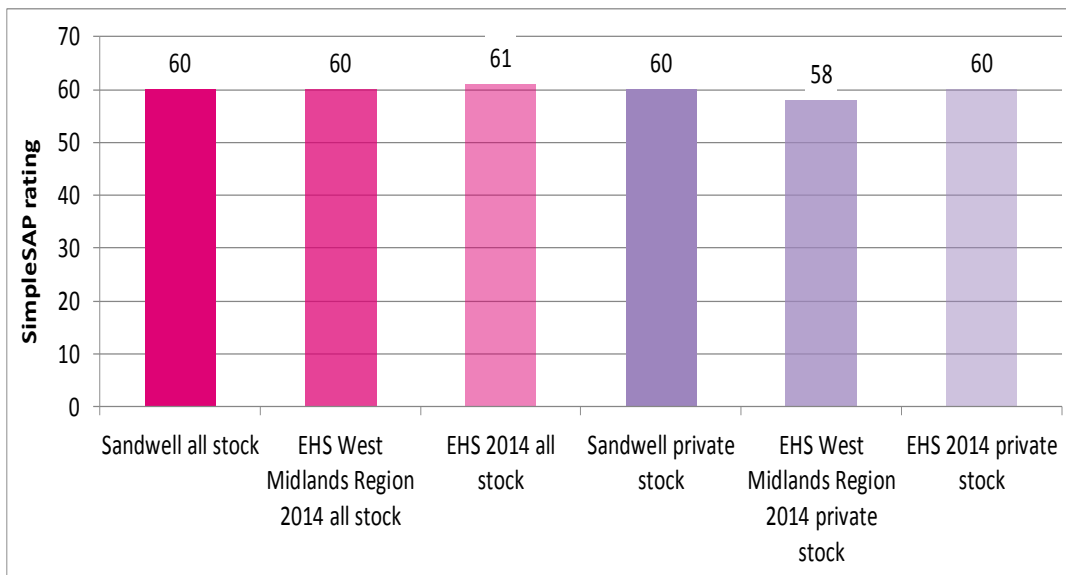


Figure 4: Average SimpleSAP ratings for all stock and private sector stock – Sandwell compared to the West Midlands and England (EHS 2014)





4.2.2 Key indicators by tenure – Sandwell

The private sector stock can be further split by tenure – owner occupied and private rented - with the difference between total private sector stock and total housing stock being the social housing stock.

Table 4 and **Figure 5** below show the results for each of the key indicators split by tenure and **Figure 6** shows the SimpleSAP ratings by tenure.

The social stock is generally better than the private sector stock across the majority of indicators including SimpleSAP. Social stock tends to be more thermally efficient than the private stock partly due to the prevalence of flats, and partly due to being better insulated owing to the requirements placed on social housing providers, for example through the Decent Homes Programme. As would be expected, the social stock is significantly worse than the private sector stock for the low income households indicator. For fuel poverty, however, the social tenure shows the highest levels for the Low Income High Costs definition.

The social data should be treated with some caution as the social rented stock, particularly when largely comprising stock owned by a single landlord, is more difficult to model than the private sector. This is because the decisions of an individual property owner usually only affect a single dwelling out of the thousands of private sector stock whereas the policies and decisions of a single landlord can have a very great effect on a large proportion of the social stock. The social rented results are therefore best considered as a benchmark which takes account of the age, type, size and tenure against which the landlord's own data could be compared.

Focussing on the tenures within the private sector stock, the private rented stock and the owner occupied stock have similar levels of all hazards, excess cold hazards and fall hazards. The private rented stock has higher levels of disrepair, fuel poverty (both definitions) and low income households.

Table 4: Estimates of the numbers and percentage of dwellings meeting the key indicator criteria assessed by the Housing Stock Models and Housing Stock Condition Database by tenure for Sandwell

Indicator	Private sector stock				Social stock		
	Owner occupied		Private rented		No.	%	
	No.	%	No.	%			
No. of dwellings	61,864	-	34,386	-	37,430	-	
HHSRS category 1 hazards	All hazards	7,483	12%	4,422	13%	3,088	8%
	Excess cold	1,495	2%	742	2%	683	2%
	Fall hazards	5,980	10%	3,491	10%	2,085	6%
Disrepair	3,446	6%	2,577	7%	1,882	5%	
Fuel poverty (10%)	7,615	12%	4,660	14%	7,030	19%	
Fuel poverty (Low Income High Costs)	6,694	11%	4,839	14%	4,893	13%	
Low income households	11,048	18%	9,123	27%	24,257	65%	

N.B. the information on hazards refers to the number of dwellings with a hazard of the stated type. Because of this there is likely to be some overlap – for example, some dwellings are likely to have excess cold and fall hazards, but this dwelling would only be represented once under 'all hazards'. The number of dwellings under 'all hazards' can therefore be less than the sum of the excess cold plus fall hazards.



Figure 5: Estimates of the percentage of dwellings meeting the key indicator criteria assessed by the Housing Stock Models and Housing Stock Condition Database by tenure for Sandwell

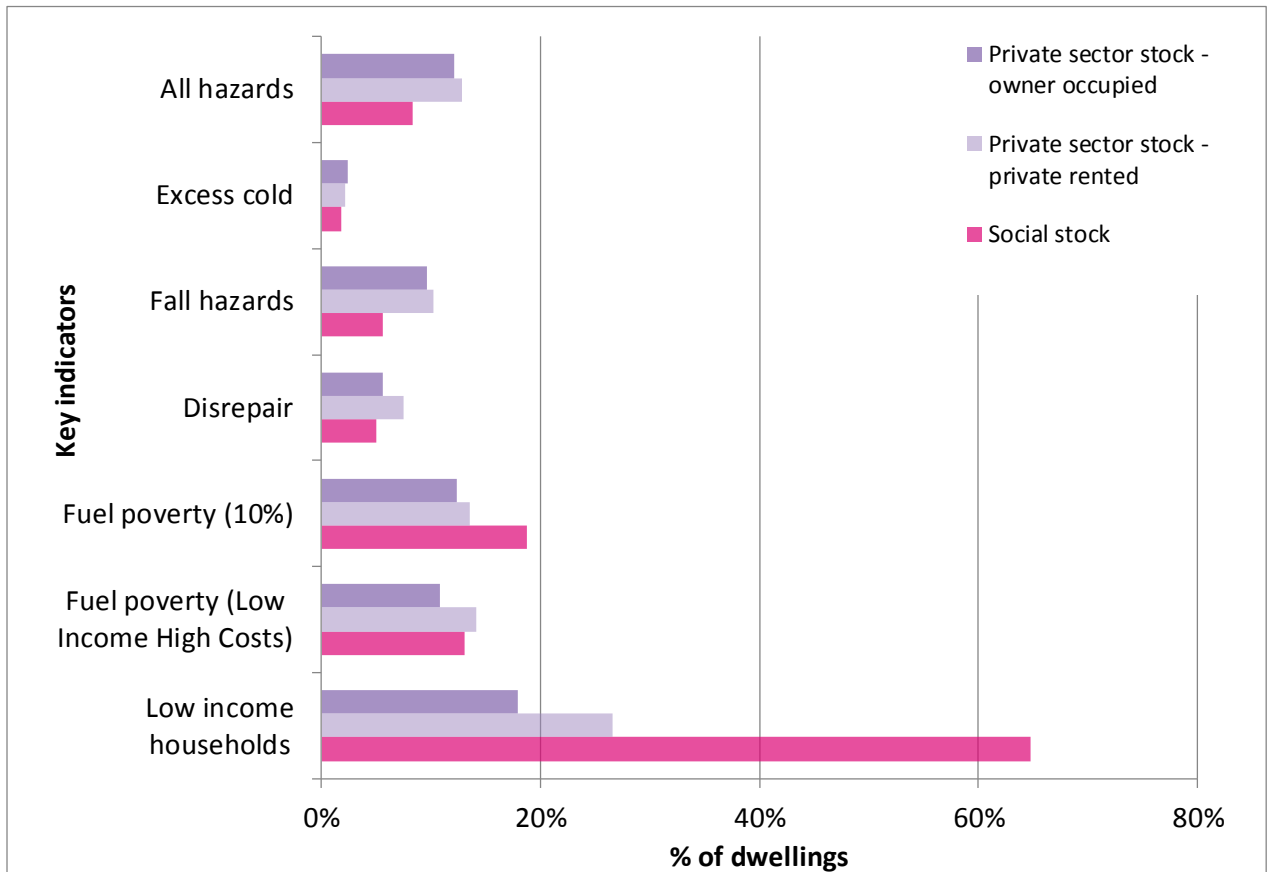
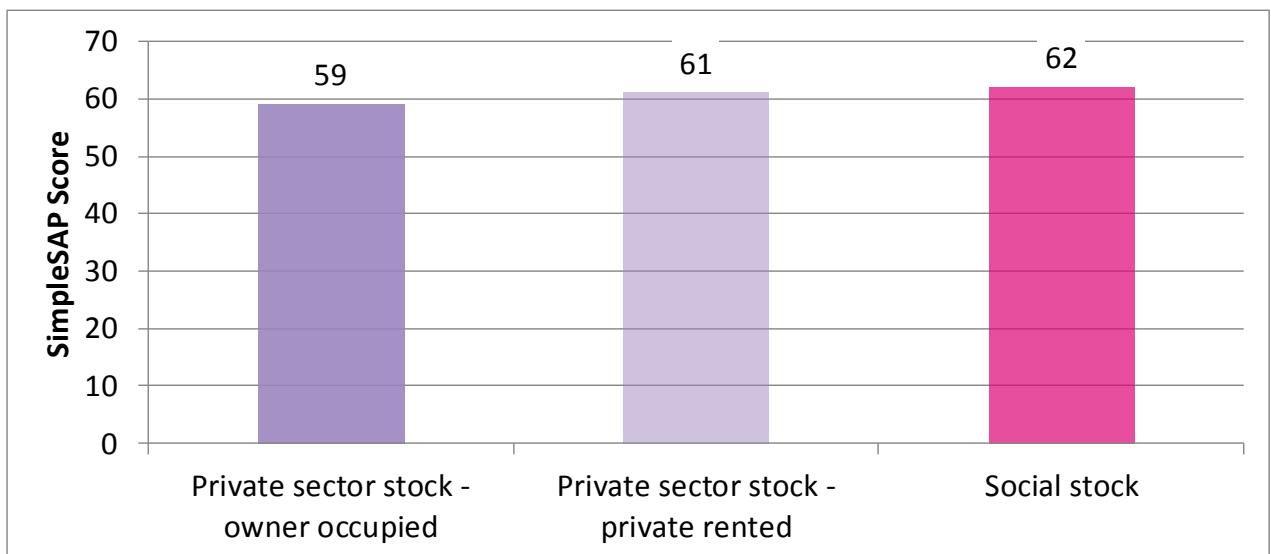


Figure 6: Average SimpleSAP ratings by tenure for Sandwell





4.2.3 Key indicators mapped by Census Output Area (COA) – Sandwell private sector stock

Some of the key indicators are also provided in map form below along with a brief description of each indicator³⁸, thus enabling quick observation of the geographical distribution of properties of interest. The maps show the percentages of private sector dwellings in each Census Output Area (COA) that are estimated to have each of the key indicators.

The ranges shown in the map keys are defined based on the Jenks' Natural Breaks algorithm of the COA statistics³⁹. The outputs in the lightest and darkest colours on the maps show the extreme ends of the range, highlighting the best and the worst areas.

Maps at COA level are provided for the following key indicators in **Map 4** to **Map 12** below:

- **HHSRS**
 - The presence of a category 1 HHSRS hazard
 - The presence of a category 1 hazard for excess cold
 - The presence of a category 1 hazard for falls
- **Levels of disrepair**
- **Levels of fuel poverty** (Low Income High Costs and 10% definitions)
- **Low income households**
 - Dwellings occupied by low income households
 - Dwellings with a category 1 excess cold hazard that are occupied by a low income household
- **The average SimpleSAP⁴⁰ rating**

In addition, maps have been provided for HMOs and EPC ratings.

These maps are extremely useful in showing the geographical distribution for single key indicators. Maps can also be produced for a combination of indicators, such as dwellings with an excess cold hazard which are also occupied by low income households, as shown in **Map 11**.

The maps are produced at COA level, which is typically made up of 125 households, usually including whole postcodes and having similar sized populations. Using the first map below (**Map 4**) as an example,

³⁸ See **0** for full definitions.

³⁹ The natural breaks classification method is a data clustering method determining the best arrangement of values into different classes. It is achieved through minimising each class's average deviation from the class mean while maximising each class's deviation from the means of the other groups. The method seeks to reduce the variance within classes and maximise variance between classes thus ensuring groups are distinctive.

⁴⁰ Important note: Whilst it is possible to provide "SimpleSAP" ratings from the "SimpleCO₂" software, under no circumstances must these be referred to as "SAP" as the input data is insufficient to produce an estimate of SAP or even RdSAP for an individual dwelling that meets the standards required by these methodologies.



it can be seen that each ward is split into several COAs and, in this instance there are 71 COAs that have 22 – 30% of private sector dwellings estimated to have the presence of a category 1 hazard.

The maps also highlight the differences between areas, showing that the results for some areas are much worse than for others and these are the specific areas which might warrant attention. The maps also show that even within wards there can be large differences between the results at COA level.

4.2.3.1 HHSRS

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. It was introduced under the Housing Act 2004⁷ and applies to residential properties in England and Wales.

The HHSRS assesses 29 categories of housing hazard. Each hazard has a weighting which will help determine whether the property is rated as having a category 1 (serious) hazard⁴¹.

The HHSRS category 1 hazards map (**Map 4**) shows no obvious pattern to the distribution of hazards, although there appears to be an area of higher levels of hazards in the Smethwick area to the south east corner. The data behind the map shows that the wards with the highest levels overall are Abbey, Smethwick and St. Pauls, although there are still pockets with higher levels elsewhere, such as the West Bromwich area (central parts of Greets Green and Lyng ward) and the Wednesbury area (to eastern parts of Wednesbury North ward).

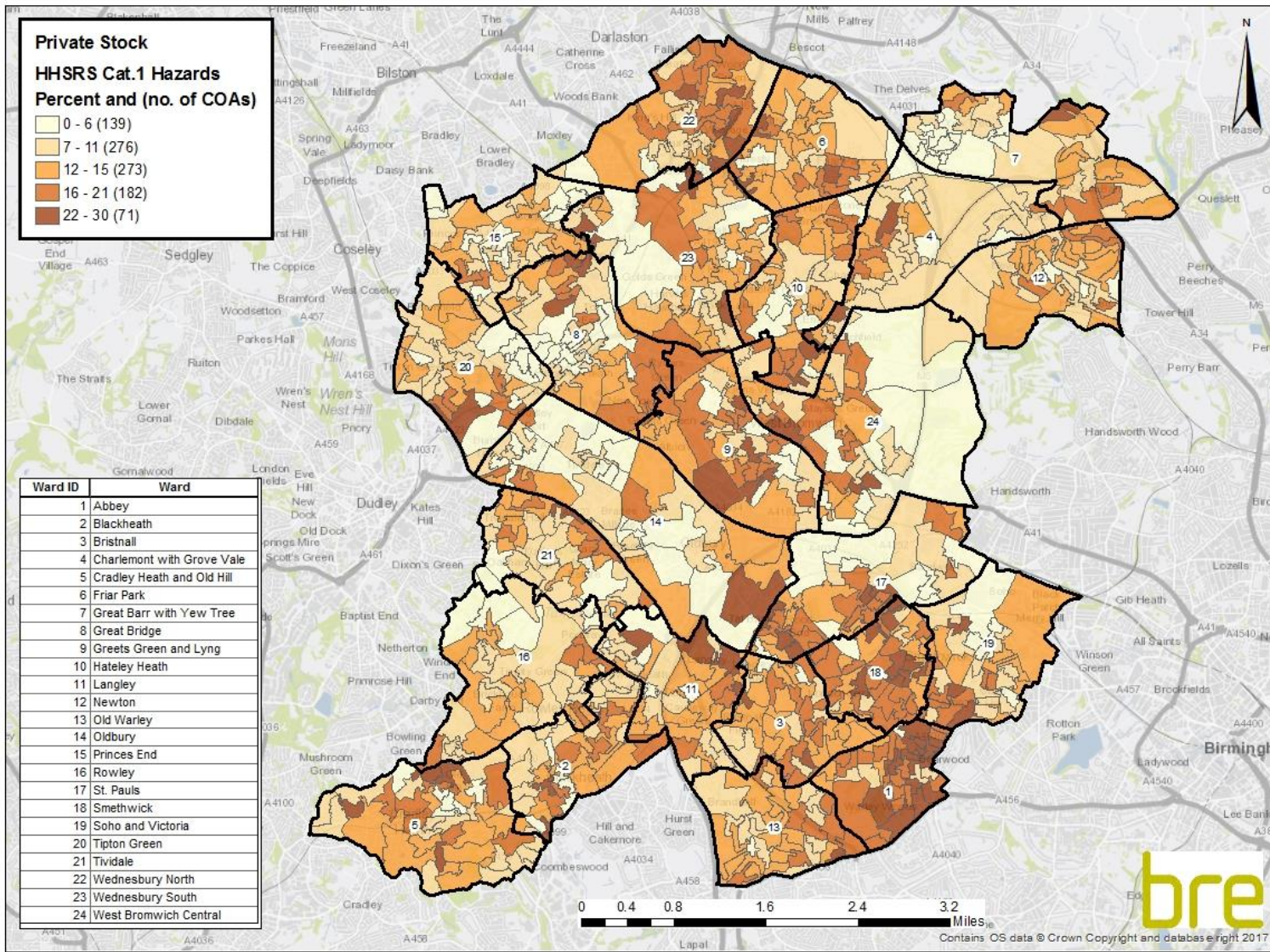
Looking at the hazard of excess cold in Sandwell there are again higher concentrations scattered across the area with no obvious pattern to the distribution – see **Map 5**. The data behind the map shows that the highest levels overall are again concentrated in the south east corner and Smethwick area in the wards of Old Warley, Abbey and Smethwick.

The distribution of fall hazards is shown in **Map 6** which indicates that the high concentrations are scattered across the district, with some of the higher concentrations found again to the south east corner as well as in central and central/northern parts of the area. The data behind this shows that the wards with the highest levels of fall hazards are Abbey, Smethwick and St. Pauls, but there are also COAs with high levels in other areas; for example central parts of Greets Green and Lyng ward and eastern parts of Wednesbury North ward.

⁴¹ Housing Health and Safety Rating System Operating Guidance, ODPM, 2006

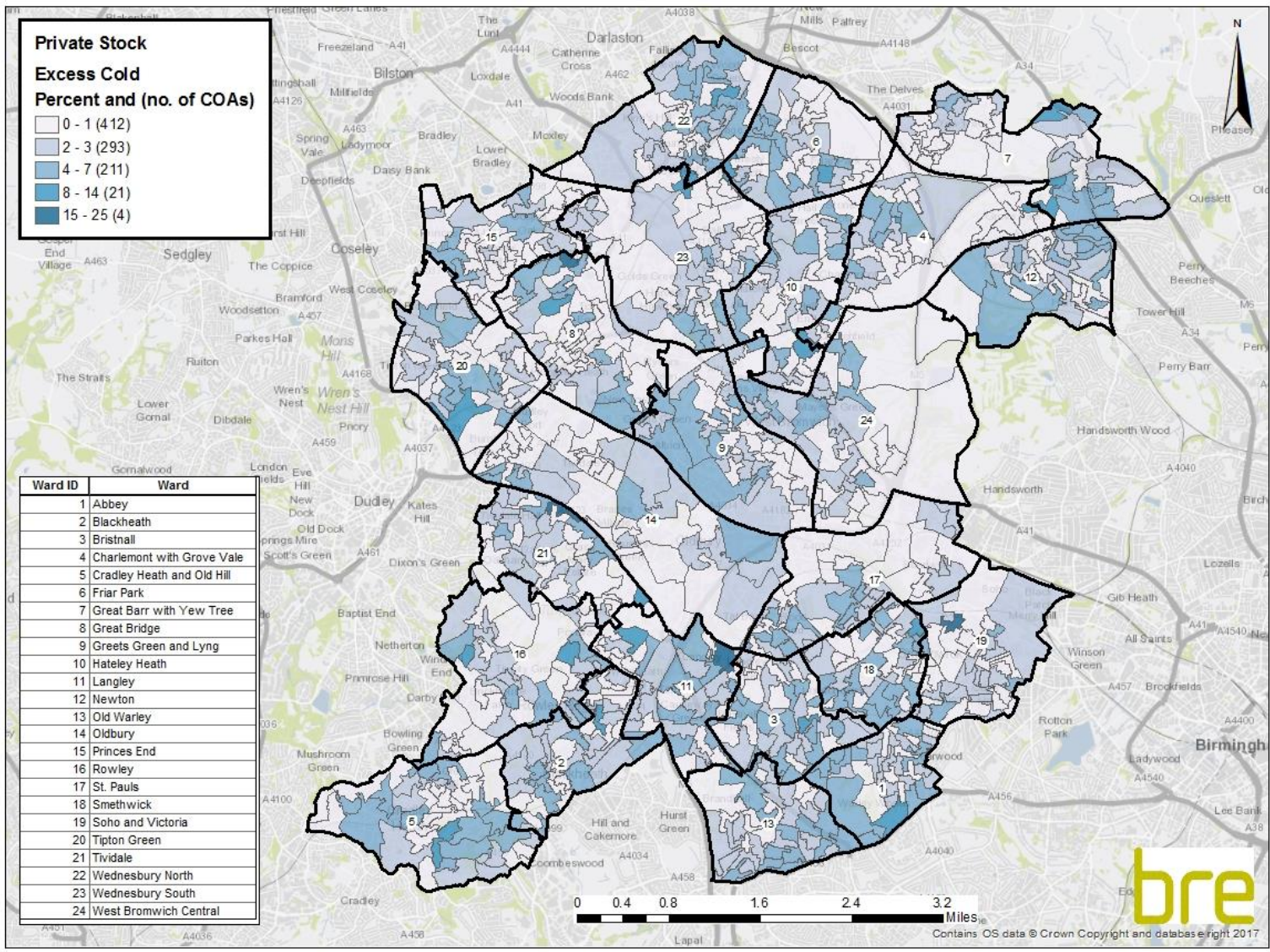


Map 4: Percentage of private sector dwellings in Sandwell with the presence of a HHSRS category 1 hazard



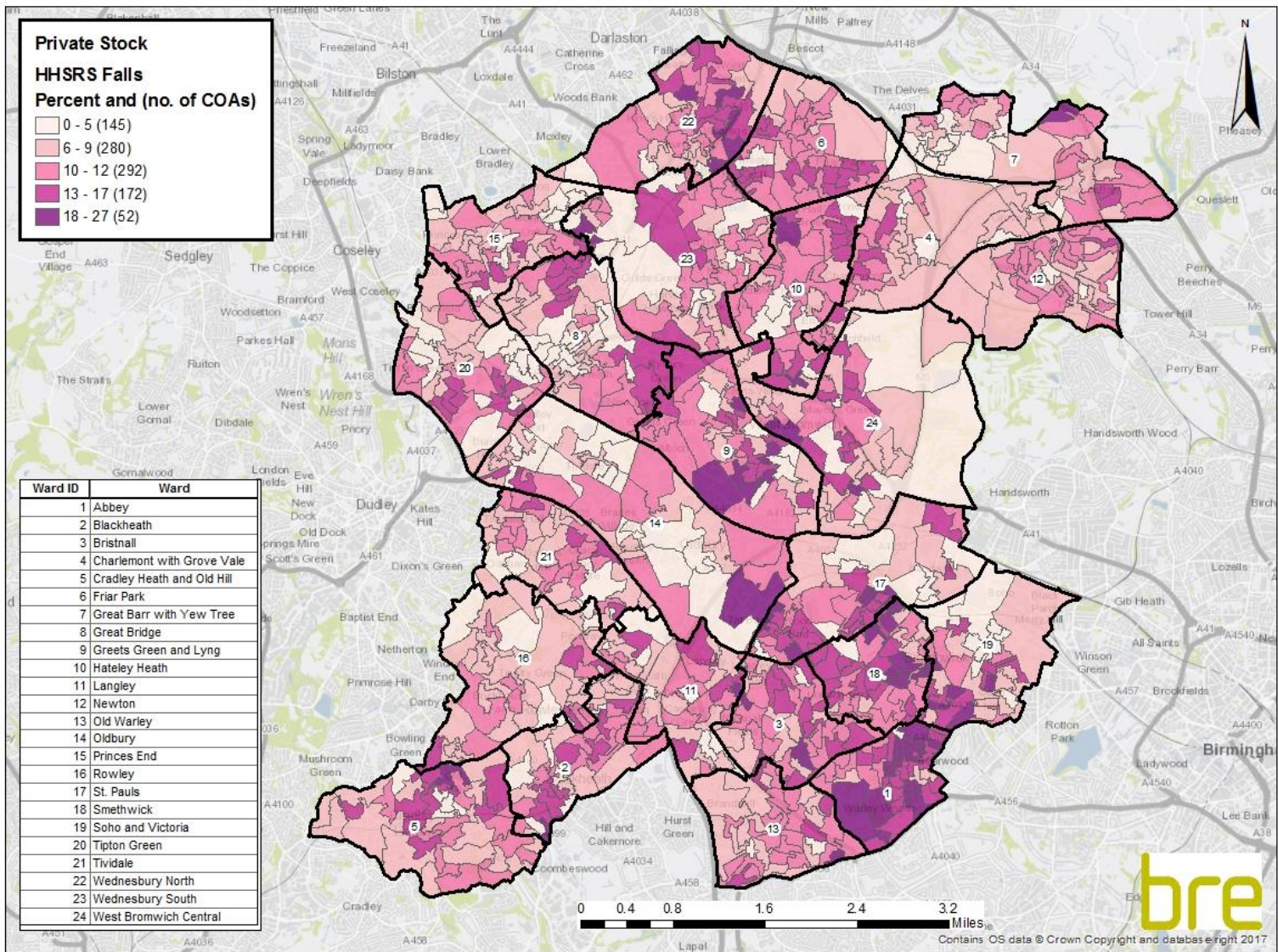


Map 5: Percentage of private sector dwellings in Sandwell with the presence of a HHSRS category 1 hazard for excess cold





Map 6: Percentage of private sector dwellings in Sandwell with the presence of a HHSRS category 1 hazard for falls





4.2.3.2 Disrepair

The disrepair indicator used in this report is based on the disrepair component of the Decent Homes Standard^{42,43}. A dwelling fails the disrepair component if:

- One or more key building components are old and, because of their condition, need replacing or major repair; or
- Two or more other building components are old and, because of their condition, need replacement or major repair.

Key building components are those which, if in poor condition, could have an immediate impact on the integrity of the building and cause further deterioration in other components. They are the external components plus internal components that have potential safety implications and include:

- External walls
- Roof structure and covering
- Windows/doors
- Chimneys
- Central heating boilers
- Electrics

If any of these components are old, and need replacing or require major repair, then the dwelling is not in a reasonable state of repair.

Other building components are those that have a less immediate impact on the integrity of the dwelling. Their combined effect is therefore considered, with a dwelling failing the disrepair standard if two or more elements are old and need replacing or require immediate major repair.

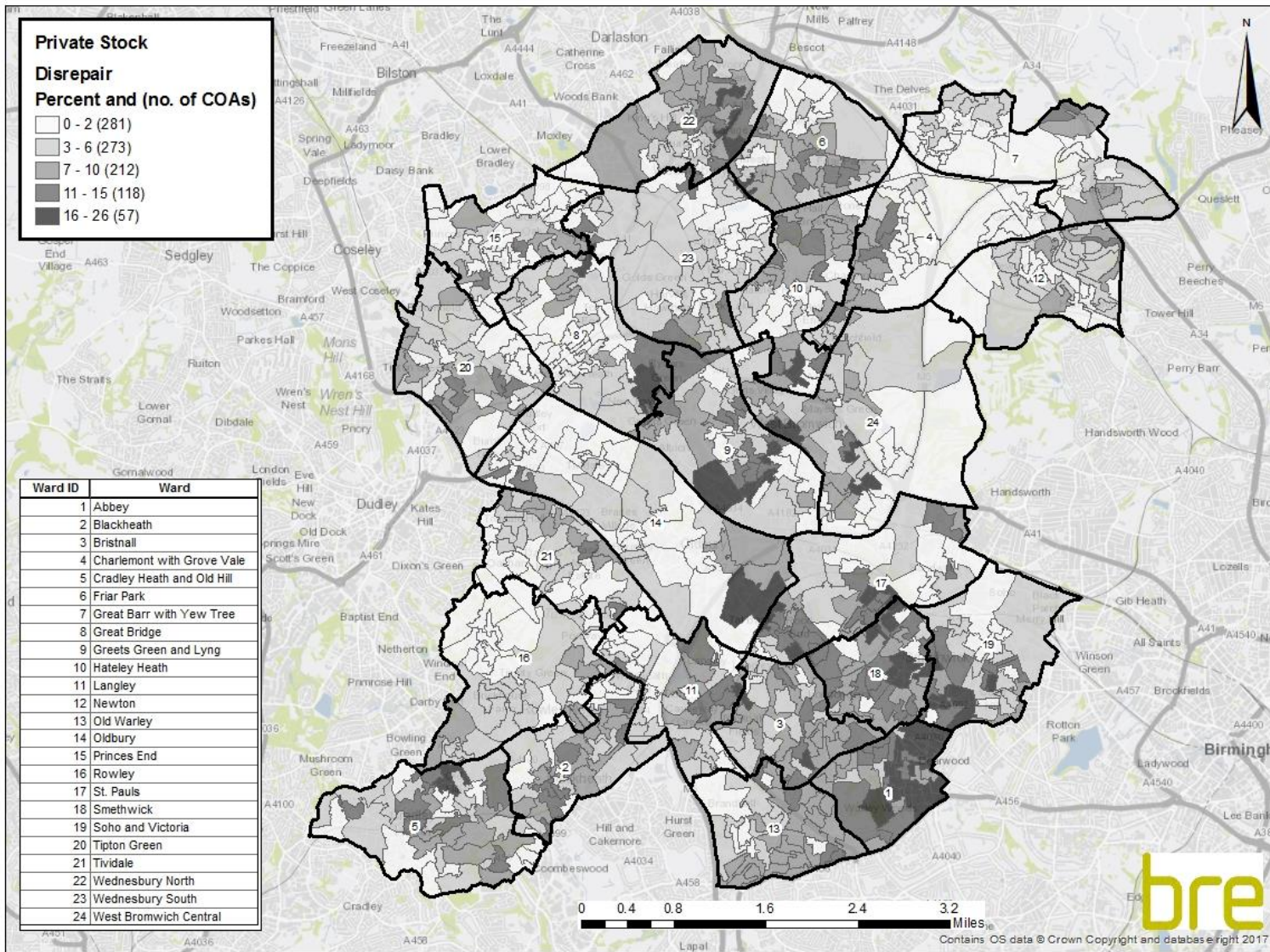
Map 7 shows the distribution of dwellings estimated to be in disrepair in Sandwell and indicates that there are pockets of higher levels of disrepair across the area, particularly in the Smethwick area, as well as in some parts of central (West Bromwich) and northern (Wednesbury) parts of Sandwell. The data behind the map shows that the highest levels overall are in the wards of Abbey, Smethwick and Soho and Victoria.

⁴² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-decent-home-definition-and-guidance>

⁴³ There are 4 components to the Decent Homes Standard – HHSRS, disrepair, modernisation and thermal comfort



Map 7: Percentage of private sector dwellings in Sandwell in disrepair



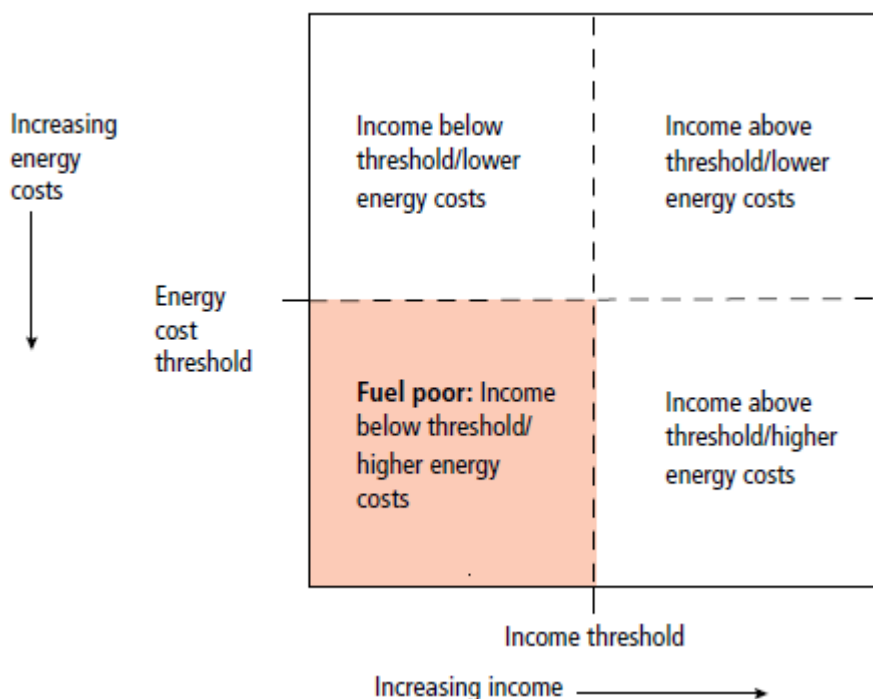


4.2.3.3 Fuel poverty

This report covers both the original definition and the more recent definition of fuel poverty. The original definition states that a household is said to be in fuel poverty if it spends more than 10% of its income on fuel to maintain an adequate level of warmth (defined as 21°C for the main living area, and 18°C for other occupied rooms in the 2012 Hills Fuel Poverty Review)⁴⁴. For the purposes of this report this is termed “fuel poverty (10%)”.

Under the Low Income High Costs definition, a household is said to be in fuel poverty if they have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level) and were they to spend that amount they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line (see the shaded area in **Figure 7** below). For the purposes of this report this is termed “fuel poverty (Low Income High Costs)”.

Figure 7: A representation of the Low Income High Costs definition of fuel poverty⁴⁴



A report produced by DECC⁴⁵ states that under the 10% fuel poverty indicator, increasing household income potentially removes households from fuel poverty as they will be spending a smaller proportion of their income on fuel. Reducing income has the opposite effect potentially pushing households into fuel poverty. Decreasing fuel prices and/or improvements made to the energy efficiency of the home can remove households from fuel poverty, while rising prices will have the opposite effect.

As the low income high cost indicator is a relative measure, it provides a much steadier trend in the number of fuel poor households over time than the 10% indicator. Whereas an increase in income is likely to reduce the extent of fuel poverty under the 10% definition, under the low income high cost indicator, a

⁴⁴ Hills, J. Getting the measure of fuel poverty - Final Report of the Fuel Poverty Review, London: LSE., 2012

⁴⁵ Fuel Poverty Report – Updated August 2013, Department of Energy and Climate Change, 2013



change in income will only have an impact on fuel poverty if households with low incomes and high costs see relatively larger income changes (increases or decreases) than the overall average change in income.

The 10% indicator tends to be very responsive to changes in prices, such that these usually dominate the indicator, outweighing other factors such as income and energy efficiency.

Map 8 shows that, based on the Low Income High Costs definition, there are areas of higher concentrations scattered across Sandwell. The wards with the highest concentrations overall are Smethwick, Abbey and St. Pauls.

For comparison, **Map 9** shows that there is a similar distribution when considering the results based on the fuel poverty 10% definition.

4.2.3.3.1 What type of property is in fuel poverty under the Low Income High Costs Definition?

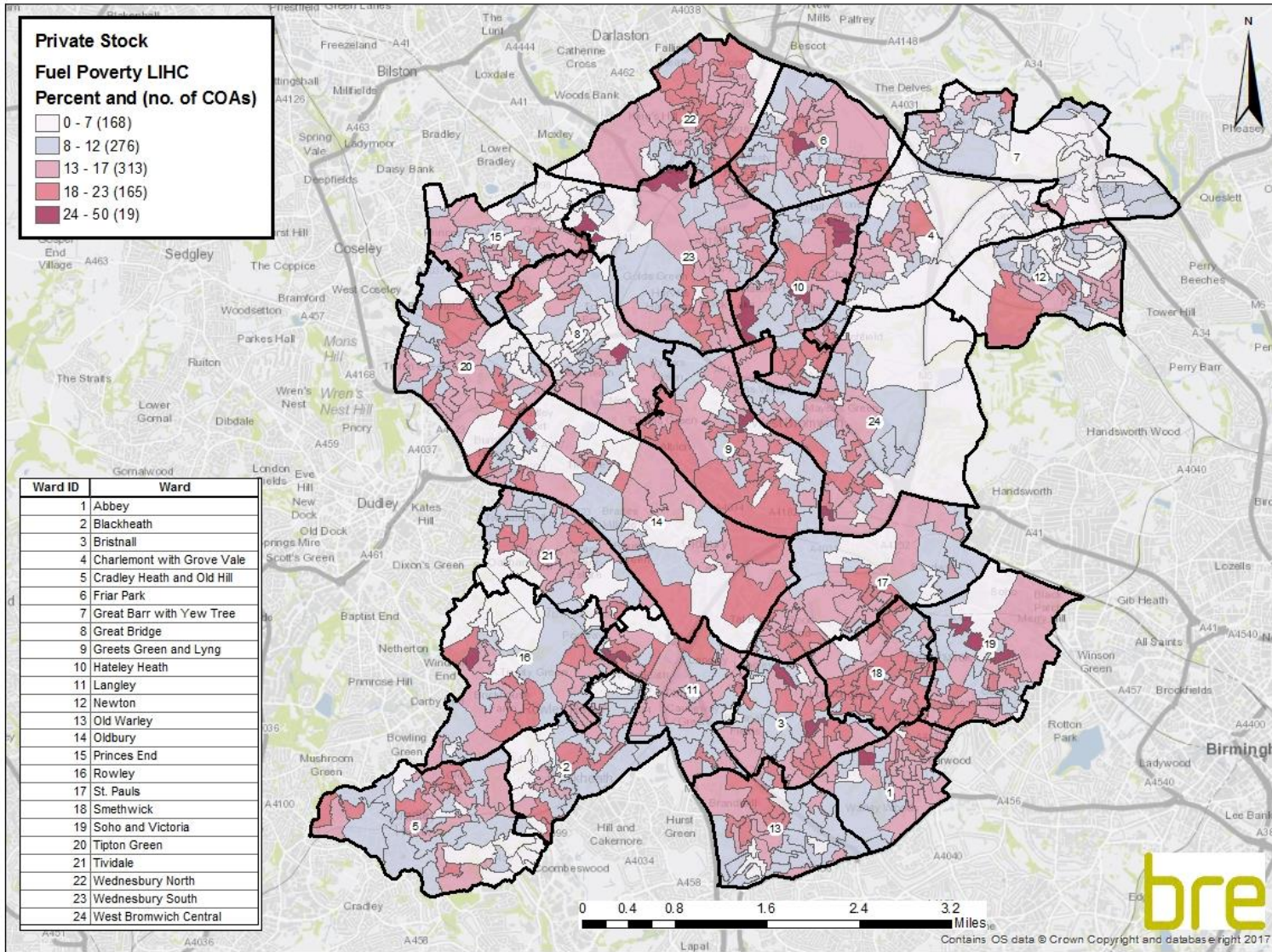
The Hills Fuel Poverty Review⁴⁴ provides useful figures that show the likely composition of a fuel poor household under this definition:

- 76% of fuel poor households have an EPC rating of E to G
- 20% of fuel poor households are rural
- 82% of fuel poor households live in houses as opposed to flats or bungalows
- A third of fuel poor households are found in a fifth of the most deprived households
- Fuel poverty is spread fairly evenly between regions, including London
- 34% of fuel poor households contain a person with a long term illness or disability
- 10% of fuel poor households contain a person over the age of 75
- 20% of fuel poor households contain a person under the age of 5

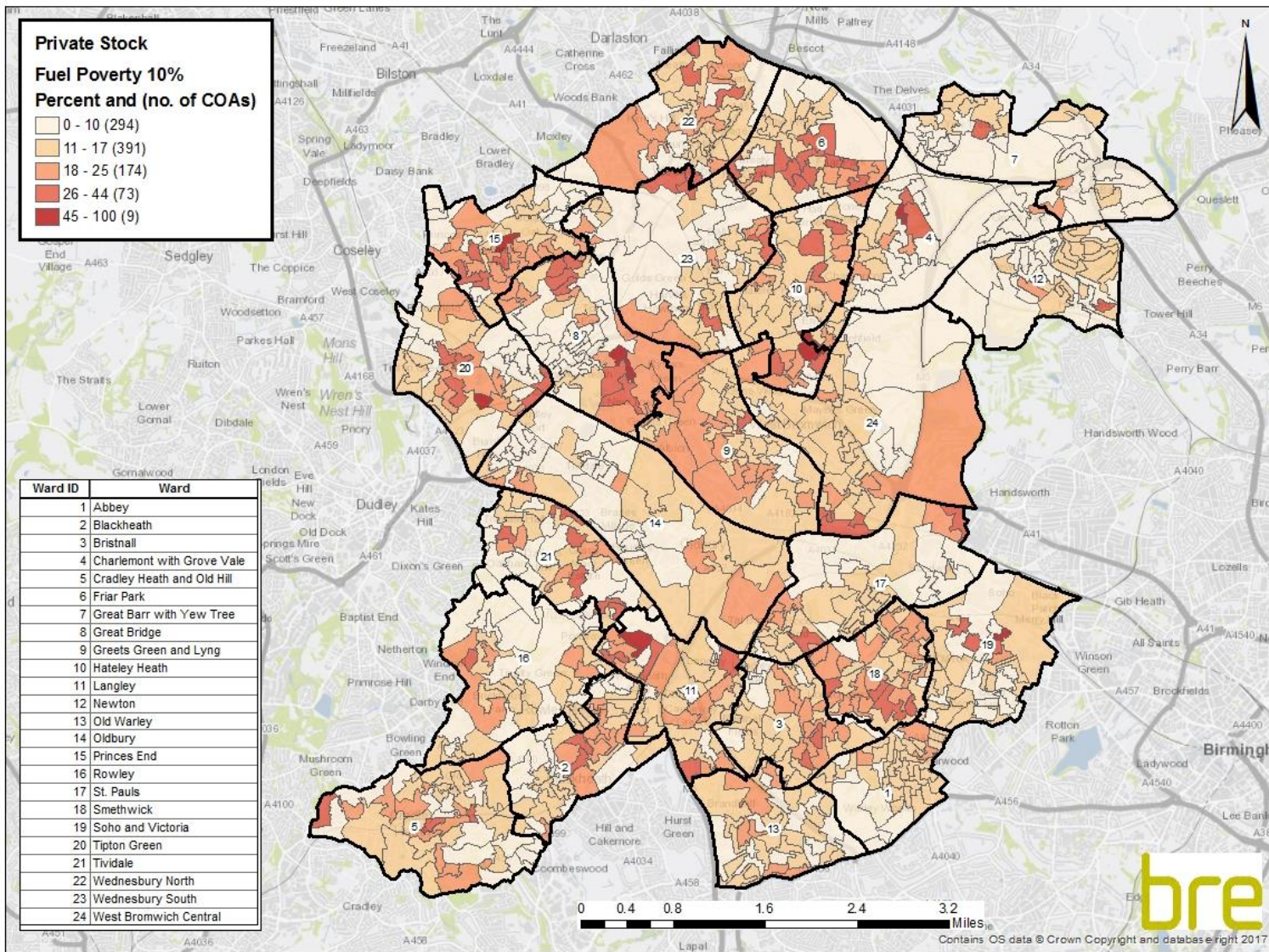
These figures should be considered when analysing the map showing the percentage of private sector dwellings in Sandwell occupied by households in fuel poverty under the Low Income High Costs definition.



Map 8: Percentage of private sector dwellings in Sandwell occupied by households in fuel poverty - Low Income High Costs definition



Map 9: Percentage of private sector dwellings in Sandwell occupied by households in fuel poverty – 10% definition





4.2.3.4 Low income households

A low income household is defined as a household in receipt of:

- Income support
- Housing benefit
- Attendance allowance
- Disability living allowance
- Industrial injuries disablement benefit
- War disablement pension
- Pension credit
- Child tax credit
- Working credit

For child tax credit and working tax credit, the household is only considered a low income household if it has a relevant income of less than £15,860.

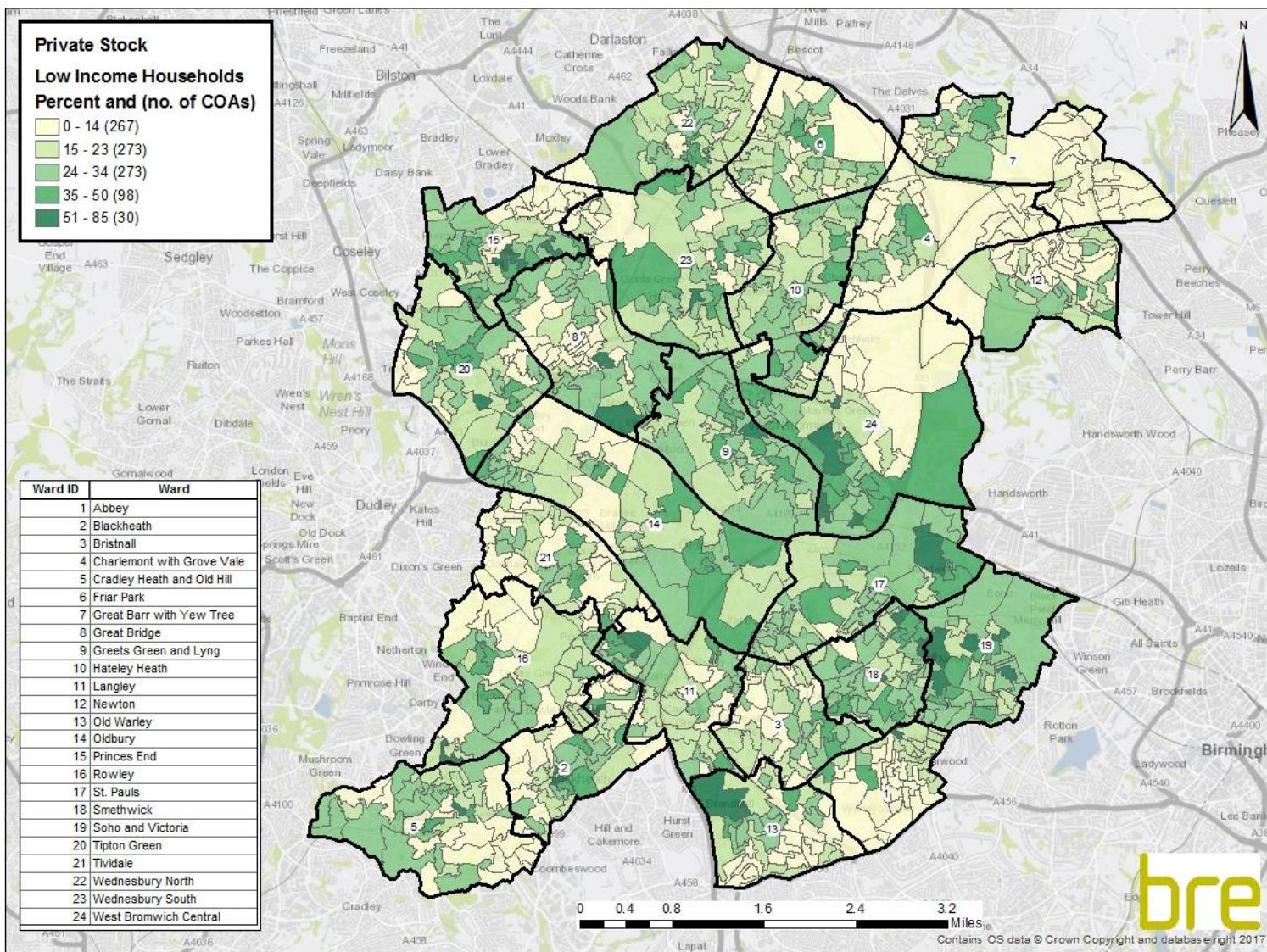
The definition also includes households in receipt of Council Tax reduction and income based Job Seekers Allowance.

Map 10 shows that concentrations of low income households are clustered around the centre and north of Sandwell. The highest levels overall are found in Soho and Victoria, Greet Green and Lyng and Smethwick ward. However, there are other areas which also have high concentrations of low income households; for example, to the south and west of West Bromwich Central ward and to the south of Princes End ward.

Map 11 provides an additional layer of information, with the data for low income households being combined with HHSRS excess cold data. This provides a vital picture of where vulnerable people are likely to be living in poor housing. The map indicates that there are pockets of both low income and excess cold scattered across the area.

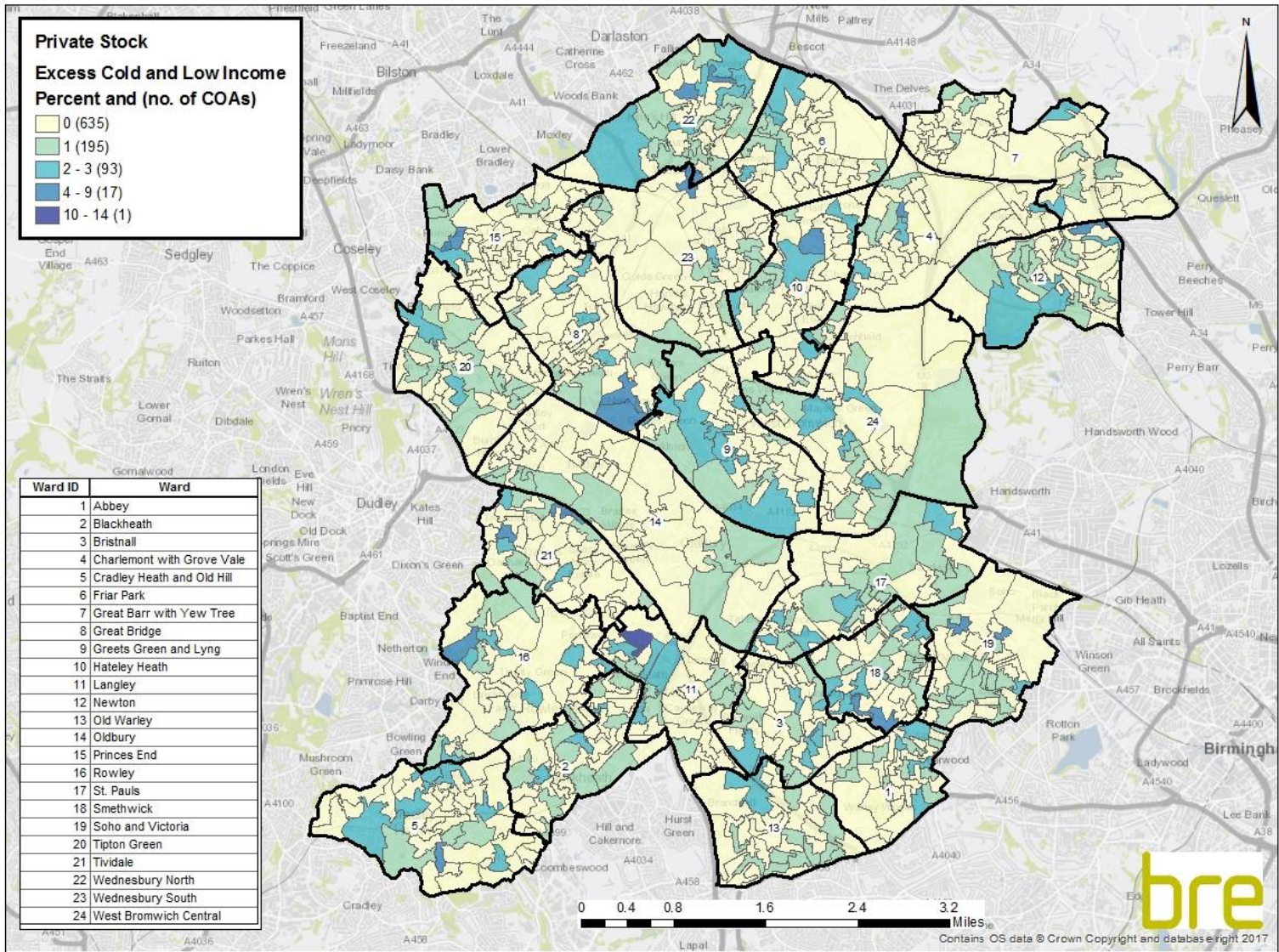


Map 10: Percentage of private sector dwellings in Sandwell occupied by low income households





Map 11: Percentage of private sector dwellings in Sandwell with both the presence of a HHSRS category 1 hazard for excess cold and occupied by low income households





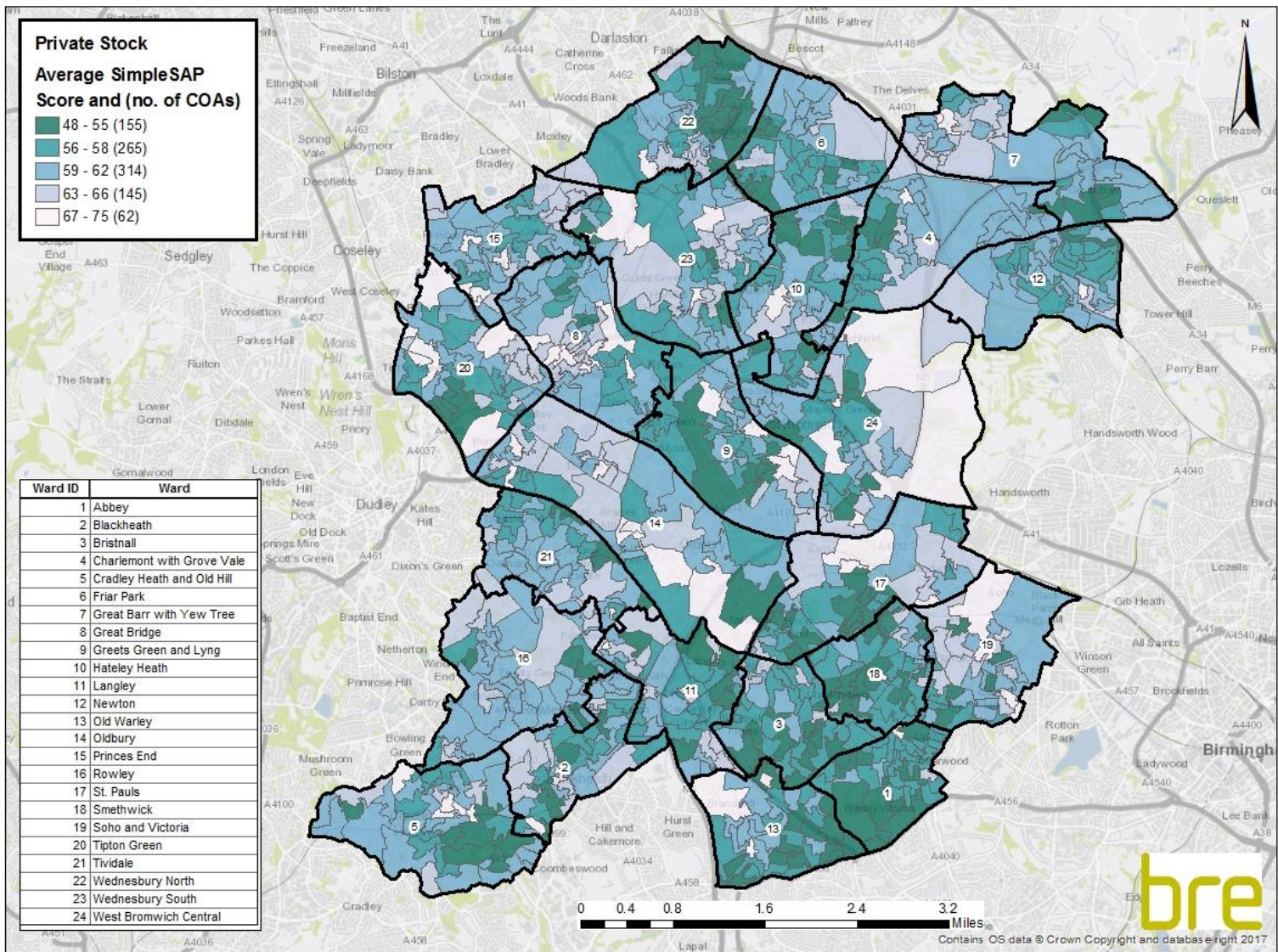
4.2.3.5 SimpleSAP

The average SimpleSAP map (**Map 12**) shows that areas with lower average SimpleSAP ratings are clustered throughout the area with a tendency towards the south east corner (Smethwick) and the northern parts of the area (Wednesbury). Whilst no particular ward obviously dominates, the data behind the map shows that the wards with the lowest average SimpleSAP ratings are Abbey, Bristnall and Old Warley.

Lower SimpleSAP ratings can occur in areas with larger, older homes where little work has been done by the occupiers to improve energy performance. The size of the home itself is not a factor in SimpleSAP, but these homes are more likely to be semi-detached or detached, and therefore have larger heat loss areas.



Map 12: Average SimpleSAP ratings per dwelling in Sandwell private sector stock





4.2.4 Ward level results for the key indicators

The previous maps have provided a visual representation of the key indicators at Census Output Area (COA) level. The following tables provide the complete set of figures at ward level for the key indicators; firstly, for the total stock (**Table 5**) and secondly, for the private sector stock (**Table 6**), owner occupied sector stock (**Table 7**) and private rented sector stock (**Table 8**). This allows a direct comparison between the wards in Sandwell.

Table 5: Total stock – number and percentage of dwellings failing each of the key indicators, and average SimpleSAP ratings by ward

Ward	Dwellings	HHSRS category 1 hazards			Disrepair	Fuel poverty		Low income households	Average SimpleSAP
		All hazards	Excess cold	Fall hazards		10%	LIHC		
Abbey	5,486	1,016 (19%)	160 (3%)	810 (15%)	770 (14%)	744 (14%)	804 (15%)	1,046 (19%)	57
Blackheath	5,526	602 (11%)	121 (2%)	471 (9%)	330 (6%)	796 (14%)	592 (11%)	1,689 (31%)	61
Bristnall	5,055	620 (12%)	130 (3%)	486 (10%)	368 (7%)	777 (15%)	699 (14%)	1,690 (33%)	58
Charlemont with Grove Vale	5,396	549 (10%)	108 (2%)	421 (8%)	198 (4%)	718 (13%)	507 (9%)	1,353 (25%)	61
Cradley Heath and Old Hill	6,174	689 (11%)	146 (2%)	517 (8%)	374 (6%)	894 (14%)	725 (12%)	2,066 (33%)	61
Friar Park	5,091	583 (11%)	118 (2%)	448 (9%)	306 (6%)	870 (17%)	651 (13%)	2,091 (41%)	59
Great Barr with Yew Tree	5,375	523 (10%)	113 (2%)	405 (8%)	164 (3%)	552 (10%)	492 (9%)	1,233 (23%)	61
Great Bridge	5,653	487 (9%)	97 (2%)	359 (6%)	211 (4%)	817 (14%)	649 (11%)	1,989 (35%)	62
Greets Green and Lyng	5,328	613 (12%)	111 (2%)	473 (9%)	361 (7%)	889 (17%)	692 (13%)	2,250 (42%)	61
Hateley Heath	5,698	606 (11%)	105 (2%)	482 (8%)	347 (6%)	924 (16%)	767 (13%)	2,203 (39%)	60
Langley	5,870	622 (11%)	141 (2%)	465 (8%)	318 (5%)	949 (16%)	741 (13%)	2,161 (37%)	61
Newton	5,042	581 (12%)	132 (3%)	450 (9%)	204 (4%)	586 (12%)	492 (10%)	1,076 (21%)	59
Old Warley	5,294	662 (13%)	154 (3%)	496 (9%)	352 (7%)	743 (14%)	632 (12%)	1,385 (26%)	58
Oldbury	6,089	480 (8%)	81 (1%)	378 (6%)	167 (3%)	672 (11%)	651 (11%)	1,751 (29%)	63
Princes End	5,634	472 (8%)	96 (2%)	353 (6%)	209 (4%)	888 (16%)	617 (11%)	2,315 (41%)	62
Rowley	5,299	525 (10%)	108 (2%)	395 (7%)	194 (4%)	709 (13%)	666 (13%)	1,740 (33%)	61
Smethwick	5,518	851 (15%)	159 (3%)	650 (12%)	566 (10%)	1,029 (19%)	910 (16%)	2,224 (40%)	58
Soho and Victoria	6,503	747 (11%)	133 (2%)	584 (9%)	497 (8%)	883 (14%)	895 (14%)	2,613 (40%)	62



Table 5 cont.: Total stock – number and percentage of dwellings failing each of the key indicators, and average SimpleSAP ratings by ward

Ward	Dwellings	HHSRS category 1 hazards			Disrepair	Fuel poverty		Low income households	Average SimpleSAP
		All hazards	Excess cold	Fall hazards		10%	LIHC		
St. Pauls	5,180	714 (14%)	115 (2%)	575 (11%)	435 (8%)	671 (13%)	743 (14%)	1,734 (33%)	59
Tipton Green	6,119	554 (9%)	102 (2%)	429 (7%)	290 (5%)	855 (14%)	692 (11%)	2,245 (37%)	62
Tividale	5,240	557 (11%)	128 (2%)	418 (8%)	248 (5%)	758 (14%)	631 (12%)	1,475 (28%)	59
Wednesbury North	5,162	683 (13%)	130 (3%)	515 (10%)	396 (8%)	811 (16%)	753 (15%)	1,799 (35%)	59
Wednesbury South	5,795	594 (10%)	109 (2%)	464 (8%)	244 (4%)	856 (15%)	692 (12%)	2,041 (35%)	61
West Bromwich Central	6,153	663 (11%)	123 (2%)	512 (8%)	356 (6%)	914 (15%)	733 (12%)	2,259 (37%)	62

N.B. the information on hazards refers to the number of dwellings with a hazard of the stated type. Because of this there is likely to be some overlap – for example, some dwellings are likely to have excess cold and fall hazards, but this dwelling would only be represented once under ‘all hazards’. The number of dwellings under ‘all hazards’ can therefore be less than the sum of the excess cold plus fall hazards.



Table 6: Private sector stock – number and percentage of dwellings for each of the key indicators, and average SimpleSAP ratings by ward

Ward	Dwellings	HHSRS category 1 hazards			Disrepair	Fuel poverty		Low income households	Average SimpleSAP
		All hazards	Excess cold	Fall hazards		10%	LIHC		
Abbey	5,033	981 (19%)	154 (3%)	786 (16%)	734 (15%)	675 (13%)	733 (15%)	738 (15%)	56
Blackheath	4,178	484 (12%)	100 (2%)	389 (9%)	246 (6%)	523 (13%)	416 (10%)	832 (20%)	60
Bristnall	3,503	469 (13%)	92 (3%)	380 (11%)	260 (7%)	478 (14%)	475 (14%)	659 (19%)	57
Charlemont with Grove Vale	4,274	485 (11%)	97 (2%)	376 (9%)	167 (4%)	518 (12%)	407 (10%)	627 (15%)	59
Cradley Heath and Old Hill	4,279	548 (13%)	115 (3%)	423 (10%)	293 (7%)	554 (13%)	494 (12%)	748 (17%)	60
Friar Park	2,511	343 (14%)	66 (3%)	273 (11%)	141 (6%)	384 (15%)	312 (12%)	473 (19%)	59
Great Barr with Yew Tree	4,476	455 (10%)	99 (2%)	360 (8%)	140 (3%)	415 (9%)	370 (8%)	671 (15%)	60
Great Bridge	3,509	301 (9%)	56 (2%)	239 (7%)	104 (3%)	384 (11%)	356 (10%)	631 (18%)	63
Greets Green and Lyng	3,468	460 (13%)	79 (2%)	364 (10%)	253 (7%)	540 (16%)	478 (14%)	1,053 (30%)	61
Hateley Heath	3,312	411 (12%)	68 (2%)	339 (10%)	211 (6%)	486 (15%)	455 (14%)	756 (23%)	60
Langley	4,065	506 (12%)	118 (3%)	386 (9%)	265 (7%)	603 (15%)	518 (13%)	888 (22%)	59
Newton	4,378	529 (12%)	118 (3%)	419 (10%)	182 (4%)	479 (11%)	423 (10%)	674 (15%)	59
Old Warley	4,295	578 (13%)	135 (3%)	442 (10%)	307 (7%)	559 (13%)	488 (11%)	694 (16%)	57
Oldbury	5,099	418 (8%)	66 (1%)	338 (7%)	139 (3%)	487 (10%)	554 (11%)	1,055 (21%)	63
Princes End	3,011	265 (9%)	47 (2%)	213 (7%)	82 (3%)	384 (13%)	275 (9%)	650 (22%)	62
Rowley	3,623	377 (10%)	73 (2%)	298 (8%)	128 (4%)	406 (11%)	407 (11%)	710 (20%)	61
Smethwick	3,736	656 (18%)	110 (3%)	519 (14%)	417 (11%)	653 (17%)	611 (16%)	1,055 (28%)	57
Soho and Victoria	4,967	621 (13%)	88 (2%)	517 (10%)	445 (9%)	612 (12%)	672 (14%)	1,645 (33%)	61



Table 6 cont.: Private sector stock – number and percentage of dwellings for each of the key indicators, and average SimpleSAP ratings by ward

Ward	Dwellings	HHSRS category 1 hazards			Disrepair	Fuel poverty		Low income households	Average SimpleSAP
		All hazards	Excess cold	Fall hazards		10%	LIHC		
St. Pauls	4,335	645 (15%)	105 (2%)	528 (12%)	386 (9%)	551 (13%)	613 (14%)	1,157 (27%)	58
Tipton Green	4,212	407 (10%)	76 (2%)	328 (8%)	193 (5%)	504 (12%)	475 (11%)	964 (23%)	62
Tividale	3,616	417 (12%)	98 (3%)	321 (9%)	159 (4%)	460 (13%)	400 (11%)	520 (14%)	59
Wednesbury North	3,524	497 (14%)	88 (2%)	394 (11%)	273 (8%)	492 (14%)	496 (14%)	781 (22%)	59
Wednesbury South	4,026	457 (11%)	80 (2%)	371 (9%)	177 (4%)	483 (12%)	483 (12%)	868 (22%)	61
West Bromwich Central	4,820	595 (12%)	109 (2%)	468 (10%)	321 (7%)	645 (13%)	622 (13%)	1,322 (27%)	60

N.B. the information on hazards refers to the number of dwellings with a hazard of the stated type. Because of this there is likely to be some overlap – for example, some dwellings are likely to have excess cold and fall hazards, but this dwelling would only be represented once under ‘all hazards’. The number of dwellings under ‘all hazards’ can therefore be less than the sum of the excess cold plus fall hazards.



Table 7: Owner occupied sector stock – number and percentage of dwellings for each of the key indicators, and average SimpleSAP ratings by ward

Ward	Dwellings	HHSRS category 1 hazards			Disrepair	Fuel poverty		Low income households	Average SimpleSAP
		All hazards	Excess cold	Fall hazards		10%	LIHC		
Abbey	2,484	446 (18%)	80 (3%)	365 (15%)	316 (13%)	330 (13%)	275 (11%)	306 (12%)	56
Blackheath	3,048	350 (11%)	79 (3%)	277 (9%)	163 (5%)	375 (12%)	280 (9%)	497 (16%)	60
Bristnall	2,623	341 (13%)	73 (3%)	277 (11%)	186 (7%)	343 (13%)	340 (13%)	448 (17%)	57
Charlemont with Grove Vale	3,286	370 (11%)	66 (2%)	297 (9%)	130 (4%)	296 (9%)	254 (8%)	401 (12%)	59
Cradley Heath and Old Hill	2,826	348 (12%)	71 (3%)	275 (10%)	176 (6%)	346 (12%)	287 (10%)	407 (14%)	59
Friar Park	1,859	258 (14%)	55 (3%)	200 (11%)	99 (5%)	282 (15%)	214 (12%)	295 (16%)	58
Great Barr with Yew Tree	3,489	365 (10%)	78 (2%)	295 (8%)	114 (3%)	327 (9%)	279 (8%)	464 (13%)	59
Great Bridge	2,233	191 (9%)	41 (2%)	150 (7%)	60 (3%)	227 (10%)	217 (10%)	363 (16%)	62
Greets Green and Lyng	1,805	253 (14%)	42 (2%)	200 (11%)	134 (7%)	310 (17%)	259 (14%)	501 (28%)	59
Hateley Heath	1,950	252 (13%)	40 (2%)	211 (11%)	128 (7%)	286 (15%)	273 (14%)	400 (21%)	58
Langley	2,587	320 (12%)	73 (3%)	250 (10%)	167 (6%)	370 (14%)	305 (12%)	513 (20%)	58
Newton	3,514	429 (12%)	103 (3%)	337 (10%)	139 (4%)	385 (11%)	297 (8%)	510 (15%)	58
Old Warley	3,295	453 (14%)	118 (4%)	338 (10%)	231 (7%)	406 (12%)	326 (10%)	517 (16%)	57
Oldbury	2,988	245 (8%)	38 (1%)	202 (7%)	73 (2%)	296 (10%)	326 (11%)	610 (20%)	62
Princes End	2,073	181 (9%)	35 (2%)	143 (7%)	46 (2%)	234 (11%)	174 (8%)	342 (16%)	61
Rowley	2,620	263 (10%)	52 (2%)	207 (8%)	82 (3%)	267 (10%)	253 (10%)	460 (18%)	61
Smethwick	1,893	316 (17%)	66 (3%)	244 (13%)	187 (10%)	345 (18%)	285 (15%)	476 (25%)	57
Soho and Victoria	1,684	211 (13%)	20 (1%)	184 (11%)	140 (8%)	208 (12%)	199 (12%)	548 (33%)	60



Table 7 cont.: *Owner occupied sector stock – number and percentage of dwellings for each of the key indicators, and average SimpleSAP ratings by ward*

Ward	Dwellings	HHSRS category 1 hazards			Disrepair	Fuel poverty		Low income households	Average SimpleSAP
		All hazards	Excess cold	Fall hazards		10%	LIHC		
St. Pauls	2,525	360 (14%)	68 (3%)	291 (12%)	199 (8%)	334 (13%)	317 (13%)	596 (24%)	58
Tipton Green	2,640	270 (10%)	52 (2%)	213 (8%)	117 (4%)	319 (12%)	302 (11%)	523 (20%)	61
Tivdale	2,794	302 (11%)	65 (2%)	245 (9%)	118 (4%)	322 (12%)	279 (10%)	359 (13%)	59
Wednesbury North	2,360	328 (14%)	61 (3%)	263 (11%)	174 (7%)	331 (14%)	326 (14%)	456 (19%)	58
Wednesbury South	2,763	320 (12%)	61 (2%)	262 (9%)	115 (4%)	333 (12%)	333 (12%)	475 (17%)	60
West Bromwich Central	2,525	311 (12%)	58 (2%)	254 (10%)	152 (6%)	343 (14%)	294 (12%)	581 (23%)	59

N.B. the information on hazards refers to the number of dwellings with a hazard of the stated type. Because of this there is likely to be some overlap – for example, some dwellings are likely to have excess cold and fall hazards, but this dwelling would only be represented once under ‘all hazards’. The number of dwellings under ‘all hazards’ can therefore be less than the sum of the excess cold plus fall hazards.



Table 8: Private rented sector stock – number and percentage of dwellings for each of the key indicators, and average SimpleSAP ratings by ward

Ward	Dwellings	HHSRS category 1 hazards			Disrepair	Fuel poverty		Low income households	Average SimpleSAP
		All hazards	Excess cold	Fall hazards		10%	LIHC		
Abbey	2,549	535 (21%)	74 (3%)	421 (16%)	418 (16%)	345 (14%)	458 (18%)	432 (17%)	56
Blackheath	1,130	134 (12%)	21 (2%)	112 (7%)	83 (7%)	148 (13%)	136 (12%)	335 (30%)	62
Bristnall	880	128 (15%)	19 (2%)	103 (8%)	74 (8%)	135 (15%)	135 (15%)	211 (24%)	58
Charlemont with Grove Vale	988	115 (12%)	31 (3%)	79 (4%)	37 (4%)	222 (22%)	153 (15%)	226 (23%)	60
Cradley Heath and Old Hill	1,453	200 (14%)	44 (3%)	148 (10%)	117 (8%)	208 (14%)	207 (14%)	341 (23%)	61
Friar Park	652	85 (13%)	11 (2%)	73 (11%)	42 (6%)	102 (16%)	98 (15%)	178 (27%)	60
Great Barr with Yew Tree	987	90 (9%)	21 (2%)	65 (7%)	26 (3%)	88 (9%)	91 (9%)	207 (21%)	63
Great Bridge	1,276	110 (9%)	15 (1%)	89 (7%)	44 (3%)	157 (12%)	139 (11%)	268 (21%)	64
Greets Green and Lyng	1,663	207 (12%)	37 (2%)	164 (10%)	119 (7%)	230 (14%)	219 (13%)	552 (33%)	62
Hateley Heath	1,362	159 (12%)	28 (2%)	128 (9%)	83 (6%)	200 (15%)	182 (13%)	356 (26%)	61
Langley	1,478	186 (13%)	45 (3%)	136 (9%)	98 (7%)	233 (16%)	213 (14%)	375 (25%)	60
Newton	864	100 (12%)	15 (2%)	82 (9%)	43 (5%)	94 (11%)	126 (15%)	164 (19%)	60
Old Warley	1,000	125 (13%)	17 (2%)	104 (10%)	76 (8%)	153 (15%)	162 (16%)	177 (18%)	59
Oldbury	2,111	173 (8%)	28 (1%)	136 (6%)	66 (3%)	191 (9%)	228 (11%)	445 (21%)	64
Princes End	938	84 (9%)	12 (1%)	70 (7%)	36 (4%)	150 (16%)	101 (11%)	308 (33%)	62
Rowley	1,003	114 (11%)	21 (2%)	91 (9%)	46 (5%)	139 (14%)	154 (15%)	250 (25%)	60
Smethwick	1,843	340 (18%)	44 (2%)	275 (15%)	230 (12%)	308 (17%)	326 (18%)	579 (31%)	57
Soho and Victoria	3,283	410 (12%)	68 (2%)	333 (10%)	305 (9%)	404 (12%)	473 (14%)	1,097 (33%)	62



Table 8 cont.: Private rented sector stock – number and percentage of dwellings for each of the key indicators, and average SimpleSAP ratings by ward

Ward	Dwellings	HHSRS category 1 hazards			Disrepair	Fuel poverty		Low income households	Average SimpleSAP
		All hazards	Excess cold	Fall hazards		10%	LIHC		
St. Pauls	1,810	285 (16%)	37 (2%)	237 (13%)	187 (10%)	217 (12%)	296 (16%)	561 (31%)	59
Tipton Green	1,572	137 (9%)	24 (2%)	115 (7%)	76 (5%)	185 (12%)	173 (11%)	441 (28%)	64
Tivdale	822	115 (14%)	33 (4%)	76 (9%)	41 (5%)	138 (17%)	121 (15%)	161 (20%)	58
Wednesbury North	1,164	169 (15%)	27 (2%)	131 (11%)	99 (9%)	161 (14%)	170 (15%)	325 (28%)	60
Wednesbury South	1,263	137 (11%)	19 (2%)	109 (9%)	62 (5%)	150 (12%)	150 (12%)	393 (31%)	63
West Bromwich Central	2,295	284 (12%)	51 (2%)	214 (9%)	169 (7%)	302 (13%)	328 (14%)	741 (32%)	62

N.B. the information on hazards refers to the number of dwellings with a hazard of the stated type. Because of this there is likely to be some overlap – for example, some dwellings are likely to have excess cold and fall hazards, but this dwelling would only be represented once under ‘all hazards’. The number of dwellings under ‘all hazards’ can therefore be less than the sum of the excess cold plus fall hazards.



4.3 Information relating to LAHS reporting and EPC ratings

4.3.1 Cost of mitigating category 1 hazards in the Sandwell private sector stock

Table 9 shows the total number of dwellings with HHSRS category 1 hazards in Sandwell's private sector stock, the average cost of mitigating hazards per dwelling and the total cost for mitigating all hazards within those dwellings. The costs are based on the average cost of mitigating category 1 hazards for the region using EHS 2014 data. The EHS costs are determined following a surveyor's assessment of the hazard. For each hazard the surveyor is given a range of common treatments that they can specify in order to treat the hazard. Where quantities are required the surveyor may specify them. The treatment recommended by the surveyor is then costed using a standard set of prices.

Table 9: Estimated costs to mitigate all category 1 hazards in private sector stock, split into tenure

Tenure	No. of hazards	Total cost (£)
Private Sector	28,116	51,683,393
Owner occupied	15,977	28,321,209
Private rented	12,139	23,362,184

4.3.2 EPC ratings in the Sandwell private sector stock

An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) is required whenever a new building is constructed, or an existing building is sold or rented out. An EPC is a measure of the energy efficiency performance of a building and is rated from band A – G, with A representing the best performance. The EPC ratings correspond to a range of SAP ratings from 1 – 100, with 100 being the best. It is possible, therefore, to give a dwelling an EPC rating based on the SAP rating.

Figure 8 below shows the bands A – G and corresponding SAP ratings in brackets. The first two columns show the number and percentage of Sandwell's private sector stock falling into each of the EPC ratings bands. The third column shows the comparable figures for the private sector stock in England.

The estimated average SimpleSAP for the private sector stock in Sandwell is 60 which corresponds to an EPC rating of D. The number of private sector dwellings with an EPC rating below band E is estimated to be 3,926 (4.1%). Sandwell has a higher proportion of dwellings in band D and E and lower proportions in the other bands.



Figure 8: Number and percentage of Sandwell’s *private sector stock* falling into each of the EPC ratings bands (based on SimpleSAP), compared to England (EHS) figures *N.B. England figures report band A and B together*

		Sandwell		2014 EHS England
		Count	Percent	Percent
(92-100)	A	0	0.0%	1.0%
(81-91)	B	282	0.3%	
(69-80)	C	18,767	19.5%	20.9%
(55-68)	D	52,623	54.7%	52.6%
(39-54)	E	20,652	21.5%	19.1%
(21-38)	F	3,289	3.4%	5.0%
(1-20)	G	637	0.7%	1.5%

Under the Energy Act 2011, new rules mean that from 2018 landlords must ensure that their properties meet a minimum energy efficiency standard - which has been set at band E - by 1 April 2018^{15, 46}.

Figure 9 shows the breakdown of SimpleSAP results into the A – G bands for the private rented stock only and compared to the figures for this tenure in England as a whole. The number of private rented dwellings in Sandwell with a rating below band E (i.e. bands F and G), is estimated to be 1,319 (3.8%). Compared to England, there are a greater proportion of dwellings in band C to E, and lower proportions in bands F and G.

The distribution of dwellings with EPC ratings below band E is shown in **Map 13**. These are for the private rented stock only, since this is affected by the new rules on minimum standards. Under the legislation these properties would not be eligible to be rented out after 2018.

⁴⁶ Although landlords will still be able to rent out F and G rated properties after this date they will not be able to renew or sign a new contract.

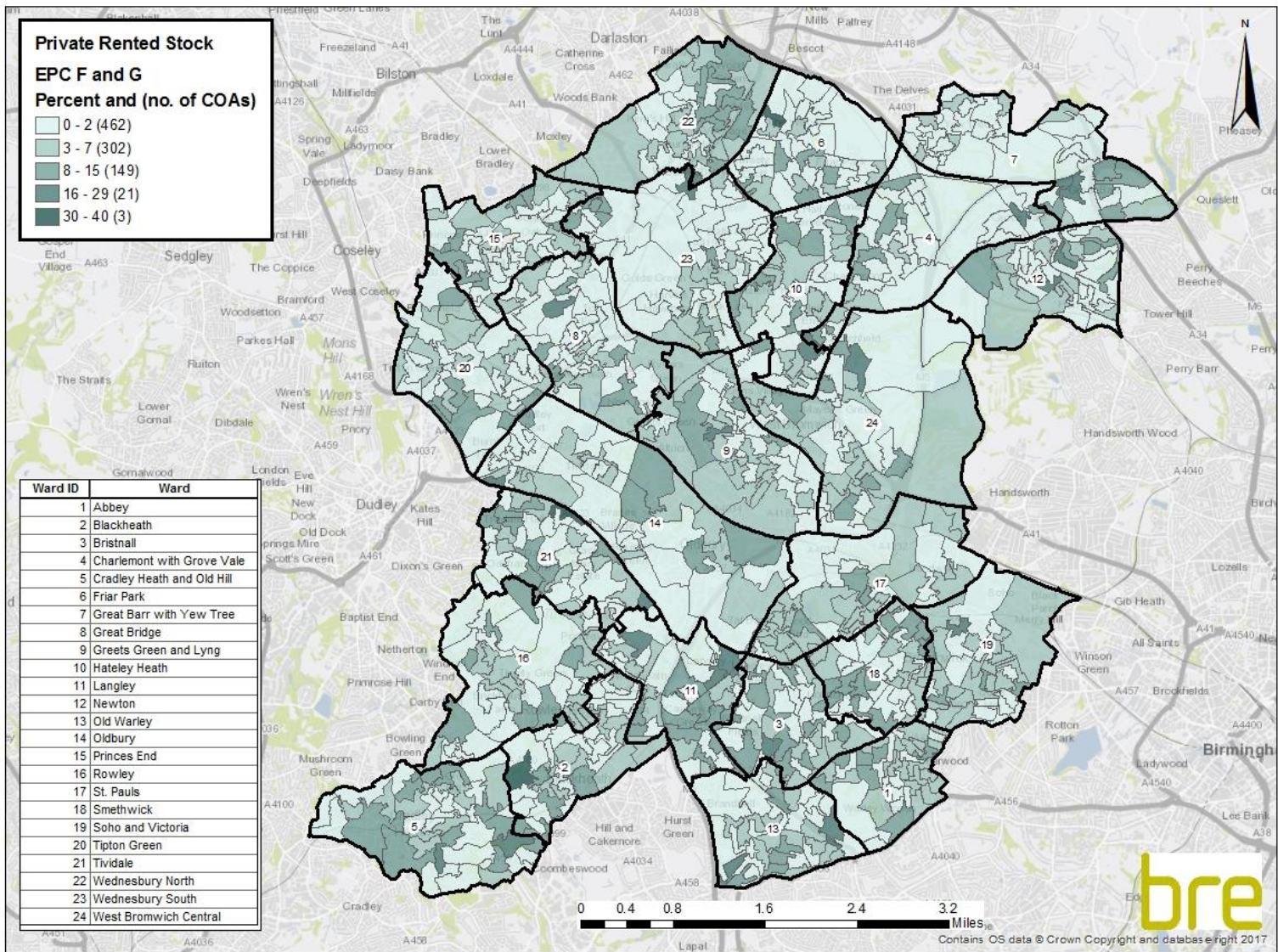


Figure 9: Number and percentage of Sandwell’s *private rented stock* falling into each of the EPC ratings bands (based on SimpleSAP), compared to England (EHS) figures *N.B. England figures report band A and B together*

		Sandwell		2014 EHS England
		Count	Percent	Percent
(92-100)	A	0	0.0%	1.4%
(81-91)	B	211	0.6%	
(69-80)	C	8,983	26.1%	23.8%
(55-68)	D	16,854	49.0%	48.9%
(39-54)	E	7,019	20.4%	18.3%
(21-38)	F	1,068	3.1%	5.4%
(1-20)	G	251	0.7%	2.1%



Map 13: Distribution of dwellings with F or G EPC ratings in the private rented stock





5 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and licensing in Sandwell private sector stock

5.1 HMO overview

A house in multiple occupation (HMO) is a property rented out by 3 or more people in 2 or more households (e.g. a family) but share facilities such as the bathroom and kitchen. For the purposes of HMOs, a household refers to husband, wife, co-habitee, child, step-child, foster-child, grandchild, parent, step-parent, grandparent, brother, half-brother, sister, half-sister, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, cousin, live-in-au-pair, housekeeper, maid, etc. . There are various types of HMOs defined by Section 254 of the Housing Act 2004. Depending on the house size, and number of occupants, particular HMOs may fall within the criteria for mandatory licensing or additional licensing. These are described in more detail in the following sub-sections.

5.1.1 Section 254 HMOs

The Housing Act 2004 introduced a new set of definitions for HMOs in England from 6 April 2006⁴⁷. The definition is a complex one and the bullet points below, which are adapted from web pages provided by the National HMO Network⁴⁸, provide a summary:

- An entire house or flat which is let to 3 or more tenants who form 2 or more households and who share a kitchen, bathroom or toilet
- A house which has been converted entirely into bedsits or other non-self-contained accommodation and which is let to 3 or more tenants who form two or more households and who share kitchen, bathroom or toilet facilities
- A converted house which contains one or more flats which are not wholly self-contained (i.e. the flat does not contain within it a kitchen, bathroom and toilet) and which is occupied by 3 or more tenants who form two or more households
- A building which is converted entirely into self-contained flats if the conversion did not meet the standards of the 1991 Building Regulations and more than one-third of the flats are let on short-term tenancies

5.1.2 HMOs subject to mandatory licensing

The Government proposes to extend mandatory licensing to cover all relevant HMOs regardless of the number of storeys⁴⁹. The requirement for the HMO to be occupied by five or more persons in two or more households will remain. As it now seems likely that the definition for licensable HMOs will change, the figures for the proposed new definition have been included in this report.

⁴⁷ See Sections 254-258 of the Housing Act (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/34/contents>)

⁴⁸ National HMO Network <http://www.nationalhmonetwork.com/definition.php>

⁴⁹

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/560777/HMO_Tech_Disc_RESPONSE_DOC.pdf



To be classified as an HMO the property must be used as the tenants' only or main residence and it should be used solely or mainly to house tenants. Properties let to students and migrant workers will be treated as their only or main residence and the same will apply to properties which are used as domestic refuges.

The LAHS requires estimates of the number of HMOs and the number of mandatory licensable HMOs.

- Number of private sector HMOs
 - Modelled using specific criteria from a number of Experian data sources and information derived from the SimpleCO₂ model. The criteria include privately rented dwellings with 3 or more bedrooms occupied by male/female/mixed home sharers, mixed occupancy dwellings or classified as the following Experian Mosaic classifications:
 - Renting a room
 - Career Builders
 - Flexible Workforce
 - Bus Route Renters
 - Learners and earners
 - Student scene
- Number of mandatory licensing scheme HMOs
 - This has been modelled using the above criteria for HMOs plus the dwelling must have 3 or more storeys and 4 or more bedrooms.
 - Flats where there are 4 or more bedrooms and two or more storeys in the dwelling which is within a building of 3 or more storeys containing a non-residential element.
- Number of licensable HMOs under the Government's proposed new definition
 - This has been modelled using the above criteria for HMOs plus the dwelling must have 4 or more bedrooms.
 - Flats where there are 4 or more bedrooms which is within a building of 2 or more storeys containing a non-residential element.

The council provided a list of licensed HMOs which were used to inform the HMO Models. The licensed HMO list and the potential licensable HMO list were also used to update the tenure information.

5.2 Discretionary licensing schemes

There are two types of discretionary licensing schemes; Additional and Selective. Additional applies to HMOs not included under mandatory licensing and selective can apply to any private rented property. The Housing Act 2004 provides councils with powers to introduce licensing of privately rented housing in certain areas. The aim of these schemes is to improve conditions for local occupiers and the surrounding communities.

5.2.1 Additional licensing

Additional licensing applies to HMOs only with the aim of improving conditions for local occupiers and the surrounding communities.

As discussed earlier in this section, local authorities already have to license HMOs that have 3 or more storeys and have 5 or more occupiers under the current mandatory licensing scheme and the proposed scheme will extend this to cover HMOs with 5 or more people regardless of the number of storeys.

Before making an additional HMO licensing designation for a particular type of HMO, or for a particular area, a local authority must do the following:



- Consider that a significant proportion of the HMOs of that description in the area are being managed sufficiently ineffectively as to give rise, or to be likely to give rise, to one or more particular problems either for those occupying the HMOs or for members of the public
- Have regard to any information regarding the extent to which any codes of practice approved under section 233 have been complied with by persons managing HMOs in the area in question
- Consider whether there are any other courses of action available to them (of whatever nature) that might provide an effective method of dealing with the problem or problems in question
- Ensure that the exercise of the power is consistent with its overall housing strategy
- Consider that making the designation will significantly assist them to deal with the problem or problems (whether or not they take any other course of action as well)
- Consult persons likely to be affected by the designation

5.2.2 HMO results for Sandwell

Table 10 and **Table 11** summarise the results for the private sector stock in Sandwell and at ward level respectively. **Map 14** shows the geographic distribution of HMOs, **Map 15** shows the distribution of licensable HMOs and **Map 16** shows the distribution of licensable HMOs under the proposed definition. The maps show the majority of HMOs to be concentrated towards central and south eastern parts of Sandwell in the urban areas of Smethwick and West Bromwich. There are notable concentrations across Soho and Victoria ward, to the east of Abbey ward, to the west of West Bromwich Central ward. Licensable HMOs (current definition) are mainly in the Smethwick area but there are a few scattered elsewhere – e.g. central COAs in Charlemont with Grove Vale ward. Licensable HMOs (proposed definition) are more obviously concentrated in the ward of Soho and Victoria. As previously mentioned, ward level data on HMOs is available in the accompanying Housing Stock Condition Database (HSCD) and **Appendix C** provides guidance on how to use the database. **Table 11** shows that Soho and Victoria ward has the highest number of HMOs (605), followed by Abbey ward (417).

Table 10: Summary of HMOs within the Sandwell private sector stock

	No. of private sector dwellings	HMOs	Mandatory Licensing Scheme HMOs	Proposed Licensing Scheme HMOs
	96,250	4,247	92	464



Table 11: Number of HMOs, current mandatory licensable HMOs and proposed mandatory licensable HMOs by ward

Ward	Dwellings - private rented stock	HMOs	Current Mandatory Licensable HMOs	Proposed Mandatory Licensable HMOs
Abbey	2,549	417 (16%)	6 (0%)	31 (1%)
Blackheath	1,130	61 (5%)	0 (0%)	9 (1%)
Bristnall	880	99 (11%)	5 (1%)	13 (1%)
Charlemont with Grove Vale	988	94 (10%)	6 (1%)	12 (1%)
Cradley Heath and Old Hill	1,453	151 (10%)	1 (0%)	10 (1%)
Friar Park	652	48 (7%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)
Great Barr with Yew Tree	987	55 (6%)	0 (0%)	12 (1%)
Great Bridge	1,276	78 (6%)	6 (0%)	14 (1%)
Greets Green and Lyng	1,663	281 (17%)	0 (0%)	15 (1%)
Hateley Heath	1,362	181 (13%)	4 (0%)	26 (2%)
Langley	1,478	143 (10%)	7 (0%)	13 (1%)
Newton	864	73 (8%)	4 (0%)	8 (1%)
Old Warley	1,000	86 (9%)	4 (0%)	11 (1%)
Oldbury	2,111	231 (11%)	2 (0%)	23 (1%)
Princes End	938	82 (9%)	0 (0%)	4 (0%)
Rowley	1,003	75 (7%)	0 (0%)	6 (1%)
Smethwick	1,843	325 (18%)	4 (0%)	31 (2%)
Soho and Victoria	3,283	605 (18%)	21 (1%)	122 (4%)

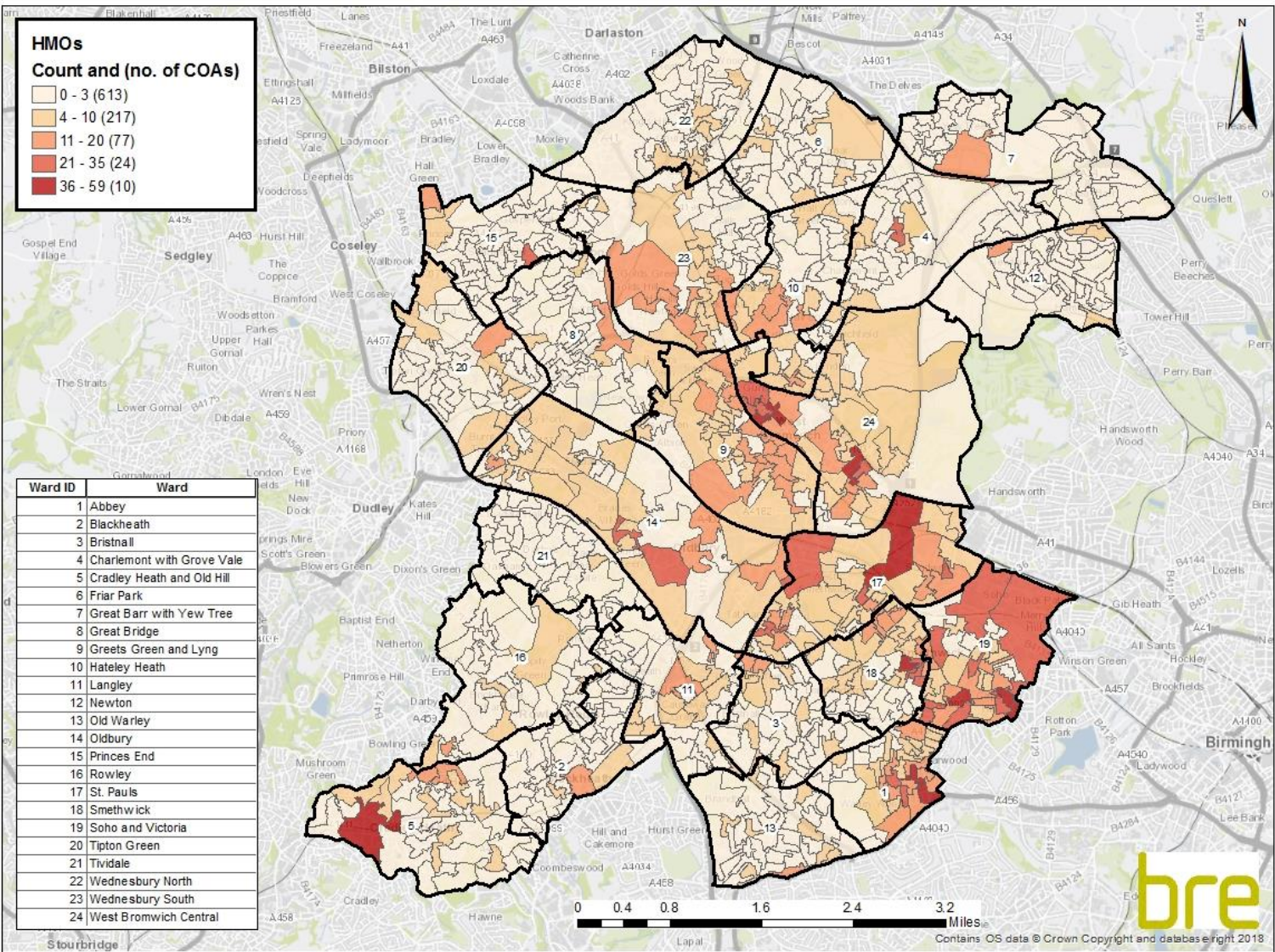


Table 11 cont.: Number of HMOs, current mandatory licensable HMOs and proposed mandatory licensable HMOs by ward

Ward	Dwellings - private rented stock	HMOs	Current Mandatory Licensable HMOs	Proposed Mandatory Licensable HMOs
St. Pauls	1,810	385 (21%)	3 (0%)	33 (2%)
Tipton Green	1,572	85 (5%)	1 (0%)	9 (1%)
Tividale	822	51 (6%)	0 (0%)	6 (1%)
Wednesbury North	1,164	102 (9%)	1 (0%)	6 (1%)
Wednesbury South	1,263	163 (13%)	1 (0%)	8 (1%)
West Bromwich Central	2,295	376 (16%)	16 (1%)	41 (2%)

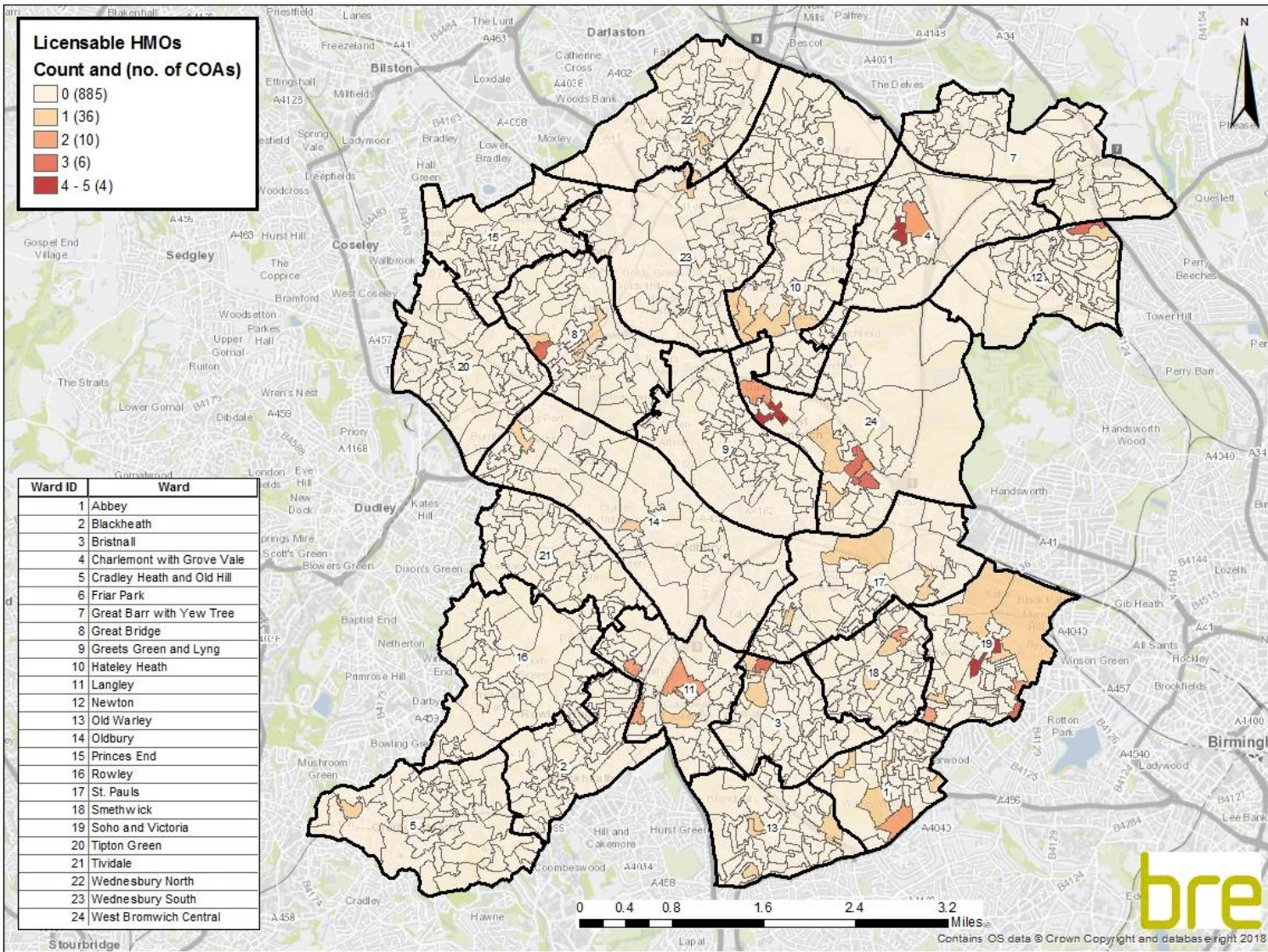


Map 14: Count of HMOs



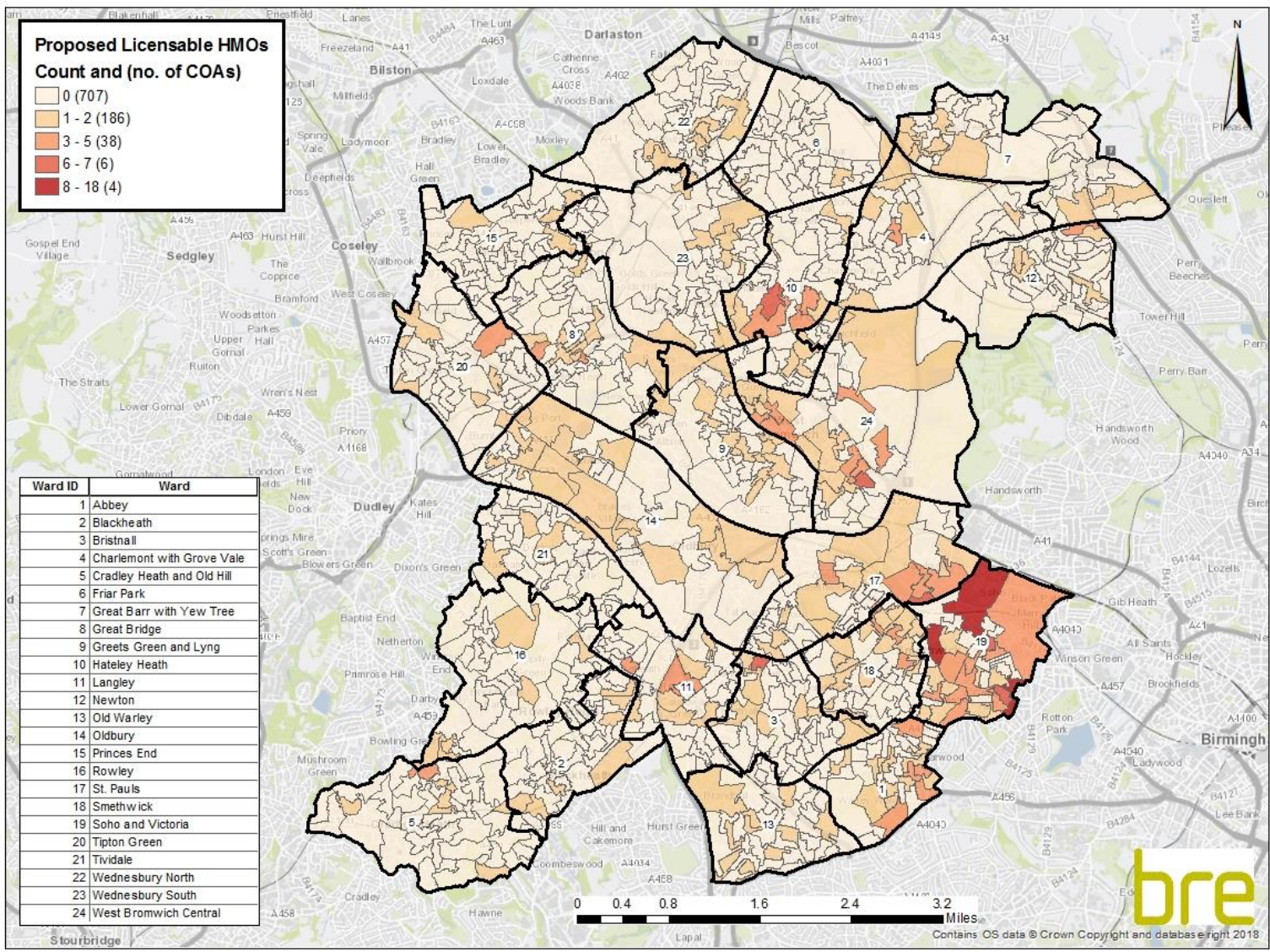


Map 15: Count of licensable HMOs





Map 16: Count of licensable HMOs under proposed definition





5.2.2.1 Key indicators for HMOs

Table 12 and **Figure 10** show the results for each of the key indicators in Sandwell for the private rented sector split into non-HMOs and HMOs. **Figure 11** shows the SimpleSAP ratings for non-HMOs and HMOs.

In general, HMOs in Sandwell are in poorer condition than non-HMOs in the private rented sector. The levels of HHSRS category 1 hazards are higher for HMOs (16% compared to 12% for non-HMOs), especially for fall hazards (13% compared to 10%), rather than for excess cold hazards. Levels of disrepair are also higher for HMOs (11% compared to 7% for non-HMOs). Levels of low income are actually lower in HMOs (24% compared to 27%). However, as HMOs have lower energy efficiency levels compared to non-HMOs (average SimpleSAP score of 59 compared to 61), the levels of fuel poverty are higher for HMOs for the Low Income High Costs definition, but lower for the 10% definition.

Table 12: Estimates of the numbers and percentages of dwellings meeting the key indicator criteria by the Housing Stock Models and HSCD for the private rented sector split by non-HMOs and HMOs for Sandwell

Indicator		Private rented sector stock			
		Non HMOs		HMOs	
		No.	%	No.	%
No. of dwellings		30,147	-	4,247	-
HHSRS category 1 hazards	All hazards	3,751	12%	671	16%
	Excess cold	631	2%	111	3%
	Fall hazards	2,948	10%	543	13%
Disrepair		2,131	7%	446	11%
Fuel poverty (10%)		4,325	14%	335	8%
Fuel poverty (Low Income High Costs)		4,124	14%	715	17%
Low income households		8,115	27%	1,008	24%

N.B. the information on hazards refers to the number of dwellings with a hazard of the stated type. Because of this there is likely to be some overlap – for example, some dwellings are likely to have excess cold and fall hazards but this dwelling would only be represented once under ‘all hazards’. The number of dwellings under ‘all hazards’ can therefore be less than the sum of the excess cold plus fall hazards.



Figure 10: Estimates of the percentage of dwellings meeting the key indicator criteria assessed by the Housing Stock Models and HSCD for HMOs in Sandwell

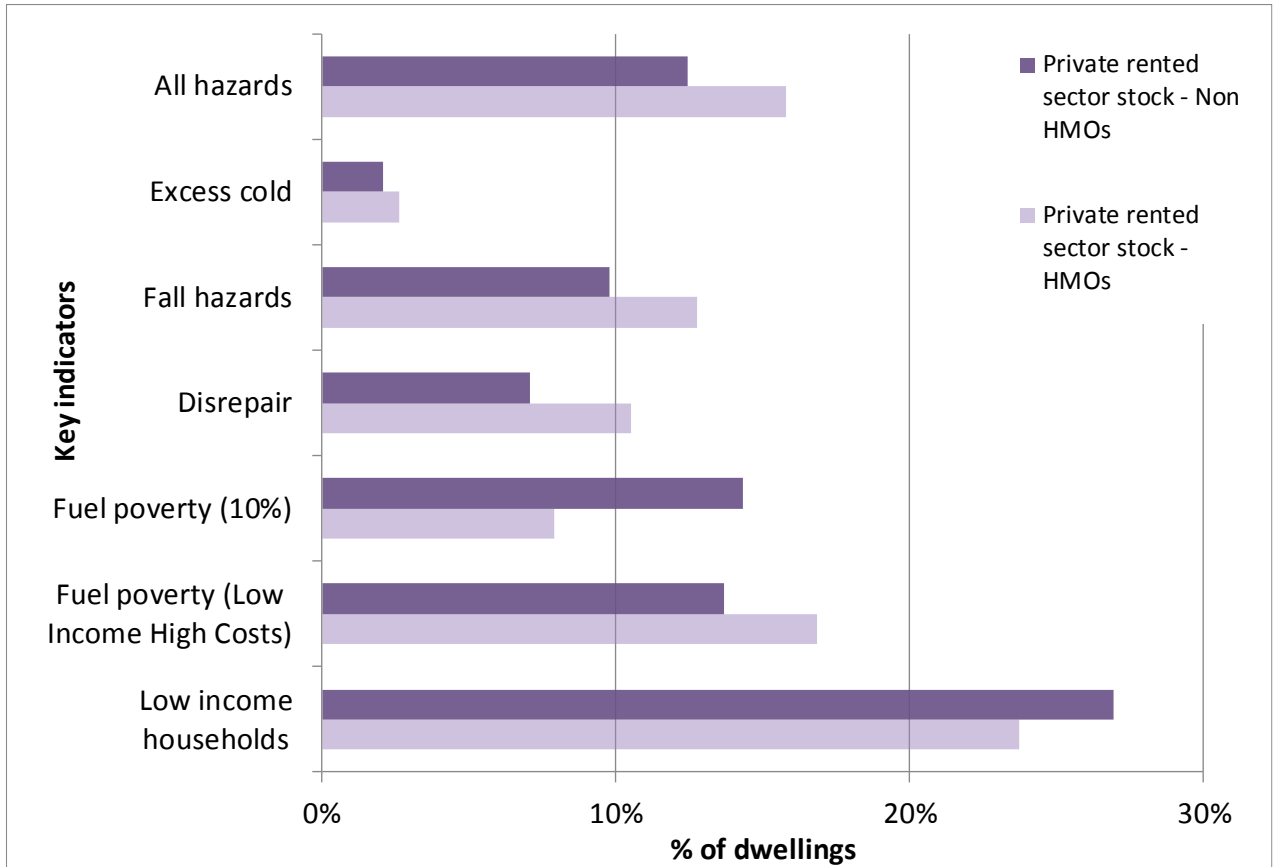
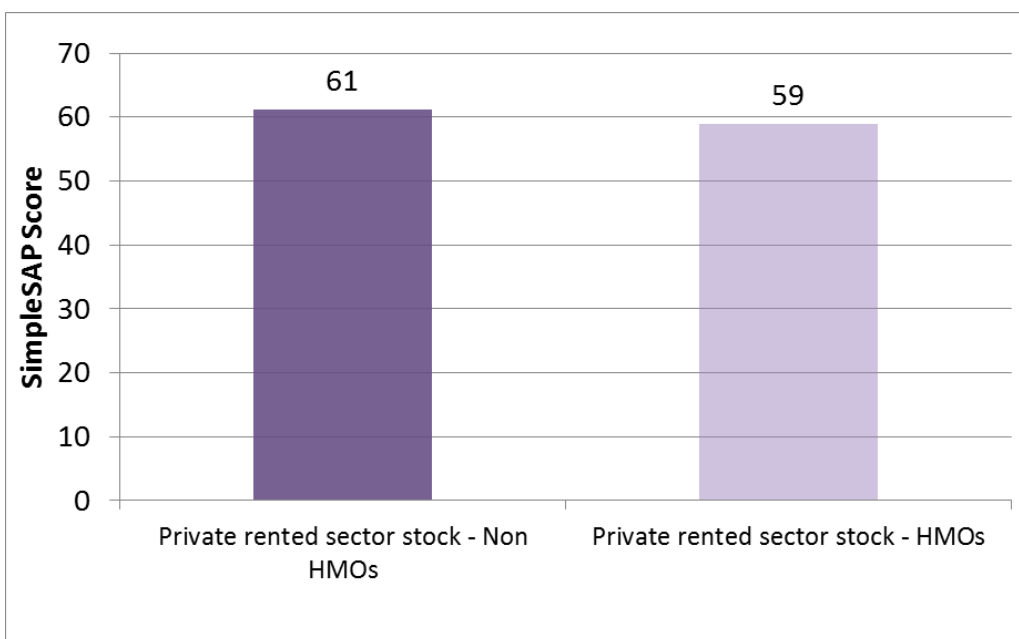


Figure 11: Average SimpleSAP ratings for HMOs in Sandwell





5.2.2.2 Potential areas for investigation within Sandwell – additional HMO licensing

Table 13 shows the number of HMOs in each ward as well as the proportion of those HMOs containing a category 1 hazard or being in disrepair. Wards with high levels of HMOs and with high proportions of hazards or in disrepair may be a starting point when considering areas which could be suitable for Additional HMO licensing.



Table 13: Number of HMOs, and percentage of those HMOs containing a category 1 hazard or being in disrepair, by ward

Ward	HMOs	HHSRS category 1 hazards			Disrepair
		All hazards	Excess cold	Fall hazards	
Abbey	417	64 (15%)	10 (2%)	47 (11%)	74 (18%)
Blackheath	61	10 (16%)	3 (5%)	7 (11%)	3 (5%)
Bristnall	99	17 (17%)	2 (2%)	15 (15%)	10 (10%)
Charlemont with Grove Vale	94	12 (13%)	2 (2%)	10 (11%)	6 (6%)
Cradley Heath and Old Hill	151	38 (25%)	10 (7%)	26 (17%)	22 (15%)
Friar Park	48	5 (10%)	0 (0%)	5 (10%)	6 (13%)
Great Barr with Yew Tree	55	8 (15%)	1 (2%)	7 (13%)	3 (5%)
Great Bridge	78	10 (13%)	1 (1%)	7 (9%)	4 (5%)
Greets Green and Lyng	281	46 (16%)	7 (2%)	40 (14%)	26 (9%)
Hateley Heath	181	27 (15%)	1 (1%)	25 (14%)	11 (6%)
Langley	143	22 (15%)	6 (4%)	16 (11%)	13 (9%)
Newton	73	18 (25%)	3 (4%)	15 (21%)	4 (5%)
Old Warley	86	15 (17%)	3 (3%)	13 (15%)	10 (12%)
Oldbury	231	31 (13%)	3 (1%)	29 (13%)	14 (6%)
Princes End	82	10 (12%)	2 (2%)	9 (11%)	3 (4%)
Rowley	75	10 (13%)	2 (3%)	8 (11%)	2 (3%)
Smethwick	325	66 (20%)	11 (3%)	51 (16%)	51 (16%)
Soho and Victoria	605	98 (16%)	15 (2%)	81 (13%)	84 (14%)



Table 13 cont: Number of HMOs, and percentage of those HMOs containing a category 1 hazard or being in disrepair, by ward

Ward	HMOs	HHSRS category 1 hazards			Disrepair
		All hazards	Excess cold	Fall hazards	
St. Pauls	385	62 (16%)	13 (3%)	50 (13%)	48 (12%)
Tipton Green	85	7 (8%)	1 (1%)	7 (8%)	4 (5%)
Tividale	51	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	2 (4%)
Wednesbury North	102	22 (22%)	3 (3%)	19 (19%)	10 (10%)
Wednesbury South	163	18 (11%)	3 (2%)	13 (8%)	5 (3%)
West Bromwich Central	376	55 (15%)	8 (2%)	44 (12%)	31 (8%)



5.3 Selective licensing

Selective licensing is different to additional licensing as it covers all private rented sector properties (excluding any HMOs already licensed under HMO schemes). Selective licensing must be part of the overall strategic approach taken by an authority. The main aim of selective licensing is to address the problems caused by poor quality private rented accommodation⁵⁰.

Section 80 of the 2004 Housing Act⁵¹ gives powers to Local Housing Authorities (LHAs) to designate geographical areas to be licensed, provided certain conditions are met. The power does not permit LHAs to require licensing of houses that have been exempted under the Selective Licensing of Houses (Specified exemptions) (England) Order 2006, or a property that is subject to a tenancy or licence granted by a body which is registered as a social landlord under Part 1 of the Housing Act 1996. Furthermore, a local housing authority will need to apply to the Secretary of State for confirmation of any scheme which covers more than 20% of their geographical area, or that would affect more than 20% of privately rented homes in the local authority area. Prior to the introduction of a licensing scheme, there must be a consultation with local residents, landlords and tenants and any others likely to be affected. If the selective licensing scheme is adopted then landlords who rent out properties in that area will be required to obtain a licence from the local authority for each of their properties. Failure to do so, or if they fail to achieve minimum standards the authority can take enforcement action. More details can be found in the DCLG document “Selective licensing in the private rented sector: A guide for local authorities”⁵².

The conditions which apply to Selective licensing areas are split into 3 “sets”, each of which has several conditions. Any of the three sets needs to be met in order for a local authority to designate a selective licensing area. The requirements of each of the sets are summarised as follows:

Set one:

- The area has low housing demand (or is likely to become such an area)
- Selective licensing will contribute to the improvement of the social or economic conditions in the area, when combined with other measures taken in the area

Set two:

- The area has a significant and persistent problem cause by anti-social behaviour
- Some or all of the private landlords letting dwellings in the area are failing to take appropriate action to combat the problem
- Selective licensing will lead to a reduction/elimination of the problem, when combined with other measures taken in the area

⁵⁰ <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN04634/SN04634.pdf>

⁵¹ http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/34/pdfs/ukpga_20040034_en.pdf

⁵²

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418551/150327_Guidance_on_selective_licensing_applications_FINAL_updated_isbn.pdf



Set three:

- The area has a high proportion of properties in the private rented sector, compared to the total number of properties in the area – this is suggested as being the national average as reported in the latest available English Housing Survey (currently 20%)⁵²
- These properties are occupied under either assured tenancies or licences to occupy
- One or more of the following conditions is satisfied:
 - **Housing conditions** – the authority has reviewed housing conditions in the area and that it considers it would be appropriate for a significant number of properties in the area to be inspected to determine presence of category 1 or 2 hazards, or the authority intends to carry out inspections with a view to carrying out enforcement action; selective licensing, combined with other measures, will contribute to an improvement in general housing conditions in the area.
 - **Migration** – the area has recently or is experiencing high levels of migration, a significant number of properties in the area are occupied by migrants; selective licensing will contribute to an improvement in the social or economic conditions in the area and ensuring that properties are properly managed and overcrowding is prevented.
 - **Deprivation** – the area has high levels of deprivation which affects a significant number of the occupiers; selective licensing, combined with other measures, will contribute to a reduction in deprivation levels in the area. To determine if an area has high levels of deprivation the authority can look at: employment status, average income, health, access to education, training and services, housing conditions, physical environment, crime levels.
 - **Crime** – the area has high levels of crime which affects those living in the area; selective licensing, combined with other measures, will contribute to a reduction in crime levels in the area for the benefit of those living in the area.

5.3.1 Indicators for investigation

As detailed, there are various criteria which can be used to designate areas for Selective licensing. The criteria which were investigated in more detail are:

- The proportion of dwellings that are privately rented
- Information on property condition - proportion of dwellings:
 - With a category 1 Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) hazard – this is the presence of one or more of the 29 hazards covered by the HHSRS⁵³
 - With a category 1 HHSRS hazard for excess cold

⁵³ For a full list of hazards see - Housing Health and Safety Rating System Operating Guidance, ODPM, 2006 - https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/15810/142631.pdf



- With a category 1 HHSRS fall hazard – these include those fall hazards where the vulnerable person is 60 or over i.e. the presence of falls associated with baths, falling on the level and falling on stairs
 - In disrepair – this is based on the former Decent Homes Standard criteria for disrepair which states that a dwelling fails this criterion if it is not found to be in a reasonable state of repair. This is assessed by looking at the age of the dwellings and the condition of a range of building components including walls, roofs, windows, doors, electrics and heating systems)
- Information on deprivation based on the 2015 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)⁵⁴
 - Information on migration

⁵⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2015>



5.3.2 Potential areas for investigation within Sandwell – selective licensing

Areas with considerably higher levels of private rented stock in Sandwell, compared to the national average, were identified. The percentage of private rented stock for Sandwell is 26%.

Table 14 shows that there are 15 wards in Sandwell with private rented proportions in excess of the national average (20%)⁵⁵ depicted by the dashed line.

Two wards have considerably higher proportions of private rented dwellings – Soho and Victoria at 50% and Abbey at 46%. **Map 17** shows the distribution of the wards with over 20% of dwellings in the private rented sector.

Therefore, the specific areas for investigation were defined as follows:

Wards with PRS in excess of 35%:

- Soho and Victoria
- Abbey
- West Bromwich Central

Wards with PRS between 25-35%:

- St. Pauls
- Oldbury
- Smethwick
- Greet Green and Lyng
- Tipton Green
- Langleigh

Wards with PRS between 20-25% (above national average of 20%):

- Hateley Heath
- Cradley Heath and Old Hill
- Great Bridge
- Wednesbury North
- Wednesbury South
- Blackheath

Map 17 shows the distribution of the above wards.

⁵⁵ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/595785/2015-16_EHS_Headline_Report.pdf

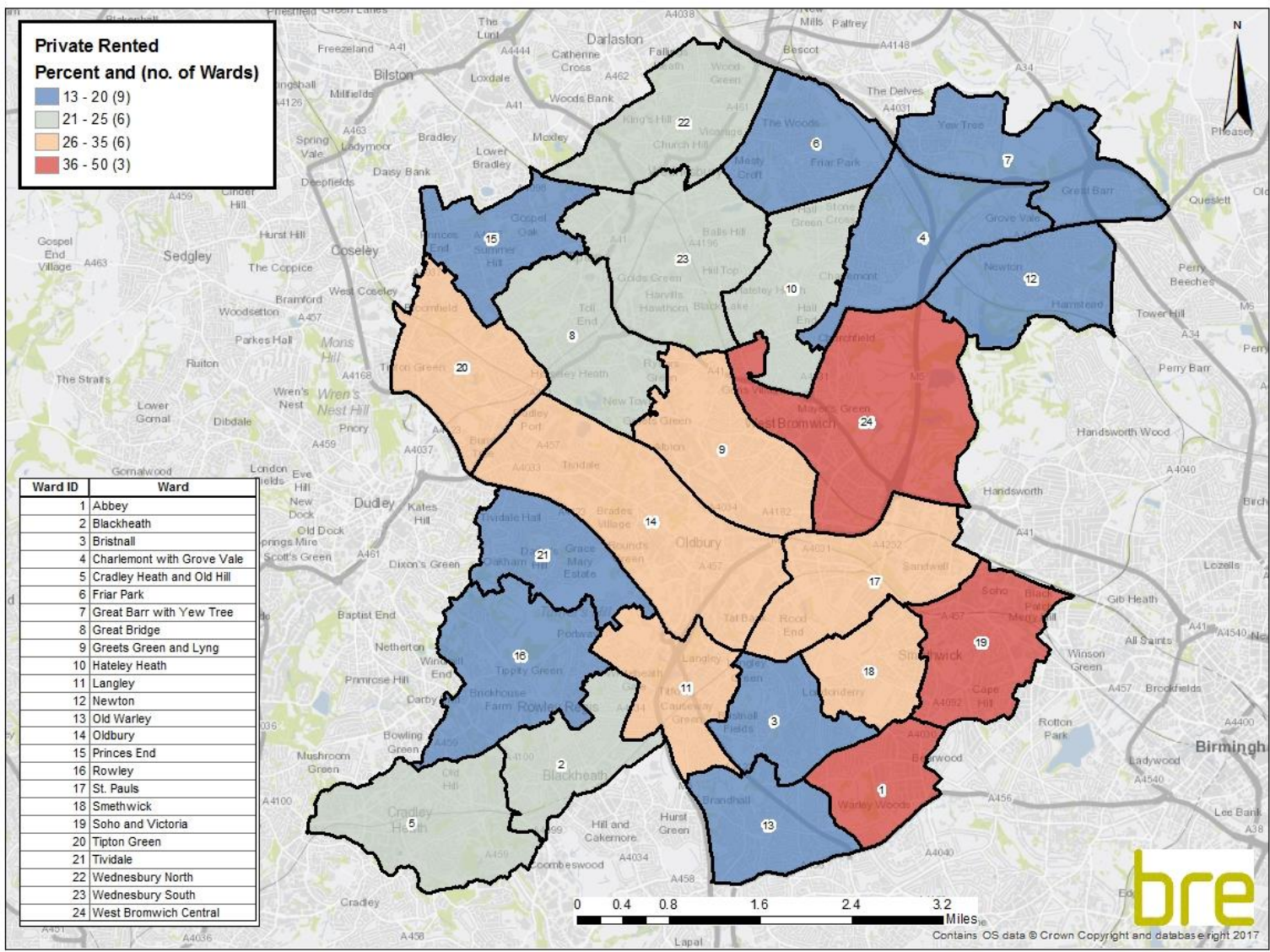


Table 14: Count and percentage of estimated privately rented dwellings across Sandwell (sorted by descending private rented proportion)

Ward	Dwellings - all stock	Dwellings - private rented	
		Count	Percentage
Soho and Victoria	6,503	3,283	50%
Abbey	5,486	2,549	46%
West Bromwich Central	6,153	2,295	37%
St. Pauls	5,180	1,810	35%
Oldbury	6,089	2,111	35%
Smethwick	5,518	1,843	33%
Greets Green and Lyng	5,328	1,663	31%
Tipton Green	6,119	1,572	26%
Langley	5,870	1,478	25%
Hateley Heath	5,698	1,362	24%
Cradley Heath and Old Hill	6,174	1,453	24%
Great Bridge	5,653	1,276	23%
Wednesbury North	5,162	1,164	23%
Wednesbury South	5,795	1,263	22%
Blackheath	5,526	1,130	20%
Rowley	5,299	1,003	19%
Old Warley	5,294	1,000	19%
Great Barr with Yew Tree	5,375	987	18%
Charlemont with Grove Vale	5,396	988	18%
Bristnall	5,055	880	17%
Newton	5,042	864	17%
Princes End	5,634	938	17%
Tividale	5,240	822	16%
Friar Park	5,091	652	13%



Map 17: Distribution of estimated percentage of private rented dwellings across Sandwell (over 20%) – based on HSCD



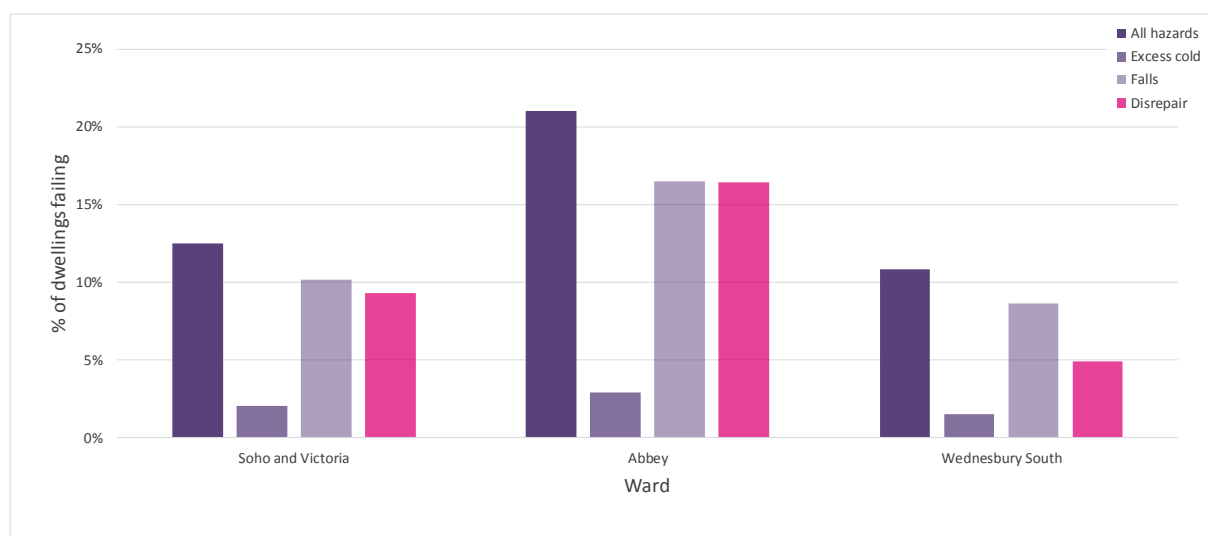


5.3.2.1 Information on property condition

Information on property condition is based on the presence of a category 1 HHSRS hazard (one or more of the 29 covered by the HHSRS⁵⁶), a category 1 hazard for excess cold and a category 1 hazard for falls (these are fall hazards where the vulnerable person is over 60 and includes falls associated with baths, falling on the level and falling on stairs). Property condition also includes proportions of dwellings in disrepair. This is based on the former Decent Homes Standard and assesses the age of the dwelling and the condition of a range of building components – e.g. walls, roofs, electrics and heating systems.

Figure 12 to Figure 14 compare these property condition indicators across the three groups of wards with over 20% of the stock being private rented. For wards with over 35% of the stock being private rented, Abbey ward stands out as also having the highest levels of all hazards (21%), fall hazards (17%) and dwellings in disrepair (16%). Of the six wards where 25-35% of the stock is estimated to be private rented, Smethwick has the highest rates of all hazards (18%), falls hazards (15%) and dwellings in disrepair (12%). For the six wards with 20-25% private rented stock, Wednesbury North has the highest rates of all hazards (15%), falls hazards (11%) and dwellings in disrepair (9%).

Figure 12: Comparison of percentage of dwellings failing the housing condition indicators across the Central Wards and the areas of interest for selective licensing in Sandwell – private rented sector over 35%



⁵⁶ For a full list of hazards see - Housing Health and Safety Rating System Operating Guidance, ODPM, 2006 - https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/15810/142631.pdf



Figure 13: Comparison of percentage of dwellings failing the housing condition indicators across the Central Wards and the areas of interest for selective licensing in Sandwell – private rented sector 25 -35%

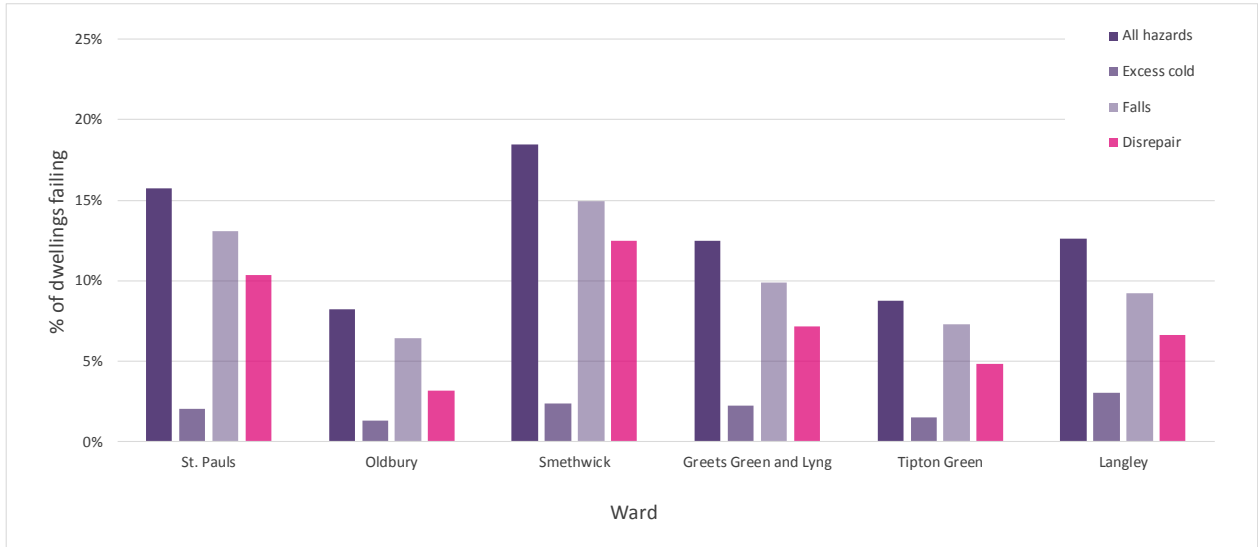
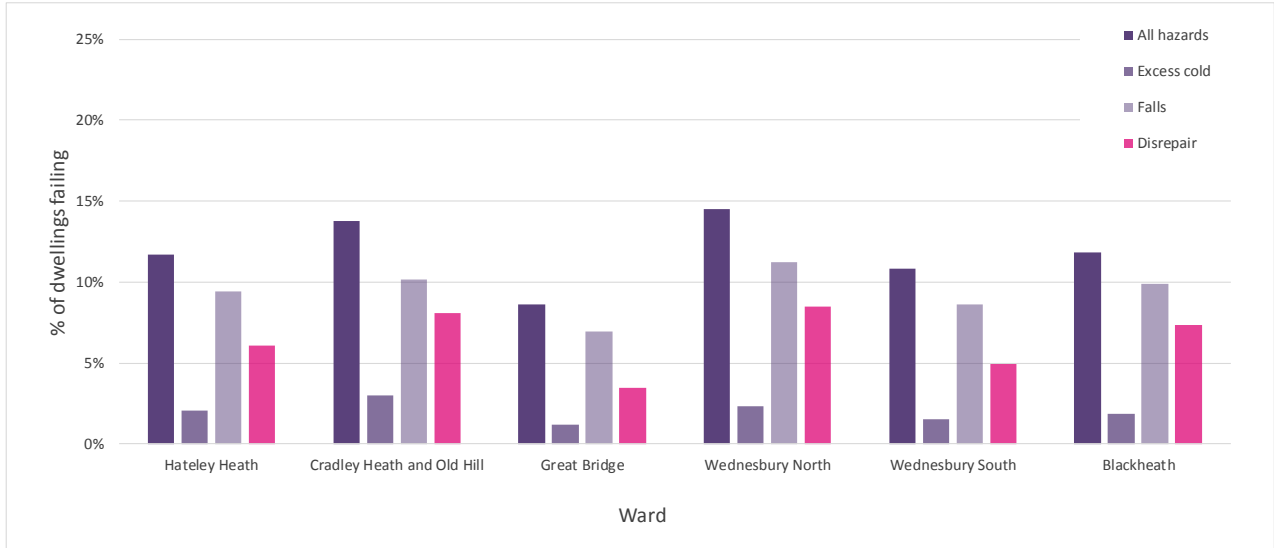


Figure 14: Comparison of percentage of dwellings failing the housing condition indicators across the Central Wards and the areas of interest for selective licensing in Sandwell – private rented sector 20 -25%





5.3.2.2 Information on deprivation

The 2015 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)⁵⁷ take account of seven “domains” to produce an overall relative measure of deprivation. The domains and their weighting are as follows:

- Income deprivation (22.5%)
- Employment deprivation (22.5%)
- Education, skills and training deprivation (13.5%)
- Health deprivation and disability (13.5%)
- Crime (9.3%)
- Barriers to housing and services (9.3%)
- Living environment deprivation (9.3%)

The indices are produced at Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) and provide statistics on relative deprivation in England by ranking every LSOA from 1 (most deprived) to 32,844 (least deprived). To determine whether an area is deprived or not for the purposes of this study, the 20% most deprived LSOAs have been used.

Map 18 shows the distribution of deprivation across Sandwell at LSOA level with the wards shown over the top (N.B. some LSOAs span more than one ward). The darker colours indicate the most deprived areas – for example, looking at the key there are 108 LSOAs which fall into the 20% most deprived areas in England.

To enable a comparison between wards the dwellings have been aggregated from dwelling level based on the LSOA and ward they are contained within. **Figure 15** shows the results of this analysis. In Soho and Victoria ward 88% of the dwellings are in the 20% of the most deprived LSOAs in England. For Hateley Heath ward the figure is 80%. At the other end of the scale, there are a number of wards with no dwellings in the 20% most deprived LSOAs - Abbey and Great Barr with Yew Tree wards.

⁵⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2015>

Map 18: Distribution of deprivation in Sandwell (1 - 2 = the 10% and 20% deciles (i.e. the most deprived), 3 – 4 = the 30% and 40% deciles, etc.) (Source: DCLG, Indices of Deprivation 2015)

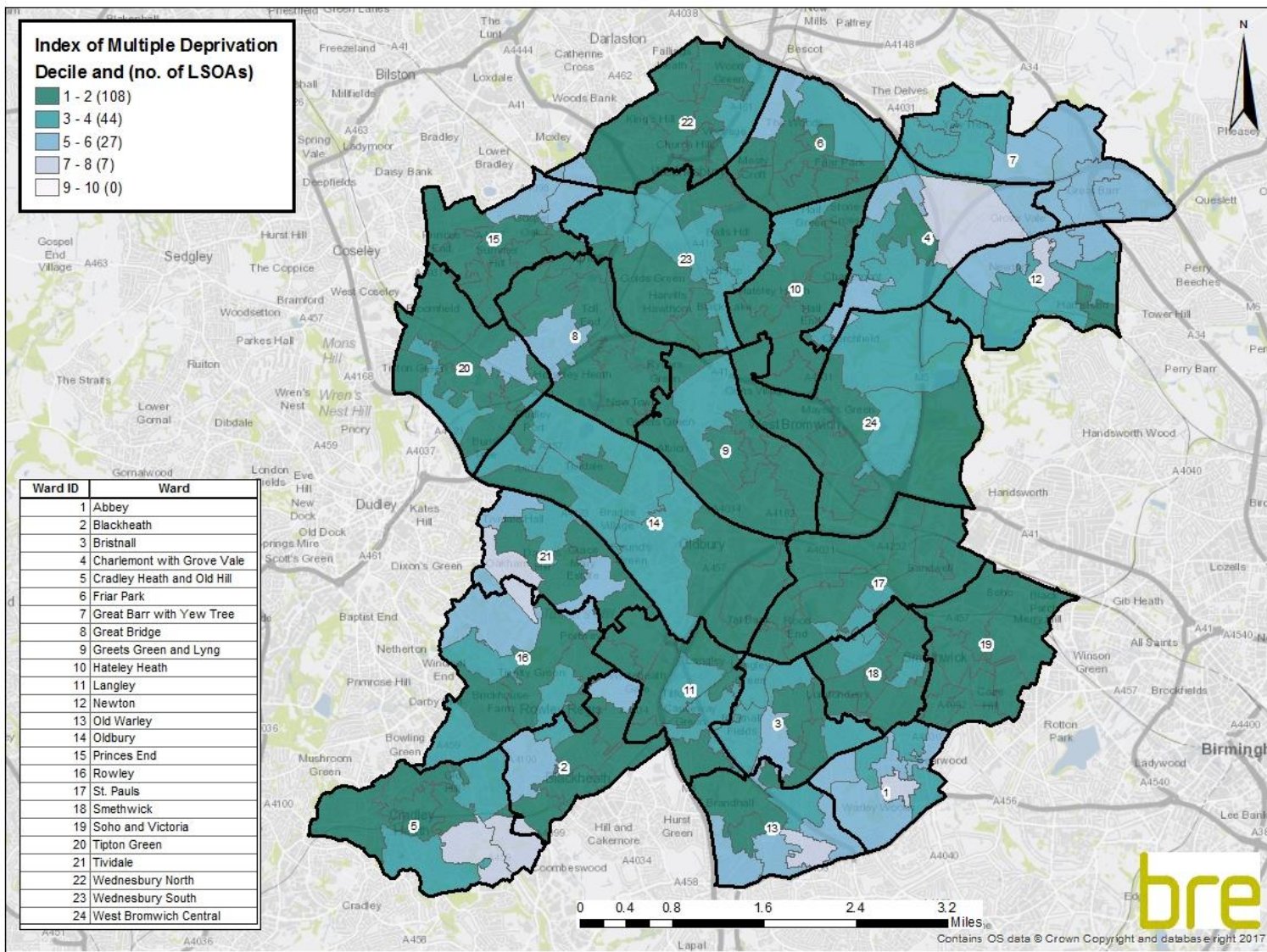
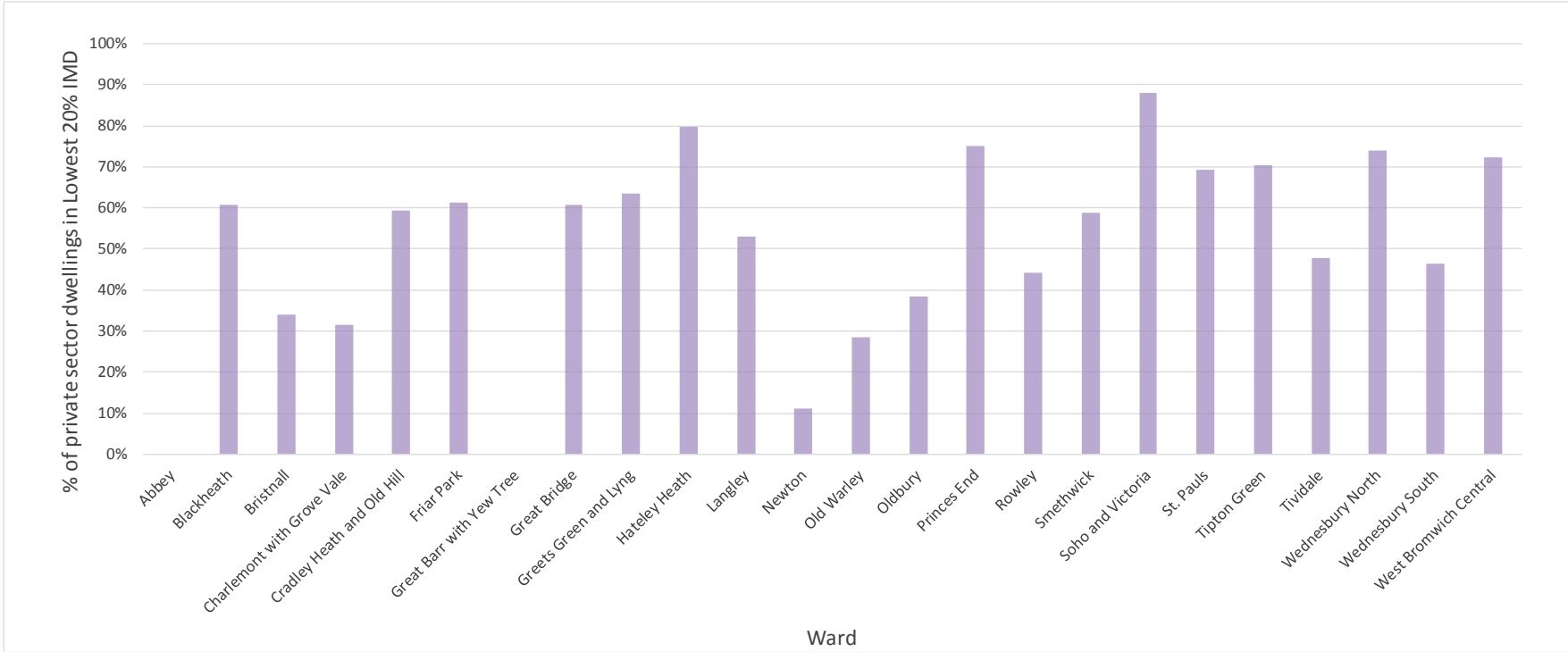


Figure 15: Percentage of privately rented dwellings in each ward in Sandwell which are in the 20% most deprived areas in England (IMD 2015)



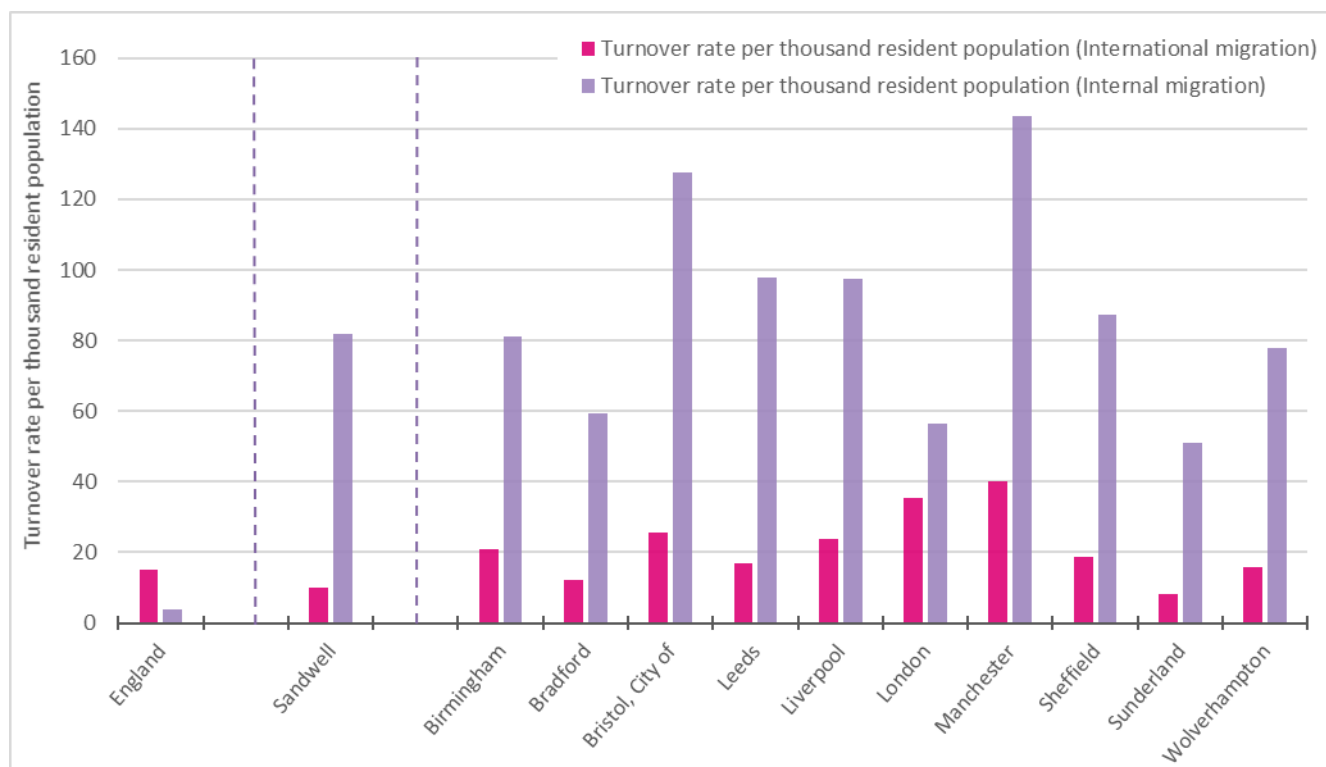
N.B. where no IMD 20 exists on the graph for an area, this is due to there being no properties within the 20% most deprived LSOAs for England.



5.3.2.3 Information on migration

Data on migration is only available at the local authority level⁵⁸, therefore migration figures for Sandwell have been compared to the 10 largest cities in England and England overall for mid-2014 to mid-2015 – see **Figure 16**. The data uses the long-term⁵⁹ international and internal (within UK) migration component of population change data to calculate the rates for turnover and is therefore split into international migration and internal migration. The data shows that for international migration the greatest turnover rate is in Manchester, followed by London and Sandwell has a relatively low level compared to the 10 largest cities in England. Looking at internal migration, Sandwell has the sixth highest level and is slightly higher than large cities such as Birmingham and Wolverhampton (the highest level overall can be seen in Manchester).

Figure 16: Comparison of migration figures (international and internal) for Sandwell compare to the 10 largest cities in England and England overall for mid-2014 to mid-2015 (Source: ONS⁵⁸)



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<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/migrationwithintheuk/datasets/localareamigrationindicatorsunitedkingdom>

59 A person who moves from their country of usual residence for a period of at least 12 months -

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/methodologies/migrationstatisticsfirsttimeuserguide/glossaryandlistofproducts>



5.3.3 In-depth analysis on specific areas

5.3.3.1 Wards of interest

Areas with proportions of private rented stock above the national average (20%) were examined more closely. **Map 19** shows the levels of HHSRS category 1 combined with the worst 20% Index of Multiple Deprivation. Nationally the average proportion of HHSRS cat. 1 hazard is 17% for the private rented sector⁵⁵.

Focussing on the darkest colours on the map (i.e. those meeting higher than national average private rented proportions and higher than national average HHSRS cat. 1 hazards), combined with the LSOA areas of deprivation, there are parts of wards that may merit further investigation; pockets to the north east of Wednesbury South ward and across parts of Wednesbury North ward.

Map 20 to Map 22 illustrate the distributions of the excess cold, falls and disrepair hazards across Sandwell combined with the worst 20% Index of Multiple Deprivation. Pockets of higher rates of excess cold and deprivation can be seen in Wednesbury North and Wednesbury South, higher rates of falls hazards and deprivation in Wednesbury North, Smethwick, and Greets Green and Lyng, and higher levels of disrepair and deprivation in Wednesbury North, Soho and Victoria and Greets Green and Lyng.

Table 15 provides the figures behind the maps. While Abbey ward has the highest estimated rate of private rented sector category 1 hazard (21%) and disrepair (16%), it has lower levels of deprivation. Soho and Victoria ward has the highest proportion of private rented dwellings in deprivation, but slightly lower rates of category 1 hazard than the Sandwell private rented sector average (12% compared with 13%), although disrepair is higher than the Sandwell average (9% compared with 7.5%). Of the wards with higher than national average proportions for private rented stock, St Pauls, Smethwick, Langley, Cradley Heath and Old Hill, and Wednesbury North wards with higher than Sandwell average for category 1 hazards and contain significant proportions of private rented properties in deprived areas.



Table 15: Number and percentage of dwellings for each of the HHSRS indicators, disrepair and the most deprived 20% of LSOAs in England (IMD 2015) by ward – *private rented*

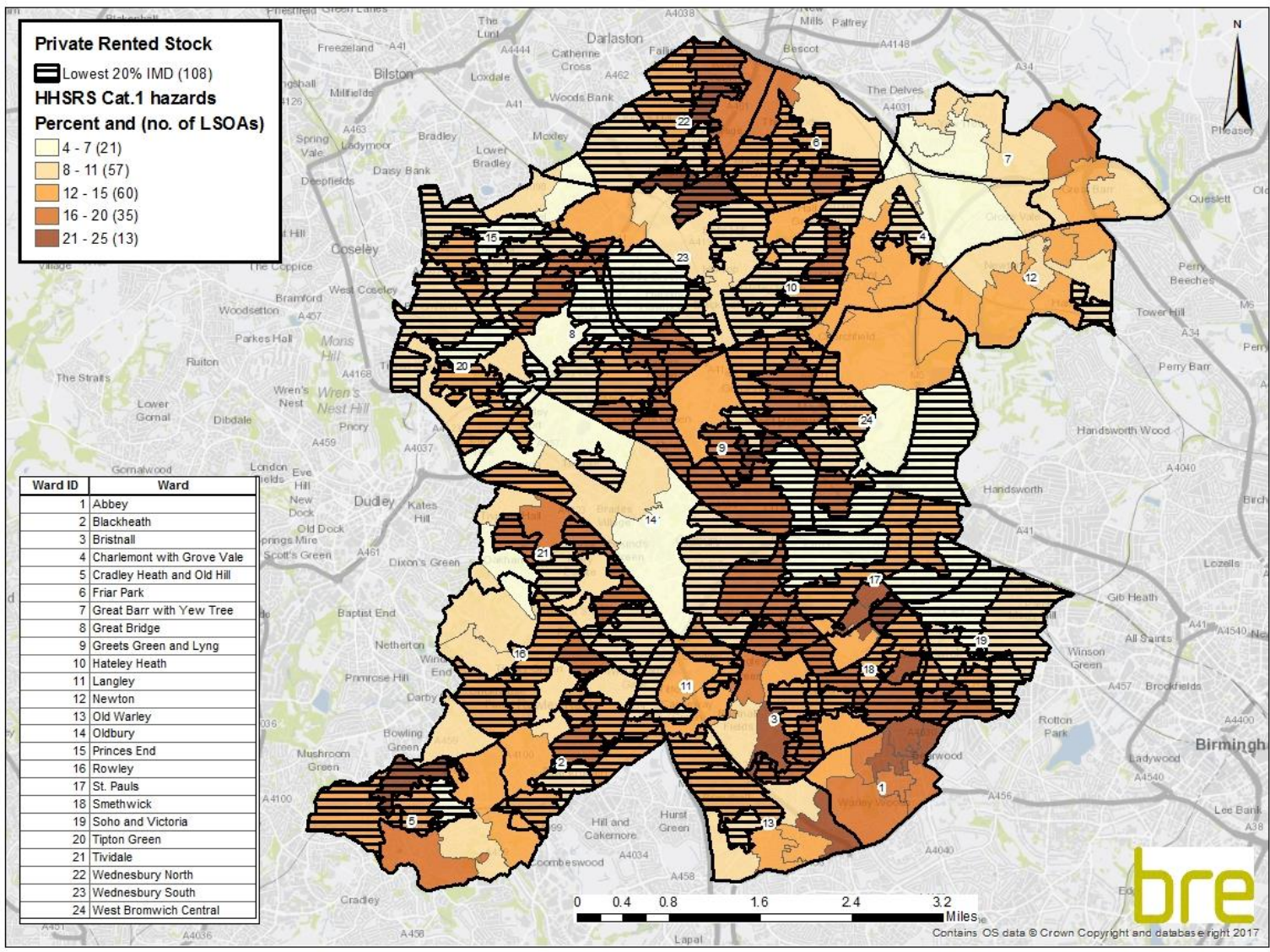
Ward	Dwellings - private rented stock	HHSRS category 1 hazards			Disrepair	Index of Multiple Deprivation (20%)
		All hazards	Excess cold	Fall hazards		
Abbey	2,549	535 (21%)	74 (3%)	421 (17%)	418 (16%)	0 (0%)
Blackheath	1,130	134 (12%)	21 (2%)	112 (10%)	83 (7%)	685 (61%)
Bristnall	880	128 (15%)	19 (2%)	103 (12%)	74 (8%)	298 (34%)
Charlemont with Grove Vale	988	115 (12%)	31 (3%)	79 (8%)	37 (4%)	311 (31%)
Cradley Heath and Old Hill	1,453	200 (14%)	44 (3%)	148 (10%)	117 (8%)	861 (59%)
Friar Park	652	85 (13%)	11 (2%)	73 (11%)	42 (6%)	400 (61%)
Great Barr with Yew Tree	987	90 (9%)	21 (2%)	65 (7%)	26 (3%)	0 (0%)
Great Bridge	1,276	110 (9%)	15 (1%)	89 (7%)	44 (3%)	774 (61%)
Greets Green and Lyng	1,663	207 (12%)	37 (2%)	164 (10%)	119 (7%)	1,054 (63%)
Hateley Heath	1,362	159 (12%)	28 (2%)	128 (9%)	83 (6%)	1,086 (80%)
Langley	1,478	186 (13%)	45 (3%)	136 (9%)	98 (7%)	782 (53%)
Newton	864	100 (12%)	15 (2%)	82 (9%)	43 (5%)	97 (11%)
Old Warley	1,000	125 (13%)	17 (2%)	104 (10%)	76 (8%)	284 (28%)
Oldbury	2,111	173 (8%)	28 (1%)	136 (6%)	66 (3%)	810 (38%)
Princes End	938	84 (9%)	12 (1%)	70 (7%)	36 (4%)	704 (75%)
Rowley	1,003	114 (11%)	21 (2%)	91 (9%)	46 (5%)	444 (44%)
Smethwick	1,843	340 (18%)	44 (2%)	275 (15%)	230 (12%)	1,082 (59%)
Soho and Victoria	3,283	410 (12%)	68 (2%)	333 (10%)	305 (9%)	2,889 (88%)



Table 15 cont: Number and percentage of dwellings for each of the HHSRS indicators, disrepair and the most deprived 20% of LSOAs in England (IMD 2015) by ward – *private rented*

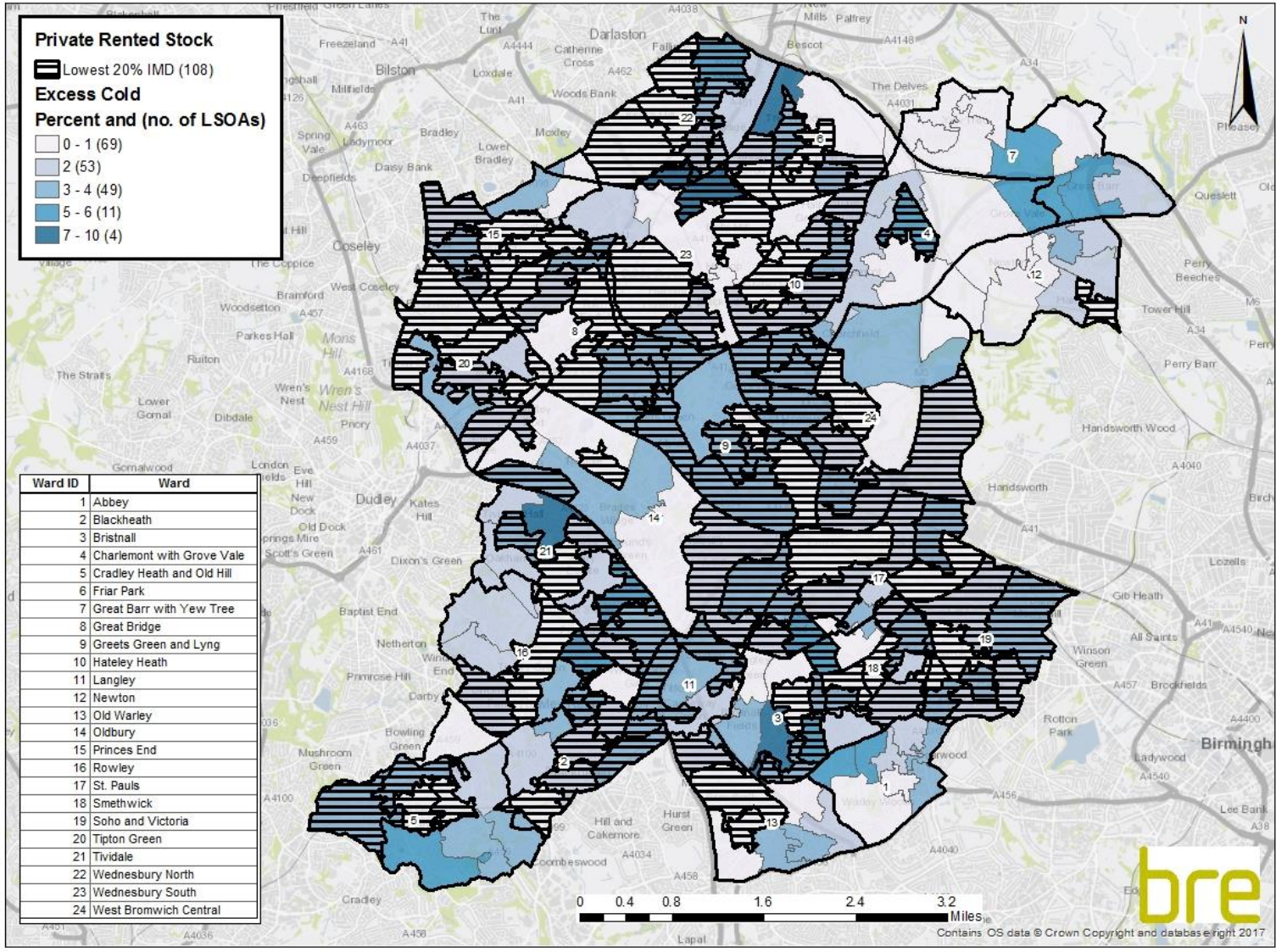
Ward	Dwellings - private rented stock	HHSRS category 1 hazards			Disrepair	Index of Multiple Deprivation (20%)
		All hazards	Excess cold	Fall hazards		
St. Pauls	1,810	285 (16%)	37 (2%)	237 (13%)	187 (10%)	1,254 (69%)
Tipton Green	1,572	137 (9%)	24 (2%)	115 (7%)	76 (5%)	1,108 (70%)
Tividale	822	115 (14%)	33 (4%)	76 (9%)	41 (5%)	393 (48%)
Wednesbury North	1,164	169 (15%)	27 (2%)	131 (11%)	99 (9%)	861 (74%)
Wednesbury South	1,263	137 (11%)	19 (2%)	109 (9%)	62 (5%)	586 (46%)
West Bromwich Central	2,295	284 (12%)	51 (2%)	214 (9%)	169 (7%)	1,662 (72%)

Map 19: Distribution of category 1 HHSRS hazards where proportions of private rented stock is above national average (20%), with areas in the most deprived 20% of LSOAs in England highlighted (source: DCLG, Indices of Deprivation 2015)



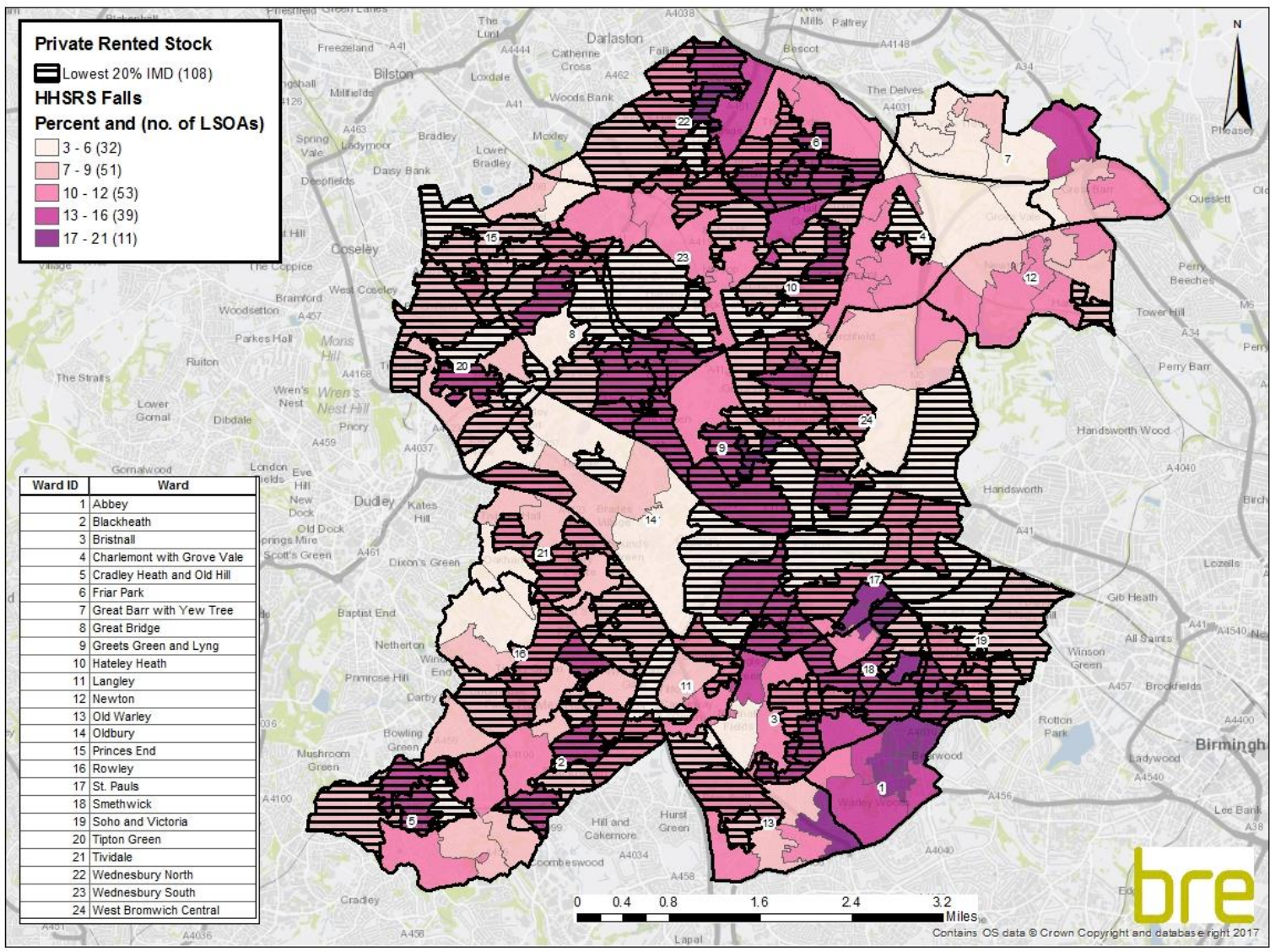


Map 20: Distribution of category 1 HHSRS Excess Cold hazards where proportions of private rented stock is above national average (20%), with areas in the most deprived 20% of LSOAs in England highlighted (source: DCLG, Indices of Deprivation 2015)



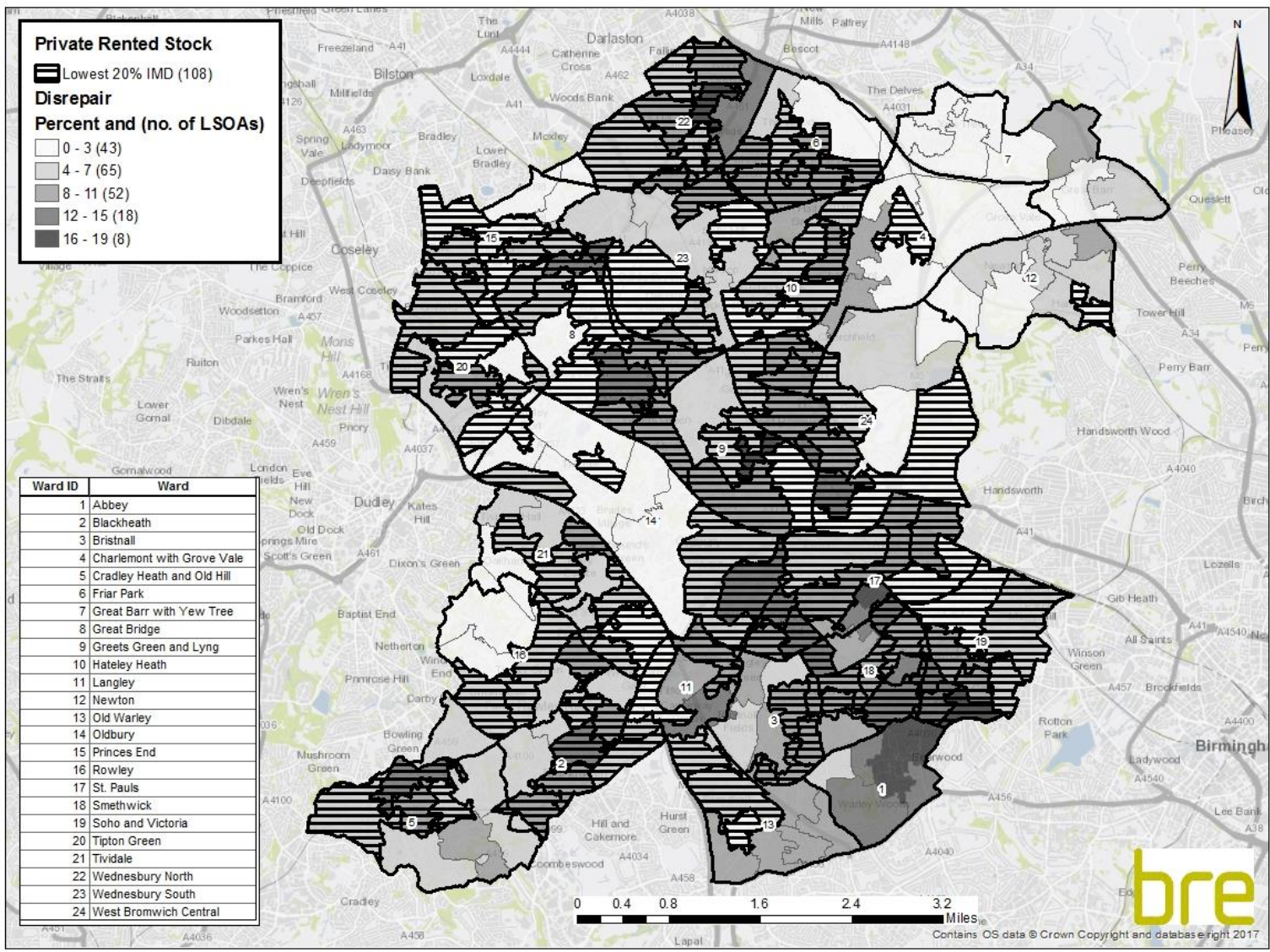


Map 21: Distribution of category 1 HHSRS Fall hazards where proportions of private rented stock is above national average (20%), with areas in the most deprived 20% of LSOAs in England highlighted (source: DCLG, Indices of Deprivation 2015)





Map 22: Distribution of Disrepair where proportions of private rented stock is above national average (20%), with areas in the most deprived 20% of LSOAs in England highlighted (source: DCLG, Indices of Deprivation 2015)





6 Conclusion and recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council commissioned BRE to undertake a series of modelling exercises on their housing stock to provide an integrated housing stock condition database, making use of available local data sources (Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG), HMO, tenure and benefits data) plus the EPC data which have been integrated into BRE's standard housing stock condition database. The integration of this data source serves to further increase the accuracy of the models by removing the need to rely on imputed data for the 61,495 cases where EPC data is available, and instead using observed data from the surveys. This leads to more accurate SimpleSAP ratings, more accurate excess cold data (and therefore HHSRS data), and more accurate fuel poverty data for around 46.0% of the stock in Sandwell.

This report describes the modelling work and provides details of the results obtained from the dwelling level model and database. The housing stock condition database is also provided to the council to enable them to obtain specific information whenever required. This database is now in an online format.

The integrated stock models and database provide the council with dwelling level information, focussing on private sector housing, for the following:

- The percentage of dwellings meeting each of the key indicators for Sandwell overall and broken down by tenure and then mapped by COA (private sector stock only)
- Information relating to LAHS reporting for the private sector stock - category 1 hazards and HMOs as well as information on EPC ratings
- The council also requested additional analysis of data on the private rented stock to investigate the potential for licensing schemes in this sector

Some of the key findings of this report are as follows:

- The performance of the housing stock in Sandwell compared to the EHS England average is mixed with Sandwell performing slightly better for all hazards and excess cold, but worse for the other indicators particularly low income households (33% compared to 27%).
- The private rented sector generally performs worse than other tenures (except for fuel poverty 10% definition and low income households where the social sector is worse).
- 3.8% of dwellings in the private rented sector are estimated to have an EPC below band E. Under proposed legislation these properties would not be eligible to be rented out after 2018.

Such information will facilitate the decision making process for targeting resources to improve the condition of housing and to prevent ill health resulting from poor housing conditions. Furthermore, the results of this project provide Sandwell with information which will assist in housing policy and strategy development whether these are inspired locally, arise from obligations under the Housing Act 2004 or as responses to government initiatives such as MHCLG's Housing Strategy Policy and ECO.



6.2 Recommendations

Programmes designed to tackle disrepair for example group repair schemes, regeneration or enforcement interventions could be considered with a focus on areas of greatest disrepair such as Abbey ward with 15% disrepair and 19% containing category 1 hazards, or Smethwick ward with an estimated 11% of private sector homes in disrepair and 18% with category 1 hazards. These findings could be combined with local intelligence to help identify areas for targeting assistance for physical improvements to private sector stock and the environment. Furthermore, programmes aimed at increasing household income through job creation, benefit entitlement checks and other initiatives should also be considered, with a particular focus on areas containing high proportions of low income households like Soho and Victoria (33%), Greets Green and Lyng (30%) and Smethwick (28%).

The use of additional local data in this project has enhanced the housing stock models and Housing Stock Condition Database (HSCD). The addition of any further local data, were it to become available, would potentially further enhance the models and database.

Examples of such data are:

- **Local repair schemes**

Data from any local repair schemes, including the use of repair grants, could be used to enhance the Disrepair Model.

- **Local energy improvement schemes**

Any local schemes to improve the energy efficiency of dwellings, including national schemes for which local data has been made available to Sandwell Council, could be used to further enhance the energy models (SimpleSAP, excess cold, fuel poverty).

Furthermore, it would be possible to commission BRE to carry out an analysis of the condition of the housing stock and its health impact, through a Health Impact Assessment (HIA). The results of this would be provided in a separate report which provides a cost benefit analysis of mitigating Housing Health and Safety hazards within the stock.

6.3 HMO licensing conclusions

The main results of the analysis are as follows:

Additional HMO licensing

The data covering HHSRS hazards in the private rented stock shows that HMOs have higher rates of hazards than non-HMOs. In particular 16% of HMOs contain category 1 HHSRS hazards compared to 12% in non-HMOs.

In terms of concentration of HMOs, Soho and Victoria, Abbey, West Bromwich Central and Smethwick wards have the highest numbers. Of these, the highest rates of category 1 hazard are in Smethwick (20%), and disrepair in Abbey (18%).



Selective licensing

Overall the percentage of dwellings in the private rented sector across Sandwell is 26% compared to the national average of 20%⁶⁰. A large proportion of wards (15 out of 24 wards) in Sandwell have a percentage of private rented sector dwellings in excess of the national average.

Dwelling condition in the private rented sector

The proportion of HHSRS category 1 hazards in the private rented stock for the areas covered by this report is as follows:

- The 3 wards with greater than 35% PRS - 15%
- The 6 wards with 25-35% PRS- 13%
- The 6 wards with 20-25% PRS – 12%
- Sandwell overall – 13%

The DCLG document “Selective licensing in the private rented sector: A guide for local authorities”⁶¹ states that to meet the criteria relating to dwelling condition for selective licensing, the local authority needs to consider that a ‘significant’ number of properties in the private rented sector need to be inspected to determine whether any of them contain category 1 or 2 hazards. In this case ‘significant’ is said to be more than a small number but it does not need to be a majority.

Given the numbers of category 1 hazards modelled in the areas specified, it is reasonable to assume that there will also be a significant percentage of high category 2 hazards present. The data in this report shows that there are therefore likely to be a significant number of properties in the areas specified that would require inspection to determine whether category 1 or 2 hazards are present.

It is stated in the DCLG document referenced above that any selective licensing scheme aiming to improve poor property conditions should “state what action the authority intends to take under Part 1 of the Act if it identifies there are serious deficiencies with properties, including the timescale for taking the appropriate action and its enforcement plan for noncompliance with improvement notices or prohibition orders it serves.”

Deprivation

56% of private rented dwellings in the 3 wards with excess of 35% private rented stock, 58% in the 6 wards with 25-35% private rented stock, and 63% in the 6 wards with 20-25% private rented stock are located in the 20% most deprived LSOAs in England. This is more than the figure for Sandwell as a whole (54%).

⁶⁰ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/595785/2015-16_EHS_Headline_Report.pdf

⁶¹https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418551/150327_Guidance_on_selective_licensing_applications_FINAL_updated_isbn.pdf



As stated in the DCLG document “Selective licensing in the private rented sector: A guide for local authorities”⁶², should the local authority proceed with a selective licensing scheme under this condition it should “state what actions the local housing authority intends to take to combat housing problems associated with the deprivation; including, for example, through licence conditions to ensure properties are managed properly, and can contribute to an improvement in the well-being of the occupants and wider community.”

The guidance goes on to state “The outcome of the designation should be (together with other measures) a reduction of the problems with housing in the private rented sector contributing to the high level of deprivation.”

In depth analysis on specific areas

The in depth analysis carried out shows that there are significant levels of HHSRS hazards and deprivation in a number of areas which could be considered targets for discretionary licensing.

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https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418551/150327_Guidance_on_selective_licensing_applications_FINAL_updated_isbn.pdf

Appendix A Definitions of the key indicators

1. House condition indicators

a. The presence of a category 1 hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) – reflecting both condition and thermal efficiency

Homes posing a category 1 hazard under the HHSRS – the system includes 29 hazards in the home categorised into category 1 – band A to C (serious) or category 2 – band D onwards (other) based on a weighted evaluation tool. Note that this includes the hazard of excess cold which is also included as one of the energy efficiency indicators.

The 29 hazards are:

1 Damp and mould growth	16 Food safety
2 Excess cold	17 Personal hygiene, Sanitation and Drainage
3 Excess heat	18 Water supply
4 Asbestos	19 Falls associated with baths etc.
5 Biocides	20 Falling on level surfaces etc.
6 Carbon Monoxide and fuel combustion products	21 Falling on stairs etc.
7 Lead	22 Falling between levels
8 Radiation	23 Electrical hazards
9 Uncombusted fuel gas	24 Fire
10 Volatile Organic Compounds	25 Flames, hot surfaces etc.
11 Crowding and space	26 Collision and entrapment
12 Entry by intruders	27 Explosions
13 Lighting	28 Position and operability of amenities etc.
14 Noise	29 Structural collapse and falling elements
15 Domestic hygiene, Pests and Refuse	

b. The presence of a category 1 hazard for falls (includes “falls associated with baths”, “falling on the level” and “falling on stairs”)

The HHSRS Falls Model includes the 3 different falls hazards where the vulnerable person is over 60 as listed above.

c. Dwellings in disrepair (based on the former Decent Homes Standard criteria for Disrepair)

The previous Decent Homes Standard states that a dwelling fails this criterion if it is not found to be in a reasonable state of repair. This is assessed by looking at the age of the dwelling and the condition of a range of building components including walls, roofs, windows, doors, electrics and heating systems).



2. Energy efficiency indicators:

a. The presence of a category 1 hazard for excess cold (using SAP ratings as a proxy measure in the same manner as the English House Condition Survey)

This hazard looks at households where there is a threat to health arising from sub-optimal indoor temperatures. The HHSRS assessment is based on the most low income group for this hazard – persons aged 65 years or over (note that the assessment requires the hazard to be present and potentially affect a person in the low income age group should they occupy that dwelling. The assessment does not take account of the age of the person actually occupying that dwelling at that particular point in time).

The English Housing Survey (EHS) does not measure the actual temperatures achieved in each dwelling and therefore the presence of this hazard is measured by using the SAP rating as a proxy. Dwellings with a SAP rating of less than 33.52 (SAP 2012 methodology) are considered to be suffering from a category 1 excess cold hazard.

b. An estimate of the SAP rating which, to emphasise its origin from a reduced set of input variables, is referred to as “SimpleSAP”

The Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) is the UK Government’s standard methodology for home energy cost ratings. SAP ratings allow comparisons of energy efficiency to be made, and can show the likely improvements to a dwelling in terms of energy use. The Building Regulations require a SAP assessment to be carried out for all new dwellings and conversions. Local authorities, housing associations, and other landlords also use SAP ratings to estimate the energy efficiency of existing housing. The version on which the Average SAP rating model is based is SAP 2012.

The SAP ratings give a measure of the annual unit energy cost of space and water heating for the dwelling under a standard regime, assuming specific heating patterns and room temperatures. The fuel prices used are the same as those specified in SAP 2012. The SAP takes into account a range of factors that contribute to energy efficiency, which include:

- Thermal insulation of the building fabric
- The shape and exposed surfaces of the dwelling
- Efficiency and control of the heating system
- The fuel used for space and water heating
- Ventilation and solar gain characteristics of the dwelling

3. Household vulnerability indicators:

a. Fuel poverty - 10% definition

This definition states that a household is said to be in fuel poverty if it spends more than 10% of its income on fuel to maintain an adequate level of warmth (usually defined as 21°C for the main living area, and 18°C for other occupied rooms). This broad definition of fuel costs also includes modelled spending on water heating, lights, appliances and cooking.

The fuel poverty ratio is defined as:

$$\text{Fuel poverty ratio} = \frac{\text{Fuel costs (usage * price)}}{\text{Full income}}$$



If this ratio is greater than 0.1 then the household is in fuel poverty.

The definition of full income is the official headline figure and in addition to the basic income measure, it includes income related directly to housing (i.e. Housing Benefit, Income Support for Mortgage Interest (ISMI), Mortgage Payment Protection Insurance (MPPI), Council Tax reduction).

Fuel costs are modelled, rather than based on actual spending. They are calculated by combining the fuel requirements of the household with the corresponding fuel prices. The key goal in the modelling is to ensure that the household achieves the adequate level of warmth set out in the definition of fuel poverty whilst also meeting their other domestic fuel requirements.

b. Fuel poverty - Low Income High Costs definition

The government has recently set out a new definition of fuel poverty which it intends to adopt under the Low Income High Costs (LIHC) framework⁶³. Under the new definition, a household is said to be in fuel poverty if:

- They have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level)
- Were they to spend that amount they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line

c. Dwellings occupied by a low income household

A household in receipt of:

- Income support
- Housing benefit
- Attendance allowance
- Disability living allowance
- Industrial injuries disablement benefit
- War disablement pension
- Pension credit
- Child tax credit
- Working credit

For child tax credit and working tax credit, the household is only considered a low income household if it has a relevant income of less than £15,860.

The definition also includes households in receipt of Council Tax reduction and income based Job Seekers Allowance.

⁶³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fuel-poverty-statistics>



Appendix B Methodology for the BRE Integrated Dwelling Level Housing Stock Modelling approach

This Appendix provides a more detailed description of the models which make up the overall housing stock modelling approach and feed into the housing stock condition database. The process is made up of a series of data sources and Models which, combined with various imputation and regression techniques and the application of other formulae, make up the final Housing Stock Condition Database (HSCD). The database is essentially the main output of the modelling and provides information on the key indicators and other data requirements (e.g. energy efficiency variables). An overview of the approach and a simplified flow diagram are provided in **Section 3** of this report.

The models making up the overall housing stock modelling approach are:

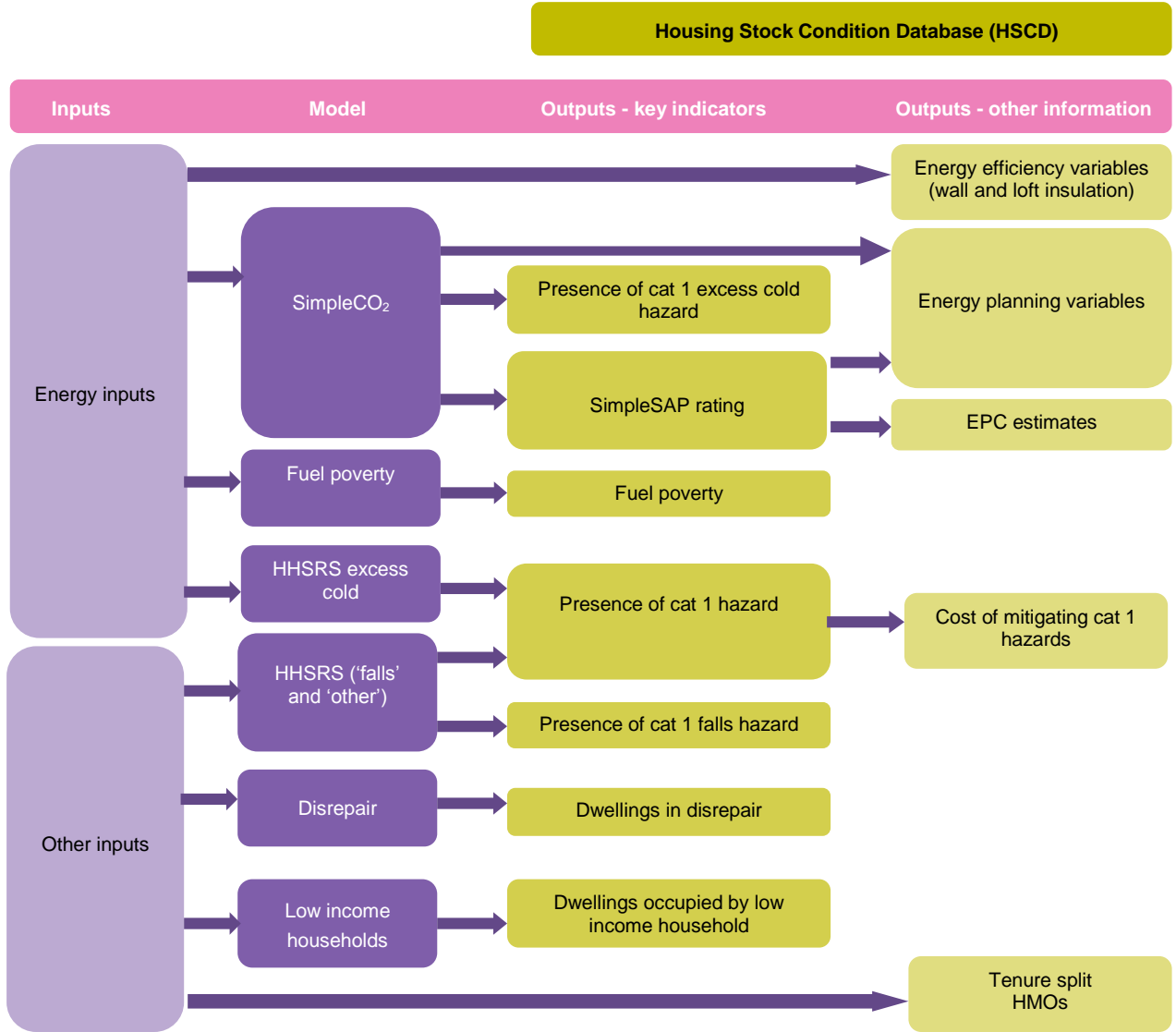
- SimpleCO₂ Model
- Fuel Poverty Model
- HHSRS (all hazards, falls hazards and excess cold) Models
- Disrepair Model
- Low Income Households Model

Figure B.1 shows the data flows for the stock modelling approach, showing which models each of the outputs in the database (split into the key indicators and other information) come from. The exception is the energy efficiency variables (if used) which come directly from the energy inputs, and the tenure and HMO data (if used) which come directly from the other inputs.

Section B.1 describes the SimpleCO₂ Model in more detail, **Section B.2** provides more information on the other four models and **Section B.3** gives details of the OS MasterMap/geomodelling approach.



Figure B.1: Simplified data flow for the housing stock modelling approach





B.1 BRE SimpleCO₂ Model

BRE have developed a variant of the BREDEM⁶⁴ software, named “SimpleCO₂”, that can calculate outputs from a reduced set of input variables. These outputs are indicative of the full BREDEM outputs and the minimum set of variables the software accepts is information on:

- Tenure
- Dwelling type
- Location of flat (if a flat)
- Dwelling age
- Number of storeys
- Number of rooms
- Loft insulation
- Level of double glazing
- Main heating type
- Boiler type (if a boiler driven system)
- Heating fuel
- Heating system
- Heating controls
- Water heating
- Hot water cylinder insulation
- Solar hot water
- PV panels
- Internal floor area

The Experian UK Consumer Dynamics Database is used as a source for some of these variables (tenure, dwelling age) and they are converted into a suitable format for the SimpleCO₂ software. The dwelling type is derived using information from OS Mastermap and the number of storeys from OS experimental height data. The remaining pieces of data are inferred from the EHS using other tenure, dwelling age and type, other Experian data (number of bedrooms), other OS data (i.e. dwelling footprint) and data from Xoserve⁶⁵ which indicates whether the dwelling is in a postcode which is on the gas network. As the characteristics of a dwelling cannot be determined through access to observed data, a technique known as cold deck imputation is undertaken. This is a process of assigning values in accordance with their known proportions in the stock. For example, this technique is used for predicting heating fuels because the Xoserve data only confirms whether a dwelling is on the gas network or not. Fuel used by dwellings not on the gas network is unknown, so in most cases this information will be assigned using probabilistic

⁶⁴ Building Research Establishment Domestic Energy Model, BRE are the original developers of this model which calculates the energy costs of a dwelling based on measures of building characteristics (assuming a standard heating and living regime). The model has a number of outputs including an estimate of the SAP rating and carbon emissions.

⁶⁵ Xoserve is jointly owned by the five major gas distribution Network companies and National Grid’s gas transmission business. It provides transportation transactional services on behalf of all the major gas Network transportation companies.



methods. The process is actually far more complex e.g. dwellings with particular characteristics such as larger dwellings are more likely to be assigned with oil as a fuel than smaller dwellings.

The reason for taking this approach is to ensure that the national proportions in the data source are the same as those found in the stock nationally (as predicted by the EHS or other national survey). Whilst there is the possibility that some values assigned will be incorrect for a particular dwelling (as part of the assignment process has to be random) they ensure that examples of some of the more unusual types of dwelling that will be present in the stock are included.

Whilst this approach is an entirely sensible and commonly adopted approach to dealing with missing data in databases intended for strategic use, it raises issues where one of the intended uses is planning implementation measures. It must therefore be kept in mind at all times that the data provided represents the most likely status of the dwelling, but that the actual status may be quite different. That said, where EPC data has been used, the energy models (which use EPC data) are likely to be more accurate.

It is important to note that some variables have been entirely assigned using cold decking imputation techniques. These include presence of cavity wall insulation and thickness of loft insulation as there is no reliable database with national coverage for these variables.

The “SimpleCO₂” software takes the combination of Experian and imputed data and calculates the “SimpleSAP” rating for each dwelling in the national database. The calculated “SimpleSAP” ratings are the basis of the estimates of SAP and excess cold. How the other key variables are derived is discussed later in this Appendix.

Because the estimates of “SimpleSAP” etc. are calculated from modelled data it is not possible to guarantee the figures. They do, however, provide the best estimates that we are aware can be achieved from a data source with national coverage and ready availability. The input data could, however, be improved in its:

- accuracy for example through correcting erroneous values,
- depth of coverage, for example by providing more detailed information on age of dwellings,
- breadth by providing additional input variables such as insulation.

Improving any of these would enhance the accuracy of the output variables and for this reason it is always worth considering utilising additional information sources where they are available. Using EPC data will go some way towards meeting these improvements by providing more accurate data.

B.2 Housing Condition and Low Income Household Models

This section provides further information on the remaining four models – fuel poverty, HHSRS, disrepair and low income households. These models are discussed together since the approach used for each one is broadly the same.

These models are not based solely on the thermal characteristics of the dwelling, and in some cases are not based on these characteristics at all. A top down methodology has been employed for these models, using data from the EHS and statistical techniques, such as logistic regression, to determine the combination of variables which are most strongly associated with failure of each standard. Formulae have been developed by BRE to predict the likelihood of failure based on certain inputs. The formulae are then applied to the variables in the national Experian dataset to provide a likelihood of failure for each dwelling. Each individual case is then assigned a failure/compliance indicator based on its likelihood of failure and



on the expected number of dwellings that will fail the standard within a given geographic area. Thus if the aggregate values for a census output area are that 60% of the dwellings in the area fail a particular standard then 60% of the dwellings with the highest failure probabilities will be assigned as failures and the remaining 40% as passes.

The presence of a category 1 hazard failure is the only exception to this as it is found by combining excess cold, fall hazards and other hazards such that failure of any one of these hazards leads to failure of the standard.

B.3 Integrating local data sources

As mentioned in the main body of the report, Sandwell identified a number sources of data which were used to update the BRE dwelling level models to provide an integrated housing stock condition database. Their data sources are shown in **Table B.1**.

To allow these data sources to be linked to the BRE Dwelling Level Stock Models, an address matching exercise was required to link each address to the Experian address key. Address matching is rarely 100% successful due to a number of factors including:

- Incomplete address or postcodes
- Variations in how the address is written e.g. Flat 1 or Ground floor flat
- Additions to the main dwelling e.g. annexes or out-buildings

Experience indicates that, for address files in good order, match rates are around 75% - 95%. **Table B.1** provides the address matching results for the three data sources provided by Sandwell and the resulting impact on the modelling process.

**Table B.1:** Address matching results and impact on the modelling process

Data source	No. (and % of the stock)	Notes
LLPG data	133,680	Number of records received – 133,845 BLPU classes checked and duplicate UPRNs removed – 133,703 remaining Remaining cases once address fields checked – 133,680
EPC data	61,495 (46% of the stock)	Number of records received – 79,627 Data de-duplicated for multiple EPCs – 63,170 remaining Final number matched to modelled data and useable – 61,495
Licensed HMO data	2	Number of records received – 26
Possible unlicensed HMO	618	Number of records received – 920 Remaining cases once records with no UPRN removed – 907 Final number matched to modelled data and useable - 618
My Deposits	494	Number of records received – 634 Final number matched to modelled data and useable – 494
Tenancy Deposit Scheme data	982	Number of records received – 1,302 Final number matched to modelled data and useable – 982
The Deposit Protection Service	4,873	Number of records received – 5,833 Final number matched to modelled data and useable – 4,873
Riverside with UPRNs	1,067	Number of records received – 1,074 Final number matched to modelled data and useable – 1,067
Sandwell Homes	28,211	Number of records received – 28,884 Final number matched to modelled data and useable – 28,211
Total tenure data	35,627 (26% of the stock)	
Benefits data	37,764	Number of records received – 38,622 Remaining cases once records with no UPRN removed – 38,545 Data de-duplicated for multiple UPRNs – 37,955 Final number matched to modelled data and useable – 37,764



The Housing Stock Condition Database (HSCD) was also updated using the Ordnance Survey (OS) MasterMap data which enables the measurement of the footprint of the building and provides information on the number of residential addresses within the building, and to see which other buildings each address is attached to or geographically close to.

The stage at which the local data sources are included in the modelling process depends on whether or not the data includes information which can be used as an input into the SimpleCO₂ model. The simplified flow diagram in **Figure 1** in the main report shows how these data sources are integrated into the standard modelling approach.

The following sections consider each of the data sources and how they are used to update the SimpleCO₂ inputs and/or stock model outputs.

EPC data

If there are discrepancies in the energy data for the same dwelling case, arising from different energy data sources, then, if available, the EPC data will be used. If no EPC data source is available for that case, then the data with the most recent date will be taken.

Some of the energy data provided includes tenure data, in which case the housing stock condition database has been updated accordingly. However EPC cases do not include tenure data, they only include the reason for the EPC.

Therefore:

- If the reason given was a sale then the dwelling was assumed to be owner occupied.
- If the reason given was re-letting and the tenure of the let was specified (i.e. private or social) then the tenure was changed to that indicated.
- If the reason for the sale did not indicate tenure then the tenure was left unchanged.

It is important to note that the modified tenure created from the EPC data should only ever be used for work relating to energy efficiency and carbon reduction. This is a legal requirement stemming from the collection of the data, and is a licence condition of the data suppliers, Landmark. For this reason the tenure variable supplied in the database is NOT based on EPC data; however, the calculations used to determine the SimpleSAP rating and other energy characteristics of the dwelling do make use of the EPC tenure.

Where the energy data provides information on loft insulation, wall insulation, the location of a flat within a block and floor area this information will be used in favour of any imputed information, as long as the OS data is in agreement with the dwelling type.

Where energy data on wall type is present for a dwelling in a block of flats, terrace or semi-detached, that data is extrapolated to the rest of the block or terrace. If multiple dwellings with energy data are present then the most common wall type is used. Note that where the energy data indicates a wall type that is not the predominant one, this data will not be overwritten with the predominant type – the data reported in the energy database will always be used even if this results in two different wall types being present in a terrace or a block of flats.

For flats it is assumed that all flats in the block will have the same level of double glazing and as the case for which we have energy data for. If there are multiple flats in the block with energy data showing different levels of double glazing, an average will be used.



It is assumed that all flats in a block share the same heating type, boiler type if present, fuel type and heating controls. Where there are multiple types present, the predominant type is used. Flats are assumed to have the same hot water source, and if one flat benefits from solar hot water it is assumed that all flats in the block do.

B.4 OS MasterMap information

The OS data has been used to update a number of the SimpleCO₂ model inputs. The most valuable use of the OS data is the ability to determine the dwelling type with much greater confidence.

The existing dwelling type is replaced with a new dwelling type derived from OS data. By looking at the number of residential address points it can be inferred whether the building is a house or block of flats (houses have one residential address point and blocks of flats have two or more).

Houses - where the dwelling is a house the number of other buildings it is attached to can be observed and the following assumptions made:

- If there are no other dwellings attached, the house is detached.
- If two dwellings are joined to one another, but not to any other dwellings, they are semi-detached.
- If they are attached to two or more other dwellings, they are mid terraced.
- If they are attached to only one dwelling, but that dwelling is a mid-terrace, they are an end-terrace.

Flats - if the building is a block of flats, its exact nature is determined by its age and the number of flats in the block and the following assumptions made:

- If there are between two and four flats in the block (inclusive) and the dwelling was built before 1980 then it is a conversion.
- Otherwise it is purpose built.

This information can also be used to reconcile discrepancies within blocks of flats, terraced and semi-detached houses. These discrepancies occur in variables such as dwelling age, location of flat in block, number of storeys, loft insulation, wall insulation, wall type and floor area.

Looking at dwelling age, although the OS data does not itself provide any information on age, it does allow reconciliation of age data within semi-detached, terraces and blocks of flats.

Where a group of buildings are all attached in some way, such as a terrace, it is logical to assume that they were built at the same time. Therefore the age of each building is replaced with the most common age among those present. Where the most common age occurs in equal numbers, this is resolved by looking at the average age of houses in the same postcode.

If one dwelling has an age that is notably newer than its neighbours, then the age is not changed, as it is assumed that the original dwelling was destroyed and rebuilt.

Figure B. 2 and **Figure B. 3** below show how the initial base data is adjusted using the OS data to produce more consistent and reliable results.

Considering the number of storeys and the location of a flat in its block, if the OS data reveals that the dwelling type is significantly different from the original value – specifically if a house becomes a flat, or vice versa then the variables are adjusted. If this is the case a new location for the flat within the block or the number of storeys will be imputed using the same method as before, but taking into account the revised dwelling type.



Similarly with floor area, loft insulation and wall type - if the dwelling type or location of a flat within a block changes as a result of OS data then the variables are calculated using the same method of imputation as the original models, but taking into account the new data.



Figure B. 2: Dwelling level map showing the base data, prior to using the OS data

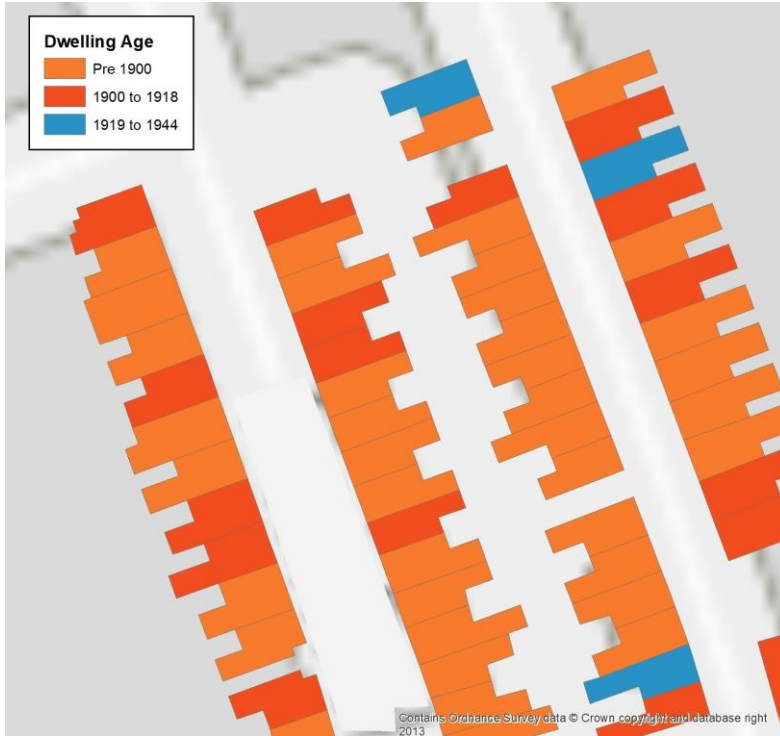
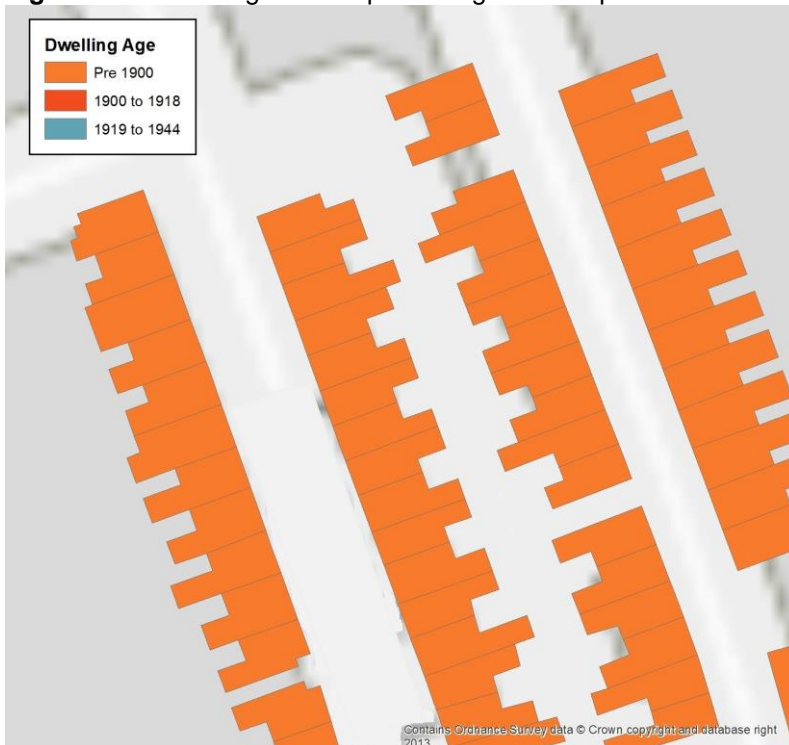


Figure B. 3: Dwelling level map showing the OS updated data





Appendix C Using the BRE Integrated Dwelling Level Housing Stock Database

The BRE Housing Stock Condition Database (HSCD) is the final output of the overall stock modelling approach described in **Section 3** and **Appendix B**. The HSCD has been designed to allow local authorities to access their local area data. There are a number of different options for summarising or investigating the data and generating lists of properties of interest.

C.1 Overview

The Housing Stock Condition Database (HSCD) is now online. You can access it in www.hscd.bre.co.uk with the credentials sent to you by email.

To ensure data security the interface will automatically open on the login page shown in **Figure C. 1**. Should you forget your password details, these can be reset and emailed to you using the function provided on the login page.

Upon login, the home page will open with a dashboard showing the key indicators for your housing stock, similar to that shown in

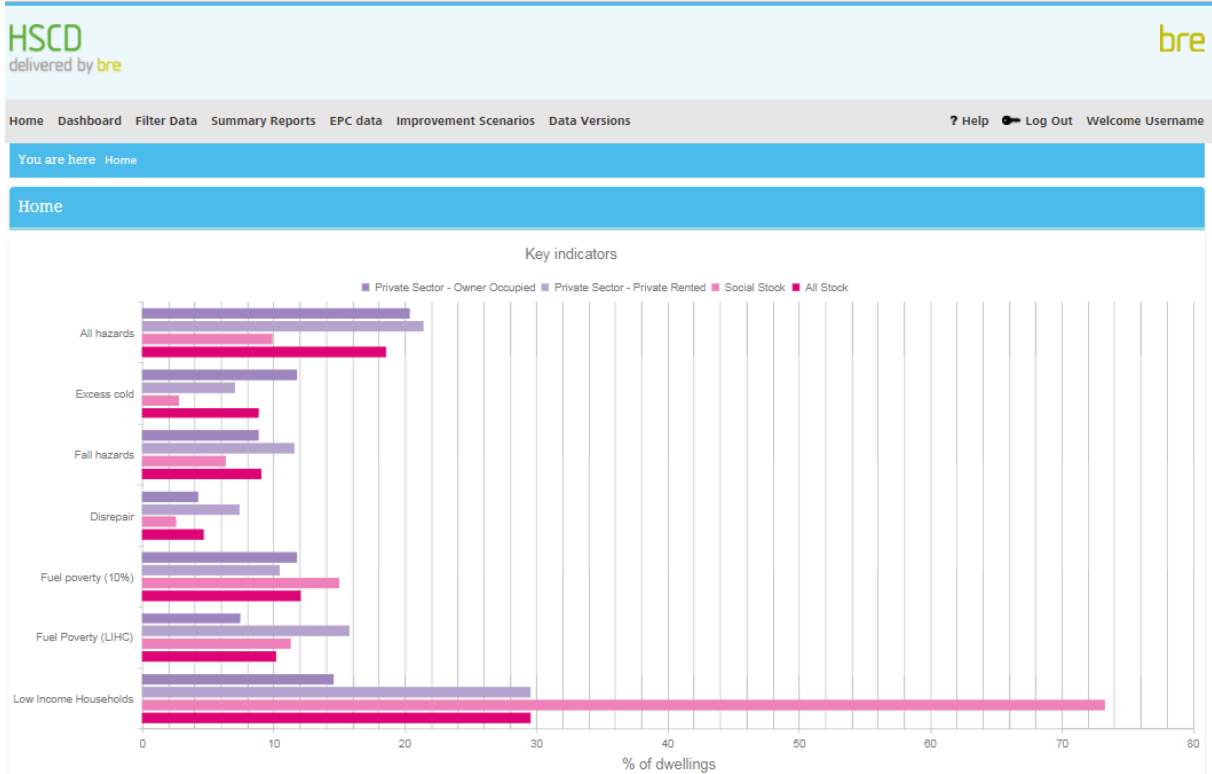
Figure C. 2. The navigation pane is along the top and is visible on all pages; the options shown on the navigation pane will depend upon the options purchased.

Figure C. 1: Login screen

The screenshot shows the login interface for the HSCD. At the top left, it says 'HSCD delivered by bre'. At the top right is the 'bre' logo. Below the header is a grey bar with '? Help' and 'Log In' links. The main content area has a blue header 'Log in' and the instruction 'Enter your Email and password'. There are two input fields: 'Username' and 'Password'. Below the password field is a link: 'Forgotten your password? We can reset it for you.' At the bottom right is a blue 'Login' button with a play icon.



Figure C. 2 Home page (note screenshot below is sample data)



Please refer to the user guide accessible via the log in page under the [help](#) button.



Glossary of terms

BREDEM	BRE Domestic Energy Model
Category 1 hazard	Hazards with a HHSRS score of > 1,000. A dwelling with a category 1 hazard is considered to fail the minimum statutory standard for housing
CLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
COA	Census Output Area Designed for statistical purposes, built from postcode units, approximately 125 households
Disrepair	Based on former Decent Homes Standard criteria which states that a dwelling fails this if it is not in a reasonable state of repair – this is based on the dwelling age and condition of a range of building components including walls, roofs, windows, doors, electrics and heating systems
ECO	Energy Companies Obligation Places legal obligations on the larger energy suppliers to deliver energy efficiency measures to domestic energy users
EHS	English Housing Survey A continuous national survey commissioned by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). It collects information about people's housing circumstances and the condition and energy efficiency of housing in England
EPC	Energy Performance Certificate Present the energy efficiency of domestic properties on a scale of A (most efficient) to G (least efficient)
Fuel poverty	The original definition of fuel poverty states that a household is in fuel poverty if it needs to spend more than 10% of their income on fuel to maintain an adequate level of warmth (10% definition). The new definition now adopted by government is that a household is said to be in fuel poverty if they have fuel costs that are above average and were they to spend that amount they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line (Low Income High Costs definition)
GIS	Geographic Information System A system designed to capture, store, manipulate, analyse, manage and present spatial or geographical data
HHSRS	Housing Health and Safety Rating System A risk assessment tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety related deficiencies in dwellings, covering 29 categories of hazards



HIA	<p>Health Impact Assessment</p> <p>A formal method of assessing the impact of a project, procedure or strategy on the health of a population</p>
HMO	<p>Houses in Multiple Occupation</p> <p>An entire house or flat which is let to 3 or more tenants who form 2 or more households and who share a kitchen, bathroom or toilet</p> <p>A house which has been converted entirely into bedsits or other non-self-contained accommodation and which is let to 3 or more tenants who form two or more households and who share kitchen, bathroom or toilet facilities</p> <p>A converted house which contains one or more flats which are not wholly self-contained (i.e. the flat does not contain within it a kitchen, bathroom and toilet) and which is occupied by 3 or more tenants who form two or more households</p> <p>A building which is converted entirely into self-contained flats if the conversion did not meet the standards of the 1991 Building Regulations and more than one-third of the flats are let on short-term tenancies</p> <p>In order to be an HMO the property must be used as the tenants' only or main residence and it should be used solely or mainly to house tenants. Properties let to students and migrant workers will be treated as their only or main residence and the same will apply to properties which are used as domestic refuges</p>
HSM	<p>Housing Stock Model</p> <p>Desktop based modelling used to determine the condition of the housing stock</p>
Jenks' Natural Breaks	<p>The natural breaks classification method is a data clustering method determining the best arrangement of values into different classes. It is achieved through minimising each class's average deviation from the class mean while maximising each class's deviation from the means of the other groups. The method seeks to reduce the variance within classes and maximise variance between classes thus ensuring groups are distinctive</p>
JSNA	<p>Joint Strategic Needs Assessment</p> <p>An assessment of the current and future health and social care needs of the local community</p>
LACORs	<p>Local Authority Coordinators of Regulatory Services – now renamed Local Government Regulation</p>
LAHS	<p>Local Authority Housing Statistics</p> <p>National statistics on housing owned and managed by local authorities</p>



LIHC	Low Income High Cost Measure of fuel poverty, considers a household to be in fuel poverty if required fuel costs are above average, or if they were to spend that amount they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line
LLPG	Local Land and Property Gazetteer An address database maintained by local authorities
LSOA	Lower Super Output Area Designed for statistical purposes, built from census output areas, approximately 400 households
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
MSOA	Medium Super Output Area Designed for statistical purposes, built from lower super output areas, approximately 2,000 households
NHS	National Health Service
Older people	People over 65 for the excess cold hazard, people over 60 for the fire and fall hazards (excl. falling between levels)
OS	Ordnance Survey
Poor housing	Dwellings where a category 1 hazard is present
Private sector housing	Housing not owned by the local authority or a housing association
SAP	Standard Assessment Procedure Method system for measurement of energy rating of residential buildings.
SimpleSAP	An estimate of a residential dwelling's likely SAP score, it is not based on the full required range of data for a SAP calculation or a reduced data SAP calculation (RDSAP), it should only ever be considered an estimate of the SAP score, and used as a guide
UPRN	Unique Property Reference Number A unique 12 digit number assigned to every unit of land and property recorded by local authorities as part of their LLPG
Vulnerable persons	Persons who are more likely to be affected by the particular hazard as defined by the HHSRS Operating Guidance

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Report to Cabinet

13 September 2023

Subject:	Hamstead Infant School and Hamstead Junior School - Proposed Closure and Expansion
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Children and Education Councillor Simon Hackett
Director:	Director of Children and Education, Michael Jarrett
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Martyn Roberts, Service Manager - School Organisation

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That having taken the results of consultation into account, approval be given to the publication of a Statutory Proposal to:-
- i) formally close Hamstead Infant School, Tanhouse Avenue, Great Barr B43 5AS; and
 - ii) increase the age range of Hamstead Junior School, Hamstead Road, Great Barr B43 5BE from the ages of 8-11 years old to 3-11 years old to accommodate the displaced pupils from Hamstead Infant School.




- 1.2 That, subject to no objections being raised during the statutory representation period for the Statutory Proposal as set out in 1.1 above, authorise the Director of Children and Education to make a final decision on the proposal for the prescribed alterations at Hamstead Infant School, Tanhouse Avenue, Great Barr B43 5AS and Hamstead Junior School, Hamstead Road, Great Barr B43 5BE, in conjunction with the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, and in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Education.
- 1.3 That in the event that any unresolved objections are raised during the statutory representation period for the Statutory Proposal, that a report is submitted to the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services with full details of representations received to inform a final decision on the proposal.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Where there is a proposal to amalgamate 2 (or more) existing maintained schools, under ‘The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013’ and in line with the Department for Education (DfE) published guidance: ‘Opening and Closing Maintained Schools, Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers January 2023’ and ‘Making Significant Changes (‘prescribed alterations’) to maintained schools Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers January 2023’, the Local Authority must act as the ‘decision maker’.
- 2.2 The Local Authority can publish a proposal to close one school (or more) and enlarge / change the age range of an existing school (following the statutory prescribed alterations process), to accommodate the displaced pupils.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>The Best Start in Life for Children and Young People</p> <p>The recommendations in this report support: Ready for school “B9 We will provide enough good school places that offer families choice and confidence that their</p>
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	<p>children can experience high quality education and achieve good outcomes.</p> <p>B10 We will work with schools and other learning providers to improve educational outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p>Children and young people that need more support</p> <p>B16 We will ensure that children and young people with SEND can access high quality local services when they need them, by working with partners to ensure there is a comprehensive local offer available to children and families.”</p>
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4 Context and Key Issues

Purpose of the Report

- 4.1 To consider the outcome of Stage 1 statutory consultation (Appendix 1) undertaken on a proposal to close Hamstead Infant School, Tanhouse Avenue, Great Barr and expand Hamstead Junior School, Hamstead Road, Great Barr.
- 4.2 Following consideration of the Stage 1 consultation, Cabinet are requested to approve the publication of a Statutory Proposal to close Hamstead Infant School on 31 December 2023 and expand the age range of Hamstead Junior School from 8-11 years to 3-11 years with effect from 1 January 2024. The proposal, if agreed, will provide for the formal amalgamation of two twinned schools in Great Barr to form a 420 statutory place primary school, with a 39 full time equivalent place Nursery.

Background and main considerations

- 4.3 Hamstead Infant School and Hamstead Junior School are co-located on a single site at Tanhouse Avenue and Hamstead Road, Great Barr. Both schools continue to operate as community-controlled schools. Each school has a Governing Board responsible for the day to day management and performance of their school. Each school receives a delegated school budget from the Local Authority to operate.



- 4.4 Both schools remain popular, Hamstead Infant School has a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 60 places for Reception, Hamstead Junior School a PAN of 60 for admission into Year 3, providing a total pupil capacity of 420 places across both schools. In addition, Hamstead Infant School has capacity to operate a non-statutory 39 full time equivalent (fte) place Nursery.
- 4.5 The retirements of the former Head Teacher, and subsequent Acting Head Teacher, at Hamstead Infant School provides an opportunity for the Local Authority to consider closure of the school. With a concurrent extension of the age range of Hamstead Junior School from 8 to 11 years old, to 3 to 11 years old, the Junior School could then operate as a 420 place, two form entry primary school with the transfer of infant aged children to the primary school.
- 4.6 The Authority has adopted a similar successful policy across a number of infant and junior twinned schools, most recently through the amalgamation of Warley Infant and Bleakhouse Junior Schools, to form Bleakhouse Primary School.
- 4.7 Upon the closure of the school, and expansion of the age range at Hamstead Junior School to form an enlarged 420 place primary school, the day to day responsibility for the Infant School site and building would transfer to the Governing Board of the new primary school.
- 4.8 The Governing Boards of both schools have been supportive of the proposal through their engagement with the Authority and have set up an interim Joint Management Board to prepare both schools for a final decision on the proposal.
- 4.9 A number of benefits have been identified with the proposal. Administratively, duplication of functions with staffing and use of spaces can be reviewed by the enlarged primary school. Financially the new school budget would see economies of scale compared to the two former individual budgets, with a similar number of employees appointed to the expanded Primary School.



- 4.10 Utmost consideration for the proposal is that children attending the school should not see any major upheaval as a result of the closure of Hamstead Infant School and the extension of the age range at Hamstead Junior School. As the two schools share the same site, there is minimal impact expected for children.
- 4.11 The new primary school will continue to serve a highly populated residential area of the Borough. The proposal will support parental choice, maintaining quality provision in the area.

The current position

- 4.12 The council consulted with a range of stakeholders between 6 June and 3 July 2023 on a proposal to close Hamstead Infant School and permanently increase the age range of Hamstead Junior School to take effect from January 2024.
- 4.13 Stakeholders included all parents / carers of all pupils attending both schools, staff, governors, local ward councillors and the local Member of Parliament.
- 4.14 A consultation event to meet with senior education officers by appointment was arranged at the schools for 13 June 2023 for any stakeholder to meet to raise questions. No appointments were requested.
- 4.15 Stakeholders were provided further opportunity to raise any questions with the council via the questionnaire enclosed within the consultation document (see Appendix 1). No questions were received during the consultation period.
- 4.16 Subject to approval of the report recommendations, a Statutory Proposal to close Hamstead Infant School and extend the age range of Hamstead Junior School from 8-11 years to 5-11 years will be published, followed by a four-week statutory consultation period.
- 4.17 Following completion of the statutory consultation period all representations will be considered. Subject to no objections being received authority is sought to grant to the Director of Children and Education, authority to make a final decision on the Statutory Proposal in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Education.



Should any objections be received during the statutory consultation period a further report will be submitted to Cabinet for a final decision.

Consultation (Customers and other Stakeholders)

4.18 The four-week initial consultation process undertaken by the council (Stage 1) commenced on 6 June 2023 and ended on 3 July 2023 with the following stakeholders consulted:

- Hamstead Infant School Governing Board
- Hamstead Junior School Governing Board
- Parents / carers at both schools
- School staff
- All schools in Sandwell
- Ward Councillors
- Member of Parliament
- Trade Unions

4.19 The consultation elicited a positive response with unanimous support to the proposal.

Category	Number Responding	Yes (to the proposal)	No (to the proposal)	Don't know
Parents / Carers	22	22		
Staff	0			
Governors	2	2		
More than one category	3	3		
Community Member	0			
TOTAL	27	27		

Appendix 2 provides detail of responses received from consultees that responded to the proposal.



- 4.20 Stage 2 is the statutory stage of consultation which, in accordance with prescribed regulations, the council is required to publish a 'Statutory Proposal'. The Statutory Proposal will formally publicise the proposed closure of Hamstead Infant School, and the extension to the age range of Hamstead Junior School to 3-11 years of age, to enable the school to operate as a two-form entry primary school.
- 4.21 Arrangements for publication will follow a similar format to the first consultation exercise, i.e., uploaded via the council's website, with a link from each school's website, and key stakeholders accordingly advised. Following publication of the formal proposal and a statutory notice on 25 September 2023 a representation period will last 4 weeks, during which time any objections or observations could be made to the council. At the expiry of the representation period on 22 October 2023, any objections received will need to be considered, and a final decision made on the Statutory Proposal.
- 4.22 A formal consultation would be arranged with staff if a decision is taken to close Hamstead Infant School and extend the age range of Hamstead Junior School.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 To not proceed: would continue to lead to inefficiencies in revenue expenditure across both schools with duplication of certain functions and spend, and not provide the opportunities to streamline across one school.
- 5.2 Closure of Hamstead Junior School: the school has a substantive Head Teacher in post, whereas at Hamstead Infant School there are 3 senior Leadership post vacancies, including Head Teacher, with an Acting Assistant Head Teacher in post. Both the SENDCO and Office Manager posts are now also vacant. With the number of senior staff posts currently vacant the Infant School could not support a successful expansion to its age range to operate at the two-form entry primary school model required.



- 5.3 Closure of both schools: the Authority would not be able to establish a new community maintained school to replace the two existing schools, but would be required to seek a free school sponsor to open a replacement school.

6 Implications

<p>Resources:</p>	<p>The Department for Education “Scheme for financing local authority maintained schools” (Updated 1 April 2020) states the budget shares of schools for which approval for discontinuation has been secured, will be made available until closure on a monthly basis, net of estimated pay costs.</p> <p>Where a school has been established or is subject to a prescribed alteration as a result of the closure of a school, the authority may add an amount to the budget share of the new / enlarged school to reflect all or part of the unspent budget share, including any surplus balances carried forward from previous funding periods of the closing school for the funding period in which it closes.</p> <p>If the proposed amalgamation is approved, the Authority intend to act as described above; giving all unspent budget share to Hamstead Junior School, and any surplus balances carried forward, and there would no additional financial resource implication of this proposal.</p> <p>No major capital works are proposed for the school sites.</p>
<p>Legal and Governance:</p>	<p>Statutory consultation was carried out in accordance with guidance issued by the DfE entitled ‘<i>Opening and Closing Maintained Schools, Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers January 2023</i>’ and ‘<i>Making Significant Changes (‘prescribed alterations’) to maintained schools Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers January 2023</i>’ and under ‘<i>The</i></p>



	<i>School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013</i> .
Risk:	<p>The Corporate Risk Management Strategy has been complied with. The Cabinet has a statutory duty under the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 to make a decision on a prescribed alteration proposal. Based on the information provided, it is the officers' opinion that there are no current "red" risks that need to be reported with regards to this proposal.</p> <p>Agreement to the report recommendations may result in minor risks being highlighted, namely inadequate publication of the Statutory Proposal, or the receipt of any objections during the statutory notice period. Appropriate mitigation measures have been identified to minimise the occurrence of any such risks, including a follow up report to Cabinet should any such objections be received.</p>
Equality:	An Equality Impact Assessment initial screening has been undertaken and a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required for this report.
Health and Wellbeing:	The proposed expansion will accommodate projected levels of pupil demand which is expected to be sustained into the foreseeable future.
Social Value	In supporting the prioritisation of applications from the local community the proposal will ensure that children have access to a school place, and will be educated and develop within their residential and social communities.
Climate Change:	No impact on climate change.



<p>Corporate Parenting:</p>	<p>The report recommendations will establish a two-form entry, 420 place primary school through the closure of Hamstead Infant School and the expansion of the age range of Hamstead Junior School.</p> <p>The new enlarged school will fulfil the role of Corporate Parenting by supporting the care and safeguarding of all children throughout their time attending the school, from Early Years through to end of Key Stage 2.</p>
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7. Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix 1 - Consultation document.
Appendix 2 – Consultation responses.

8. Background Papers

None.



Hamstead Infant School and Hamstead Junior School

June 2023

THE FUTURE FOR HAMSTEAD INFANT SCHOOL AND HAMSTEAD JUNIOR SCHOOL

What is the proposal?

Sandwell Council is consulting parents / carers, staff and the local community on the future of Hamstead Infant School and Hamstead Junior School. We have proposals which we believe will result in an improvement in educational provision for all pupils in the area by ensuring that resources available to both schools are used in the most effective way to meet the needs of learners.

We have written this for parents / carers, staff and the local community served by the two schools so that you are aware of the proposals and so that you can let us know your views.

There are two possibilities for the future of the two schools:

Either

- **the amalgamation of the schools on 1st January 2024 to form one 2 Form Entry (60 places per year group) primary school operating on the existing sites with a capacity for 420 pupils.**

Or

- **the two schools could remain as they are and continue to operate in the way they do at present.**

This document:

- explains why the possible change is being proposed.
- covers in detail the implications for the two schools.
- includes a response form for your comments.

Before any decision is made, we would like to know what you think.

2. HOW YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE CONSULTATION

A letter has been sent to parents / carers of children at the schools and staff, directing them to this document via each school's website:

www.hamstead-inf.sandwell.sch.uk and

www.hamsteadjuniorschool.co.uk

Copies have been circulated to other interested parties, including the local Member of Parliament and Ward Councillors.

Hard copies are available at either school or by contacting Sharon Hammick, Project Officer, School Organisation, Children and Education Directorate on 07917 077876 or email

sharon_hammick@sandwell.gov.uk

You are invited to express your views on the proposal at an event organised at both Hamstead Infant and Hamstead Junior Schools on Tuesday 13th June 2023.

Please note that this will be an appointment led event, requiring interested parties to make a booking prior to the event, between the hours of 4.00 and 8.00pm. This will allow us to manage the process effectively, minimise waiting times and ensure that appropriate officers are available to offer advice and guidance relating to specific matters of interest.

Bookings can be made by telephone or email by contacting the School Organisation on 07917 077876 or sharon_hammick@sandwell.gov.uk

The closing date for booking an appointment is Monday 12th June 2023.

If you cannot attend, we also welcome your views in writing. Please use the form at the end of this booklet, and return it to either school, or the address on the form, by 5.00pm, Monday 3rd July 2023. All views and comments must be received by this date in order to be considered by the Council when we decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal.

3. WHY WE ARE PROPOSING A CHANGE

Hamstead Infant School and Hamstead Junior School are in the Newton Ward in Great Barr. Both schools have the capacity to admit up to 60 children in each year group. The current and projected numbers on roll at the two schools (as at January 2023) are given as follows:

Pupil numbers and school buildings

	School Capacity	January 2023 Number on roll	Forecast based on October 2022		
			2023	2024	2025
Hamstead Infant School	180	189	180	180	180
Hamstead Junior School	240	232	240	240	240
Total	420	421	420	420	420

(Hamstead Infant School has a 78 place (39 full-time equivalent) nursery, and offers both part and full-time places – nursery figures are not included in the above table)

These figures indicate that both schools will continue to be popular.

The running costs of the two schools are inevitably higher than the costs of running a single primary school. Each school currently has its own management and administrative structures. If we keep the two separate schools a lot of money will continue to be used on management and administration which therefore cannot be spent directly on the education of children.

The Local Authority has previously amalgamated a number of schools in the borough to form all-through schools in the interest of providing better educational outcomes for the pupils. The opportunity to consider the option at Hamstead Junior School has arisen due to the vacant post of Head Teacher at Hamstead Infant School.

4. STANDARDS

The most recent Ofsted inspection reports are available on the Ofsted website.

Hamstead Infant School:

<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/21/103896>

Hamstead Junior School

<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/21/103895>

School performance data is available on each school's website. Bringing the two schools together has a number of potential benefits to pupils which can impact on standards:-

- One curriculum and assessment model which focusses on improving pupil outcomes at all key stages.
- Continuity in teaching approaches.
- Shared teacher knowledge on how to support pupils and get the best out of them.
- One set of policies and procedures with a focus on standards.

5. POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSAL

- **Budget and staffing flexibility**

A single Head Teacher and Governing Board of one school would provide more flexibility in responding to the needs of the school through having a single larger pool of resources than either of the individual schools through the combined teaching and non-teaching staff. Deployment of staff and other resources across both sites of the school will enrich the curriculum delivery and also allow for more flexibility when additional staffing support is required.

- **Management and support structure**

Having just one school would provide a single school management and support structure. Less money would need to be spent on management and administration freeing it up to be spent directly on children and in the community. A revised set of 'whole school' policies and practices would be developed as part of planning the way the new school will work.

- **Continuity of Learning**

At present with the two schools as separate establishments, parents of Year 2 children at Hamstead Infant School must apply for their children to attend Hamstead Junior School, with no guarantee that they will secure a place.

Should the amalgamation proceed, from 1st January 2024 parents / carers of children in Year 2 will no longer need to apply to secure a Year 3 place.

With lots of opportunities for staff and pupils to work together as one school community, movement of pupils from Year 2 to Year 3 would be seamless.

- **Greater breadth of staff experience**

Recent curriculum developments, including new expectations from Ofsted have led to an increase in the number and range of specialist

tasks to be completed in schools. The sharing of these tasks amongst a larger number of staff with a wider range of experience, would mean an improvement in the standard of education that pupils receive. A larger number of staff would enable school leaders to increase extra-curricular opportunities for pupils.

- **Increased opportunities for staff development**

A wide range of teaching and learning expertise is needed in a primary school. The skills and knowledge of teaching staff would be extended. This would benefit the children and support the recruitment and induction of new staff and the retention of existing colleagues.

- **Improving the environment for learning**

The Head Teacher and staff of a single school could plan to use all of the available school buildings and outdoor areas to provide a greater range of educational facilities and activities.

6. POSSIBLE DISADVANTAGES OF THE PROPOSAL

Although we have identified many benefits from the proposal, we recognise that you may have several concerns which need to be considered.

- **Budget implications**

In the longer term the budget for the new school will be smaller than the total amount currently available to both schools combined but the costs will be less as savings will be made from running one school instead of two and from other economies of scale. The overall effect on the new school is expected to be broadly neutral.

This issue is addressed fully in section 10 titled 'Finance' below. Our view is that the final decision on whether to go ahead or not must be made on the basis of giving the children the best chance of a good quality education.

7. WHEN WOULD THE PROPOSAL TAKE PLACE?

The amalgamation would be achieved by the closure of Hamstead Infant School which would take place on 31st December 2023. Hamstead Junior School would be expanded to become a two-form entry primary school as of 1st January 2024.

All children currently on roll at both schools and children who have been offered a Reception place at Hamstead Infant School, or a year 3 place at Hamstead Junior School will become pupils at the new primary school.

8. LOCAL AUTHORITY SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS DURING REORGANISATIONS

There is a School Improvement Adviser attached to each school. The level of support each school gets is determined according to individual need, but is sufficient to support school personnel and to ensure that the school is supported professionally and pastorally. The School Improvement Adviser will be one of the key personnel supporting schools through the reorganisation process if it goes ahead.

The school's Human Resources provider will also provide support to the schools throughout the process and will also provide support to individual members of staff.

9. WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

The consultation period for this proposal ends at 5.00pm on 3rd July 2023. The Council will then need to consider the outcome of the consultation exercise and decide whether to proceed with the proposal. The Council could decide not to proceed, in which case both schools would continue as present as separate schools.

If the outcome of this process leads the Council to decide to go ahead with the proposal, it has to publish a legal notice called a 'Statutory Proposal'. This notice, which would be published in September 2023 and would formally state that the Council intends to close Hamstead Infant School and expand Hamstead Junior School to become a two-form entry Primary School on the existing schools' sites. The notice would explain how and when it would do this and would also give people the opportunity to make formal representations about the proposals. These representations would need to be made within 4 weeks of the publication of the Statutory Notice.

The Council would consider any formal objections in October 2023. A final decision would then be expected.

The table below shows the likely timeline should approval be given for the proposal to proceed:

DATE	ACTION
Tuesday 6 th June	Initial consultation begins
Monday 3 rd July	Initial consultation ends
To Be Confirmed	Cabinet meeting to consider feedback from consultation and whether to publish a Statutory Proposal
Monday 25 th September	Publish statutory notice
Sunday 22 nd October	End of statutory notice and representation period
w/c Monday 23 rd October	Director – Children and Education considers outcome of representation period and makes a final decision on the proposal

10. FINANCE

When a school closes, any balance (whether surplus or deficit) shall revert to the Local Authority; it cannot be transferred as a balance to any other school, even where a school is a successor to the closing school.

The combined budget of both schools is currently £2,249,321 (taking into account the original budget share, Early Years and high needs funding). The budget of any school is worked out on the basis of a School Funding Formula that takes into account the number of children on roll and their pupil characteristics, i.e. prior attainment, English as an additional language. This means that the budget can fluctuate from year to year as the numbers of children go up or down and the pupil characteristics change.

11. THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND OUTDOOR AREAS

The new Governing Board will be responsible for management of the site and buildings for both Hamstead Infant School and Hamstead Junior School.

12. THE GOVERNING BOARD

The current Governing Boards for both Hamstead Infant School and Hamstead Junior School continue to look after the two schools until the 31st December 2023.

Representatives of each Board will work together to make decisions on behalf of the new single school. The Local Authority will determine the size and membership of this group. This group will be responsible for ensuring that any action needed to prepare for the opening of the new school is undertaken.

The existing Governing Board compositions and the proposed temporary Governing Board composition are given in the table below:

	Existing composition of Governing Board		Proposed temporary Management Board structure
	Hamstead Infant	Hamstead Junior	Primary School
Parents	2	2	-
Staff (including Head Teacher)	2	2	1 (Head Teacher – Advisory Capacity)
Local Authority	1 (vacant)	1(vacant)	-
Chair of Governors	1 (included in co-opted figures)	1 (included in co-opted figures)	-
Vice Chair	1 (included in co-opted figures)	2 (included in co-opted figures)	-
Community / Co-opted	5	6	6
Total	10	11	8

13. STAFFING

The number of staff currently employed at each school is as follows:

	Teaching ¹		Non-teaching	
	Full time	Part time	Full time	Part time
Hamstead Infant	8	2	11	12
Hamstead Junior	7	3	9	12
Total	15	5	20	24

The staffing structure of a new 2 form entry primary school would be the responsibility of the Governing Board to determine. There will be discussions with relevant trades unions about the staffing process.

In the interim, the Head Teacher of Hamstead Junior School will provide leadership support to Hamstead Infant School and determine any other additional arrangements in conjunction with the Joint Management Board.

¹ Including Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher

CONSULTATION ON THE REORGANISATION OF HAMSTEAD INFANT AND HAMSTEAD JUNIOR SCHOOLS
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CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

Are you a:

	Please tick	
	At Hamstead Infant	At Hamstead Junior
Parent / Carer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Governor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Member of staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Member of the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Do you agree that Hamstead Infant and Hamstead Junior Schools should amalgamate on 1st January 2024 to form a new 2 form entry Primary School operating on the existing sites (so that it will be a school with a capacity for 420 pupils)

Yes / No* (*please delete as necessary)

Please add any comments here (and overleaf if necessary)

Signed:

Date:

Please return this form by 5.00pm, Monday 3rd July 2023 to either school or, if you prefer to: Sharon Hammick, Project Officer, School Organisation, Children and Education, Sandwell Council House, Freeth Street, Oldbury, B69 3DE (or email: sharon_hammick@sandwell.gov.uk)

The information you provide on this form is subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations. Where applicable information entered will be forwarded to the relevant Education / Council sections for action or for a reply to be given.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES ON THE RE-ORGANISATION OF HAMSTEAD INFANT AND HAMSTEAD JUNIOR SCHOOLS

27 Feedback forms received

27 Positive Responses

	Type	Hamstead Infant	Hamstead Junior	Yes	No	Comment
1	Parent / Carer		X	X		No comment
2	Parent / Carer	X	X	X		It would make things easier when children are leaving year 2, there would be no application needed
3	Parent / Carer		X	X		No comment
4	Parent / Carer	X	X	X		I think it is a great idea
5	Parent / Carer		X	X		No comment
6	Parent / Carer		X	X		No comment
7	Parent / Carer	X	X	X		No comment
8	Parent / carer	X	X	X		I believe this will create a better opportunity for a more coherent primary school experience and ensure quality curriculum provision, curriculum continuity and a joined-up approach to teaching and learning across the Key stages
9	Parent / carer		X	X		No comment
10	Parent / Carer		X	X		No comment
11	Parent / Carer		X	X		Great idea – less paperwork and reduces stress worrying about reapplying to join the junior school
12	Parent / carer		X	X		No comment

13	Parent / Carer	X	X	X	No comment
14	Parent / Carer	X	X	X	Brilliant agreement! Will bring some coordination and communication will only improve, there will be a flow
15	Parent / Carer	X	X	X	Yes
16	Parent / Carer	X	X	X	No comment
17	Governor		X	X	I believe this is a positive move that will serve the children, teachers and local community in the years to come. I also believe that under strong, progressive and focused leadership the school will definitely thrive not just survive
18	Parent / carer	X	X	X	No comment
19	Parent / Carer and Governor		X	X	No comment
20	Parent / Carer		X	X	No comment
21	Parent / Carer	X	X	X	Great Idea!
22	Parent / Carer		X	X	No comment
23	Parent / Carer		X	X	No comment
24	Parent / Carer and member of the community		X	X	No comment
25	Governor		X	X	Best thing for both schools and its community. Children and parents will have consistency throughout their school life.
26	Parent / Carer Member of the Community	X	X	X	My daughter has attended the Infant school and is currently in year 3 of the junior school. To me the amalgamation of the schools makes perfect

					<p>sense, considering that the year 3 class is made up almost completely from pupils who have moved up from the year 2 class in the infant school.</p> <p>Furthermore, with the arrangement of the playgrounds, and the dinner hall there is already an overlap between the two.</p> <p>It would also make it easier with families who require additional support / needs as the school would already be aware of the situation and wouldn't need to all be explained / processed / planned again.</p> <p>From a pupil's perspective, I also believe that it would remove the daunting prospect of changing schools as the teachers would be interchangeable and familiar with the pupils and give better continuation / transition.</p>
27	Parent / Carer		X	X	<p>My children have attended both schools and there is already a good amount of collaboration between them, which is beneficial to the students. They will not need to go through the difficult transition between schools even though it is still a jump between year 2 and year 3</p>

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Report to Cabinet

13 September 2023

Subject:	Temporary Accommodation – award approval
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Housing and Built Environment, Councillor Laura Rollins
Director:	Director for Housing, Gillian Douglas
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Mandy Amos, Operations Manager – People (Housing Solutions) Mandy_amos@sandwell.gov.uk Shazia Nazir, Business Partner - Procurement Shazia_Nazir@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to appoint providers for the provision of Bed and Breakfast and temporary accommodation for homeless households as a result of the tender process.
- 1.2 That the Director for Housing be authorised to enter into the framework agreement for the provision of Bed and Breakfast and temporary accommodation for homeless households for a two-year period with an option to extend for an additional two-years with an annual gross spend of approximately £750,000 per annum.







2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council have a statutory responsibility to help relieve homelessness which includes temporary accommodation provision and the current contract extension for temporary accommodation of this nature expires on 31 October 2023.
- 2.2 The housing solutions service has seen an unprecedented rise in demand for temporary accommodation, related to the cost of living crisis and shortage of affordable housing; with 130 households in this accommodation type as at June 2023, an increase of 65% on TA usage from last year. To meet the growing demand for quality temporary accommodation a tendering exercise has been undertaken to source the right quality and type of temporary accommodation to meet the needs of homeless households and provide the required flexibility to the service for same day emergency placements. This will be in line with the council's published Temporary Accommodation Procurement and Placement Policy (Appendix 3).
- 2.3 When households approach the housing solutions service requesting temporary accommodation, the service ensures robust investigation and evaluation of all other available options. This is to obtain the most appropriate provision for the household and avoid unnecessary use of temporary accommodation.
- 2.4 The Housing Solutions service have had success in repurposing council owned buildings into temporary accommodation. Temporary accommodation centres such as Applewood Grove and Manifoldia Grange have contributed to reducing the numbers of households in bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation and are a more suitable option for families. As of 26/06/2023 Manifoldia Grange in West Bromwich opened which has 40 self-contained units and is managed by Housing Solutions staff which will contribute to the reduction of households in B&B accommodation. In some instances this provision will be fully occupied or not immediately accessible (during out of hours provision) and as such, the service must have access to suitable temporary accommodation that can be booked at short notice.






- 2.5 The increase in number of households requiring temporary accommodation can be attributed to factors such as:
- The issues with the current Private Rented Sector (PRS) housing market where properties are unaffordable for those on low income or in receipt of benefits
 - The PRS market is very buoyant with demand outstripping supply
 - An increase in section 21 evictions from the private rented sector
 - Family relationship breakdowns

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people</p> <p>The provision of good quality temporary accommodation will provide accommodation which better meets the needs of families whilst we source longer term accommodation under the relevant homelessness duties and support.</p>
	<p>Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods</p> <p>Households require temporary accommodation of both good quality and that which fits their individual requirements and the tender evaluation process contains a renewed focus on quality measures.</p>
	<p>A strong and inclusive economy</p> <p>The tender process in relation to temporary accommodation contracts helps in investing and supporting local businesses. The tender process and evaluation promotes and rewards tenders from local provision.</p> <p>Access to suitable accommodation supports our delivery model of holistically supporting individuals in temporary accommodation ensuring that households have access to education, training and employment opportunities.</p>
	<p>Strong resilient communities</p> <p>A variety of flexible temporary accommodation that covers a number of areas in the borough will ensure that those housed can be located as close to their previous home and support network as possible.</p>



	When families are placed in temporary accommodation they have a support worker who will help them settle in, get to know their local area, promote housing options and reinforce and support move on to permanent accommodation.
	Best start in life for children and young people The provision of good quality temporary accommodation will provide accommodation which better meets the needs of families whilst we source longer term accommodation under the relevant homelessness duties and support.
	Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods Households require temporary accommodation of both good quality and that which fits their individual requirements and the tender evaluation process contains a renewed focus on quality measures.
	A strong and inclusive economy The tender process in relation to temporary accommodation contracts helps in investing and supporting local businesses. The tender process and evaluation promotes and rewards tenders from local provision. Access to suitable accommodation supports our delivery model of holistically supporting individuals in temporary accommodation ensuring that households have access to education, training and employment opportunities.

4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 The Council has a duty to provide temporary accommodation where there is reason to believe an applicant may be homeless, eligible and have priority need. Accommodation will continue to be provided if the household is awarded homeless priority until the duty is discharged most likely through an offer of accommodation. This function is provided by the Housing Solutions Service.
- 4.2 As per previous tender exercises for temporary accommodation, it was agreed that this framework document will also be available for use by Sandwell Children's Trust for sourcing accommodation.



- 4.3 An initial tender exercise commenced on 30 June 2023 and closed on 2 August 2023.
- 4.4 The compliant tenders received are currently being evaluated in accordance with the criteria stipulated within the tender documentation and a copy of the tender document can be found at Appendix one.

Service demand

- 4.5 The current Sandwell MBC housing register has 12,600 applicants on the waiting list. The number of applicants has doubled since 2020. An increase can be linked to the need for affordable rents and secure, quality accommodation. This has meant that as it is taking households longer to secure permanent accommodation and as such has increased demand for temporary accommodation and the average length of stay.
- 4.6 The housing solutions service ensures that we are successfully preventing homelessness and supporting people to find alternative housing solutions once it is identified there is a threat of homelessness. Between 2021/22 and 2022/23 there was a 25% increase in the numbers of homelessness presentations from 4000 to 5000 cases. Whilst only a small proportion of these cases escalate to a risk of homelessness, any step change will result in additional pressure on temporary accommodation.
- 4.7 The service is now facing new emerging pressures on homelessness, and in turn temporary accommodation due to the national cost of living pressures and energy price crisis. Referrals from our housing solutions team to the commissioned provision for debt and money advice at Citizens Advice Bureau have resulted in assistance provided to services users during 2022/23 with a total of £0.300m arrears identified. Additional debts (not inclusive of rent) during the same period totalled £0.610m. In depth assessments have highlight that issues such as decreased credit score; rent shortfall; rising living costs and issues affording essential products/ services have contributed to difficulty obtaining a new or maintaining existing properties.



4.9 Impending national changes to abolish Section 21 notices served to private rented tenants mean further potential risk of eviction. Landlords may act to 'move on' tenants who pose a risk of non-payment or arrears ahead of this change. Landlords may be reluctant to rent to lower income households or those in receipt of benefits.

Temporary Accommodation Trends

4.10 Nationally, there has been a 74% rise in temporary accommodation in the last 10 years. 68% of families living in temporary accommodation have been there for over a year. Data shows that (63% of individuals living within temporary accommodation has had a negative impact on their mental health. (51% say that it has had a negative impact on their physical health and 39% say that living in temporary accommodation has made it harder to access healthcare appointments.

4.11 Within Sandwell there has been an increase in temporary accommodation from June 2021 to date (June 2023) with 130 households within this accommodation type.

4.13 It is important to note that whilst Sandwell's proportion is increasing, the borough has less than half the number per 1000 households when compared to the all England rate. Sandwell has 0.92 h/holds per 1000 in TA compared to 15.98 households living in temporary accommodation in London and 2.06 households in the Rest of England.

4.14 Appendix 2 sets out the trends of temporary accommodation for Sandwell Council and nationally.

Future proposals

4.14 The council has a range of Temporary Accommodation provision, with varying advantages and disadvantages of each stock type.

4.15 Whilst the service is working to apply downward pressure on the TA numbers through the housing solutions operating model (which focusses on early intervention and solving the real underlying issues for families at risk of homelessness), we also accept that there are a significant number of upward pressures as mentioned in this report.



- 4.16 There are two aims for the service around managing temporary accommodation; the first is to reduce the overall need for temporary accommodation; and the second is to ensure we make the best use of existing in-house stock which provides the best provision for both customers and the council. There are various options being considered to reduce the continued need for temporary accommodation including embedding of a prevention focussed operating model and increasing affordable housing options.
- 4.17 When accounting for the current projected TA demand, the service projects demand of up to an additional 40 units over the course of 2023/24.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The Council has a statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation under certain circumstances. As many households present at crisis it leaves little opportunity to prevent the homeless situation from occurring and as a result it is necessary to have access to accommodation at very short notice. In addition, approaches can be received out of hours and therefore, there is a requirement to have access to temporary accommodation at all times.
- 5.2 However, there is a drive to make best use of the Councils own stock and repurpose assets as temporary accommodation, which will reduce the use and cost of B&B accommodation.

6 Implications

Resources:	<p>There are financial pressures created by the increasing numbers of households in TA. This is further exacerbated with increase proportion of presentation in B&B accommodation</p> <p>The service has a small contribution from general fund with most of the provision resulting from use of the homelessness prevention grant.</p> <p>The temporary accommodation centre model is both more cost effective and results in quicker move on hence reducing TA spend and will continue to be explored to mitigate rising TA costs.</p>
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	<p>The contract value of £3m over four years is the gross cost to the council. The council seeks to recover a proportion of the cost of accommodation through housing benefit and through the customer where they are self funding. The net cost of temporary accommodation to the council is funded through general fund and the Homelessness Prevention Grant.</p>
Legal and Governance:	<p>The service needs to have in place a framework contract for non-own stock owned accommodation whilst maintaining the flexibility of sourcing accommodation outside of contract where there is insufficient capacity or unmet need. i.e. disabled access</p> <p>The Homelessness Reduction Act sets out the statutory responsibility of the service to provide temporary accommodation under section 188 of housing act 1996.</p>
Risk:	<p>An increase in demand for temporary accommodation will result in an increase in spend.</p> <p>There is a risk that the embedded prevention based operating model does not result in reducing TA placements.</p> <p>There is a risk that Placements of TA are made but in substandard accommodation.</p> <p>Mitigations are in place including regular monitoring of TA placements, enhanced support model for households who are at risk of or already homeless and various forms of mediation to help people remain in their current homes. The service performs very well on homelessness prevention when compared to national performance.</p>
Equality:	<p>The specification for the contract has been designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities or other protected characteristics. This tender process has included (for the first time) requests for a number of accessible rooms and for accommodation that allows pets – as in a number of cases people have assistance and support animals.</p>



Health and Wellbeing:	The provision of good quality temporary accommodation will ensure that families have a safe and secure place to stay whilst the service works with them to address their longer term housing need. Well managed temporary accommodation reduces negative impacts on health and incidents of anti social behaviour. A broad selection of accommodation ensures that, where possible, families can be placed near to existing schools and support networks, reducing disruption.
Social Value:	The provision of temporary accommodation will support investing in local businesses, people and jobs. It will also actively encourage community engagement within the contractual arrangements. The framework has been designed to allow as many individual providers to be selected to ensure we have sufficient capacity and flexibility in provision.
Climate Change:	If we have flexible provision of temporary accommodation, we can better place families within their existing support networks, work and school catchment areas which invariably reduces the need for travel via car/public transport etc
Corporate Parenting:	We have a duty to protect children, the provision of temporary accommodation provides a safe place for children to reside when families present at crisis and enables families to continue to reside together without the intervention of Children’s Trust so we can ensure children are safeguarded and will be seen on a regular basis. When required, the trust will be accessing the contracted provision of temporary accommodation, which will have been selected through evaluation with a focus on quality of provision. The two services work closely together to address housing need and in turn ensure children can remain with their family.

7. Appendices

Appendix One – Tender document

Appendix Two – Temporary Accommodation Trends

Appendix Three – Temporary Accommodation Policy



8. Background Papers

None





Sandwell
Metropolitan Borough Council

**Tender for Emergency
Accommodation
SMBC 23037**

PART A

**Closing date for submission of tender
Not later than 15:00 on 2nd August 2023**

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Contents

This document is in two parts:

PART A

Part A is the invitation to tender and provides all the background information, a description of what is required, and an overview and instructions for the completion and submission of the tender document.

Note: Part A does not need to be returned to Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council.

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PART B

Part B is the tender questionnaire document found on the In-tend Supplier and this should be completed in full and submitted in advance of the deadline, in accordance with the instructions given (see section 5, Instructions for completing and submitting a tender) along with any other requested documentation.

NOTE: IN ORDER TO ACCESS THE PART B TENDER QUESTIONNAIRE AND SUBMIT A RESPONSE YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO “OPT IN” ON THE IN-TEND SUPPLIER PORTAL.

Glossary of Key Terms

A detailed description of the requirement, together with formal definitions of the most important terms and phrases, are given in the rest of the document. For tenderers' convenience however, the following key terms, which are used throughout this document, are defined as follows:

Contract	Means this specific contract let by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council.
Customer	Means Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Invitation to Tender	Means this document, inviting Tenderers to submit a Tender.
Services	Means the requirements of the Customer (as appropriate) for the Services from time to time as detailed in section 2 of this document, Requirement.
Supplier	Means the Supplier appointed by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council as a result of this Tender.
Tender	Means the Tender submitted by the Supplier to the Customer.
Tenderer	Means an organisation that submits a completed Tender in response to this Invitation to Tender.

1. INTRODUCTION

This is an Invitation to Tender with information, instructions and guidance provided in Part A, following consideration of which the tender submission (Part B) should be completed and returned by all suppliers who wish to tender for the requirement described in the following pages.

Overview

The requirement is for the provision of Emergency Accommodation to a minimum specification as detailed. Suppliers must undertake to manage the premises on behalf of the Council.

We only require Hotel accommodation with a reception that can be available 24 hours a day for booking in new residents. We are **not** looking for rooms within houses i.e. HMO's (Houses with Multiple Occupancy, self-contained flats or whole houses).

The Council is looking to explore a range of options for the provision of temporary accommodation whereby The Council can access the accommodation at short notice (sometimes on the same day) on a spot purchase basis. The service is open to considering additional forms of emergency accommodation such as Hotel/Bed and Breakfast and where practical self-contained flats or houses.

Properties must be free from category one hazards in accordance with the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSR) under s. 2 of the Housing Act 2004. The document can be found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/15810/142631.pdf

Scope of Contract

The Council has a requirement for the provision of Emergency Accommodation including Management Services. The Council wishes to invite interested parties ("Tenderers") to participate in a tender exercise to establish a multiple supplier Framework Agreement for the reliable supply of these services ("the Invitation to Tender"). The Council requires a number of service providers with the capacity to provide the Emergency Accommodation as set out in Section 2 Requirement & Specification.

Sandwell Children's Trust

The Council is also procuring this contract on behalf of Sandwell Children's Trust (Company No: 10620524), Wellman Building, Dudley Road, Oldbury, West Midlands, B69 3DE.

The service will be used by Sandwell Children's Trust for accommodation for Asylum seekers who have no recourse to public funds (and therefore no entitlement to social housing). But have a child/children living with them so are entitled to emergency housing and payments for food and essentials.

Sandwell Council

The service will be used by Housing for people who present themselves as homeless) until they can be found alternative accommodation.

The total value (for the Council and Sandwell Children's Trust) excluding VAT for the entire duration of the Framework Agreement (four years) is estimated to be in the region of £2.5 million - £3 million. This value is based on historical spend data and is intended to be used as a guide only and is not a guarantee of the level of business that will be generated from the Framework Agreement.

Contract period 1st September 2023 to 31st August 2025 with an option to extend for a further two years subject to the funding being available and performance until 31st August 2027.

Prices will remain fixed for the first 24 months of the contract. A price increase in accordance with the

Consumer Price Index average increase / decrease for the previous 12 months will be applied and then remain fixed for the period of the extension if taken up.

Up to a maximum of 20 tenderers will be awarded a place on the framework. When a room is needed the lowest price provider for that type of room will be approached first to enquire if they have capacity. If not then the next provider on the list will be approached until a provider is found who has capacity.

Questions and Contact Details

All requests for clarification (whether in relation to this document, the requirement or the tender submission) should be submitted as soon as possible via the In-Tend Supplier Portal.

A copy of all questions and answers raised will be visible to all recipients of the invitation to tender. If the tenderer expresses that the question is confidential and the Council agree that it is then the response will be sent only to the tenderer raising the question.

The Council will make available via the In-Tend Supplier Portal complete list of answers to all questions submitted by (up to and including) 26th July 2023 at 17:00 hours.

Questions received after this date may not be answered.

If you do not wish to submit a tender, please notify the Council via the In-Tend Supplier Portal and quoting the tender reference number. Under no circumstances should you pass this document on to a third party.

2. REQUIREMENT (including Specification)

This section provides tenderers with as much detail as possible regarding the requirements and will help tenderers to compile their tender submission and provides a specification for the services.

Specification

The council is seeking access to bedrooms in a number of hotel type establishments within or close to the Sandwell border.

The rooms will be provided on a room only basis and meals and all other expenses such as telephone usage etc will be the responsibility of the occupier.

The accommodation will be of a clean and well maintained standard and comply with Health & Safety legislation and licensing for accommodation of this type.

Where applicable reception facilities are to be provided and a member of staff should be on call at all times outside of normal reception opening times.

Check in facilities will also need be available out of hours in case of emergencies

Furniture Specification

Rooms required include Single, Double & Family rooms for emergency accommodation. Rooms must have either their own or shared bathroom facilities

A Single room should have the following: Single bed, storage unit and cot if required included in the rate.

A Double room should have the following: double or twin beds with storage unit and cot if required included in the rate.

A Family room should have the following double or twin beds and 1or 2 single beds and or cots if required included in the rate.

Where we are offered self-contained properties, the room requirement set out above can apply to each dedicated bedroom within the property but will be allocated to single family and not operated as an HMO

Any wheelchair accessible room (ground floor or accessed via a lift) should have wider doorways and space to allow access around the room for a wheelchair and a level access shower.

The service is looking to secure a number of rooms/properties that are pet friendly or flexibility that would allow short term use of accommodation for a family with pets. The service understands that this usage may attract a small premium to cover additional cleaning or insurance requirements.

3. PROCUREMENT PROCESS

Overview

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council is issuing this invitation to tender in order to appoint a suitability qualified contractor to deliver the requirement and outcomes as described in this document.

All tenders received (that are compliant i.e. submitted in accordance with the tendering instructions) will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria as set out below.

Tenders should be prepared and submitted (using Part B of this Invitation to Tender document) in accordance with section 5, Instructions for submitting a tender of this document.

At the Council's discretion, tenderers may be invited to clarify their tender, as an aid for evaluators to fully understand their offers. All tenderers should nonetheless take care to fully explain their offering in their tender submission.

The contract will be awarded to the tenderer which scores the highest marks following the evaluation of all tenders (in accordance with the scheme described in section 4, Evaluation of Tenders).

Indicative Procurement Timetable

The following indicative timetable is provided for tenderers' benefit. Please be aware that these are indicative timescales (with the exception of the deadlines in bold) and may be subject to change at the absolute discretion of the Council.

Task	Date
Issue of Invitation to Tender	4th July 2023
Closing date for clarification questions	26th July 2023 @ 17:00hrs
Closing date for receipt of tenders	2nd August 2023 @ 15:00hrs
Preliminary evaluation of tenders	3 rd to 10 th August 2023
Anticipated contract award	25 th August 2023
Commencement of contract/framework	1 st September 2023

4. EVALUATION OF TENDERS

Overview

All completed tenders received will be evaluated by officers of the Council (as appropriate).

In order to be transparent, and in order that tenderers fully understand how their tender submission will be evaluated, full details of the evaluation process are described below. Should any tenderer not understand any element, they should in first instance make contact with the Council as per the contact via the In-Tend Supplier Portal.

There are a number of minimum requirements which the Council will require Bidders to meet or exceed at the suitability stage and these are of a 'pass/fail' nature.

These minimum requirements are:

Regulations 57(1) and (2)

Regulation 57(3)

Regulation 57(8)

Modern Slavery Act 2015: Requirements under Modern Slavery Act 2015

Insurance

Any Tender submission which does not pass these minimum requirements will be rejected and not evaluated any further. The Tender submissions that do pass the minimum requirements will then be evaluated against the scored award criteria stated below.

The following price and quality weightings will be used to determine the most economically advantageous tender:

- Price 80%
- Quality 20%

The methodology for evaluating tender submissions against these criteria is as follows:

Price 80%

Price accounts for 80% of the total tender score.

The most competitive price will be awarded the full 80% award; this should be a fixed price for the required period.

All other prices will be scored on a pro-rata basis in comparison. The following calculation will be used:

Price Score = (lowest price bid / individual price bid) x 80.

Completion of the price schedule table will be assessed.

The below example illustrates how this methodology will work in principle:

Tenderer	Price	Formula = Lowest Price / Tenderers Price x Price Score	Price Score
A	£20,000	= £20,000 / £20,000 x 80	60
B	£25,000	= £20,000 / £25,000 x 80	48
C	£30,000	= £20,000 / £30,000 x 80	40

Please note that:

- Any Tender that is found to be abnormally low will be excluded from further consideration. In this instance, the Council will initially clarify with the Tenderer whether the pricing is correct and has been interpreted correctly. As part of the clarification, evidence will be required to demonstrate that the charges are accurate, achievable and sustainable. If, following the clarification, any charge is found to be abnormally low, that tender will be rejected in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 regardless of how many points it scores in all other aspects.

Quality 20%

Quality accounts for 20% of the total tender score. Tenderers will be asked to provide a response to the quality questions (Appendix A).

The quality questions are located within the online 'Award Criteria Questionnaire' on the In-Tend Supplier Portal which is available to Suppliers who 'Opt In' to the tender.

The quality questionnaire section will be assessed by reference to a number of answers supplied by the tenderer, in response to questions posed. There are 6 quality questions, with each of these having an equal weighting (more information is provided below).

When completing the questions tenderers must make sure that they answer what is being asked. Anything that is not directly relevant to the particular question should not be included, but wherever possible tenderers should demonstrate how they will go further than what is being asked for, to add value.

Tenders should also make sure that their answers inform not just what they will do, but how they will do it, and what their proposed timescales are (as relevant). It is useful to give examples or provide evidence to support your responses. The purpose should be to include as much relevant detail as required, so that the evaluation panel gets the fullest possible picture.

Each question will be evaluated individually, one by one in order. When scoring each statement, no consideration is given to information included in other answers so please do not cross reference to responses or information provided elsewhere in your tender submission.

Scoring Scale

Questions will be assessed on a scale of 0 to 5 marks, as detailed in the table below:

Score	Classification
0	An unanswered response or a response that does not fulfil the requirement in any way and is totally unacceptable.
1	An unsatisfactory response. The information provided gives rise to significant reservations as regards the Applicant's ability to meet the requirement and / or is inadequately substantiated.
2	Acceptable basic response with some reservations. The information provided shows that the Applicant has some ability to meet the requirement but some information is irrelevant or missing.
3	Good standard of response with some minor reservations. The information shows that the Applicant has the ability to meet the requirement, but some information has little relevance.
4	High standard response with a good level of substantiating information provided. The information is complete and sufficient to indicate that the Applicant is capable of fully meeting the requirement.
5	Exemplar response with a high level of substantiating information and detail provided. The information provided indicates that the Applicant is capable of exceeding the requirement.

All question responses will be scored by officers from the Council using the scoring table above with each score awarded entered onto the Sandwell In-tend Evaluation module. If more than one officer scores an individual question the In-tend system will calculate an average score (to 2 decimal places) for the question depending upon the scores submitted by each individual evaluator in accordance with the above table.

If more than one officer scores an individual question then the average score (to 2 decimal places) for that question shall then be used in the following quality evaluation.

Weightings

The questions are marked out of a total of 100 and the weighting is shown against each individual question and in the table below.

The weighting scored for each question will be calculated as per the following example:

Q 1

This question is weighted at 20 out of the total of 100.

Tenderer is awarded a mark of 3 out of a maximum of 5

$$3/5 \times 20 = \underline{12}$$

The scores awarded for each question will be totalled and then used in the following calculation to provide the tenderers weighted percentage for the quality assessment part of the evaluation:

Total of tenderers question scores/100 x 40 = Total percentage awarded for quality assessment.

Score	Classification
0	Unacceptable. The response demonstrates no understanding of social value relevant to the Sandwell area and people. The Tenderer identifies no activities which would engage the local community or achieve social benefit within the social value areas. The proposals are minimal, lack description and are not measureable or quantifiable.
1	Satisfactory. The response demonstrates a satisfactory understanding of social value relevant to the Sandwell area and people. The Tenderers response proposes to identify and participate in a limited range of activities which engage the local community and achieve social benefit. Proposals are limited in range and quantity, offer limited description, have no targets and are not clearly measureable or quantifiable, however, look to improve with advice and support.
3	Good. The response demonstrates a good understanding of social value relevant to the Sandwell area and people. The Tenderers response clearly proposes to identify and participate in a range of activities which engage the local community and achieve social benefit within social value areas. Proposals are descriptive and measureable but lack specific targets.
5	Excellent. The response demonstrates an excellent understanding of social value relevant to the Sandwell area and people. The Tenderer very clearly proposes to identify and participate in a full range of activities and innovative opportunities which engage the local community and achieve social benefit with the social value areas. Proposals have identified targets which are quantifiable and measureable.

Quality Question	Question Weighting
Q 1	20
Q 2	20
Q 3	15
Q 4	15
Q 5	20
Q6	10
TOTAL	100

Award of Contract

Upon conclusion of the evaluation, up to twenty tenderers with the lowest price who have passed the suitability pass / fail stage will be offered a place on the framework.

The tenderers to be offered a place on the framework will be advised accordingly via the Intend Supplier Portal. Such award, offered pursuant to this Invitation to Tender, will be on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender, based on the evaluation criteria described above.

Tenderers whom it is proposed will not be offered the contract will be advised of this via the Intend Supplier Portal and will be entitled to receive feedback on relative merits and characteristics of their tender submission compared with that of the accepted tender.

The Council does not bind itself to accept the lowest or any tender, and unless a tenderer expressly states that a partial award will not be acceptable, then the right is reserved to accept a tender in part.

Upon conclusion of all the above stages, a formal contract will be entered into between the Council and the successful tenderer. The terms and conditions governing the contract will be those issued by the Council as part of this Tender document. Unless and until a formal contract is prepared and executed, the tenderer's tender submission, together with the Council's acceptance thereof, shall constitute a binding contract between the parties. Please see Section 7 for further details on the terms and conditions.

5. INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING AND SUBMITTING A TENDER

To enable evaluating officers to fully assess the tenderer's suitability, all of the information requested in this invitation to tender must be provided. Failure to complete the tender submission in full or failure to provide any of the documents requested may result in your tender being rejected. Questions should be answered as instructed:

- Please answer every question
- Questions must be answered in English
- Any figures requested should be stated in full (i.e. £4,000,000 not £4m) and in GBP.
- If the question does not apply to you please enter N/A; if you don't know the answer please enter N/K.

1. Clarification Questions

All enquiries relating to the completion of this Tender should be submitted as a correspondence on the Intend Supplier Portal no later than 17:00 hours on 26th July 2023. The Council is under no obligation to respond to clarification enquiries received after this date.

All enquiries received and responses provided may be circulated to all Tenderers. If a Tenderer believes an enquiry relates to a confidential aspect of their submission, it must mark the enquiry as "confidential". If the Council agrees that the enquiry should be answered confidentially, the Council will send a response only to the Tenderer that submitted the enquiry.

2. Submission of Tender

Completed Tenders should be submitted using the Sandwell In-tend Supplier Portal by no later than 15:00 hours on 2nd August 2023. Please note that an offer made in any format other than submission through the Sandwell In-Tend portal will be rejected.

All documents that require signatures must be correctly signed and scanned in before being uploaded.

Please allow sufficient time for submissions to be made before the closing time and date of the tender. It is the tenderers responsibility to ensure that it uploads and submits the completed tender, mandatory and relevant attachments.

Tenderers are required to name any attachments with a title requested within the relevant question of the Questionnaire.

Additional documents, including Promotional material should not be submitted unless specifically requested.

Please note the Intend Supplier Portal will lock down once the closing date and time has finished and you will not be able to submit any part of your Tender response thereafter.

The time remaining for tender submissions will be displayed on the In-tend Supplier portal and you will receive automatic email notifications 10, 5 and 1 day prior to the closing date. If tenderers have problems in using the In-tend Supplier Portal they may contact the help desk on +44 844 272 8810.

Only the information contained within this invitation to tender or otherwise communicated in writing by the Council to the tenderer should be considered when submitting your tender.

Any information and/or documents submitted on or with this tender must relate to the tenderer only – the tenderer being the organisation which it is proposed will enter into a formal contract should their tender be successful. (All responses and submissions provided by the tenderer will form part of that contract). The Council may seek further clarification from the tenderer following submission of completed forms where required.

6. CONDITIONS OF TENDER

In submitting a response to this Invitation to Tender, tenderers do so in accordance with the conditions set out below. In the event of any breach of the conditions the Council shall be entitled to terminate any arrangement made as a result of such tender and to claim damages accordingly.

The terms and conditions entered into with the successful contractor will be those issued by the Council as part of this Tender document.

Warnings and disclaimers

- Tenderers should consider only the information contained within this invitation to tender, or otherwise communicated in writing to tenderers, when preparing their tender.
- Information supplied by the Council (whether in this document or otherwise) is supplied for general guidance in the preparation of tenders. Tenderers must satisfy themselves by their own investigations with regard to the accuracy of such information. The Council cannot accept responsibility for any inaccurate information obtained by tenderers.

Tenderer conduct and conflicts of interest

- Tenderers shall not, before the date and time specified for return of the tender, communicate to any person the amount or approximate amount of the tender or proposed tender, except where the disclosure in confidence of the approximate amount of tender is necessary to obtain insurance cover.
- The tender shall be a bona-fide tender and shall not be fixed or adjusted by or under or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other person.
- Tenderers shall not enter into any agreement or arrangement with any other person with the intent that the other person shall refrain from tendering or agree as to the amount of any other tender to be submitted.
- Tenderers must not, in connection with the proposed contract:
 - offer any inducement, fee or reward to any member or officer of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - do anything which would constitute a breach of the Bribery Act 2010 or the Section 117 (2) Local Government Act 1972, or
 - canvass any of the persons referred to above in connection with the contract; or contact any member or officer of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council or any person acting as an advisor to Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (except as authorised by this Invitation to Tender for the purpose of asking genuine questions about the process or the contract) about any aspect of the proposed contract or for soliciting information in connection therewith.
- Tenderers are responsible for ensuring that no conflicts of interest exist between the tenderer and its advisors and the Council and its advisors. Any tenderer who fails to comply with this requirement may be disqualified from the procurement process at the discretion of the Council.

Tenderer's responsibility to submit a complete tender

- It is the tenderer's responsibility to ensure that their submitted tender is complete, prepared and submitted in accordance with the instructions contained herein, and signed and dated where required. The Council are not obliged to consider any tender which is incomplete or not prepared or submitted in accordance with the said instructions, but at its sole discretion the Council may offer a tenderer who submits such a tender an opportunity to remedy the omission before evaluation of the tender takes place, provided that in the judgement of the Council this does not adversely affect the integrity and fairness of the tender exercise.
- Unless specifically withdrawn in writing, tenders shall remain open for acceptance for a period of 120 days from the return date.

Bid costs

- The Council will not be liable for any tender costs, expenditure, work, or effort incurred by a tenderer in proceeding with or participating in this procurement process, including if the procurement process is terminated or amended by the Council.

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council's rights

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council reserves the right to

- Seek additional information or clarification from tenderers at any time during the tender process.
- Disqualify any tenderer that does not submit a compliant tender, in accordance with the instructions given in this invitation to tender.
- Disqualify any tenderer that is guilty of serious misrepresentation in relation to its tender, expression of interest, the application form or the procurement process.
- Withdraw this invitation to tender at any time, and to re-invite tenders on the same or any alternative basis.
- Choose not to award any contract as a result of the procurement process.
- Make whatever changes it sees fit to the timetable, structure or content of the procurement process.
- Retain copies of all tender submissions to satisfy its audit obligations and for other purposes.

Confidentiality and Freedom of Information Act

- This invitation to tender is made available on condition that its contents (including the fact that the tenderer has received this invitation to tender) is kept confidential by the tenderer and is not copied, reproduced, distributed or passed to any other person at any time, except for the purpose of enabling the tenderer to submit a tender.
- As a public body, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in respect of information it holds (including third-party information). Any member of the public or other interested party may make a request for information.
- The Council shall treat all tenderers' responses as confidential during the procurement process. Requests for information received following the procurement process shall be considered on a case-by-case basis, applying the principles of the FOIA.
- While the Council aims to consult with third-party providers of information before it is disclosed, it cannot guarantee that this will be done. Therefore, tenderers are responsible for ensuring that any confidential or commercially sensitive information has been clearly identified to the Council in the form provided in the Tender Submission Document (i.e. the Freedom of Information Exclusion Schedule).
- Tenderers should be aware that, in compliance with its transparency obligations, the Council may publish details of its contract(s), including the contract values and the identities of its suppliers on its website.
- More information is available on www.ico.org.uk

Publicity

- No publicity regarding the contractor the award of any contract will be permitted unless and until the Council has given express written consent to the relevant communication. For example, no statements may be made to the media regarding the nature of any tender, its contents or any proposals relating to it without the prior written consent of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council.

7. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

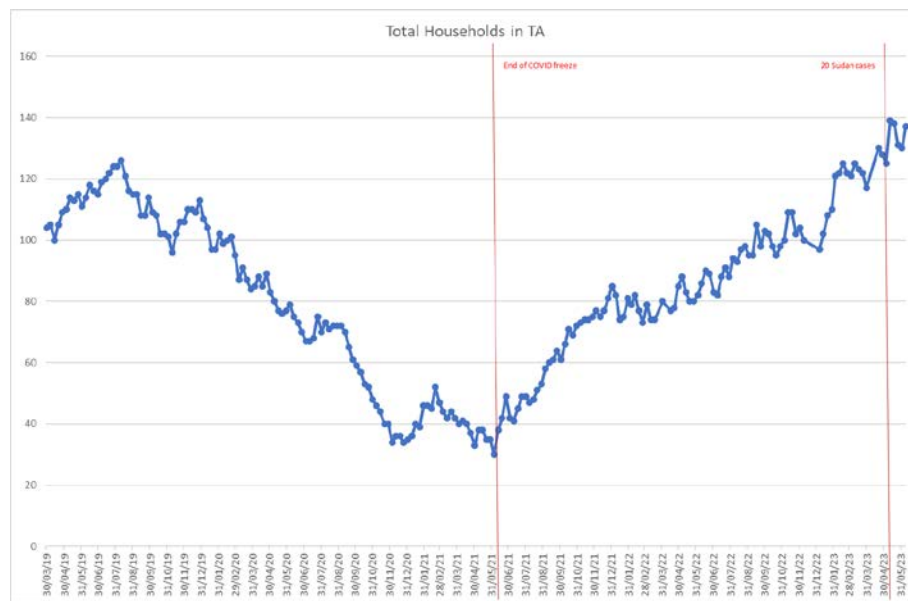
By submitting a bid, tenderers are agreeing to be bound by the terms and conditions without further negotiation or amendment and must sign the Tendering Declaration accordingly.

Should a qualification of offer be made to change the terms and conditions by any tenderer, then grounds will exist to exclude should bids from further consideration.

Temporary Accommodation Trends

Nationally, there has been a 74% rise in temporary accommodation in the last 10 years. 68% of families living in temporary accommodation have been there for over a year. Data shows that (63% of individuals living within temporary accommodation has had a negative impact on their mental health. (51% say that it has had a negative impact on their physical health and 39% say that living in temporary accommodation has made it harder to access healthcare appointments.

Within Sandwell there has been an increase in temporary accommodation from June 2021 with 122 households within this accommodation type at the end of March 2023. The chart below shows the trend over the last four years:



The chart above shows a gradual decline in TA numbers from August 2019 to an all-time low of 30 units in May 2021. This was achieved through both the eviction freeze due to COVID (and predominantly PRS sector) and piloting a new operating model and the associated reduction in demand from 8% of presentations to 4%. In June 2021 significant latent demand in the system started to come through (as the freeze ended) and this continued throughout the next 12 to 18 months. The gradual increase in number of households in TA plateaued in February 2023 and remained within about 8 households for next three months,

which was largely maintained until we placed 20 Sudanese households as part of the evacuation.

Figure 1 highlights the yearly trend of household in temporary accommodation placed by Sandwell Council’s housing solutions team and the net change. Figure 2 echoes the national rise in number of households placed in TA.

Figure 1

Year	Number	% change
Mar-20	87	
Mar-21	44	-49%
Mar-22	74	68%
Mar-23	122	65%

Figure 2



In figure 1, The table shows that the service saw 49% less households in TA from March 2020 to March 2021 with a decrease from 87 households to 44. The following year saw an increase of 68% in placements moving the figure to 74 households. As of March this year, the number of households in TA placed by Sandwell Council’s housing solutions service was at 122, which is a further 65% increase.

It is important to note that whilst Sandwells proportion is increasing, the borough has less than half the number per 1000 households when compared to the all England rate. Sandwell has 0.92 h/holds per 1000 in TA compared to 15.98 households living in temporary accommodation in London and 2.06 households in the Rest of England.

Sandwell Council's Temporary Accommodation Policy

Sandwell Borough Council's Temporary Accommodation Policy

Sandwell Borough Council's (the Council) temporary accommodation policy is divided into two parts:

- A. The Allocation of Temporary Accommodation (Part A)
- B. The Procurement of Temporary Accommodation (Part B)

A. The Allocation of Temporary Accommodation

1. Background

Part A sets out how the Council will meet its responsibilities to provide temporary accommodation to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Part A will ensure that Sandwell Borough Council procures sufficient units of temporary accommodation to meet the anticipated demand annually. Part A has been produced having had regard to the Council's [Prevention of Homelessness Strategy and Review 2018-21](#).

Part A will be reviewed annually or whenever new statute is enacted, along with Part B which it compliments.

2. Legislative Content

Part A has been drafted having had regard to the following legislation and statutory guidance (this list is not meant to be exhaustive):

1. Housing Act 1996, Part 7 Homelessness
2. Homelessness Act 2002
3. Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities (2006)
4. Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) Order 1996
5. Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003
6. Localism Act 2011 (Commencement No 2 and Transitional Provisions) (England) Order 2012
7. Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012
8. Supplementary Guidance on Changes in Localism Act 2011 and Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012 (2012)
9. Supplementary Guidance on Domestic Abuse and Homelessness (2014)
10. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

Part A has been drafted with due consideration to the judgment handed down by the Supreme Court in the case of *Nzolamesso v Westminster City Council* April 2015.

Part A has been drafted with due consideration to the advice published in 2014 by the Local Government Ombudsman contained within the report 'No Place Like Home: Council's use of unsuitable bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless families and young people'.

Part A covers the procurement of temporary accommodation by Sandwell Council to perform duties under the following section of the Housing Act 1996, Part 7:

1. Section 188 – provision of interim accommodation provided to applicants where there is a reason to believe they are homeless, eligible and in priority need pending the conclusion of enquiries
2. Section 190(2) – provision of accommodation provided for a reasonable period to applicants who are intentional homeless but in priority need to allow a reasonable period of time to identify alternative accommodation
3. Section 193(2) – provision of accommodation to applicants owed the main housing duty, until this duty is brought to an end.

Part A also extends to the procurement of temporary accommodation by Sandwell Council to enact any temporary accommodation powers available to the local authority under Housing Act 1996, Part 7.

For the purpose of Part A, the act of procuring temporary accommodation is defined as obtaining dwellings by way of purchase and/or lease for the purpose of fulfilling statutory accommodation duties and/or enacting discretionary powers towards homeless applicant households. This definition extends to the same acts undertaken by third parties, which may include other public bodies or private companies. This also encompasses accessing accommodation procured by other public bodies (e.g. Lancashire County Council) for the provision of accommodation-based housing related support services.

3. Allocation of Temporary Accommodation

In allocating temporary accommodation the Council will treat each case on an individual basis and will endeavour to allocate temporary accommodation considered to be the most suitable for the applicant together with anyone who resides or might reasonably be expected to reside with them, based upon the availability of accommodation within the Council's temporary accommodation portfolio.

The accompanying Part B deals with the procurement of dwellings for the Council's temporary accommodation portfolio.

No pets will be allowed, except assistance dogs for the disabled. The applicant household will be supported to re-home any pets prior to occupation of temporary accommodation.

4. Principles and Objectives

Within the constraints of the local housing market, the Council's overall aim is to move residents of temporary accommodation on to permanent accommodation, as quickly as possible whilst also ensuring that this is only done at a time when the household is able to sustain permanent accommodation.

The Council also aims to:

1. Prevent homelessness
2. Minimise the risk of homelessness recurring
3. Not place applicants in temporary accommodation unnecessarily
4. Minimise time spent in temporary accommodation
5. Avoid moves between different dwellings of temporary accommodation, particularly for households with children (unless the move is in the best interests of the family).

4.1 Principles

The Council seeks to:

1. Ensure its temporary accommodation policy and procedures reflect the legal framework, comply with statutory guidance, and other relevant guidance, case law and good practice.
2. Be consistent in the application of the policy
3. Comply with the Equality Act 2010, which covers eight protected characteristics - age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation - and will not discriminate against service users.
4. Comply duties arising from Children Act 2004 section 11
5. Have a policy that is capable of responding to a wide range of complex individual needs and circumstances.

4.2 Objectives

1. To provide good quality temporary accommodation
2. To enable applicants to have a home of their own which, meets their needs and enables them to live independently.
3. To provide for the particular needs of applicants and their families, especially applicants of a young age and persons who currently find it difficult to access or sustain any form of accommodation – **such as people with problematic alcohol or drug use, people with mental health problems and people with challenging behaviour.**
4. To ensure applicants have **the information and support** required while in temporary accommodation.

4.3 Standards

The Council will:

1. Be sensitive to applicants' individual needs and circumstances, and ensure people are treated with dignity and respect.
2. Work effectively and jointly with other services provided by the Council and other public bodies or private and third sector organisations.
3. Provide opportunities for applicants to have their views heard and taken into account.
4. Follow Customer Service Standards at all times and any specific Homelessness Charter that might have been adopted.
5. Will satisfy any public sector equality duty owed under Equality Act 2010
6. Will satisfy any safeguarding or welfare duty owed under Children Act 2004.

4.6 Physical Standards

All temporary accommodation (where possible) will:

1. Meet the **physical or sensory disability requirements of applicants and any member of their household.**
2. Comply with relevant housing quality standards including health and safety, hygiene and fire legislation and regulations.
3. Provide units that are secure with individual locks so people feel they and their belongings are safe. The occupancy / tenancy agreement will include an agreed minimum amount of notice a landlord must give before accessing a person's property and under what circumstances they would give such notice. This will be at least **24 hours.**

4. Have sufficient bedroom space to meet the needs of the household as far as possible.
5. Have adequate communal living space, which includes, for example, space for children to play or do homework.
6. Have individual bathroom / toilet facilities for a household
7. Have access to on-site laundry facilities.
8. Have a suitable standard of furniture to meet the families' needs.
9. Have a minimum standard of cleanliness and decoration.
10. Have sufficient and affordable heating systems at an acceptable efficiency rating.
11. Be accessible 24 hours a day.

4.6.2 Shared housing for 3 or more unrelated people will have a Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMO) license. This license will be displayed on the premises.

5. Allocation Principles

5.1 Suitability

In allocating temporary accommodation, the Council will consider the applicant and his or her household's particular needs. In ensuring that the accommodation is suitable Sandwell Council will consider the needs of the applicant together with any other person who is part of the applicant's family who normally resides with him or her, and anyone else who might reasonably be expected to reside with him or her. The Council will determine who resides or might reasonably be expected to reside with an applicant, based on the facts available on the date temporary accommodation is offered.

Following an allocation of temporary accommodation, should new facts emerge about anyone residing with or anyone reasonably be expected to reside with an applicant following the allocation of temporary accommodation, a decision will be made as whether alternative temporary accommodation is required. At all times the Council will ensure temporary accommodation provided to applicants is suitable. Applicants accessing temporary accommodation will be expected to engage with support services that are available and funded by the local authority during their occupation of temporary accommodation.

5.1 Location

Wherever possible households will be allocated temporary accommodation that is in a reasonable proximity to the area from which they became homeless (providing it is safe to do so), recognising the constraints local authorities have when sourcing temporary accommodation based on local circumstances and stock options they have available to them, for example the organisation which is supplying that stock. The Council will endeavour to ensure that children are able to continue to access their current school, and where this is not possible will provide advice and assistance in arranging a transfer to an alternative school. Sandwell Council will also endeavour to ensure that working households are still able to access their employment. On occasions this may result in the nearest unit of temporary accommodation being obtained in a neighbouring local authority district.

All temporary accommodation provided is located so that the main services used by a household can be reached by foot or by public transport. Services include supermarket or convenience store, doctors, dentists, schools or other health providers, advice agencies (where applicable). The location of the property will take

into account the needs the applicant and all household members in terms of reasonable access to place of employment and formal or informal support networks, and, for applicants with children, easy access to schools or nursery.

The location of the allocated accommodation takes into account the social and economic needs of the household. These factors will be equally weighted alongside other matters and will not be the primary or overruling issues used to determine the suitability of accommodation to be allocated. Cultural or religious needs will be identified and where possible will be met through the location of accommodation. These factors will be equally weighted alongside other matters and will not be the primary or overruling issues to determine the suitability of accommodation to be allocated.

While the Council will take into account areas of preference expressed by the applicant when allocating temporary accommodation; it will not always be possible to meet such requests due to the fact that only a limited number of temporary accommodation units will be available at any one time. **The limited availability of properties in rural locations might mean on some occasions that temporary accommodation is provided in a nearby town instead.**

Where an applicant has to be placed away from their existing networks due to availability of temporary accommodation; the Council may be able to assist them in moving to a more ideally located unit of temporary accommodation should it become available. The Council will also take into consideration the risk of the applicant in suffering harassment or violence and any particular vulnerability of the applicant together with their household, if placed in certain geographic areas when considering suitability.

When allocating temporary accommodation the Council will take the following into consideration

1. The significance of disruption to employment, account will be taken of their need to reach their normal workplace from the accommodation secured.
2. The significance of disruption to caring responsibilities, account will be taken of the type and importance of the care applicants provide, or they or usual household member might receive, and the likely impact the withdrawal would cause.
3. Medical facilities and other support currently provided for the applicant and their household. The Council will consider the potential impact on the health and wellbeing of an applicant or any person reasonably expected to reside with them, were such support removed or medical facilities were no longer accessible. The Council will also consider whether similar facilities are accessible and available near the accommodation being offered and whether there would be any specific difficulties in the applicant or person residing with them using those essential facilities, compared to the support they are currently receiving

5.3 Children

When exercising any temporary accommodation duties the Council will ensure compliance with section 11(2) of the Children Act 2004. On all occasions when offering a dwelling to fulfil a temporary accommodation duty Sandwell Council will have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. For the sake of clarity welfare encompasses physical, psychological, social, educational and economic welfare. This does not, however, mean that the children's welfare will be the paramount or even a primary consideration. However safeguarding and welfare issues will be equally weighted alongside all other evidence to identify suitable accommodation.

5.4 Placements In or Out of Area Criteria

Households will be given priority for a placement in area if they meet the following criteria. Please note this does not mean that they are guaranteed to receive an offer of 'in area' accommodation when any temporary accommodation duty arises. It may be that at the time any temporary accommodation duty is owed there are no vacancies in area and if this is the case an offer of suitable temporary accommodation will be made as close as possible with priority given to any household that meets one or more of the criteria set out below, to be given a suitable offer of temporary accommodation within area as soon as is reasonably practicable to do so.

The 'in area placement criteria'

- 1) Households with one child (or more) in secondary school in their final year of Key Stage 4 (generally Year 11) with exams to be taken within the next six months. Wherever practicable we will seek to place such households within area and as close as possible to existing schools to minimise public transport travelling distance and costs.
- 2) Households with one child (or more) who has a Statement of Special Educational Needs who is receiving education or educational support in our area and where a change of schools would be extremely detrimental to their well-being because either the impact of moving on that child or that a similar package of support is unlikely to be available. Wherever practicable we will seek to place such households within area and as close as possible to existing schools to minimise public transport travelling distance and costs
- 3) Households with significant medical or severe learning disability where a child attends a special school. Wherever practicable we will seek to place such households within area and as close as possible to existing schools to minimise public transport travelling distance and costs
- 4) Households where one person (or more) has a severe and enduring mental health problem where they are receiving psychiatric treatment and aftercare provided by community mental health services and have an established support network in this area so that a placement outside of this area may severely impact on their wellbeing.
- 5) Households where one person (or more) is in permanent and settled employment This group will be prioritised for temporary accommodation as close as possible to their workplace. Where this is not possible we will endeavour to place a household no more than 60 minutes by public transport away from their place of employment and will continue to seek suitable accommodation closer to their place of work.
- 6) Households who have a longstanding arrangement to provide care and support to another family member in the local area, and that person would be likely to require statutory health and social care support if that care and support ceased and there are no other relatives willing and able to provide that care and no other suitable alternative arrangements available.

o Please note the following:

1. The above categories do not mean that no other special circumstances will be taken into account. Whenever an applicant is owed an interim or full temporary accommodation duty a full assessment will be carried out of their household's housing needs and circumstances. Following that assessment it may be decided that an applicant should qualify for a local area offer for a special reason despite not meeting the criteria set.
2. The time likely to be spent in the accommodation will also be taken into account when determining the suitability of any offer of temporary accommodation out of area.

3. Where there are no in area temporary accommodation units immediately available which meets the household's identified needs, a homeless household may be placed on an emergency basis into accommodation in any location where there is availability on that day as long as it has been assessed as being suitable.

4. Households in receipt of welfare benefits or who may be on a low income may be subject to restrictions on the amount of benefit they can receive, which may affect their ability to pay their temporary accommodation rent. Placement in a local area is subject to suitable accommodation being available that the applicant can afford.

5. Given the shortage of available properties, it may be required to make a decision regarding how to prioritise the allocation of a particular property on a particular day where more than one household requires temporary accommodation and more than one household meets the local area criteria set out above. The following circumstances will be taken into account when prioritising between households. The circumstances listed are not in descending order of importance and do not form an exclusive set of criteria as other factors may also be relevant:

- Level of need relating to the welfare and safeguarding of any children in the household
- Level of educational need
- Identified risks posed by living in particular areas
- Permanency/flexibility of employment
- Access to transport
- Level of need to be close to services and amenities
- Level of need to be close to health services
- Level of need to be close to support networks
- Level of need to be close to cultural or religious amenities
- Impact on caring responsibilities
- Affordability of the accommodation
- Impact of the relocation, and of occupying the accommodation on a continuing basis, on the well-being of household members
- Impact of the relocation, and of occupying the accommodation on a continuing basis, on the well-being of any children in the household, having regard to the Council's duty under the Children Act 2004 to safeguard and promote their well-being

The impact of these and any other relevant circumstances will be considered both individually and cumulatively.

5.5 Domestic Abuse & Harassment

In cases where homelessness is due to domestic abuse and the applicant is not able to stay in the current home, the Council may need to consider the need for alternative accommodation whose location can be kept a secret and which has security measures and appropriately trained staff to protect the occupants.

For applicants who have suffered domestic violence who are accommodated in an emergency in hostels or bed and breakfast accommodation, the accommodation should be where possible gender-specific as well as have appropriate security measures. In cases where homelessness is due to domestic abuse or other actual violence or threats of violence it may be in the best interests of the applicant to place them in temporary accommodation outside of the Sandwell local authority area. This will be agreed with the applicant and any other professionals (e.g. Police or domestic abuse advocates) and a safe location will be identified.

5.6 Type of Temporary Accommodation

In allocating temporary accommodation the Council will consider the needs of the applicant together with their household. In particular it will take into account any physical or mental health needs in identifying any special requirements to the property, and access to specialist services essential to the wellbeing of the applicant and their household, including:

1. Level access
2. Adaptations to kitchens & bathrooms
3. Layout of the accommodation, including any internal stairs
4. Access to the accommodation
5. Location of the accommodation in relation to access to essential health or support services
6. Issues that may exacerbate any issues relating physical or mental health or old age

5.7 Size of Accommodation

Sandwell Council will ensure that when allocating temporary accommodation that it is of an appropriate size for the applicant together with their household. Making a calculation using both the bedroom and space standard tests will be used to inform the overall number of rooms required for each applicant household

When making this decision the Council will take into account any general shortage of accommodation available to the Council and the nature of accommodation available. Due to the emergency nature of temporary accommodation placements and the fact that only a limited number of properties will be available at any given time, living rooms and dining rooms may therefore need to be used as bedrooms. Where households are placed in accommodation that is smaller than their bedroom needs, support and practical assistance (i.e. bunk beds) will be provided until they can be moved to a larger unit of temporary accommodation. Households will not be placed into accommodation of such a size that it would result in statutory overcrowding.

5.8 Physical Condition of the Property

The Council will ensure that all of its temporary accommodation is of a good standard and complies with relevant housing quality standards including health and safety, hygiene and fire legislation and regulations.

5.9 Bed & Breakfast

Through effective management of the temporary accommodation the Council's disposal, the use of any Bed and Breakfast establishment will be kept to an absolute minimum. Where Bed & Breakfast accommodation is used it will only be done so in an emergency, where no other suitable accommodation is available. As soon as alternative accommodation is made available the applicant will be moved.

5.9.3. Households with dependent children and/or a pregnant woman will not be placed in Bed & Breakfast accommodation except in an emergency. In situations where they are placed in Bed & Breakfast this will be for no longer than 6 weeks. If Bed and Breakfast accommodation is used, it will be for as short a time period as possible.

5.10 Cost

The Council will ensure that temporary accommodation is affordable, and will therefore consider each household's income and reach a conclusion as to what will be affordable, based on any savings the household might have, plus income received from employment and any benefits they may be entitled to claim.

Sandwell Council accepts that accommodation will not be suitable if the applicant's net income, after payment of housing costs, would be significantly less than Income Support or Jobseekers Allowance levels (e.g. significantly exceeds the Overall Benefit Cap for claimants in receipt of Universal Credit). Nor will it be suitable if the applicant would not be able to afford basic essentials such as food, clothing, heating or transport as well as the costs of the accommodation. Applicants will be advised of the costs associated with temporary accommodation including eligible and ineligible costs.

5.11 Change of circumstances

Any change of circumstances that affects an applicant's needs in relation to temporary accommodation will be considered on a case-by-case basis. An assessment of what is reasonable with regard to the above guidance will be made.

The Council's duty is to the applicant and the provision of temporary accommodation to meet their needs. However, Sandwell Council recognise that due to the length of time applicants spend in temporary accommodation, their circumstances may change to the extent that alternative temporary accommodation is needed. Changes in circumstances that make the temporary accommodation unsuitable will be given priority for a move to alternative temporary accommodation.

5.12 Management Standards

1. A written occupancy agreement will be provided and explained to the household for Council owned or managed TA.
2. Repairs procedures will be provided to the household for Council owned or managed TA.
3. Notice periods will comply with the law and good practice for Council owned or managed TA.
4. When households move in or are relocated the Council will seek to ensure minimum disruption to the household.
5. The Council will provide advice and assistance to protect households personal possessions where required

5.13 Offers and Refusals

An applicant will receive **one reasonable offer of TA**. The Council considers a reasonable offer of accommodation to be accommodation that meets the applicant household's needs, based on the information held in relation to the applicant's homeless application at the time of allocation. Applicants will be notified of their rights and timescales to seek a review or appeal any decision made about the suitability of temporary accommodation offered or provided. Applicants will be informed where they obtain assistance to take this action and how to go about requesting a review or appeal.

Applicants will be notified of their responsibilities and informed of the penalties that can be imposed by the Courts for withholding or providing false information and the impact that will have on their temporary accommodation provided.

5.14 Length of stay in temporary accommodation

Where there is an interim duty to accommodate (as described in Housing Act 1996 Part 7 Section 188), applicants will be provided with temporary accommodation until:

1. The investigation into their homeless application is complete
2. The outcome of any review is known
3. A penalty will be awarded against applicant household found to be in breach of their occupation agreement
4. Action will be taken against applicant who fraudulently gain temporary accommodation

Where there is a temporary duty to accommodate following a decision of intentional homeless but in priority need (as described in Housing Act 1996 Part 7 Section 190) applicants will be provided with temporary accommodation until:

1. a reasonable period of time has elapsed that will allow them to secure their own accommodation (taking account of the local housing conditions e.g. the availability of alternative accommodation and the personal circumstances of the applicant, which may affect their ability to secure accommodation).

5.14.3 Where there is the main duty to secure accommodation (as described in Housing Act 1996 Part 7 Section 193(2) applicants will be provided with temporary accommodation until:

1. They cease to be eligible for assistance
2. They become homeless intentionally from the accommodation provided
3. They otherwise voluntarily ceases to occupy the accommodation provided as his/her only or principal home
4. They accept an offer of accommodation under Housing Act 1996 Part 6 (allocation of housing accommodation)
5. They accept an offer of an assured tenancy
6. They accept an offer of suitable private rented sector accommodation (by means to an assured shorthold tenancy which is of a minimum term of 12 months and includes a break clause should the accommodation deemed to be not suitable).
7. They refuse a final offer of suitable accommodation under Housing Act 1996 Part 6 (allocation of housing accommodation) where they has been informed of the possible consequences of refusal and of their right to request a review of the suitability of the accommodation
8. They refuse an offer of suitable private rented sector accommodation (by means to an assured shorthold tenancy which is of a minimum term of 12 months and includes a break clause should the accommodation deemed to be not suitable) where they have been informed of the possible consequences of refusal and been notified them that they have discharged their duty.

An applicant's temporary accommodation will also be brought to an end when an applicant sources his or her own private sector accommodation for a 6 month period and using the local authorities rent bond/rent in advance support?

5.15 Request for change of temporary accommodation

If the temporary accommodation available does not meet the needs of the applicant, this will be assessed by the Housing Options Team Leader/or Strategic Housing Manager.

It is likely that a very limited number of temporary accommodation options will be available at any one time. For this reason, the applicant will be advised that it may not be possible to meet their preferences in relation to temporary accommodation and, whilst any preferences will be taken into account, there are no guarantees. Applicants will be provided with what is reasonable based on the temporary accommodation that is available.

Any decision to prioritise an applicant already in temporary accommodation for a move to alternative temporary accommodation will take into any special social, medical, employment, family or other issues. If temporary accommodation becomes available, requests for changes will be verified. If the accommodation will meet the needs of an applicant who has requested a change, this move should be considered. The move can only take place if it will not place an undue strain on remaining resources. The move should not take place, if it will result in the need for another temporary accommodation unit being set up.

6.0 Refusal of Temporary Accommodation

If an applicant refuses an offer of temporary accommodation any of the following duties may come to an end:

1. Section 188 interim accommodation duty.
2. Section 190(2) duty to accommodate for reasonable period.
3. Section 193(2) main housing duty.

The applicant will be notified in writing of the possible consequences of refusal, and advised of their right to request a review of the suitability of the accommodation. Applicants will be encouraged to accept the offer of temporary accommodation, and request a review of the suitability if they consider it to not be appropriate. On this basis if their review request is unsuccessful they are able to continue to occupy the accommodation.

6.4 If the accommodation is refused and upon review the Council is satisfied that the accommodation is suitable the Council will notify the applicant in writing that they are no longer subject the section 193(2) duty. No further offer of temporary accommodation will be made available.

7.0 Review of Policy

The Council will review part A as often as needed or on an annual basis, or when new legislation is enacted, to ensure that its allocation of temporary accommodation meets need and demand effectively.

B. The Procurement of Temporary Accommodation

1. Background

Part B sets out how Sandwell Council will meet its responsibilities to provide temporary accommodation to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Part B will ensure that Sandwell Council procures sufficient units of temporary accommodation to meet the anticipated demand annually. Part B has

been produced having had regard to the Council's Prevention of Homelessness Strategy and Review 2018-21.

Part B will be reviewed annually or whenever new statute is enacted, along with Part A which it compliments.

2.0 Legislative Context

Part B has been drafted having had regard to the following legislation and statutory guidance (this list is not meant to be exhaustive):

1. Housing Act 1996, Part 7 Homelessness
2. Homelessness Act 2002
3. Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities (2006)
4. Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) Order 1996
5. Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003
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8. Supplementary Guidance on Changes in Localism Act 2011 and Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012 (2012)
9. Supplementary Guidance on Domestic Abuse and Homelessness (2014)
10. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

Part B has been drafted with due consideration to the judgment handed down by the Supreme Court in the case of *Nzolamesso v Westminster City Council* April 2015.

Part B has been drafted with due consideration to the advice published in 2014 by the Local Government Ombudsman contained within the report 'No Place Like Home: Council's use of unsuitable bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless families and young people'.

Part B covers the procurement of temporary accommodation by Sandwell Council to perform duties under the following section of the Housing Act 1996, Part 7:

1. Section 188 – provision of interim accommodation provided to applicants where there is a reason to believe they are homeless, eligible and in priority need pending the conclusion of enquiries
2. Section 190(2) – provision of accommodation provided for a reasonable period to applicants who are intentional homeless but in priority need to allow a reasonable period of time to identify alternative accommodation
3. Section 193(2) – provision of accommodation to applicants owed the main housing duty, until this duty is brought to an end.

Part B also extends to the procurement of temporary accommodation by Sandwell Council to enact any temporary accommodation powers available to the local authority under Housing Act 1996, Part 7.

For the purpose of Part B, the act of procuring temporary accommodation is defined as obtaining dwellings by way of purchase and/or lease for the purpose of fulfilling statutory accommodation duties and/or enacting discretionary powers towards homeless applicant households. This definition extends to the same acts undertaken by third parties, which may include other public bodies or private companies. This also encompasses accessing accommodation procured by other public bodies (e.g. Lancashire County Council) for the provision of accommodation-based housing related support services.

3. Provision of Temporary Accommodation

The Council will procure temporary accommodation by deploying Council employees to procure temporary accommodation.

The Council will procure the provision of temporary accommodation in the following ways:

1. The Council itself will provide units of accommodation from its own stock, and/or
2. Social landlords will provide units of accommodation from their own stock, and/or
3. Third sector organisations will provide units of accommodation from their own stock, and or
4. A mixture of the above arrangements.

The Council will manage the temporary accommodation by entering into the following arrangements:

1. Sandwell Council itself will manage the temporary accommodation portfolio, and/or
2. A social landlord will manage the temporary accommodation portfolio, and/or
3. A mixture of the above arrangements

Location of Temporary Accommodation

- 3.1 The predominantly used temporary accommodation will be sited within the Council's administrative boundaries;
- 3.2 Temporary accommodation will be procured in the areas from which homelessness is known to most commonly occur. the Council will use its P1E/H-Clic data and other sources of intelligence to identify the wards from which homelessness occurs and will endeavour to ensure temporary accommodation is made available within these areas or as near as possible, wherever it is practicable to do so. On occasions this may result in the nearest unit of temporary accommodation being obtained in a neighbouring local authority district.

The Council will ensure that temporary accommodation provided is located so that the main services used by an applicant and their household can be reached by foot or by public transport, doctors, dentists or other health providers, advice agencies (where applicable), schools. The suitability of the Council's provision of temporary accommodation will be reviewed as part of future Prevention of Homelessness Strategy adopted by the local authority, or when any new statute comes into force.

4. Bed & Breakfast Hotel Accommodation

Bed & Breakfast accommodation will not be used except in an emergency. Where this does become necessary the Council will ensure it has a list of approved premises within the local authority area. **These Bed & Breakfast premises will be inspected by the Council annually (or more often if required) to ensure that they meet the minimum standards as set out within Part B. The Council will write to each Bed & Breakfast owner to advise them of the minimum standards and to confirm whom they should contact if they have any queries or require support.**

It is recognised that in certain circumstances Bed & Breakfast premises that are not on the approved premises list will have to be used. **Where an applicant and their household remains within this accommodation for longer than a week the Council will endeavour to inspect this premise providing that it does not place an undue strain on resources. However where an applicant who is pregnant and/or dependent children reside, or the applicant is a child aged 16 or 17, the property will be inspected within a week.**

Where the premise is situated within another local authority's **boundary the Council will liaise with the relevant local housing authority regarding an inspection.**

5. Standards of Temporary Accommodation

5.1 Minimum standards

1. Be where possible within the Council's administrative boundaries; and
2. Have adequate and exclusive toilet and personal washing facilities; and 3. Have adequate bedrooms, cooking facilities and access to a living room; and
4. Be useable by the applicant household 24 hours a day.
5. The accommodation should have accessible facilities and services for health and education in the locality, taking account of the distance of travel, access to public transport.
6. The accommodation should be suitable for occupation by an applicant whom is pregnant and/or dependent children reside, or the applicant is a child aged 16 or 17, whenever needed
7. No pets will be allowed, except assistance dogs for the disabled. Applicant household will be supported to re-home any pets prior to occupation of temporary accommodation.
8. Will satisfy any public sector equality duty owed under Equality Act 2010
9. Will satisfy any safeguarding or welfare duty owed under Children Act 2004.

6.2 Physical Standards

All temporary accommodation will: -

1. Meet the physical or sensory disability requirements of any member of the household.
2. Comply with relevant housing quality standards including health and safety, hygiene and fire legislation and regulations.
3. Provide units that are secure with individual locks so people feel they and their belongings are safe. The occupancy / tenancy agreement will include an agreed minimum amount of notice a landlord must give before accessing a person's property / unity and under what circumstances they would give such notice. This will be at least 24 hours.
4. Have sufficient bedroom space to meet the needs of the household as far as possible.
5. Have adequate communal living space, which includes, for example, space for children to play or do homework.
6. Have individual bathroom / toilet facilities for an applicant and their household (currently some shared temporary accommodation does not meet this standard, but where it cannot be met, bathrooms are shared by no more than two individuals).
7. Have access to on-site laundry facilities whenever possible. B&B will also be required to provide an on-site facility whenever possible.
8. Have a suitable standard of furniture to meet the applicant and their households' needs.
9. Have a minimum standard of cleanliness and decoration.

10. Have sufficient and affordable heating systems at an acceptable efficiency rating.
11. Be accessible 24 hours a day.

6.3 Shared Accommodation

Shared housing for 3 or more unrelated people will have a Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMO) license. This license will be displayed on the premises.
Inspections

The Council will carry out inspections at least annually of all temporary accommodation to ensure that it meets these physical standards.

6.4 Out of area placements

The Council will endeavour to procure all of its temporary accommodation within the Sandwell local authority area; however where this is not possible due to a lack of appropriate accommodation, The Council may at times need to procure accommodation outside of its administrative boundaries. Where this happens The Council will ensure that any accommodation it procures is as close to Sandwell as possible.

7.0 Review of Policy

The Council will review this procurement policy as often as needed or on an annual basis, or when new legislation is enacted, to ensure that its provision of temporary accommodation continues to meet the current demand and anticipated demand. This aim will be accomplished via the Prevention of Homelessness Strategy 2018-21.

Report to Cabinet

13 September 2023

Subject:	Moat Farm Infant School – Making Significant Changes (Prescribed Alternations) Consultation Outcome for Change of Age Range
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education, Councillor Simon Hackett
Director:	Director Children and Education, Michael Jarrett
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Rachel Hill, Project Officer, School Organisation

1 Recommendations

1.1 That in connection with the proposed prescribed alterations to change the age range of Moat Farm Infant School, Brookfields Road, Oldbury, B68 9QR (the school) from 2 – 7 years old to 0 – 7 years old, approval be given to:

- i) publication of the appropriate Statutory Proposal;
- ii) subject to no objections being raised during the statutory representation period for the Statutory Proposal, authorise the Director of Children and Education to make a final decision on the proposal for the prescribed alterations at Moat Farm Infant School, in conjunction with the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, and in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Education; and




- iii) in the event that any objections are raised during the statutory representation period for the Statutory Proposal, that a report is submitted to the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services with full details of representations received to inform a final decision on the proposal.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Lavender Farm Day Nursery (the nursery), Brookfields Road, Oldbury, B68 9QR is a Children’s Centre, Nursery Plus site, and is currently run by the school’s governing body under its community powers.
- 2.2 The school is due to convert to academy status in the Autumn term 2023 and join Stour Vale Academy Trust (the Trust). The Trust wishes to continue running the nursery but does not have the same community powers, therefore the current proposal is to extend the age range of the school to include children that will attend the nursery.
- 2.3 An initial consultation was completed between 26 June 2023 and 24 July 2023. Consultation has been completed and no responses were received. Subject to Cabinet approval to this report, statutory proposals to change the age range will be published for 4 weeks.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>The Best Start in Life for Children and Young People</p> <p>The recommendations in this report support:</p> <p>“B2 We will work with partners to deliver the EY Outcomes Framework and specifically, create new pathways for support that meet the needs of our residents and fill in the gaps in services for children aged 12-24 months.</p> <p>B9 We will provide enough good school places that offer families choice and confidence that their children can experience high quality education and achieve good outcomes.</p>
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	<p>B10 We will work with schools and other learning providers to improve educational outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p>B15 We will work with partners to ensure early help is available to children and young people at the earliest opportunity depending on their need.</p>
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4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 The school's Governing Body entered a Service Level Agreement in June 2006 to run the nursery located in the Oldbury Sure Start Children's Centre under its community powers as outlined in the Education Act 2002.
- 4.2 In October 2014 Cabinet decision 59/14 approved the designations of Children's Centres in the borough as Core, Satellite and Nursery Plus. The nursery was designated as a Nursery Plus site.
- 4.3 The school also has a school nursery offering places for children aged 2–5 years. Lavender Farm Day Nursery offers 150 places for children aged 0–5 years.
- 4.4 The school's current registered age range is 2-7 years; including the school Nursery and Reception for children aged 2-5 years and Key Stage One pupils aged 5–7 years.
- 4.5 The school is due to convert to academy status in the Autumn term 2023 and join Stour Vale Academy Trust. The Department for Education's (DfE) policy for schools converting to Academy status is to 'convert as is'. The Early Years provision should normally be run in the same way post-academy conversion. If a school's governing body is providing Early Years provision under its "community powers", changes are required as those powers are not available to academy trusts.
- 4.6 Therefore, any Early Years provision that will be run by the Trust post conversion, will need to be reflected within the school's age range. The Trust would be running the nursery following the school's conversion to an Academy, and the age range of the school must be changed to start from 0 years of age to include this provision. The age range set out in the Academy's Funding Agreement with the DfE should reflect the age range of all registered pupils at the Academy.



- 4.7 The nursery was built utilising Sure Start capital funding. The building needs to remain as a nursery plus site until the expiry of the conditions of Sure Start capital funding in 2031. Therefore, the Trust will be granted a short-term lease of the building with the permitted use as a nursery.
- 4.8 The nursery was last inspected by Ofsted in August 2022. Its overall effectiveness was rated as Good.
- 4.9 There is not expected to be any direct impact on any other educational institutes in the area.

Consultation (Customers and other Stakeholders)

- 4.10 The DfE regulations: 'Making Significant Changes ('Prescribed Alterations') to Maintained Schools' requires that when the Local Authority is proposing a significant alteration, i.e., a change to the age range, it must consult upon the proposal and make a formal decision to make the alteration permanent.
- 4.11 The statutory process to change the age range needs to be completed before the school can convert to academy status.
- 4.12 Initial consultation ran from 26 June 2023 to 24 July 2023. The consultations were published on the Council's Consultation Hub and published in the Express and Star on the 29 June 2023 and available on the Express and Star's website for a further 14 days. All Sandwell schools were also consulted. Moat Farm Infant School also published it on its school website under latest news.
- 4.13 No responses to the consultation were received.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 Do nothing and keep the age range at the existing range of 2-7 years – school would not be able to convert to academy status and continue to run the nursery. The area would lose a much needed nursery provision with a Good Ofsted rating. Staff employed by the school would have to be made redundant. A new provider would have to be commissioned.



- 5.2 The school could convert to academy status, but upon conversion relinquishes the provision that is provided through Lavender Farm Day Nursery. The Authority would have to seek to secure an alternative provider to retain provision for 0-2 year olds in the area.

6 Implications

Resources:	<p>Financial and Staffing There will be no effect on staffing. The school will be financed via its academy funding agreement for the age range 0-7years.</p> <p>Land / building implications – a short term lease will be granted to the Trust for the duration of the Sure Start capital funding period.</p>
Legal and Governance:	<p>A Local Authority must have regard to the below guidance when exercising functions under The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 (‘the Prescribed Alterations Regulations’). It should be read in conjunction with Parts 2 and 3 and Schedule 3 of the Education and Inspections Act (EIA) 2006 and the Prescribed Alterations Regulations. It also relates to the Establishment and Discontinuance Regulations and The School Organisation (Removal of Foundation, Reduction in the Number of Foundation Governors and Ability of Foundation to Pay Debts) (England) Regulations (2007)(‘the ‘Removal Regulations’).</p>
Risk:	<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> <p>The Cabinet has a statutory duty under the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 to make a decision on a prescribed alteration proposal.</p>



	<p>Based on the information provided, it is the officers' opinion that there are no current "red" risks that need to be reported with regards to this proposal.</p> <p>One risk has been identified on the project risk register; report not being approved</p> <p>The risk has been assessed and mitigating measures are in place.</p>
Equality:	An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed. The recommendation has a positive impact on age and disability and a neutral impact on other characterises.
Health and Wellbeing:	Early Years education provides a foundation for how children will develop, grow and learn; and for their future life chances.
Social Value:	Ensuring every child has access to a nursery place in their area and to improve a child's education and development in the early years.
Climate Change:	No impact on climate change.
Corporate Parenting:	<p>The report recommendations will enable the age range of Moat Farm Infant School to be extended from 2-7 to 0-7 years old and provide continuity of management and operation of Lavender Farm Day Nursery as a Children's Centre, Nursery Plus site.</p> <p>The enlarged Infant School will fulfil the role of Corporate Parenting by supporting the care and safeguarding of all children throughout their time attending the school, from Early Years through to end of Key Stage 1.</p>

7. Appendices

Moat Farm Infant School and Lavender Farm Day Nursery consultation.



8. Background Papers
None



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Moat Farm Infant School and Lavender Farm Day Nursery

Sandwell Council is consulting parents / carers, staff and the local community on the change of age range from 2 –7 years to 0–7 years at Moat Farm Infant School.

WHAT IS THE PROPOSAL?

The school's current registered age range is 2 -7 years; including Nursery and Reception for children aged 2-5 years and Key Stage One pupils aged 5–7 years.

The school also operates 'Lavender Farm Day Nursery', Brookfields Road, Oldbury, which provides 150 places for children aged 0–5 years, under the Governing Body's community powers as outlined in the Education Act 2002.

The school is due to convert to academy status in Autumn 2023 and join Stour Vale Academy Trust. The Academy Trust wishes to take over management of Lavender Farm Day Nursery but does not have the same community powers, therefore the current proposal is to extend the age range of the Infant School to include the children attending Lavender Farm Day Nursery.

THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND OUTDOOR AREAS

There would be no change to the school buildings or Lavender Farm Day Nursery.

WHY WE ARE PROPOSING A CHANGE

The Department for Education's policy for schools converting to Academy status is to 'convert as is policy'. The Early Years provision should normally be run in the same way post-academy conversion. If a school's governing body is providing Early Years provision under its

“community powers”, changes are required as those powers are not available to academy trusts.

Therefore, any Early Years provision that will be run by the Academy Trust post conversion, will need to be reflected within the Infant School’s age range. Stour Vale Academy Trust would be running Lavender Farm nursery following the school’s conversion to an Academy, the age range of the school must be changed to start from 0 years of age to include this provision, and the age range set out in the Academy’s Funding Agreement with the Department for Education should reflect the age range of all registered pupils at the Academy.

WHY ARE YOU CONSULTING NOW?

The Department for Education regulations: ‘Making significant changes (‘prescribed alterations’) to maintained schools’ requires that when the Local Authority is proposing a significant alteration, i.e., a change to the age range, it must consult upon the proposal and make a formal decision to make the alteration permanent.

The statutory process to change the age range needs to be completed before the school can convert to academy status which is due to take place 1 October 2023.

STANDARDS

Lavender Farm Day Nursery was last inspected by Ofsted in August 2022. Its overall effectiveness was rated as Good.

<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/16/EY339394>

Ofsted completed a short inspection of Moat Farm Infant School in February 2019 the school retained its Good rating.

<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/21/103949>

EFFECT ON OTHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES IN THE AREA

There is not expected to be any direct impact on any other educational institutes in the area.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSAL

As a condition of Moat Farm Infant School converting to academy status, Stour Vale Academy Trust will be required to ensure that both the

Nursery and School will continue to provide the same provision to the Oldbury community.

Continued Early Years provision for the local community providing children and families with early access to childcare services and support.

Combined management arrangements as Stour Vale Academy Trust and the new Academy would be responsible for all childcare and education provision at the expanded school for children aged 0-7 years.

WHEN WOULD THE PROPOSAL TAKE PLACE?

The expansion would take place on 1 October 2023. The age range of Moat Farm Infant School would be expanded from 2-7 to 0-7 years but continue as an Infant School.

All children currently on roll at the school and children who have been offered a Reception place for the academic year 2023/24 will continue to attend the expanded Infant School.

FINANCE

Lavender Farm Nursery and Moat Farm Infants School currently control their own finances with the income and expenditure of each accounted for separately to the Governing Body. Post age range change and conversion to an academy there are no plans to change this separation between the two entities and they would continue to report separately to both the Local Governing Body and the Academy Trust Board.

STAFFING

The number of staff currently employed at the Nursery and School is as follows:

	Teaching ¹		Non-teaching	
	Full time	Part time	Full time	Part time
Lavender Farm Day Nursery			18	18
Moat Farm Infant School	14	6	2	28
Total	16	6	20	46

¹ Including Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher

The staffing structure of the expanded Infant School would be the responsibility of the Governing Board to determine. There will be discussions with relevant trades unions about the staffing process.

MOAT FARM INFANT GOVERNING BODY

In all types of schools, governing boards should have a strong focus on three core strategic functions:

- a) Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction,
- b) Holding the executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, the performance management of staff; and
- c) Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

Moat Farm Infant School's governing body consists of the following;

Type of governor	No.
Local Authority appointed governor	1
Parent governors	2
Head teacher	1
Staff governors	1
Co-opted governors	8

Post conversion a Local Governing Body shall remain. Each member school of Stour Vale has a Local Governing Board or Interim Executive Board in place.

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

The consultation period for this proposal ends at 5.00pm on 24 July 2023. The Council will then need to consider the outcome of the consultation exercise and decide whether to proceed with the proposal.

If the outcome of this process leads the Council to decide to go ahead with the proposal, it has to publish a legal notice called a 'Statutory

Proposal'. This notice, which would be published in September 2023 and would formally state that the Council intends to extend the age range of Moat Farm Infant School from 2-7 to 0-7 years and expand the school using the existing Nursery and School sites. The notice would explain how and when it would do this and would also give people the opportunity to make formal representations about the proposals. These representations would need to be made within 4 weeks of the publication of the Statutory Notice.

The Council would consider any formal objections in October 2023. A final decision would then be expected.

The table below shows the likely timeline should approval be given for the proposal to proceed:

DATE	ACTION
Monday 26 June	Initial consultation begins
Monday 24 July	Initial consultation ends
Wednesday 13 September	Cabinet meeting to consider feedback from consultation and whether to publish a Statutory Proposal
Monday 25 th September	Publish statutory notice
Sunday 22 nd October	End of statutory notice and representation period
w/c Monday 23 rd October	Director – Children and Education considers outcome of representation period and makes a final decision on the proposal

We would like to hear your views on the proposal, the next section provides information as to how you can share those views.

HOW YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE CONSULTATION

You are invited to express your views on the proposal in writing. Please use the form at the end of this booklet, and return it to the school, or the address on the form, by 5.00pm on 24 July 2023. All views and comments must be received by this date in order to be considered by the Council when we decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal.

**CONSULTATION ON CHANGE OF AGE RANGE FROM 2– 7 YEARS
TO 0 – 7 YEARS AT MOAT FARM INFANT SCHOOL**

CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM:

Please indicate, are you a:

Please tick

Parent / Carer

Governor

Member of staff

Member of the community

- Do you agree that the school age range should be changed to 0-7years

Yes / No* (*please delete as necessary)

Please add any comments here (and overleaf if necessary)

Signed:

Date:

Please return this form by 5.00pm 24 July 2023 to the school or, if you prefer to: School Organisation, Children and Education, Sandwell Council House, Freeth Street, Oldbury, B69 3DE, school_organisationunit@sandwell.gov.uk

The information you provide on this form is subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations. Where applicable information entered will be forwarded to the relevant Education / Council sections for action or for a reply to be given.

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Report to Cabinet

13 September 2023

Subject:	Adoption of Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Housing and Built Environment Cllr Laura Rollins
Director:	Director of Housing Gillian Douglas
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Housing Policy and Strategy Lead Officer, Louis Bebb louis_bebb@sandwell.gov.uk Transformation Officer, Jennifer Collins Jennifer_Collins@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy as set out in the Appendix.

2 Reasons for Recommendations




- 2.1 Our vision is for Sandwell to be a borough of sanctuary that welcomes those fleeing violence and persecution in their own countries and protects the rights of all migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. A 'Borough of Sanctuary' is a borough which provides a welcoming place of safety for people who are asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants.
- 2.2 We recognise that the way in which individuals and families arriving in Sandwell are supported to settle and integrate is critical to enable them to feel welcome and part of the local community. This sees benefits for all of Sandwell's residents and communities across the borough.





2.3 This strategy sets out the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Network's and Sandwell Council's commitments to welcoming and integrating individuals and families who arrive in Sandwell. This strategy co-ordinates the approach of the council and other organisations, council-wide and borough-wide, delivering services to those arriving and settling in Sandwell.

2.4 The strategy is for five years with a review built in after the second year to ensure our approach continues to align with our vision and objectives and sets out how partners will support those arriving in Sandwell. This will enable services to develop within a strategic framework while allowing the strategy to be responsive to any changes and progress.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>The Best Start in Life for Children and Young People The strategy will enable partnership working to best support children and young people newly arriving in the borough, such as language learning for children and young people. Uniquely to Sandwell, Thimble Library in Smethwick was recognised nationally as the first Library of Sanctuary. There's also a tailored pathway of support is available to newly arriving children, young people, and families as part of Sandwell's Transition, Education and Partnership Service. As part of the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Partnership, we want to continue to build our local offer to those seeking sanctuary in Sandwell and tailor services and provision to best meet the needs of existing and newly emerging communities across the borough.</p>
	<p>People Live Well and Age Well We want to ensure that asylum seekers, refugees and migrants can access a range of well-coordinated and effective services, including those that support health and wellbeing. In addition, we want to improve the social and mental wellbeing of individuals and families arriving in Sandwell through reducing social isolation.</p>
	<p>Strong Resilient Communities Sandwell has a diverse population made up of differing ethnicities, cultures, languages and religions. The document recognises Sandwell's responsibility to invest in the Borough of Sanctuary in order to build strong relationships between</p>



	local community groups and promoting safe and welcoming communities that are cohesive.
	Quality Homes in Thriving Neighbourhoods The Borough of Sanctuary Strategy links directly to this priority in the Corporate Plan and will provide a framework for offering a safe place for asylum-seekers and refugees to live, while recognising our leadership role in promoting integration and community cohesion.
	A Strong and Inclusive Economy Refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants bring skills, qualifications and prior experience from their countries of origin and we want to support access to education, earning and employment while recognising the legal restrictions that asylum-seekers face in being allowed entry to the labour market. We want to ensure we can bring newly-arrived individuals into the workforce and provide opportunities for language learning and transfer of skills.

4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 The strategy has been developed between the Council and Sandwell's local Borough of Sanctuary network. The network is made up of local organisations (particularly the voluntary and community sector and public sector organisations), council officers, residents and councillors who support individuals and families arriving in the borough. Developing the strategy is a required step in the application process to become a recognised Council of Sanctuary.
- 4.2 Although not a statutory document, it is nevertheless a key strategy in articulating what actions we will take to continue working to ensure Sandwell is a welcoming borough for all. The strategy will interlink with the council's equality, diversity, and inclusion priorities and feed into the Sandwell New Arrivals Partnership. An action plan will be developed to sit beneath the strategy, with actions relating to key themes that relate to Sandwell' six strategy objectives.



- 4.3 As part of developing the strategy, we have engaged with officers across the council that are delivering relevant services such as Housing Solutions, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, Public Health, Adult Social Care, Community Safety, Libraries, Childrens, Education, Employment & Skills and Community Partnerships. An internal working group has been set up which receives updates and continues to input into the strategy.
- 4.4 The local Borough of Sanctuary network was established in 2020 (<https://sandwell.cityofsanctuary.org/>) and is a network of organisations, groups and individuals pledging to build a culture of welcome across the borough as part of the national City of Sanctuary network. The network leads have been engaged throughout the process and were involved in the decision to create a partnership strategy. Through the local network, we have engaged with individuals with lived experience of seeking sanctuary in the borough and will continue to build upon this throughout the delivery of the strategy.
- 4.5 We have also engaged with City of Wolverhampton Council, Liverpool City Council, Lambeth Council and Newcastle City Council to discuss their experiences in creating and implementing Council of Sanctuary strategies and what some of the challenges and lessons that have been learnt during and after this project. This has produced some really informative feedback through collaboration with other local authorities.

Borough of Sanctuary - Partnership Strategy Workshop

- 4.6 In April 2023, the partnership undertook a consultation exercise with over 40 attendees to understand what a 'welcoming Sandwell' looks like and to establish the approach we need to take to become a borough of sanctuary for all. The consultation workshop included representation from local and national groups, residents, the council, and people with lived experience of seeking sanctuary in Sandwell to understand what issues meant the most to them.
- 4.7 During the workshop we aimed to gather thoughts and feedback on the proposed content of the Partnership Sanctuary Strategy and work together to build on suggested actions for the Council and local network organisations that will form the action plan that sits within the strategy. The consultation highlighted a need to further explore issues related to accessing healthcare, housing conditions, and communication with services and local authorities, as well as access to ESOL classes.



4.8 Summary of workshop feedback:

- Overall, support across the strategy document and action plan was relatively high, with a large proportion of the respondents either tending to agree or strongly agreeing with the strategy's overarching objectives. Please note we are still in the process of documenting all the feedback from the workshop session.
- A large cohort of attendees were from organisations operating in either Smethwick, West Bromwich, Wednesbury or Oldbury – there were no attendees from Rowley Regis or Tipton. Therefore, we intend to run additional workshops to involve partner organisations from these towns.
- Partners felt asylum resettlement across wards in Sandwell needs to be more even, as there is currently a high concentration in particular areas, such as Smethwick and St. Pauls, but less so in areas such as Newton and Blackheath. It is important to acknowledge the different identities and needs of the 6 towns in the strategy's overarching vision and also to recognise where the current infrastructure is that supports asylum-seekers and refugees including key voluntary sector groups and faith based organisations.
- Within the narrative in the strategy about Sandwell's history of resettlement and inward migration, partners felt we need to ensure we acknowledge that international migration has helped to shape Sandwell's population, communities and identity for decades.
- Partners felt anything proposed needs to be actionable and realistic.
- The Borough of Sanctuary Strategy should include more content that celebrates the partnership work that goes on in the area.
- Partners wanted Sandwell Council to play a greater role in national campaigns around migration and resettlement and the rights of asylum-seekers and refugees.

4.9 **The following joint objectives have been developed and agreed by Sandwell Council and the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Network:**

- The partnership will work together as a network to make Sandwell a Borough of Sanctuary. We will strive to build a welcoming place for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, whilst also promoting integration and community cohesion.
- The partnership will promote a culture of inclusion between Sandwell residents and support a mutual understanding in which longer-



standing communities feel able to understand and welcome migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.

- The partnership will enhance opportunities for migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers to utilise and develop their skills, to access opportunities to support themselves and their families which contributes to the social and economic wellbeing of the borough.
- The partnership will advocate the engagement of those seeking sanctuary in decision making processes at all levels and in all activities.
- The partnership will stand together against modern slavery and are committed to preventing slavery and human trafficking activities across the Borough.

4.10 Consultation

A 6 week consultation period took place from Tuesday 20 June until Tuesday 1 August. An online public consultation was published on the Citizen Space platform. Alongside this, a collective response from individuals with lived experience of migrating to and seeking sanctuary in Sandwell was received from service users of Brushstrokes.

The Community Partnerships Team supported the consultation to increase the number of residents and community groups we heard from by promoting the consultation across their networks, providing paper copies where required and supporting individuals to complete the consultation online. The aim of the consultation was to include as many different voices and points of view as possible.

4.11 The consultation was promoted and shared with community groups and residents by:

- Presented to and shared across the Sandwell New Arrivals Partnership
- Newsletters shared to the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary partners
- Shared via housing forums and networks such as the Homelessness Forum, the West Midlands Housing Officer Group, and the Housing Partnership Forum
- Shared via wider networks that the council are engaged with such as the Health and Wellbeing Board, Faith Leaders Group, Community Safety Network, and the Sandwell Advice Providers Network
- Shared across an internal cross-directorate officer working group for officers to distribute across their networks and with the staff Equalities Diversity and Inclusion Networks
- Shared via internal communications- newsletters, Members updates



- Leaflets and posters distributed to Libraries, OCH Reception, West Bromwich Town Hall, to community groups via the Community Partnerships Team and to tenants at our first Tenant Conference
- Communications shared via social media and via Gov Directory mailing list
- Shared by wider organisations across their online platforms and networks (e.g. SCVO, Sandwell Churches Link)

4.12 In total, we received a total of **119** responses to the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy public consultation (online and through both workshops and focus group events).

In addition, responses were also received from elected members when the strategy was presented to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny (SNAC) Board on 11th July 2023.

4.13 Consultation Findings

In various feedback formats, quantitative and qualitative data has been gathered to help shape and inform the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy. The below provides a summary of the consultation feedback – however, if the reader would like a more detailed breakdown of the consultation findings and each individual question, they can read the accompanying 22-page Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy Consultation Report (Appendix Two):

- The public consultation contained 10 multiple choice questions – 2 relating to how welcoming Sandwell is, 3 relating to both the document’s overall vision and strategic aims, and 5 questions in response to the main priorities set out for the Borough of Sanctuary partnership.
- Each question asked the respondent whether they agreed with a particular theme in the Borough of Sanctuary Strategy, with options of ‘strongly agree’, ‘somewhat agree’, ‘neither agree nor disagree’, ‘somewhat disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’.
- Support across all questions was fairly high, with respondents either tending to agree or strongly agree with the priorities of the partnership. The average agreement was 63%, demonstrating a reasonable level of support for the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy overall.
- Across all priorities for the partnership, the most well received amongst respondents was *‘the partnership will enhance opportunities for migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers to utilise and develop their skills, to access opportunities to support themselves and their families*



which contributes to the social and economic wellbeing of the borough', which generated a 65% agreeance overall.

- The response with the lowest level of support was when respondents were asked if they thought Sandwell is a welcoming place for those resettling.

Within the public consultation, respondents were given the opportunity at the end of every priority, and for the strategy as a whole, to feedback anything they felt was missing or any point they particularly wanted to emphasise. This produced a range of responses, with a number of key words and phrases emerging repeatedly.

The top 5 phrases were:

- 1. Community** – respondents stressed the importance of ensuring there are opportunities for migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers to integrate within their local communities.
- 2. Support/Services** – respondents emphasised that there needs to be a provision of adequate resources to ensure Sandwell is able to support migrants, refugees and asylum seekers across all areas of the Borough.
- 3. Language** – concerns were raised regarding the language barriers those resettling face in accessing services across Sandwell.
- 4. Housing** – many respondents were supportive of housing as a means of ensuring those resettling are able to do so safely.
- 5. Work/Employment** – respondents wished to see individuals resettling engaging in employment and volunteering opportunities that utilise their experience, qualifications, and transferrable skills.

4.14 Detailed contributions and amendments:

The consultation also highlighted a number of additional suggestions which have been considered and adopted in the final version of the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy.

Actions taken in response to consultation feedback:

Response Received	Action Taken
Victims of violence, exploitation and modern slavery and our offer to them as a partnership needs to be included within the strategy.	Included an additional objective for the partnership in relation to modern slavery. Also, we have now expanded our definitions section (Appendix 1) in



	order to include Modern Slavery and Trafficking victims, setting out the scope for who the strategic document and who it is aimed at.
Acknowledgement of Windrush Generation needs to be included into this strategic document.	Included an additional section in the strategy to acknowledge the Windrush Generation in Sandwell.
Strategy needs to acknowledge that there are pockets in Sandwell where new arrivals aren't made to feel part of the community.	Further information added into Appendix 2 to accompany the resettlement map in order to show how Sandwell Council will help to ensure a holistic approach is adopted so that all those resettling can integrate into their community, no matter what part of the Borough they live in.
All resettling individuals must be part of the political decision-making process to truly reflect our community needs and the problems they face.	Under the objectives for the partnership on page 11, we have added that 'The partnership will challenge and question policy changes at a local, regional, and national level that support the rights and needs of asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants. We will assist and educate those seeking sanctuary as to what rights and entitlements they do have'.
Language support must be integrated into the strategic aims of this document.	In our strategic objectives (p.13), we have added a strategic commitment of providing language learning for adults (ESOL) and committing to this. We have also added a strategic commitment of providing language learning for children and young people.
I think accessibility is the key challenge. Transport is expensive for people resettling in Sandwell.	We have added the following onto our strategic outcomes 'We will work to ensure there is a cohesive transport model across the six towns that helps to promote social connectedness.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Social connectedness and accessibility to services -Access to and affordability of public transport -Clear information about public transport and how to get around the borough -Signposting to wider support services and community activities’.
The strategy should acknowledge that systems are complex. Even with language support it is difficult to explain and navigate the systems for schools, housing and other council services.	Under the objectives for the partnership on page 13, we will add ‘We will enable individuals and families to settle in Sandwell by sharing information and signposting to wider support services and community activities’.
Greater emphasis needed on community cohesion within the strategic objectives of the document.	<p>In our strategic objectives (p.13), we have added in that ‘we will work with communities to build relationships, support each other, and celebrate communities and culture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Building welcoming communities -Taking part in community activities -Create more opportunities for community enterprise -Sharing and celebrating communities and cultures’.
Housing support needs to be mentioned within the strategy.	<p>We have expanded on our commitment where ‘We will take a holistic approach and support individuals throughout their housing journey’. Adding...‘-Wrap around support for transition from temporary accommodation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Support individuals and families to feel safe and at home -Provision of affordable and quality homes -Provision of move-on accommodation’.



In addition, recommendations were also received from elected members when the strategy was presented to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny (SNAC) Board on 11th July 2023.

Recommendation	Action Taken
That the Director of Housing considers the feasibility of embedding ESOL tuition for asylum seekers and refugees into the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Strategy.	An action planning workshop is taking place with partners to look at how this can be incorporated in the partnership's action plan that will sit beneath the strategy
That the Director of Housing considers the inclusion of the educational needs of asylum seekers and refugees under eighteen years old within the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Strategy including SEND, transport and language needs.	An action planning workshop is taking place with partners to look at how this can be incorporated in the partnership's action plan that will sit beneath the strategy
That the Director of Housing explores the cascading of consultations via town based community teams to increase response rates and to all Members.	There has been good cross-borough engagement in the consultation, but we do recognise that we need to support asylum-seekers, migrants and refugees across the whole borough, including in neighbourhoods where people have been less likely to settle.
That the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Strategy is publicised as part of the Windrush and 50 years of Sandwell celebrations.	Currently working with Sandwell's Communications team on how we can publish and promote this strategic document once it is finalised.



That the Director of Housing explores the inclusion of female health care, including access to sexual health and period products within the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Strategy.	An action planning workshop is taking place with partners to look at how this can be incorporated in the partnership's action plan that will sit beneath the strategy.
That training is provided to Members to increase awareness and better inform decision making in relation to the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Strategy.	This will be addressed at the All Member Briefing once the strategy has been finalised.
That the Director of Housing explores the adoption of a holistic approach when progressing the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Strategy.	Agreed.

5 Alternative Options

5.1 Not available.

6 Implications

Resources:	Delivery of the strategy will be through existing resources where possible. Council-wide resources may also need to be identified to deliver the strategy.
Legal and Governance:	Whilst there is not a legal framework for migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers have "specific needs and rights which are protected by a particular legal framework". The Sandwell Sanctuary Strategy Action Plan will provide oversight ensuring the local authority and stakeholders support this legislation, in addition to monitoring of the delivery of actions against the key objectives. Unless there are major legislative changes or significant service changes this strategy will be reviewed every five years.
Risk:	Many migrants, refugees and asylum seekers come from minority ethnic groups (and refugees and asylum seekers



	<p>may have fled persecution in their homeland because of their race). People from minority ethnic groups can be at particular risk of discrimination and persecution.</p> <p>Because migration and resettlement is such a contentious issue both in local and national government, there is the potential risk of some political backlash from residents. In more extreme cases, we may also need to consider hostile behaviour from local far-right political groups.</p>
<p>Equality:</p>	<p>The strategy will interlink with the council's equality, diversity, and inclusion priorities.</p> <p>Race- The strategy aims to make Sandwell a more welcoming place for all ethnic minority groups, including newly arrived and well-established communities.</p> <p>Religion/ belief- The strategy will link into the work Public Health are carrying out with Sandwell's Faith Network. The local Borough of Sanctuary Network works closely with faith groups and communities across the borough, which will feed into developing the strategy.</p> <p>Age- A strategic approach is necessary to meet the housing needs of Sandwell's growing younger population, whilst also considering Sandwell's older population too. The action plan will include actions that benefit individuals and families of all ages arriving in Sandwell. There are actions that relate to each of Sandwell's six strategic objectives, that focus on the Best Start in Life for Children and Young People and actions that relate to people of working age for instance.</p>
<p>Health and Wellbeing:</p>	<p>The proportion of those in poor health in Sandwell is significantly higher than the national average. With the significant health issues in the borough, we know the strategy can play a key role in ensuring individuals and families access to the support and services they need to improve their quality of life.</p> <p>Indirectly, the benefits of positive partnership working will contribute to improving levels of social isolation seen throughout communities and encourage social integration between newly arrived and existing communities.</p>



Social Value:	A large part of social value in this strategy is about creating communities in which people feel safe and welcome. The strategy aims to enhance and build upon existing community cohesion and inclusivity. Working in partnership with the local Borough of Sanctuary Network will improve service delivery and increase the reach and accessibility of services. Engaging with local community groups and individuals with lived experience throughout the process has generated social value through empowering the community and building positive working relationships.
Climate Change:	Not applicable.
Corporate Parenting:	Promoting the integration of possible unaccompanied asylum seekers and young refugees.

7 Appendices

- Appendix One: Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy
- Appendix Two: Consultation Report – Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary

8 Background Papers

- City of Sanctuary Local Authority Network
<https://la.cityofsanctuary.org/>
- Council of Sanctuary Award Procedure and Criteria
<https://cdn.cityofsanctuary.org/uploads/sites/166/2021/08/Council-of-Sanctuary-Award-Minimum-Criteria.pdf>
- National Census 2021 England and Wales
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E08000028/>
- Migrant Health in the West Midlands, Public Health England
https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/7890/phe_migrant_health_in_the_west_midlands_february_2017.pdf
- Migration Statistics Briefing, West Midlands Migrant Strategic Partnership
<https://www.wmsmp.org.uk/data/>
- Politics, Governance and the Shaping of Smethwick Since 1945
<https://etheses.bham.ac.uk/id/eprint/6890/>
- Social and Public Service Impacts of International Migration at the Local Level





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Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary

*Partnership strategy between Sandwell's Borough of Sanctuary
local organisations and Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council*

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Introduction

The aim of this strategy is to establish and deliver a partnership between Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary's local organisations and Sandwell Council.

Our vision is for Sandwell to be a sanctuary borough, that welcomes those fleeing violence and persecution in their own countries and protects the rights of all migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. A 'Borough of Sanctuary' is a borough which provides a welcoming place of safety for people who are asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants. **Appendix one** details key definitions for the purpose of this strategy.

We want Sandwell to be a welcoming place for all, whether they have newly arrived in the borough, were born in Sandwell, or have a long history of their families migrating to the borough.

We know that Sandwell has a rich history of migration which includes people who have arrived in Sandwell as refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants from both inside and outside of the European Union. We want to recognise and celebrate the contributions of these individuals and also the families who have contributed to the borough and their local communities for generations, such as the Windrush Generation.

We want Sandwell to be a welcoming place of safety for those arriving in the borough. We recognise that how individuals and families arriving in Sandwell are supported to settle and integrate into their communities is vitally important to enable them to feel welcome and part of their local communities. A welcoming place for all will bring benefits for all of Sandwell's residents and communities across the borough.

This strategy sets out the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary's local organisations and Sandwell Council's commitments to welcoming and integrating individuals and families who arrive in Sandwell. This strategy co-ordinates the approach of council officers and organisations, council-wide and borough-wide, delivering services to those arriving and settling in Sandwell.

That's why we are committed to becoming a Borough of Sanctuary, and for Sandwell Council to be an equal and active member of the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Partnership. We want to make sure that Sandwell is inclusive and welcoming, that we are meeting people's specific needs, and that we listen to and amplify the voices of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants.

The strategy is for five years with a review built in after the second year to ensure the strategy best enables us, as a partnership, to support individuals and families arriving in Sandwell. This will enable services to develop with the stability of a medium-term strategic directive while allowing the strategy to be responsive to any changes and progress.



What welcome means to Sandwell

Across the borough we have a wide range of third-sector partners and community groups providing specialist support and delivering community events and activities. Thimblemill Library in Smethwick was recognised nationally as the first Library of Sanctuary and a tailored pathway of support is available to newly arriving children, young people, and families as part of Sandwell's Transition, Education and Partnership Service- Sandwell's first School of Sanctuary. As part of the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Partnership, we want to continue to build our local offer, both as a council and through community-led actions, to those seeking sanctuary in Sandwell and tailor services and provision to best meet the needs of existing and newly emerging communities across the borough.

As part of the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Partnership, we want to ensure that asylum seekers, refugees and migrants can:

- thrive safely in their communities
- build diverse positive relationships locally
- understand their rights, responsibilities, and entitlements
- access well-coordinated and effective services
- and inform local policy and programmes where individuals wish to be more involved.

The overall aim of the partnership is to make Sandwell a welcoming place for individuals and families seeking sanctuary in the borough, by working to:

- strengthen collaboration and partnerships between local businesses, schools, the council, healthcare providers, and other organisations to support the integration and inclusion of refugees and migrants in the community
- develop training and support programs for volunteers, community members and council officers to promote understanding and empathy for the experiences of refugees and migrants, and to equip them with the skills needed to support these individuals
- promote and protect the mental health and wellbeing of asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants, who may have experienced trauma and face significant challenges adjusting to a new environment
- advocate for policy changes at the local, regional, and national levels that support the rights and needs of asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants.



In April 2023, the partnership undertook a consultation exercise with over 40 attendees to understand what a 'welcoming Sandwell' looks like and to establish the approach we need to take to become a borough of sanctuary for all. The consultation workshop included representation from local and national groups, residents, the council, and people with lived experience of seeking sanctuary in Sandwell to understand what issues meant the most to them. The consultation highlighted a need to further explore issues related to accessing healthcare, housing conditions, and communication with services and local authorities, as well as access to ESOL classes. The following drawings capture some of the discussions from the session:

YOUR VIEWS ON A 'WELCOMING SANDWELL'



WHERE ARE WE NOW?



Sandwell's Local Context

Over the past decade, the population size in Sandwell has grown by 11% from 308,100 in 2011, to 341,832 in 2021.



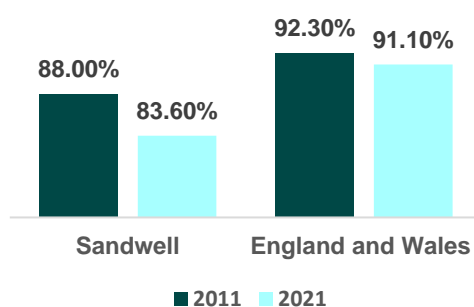
The overall population increase was much greater in comparison to the West Midlands (6.2%) and the rest of England and Wales (6.6%)¹.

In Sandwell, almost one in four (23.6%) usual residents were born outside the UK, compared with one in six nationally.

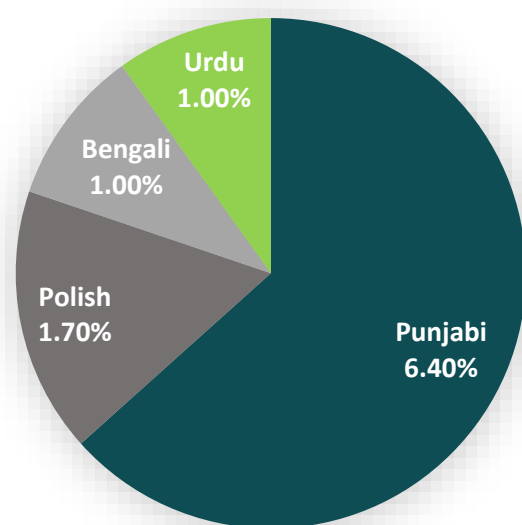


This proportion puts the borough in the top 50 Local Authorities across England & Wales for this measure².

In 2021, 83.6% of Sandwell's population, aged three years and over, had English as a main language, compared with 91.1% in England & Wales. The Sandwell figure is down from 88.0% in 2011³.



The most common main languages spoken in Sandwell (other than English)



¹ National Census 2021 England and Wales

² National Census 2021 England and Wales

³ National Census 2021 England and Wales

Welcoming resettlement in Sandwell

Sandwell has a proud history of supporting individuals resettling. Everyone who seeks to make our borough their home is welcome here – no matter where you are from in the world. We are proud to celebrate the achievements and contributions that refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers have made. Across the borough, you'll see their influence everywhere you go.

You'll come across individuals from across the world in every walk of life. You might be treated by nurses and doctors in our hospitals or taught by teachers in our schools. You could be supported by carers in care homes, driven in buses and trains, served in shops, or cared for in hospices. Refugees, asylum seekers and migrants have helped shape our borough in so many profound ways.

Sandwell's History of Migration and Resettlement

International migration has helped to shape Sandwell's population, communities, and identity for decades. Mass migration, primarily from countries in the New Commonwealth, arose through the 'pull' of UK labour shortages in the 1950s and 60s with many arriving from the Indian subcontinent – a significant number of Afro-Caribbean immigrants also settled in the local authority too⁴. Areas such as Smethwick attracted a high concentration of immigration in the post-war years because of plentiful employment opportunities and accessible private housing, in addition to its proximity to Birmingham. In recent decades, free movement of labour has resulted in increased migration to Sandwell from European Union countries. As a result, Sandwell is a diverse borough with many well-established migrant communities across Sandwell's six towns and continues to welcome the emergence of new communities⁵.



A black and white photograph of the Sikh Temple, High Street, Smethwick, formerly Congregational Church. Interior view showing some of the members. 9th June 1963. *Sandwell Archives (PHS/8621)*.

⁴ Politics, Governance and the Shaping of Smethwick Since 1945, Adam John Carey

⁵ Social and Public Service Impacts of International Migration at the Local Level

Migration and Resettlement in Sandwell Today

International migration has been a major driver of population change, first from the Commonwealth then from Europe and globally, including asylum seekers and refugees. Over the past decade, the population size in Sandwell has grown by 11% - from 308,100 in 2011, to 341,832 in 2021 - the overall population increase was much greater in comparison to the West Midlands (6.2%) and the rest of England and Wales (6.6%)⁶.

In Sandwell, the 2021 Census found that almost one in four (23.6%) usual residents were born outside the UK, compared with one in six nationally - this proportion puts the borough in the top 50 Local Authorities across England & Wales for this measure. In the last decade, this proportion has increased by 7.7%.

Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Armed conflict and human rights abuses has seen many families and individuals fleeing their own countries to seek a welcoming place of safety.

The West Midlands is currently the 4th largest of all 12 UK regions for welcoming asylum seekers and refugees⁷. Sandwell has been accommodating people through the Home Office's contracted dispersal programme for decades – most recent projects include the Afghanistan resettlement and Homes for Ukraine schemes. Sandwell has around 1,100 asylum seekers dispersed in the borough⁸.

For the cohort of asylum seekers who have resettled in the past two and a half years, the most common country of origin was Iran with 31.1%, followed by Iraq with 19.8%. The remaining countries include Albania (9.3%), Afghanistan (7.1%), Syria (5.4%) Sudan (5.1%), El Salvador (4.5%), Eritrea (3.1%), India (2.3%) and Turkey (2.0%)⁹.

For a further breakdown of language composition, migration and asylum statistics please see **appendix two**.

⁶ National Census 2021 England and Wales

⁷ Migrant Health in the West Midlands, Public Health England

⁸ Migration Statistics Briefing, West Midlands Migrant Strategic Partnership

⁹ Serco



Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary

The Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary network of partners aims to engage individuals and organisations across the borough to join us in enacting the principles of the Cities of Sanctuary movement.

We are working to become a recognised Borough of Sanctuary, working alongside partners to take practical steps to welcome and include refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in our activities, and to actively seek ways of supporting them wherever we can.

Borough of Sanctuary Charter

The following Borough of Sanctuary Charter has been agreed by the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary partnership.

- Vision** We hold the vision that the UK, and specifically Sandwell will be a welcoming place of safety for all and is proud to offer sanctuary to people fleeing violence and persecution.
- Our Values** Sandwell Borough of sanctuary will be guided and informed by commitment to the following values:-
- Inclusiveness:*** We welcome and respect people from all backgrounds, place the highest value on diversity and are committed to equality.
- Openness:*** We are committed to a culture of working collaboratively and in partnership with others.
- Participation** Those who support our vision work together with people seeking sanctuary. We value and recognise the contribution of all involved. We aspire to ensure people seeking sanctuary are fully involved in decision making processes and are supported to become leaders within the Borough of Sanctuary organisation and network as well as within the wider movement.
- Inspiring** We work with enthusiasm and positivity and are determined to surpass what has already been achieved to welcome refugees and people seeking sanctuary. We act as a catalyst for change by being open to new and innovative ideas and through sharing knowledge gained with others and working in partnership.
- Integrity** We aspire to high standards of honesty and behaviour, and always to act in the interests of people seeking sanctuary.

Additional information on Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary, and details of how organisations can join, can be found at: <https://sandwell.cityofsanctuary.org/>



Sandwell Council's strategic vision

Sandwell Council recognises that providing a welcoming place of safety is about more than how people arrive in Sandwell, and are welcomed, and that how they settle and integrate in the borough is just as important.

Sandwell Council's corporate plan details how we are working to create a fairer Sandwell through investing locally, doing things with the community, being green in everything we do and ensuring no one gets left behind.

We must be proactive to ensure we work in partnership to create a welcoming place of safety for individuals and families arriving in Sandwell. Following the framework of this strategy ensures the council takes a joined-up 'One Council, One Team' approach to best support individuals and families accessing services and formalises the council's role in wider work on sanctuary across the borough.

Sandwell Vision 2030

Sandwell has a clear vision for what the borough should look and feel like by 2030. In 2030, Sandwell is a thriving, optimistic and resilient community. It's where we call home and where we're proud to belong. Our vision for Sandwell:



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.



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.



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.



We now have many new homes to meet a full range of housing needs in attractive neighbourhoods and close to key transport routes.



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.



Our distinctive towns and neighbourhoods are successful centres of community life, leisure and entertainment where people increasingly choose to bring up their families.



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.



Sandwell has become a location of choice for industries of the future where the local economy and high performing companies continue to grow.



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.



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.

Sandwell Vision 2030 is inclusive of all residents whether they were born in Sandwell or have recently arrived from other parts of the world as refugees, asylum seekers or migrants. We want those arriving in the borough to feel Sandwell is a place they want to bring up their families, to feel safe and cared for, to enjoy good health and rewarding work, be confident in the future and feel connected and valued in our neighbourhoods and communities.

Objectives for the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Partnership

The following joint objectives have been developed and agreed by Sandwell Council and the Sandwell's Borough of Sanctuary local organisations. They are recognised by senior management, frontline officers delivering services and political leaders within the council alongside being recognised by local charities, organisations, residents, and services that form Sandwell's multi-agency Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Partnership.

A detailed action plan will be developed by the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary partners, identifying the specific actions required, who is responsible, and timeframes involved which will be monitored to evidence impact the action plan. The action plan template can be found in **appendix three**.

The partnership will work together as a network to make Sandwell a Borough of Sanctuary. We will strive to build a welcoming place for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, whilst also promoting integration and community cohesion.

- The partnership will build strong and resilient communities through cohesion and support. Furthermore, we want groups to contribute their decades of experience and expertise to our collaborative vision and draw on the individual strengths of each partner.
- The partnership will constantly strive for excellence and best practice in our service delivery and partnership working. We will seek to uphold the dignity and worth of every migrant, refugee and asylum seeker in the borough.
- The partnership will work to identify gaps in provision and encourage the diverse range of refugee and asylum support organisations in the borough to work together.

The partnership will promote a culture of inclusion between Sandwell residents and support a mutual understanding in which longer-standing communities feel able to understand and welcome migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.

- The partnership will not tolerate a hostile environment towards individuals resettling in the borough. Rather, we will celebrate and be strengthened by our diversity and the values we hold which enable and empower it.
- The partnership will challenge the negative perceptions and misleading narratives of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the media, through facts and positive stories of integration.
- The partnership will challenge and question policy changes at a local, regional, and national level that support the rights and needs of asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants. We will assist and educate those seeking sanctuary as to what rights and entitlements they do have.



The partnership will enhance opportunities for migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers to utilise and develop their skills, to access opportunities to support themselves and their families which contributes to the social and economic wellbeing of the borough.

- The partnership will provide opportunities for resettled individuals to apply their skills, determination, and enthusiasm within the local Sandwell economy.
- The partnership will help support those facing discrimination and lack of equal opportunities in labour markets and in work. We will actively engage in developing pathways for people who are resettling with leave to stay and the right to work in the UK into a number of different programmes.
- The partnership will support those who do not have the right to work in order to access volunteering opportunities that meet their aspirations and increase their employability.

The partnership will advocate the engagement of those seeking sanctuary in decision making processes at all levels and in all activities.

- The partnership wants sanctuary seekers to feel like their resettlement status does not limit their access to support and that they feel both heard and a valued part of our communities.
- The partnership will engage people seeking sanctuary in all activities to promote understanding of migrant, refugee, and asylum seeker issues, especially by enabling voices to be heard directly.
- The partnership will play a proactive role as a network in empowering key stakeholders across the borough to make changes to the systems that affect them to ensure that the issues affecting migrants, asylum seekers and refugees are raised and addressed.

The partnership will stand together against modern slavery and are committed to preventing slavery and human trafficking activities across the Borough.

- The partnership will work with the Sandwell Anti-Slavery Strategic Partnership to keep informed and support statements to tackle modern slavery across Sandwell.
- The partnership will access training that will enable the partners to identify signs of modern slavery.
- The partnership will be aware of services that partners can signpost individuals to across the borough that support victims of modern slavery.

A statement from Sandwell Council

As a local authority, we will commit to doing everything in our power to make Sandwell a welcoming place of safety for people who are asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants. By working proactively, we can make our neighbourhoods places of sanctuary, where everyone can build a life, be part of the community and get the support they need. We will demonstrate strong local leadership through working proactively with national and local



government, the voluntary and community sector, faith bodies and our local communities on Borough of Sanctuary initiatives.

We wholeheartedly endorse this strategy, and we are committed to its successful delivery; we will set a standard that the council will honour and build-on as we continue our journey as part of a Borough of Sanctuary.

Embedding sanctuary as a partnership

All six of Sandwell's strategic objectives relate to the aims of the partnership. The following strategic outcomes, which are outlined in the council's Corporate Plan, have formed the basis of our framework. Through applying the six strategic outcomes, we have defined our approach to ensuring that the work we do, and services we provide, as a local authority and local organisations contributes to creating a welcoming place of safety for individuals and families who arrive in Sandwell as asylum seekers, refugees and migrants.

The partnership has applied the strategic outcomes to creating a welcoming place of safety for those arriving in the borough.

Strategic Outcome



We will support families to be able to engage with relevant providers of services such as childcare, family support, schools and activities for children and young people.

- Education and language learning for children and young people
- Dedicated support for newly arrived children and young people in school environments
- Early years support
- Family support
- Activities for children and young people outside of school



We will enable individuals and families to settle in Sandwell by sharing information and signposting to wellbeing activities, healthcare, and welfare provisions.

- Support for individuals to know their rights and access healthcare and welfare benefits
- Creating safe places to engage and access information
- Language learning for adults (ESOL)



We will work with communities to build relationships, support each other, and celebrate communities and culture.

- Building welcoming communities
- Taking part in community activities
- Create more opportunities for community enterprise
- Sharing and celebrating communities and cultures



We will take a holistic approach and support individuals throughout their housing journey.

- Wrap around support for transition from temporary accommodation
- Support individuals and families to feel safe and at home
- Provision of affordable and quality homes
- Provision of move-on accommodation



We will advocate for and promote services that offer opportunities for individuals to use their skills and access employment and language support.

- Sharing opportunities to engage in employment that utilises individuals experience, qualifications, and transferrable skills
- Employment and volunteering opportunities
- Recognition of migrant expertise in the workforce and sharing with young people
- ESOL classes and language support for work purposes



We will work to ensure there is a cohesive transport model across the six towns that helps to promote social connectedness.

- Social connectedness and accessibility to services
- Access to and affordability of public transport
- Clear information about public transport and how to get around the borough
- Signposting to wider support services and community activities



Action planning

This strategy will inform actions for local organisations and directorates within the council. The action plan will set out how the council and Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary local organisations will work in partnership to create a welcoming place of safety for individuals and families seeking sanctuary in Sandwell.

Governance

The aims of this strategy and actions detailed within the action plan will be monitored by Sandwell's Borough of Sanctuary Partnership Group. The partnership group consists of representatives from local organisations alongside the council's Resettlement Co-Ordinator and representation from council directorates.

The Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Partnership Group enables collaborative working between the council and local organisations, residents, and local businesses. As part of the group, partners can collectively engage with national organisations and respond to policy changes at a local, regional, and national level to support the rights and needs of asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants.

Local organisation and council leads will need to ensure that their organisation or directorate within the council are working on their actions and will be accountable to the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Partnership Group.

Within the council, the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Partnership Group is one of the council's external partnership groups that link into the Sandwell New Arrivals Partnership (SNAP) and the council's wider migration governance structure. Through working closely with the Sandwell New Arrivals Partnership (SNAP), the partnership group feeds into and receives updates from the West Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership (<https://www.wmsmp.org.uk/>).



Appendix 1: Definitions

There are some core concepts that this strategy centres on which have a common meaning across the partnership. These are defined for the purpose of this strategy as set out below:

- An **asylum seeker**, or a **person seeking asylum**, is someone who has left their country of origin and formally applied for asylum but whose application has not yet been concluded, where **asylum** is protection or safety given by a government to people forced to leave their own countries for fear of persecution.
- **UASC** stands for **unaccompanied asylum-seeking children** and refers to children who are outside their country of origin to seek asylum, are separated from parents and relatives, and are not in the care of someone who is responsible for them in a guardianship role.
- A **refugee** is someone who:
 - i. has a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion; and
 - ii. is outside the country of their nationality; and
 - iii. is unable, or owing to their well-founded fear unwilling, to avail themselves of the protection of that country.

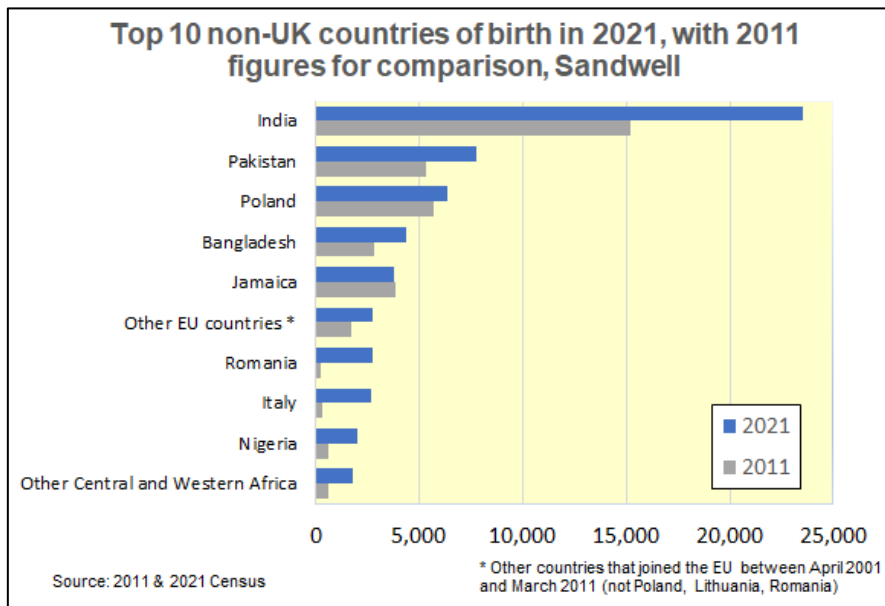
In the UK, a person becomes a refugee when government agrees that their application for asylum meets this definition (taken from the Refugee Convention) and recognises them as a refugee. The other route for refugee status in the UK is to be accepted onto one of the dedicated resettlement schemes prior to arrival.

- The **Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme, Vulnerable Person's Resettlement Scheme** (both up to 2020/21) or the **Global Resettlement Scheme** (from 2020/21) refer to specific programmes where the Home Office and United Nations Human Rights Committee identify the most vulnerable refugees for resettlement. The **refugee resettlement programme** is how we refer to this programme in the Council, where we accept referrals to welcome and resettle these families.
- A **migrant** is someone who has moved from one country to another, not for reasons of asylum or refuge. Often the move is for work, education or to be with family.
- The **Windrush Generation** are those who arrived in the UK from Caribbean countries between 1948 and 1973. Many took up jobs in employment sectors affected by Britain's post-war labour shortage. The name 'Windrush' derives from the 'HMT Empire Windrush' ship which brought one of the first large groups of Caribbean people to the UK in 1948.
- A **person with lived experience**, in the context of this strategy, is someone who has experienced migrating to or seeking sanctuary in the UK. The person's experiences give them a knowledge and understanding of migrating to the UK, and specifically Sandwell, that those who have only heard about such experiences do not have.

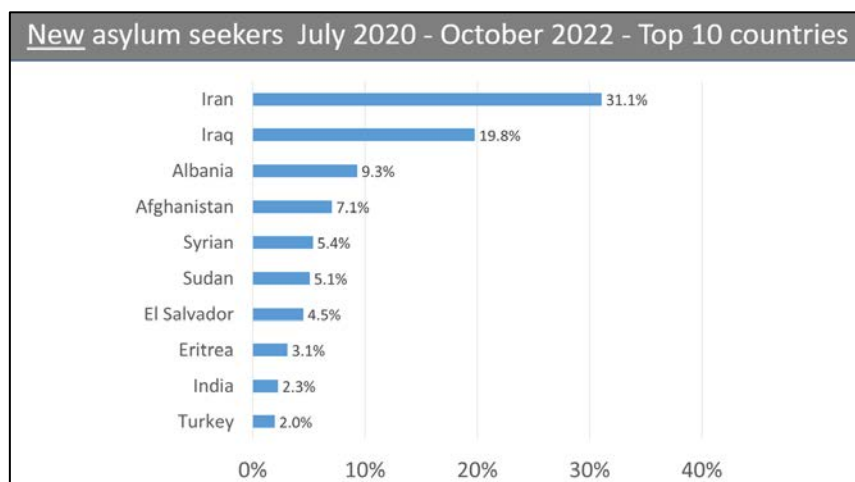


Appendix 2: Sandwell's Local Context- Data

The table below gives some breakdown to migration in Sandwell and their country of origin¹⁰:

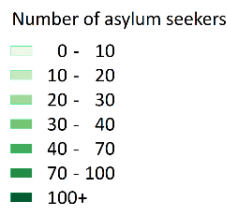


- India remained the most common country of birth outside the UK in 2021 with 6.9% of the population. Relatively large proportions of Sandwell residents were born in Pakistan (2.3%) and Bangladesh (1.3%).
- The number of people living in Sandwell who were born in Poland grew slightly 0.1% since the previous census, from 1.8% in 2011 to 1.9% in 2021. Whereas the number born in Romania saw a fairly significant increase from 0.1% in 2022 to 0.8% in 2021.
- 13.9% of Sandwell residents owned a non-UK passport; the most common non-UK passport held was Polish (2.0% of the population).
- 0.8% of the population had an address outside the UK one year before the census.



¹⁰ National Census 2021 England and Wales

Individuals and families seeking asylum in Sandwell are living across a number of wards within the borough, most commonly in the areas of St. Pauls, Smethwick and Soho and Victoria. However, there are several wards within Sandwell where no asylum seekers are placed – including Great Barr, Newton, Princes End, Hateley Heath, Charlemont with Grove Vale and Blackheath¹¹. This suggests that there has been some disproportionate dispersal in the re-settlement of migrants in wards and towns in Sandwell.



Language Composition







- In 2021, 11.3% (14,750) of households consisted of members who had different main languages.
- In 2021, 83.6% of Sandwell’s population, aged three years and over, had English as a main language, compared with 91.1% in England & Wales. The Sandwell figure is down from 88.0% in 2011¹².
- A further 5.2% of Census respondents stated they were proficient in English (saying they speak it very well) but did not speak it as their main language.
- The most common main languages spoken in Sandwell, other than English were: Punjabi (6.4%), Polish (1.7%), Bengali (1.0%) and Urdu (1.0%).
- The largest increase was for people who specified Punjabi as a main language, rising by 2.1% in the past decade.

¹¹ Serco

¹² National Census 2021 England and Wales



Appendix 3: Template of thematic action plan

Strategic Outcome	Thematic areas of focus	Action	Lead Organisation	Evidence of impact and involvement of individuals with lived experience	Examples of support and services we currently offer and can build upon
 <p>THE BEST START IN LIFE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education and language learning for children and young people - Dedicated support for newly arrived children and young people in school environments - Early years support - Family support - Activities for children and young people outside of school 				
 <p>PEOPLE LIVE WELL AND AGE WELL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support for individuals to know their rights and access healthcare and welfare benefits - Creating safe places to engage and access information - Language learning for adults (ESOL) 				
 <p>STRONG RESILIENT COMMUNITIES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building welcoming communities - Taking part in community activities - Create more opportunities for community enterprise - Sharing and celebrating communities and cultures 				
 <p>QUALITY HOMES IN THRIVING NEIGHBOURHOODS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wrap around support for transition from temporary accommodation - Support individuals and families to feel safe and at home - Provision of affordable and quality homes - Provision of move-on accommodation 				
 <p>A STRONG AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sharing opportunities to engage in employment that utilises individuals experience, qualifications, and transferrable skills - Employment and volunteering opportunities - Recognition of migrant expertise in the workforce and sharing with young people - ESOL classes and language support for work purposes 				
 <p>A CONNECTED AND ACCESSIBLE SANDWELL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social connectedness and accessibility to services - Access to and affordability of public transport - Clear information about public transport and how to get around the borough - Signposting to wider support services and community activities 				



Contact us

If you have any questions about this strategy or the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Partnership please email Bossandwell@gmail.com

To find out more, and for details of how to get involved, please visit www.sandwell.cityofsanctuary.org

Please visit the Settling in Sandwell webpage to find out about support for individuals and families settling in Sandwell www.sandwell.gov.uk/settlinginsandwell





Consultation Report: Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy

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Aims of the consultation

Residents and community groups have been asked for their views on the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy, which has been developed by the council and local organisations that form Sandwell's Borough of Sanctuary Partnership. The draft strategy sets out the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Partnership's commitments to welcoming and integrating individuals and families who arrive in Sandwell. The strategy co-ordinates the approach of council officers and organisations, council-wide and borough-wide, delivering services to those arriving and settling in Sandwell.

The consultation also provided an opportunity to strengthen the partnerships understanding of 'what welcome means' to our residents and community groups and what respondents feel are priorities should be as a partnership based on current barriers that are faced and what is already in place that we can build upon to make Sandwell more welcoming.

The strategy is for five years with a review built in after the second year to ensure our approach continues to align with our vision and objects and best enables us to support those arriving in Sandwell. This will enable services to develop with the stability of a medium-term strategic directive while allowing the strategy to be responsive to any changes and progress.

The following joint objectives have been developed and agreed by Sandwell Council and the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell local organisations:

- The partnership will work together as a network to make Sandwell a Borough of Sanctuary. We will strive to build a welcoming place for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, whilst also promoting integration and community cohesion.
- The partnership will promote a culture of inclusion between Sandwell residents and support a mutual understanding in which longer-standing communities feel able to understand and welcome migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.
- The partnership will enhance opportunities for migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers to utilise and develop their skills, to access opportunities to support themselves and their families which contributes to the social and economic wellbeing of the borough.
- The partnership will advocate the engagement of those seeking sanctuary in decision making processes at all levels and in all activities.
- The partnership will stand together against modern slavery and are committed to preventing slavery and human trafficking activities across the Borough. The partnership will stand together against modern slavery and are committed to preventing slavery and human trafficking activities across the Borough.

Approach to consultation

A six-week consultation period took place from Tuesday 20 June until Tuesday 1 August. An online public consultation was published on the Citizen Space platform. Alongside this, a collective response from individuals with lived experience of migrating to and seeking sanctuary in Sandwell was received from service users of Brushstrokes.

The Community Partnerships Team supported to increase the number of residents and community groups we heard from by promoting the consultation across their networks, providing paper copies where required and supporting individuals to complete the consultation online. The aim of the consultation was to include as many different voices and points of view as possible.

The consultation was promoted and shared with community groups and residents by:

- Presented to and shared across the Sandwell New Arrivals Partnership
- Newsletters shared to the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary partners
- Shared via housing forums and networks such as the Homelessness Forum, the West Midlands Housing Officer Group, and the Housing Partnership Forum
- Shared via wider networks that the council are engaged with such as the Health and Wellbeing Board, Faith Leaders Group, Community Safety Network, and the Sandwell Advice Providers Network
- Shared across an internal cross-directorate officer working group for officers to distribute across their networks and with the staff Equalities Diversity and Inclusion Networks
- Shared via internal communications- newsletters, Members updates
- Leaflets and posters distributed to Libraries, OCH Reception, West Bromwich Town Hall, to community groups via the Community Partnerships Team and to tenants at our first Tenant Conference
- Communications shared via social media and via Gov Directory mailing list
- Shared by wider organisations across their online platforms and networks (e.g. SCVO, Sandwell Churches Link)

In total, we received a total of **119** responses to the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy public consultation (online and through both workshops and focus group events).

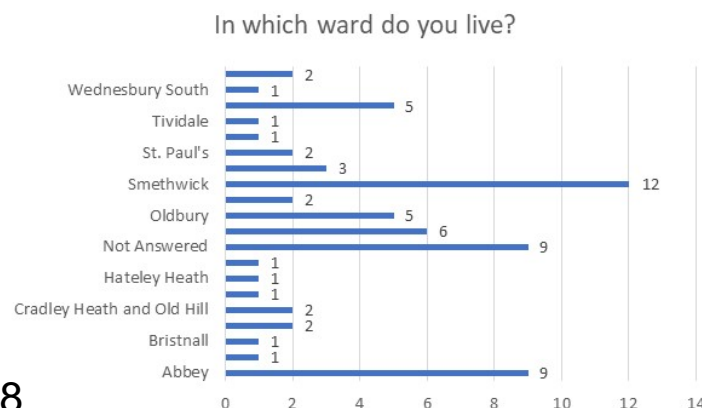
In addition, responses were also received from elected members when the strategy was presented to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny (SNAC) Board on 11th July 2023.

Demographics of respondents to the public consultation

Respondents to the consultation survey were provided with the option to provide demographic information about themselves. It must be noted that this is an option and that not all respondents included this information. This data allows the demographic results to be included in this report to enable analysis of the scope of responses and representation from different demographic groups.

In total 67 responses were captured by the online public consultation, with a small handful of paper copies being completed that were later inputted into the online response. The views of a further 12 individuals with lived experience of migrating to or seeking sanctuary in the borough were captured as a collective response discussion from Brushstrokes' Service User Panel. These responses are captured separately, further on in this report.

59 of the 67 responses captured by the online public consultation were from people who currently reside in Sandwell. The remaining eight respondents who did not live in Sandwell were members of voluntary or community partner organisations, Sandwell Council employees or a person with lived experience of migrating to or seeking sanctuary in the UK who is not a resident of Sandwell. A breakdown of which wards respondents live in is shown below.

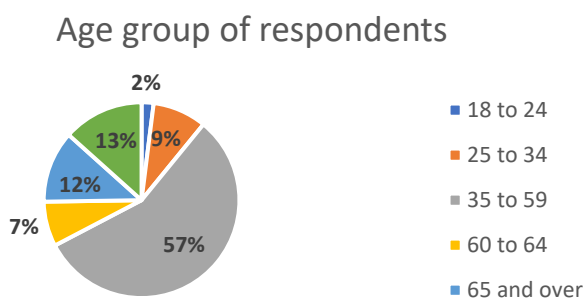


Respondents interests in the public consultation are shown in the chart below, with a good balance between each group of interest – particularly those with lived experience (26%) in proportion with longstanding residents already existing in the Borough (28%), and members of voluntary or community partner organisations (15%).

Sandwell Councillors and members of a national organisation supporting migrants, refugees and/or asylum seekers were the most under-represented in this consultation survey with no responses at all. However, we received feedback from members at the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny (SNAC) Board on July 11th 2023. Also, at the workshop in April, a councillor and a representative from the national organisation Asylum Matters attended. In addition, we have received feedback from City of Sanctuary UK on the draft copy of the strategy.

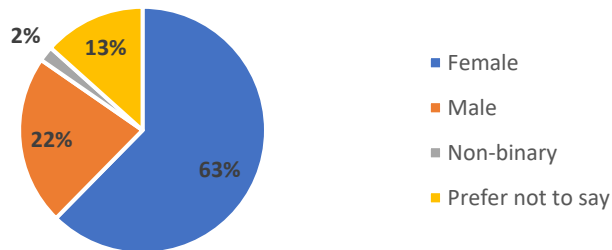
Respondents interest in the public consultation	Count of respondents	Percentage
A member of a voluntary or community partner organisation	10	15%
A resident of Sandwell who has lived experience of migrating to the borough (not for reasons of asylum or refuge)	13	20%
A resident of Sandwell who has lived experience seeking sanctuary in the borough (leaving your country of origin and you have formally applied for asylum or refuge)	2	3%
A resident of Sandwell who has lived experience of migrating to the borough (not for reasons of asylum or refuge) & a member of a voluntary or community partner organisation	2	3%
A Sandwell resident who has not experienced migrating to or seeking sanctuary in Sandwell	19	30%
A Sandwell Council employee	6	6%
A person with lived experience of seeking sanctuary/ migrating to the UK, who is not a resident of Sandwell	1	2%
A Sandwell Councillor	0	0%
A member of a national organisation supporting migrants, refugees and/or asylum seekers	0	0%
Prefer not to say	14	21%

The most significant age proportion of respondents was 35 to 59 year olds (57%), followed by an even distribution of older respondents within the age ranges of 60 to 64 (7%) and 65 and over (12%). Amongst younger age groups, whilst there was decent proportion of respondents aged 25 to 34 (9%), the least represent age groups was 18 to 24 year olds with only a 2% cohort - therefore, any future consultation work should aim to include greater representation of this demographic. The remaining respondents (13%), did not wish to disclose their age.



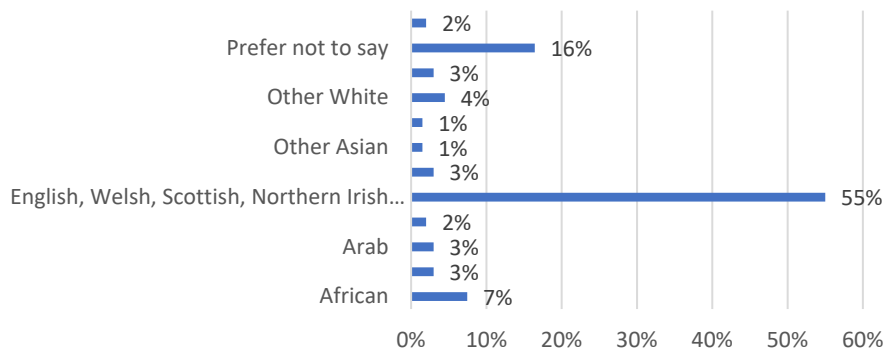
Overwhelmingly, female respondents had the largest say in this consultation, representing almost two thirds (63%) of respondents, in comparison to just 22% of respondents being male. In addition, 2% of respondents were non-binary. The remaining respondents (13%), did not wish to disclose their gender.

Gender of respondents



The largest ethnic group amongst respondents was white British (55%) – a similar proportional representation found in the wider Sandwell population. Ethnic minority groups represented 27% of the population – of these groups, the largest cohort included African (7%), other white (4%), followed by Pakistani, Indian, Arab and any other ethnic group - all with 3% each. Overall, it is important to see so many different backgrounds represented within this public consultation as this reflects the ethnically diverse population within the Borough.

What best describes your ethnicity?



Summary of Feedback

In various feedback formats, quantitative and qualitative data has been gathered to help shape and inform the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy, a full list of these responses can be found in the accompanying consultation spreadsheet.

Summary of key findings:

- The public consultation contained 10 multiple choice questions – 2 relating to how welcoming Sandwell is, 3 relating to both the document’s overall vision and strategic aims, and 5 questions in response to the main priorities set out for the Borough of Sanctuary partnership.
- Each question asked the respondent whether they agreed with a particular theme in the Borough of Sanctuary Strategy, with options of ‘strongly agree’, ‘somewhat agree’, ‘neither agree nor disagree’, ‘somewhat disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’.

- Support across all questions was fairly high, with respondents either tending to agree or strongly agree with the priorities of the partnership. The average agreement was 63%, demonstrating a reasonable level of support for the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy overall.
- Across all priorities for the partnership, the most well received amongst respondents was *'the partnership will enhance opportunities for migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers to utilise and develop their skills, to access opportunities to support themselves and their families which contributes to the social and economic wellbeing of the borough'*, which generated a 65% agreement overall.
- The response with the lowest level of support was when respondents were asked if they thought Sandwell is a welcoming place for those resettling.

Within the public consultation, respondents were given the opportunity at the end of every priority, and for the strategy as a whole, to feedback anything they felt was missing or any point they particularly wanted to emphasise. This produced a range of responses, with a number of key words and phrases emerging repeatedly.

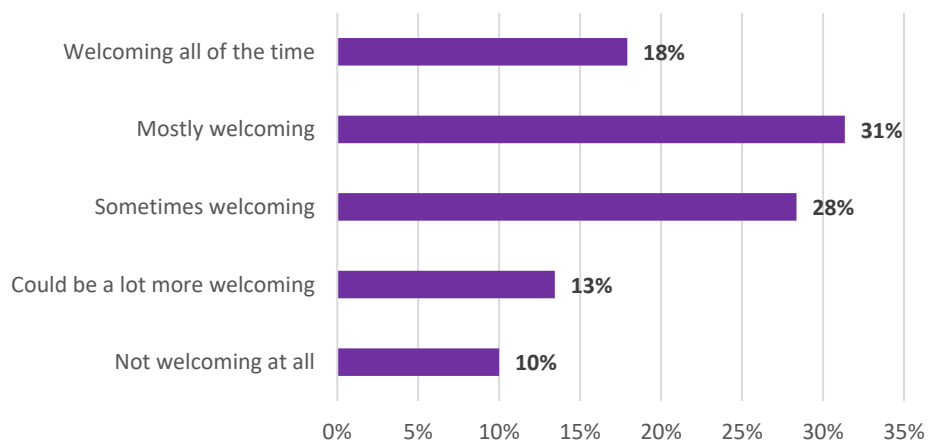
The top 5 phrases were:

- 1. Community** – respondents stressed the importance of ensuring there are opportunities for migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers to integrate within their local communities.
- 2. Support/Services** – respondents emphasised that there needs to be a provision of adequate resources to ensure Sandwell is able to support migrants, refugees and asylum seekers across all areas of the Borough.
- 3. Language** – concerns were raised regarding the language barriers those resettling face in accessing services across Sandwell.
- 4. Housing** – many respondents were supportive of housing as a means of ensuring those resettling are able to do so safely.
- 5. Work/Employment** – respondents wished to see individuals resettling engaging in employment and volunteering opportunities that utilise their experience, qualifications, and transferrable skills.

Consultation Questions and Responses

Below is a percentage breakdown of the responses to each of the multiple-choice questions presented to the consultation respondents and a summary of the reasons for their responses.

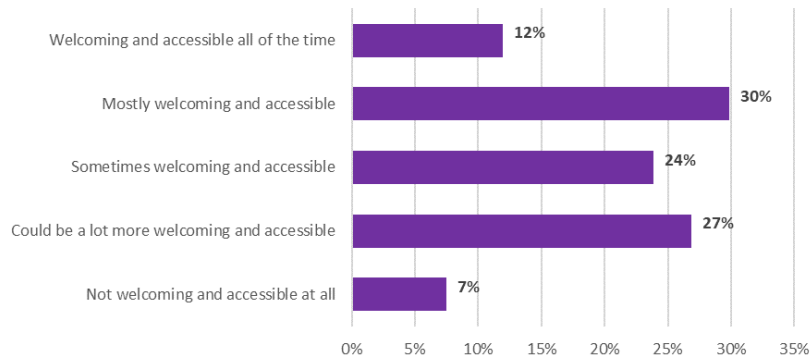
1) How welcoming is Sandwell for individuals and families arriving as migrants, refugees, or asylum seekers across the borough?



Response Analysis

- Overall, there was a mixed response when asked whether Sandwell is welcoming to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.
- 49% of respondents believed Sandwell is a welcoming place for those resettling (18% saying strongly all the time and 31% saying mostly welcoming). Different individuals with lived experience stated the following:
 - *“I feel incredibly welcome here as a migrant, have a very supportive community around me and definitely have all the support I need”.*
 - *“There are incredible organisations that enrich our community and should be strategically supported to deliver their work. They are a massive asset and have been essential for many migrants and asylum seekers. Both organisations need more capacity and need to be acknowledged as core delivery organisations for the strategy”.*
- 28% of respondents believe Sandwell is sometimes welcoming.
 - *“There are pockets of good practice but overall, the Borough lacks a clear and coherent approach, and this can impact the welcome received”.*
- However, 22% of respondents think it isn’t welcoming. Notably, one respondent provided some very significant feedback about who this document was aimed at.
 - *“Already after reading the Sandwell statement I feel unwelcome in your Borough. I do not see or read anywhere about trafficking victims, modern slavery victims, domestic violence and sex exploitation, forced labour and servitude victims. As one of the victims of the above I feel rejected as I feel not considered to be part of the community, I am not included in the Sandwell Borough planning strategies. Not every migrant is seeking Asylum or a refugee or has come to work on a skilled visa some have been trafficked and forced to work and abused”.*

2) How welcoming and accessible are the services provided by Sandwell Council for individuals and families who have arrived in the borough as migrants, refugees or asylum seekers?



Response Analysis

- Overall, there was a mixed response to this question. However, most feel that Sandwell is welcoming and accessible to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.
- 42% of respondents believed Sandwell is a welcoming place for those resettling (12% saying it is welcoming all the time and 30% saying it is mostly welcoming).
 - *“As far as I can tell the services are in visible and accessible buildings with welcoming staff and volunteers”.*
 - However, for the majority, whilst the majority think Sandwell is welcoming, it could potentially be doing more as a Borough. One community organisation stated, *“whilst it is mostly welcoming, due to language barriers and some attitudes towards migrants etc it can be difficult to help them navigate through council systems”.*
- 28% of respondents believe Sandwell is sometimes welcoming.
 - One individual with lived experience stated *“some of the services like ordering bins, tax and anything that requires a website login are hard to navigate for people without the language and some IT skills. Therefore, believing it could be more accessible to those resettling.*
- 22% of respondents don’t think Sandwell is welcoming.
 - Another individual with lived experience stated *“I don’t remember being welcomed when I arrived in Oldbury. I had to manage by my own where the supermarket is located. Also, I registered my son to school or to the GP on my own. People need more information about all the public services they can access”.*

3) What does a welcoming borough look like to you?

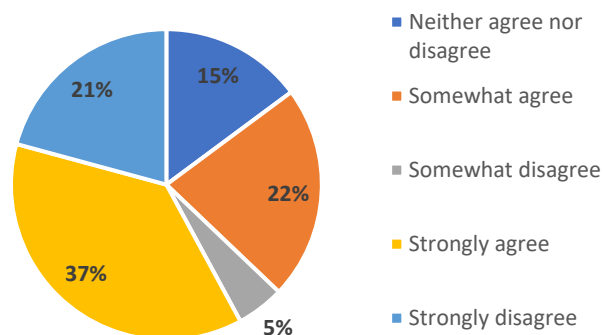
- *“Where local authorities and third sector organisations work in a coordinated and strategic way to make newly arrived people feel safe and supported.”*
- *“A place where everyone belongs. A community that is ready to help refugees integrate into the community, not segregate them”.*
- *“Accepting. Clear information and advice available at places where people feel safe”.*
- *“More open and inclusive - offering hospitality and opportunities targeted at refugees and asylum seekers but including other groups and local people. This will help refugees integrate and promote acceptance”.*
- *“A place where individuals feel safe , can access the services they need on the same basis as local residents , feel a sense of belonging and have the opportunity to participate in the life of the community as valued members”.*

- *“Unintimidating and obvious services and resources, diverse and friendly public spaces, a multiplicity of languages and cultures being celebrated”.*
- *“No post code lottery or disproportionality issues”.*

4) What stops Sandwell being a welcoming place for all?

- *“Levels of deprivation, lack of clear strategy. Also government policy and the Borough has to be realistic that being a Borough of sanctuary will necessarily involve pushing back on anti-refugee policy”.*
- *“Poverty, language barriers, impact of the media and govt policy on migration/immigration, limited access to housing and the knock on effects on access to employment and ability for individuals / families to feel settled”.*
- *“Negative public perception, racism, national government attitude, and lack of sufficiently resourced community organisations to support people”.*
- *“Lack of ESOL classes”.*
- *“I think what would help in schools in particular is more emphasis on supporting schools to become schools of sanctuary - how this would be helped would be to appoint/recruit somebody to coordinate this in the LA”.*

5) "To what extent do you agree or disagree with the overall vision of the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary strategy?"



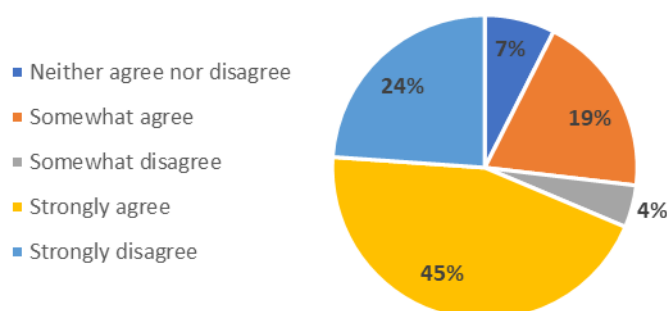
Response Analysis

- Support for the overall vision of the strategy was reasonably high, with a large proportion of the respondents either tending to agree or strongly agreeing. 59% of respondents agreed with the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy’s overall vision (37% strongly agreeing and 22% somewhat agreeing).
 - One individual with lived experience stated the document has *“clear priorities and realistic outcomes”*, whereas a Sandwell resident said it *“recognises current challenges and opportunities to improve”*.
 - The overall vision is also supported by community partners, who believe *“there is a strong focus on welcome and safety that recognises the specific challenges refugees and other migrants may have experienced”*.
- 15% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the strategy’s overall vision.
 - Another individual with lived experience felt that whilst it was a good document, it needs to redefine its scope, stating *“it's not a bad Sanctuary strategy but the fact that I'm not part of the plan as trafficking victim is frustrating”*.

- 21% of respondents strongly disagreed with the overall vision, whilst 4% of respondents somewhat disagreed.
 - *“Strategies look great on shelves. What is important is that it actually does what it says it will do”.*

6) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the overall aims of the partnership which are listed below?

The overall aim of the partnership is to make Sandwell a welcoming place for individuals and families seeking sanctuary in the Borough, by working to:

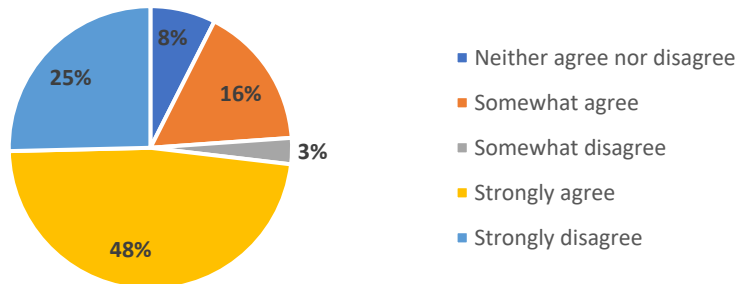


Response Analysis

- Support for the overall vision of the partnership was reasonably high, with a large proportion of the respondents either tending to agree or strongly agreeing. 64% of respondents agreed with the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy’s overall vision (45% strongly agreeing and 19% somewhat agreeing).
 - Community partners supported the overall aims of the partnership, stating *“this is the right combination of factors to focus on. If done through a two-way approach to integration this could be really effective”.*
 - One resident said, *“the aims are clear and will ensure wider understanding of organisations , frontline staff and communities of the experience of refugees and migrants, promote access and uptake of health care and ensure greater coordination of services”.*
- 7% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the partnership’s overall vision.
 - One community partner stated *“greater coordination and networking between local authorities and local community groups needed”.*
- 28% of respondents disagreed (24% strongly disagreed of respondents disagreed, and 4% somewhat disagreed).
 - One resident stated the strategy is a *“total idealistic pipedream - we can’t afford these policies”.*

7) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed objective of the partnership?

The partnership will work together as a network to make Sandwell a Borough of Sanctuary. We will strive to build a welcoming place for migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, whilst also promoting integration and community cohesion.

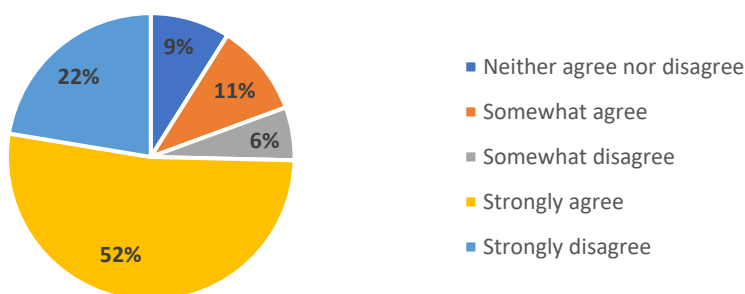


Response Analysis

- Support for this proposed objective was reasonably high, with a large proportion of the respondents either tending to agree or strongly agreeing. 64% of respondents agreed with the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy’s overall vision (48% strongly agreeing and 16% somewhat agreeing).
 - One individual with lived experience said “as someone seeking sanctuary, I want to contribute to my community, make a difference and earn respect and trust”.
 - Community partners were also supportive of this objective, adding “it’s really important that the partnership strives to help communities work together. Without community networks, newly arrived families have very little to help them navigate our systems”.
- 8% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the strategy’s overall vision.
 - One resident stated the partnership “need to do more to make sure its cohesive”.
- 28% of respondents disagreed (25% strongly disagreed of respondents disagreed, and 3% somewhat disagreed).
 - Another resident stated “without funding, this objective will be very difficult to achieve”.

8) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed objective of the partnership?

The partnership will promote a culture of inclusion between Sandwell residents and support a mutual understanding in which longer-standing communities feel able to understand and welcome migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.

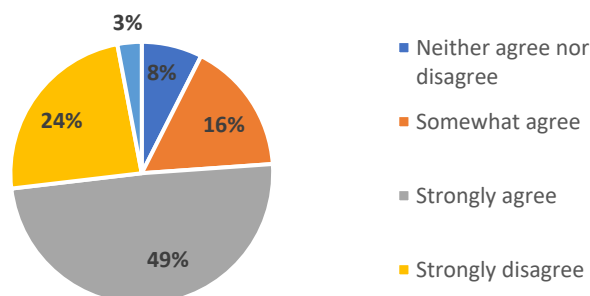


Response Analysis

- Support for this proposed objective was reasonably high, with a large proportion of the respondents either tending to agree or strongly agreeing. 63% of respondents agreed with the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy’s proposed objective (52% strongly agreeing and 11% somewhat agreeing).
 - One resident stated *“this is absolutely necessary to achieving positive welcome, but you do also need to acknowledge that anti-migrant and racist attitudes are often exacerbated by deprivation which is high in the Borough”*.
 - A community partner stated *“absolutely essential in order to counteract national and local media messages and the government's 'hostile environment' policy”*.
- 9% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the strategy’s overall vision.
 - One resident was less supportive, stating *“I agree totally with the commitments but doubt that the partnership will make significant changes at even borough level”*.
- 28% of respondents disagreed (22% strongly disagreed of respondents disagreed, and 6% somewhat disagreed).
 - Not all community partners were as supportive, commenting the objective is *“not clear how this would work in practice both in terms of tackling hostile environment and challenging policy. We can say we will not tolerate hostility but what real options are available to put a stop to this quickly?”*.

9) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed objective of the partnership?

The partnership will enhance opportunities for migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers to utilise and develop their skills, to access opportunities to support themselves and their families which contributes to the social and economic wellbeing of the borough.



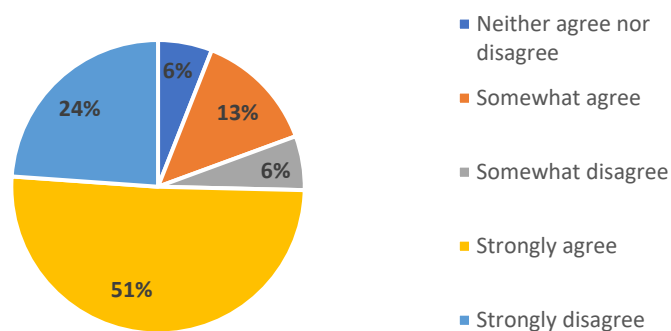
Response Analysis

- Support for this proposed objective was reasonably high, with a large proportion of the respondents either tending to agree or strongly agreeing. 65% of respondents agreed with the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy’s proposed objective (49% strongly agreeing and 16% somewhat agreeing).
 - One community organisation stated *“newcomers to our communities have a wide breadth and depth of skills to offer our employment market”*.
 - One individual with lived experience commented *“helping people work and thrive in the community is key to this”*.
- 8% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the strategy’s overall vision.

- Other community organisations were less supportive, *“on the final point, supporting those without the right to work to volunteer is a second order issue. These people are often being forced to live in a state of near or actual destitution, deeply traumatised yet disbelieved by state authorities and facing the constant fear of detention and deportation. Things like volunteering and even language learning can come later, once people feel safe and have the basics that they need to live with dignity”*.
- 27% of respondents disagreed (24% strongly disagreed of respondents disagreed, and 3% somewhat disagreed).
 - *“Appreciate that the partnership need to take some responsibility but so much to do elsewhere”*.

10) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed objective of the partnership?

The partnership will advocate the engagement of those seeking sanctuary in decision making processes at all levels and in all activities.



Response Analysis

- Support for this proposed objective was reasonably high, with a large proportion of the respondents either tending to agree or strongly agreeing. 64% of respondents agreed with the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy’s proposed objective (51% strongly agreeing and 13% somewhat agreeing).
 - One community organisation stated *“All members of society must be part of the decision-making process to truly reflect our communities needs and the problems they face”*
 - One resident commented this proposed objective is *“absolutely essential in order to counteract national and local media messages and the government’s ‘hostile environment’ policy”*.
- 6% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the strategy’s overall vision.
 - One individual with lived experience wasn’t totally convinced - *“I agree totally with the commitments but doubt that the partnership will have teeth to make changes at even borough level and less so at regional and national level, especially in the face of hostile government policy and hostile uninformed media”*.
- 30% of respondents disagreed (24% strongly disagreed of respondents disagreed, and 6% somewhat disagreed).
 - The scepticism from those with lived experience was demonstrated again as one commented *“all good aims and objectives. However, the council does not behave in such*

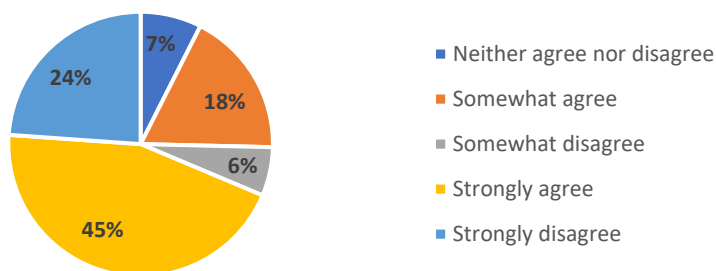
a positive empowering way with any of its residents at present. Empowering stakeholders is not very evident in council practices and behaviours”.

11) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following proposed outcomes of the partnership strategy?



- We will support families to be able to engage with relevant providers of services such as childcare, family support, schools and activities for children and young people.
- We will enable individuals and families to settle in Sandwell by sharing information and signposting to wellbeing activities, healthcare, and welfare provisions.
- We will work with communities to build relationships, support each other, and celebrate communities and culture.
- We will take a holistic approach and support individuals throughout their housing journey.
- We will advocate for and promote services that offer opportunities for individuals to use their skills and access employment and language support.
- We will work to ensure there is a cohesive transport model across the six towns that helps to promote social connectedness

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following proposed outcomes of the partnership strategy?

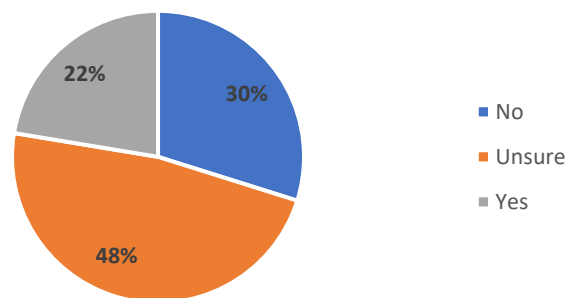


Response Analysis

- Support for these proposed outcomes was reasonably high, with a large proportion of the respondents either tending to agree or strongly agreeing. 63% of respondents agreed with the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy’s proposed objective (45% strongly agreeing and 18% somewhat agreeing).
 - One individual with lived experience said “you will meet every sanctuary seeker’s expectation of a welcoming Borough and safe place to call home”.
 - Members of community organisations were supportive of these objectives, stating “all of the above are needed. Having supported a family to resettle through community sponsorship, we have provided and continue to provide, support in all of the above”.

- 7% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the strategy’s overall vision.
 - Other respondents from community organisations were a bit more cautious, stating *“excellent aims but again just to be mindful that affordability is a central issue for people seeking asylum who may not really be able to move beyond the second objective.”*
- 30% of respondents disagreed (24% strongly disagreed of respondents disagreed, and 6% somewhat disagreed).
 - One resident did not support these proposed objectives, saying *“the partnership is a good idea but how will it impact on local residents? E.g. focussing on facilities”*.

12) Are there any things you think are missing from the strategy?



Response Analysis

- Overall, almost a half of responses (48%) were unsure whether the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy needed anything adding.
- However, there was a fairly even split amongst those who believe there are things missing from the strategy (22%), and those who do not (30%).

13) If you have selected yes, what do you think is missing from the strategy?

This generated the following responses, including:

- One individual with lived experience stated *“please mention trafficking and modern slavery victims too, we need to educate the community on this”*.
- One resident suggested the need for *“a clear statement of support for people seeking asylum who simply cannot afford to live”*.
- Another resident stated *“it's a dense document that few will read. However, it's useful to have it and to point to”*.

14) What more would you like Sandwell Council to do as an organisation to deliver support for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the borough?

This generated the following responses, including:

- One community organisation member said *“have a wider variety of community language information or the option to translate, on their website. Provide a greater presence of council representatives visiting local community organisations to talk with the constituents about the issues that matter most to them”*.

- One resident suggested to *“Enable travel that is free or supplemented so those in the poorest families and lowest incomes can access facilities outside of walking distance”*.
- One individual with lived experience suggested *“Positively challenge disinformation. And provide opportunities for communities to learn and work together as well as celebrating. Employing people from diverse backgrounds who may have an understanding of what these groups have been through and may experience when they first settle in the Borough”*.

15) What more would you like community groups to do as local organisation to support migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the borough?

- One community organisation stated *“more integrated spaces where migrants mix with UK citizens to break down barriers”*.
- One resident stated *“I’m not sure because I imagine they are already doing more than enough in the absence of effective national state support for newly arrived people. The bigger issue is what more the local authority can do to vocally push back against hostile policies”*.
- One individual with lived experience said *“I would like to see more kindness and tolerance towards the people who are sceptical about immigration, because most of them aren’t too bad. Some way to undo these attitudes so they don’t have after affects for migrants years later”*.

Collective response from Brushstrokes service users

A meeting was held by Brushstrokes with 12 of their service user panel, who have experience of migrating to or seeking sanctuary within Sandwell primarily as asylum seekers or refugees. The group consisted of both male and female respondents, from a range of nationalities including Syria, Kuwait, Pakistan, Nigeria, India, Malawi and Iran.

The group responded that Sandwell is welcoming all of the time for individuals and families arriving as migrants, refugees or asylum seekers. Sandwell is where people want to live and have fought to remain here. The group highlighted the positives of living here as a migrant such as there being many facilities nearby, transport services, green spaces and the area being relatively free of violence compared to other parts of the West Midlands. Service users are pleased with how schools have supported their children and families, such as through the provision of holiday vouchers, free school meal vouchers and schools responding well to any issues that have arisen. Community organisations and education providers have played a significant role in welcoming them and providing them with information and support to establish themselves. These include Sandwell Adult and Family Learning and Brushstrokes, who have provided resources, immigration advice and employment support.

The group feel that services provided by Sandwell Council are mostly welcoming and accessible, with service users reporting limited interactions with the council. Service users reported limited interactions with the council. One member mentioned the council acted quickly and efficiently regarding registering their children at schools, whilst another mentioned that the council acted quickly when finding temporary accommodation after being given leave to remain. Interactions with council’s Complex Case Officer for Asylum Seekers and Refugees have been positive.

Sandwell could be more welcoming if: housing stock could accommodate larger families, roads were safer, streets were cleaner and if a wider range of apprenticeships are made available. It was felt that the following stops Sandwell being a welcoming place for all: untidy and unsightly streets, poor access to GPs, unsafe drivers and a lack of female only secondary schools which is important in some

cultures. When thinking about making Sandwell a welcoming place for all, the group felt worry for individuals suffering from alcoholism and drug abuse on the street.

The group either somewhat agreed or neither agreed nor disagreed to the objectives of the partnership for the following reasons:

- The strategy recognises recent changes to the nationalities that have moved into the area, which is a positive.
- There are some particularly vulnerable people living in Sandwell who go under the radar (people being trafficked, working illegally, living in very poor conditions) and need to be considered in the strategy as well.
- Important to realise that certain services (due to their geographic location within the borough) are a lot more accessible to some people than others)- you can live in parts of Sandwell and be far away from immigration advice.
- An even greater emphasis on the importance of providing suitable housing should be taken.
- The importance of cultural sensitivity when accommodating asylum seekers was raised (e.g. food requirements, religious needs).
- It is important to not treat asylum seekers as a homogenous group- individuals have different experiences and faced different forms of trauma which sees a need for a range of support services.
- Reaching out to organisations, rather than individuals/neighbours, for support is preferred by people who are new to the area. Even reaching out to those from the same nationality does not necessarily happen due to the insecurities that people feel.

The group were unsure as to whether anything is missing from the strategy. The group felt that Sandwell Council could deliver more of the following to support migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the borough: improve quantity and quality of housing, increase accessibility of immigration advice and increase the support offered to particularly vulnerable migrants (e.g. victims of exploitation, human trafficking). It was felt that community groups could deliver more outreach and promotion of services, more support regarding resource provision (especially food) and have information available in a range of language.

Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy – partnership workshop

In April 2023, the partnership undertook a consultation exercise with over 40 attendees to understand what a 'welcoming Sandwell' looks like and to establish the approach we need to take to become a borough of sanctuary for all. The consultation workshop included representation from local and national groups, residents, the council, and people with lived experience of seeking sanctuary in Sandwell to understand what issues meant the most to them.

During the workshop we aimed to gather thoughts and feedback on the proposed content of the Partnership Sanctuary Strategy and work together to build on suggested actions for the Council and local network organisations that will form the action plan that sits within the strategy. The consultation highlighted a need to further explore issues related to accessing healthcare, housing conditions, and communication with services and local authorities, as well as access to ESOL classes.

Summary of workshop feedback:

- Overall, support across the strategy document and action plan was relatively high, with a large proportion of the respondents either tending to agree or strongly agreeing with the strategy's overarching objectives. Please note we are still in the process of documenting all the feedback from the workshop session.

- A large cohort of attendees were from organisations operating in either Smethwick, West Bromwich, Wednesbury or Oldbury – there were no attendees from Rowley Regis or Tipton. Therefore, we intend to run additional workshops to involve partner organisations from these towns.
- Partners felt asylum resettlement across wards in Sandwell needs to be more even, as there is currently a high concentration in particular areas, such as Smethwick and St. Pauls, but less so in areas such as Newton and Blackheath. It is important to acknowledge the different identities and needs of the 6 towns in the strategy’s overarching vision and also to recognise where the current infrastructure is that supports asylum-seekers and refugees including key voluntary sector groups and faith based organisations.
- Within the narrative in the strategy about Sandwell’s history of resettlement and inward migration, partners felt we need to ensure we acknowledge that international migration has helped to shape Sandwell’s population, communities and identity for decades.
- Partners felt anything proposed needs to be actionable and realistic.
- The Borough of Sanctuary Strategy should include more content that celebrates the partnership work that goes on in the area.
- Partners wanted Sandwell Council to play a greater role in national campaigns around migration and resettlement and the rights of asylum-seekers and refugees.

Action taken in response to consultation feedback

Response Received	Action Taken
Victims of violence, exploitation and modern slavery and our offer to them as a partnership needs to be included within the strategy.	Included an additional objective for the partnership in relation to modern slavery. Also, we have now expanded our definitions section (Appendix 1) in order to include Modern Slavery and Trafficking victims, setting out the scope for who the strategic document and who it is aimed at.
Acknowledgement of Windrush Generation needs to be included into this strategic document.	Included an additional section in the strategy to acknowledge the Windrush Generations in Sandwell.
Strategy needs to acknowledge that there are pockets in Sandwell where new arrivals aren't made to feel part of the community.	Further information added into Appendix 2 to accompany the resettlement map in order to show how Sandwell Council will help to ensure a holistic approach is adopted so that all those resettling can integrate into their community, no matter what part of the Borough they live in.
All resettling individuals must be part of the political decision-making process to truly reflect our community needs and the problems they face.	Under the objectives for the partnership on page 11, we have added that ‘The partnership will challenge and question policy changes at a local, regional, and national level that support the rights and needs of asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants. We will assist and educate those seeking sanctuary as to what rights and entitlements they do have’.
Language support must be integrated into the strategic aims of this document.	In our strategic objectives (p.13), we have added a strategic commitment of providing Language learning for adults (ESOL) and

	committing to this. We have also added a strategic commitment of providing language learning for children and young people.
I think accessibility is the key challenge. Transport is expensive for people resettling in Sandwell.	We have added the following onto our strategic outcomes 'We will work to ensure there is a cohesive transport model across the six towns that helps to promote social connectedness. -Social connectedness and accessibility to services -Access to and affordability of public transport -Clear information about public transport and how to get around the borough -Signposting to wider support services and community activities'.
The strategy should acknowledge that systems are complex. Even with language support it is difficult to explain and navigate the systems for schools, housing and other council services.	Under the objectives for the partnership on page 13, we will add 'We will enable individuals and families to settle in Sandwell by sharing information and signposting to wider support services and community activities'.
Greater emphasis needed on community cohesion within the strategic objectives of the document.	In our strategic objectives (p.13), we have added in that 'we will work with communities to build relationships, support each other, and celebrate communities and culture. -Building welcoming communities -Taking part in community activities -Create more opportunities for community enterprise -Sharing and celebrating communities and cultures'.
Housing support needs to be mentioned within the strategy.	We have expanded on our commitment where 'We will take a holistic approach and support individuals throughout their housing journey'. Adding... '-Wrap around support for transition from temporary accommodation -Support individuals and families to feel safe and at home -Provision of affordable and quality homes -Provision of move-on accommodation'.

In addition, recommendations were also received from elected members when the strategy was presented to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny (SNAC) Board on 11th July 2023.

Recommendation	Action Taken
That the Director of Housing considers the feasibility of embedding ESOL tuition for asylum seekers and refugees into the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Strategy.	An action planning workshop is taking place with partners to look at how this can be incorporated in the partnership's action plan that will sit beneath the strategy

That the Director of Housing considers the inclusion of the educational needs of asylum seekers and refugees under eighteen years old within the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Strategy including SEND, transport and language needs.	An action planning workshop is taking place with partners to look at how this can be incorporated in the partnership's action plan that will sit beneath the strategy
That the Director of Housing explores the cascading of consultations via town based community teams to increase response rates and to all Members.	There has been good cross-borough engagement in the consultation, but we do recognise that we need to support asylum-seekers, migrants and refugees across the whole borough, including in neighbourhoods where people have been less likely to settle.
That the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Strategy is publicised as part of the Windrush and 50 years of Sandwell celebrations.	Currently working with Sandwell's Communications team on how we can publish and promote this strategic document once it is finalised.
That the Director of Housing explores the inclusion of female health care, including access to sexual health and period products within the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Strategy.	An action planning workshop is taking place with partners to look at how this can be incorporated in the partnership's action plan that will sit beneath the strategy.
That training is provided to Members to increase awareness and better inform decision making in relation to the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Strategy.	This will be addressed at the All Member Briefing once the strategy has been finalised.
That the Director of Housing explores the adoption of a holistic approach when progressing the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Strategy.	Agreed.

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Equality Impact Assessments Toolkit EqIA Template



You must consider the [Equality Impact Assessment Guidance](#) when completing this template.

The EDI team can provide help and advice on undertaking an EqIA and also provide overview quality assurance checks on completed EqIA documents.

EDI team contact email: edi_team@sandwell.gov.uk

Quality Control	
Title of proposal	Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy
Directorate and Service Area	Housing Housing Management & Solutions
Officer completing EqIA	Louis Bebb, Housing Policy and Strategy Lead Officer
Contact Details	Email: louis_bebb@sandwell.gov.uk Mobile: 07342093138
Other officers involved in completing this EqIA	N/A
Date EqIA completed	10/08/2023
Date EqIA signed off or agreed by Director or Executive Director	11/08/2023
Name of Director or Executive Director signing off EqIA	Gillian Douglas
Date EqIA considered by Cabinet	13/09/2023
Where the EqIA is Published (please include a link to the EqIA and send a copy of the final EqIA to the EDI team)	Modern Gov

Section 1.

The purpose of the project, proposal or decision required

The purpose of this proposal is to seek approval for the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy, for adoption subject to Cabinet meeting on the 13th September 2023.

Our vision is for Sandwell to be a borough of sanctuary that welcomes those fleeing violence and persecution in their own countries and protects the rights of all migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. A 'Borough of Sanctuary' is a borough which provides a welcoming place of safety for people who are asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants.

We recognise that the way in which individuals and families arriving in Sandwell are supported to settle and integrate is critical to enable them to feel welcome and part of the local community. This sees benefits for all of Sandwell's residents and communities across the borough.

This strategy sets out the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Partnership's and Sandwell Council's commitments to welcoming and integrating individuals and families who arrive in Sandwell. This strategy co-ordinates the approach of the council and other organisations, council-wide and borough-wide, delivering services to those arriving and settling in Sandwell.

The strategy is for five years with a review built in after the second year to ensure our approach continues to align with our vision and objectives and sets out how the council and partners will support those arriving in Sandwell. This will enable services to develop within a strategic framework while allowing the strategy to be responsive to any changes and progress.

Section 2.

Evidence used and considered. Include analysis of any missing data

The strategic outputs outlined in the document have been formulated around a considerable amount of research and associated data.

- City of Sanctuary Local Authority Network <https://la.cityofsanctuary.org/>
- Council of Sanctuary Award Procedure and Criteria <https://cdn.cityofsanctuary.org/uploads/sites/166/2021/08/Council-of-Sanctuary-Award-Minimum-Criteria.pdf>
- National Census 2021 England and Wales <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E08000028/>
- Migrant Health in the West Midlands, Public Health England

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/7890/phe_migrant_health_in_the_west_midlands_february_2017.pdf

- Migration Statistics Briefing, West Midlands Migrant Strategic Partnership
<https://www.wmsmp.org.uk/data/>
- Politics, Governance and the Shaping of Smethwick Since 1945
<https://etheses.bham.ac.uk/id/eprint/6890/>
- Social and Public Service Impacts of International Migration at the Local Level
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/210324/horr72.pdf

In addition, a public consultation was carried out. We received a total of **119** responses to the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy public consultation (online and through both workshops and focus group events). Further details of this will be provided in the below section.

Section 3.

Consultation

Borough of Sanctuary - Partnership Strategy Workshop

In April 2023, the partnership undertook a consultation exercise with over 40 attendees to understand what a 'welcoming Sandwell' looks like and to establish the approach we need to take to become a borough of sanctuary for all. The consultation workshop included representation from local and national groups, residents, the council, and people with lived experience of seeking sanctuary in Sandwell to understand what issues meant the most to them.

During the workshop we aimed to gather thoughts and feedback on the proposed content of the Partnership Sanctuary Strategy and work together to build on suggested actions for the Council and local network organisations that will form the action plan that sits within the strategy. The consultation highlighted a need to further explore issues related to accessing healthcare, housing conditions, and communication with services and local authorities, as well as access to ESOL classes.

Summary of workshop feedback:

- Overall, support across the strategy document and action plan was relatively high, with a large proportion of the respondents either tending to agree or strongly agreeing with the strategy's

overarching objectives. Please note we are still in the process of documenting all the feedback from the workshop session.

- A large cohort of attendees were from organisations operating in either Smethwick, West Bromwich, Wednesbury or Oldbury – there were no attendees from Rowley Regis or Tipton. Therefore, we intend to run additional workshops to involve partner organisations from these towns.
- Partners felt asylum resettlement across wards in Sandwell needs to be more even, as there is currently a high concentration in particular areas, such as Smethwick and St. Pauls, but less so in areas such as Newton and Blackheath. It is important to acknowledge the different identities and needs of the 6 towns in the strategy's overarching vision and also to recognise where the current infrastructure is that supports asylum-seekers and refugees including key voluntary sector groups and faith based organisations.
- Within the narrative in the strategy about Sandwell's history of resettlement and inward migration, partners felt we need to ensure we acknowledge that international migration has helped to shape Sandwell's population, communities and identity for decades.
- Partners felt anything proposed needs to be actionable and realistic.
- The Borough of Sanctuary Strategy should include more content that celebrates the partnership work that goes on in the area.
- Partners wanted Sandwell Council to play a greater role in national campaigns around migration and resettlement and the rights of asylum-seekers and refugees.

The following joint objectives have been developed and agreed by Sandwell Council and the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Network:

- The partnership will work together as a network to make Sandwell a Borough of Sanctuary. We will strive to build a welcoming place for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, whilst also promoting integration and community cohesion.
- The partnership will promote a culture of inclusion between Sandwell residents and support a mutual understanding in which longer-standing communities feel able to understand and welcome migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.
- The partnership will enhance opportunities for migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers to utilise and develop their skills, to access opportunities to support themselves and their families which contributes to the social and economic wellbeing of the borough.

- The partnership will advocate the engagement of those seeking sanctuary in decision making processes at all levels and in all activities.

Consultation

A 6 week consultation period took place from Tuesday 20 June until Tuesday 1 August. An online public consultation was published on the Citizen Space platform. Alongside this, a collective response from individuals with lived experience of migrating to and seeking sanctuary in Sandwell was received from service users of Brushstrokes.

The Community Partnerships Team supported the consultation to increase the number of residents and community groups we heard from by promoting the consultation across their networks, providing paper copies where required and supporting individuals to complete the consultation online. The aim of the consultation was to include as many different voices and points of view as possible.

The consultation was promoted and shared with community groups and residents by:

- Presented to and shared across the Sandwell New Arrivals Partnership
- Newsletters shared to the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary partners
- Shared via housing forums and networks such as the Homelessness Forum, the West Midlands Housing Officer Group, and the Housing Partnership Forum
- Shared via wider networks that the council are engaged with such as the Health and Wellbeing Board, Faith Leaders Group, Community Safety Network, and the Sandwell Advice Providers Network
- Shared across an internal cross-directorate officer working group for officers to distribute across their networks and with the staff Equalities Diversity and Inclusion Networks
- Shared via internal communications- newsletters, Members updates
- Leaflets and posters distributed to Libraries, OCH Reception, West Bromwich Town Hall, to community groups via the Community Partnerships Team and to tenants at our first Tenant Conference
- Communications shared via social media and via Gov Directory mailing list
- Shared by wider organisations across their online platforms and networks (e.g. SCVO, Sandwell Churches Link)

In total, we received a total of **119** responses to the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy public consultation (online and through both workshops and focus group events).

In addition, responses were also received from elected members when the strategy was presented to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny (SNAC) Board on 11th July 2023.

Consultation Findings

In various feedback formats, quantitative and qualitative data has been gathered to help shape and inform the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy. The below provides a summary of the consultation feedback – however, if the reader would like a more detailed breakdown of the consultation findings and each individual question, they can read the accompanying 22-page Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy Consultation Report (Appendix Two).

- The public consultation contained 10 multiple choice questions – 2 relating to how welcoming Sandwell is, 3 relating to both the document's overall vision and strategic aims, and 5 questions in response to the main priorities set out for the Borough of Sanctuary partnership.
- Each question asked the respondent whether they agreed with a particular theme in the Borough of Sanctuary Strategy, with options of 'strongly agree', 'somewhat agree', 'neither agree nor disagree', 'somewhat disagree' and 'strongly disagree'.
- Support across all questions was fairly high, with respondents either tending to agree or strongly agree with the priorities of the partnership. The average agreement was 63%, demonstrating a reasonable level of support for the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy overall.
- Across all priorities for the partnership, the most well received amongst respondents was *'the partnership will enhance opportunities for migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers to utilise and develop their skills, to access opportunities to support themselves and their families which contributes to the social and economic wellbeing of the borough'*, which generated a 65% agreeance overall.
- The response with the lowest level of support was when respondents were asked if they thought Sandwell is a welcoming place for those resettling.

Within the public consultation, respondents were given the opportunity at the end of every priority, and for the strategy as a whole, to feedback anything they felt was missing or any point they particularly wanted to

emphasise. This produced a range of responses, with a number of key words and phrases emerging repeatedly.

The top 5 phrases were:

- 1. Community** – respondents stressed the importance of ensuring there are opportunities for migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers to integrate within their local communities.
- 2. Support/Services** – respondents emphasised that there needs to be a provision of adequate resources to ensure Sandwell is able to support migrants, refugees and asylum seekers across all areas of the Borough.
- 3. Language** – concerns were raised regarding the language barriers those resettling face in accessing services across Sandwell.
- 4. Housing** – many respondents were supportive of housing as a means of ensuring those resettling are able to do so safely.
- 5. Work/Employment** – respondents wished to see individuals resettling engaging in employment and volunteering opportunities that utilise their experience, qualifications, and transferrable skills.

Detailed contributions and amendments:

The consultation also highlighted a number of additional suggestions which have been considered and adopted in the final version of the Sandwell Borough of Sanctuary Strategy.

Actions taken in response to consultation feedback:

Recommendation	Action Taken
That the Director of Housing considers the feasibility of embedding ESOL tuition for asylum seekers and refugees into the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Strategy.	An action planning workshop is taking place with partners to look at how this can be incorporated in the partnership’s action plan that will sit beneath the strategy
That the Director of Housing considers the inclusion of the educational needs of asylum seekers and refugees under eighteen years old within the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Strategy including SEND, transport and language needs.	An action planning workshop is taking place with partners to look at how this can be incorporated in the partnership’s action plan that will sit beneath the strategy

That the Director of Housing explores the cascading of consultations via town based community teams to increase response rates and to all Members.	There has been good cross-borough engagement in the consultation, but we do recognise that we need to support asylum-seekers, migrants and refugees across the whole borough, including in neighbourhoods where people have been less likely to settle.
That the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Strategy is publicised as part of the Windrush and 50 years of Sandwell celebrations.	Currently working with Sandwell's Communications team on how we can publish and promote this strategic document once it is finalised.
That the Director of Housing explores the inclusion of female health care, including access to sexual health and period products within the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Strategy.	An action planning workshop is taking place with partners to look at how this can be incorporated in the partnership's action plan that will sit beneath the strategy.
That training is provided to Members to increase awareness and better inform decision making in relation to the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Strategy.	This will be addressed at the All Member Briefing once the strategy has been finalised.
That the Director of Housing explores the adoption of a holistic approach when progressing the Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell Strategy.	Agreed.

In addition, recommendations were also received from elected members when the strategy was presented to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny (SNAC) Board on 11th July 2023.

Response Received	Action Taken
Victims of violence, exploitation and modern slavery and our offer to them as a partnership needs to be included within the strategy.	Included an additional objective for the partnership in relation to modern slavery. Also, we have now expanded our definitions section (Appendix 1) in order to include Modern Slavery and Trafficking victims, setting out the scope for who the strategic document and who it is aimed at.

<p>Acknowledgement of Windrush Generation needs to be included into this strategic document.</p>	<p>Included an additional section in the strategy to acknowledge the Windrush Generation in Sandwell.</p>
<p>Strategy needs to acknowledge that there are pockets in Sandwell where new arrivals aren't made to feel part of the community.</p>	<p>Further information added into Appendix 2 to accompany the resettlement map in order to show how Sandwell Council will help to ensure a holistic approach is adopted so that all those resettling can integrate into their community, no matter what part of the Borough they live in.</p>
<p>All resettling individuals must be part of the political decision-making process to truly reflect our community needs and the problems they face.</p>	<p>Under the objectives for the partnership on page 11, we have added that 'The partnership will challenge and question policy changes at a local, regional, and national level that support the rights and needs of asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants. We will assist and educate those seeking sanctuary as to what rights and entitlements they do have'.</p>
<p>Language support must be integrated into the strategic aims of this document.</p>	<p>In our strategic objectives (p.13), we have added a strategic commitment of providing language learning for adults (ESOL) and committing to this. We have also added a strategic commitment of providing language learning for children and young people.</p>
<p>I think accessibility is the key challenge. Transport is expensive for people resettling in Sandwell.</p>	<p>We have added the following onto our strategic outcomes 'We will work to ensure there is a cohesive transport model across the six towns that helps to promote social connectedness. -Social connectedness and accessibility to services -Access to and affordability of public transport</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Clear information about public transport and how to get around the borough -Signposting to wider support services and community activities’.
The strategy should acknowledge that systems are complex. Even with language support it is difficult to explain and navigate the systems for schools, housing and other council services.	Under the objectives for the partnership on page 13, we will add ‘We will enable individuals and families to settle in Sandwell by sharing information and signposting to wider support services and community activities’.
Greater emphasis needed on community cohesion within the strategic objectives of the document.	<p>In our strategic objectives (p.13), we have added in that ‘we will work with communities to build relationships, support each other, and celebrate communities and culture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Building welcoming communities -Taking part in community activities -Create more opportunities for community enterprise -Sharing and celebrating communities and cultures’.
Housing support needs to be mentioned within the strategy.	<p>We have expanded on our commitment where ‘We will take a holistic approach and support individuals throughout their housing journey’. Adding... ‘-Wrap around support for transition from temporary accommodation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Support individuals and families to feel safe and at home -Provision of affordable and quality homes -Provision of move-on accommodation’.

Section 4.

Summary assessment of the analysis at section 4a and the likely impact on each of the protected characteristics (if any)

Refugees, migrants and asylum seekers in Sandwell represent a number of different protected characteristics, most notably race, age and religion. The strategy will provide a framework in order to promote a culture of inclusion between Sandwell residents and support a mutual understanding in which longer-standing communities feel able to understand and welcome migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.

Sandwell Borough of sanctuary will be guided and informed by commitment to the following value:

- **Inclusiveness:** We welcome and respect people from all backgrounds, place the highest value on diversity and are committed to equality.

There is no negative impact arising in relation to any of the protected characteristics/equality groups identified in the Equality Act 2010.

Section 4a - What are the potential/actual impacts of the proposal on the protected characteristics?

Reviewed Characteristic	Impact? Positive (P) Negative (N) Neutral (Ne)	Details of impact	Actions to address negative impact or promote positive impact (use section 8 table)	Owner of action/ Timescale
Age	P	<p>A strategic approach is necessary to meet the community and support needs of Sandwell's younger resettling population, whilst also acknowledging Sandwell's older population too. We want Sandwell to be a welcoming place for all, whether they have newly arrived in the borough, were born in Sandwell, or have a long history of their families migrating to the borough. The document considers the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the strategic outcomes of this document is to give the best start in life to children and young people. We will do this by supporting families to be able to engage with relevant providers of services such as childcare, family support, schools and activities for children and young people. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Education and language learning for children and young people 		

Reviewed Characteristic	Impact? Positive (P) Negative (N) Neutral (Ne)	Details of impact	Actions to address negative impact or promote positive impact (use section 8 table)	Owner of action/ Timescale
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dedicated support for newly arrived children and young people in school environments ○ Early years support ○ Family support ○ Activities for children and young people outside of school ● It is also important that longer standing generations of those resettling are covered within this document too. Older people will have improved supply of suitable and accessible homes where they in particular feel safe and supported. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In addition to new arrivals, we wish to continue promoting a culture of inclusion between Sandwell residents and longer-standing communities of resettled individuals. For instance, we want to recognise and celebrate the contributions of these individuals and also the families who have contributed to 		

Reviewed Characteristic	Impact? Positive (P) Negative (N) Neutral (Ne)	Details of impact	Actions to address negative impact or promote positive impact (use section 8 table)	Owner of action/ Timescale
		the borough and their local communities for generations, such as the Windrush Generation.		
Disability	P	<p>Migrants, asylum seekers and refugees will need support with any disabilities and guidance together with understanding the support available in this country:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the strategy states, we will enable individuals and families to settle in Sandwell by sharing information and signposting to wellbeing activities, healthcare, and welfare provisions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This includes support for individuals to know their rights and access healthcare and welfare benefits. ○ We will also strengthen collaboration and partnerships between healthcare providers, and other organisations to support the integration and inclusion of 		

Reviewed Characteristic	Impact? Positive (P) Negative (N) Neutral (Ne)	Details of impact	Actions to address negative impact or promote positive impact (use section 8 table)	Owner of action/ Timescale
		refugees and migrants in the community – including those with disabilities.		
Gender Reassignment	Ne	There is no evidence that the strategy would impact negatively on this protected characteristic.		
Marriage and civil partnership	Ne	There is no evidence that the strategy would impact negatively on this protected characteristic.		
Pregnancy and maternity	Ne	There is no evidence that the strategy would impact negatively on this protected characteristic.		
Race	P	The strategy will have an impact on ethnic minority groups in several ways. These individuals have distinct characteristics in terms of their community and support needs which may leave them disadvantaged in some way. Further, there is the potential of a hostile environment towards individuals resettling in the borough based on racial prejudice. Rather, we will		

Reviewed Characteristic	Impact? Positive (P) Negative (N) Neutral (Ne)	Details of impact	Actions to address negative impact or promote positive impact (use section 8 table)	Owner of action/ Timescale
		<p>celebrate and be strengthened by our diversity and the values we hold which enable and empower it. How the strategy will strive for racial equality is outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is, a clear link to the race and ethnicity of individuals affected by this policy due to the broad range of countries and nationalities represented in refugee and migration trends. ○ The focus of the BoS Strategy are new arrivals to Sandwell who have not been born in the UK. There is a wide collection of ethnicities and nationalities affected across more than 120 countries of origin including pre-dominantly from across Europe, Africa and Asia. ○ The strategy states that the partnership will strive to build a welcoming place for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, whilst also promoting integration and community cohesion – we will challenge 		

Reviewed Characteristic	Impact? Positive (P) Negative (N) Neutral (Ne)	Details of impact	Actions to address negative impact or promote positive impact (use section 8 table)	Owner of action/ Timescale
		the negative perceptions and misleading narratives of ethnic minority groups.		
Religion or belief	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We believe it is important that we create a society that builds bridges between our residents regardless of culture or religion. We will work with communities to build relationships, support each other, and celebrate communities and culture. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Taking part in community activities that share and celebrate diverse communities and cultures. 		
Sex	Ne	There is no evidence that the strategy would impact negatively on this protected characteristic.		
Sexual Orientation	Ne	There is no evidence that the strategy would impact negatively on this protected characteristic.		

Reviewed Characteristic	Impact? Positive (P) Negative (N) Neutral (Ne)	Details of impact	Actions to address negative impact or promote positive impact (use section 8 table)	Owner of action/ Timescale
Other	Ne	There is no evidence that the strategy would impact negatively on this protected characteristic.		

If there are no adverse impacts or any issues of concern or you can adequately explain or justify them, then please move to Sections 6.

5. What actions can be taken to mitigate any adverse impacts?

6. Section 6: Decision or actions proposed

7. Monitoring arrangements

Section 8 Action planning (if required)

Question no. (ref)	Action required	Lead officer/ person responsible	Target date	Progress

If you have any suggestions for improving this process, please contact EDI_Team@Sandwell.gov.uk

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Report to Cabinet

13 September 2023

Subject:	Schools Capital Programme; Shenstone Lodge School, The Brades Lodge, City Road, Tividale, Oldbury – Proposed Expansion
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Member Cllr Hackett
Director:	Director – Children and Education Michael Jarrett
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Martyn Roberts School Place Planning and Capital Manager School Organisation Paul Smith, Interim Assistant Director Inclusive Learning Services

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to the allocation of £1,264,000 from the Department of Education’s (DfE) High Needs Provision Capital Allocation to extension works to The Brades Lodge, Shenstone Lodge School, Lower City Road, Tividale, Oldbury, West Midlands B69 2HA as part of the Schools Capital Programme 2023-26.
- 1.2 That subject to 1.1, in accordance with the council’s Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules – July 2022, the Director - Children and Education be authorised to award a contract to Seddon Construction Limited to deliver the construction works, following a compliant procurement exercise, in conjunction with the Section 151 Officer, and in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education.




- 1.3 That subject to 1.1 and 1.2, the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to enter into any legal agreements on terms agreed by the Director – Children and Education as required, to complete the extension works at the school.
- 1.4 that in connection with 1.1 and 1.2 the following actions identified within the appraisal report be implemented to avoid exposure to significant risks in achieving objectives:-
- That cost estimates are reviewed for reasonableness and to ensure that additional costs could be managed within the allocated funding.
 - That the project plan is reviewed to ensure that delivery can be achieved within agreed timescales and will not result in additional costs in providing alternative school accommodation.
 - That the corporate risk register is reviewed to ensure that all risks are appropriately identified and assessed, with adequate mitigation.
 - Ensure post project evaluation includes specific outcomes, along with benchmarking of final costs to assess value for money.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 There is a need to provide additional school places for children / young people with SEND. The Brades Lodge has been identified as a school where additional capacity for SEMH or ASD places can be provided.
- 2.2 On 5 May 2023 the Director – Children and Education approved that the current design work for The Brades Lodge could proceed to RIBA Stage 3 for the design of a new teaching block at the school.
- 2.3 RIBA Stage 3 has now been completed and initial designs have been checked with building control, planning and technical services.
- 2.4 Authority is now required to proceed to RIBA 4 through to RIBA 7 to appoint a contractor to complete the build of the new teaching block.
- 2.5 A financial appraisal has been undertaken by Strategic Finance which recorded a score of 67% with recommended actions to mitigate potential risks to the Council. The appraisal report is attached Appendix A.



3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>The Best Start in Life for Children and Young People</p> <p>The recommendations in this report support:</p> <p>Ready for school</p> <p>B9 We will provide enough good school places that offer families choice and confidence that their children can experience high quality education and achieve good outcomes.</p> <p>B10 We will work with schools and other learning providers to improve educational outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p>Children and young people that need more support</p> <p>B16 We will ensure that children and young people with SEND can access high quality local services when they need them, by working with partners to ensure there is a comprehensive local offer available to children and families.”</p>
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4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 Local Authorities must ensure there are sufficient school places for all pupils including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. There has been a significant rise in demand for specialist places in the Borough. The population of children and young people (C/YP) with SEND requiring additional support through an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) has risen to above 3,000 plans. If current growth in population continues it is predicted that there could be an estimated 3,500 C/YP with an EHCP by 2025. The most significant rise has been over the last 2 years, with an additional 500 C/YP requiring a plan.
- 4.2 The local authority has identified several strategies to support C/YP with an EHCP who require specialist placements. One of these is to expand specialist provision for C/YP with social, emotional and mental health needs in both Primary and Secondary age ranges through either expansion of current Special School provision or creating additional resource bases across both ages phases.



- 4.3 In January 2022, Sandwell had 319 C/YP with an EHCP whose primary area of need was Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties. This is 15.2% of all C/YP with EHCPs. Not all of these pupils require a Specialist placement. Currently the Authority commissions 95 places at Shenstone Lodge School which has 2 sites; 57 on the Primary site at Shenstone Lodge, Birmingham Road, Shenstone, and 38 at the Secondary site, Brades Lodge, City Road, Tividale. The Primary site has some Year 7 pupils due to lack of capacity at the Secondary site. The remainder of secondary aged pupils requiring specialist SEMH are currently attending independent schools both in and outside of the borough.
- 4.4 Shenstone Lodge School provides places for children with SEMH difficulties. For Key Stage 1, 2 places are provided at Shenstone Lodge School, and for Key Stage 3, 4 places are provided at The Brades Lodge. Shenstone Lodge School provides 95 places for children. 38 of those places are for Key Stage 3 – 4 at The Brades Lodge School.
- 4.5 A feasibility study and outline design have been produced and identified that the Brades Lodge site can support an increase in capacity. The new accommodation will enable the school to provide between 60 -70 total pupil places dependent of the needs of the children from September 2024.
- 4.6 The expansion will provide the following accommodation;
- Science Lab with Prep room
 - Art Room
 - Food Technology Room with prep room
 - Workshop with prep room
 - 2 General Classrooms
 - 2 Recovery rooms
 - Office
 - Unisex toilets
 - Accessible / staff toilet
- 4.7 The estimated cost of the project is £2.514million. The school's academy trust, Manor Hall Academy Trust, has agreed to contribute £1.25million towards the cost of the build. Chief Officer delegated approval was granted by the Director – Children and Education in



November 2022 to fund initial feasibility at a cost of £80,000, and further authority was obtained in May 2023 for £135,300 to fund detailed design.

- 4.8 The proposed works are scheduled for completion by August 2024 to ensure a sufficient supply of pupil places are provided at the school to support the council’s drive to expand provision within the Borough.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 Places at The Brades Lodge are not increased: Sandwell pupils continue to attend schools outside of the Borough at an increased cost to the council.
- 5.2 Adaptation of the existing school: the original building was constructed as a community centre with a small multi-classroom extension provided when the school took occupation of the site. Given the specific design for a community centre with an inner quad, recent consideration has been given to re-model and extend the existing buildings but this proved cost prohibitive due to the extent of demolition and reformation that would be required to provide a conducive teaching environment.
- 5.3 Relocation of the school: Shenstone Lodge School is now an Academy, with the existing site held by the Manor Hall Academy Trust holding a long leasehold in the land. The council does not have either an alternative site or the capital funding to provide a replacement school. An expansion of the existing school is better value for money.

6 Implications

Resources:	A balance of £5,503,757 High Needs Provision Capital Allocation grant funding is held by the Authority to fund the provision of new special school places. It is proposed to allocate a further £1,264,000 to complete the build at The Brades Lodge.
Legal and Governance:	In accordance with the Education Act 1996 the council has a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient schools available for the children of Sandwell.



	<p>The council shall ensure that any procurement of contracts necessary for this proposal are undertaken in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council’s Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules.</p>
<p>Risk:</p>	<p>The Corporate Risk Management Strategy (CRMS) 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> <p>Based on the information provided, it is the officers’ opinion that for the significant risks that have been identified, arrangements are in place to manage and mitigate these effectively.</p> <p>If this report is not agreed, then the council will risk having an insufficient level of SEND school places which is contrary to the council’s statutory responsibility. If there is an insufficiency of SEND school places this will have a detrimental impact on children's future access to school places within Sandwell and the council’s reputation will be detrimentally affected.</p> <p>Early risk analysis identified that approval of the report could introduce an amber risk to the project due to volatility of rising prices within the construction industry over the past 24 months. Sufficient mitigation measures are being managed to finalise the scope of works: detailed early stage with the contractor to provide estimated project costs at each stage: and allowance for a project contingency.</p> <p>The council’s directorate risk register currently includes an amber risk in respect of school place planning. The recommendations above if approved, will assist in the continued mitigation of this risk.</p>



	<p>In addition, improvements to the condition of school buildings may assist in mitigating some of the risks arising from insured perils (such as storms, floods, fire etc) and therefore mitigate the financial costs associated with such events.</p> <p>A Project Risk Register will continue to be managed during the lifetime of the project to ensure that time, cost and quality are continually monitored to mitigate any risk to the council once the project is finalised. There are currently no significant risks identified.</p>
Equality:	<p>The proposed feasibility and design for a new build scheme at Brades Lodge will not present a negative impact, or disadvantage any end user from an equality perspective.</p> <p>A design for an outline scheme informed by the feasibility study will ensure that the final solution will be age appropriate and provide accessibility, both for physical and curriculum delivery needs.</p>
Health and Wellbeing:	<p>These project proposals will build upon established SEND provision.</p> <p>There will be a positive impact for children and young people because the project will provide SEND school places at an outstanding school.</p>
Social Value:	<p>In supporting the provision of sufficient SEND school places for children and young people, the new facilities at Shenstone Lodge School will enhance and improve the teaching environments for all.</p>
Climate Change:	<p>The specification for the outline design will look to build upon, and use exemplar sustainable school designs built through the council's School's Capital Programme.</p> <p>The council has numerous examples of innovative school buildings where the construction and</p>



	<p>infrastructure have been built with the impact of climate change in mind.</p> <p>Equally the final design solution for Brades Lodge will have to meet prevailing Building Regulations and targets set out in the Black Country Plan.</p> <p>The construction fabric of the Block will need to provide for it to be demountable and materials that can be re-used at end of life of the building.</p>
<p>Corporate Parenting:</p>	<p>The report recommendations will provide additional SEND places in the borough. Those places will be available to all children including those in Sandwell's care, enabling / supporting them to reach their potential.</p>

7. Appendices

Appraisal report

8. Background Papers

None



Financial Appraisal Report – Schools Capital Programme – Shenstone Lodge School, Brades Lodge extension

Date Issued: 24th August 2023

Contents:

- 1. Executive Summary**
- 2. Issues Arising**

Report to Cabinet

1 Executive Summary

Introduction

Children & Education Services are seeking approval for a capital project to provide an additional 20-30 school places for children with special educational needs, at Brades Lodge, in Tividale, Oldbury.

The extension of Brades Lodge will allow provision for a total of 60 -70 pupil places, dependent on the needs of the children from September 2024.

In November 2022, the Director for Children and Education approved funding of £0.080m for initial feasibility work, with further authority given in May 2023 for £0.135m to fund the detailed design of the expansion.

Brades Lodge is operated by Manor Hall Academy Trust, who have agreed to contribute £1.25million towards the cost of the build.

It is a statutory responsibility of the Council to ensure all children in Sandwell have access to a school place. Sandwell has limited places to meet the special educational needs of primary school pupils and currently maintain 3,258 Education, Health and Care plans for young people. If the current growth in population continues, this could increase to 3,600 by 2025.

Strategic Finance has been asked to carry out an appraisal of the funding application, which has been evaluated against HM Treasury Green Book guidance. The appraisal process recorded a score of 67%, with some areas of risk identified.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]



Project Objectives

- To provide sufficient school places in ‘good’ schools.
- To support the Council’s Vision 2030, where Sandwell “children benefit from a high-quality education throughout their school careers...”

Project Details

Following a significant rise in demand for school places for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in Sandwell, feasibility studies at Brades Lodge identified the potential to expand the school site to provide an additional 20-30 places. The Manor Hall Academy Trust manage and operate both Shenstone Lodge and Brades Lodge. The proposed expansion of the site will cover 565 square metres and will be complete by September 2024.

The project will deliver the following accommodation:

- Science Lab with Prep room
- Art Room
- Food Technology Room with prep room
- Workshop with prep room
- 2 General Classrooms
- 2 Recovery rooms
- Office
- Unisex toilets
- Accessible / staff toilet

The total cost of the construction phase is estimated to be £2.514m, with funding to a maximum of £1.250m being offered by Manor Hall Academy Trust. The remaining costs of £1.264m will be met from the Council’s Basic Need funding. Sandwell MBC will enter into legal agreement with Manor Hall Academy Trust for their capital contribution to the project.

Scope and objectives of financial appraisal

The purpose of financial appraisals is to consider the guidance provided by HM Treasury in evaluating business case proposals and assessing the potential risk to the Council in achieving its objectives. The following components and risks are assessed:

HM Treasury Green Book	Potential Risks
<u>Strategic Case</u> Objective, need, demand and reasonableness	Insufficient justification for project/will not meet strategic objectives

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]



<u>Economic case</u> Option analysis and risk	Poor use of council resources & excessive risk to Council
<u>Commercial Case</u> Legal and statutory implications	Project may contravene legal/statutory regulations
<u>Financial Case</u> Affordability	Proposals are not affordable or realistic
<u>Management Case</u> Governance, project management, monitoring and evaluation	Non-delivery of project and outputs
Limitations to scope of appraisal	Information provided by Project Officer

LEVEL OF ASSURANCE GAINED FROM FINANCIAL APPRAISAL

Limited (0%-65%)	Satisfactory (66%-80%)	Substantial (81%-100%)
There is a high risk of objectives not being met due to insufficient assurance within the project proposals. There is limited evidence to confirm that the risks to the Council could be adequately mitigated.	There is adequate assurance that objectives could be met, but further actions are required to adequately mitigate the risk to the Council.	There is good assurance that objectives will be met, with little risk to council resources.

Overall Conclusion

The appraisal scored 66% and provides **satisfactory assurance** over the adequacy of the proposals.

Financial appraisals will identify the following levels of issues:

Fundamental

Action is imperative to ensure that the objectives of the project are met

Significant

Action is required to avoid exposure to significant risks in achieving objectives

Merits Attention

Action is advised to enhance operational efficiency

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]



Summary of key issues identified

- The financial appraisal has identified NO 'fundamental' issues
- The financial appraisal has identified 3 'significant' issues
- The financial appraisal has identified 2 'merits attention' issues

2 Issues Arising

Action is required to avoid exposure to significant risks in achieving objectives
Significant

2.1 Financial Case – Reasonableness of Costs

- (a) A breakdown of the estimated construction costs was provided by the contractor in March 2023. However, the contractor has caveated the estimates stating 'it should be noted that the figures are indicative at this point and should be used for high level purposes only, with the clear understanding by all parties that all prices will change as the design develops and additional items may well be required. A lot of assumptions have been made due to the lack of detailed design information as drawings are only at RIBA 2 level to date.'
- (b) The contractor has allowed a total contingency allowance of £0.436m, which represents a 17% allowance. However, considering rising inflation and other cost increases within the construction industry, it is unclear whether this will be sufficient.
- (c) Estimated costs of £0.095m have been included by the Schools Organisation Team for consultants' fees but no further breakdown has been provided to understand what the estimates include or to determine whether they are reasonable.
- (d) No financial sensitivity analysis has been undertaken on the proposals and it was therefore not possible to determine the effect on the overall cost of the programme should there be fluctuations in the cost drivers of the project, e.g. construction costs, changes to specifications etc.

Implication:

Further changes to specifications may be required which could result in additional costs. Where additional costs cannot be managed within the allocated funding, further approval for additional funding would then be required and may delay delivery of the project.

Recommended Action:

- That cost estimates are reviewed for reasonableness and to ensure that additional costs could be managed within the allocated funding.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]



2.2 Management Case – Project Programme

A detailed project plan was provided by the contractor and includes a date for completion of mid-September 2024. As the academic year starts in early September, it is not known what contingency plans are in place, should the expansion works not be completed for the start of term.

Implication:

Failure to deliver the proposed expansion by September 2024 may result in financial implications to the Council, in providing alternate learning provision for the additional pupils.

Recommended Action:

- That the project plan is reviewed to ensure that delivery can be achieved within agreed timescales and will not result in additional costs in providing alternative school accommodation.

Action is advised to enhance operational efficiency
Merits Attention

2.3 Economic Case – Risks

A corporate Risk Register was provided to support the expansion of Brades Lodge. However, only two risks were identified and the risk of delivery within timescales has not been recognised. It was also unclear whether all the risks specific to this project had been adequately considered and addressed.

Implication:

Risks to the project may not be adequately assessed and mitigated, resulting in non-delivery of the objectives and financial implications to the Council.

Recommended Action:

- That the corporate risk register is reviewed to ensure that all risks are appropriately identified and assessed, with adequate mitigation.

2.4 Management Case – Project Evaluation of Outcomes

No specific outcomes have been included within the appraisal application.

Implication:

It may not be possible to undertake effective project evaluation without pre-determined outcomes to monitor against.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]



Recommended Action:

- Ensure post project evaluation includes specific outcomes, along with benchmarking of final costs to assess value for money.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]



Report to Cabinet

13 September 2023

Subject:	Contract for the provision of temporary agency workers to the council.
Cabinet Member:	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources Cllr Bob Piper
Director:	Assistant Director HR and Organisational Development Victoria Lee
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	HR Resourcing Manager, Harpreet Sandhu Harpreet_Sandhu@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO) Framework Agreement for the Managed Service Framework for the Provision of Temporary Workers delivered by Hays Specialist Recruitment Ltd is called off as a direct award to meet our temporary worker demand for a year with 3 x 12-month extension options (1+1+1+1) at the council's own discretion, pending new longer-term agency procurement partnership arrangements, for the provision of temporary workers.
- 1.2 Whilst the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation Framework Agreement and contract is implemented, Sandwell Council continue to operate under existing terms and conditions via Birmingham City Council's framework until such time the new agreement under the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation Framework Managing Temporary and Permanent Recruitment- ref 942 (Lot 12 Total Talent Management) are agreed.



- 1.3 That the Assistant Director of HR be authorised to sign any framework call off documents or Access Agreements that are required.
- 1.4 The Assistant Director of HR submit a further report to Cabinet on options available for the longer-term procurement of the provision of temporary agency workers and permanent recruitment.
- 1.5 That any necessary exemptions be made to the Contract Procedure Rules to enable the course of action referred to in 1.1 and 1.2 above to proceed.


2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The current contract, through Birmingham City Council's Managed Service Framework for the Provision of Temporary, will expire on 30 September 2023. Birmingham City Council has very recently announced new arrangements. With no access to renewal under this contract, it is imperative that the council establishes suitable arrangements from 1 October 2023 to continue to resource ongoing requirements for temporary workers, essential to enable the Council to deliver services. Considering the options available, it is possible for Sandwell Council to enter a new contract with Hays Specialist Recruitment Ltd under the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation Framework.
- 2.2 It is recommended Sandwell Council access a collaborative framework agreement via – Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation Framework Agreement Managing Temporary and Permanent Recruitment – ref. 942 (Lot 12 – Total Talent Management) for one year with 3 x 12-month extension options (1+1+1+1). This option allows the council to access additional recruitment solutions such as difficult to fill permanent roles, executive or senior leadership permanent recruitment and overall talent management if required. There would be no price or fee increase under this framework. This is the recommended option to ensure we continue to control the cost of agency spend. Hays is a supplier listed on the framework. It is therefore, recommended that an award be made to Hays, in line with the terms of the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation framework, as it meets the Council's current needs for temporary and access to additional permanent recruitment solutions.



- 2.3 The contract extension under the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation Framework will allow Sandwell Council the opportunity to prioritise our temporary worker provision, enabling a proper review of our current use of agency workers and spend, incorporate procurement planning, refine our requirements and complete a tender and sourcing exercise to award a new contract if required in 12 months' time.
- 2.4 The contract extension under this YPO Framework will continue to provide a platform for Directorates to deliver their workforce plans and where there are peaks and troughs and short-term specialist transformational resource requirements, the contract will be an enabler to the completion of priorities.
- 2.5 A change of supplier now would mean a disruption to directorates with current temporary workers supplied via Hays, pressure on directorates to deliver their service and priorities without the use of temporary workers and the work involved to identify suitable suppliers within short time scales given the number of roles that Hays fill via their supply chain.
- 2.6 The contract with Hays will continue to provide assurances surrounding various vetting compliance requirements e.g., right to work, Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (DBS), and qualifications to mitigate legal and financial risks to the Council.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>A Strong and Inclusive Economy Hays needs to work with us to focus on employment and employability for Sandwell residents, particularly in disciplines and job roles that historically have been hard to fill for the Council.</p>
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4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 Temporary workers are used for a variety of reasons across the council and are an essential resourcing tool to ensure effective service delivery. This may be to satisfy short-term, specialist demand, to backfill positions whilst permanent recruitment takes place or to cover extended staff absence.
- 4.2 Whilst the proposed contract with Hays has no defined value, the annual spend on temporary workers via Hays, excluding Children's Social Care, from April 2022 to March 2023 was £4.5 million. The figure includes the salary paid to the workers and all associated costs.
- 4.3 The Council has accessed Birmingham City Council's Managed Service Framework for the Provision of Temporary workers, delivered by Hays Specialist Recruitment Ltd to meet the demand for temporary workers, since 1 November 2017.
- 4.4 We are currently reviewing our temporary worker provision as part of our Recruitment Strategy, and work has commenced to explore options that will be further developed and brought to Cabinet. In the meantime, our intention was to continue accessing a temporary worker framework through Birmingham City Council. However, Sandwell was informed by Birmingham City Council in May 2023 they were undertaking a procurement process and would not be able to confirm the outcome until a formal cabinet decision had been reached in June 2023.
- 4.5 Birmingham City Council has since undertaken a procurement process for the provision of temporary workers and additional HR services and made an award of a contract to Hays Specialist Recruitment Ltd, called off under the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO) Framework Agreement by direct award for a period of 4 years. Sandwell Council will no longer have access to this contract through Birmingham City Council.
- 4.6 Our relationship with Hays commenced in 2017, having worked with the Council for six years Hays know how we operate. Given the imminent expiry of the corporate contract, it would be beneficial to the council to extend our current contract with Hays for the short term whilst we consider options available to us for the longer term.



5 Alternative Options

5.1 The following procurement options were also considered;

- a) To carry out the work in-house – there is a lack of sector expertise to manage the function as a Managed Service Provider (this would involve managing large number of individual agencies & workers and the service issues likely to come with this). Given the timescales it is, therefore, too costly for the Council to run an internal managed service provider type service. There is a lack of commercial skills and resources currently available.
- b) Tender for a Council only contract – This was discussed with Procurement and discounted due to limited time to conduct a full procurement process and availability of the YPO framework which offers a quicker, cheaper and compliant route to market and will deliver the same outcomes as the current contract with Hays whilst giving the Council time to address the options available for the longer-term procurement of the provision of temporary agency workers.
- c) Use a collaborative framework agreement – YPO Framework Agreement Managing Temporary Recruitment – ref. 942 (Lot 1 – Temporary Recruitment) for one year with an option to extend for a further year. The pricing structure and fee would increase significantly. For example, the fee paid to Hays for an Administrator on this framework is £1.76 whereas currently, the fee paid to Hays is £0.50 which would increase our agency spend considerably.

6 Implications

Resources:	The contract will not commit the Council to any particular level of spend, this is incurred when an agency worker is hired against the contract. Any spend associated with this contract will be met from approved Directorates' service budgets.
Legal and Governance:	Procurement and Legal will review the YPO Framework contract and terms to mitigate any risks.
Risk:	An assessment of the options available and of direct award under the framework agreement has been completed.



	It is therefore considered a measured and acceptable risk to take in the circumstances avoiding the signification disruption, potential cost of change associated with a change of supplier and allowing the Council to focus on permanent recruitment, hard to fill roles, strategic advice and support to directorates.
Equality:	There are no equality implications associated with the report.
Health and Wellbeing:	There are no Health and Wellbeing implications associated with the report.
Social Value:	<p>The contract with Hays needs to identify a focus on employment and employability for Sandwell residents, particularly in disciplines and job roles that historically have been hard to fill for the Council.</p> <p>The contract with Hays needs to identify a focus on engaging with local schools to give young people information about working at the Council and the range of jobs and disciplines available to them particularly focusing on the hard to fill roles.</p>
Climate Change:	There are no climate change implications associated with the report.
Corporate Parenting:	There are no corporate parenting implications associated with the report.



Report to Cabinet

13 September 2023

Subject:	Information Governance- Records Retention
Cabinet Member:	Leader of the Council – Councillor Carmichael
Director:	Surjit Tour Director- Law and Governance and Senior Information Risk Owner
Key Decision:	No
Contact Officer:	Vanessa Maher-Smith, Legal Services Manager – Governance and Regulatory and Data Protection Officer vanessa_mahersmith@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to the Council’s Corporate Retention Schedule as set out in Appendix 1.
- 1.2 That the Director Law and Governance and SIRO, in consultation with the Leader, be authorised to undertake requisite steps to ensure the Council complies with the approved Corporate Retention Policy.
- 1.3 That the Director Law and Governance and SIRO, in consultation with the Leader, be authorised to amend the Corporate Retention Policy to comply with changes in good practice and legislation as and when required

2. Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The Council has a legal obligation in relation to the collection, use and retention of information relating to individuals.
- 2.2 The purpose of the Corporate Retention Schedule is to help ensure that the Council manages the data that it holds appropriately and in



accordance with the legislative framework as principally set out in the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018).

Article 5 (1) (e) of the UKGDPR states:







“1. Personal data shall be:

(e) kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed;”

2.3 The Corporate Retention Schedule will also ensure the Council meets the requirements of its Information Governance Framework which requires that the Council maintains an up to date retention schedule accessible to employees, elected members and anyone working for and on behalf of SMBC.

2.4 This schedule should be reviewed on an annual basis. The last review was approved by Cabinet in February 2022.

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

		UKGDPR is a statutory requirement. The Council is not permitted to keep personal information for longer than the purpose for which it was originally collected.
		
		This contributes to the Council's Corporate plans indirectly as proper records management allows the Council to operate more efficiently, respond to queries faster and easier and provides the residents of the Borough with assurance that the Council is not retaining personal information for longer than is required.



4. Context and Key Issues

4.1 The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR), outlines the seven data protection principles which are at its core. These are set out in Article 5 and are:

- Lawfulness, fairness and transparency
- Purpose limitation
- Data minimisation
- Accuracy
- Storage limitation
- Integrity and confidentiality (security)
- Accountability

4.2 The Council handles personal data and must comply with these principles. Article 5 (1) (e) the Storage Limitation principle specifically outlines the Council's obligations in relation to storage limitation and stipulates;

- Records must not be kept for longer than is necessary
- Organisations can keep personal data for longer if keeping it archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research or statistical purposes.

The UKGDPR also stipulates that the Council:

- Must establish and document standard retention periods for the different categories of information held.
- Be able to justify how long it is keeping personal data for
- Must regularly review the personal information it holds and delete or anonymise anything that it no longer needs.
- Should carefully consider challenges to the retention of data

The regular review of the Councils Retention Schedule helps it to meet these requirements.

4.3 In July 2022, the Covid-19 Inquiry was launched. The Inquiry has provided a 'Protocol for the Transfer and Handling of Documents' which includes:

The procedure and conduct of the Inquiry are to be such as



the Chair of the Inquiry may direct (s.17(1) Inquiries Act 2005 ('the Act')), and are subject to the provisions of the Inquiries Act and the Inquiry Rules 2006 ('the Rules').

It is an offence under s.35 of the Act to do anything which is intended to have the effect of:

- a. distorting or otherwise altering any evidence, document or other thing that is given, produced or provided to the Inquiry panel, or*
- b. preventing any evidence, document or other thing from being given, produced or provided to the Inquiry panel, or to do anything that the person knows or believes is likely to have that effect.*

It is also an offence for a person to:

- a. intentionally to suppress or conceal a document that is, and that he knows or believes to be, a relevant document, or*
- b. intentionally to alter or destroy such a document.*

The procedures set out in this Protocol are not intended to cover every eventuality, and where the Chair needs to make a decision as to the procedure or conduct of the Inquiry not covered by this Protocol, she will, in accordance with her obligations under the Act, act fairly and with regard to the need to avoid unnecessary cost.

- 4.4 As a result of this, the Retention Schedule has been updated to include reference to the preservation of Covid 19 related information. A risk assessment has been conducted (see Appendix 2) which sets out the basis on which the Council can continue to meet its obligations under UKGDPR whilst ensuring it does not fall foul of the requirement to preserve Covid 19 related data that may be relevant for the Covid-19 Inquiry.
- 4.5 This year's review has also taken into consideration good practice and the Council has used a similar template to that used by the Information Commissioners Office. It has also been brought in line with the recent Corporate Restructure.



- 4.6 The review of the Retention Schedule and any updates has been completed by each Directorate, through their Information Governance Board representatives, and final sign off has been provided by the Council’s Information Governance Board (IGB), Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) and the Data Protection Officer (DPO).
- 4.7 The Retention Schedule and approach taken to apply the retention periods whilst preserving any Covid 19 related information was approved by Leadership Team on 13th June 2023.
- 4.8 The Council have made significant progress on Information Governance compliance since May 2019. There is now a strong Information Governance Framework in place led by the Senior Information Risk Owner and Data Protection Officer. A dedicated Information Governance Board with key stakeholders from every Council department meets monthly to embed good practice in both the Council and Sandwell Children’s Trust.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 That the Council relies on the Information Asset Registers to record its retention schedules. However, these are not as robust or detailed as a specific Corporate Retention Schedule which clearly outlines in one place the retention requirements for all the personal data held by the Council. Using Information Asset Registers to manage the Councils retention schedule would require the interrogation of several hundred documents for Officers to identify the correct retention periods.

6 Implications

Resources:	The only resources required is officer time to implement the Retention Schedule.
Legal and Governance:	The Council has a legal requirement to comply with UKGDPR, the reviewed Corporate Retention Schedule allows the Council to comply with legislation. Failure to comply with UKGDPR could result in a maximum fine of £17.5 million or 4% of annual global turnover – whichever is greater. The



	<p>ICO can also issue improvement notices, reprimands, warnings or a temporary or permanent ban on data processing.</p> <p>The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) amends the Public Records Act 1958 and places obligations on public authorities to maintain their records in line with the provisions of a code of practice on records management issued by the Secretary of State under Section 46 of FOIA. Failure to comply with the code is not in itself a breach of FOIA or the Environmental Information Regulation (EIR). However, following the code will help the organisation comply with the legislation.</p>
Risk:	As set out above, the Council risks receiving penalties from the ICO if it does not have a retention schedule that it is compliant with.
Equality:	There are no equality implications.
Health and Wellbeing:	There are no direct implications on health and wellbeing of our communities. It is indirectly beneficial to our communities to be assured that the Council is processing personal information in accordance with legislation.
Social Value:	As set out above, there is the assurance to the public that the Council is handling personal information properly.
Climate Change:	There are no implications in relation to climate change.
Corporate Parenting:	There are no implications in relation to Corporate Parenting.



7. Appendices

The Corporate Retention Policy (Appendix 1)
Risk Assessment re Covid-19 Inquiry (Appendix 2).

8. Background Papers

The Retention Schedule was last approved by Cabinet on 23rd February 2022:

<https://sandwell.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=143&MId=217&Ver=4>



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Corporate Retention Policy

One Council One Team



Author:	Governance Team
Owner:	Information Governance Board (IGB)
Version:	2.0
Modified by	Governance Team
Date:	June 2023 – (Also see amendment register)
Review Date:	June 2024

Amendment Register

Revision Number	Revision Date	Revision Details	Approved By
1.5	November 2021	Information updated with regards to Adult Social Care	Kay Murphy – Service Manager
1.6	February 2022	Information updated with regards to Democratic Services	Suky Suthi-Nagra - Democratic Services Manager
		Information updated with regards to Adult Social Care Hospital2Home	Ojwant Kaur - Operations Mana
		It was agreed by Cabinet on 23 rd February 2022 that historic emails held on the Council System that are older than 8 years should be deleted.	Cabinet
2.0	June 2023	Full Review of Retention Schedule undertaken with all Directorates.	Information Governance Board Data Protection Officer SIRO Cabinet

1. **Introduction**

1.1 Sandwell Council is committed to the efficient management of the personal information it holds for the effective delivery of our services, to document our decisions and actions transparently and to comply with our legal responsibilities. This Retention Schedule sets out the periods for which the personal data held by Sandwell Council should be retained. It also specifies what should be done with this personal information once retention periods are reached.

1.2 The purpose of this Retention Schedule is to:

- Provide consistency, with regards to how long information should be retained
- Provide clarity about the scope and reach of this schedule
- Catalogue the corporate retention schedule
- Define and provide direction for record management activity
- Set the standard for how records should be disposed of at the end of record life
- Bring the Council into alignment with data protection law.
- Provide assurance to stakeholders about the use and treatment of the personal information the Council controls

1.3 Application of this schedule will give employees and customers confidence that the Council is managing the personal information it holds in compliance with:

- Legal requirements
- Best practice
- Business needs

1.4 Using the Retention Schedule to identify and dispose of personal information on a routine and timely basis ensures compliance with data protection legislation and other relevant legislation, reduces costs and helps us to manage the personal information we hold effectively.

1.5 This schedule gives details of the item containing the personal information, the criteria triggering the start of the retention period, the retention period, the disposal action, the authority (e.g. legislation, codes of practice or guidance) forming the basis for keeping the personal information and the senior person

responsible for ensuring the retention period for each item is imposed.

- 1.6 Divergence from the retention and disposal schedule may be appropriate in certain circumstances. For example, pending or actual legal action, investigation or inquiry, change of legislation or regulations or to support legitimate business need.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This Retention Schedule applies to all personal information processed by the Council for which it is the data controller.
- 2.2 The retention requirements stated within this Retention Schedule applies to all personal information held regardless of media, format or systems in which it is held.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 The **Senior manager** responsible for the personal information held is listed within the schedule. These managers are responsible for:
 - Ensuring retention periods are adhered to in line with this schedule
 - Ensuring officers are aware of their responsibilities with regards to retention periods
 - Ensuring relevant personal information is routinely identified and reviewed to ensure it is no longer required
 - Ensuring that personal information is appropriately stored and protected against unauthorised access
 - Ensuring this Retention Schedule is updated with any new records containing personal data as required

4. Legal Requirements

- 4.1 The Council is obliged to meet the legal requirements for the retention and disposal of personal information. Each entry in the Retention Schedule references the specific legislation or guidance that stipulates or recommends how long information must be kept before being disposed of. Where no such legislation or guidance exists, retention periods are based on common best practice and business need.
- 4.2 Systematic and timely records disposal in line with this schedule is fundamental to the Council's compliance with information access legislation.

4.3 There are various pieces of legislation which outline retention requirements. These include, but are not limited to:

- Freedom of Information Act 2000 – including the Code of Practice Section 46
- The UK General Data Protection Regulations (the UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Public Records Act 1958
- Limitation Act 1980
- Inquiries Act 2005

5. **Data Protection Legislation**

5.1 The Council complies with the principles relating to the processing of personal data set out in the UK General Data Protection Regulation ('UK GDPR') and the Data Protection Act 2018 ('DPA 2018'). All retention periods meet the requirements of the UK-GDPR under Article 5 (1) (e) which stipulates that personal data shall be:

'kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed'

As such the Council does not retain personal information for any longer than is needed for the purpose in which it was collected and in accordance with this Retention Schedule.

6. **Exceptions**

6.1 Occasionally records will need to be held for longer than the stipulated retention period. Circumstances that may trigger variations to the retention period include but are not limited to:

- Tribunal proceedings
- Investigations carried out by the ICO
- Ongoing litigation
- Public Inquiry
- Internal Investigations

- System failure

7. UK Covid-19 Inquiry

7.1 The UK Covid-19 Inquiry has been set up to examine the UK's response to, and impact of, the Covid-19 pandemic and learn lessons for the future. The Inquiry will examine, consider and report on preparations and the response up to and including the Inquiry's formal setting-up date of 28 June 2022. Bodies exercising public functions, including local authorities (which includes Sandwell Council), are required to comply with the Inquiry. They must:

“ensure that a full and clear record of their part in events exists, is accessible, and that they apply a precautionary principle by retaining all material that could be relevant”

7.2 Under section 35 of the Inquiries Act 2005 it is an offence to alter, destroy or prevent relevant documents from being provided to the Inquiry. Documents that may be relevant to the Inquiry, considering the [Inquiry's Terms of Reference](#), must be securely retained and kept accessible in case they need to be disclosed to the Inquiry.

As such some of the personal information we hold will need to be kept longer than the stipulated retention periods set out in this retention schedule.

7.3 Once the Inquiry has been completed and authorisation has been given by the Inquiry, records will be deleted in line with the retention periods stipulated within this schedule.

8. Review and Update

8.1 This document will be reviewed on an annual basis with formal sign off received from the Councils Information Governance Board, Data Protection Officer (DPO) and Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO)

8.2 This document will be available on the Councils intranet site.

Adult Social Care - Retention Schedule

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ASC 1.0 - Community Social Work Teams, Mental Health and Social Work Teams						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 1.1	Care and Support Plans	After Service ends	11 years 20 years if Mental Health Issues	Destroy	The Care Act 2014 Mental Health Act 1983/2007 The Mental Capacity Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)	Assistant Director: Trisha Blackstock Area Manager: Angela Measham Paulette James Annette Thompson Operations Manager: Ojwant Kaur
ASC 1.2	Registration Forms	After Service ends	11 years 20 years if Mental Health Issues	Destroy	The Care Act 2014 Mental Health Act 1983/2007 The Mental Capacity Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)	Assistant Director: Trisha Blackstock Area Manager: Angela Measham Paulette James Annette Thompson Operations Manager: Ojwant Kaur

ASC 1.0 - Community Social Work Teams, Mental Health and Social Work Teams – Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 1.3	Assessment Records	After Service ends	11 years 20 years if Mental Health Issues	Destroy	The Care Act 2014 Mental Health Act 1983/2007 The Mental Capacity Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)	Assistant Director: Trisha Blackstock Area Manager: Angela Measham Paulette James Annette Thompson Operations Manager: Ojwant Kaur
ASC 1.4	Placements	After Service ends	11 years 20 years if Mental Health Issues	Destroy	The Care Act 2014 Mental Health Act 1983/2007 The Mental Capacity Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)	Assistant Director: Trisha Blackstock Area Manager: Angela Measham Paulette James Annette Thompson Operations Manager: Ojwant Kaur
ASC 1.5	Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding applications	After Service ends	11 years 20 years if Mental Health Issues	Destroy	The Care Act 2014 Mental Health Act 1983/2007 The Mental Capacity Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)	Assistant Director: Trisha Blackstock Principal Social Worker- Operational Head Safeguarding and Dols Rachel Cotterill Operations Manager: Suki Sandhu

ASC 2.0 - Enquiry Team						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 2.1	Blue Badge Application Records	Submission	6 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 2)	Assistant Director: Colin Marsh Operations Manager; Charlotte Leadbeater-Chase Social Care Team Leader: Tony Barnes
ASC 2.2	Weekly Performance Reports, Meeting Minutes, Minor Adaption Orders	Date of Record	6 Years + Current	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director: Colin Marsh Operations Manager; Charlotte Leadbeater-Chase Social Care Team Leader: Tony Barnes

ASC 3.0 - Therapy and Sensory						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 3.1	Requests for Minor and Major adaptations, letters from service users	After Service ends	11 years 20 years if Mental Health Issues	Destroy	The Care Act 2014 Mental Health Act 1983/2007 – Mental	Operations Manager: Charlotte Leadbeater-Chase Social Care Team Manager: Keiran Hilliard

ASC 4.0 - Enhancing Health in Care						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 4.1	Enhancing Health in Care Records	End of Contract	6 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 2)	Assistant Director: Christine Guest Quality & Safety Lead: Richard Thompson
ASC 4.2	MDT physical mental and other health records.	Date of Last Action	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director: Christine Guest Quality & Safety Lead: Richard Thompson

ASC 5.0 – Commissioning						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 5.1	Service / Safeguarding Records Referral date, meetings data, Budget Reports, Assessment and Review of needs, Complaints Consultation Data	End of Service	11 years 20 years if Mental Health Issues	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director Christine Guest Operations Manager: Justin Haywood

ASC 6.0 - Commissioning for Older People

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 6.1	Performance monitoring, payments and capacity monitoring DARP records, Appraisals, 1-1 supervisions	Expiry of contract subject to extension for legal action	6 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 2)	Assistant Director Christine Guest Operations Manager: Daljit Bhangal Commissioning Manager; Ria Palmer

ASC 7.0 - Quality Team

Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 7.1	Training registers, outcome records spreadsheet, Name of Provider staff and service users	Date of Last Action	6 Years	Destroy	Service Need	Assistant Director: Christine Guest Quality & Safety Lead Richard Thompson Quality Team Manager: Debra Humphreys

ASC 8.0 - Community Alarm Team

Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 8.1	Community Alarm Service User Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical / mental health Records Other health records Photographs, Next of Kin records 	Contract End	18 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director: Colin Marsh Joint Prevention Stores & Community Alarms Manager: Louise Butler

ASC 9.0 - Independent Living Team

Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 9.1	Covid-19 Pandemic Services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winter Grant Vulnerable People Support Self Isolation 	Last Action	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Operations Manager: Charlotte Leadbeater-Chase

ASC 10.0 - Residential Care Homes (Fountain Court, The Granges)						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 10.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents Case File Care Plans Physical / mental health Records Other health records 	End of Service	<p>11 years</p> <p>20 years if Mental Health Issues</p>	Destroy	<p>Health and Social Care Act 2008</p> <p>The Mental Capacity Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) Care Act 2014</p>	<p>Assistant Director: Colin Marsh</p> <p>Operations Manager: Jackie Postin</p> <p>Homes Manager- Walker Grange – Justin Hickenbottom Fountain court – Sharon Billinge Willow Grange – Lorraine Skipp Harvest View – Michaela Wilson</p>

ASC 11.0 - Business Support – Therapy, Granges, Care Management and Prevention Stores						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 11.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SAC9 Contracts Financial Records for Residential Homes 	Date of Last Action	11 years 20 years if Mental Health Issues	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director: Colin Marsh Operations Manager: Jackie Postin Homes Manager- Walker Grange – Justin Hickinbottom Fountain court - Sharon Billinge Willow Grange – Lorraine Skipp Harvest View – Michaela Wilson

ASC 12.0 Learning Disability Day Opportunities and Shared Lives						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 12.1	Service user records: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical / mental health Records Other health records service user's Information Application for Hydrotherapy Photographs 	End of Service	11 years 20 years if Mental Health Issues	Destroy	Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) 2010	Assistant Director: Colin Marsh Operations Manager: Jackie Postin Service Development Manager (LD&MOW): Diane Cox

ASC 13.0 - Transport

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 13.1	<p>Service users respite records</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information files • Medication transfer records • Respite requests • Vehicle accident records • Passport to travel • Photographs • Next of Kin details 	End of Service	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	<p>Assistant Director: Colin Marsh</p> <p>Operations Manager: Jackie Postin</p> <p>Transport Manager: Derrick Tibbetts</p>
ASC 13.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle Records • Photographs • Reports, AP59, AP62, AP19 • Vehicle damage sheets 	Date of Last Action	7 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 2)	<p>Assistant Director: Colin Marsh</p> <p>Operations Manager: Jackie Postin</p> <p>Transport Manager: Derrick Tibbetts</p>

ASC 14.0 - Meals on Wheels						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 14.1	Service User Records	End of Service	Files are Archived on the system when no longer in use - cannot delete	Destroy	Under investigation with M2P	Assistant Director: Colin Marsh Operations Manager: Jackie Postin Transport Manager: Derrick Tibbetts

ASC 15.0 - Better Care Fund						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 15.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referral to supported housing or Extra Care Application for supported housing 	Date of Last Action	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director: Christine Guest Operations Manager Lead: Justin Haywood
ASC 15.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better Care Fund Programme Information Reports / plans 	End of BCF Scheme	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director: Christine Guest BCF Integrated Commissioning and PMO Lead: Paul Moseley

ASC 16.0 - Prevention Stores						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 16.1	Application for access to ELMs	Inactivity	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director: Colin Marsh Joint Prevention Stores & Community Alarms Manager: Louise Butler
ASC 16.2	Service User records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical / mental health Records • Other health records • Service users Information • Letters 	Return of Equipment	6 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director: Colin Marsh Joint Prevention Stores & Community Alarms Manager: Louise Butler

ASC 17.0 – Hospital Team						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 17.1	Service User case file records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care and support plans • Registration forms • Assessment records, • Placements • Grant Payments • Financial information 	End of Service	11 years 20 years if Mental Health Issues	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director: Colin Marsh Operations Manager: Ojwant Kaur

ASC 18.0 - STAR

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 18.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care Visit user records Schedule of care visits Client Records of visit, 	End of Service	<p>11 years 20 years if Mental Health Issues</p>	Destroy	The Care Act 2014 Mental Health Act 1983/2007 The Mental Capacity Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)	<p>Operations Manager: Charlotte Leadbeater-Chase</p> <p>Social Care Team Manager: Jaine Fleetwood</p>

ASC 19.0 Operational Adults Safeguarding

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 19.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Files, • Safeguarding Referrals and investigation reports, • Support and supervision needs, • Investigative records 	End of Service	<p>11 years 20 years if Mental Health Issues</p>	Destroy	<p>Section 42 of the Care Act 2014 requires that each local authority must make enquiries (or cause others to do so) if it believes an adult is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect. When an allegation about abuse or neglect has been made, an enquiry is undertaken to find out what, if anything, has happened</p>	<p>Assistant Director: Trisha Blackstock</p> <p>Principal Social Worker-Operational Head Safeguarding and Dols: Rachel Cotterill</p> <p>Operations Manager: Suki Sandhu</p>

ASC 20.0 Principal Social Work Team

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 20.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development Programme for Newly Qualified Social work staff, Staff information Safeguarding information on RARS System 		As per HR Policy, ASC Manage retention of the items.	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director: Trisha Blackstock Principal Social Worker-Operational Head Safeguarding and Dols Rachel Cotterill
ASC 20.2	Wednesbury Drive, Financial documents information		As Per HR Policy	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director: Trisha Blackstock Principal Social Worker-Operational Head Safeguarding and Dols Rachel Cotterill

ASC 21.0 Sandwell Safeguarding Adult Board

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
ASC 21.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting reviews with families Spreadsheet for identifying vulnerable adults 	Annual Review of the database	Maximum 20/25 years if mental health	Destroy	Safeguarding Adults Care Act 2014	Assistant Director: Christine Guest Operations Manager: Deb Ward
ASC 21.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting Records Evidence Members of the board details Staff contact details Safeguarding Reports 	Change of board members information	Maximum 5 Years	Destroy	Safeguarding Adults Care Act 2014	Assistant Director: Christine Guest Operations Manager: Deb Ward
21.3	Registration for board training course	Training Completion	4 Weeks	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director: Christine Guest Operations Manager: Deb Ward
21.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory Board information, Stakeholder membership, Minutes of meetings, Photos and registration details for events 	Change of Statutory board membership/ updates	6 Years	Destroy	Safeguarding Adults Care Act 2014	Assistant Director: Christine Guest Operations Manager: Deb Ward

Borough Economy - Retention Schedule

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BE 1.0 - Highways - Asset Management - Statutory and Regulatory Functions						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 1.1	Consent for Land Drainage Works form	Date of Document	7 Years	Destroy	Land Drainage Act	Robin Weare
BE 1.2	Land Drainage Enforcement Investigations	Date of Document	7 Years	Destroy	Land Drainage Act	Robin Weare
BE 1.3	Enquiries and Questionnaire	Date of Document	7 Years	Destroy	Land Drainage Act	Robin Weare
BE 1.4	Dropped Kerb Application Form	Completion of Works	18 months	Destroy	Warranty Period	Robin Weare
BE 1.5	Dropped kerb authorisation forms (During maintenance Works)	Completion of Works	18 months	Destroy	Warranty Period	Robin Weare
BE 1.6	Street name and numbering requests, Letter, emails	Completion	12 months	Destroy	Business Need	Robin Weare

BE 2.0 - Highways – Highways, Depot and Lighting						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 2.1	System held Contact Information	Collection	2 years	Destroy	Business Need	Robin Weare

BE 3.0 - Highways - Road Safety and Parking						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 3.1	Traffic Regulation Order Review Requests	Completion of Scheme	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Robin Weare
BE 3.2	Traffic Regulation Order Objections	Completion of Scheme	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Robin Weare
BE 3.3	Petitions and Questionnaires	Completion of Scheme	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Robin Weare
BE 3.4	Information gathered to issue Parking Penalty Charge	Date of Penalty Charge	7 Years	Destroy	Traffic Management Act	Robin Weare
BE 3.5	Appeals	Date of Decision	7 Years	Destroy	Traffic Management Act	Robin Weare
BE 3.7	Informal Challenge Form	Date of Decision	7 Years	Destroy	Traffic Management Act	Robin Weare
BE 3.8	Consent Form – To enforce obstructed dropped kerb access	Date of enforcement	7 Years	Destroy	Traffic Management Act	Robin Weare
BE 3.9	Application form – To gain consent to enforcement of vehicles parking on footway crossing	Date of enforcement	7 Years	Destroy	Traffic Management Act	Robin Weare
BE 3.10	Customer Information Records	Date of Decision	7 Years	Destroy	Traffic Management Act	Robin Weare
BE 3.11	Applications	Date of Decision	7 Years	Destroy	Traffic Management Act	Robin Weare

BE 4.0 - Highways – Development and Road Safety and LTP Programme						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 4.1	Road Safety Scheme enquiry records	Approval of Scheme	Until Approval of scheme	Destroy	Business Need	Robin Weare
BE 4.2	Information gathering / Enquiry Records	Date of Record	2 years	Destroy	Business Need	Robin Weare
BE 4.3	Delivery of Capital Schemes - Contract and Financial Information	Delivery Date	Financial 6 Years Sealed Contract - 12 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 2)	Robin Weare

BE 5.0 - Libraries						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 5.1	Library Membership Details	Cancellation of Membership	3 years	Destroy	Business Need	Dawn Winter
BE 5.2	Library CCTV	Date of Footage	2 weeks	Destroy	Business Need	Dawn Winter
BE 5.3	Library Room Bookings	Booking Date	Immediately	Destroy	Business Need	Dawn Winter
BE 5.4	Event Bookings	Event Date	Immediately	Destroy	Business Need	Dawn Winter
BE 5.5	Library Volunteer registration form	End of Volunteer Period	6 months	Destroy	Business Need	Dawn Winter

BE 6.0 - Museums						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 6.1	Marketing Records	Date of Consent	2 years	Destroy	Business Need	Frank Caldwell
BE 6.2	Museum Volunteer registration form	End of Volunteer Period	6 months	Destroy	Business Need	Frank Caldwell
BE 6.3	Museum Room Bookings	Booking Date	Immediately	Destroy	Business Need	Frank Caldwell

BE 7.0 - Visitor Services and Events						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 7.1	Horse Grazing Form	Horse Leaving Site	Immediately	Destroy	Business Need	Matthew Huggins
BE 7.2	Sandwell Valley Room bookings	Booking Date	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Matthew Huggins
BE 7.3	Events Planning Applications	Date of Event	7 years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 2)	Matthew Huggins
BE 7.4	Sandwell Valley CCTV	Date of Footage	1 Month	Destroy	Business Need	Matthew Huggins

BE 8.0 – Green Services and Green Spaces						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 8.1	Management of Japanese Knotweed	Date of Last Observation	5 years	Redaction of Management Plan	Business Need	Matthew Huggins
BE 8.2	Tree Works Information	Completion of Works	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Matthew Huggins
BE 8.3	Administration / booking of Sports Pitches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application / booking forms 	Date of Booking	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Matthew Huggins
BE 8.4	Allotments Waiting List	Date of Request	Till Offer Date	Destroy	Business Need	Matthew Huggins
BE 8.5	Allotments Register	Date of Lease	End of Lease	Destroy	Business Need	Matthew Huggins

BE 9.0 - Lightwoods House						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 9.1	Lightwoods House Events Booking	Date of Booking	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Matthew Huggins
BE 9.2	Tenant Lease Agreements	Date of Signing	7 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Matthew Huggins
BE 9.3	Tenancy Management Information	End of Lease	Term of Lease	Destroy	Business Need	Matthew Huggins
BE 9.4	Lightwoods House Volunteer registration form	End of Volunteer Period	6 months	Destroy	Business Need	Matthew Huggins
BE 9.5	Exhibitors Booking Form	End of Event	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Matthew Huggins
BE 9.6	Lightwoods House CCTV	Date of Footage	2 months	Destroy	Business Need	Matthew Huggins

BE 10.0 - Citizen and Consumer Protection - Environmental Health						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 10.1	Food business registrations and approvals	Closure of Business	6 years	Destroy	Food Safety Legislation	Liz Nembhard
BE 10.2	Animal Licence Applications	Closure	6 Years	Destroy	Animal Welfare Legislation	Liz Nembhard
BE 10.3	Eat Out Eat Well Award Scheme Documentation	Date of Award	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Liz Nembhard
BE 10.4	Infectious Diseases Notification	Date of Notification	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Liz Nembhard
BE 10.5	Outbreak investigations	Date of Notification	Dependant on if children involved Yes -25 Years No – 8 Years	Destroy	Record Management Code of Practice 2021	Liz Nembhard
BE 10.6	Citizens Advice and Consumer Service Request	Date of Report	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Liz Nembhard
BE 10.7	Special treatment registration including tattooing, skin piercing and electrolysis	Closure of Business	6 years	Destroy	Local Government Act Legislation	Liz Nembhard

BE 11.0 - Citizen and Consumer Protection – Trading Standards

Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 11.1	Citizen and Advice Consumer Services – Intelligence Database	Last Contact	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Liz Nembhard
BE 11.2	Inspections and Investigations	Closure of case	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Liz Nembhard
BE 11.4	Scams Hub Referral	Date of Referral	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Liz Nembhard
BE 11.5	Underage Sales documentation	Date of Visit	Until child is 18	Destroy	Business Need	Liz Nembhard

BE 12.0 - Regulated Services - Environmental Protection and Enforcement

Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 12.1	Investigation of service, Provision of Service / advice, Inspections, and enforcement of statutory duties	Closure of case	6 Years	Destroy	Environmental Protection Act 1990	Alasdair Morrison
BE 12.2	Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN)	Receipt of Payment	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Alasdair Morrison
BE 12.3	Vehicle information / records	Receipt of Payment	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Alasdair Morrison
BE 12.4	Intelligence Information	Last Contact	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Alasdair Morrison

BE 13.0 - Regulated Services - Taxi Licensing						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 13.1	Applications and Renewals	Last Action	7 Years	Destroy	Business Need, each LA sets it own retention periods	Alasdair Morrison
BE 13.2	CCTV	Date of Footage	45 days without Incident 12 months or in the Case of an Appeal Until the courts have reached final decision	Destroy	Business Need	Alasdair Morrison

BE 14.0 - Regulated Services - General Licensing						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 14.	Premises – Sale of Alcohol etc Premises Licence Personal Licence Temporary event licence	Relevance of Licence	6 years	Destroy	Licensing Act Legislation	Liz Nembhard
BE 14.	Scrap metal dealer/Site Licence	Relevance of Licence	6 years	Destroy	Scrap Metal Dealers Act Legislation	Liz Nembhard
BE 14.	Licensing Hearings	Notice of Hearing	6 Years	Destroy	Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings)	Liz Nembhard

BE 15.0 - Regulated Services - Domestic Abuse Team						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 15.1	MARAC paperwork	Date	20 Years	Destroy	Best Practice	Joanne Sailsman
BE 15.2	Domestic Homicide Reviews	Date	20 Years	Destroy	Best Practice	Joanne Sailsman

BE 16.0 - Regulated Services - CCTV						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 16.1	Synergy System records	Date of Footage	Collated Incidents 12 Months General Footage 1 Month	Destroy	Industry Good Practice	Jason Flanagan

BE 17.0 - Regulated Services – Prevention						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 17.1	Counter Terrorism records	Date of Records	Indefinite	Destroy	Business Need / In line with CTU Guidance / Best Practice	Pardeep Brar

BE 18.0 - Regulated Services - Community Safety						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 18.1	CS Team Shared File	Date of Records	Indefinite	Destroy	Best Practice / Business Need	Tessa Mitchell
BE 18.2	Staff Budget Records	Date of Records	7 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980	Tessa Mitchell

BE 19.0 - Regulated Services - Anti Social Behaviour						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 19.1	Enterprise EDMS - Case Management and Core Team	Date	3 Years after end of Tenancy	Destroy	Business Need	Andrew Clarke
BE 19.2	Anti-Social Behaviour Records	Date of Records	5 Years after end of Tenancy	Destroy	Best Practice / Business Need	Andrew Clarke

BE 20.0 - Regulated Services – Resilience Team

Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 20.1	Incident and Duty Log Books	Date of Records	5 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Xris Middleton
BE 20.2	Alert Cascade System	Annual Review	Removed at Annual Review	Destroy	Business Need	Xris Middleton

BE 21.0 - Environment and Fleet

Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 21.1	Assisted Collection Documentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisted collection form 	Date of Form	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Ben Purcival
BE 21.2	Dog Related Requests	Date of Request	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Ben Purcival
BE 21.3	Drain Requests and Graffiti	Date of Request	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Ben Purcival

Business Strategy and Change - Retention Schedule

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BSC 1.0 – ICT – Desktop and Collaboration Team						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BSC 1.1	Mailbox retention for Staff Leavers	Last Day of Employment	12 Months 8 Years Members, Directors, Directors PA's, Officers with specific business case	Destroy	Cabinet	Dave Guest
BSC 1.2	Emails of current employees	Date of email	8 years	Destroy	Cabinet	Dave Guest

BSC 2.0 - ICT - Cyber Security and Connectivity						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BSC 2.1	Avaya telephone call logs	Date of Log	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Dave Guest
BSC 2.2	Contact Centre Recordings	Date of Recording	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Dave Guest
BSC 2.3	Employee mobile phone reporting	Date of Records	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Dave Guest

BSC 3.0 - Service Improvement and Quality Team						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BSC 3.1	Employee mobile phone reporting	Date of Records	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Kate Ashley
BSC 3.2	Strategic Planning, Service Transformation and Project Management	Completion of Project	5 years	Destroy	Business Need	Kate Ashley
BSC 3.3	Sandwell Learn – Partnership Staff	Date of Record	5 years	Destroy	Business Need	Kate Ashley
BSC 3.4	Voluntary Sector Support records	Date of Record	7 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980	Kate Ashley

BSC 4.0 - Customer Service Centre						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BSC 4.1	Customer Contact Centre Recordings	Date of Recording	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Tracy Causer
BSC 4.2	Housing and Corporate Complaints Documentation	Date of Complaint	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Tracy Causer
BSC 4.3	Children's, ASC, Health and Well Being Complaints Documentation	Date of Complaint	7 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Trudie Morris
BSC 4.4	Ombudsman Complaint documentation	Date of Complaint	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Tracy Causer
BSC 4.5	Compliment documents	Date of Compliment	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Tracy Causer
BSC 4.6	MP and Councillor Enquiries documentation	Date of Enquiry	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Tracy Causer
BSC 4.7	General Enquiries documentation	Date of Enquiry	2 Years plus Current	Destroy	Business Need	Tracy Causer

BSC 5.0 - Health and Safety						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BSC 5.1	Employee Accident Records	Date of Incident	4 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Managers / Terry Hassall
BSC 5.2	Non - Employee Accident Records	Date of Incident	4 Years Children - Until they reach 21	Destroy	Business Need	Terry Hassall
BSC 5.3	Work related employee ill health records	Date of Record	40 Years	Destroy	Health and Safety Act 1974 / RIDDOR	Terry Hassall
BSC 5.4	RIDDOR Incidents	Date of Incident	5 Years	Destroy	Industry Best Practice	Terry Hassall
BSC 5.5	Risk Assessments	Date of Incident	4 or 40 Years dependent on above	Destroy	MHSWR / RIDDOR	Terry Hassall
BSC 5.6	H&S Training Records	Date of Training	4 or 40 Years dependent on above	Destroy	Health and Safety Act 1974	Terry Hassall

BSC 6.0 - Human Resources – Employee Records

Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BSC 6.1	Employee Management Records	Date Employee Leaves the Council	6 Years plus current	Destroy	Business Need	Victoria Lee
BSC 6.2	Management Records – Employees working with Children and Vulnerable Adults	Date Employee Leaves the Council	25 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Victoria Lee
BSC 6.3	Information Relating to disclosure checks	Date Employee Leaves the Council	6 Years plus current	Destroy	Business Need	Victoria Lee
BSC 6.4	Recruitment Records / eligibility to work – Successful Applicants	Date Employee Leaves the Council	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Victoria Lee
BSC 6.5	Recruitment Records / eligibility to work – Unsuccessful Applicants	Date of document	6 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Victoria Lee
BSC 6.6	Sandwell Learn – Employee Records	Date of Record	5 years	Destroy	Business Need	Victoria Lee
BSC 6.7	Sickness Absence Management Records	Last Action	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Victoria Lee
BSC 6.8	Leave and Attendance Records	Last Action	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Victoria Lee

BSC 6.0 - Human Resources – Employee Records - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BSC 6.8	Upheld or substantiated disciplinary and grievance records	Date of Record	<p>6 Months Oral Warning</p> <p>1 Year Final Warning</p> <p>6 Years plus current Termination</p> <p>6 Years Warning Involving Children</p>	Destroy	<p>Business Need</p> <p>Statutory Guidance – Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022</p>	Victoria Lee
BSC 6.9	Unfounded, dismissed and unsubstantiated disciplinary and grievance records	Date of Allegation	10 Years	Destroy	Statutory Guidance – Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022	Victoria Lee
BSC 6.10	Payroll records (evidence of what has been paid and deducted from an employee)	Tax year	6 Years plus current	Destroy	Statutory Requirement (HMRC)	Victoria Lee
BSC 6.11	Pension records (employee pension benefit calculations requires 13 years of details)	Date Employee Leaves the Council	5 years	Destroy	Statutory Requirement	Victoria Lee
BSC 6.12	Pension information	Date Employee Leaves the Council	40 years	Destroy	Business Need	Victoria Lee

BSC 7.0 - Systems Relationship Team						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BSC 7.1	Open Housing System Records	Termination of Tenancy	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Nigel Collumbell / Theresa Smith
BSC 8.0 – Neighbourhood Engagement						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BSC 8.1	Grants documentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Grant Application Form • Town Grant Appraisal Form • Non-Grant Application Form • Monitoring and Evaluation Form 	Date of Grant Payment	7 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 2)	Santokh Singh

BSC 9.0 – Performance and Analysis

Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BSC 9.1	Statutory Returns	Date of Return	6 Years	Destroy	Audit Requirements and Business Need	Ross Bailey
BSC 9.2	Surveys	Date of Surveys	1 Year User Survey 2 Years Carers Survey	Destroy	Business Need	Ross Bailey

BSC 10.0 – Transformation

Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BSC 10.1	Projects and Compliance Information	Completion of Project	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Vickie Merrick

BSC 11.0 - Adult Social Care Systems

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BSC 11.1	Data / Information Storage	End of Service	<p>11 Years</p> <p>20 Years If Mental Health Issues</p>	Destroy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHS Records Management Code of Practice 2021 • The Mental Health Act 1983 • Care Act 2014 • Health and Social Care Act • Mental Capacity Act 2005 	Rashpal Bishop
BSC 11.2	Decommissioned data on ASC Systems	End of Service	<p>11 Years</p> <p>20 Years If Mental Health Issues</p>	Destroy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHS Records Management Code of Practice 2021 • The Mental Health Act 1983 • Care Act 2014 • Health and Social Care Act • Mental Capacity Act 2005 	Rashpal Bishop

BSC 12.0 - Regulated Services – Transformation						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 12.1	Projects and compliance Records	Date of Records	7 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980	Nicola Plant

BSC 13.0 - Communications and Corporate Affairs						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
BE 13.1	VUELIO System – Log of SMBC media enquiries	Date of Enquiry	5 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Matthew More
BE 13.2	Granicus / GOV Delivery – Newsletter Distribution Subscriber lists	Customer Unsubscribes / Review Period	In line with subscription	Destroy	Business Need	Matthew More
BE 13.3	Permissions to use photographs consent form and photographs	Date of Form	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Matthew More

Children and Education - Retention Schedule

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CE 1.0 – Education Skills and Employment						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
CE 1.1	Any education records of children 'looked after' by Sandwell Council if they died after the age of 18. Includes the Education Management Information system	Date of Birth	75 Years	Destroy	The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) regulations 2010 S. 50	Assistant Director Education Support Services
CE 1.2	Any education records of children 'looked after' by Sandwell Council if they died before the age of 18 Includes the Education Management Information system	Date of Death	15 Years	Destroy	The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) regulations 2010 S. 50	Assistant Director Education Support Services
CE 1.3	Any education records held by Sandwell Council in relation to a child subject to a child protection plan.	Date of Birth	35 Years	Destroy	Childrens Act 1989 and Revision 2006	Assistant Director Education Support Services

CE 1.0 - Education Skills and Employment - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
CE 1.4	All records relating to individual children as held by Sandwell Council which form part of the main pupil record (see exceptions statement)	Date of Birth	25 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980	Assistant Director Education Support Services
CE 1.5	Any education records held by Sandwell Council in relation to those identified as children in need.	Date Provision Ends	25 Years (or 15 years from date of death if they die before 18)	Destroy	Children Act 1989 and Revision 2006	Assistant Director Education Support Services
CE 1.6	<p>Process involved in assessing and providing individual support for children who have need of special education support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND Records • EHCPs • Tribunal Records 	Date of Birth	35 Years	Destroy	Good Practice / Business Need	Assistant Director: Inclusive Learning Services

CE 1.0 - Education Skills and Employment - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
CE 1.7	<p>Documents relating to the process that assesses risks for home to school transport of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application Forms • Routes • Correspondence 	Date of Birth	35 Years	Destroy	Good Practice / Business Need	Assistant Director: Inclusive Learning Services
CE 1.8	<p>Records used for the process of assessing and providing individual support for children. Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Psychology • Inclusion Support Files • HI/VI 	Date of Birth	35 Years	Destroy	Good Practice / Business Need	Assistant Director: Inclusive Learning Services
CE 1.9	<p>Records used for the process involving individual case management in the provision of support by the local authority to children young people and families. Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance and Prosecution Services • EHE, CME, CMFE • Penalty Notices • Attendance Referrals 	Date of Birth	30 Years 35 Years if case went to Court	Destroy	Good Practice / Business Need	Assistant Director Education Support Services

CE 1.0 - Education Skills and Employment - Continued						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
CE 1.10	Records relating to permanent or fixed term exclusion from school	Date of Birth	35 Years	Destroy	Good Practice / Business Need	Assistant Director of Inclusion Services
CE 1.11	Data about children that is not required to form part of the main pupil record or for a statutory purpose	Academic Year	Current academic year plus 6 years	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director Education Support Services
CE 1.12	Child Employment and Performance records.	Last Date of Contact	2 years (paper) 25 years (Synergy)	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director Education Support Services
CE 1.13	Sandwell Guarantee or financial records.	Payment Date	7 Years	Destroy	Statute of Limitations	Assistant Director – Children’s Commissioning, Partnerships and Improvement
CE 1.14	Records held prior to 2019 relating to Adult Education. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EFSA Paperwork 	Date of Record	7 Years	Destroy	Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009	Assistant Director – Children’s Commissioning, Partnerships and Improvement
CE 1.15	Records held 2019 onwards relating to Adult Education. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EFSA Paperwork 	Date of Record	7 Years	Destroy	Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009	Assistant Director – Children’s Commissioning, Partnerships and Improvement

CE 1.0 - Education Skills and Employment - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
CE 1.16	Records for Career Advice.	Academic Year	End of academic year 16 Where the child is known to SCT or SEN end of academic year 23	Destroy	Section 68 of the ESA 2008) Raising of the Participation Age (RPA). This is under sections 18 and 68(4) of the 2008 Education and Skills Act (ESA 2008) in relation to sections 10, 12 and 68 of that Act.	Assistant Director – Children’s Commissioning, Partnerships and Improvement

CE 1.0 - Education Skills and Employment - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
CE 1.17	Records relating to the performance of schools as held by Sandwell LA	Academic Year	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director Education Services
CE 1.18	Records relating to the monitoring of standards and support provided to schools.	Academic Year	5 Years	Destroy	Business Need/Standards & Testing Agency Guidance	Assistant Director Education Services
CE 1.19	Records and visit notes relating to the support provided to childminders and Early Years Providers	Date of Records	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director Education Services
CE 1.20	Financial records relating to Early Years	Date of Record	7 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 2)	Assistant Director Education Services
CE 1.21	All records relating to local child safeguarding practice reviews including final report. Previously known as serious case reviews / independent management reviews	Date of Birth	100 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980	Assistant Director Education Services
CE 1.22	Financial records relating to Education benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application Form 	Date Of Record	7 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 2)	Assistant Director Education Services
CE 1.23	Financial records relating to Education benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic Records (Held as part of the pupil record) 	Date Of Birth	25 Years	Destroy	Good Practice / Business Need	Assistant Director Education Services

CE 1.0 - Education Skills and Employment - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
CE 1.24	Records relating to visits to Sandwell Residential Education Centres – No Incident	Date of Record	No Incident 5 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director – Children’s Commissioning, Partnerships and Improvement
CE 1.25	Records relating to visits to Sandwell Residential Education Centres – Incident	Date of Incident	25 Years	Destroy	Good Practice / Business Need	Assistant Director – Children’s Commissioning, Partnerships and Improvement
CE 1.26	Records relating to the marketing, booking and administration of a residential centre visit.	Consent	Until no longer relevant or permission withdrawn	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director – Children’s Commissioning, Partnerships and Improvement
CE 1.27	Sensitive Business Management Information (Not HR or Finance records or personal data)	Date of Record	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director Education Support Services
CE 1.28	Non-Sensitive operational information	Date of Record	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director Education Support Services
CE 1.29	Records relating to the administration of training courses and events, including attendance registers	Date of Record	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director Education Support Services
CE 1.30	Records relating to the completion of capital works to the school estate	Destruction of School / building	NA	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director Education Support Services

CE 2.0 - Young Peoples Services

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
CE 2.1	Records relating to Sandwell Young People's Services. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration Form Parental Consent Form Enhanced Youth Referral Form 	Date of Birth	25 Years	Destroy	Good Practice / Business Need	Assistant Director – Children's Commissioning, Partnerships and Improvement
CE 2.2	Booking Form for Hire of Facilities and Football Pitches	Date of Booking	7 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 2)	Assistant Director – Children's Commissioning, Partnerships and Improvement
CE 2.3	CCTV	Date of Footage	General 1 Month Incident 12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director – Children's Commissioning, Partnerships and Improvement

Finance - Retention Schedule

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1.0 Finance – Procurement						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
FIN 1.1	Expressions of Interest Process documents	Date of Contract Let or not	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Fiona McLaughlin
FIN 1.2	Procurement – Specification & Contract Development documents – Ordinary Contracts	Terms of Contract Expiry	7 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980	Fiona McLaughlin
FIN 1.3	Procurement – Specification & Contract Development documents – Contracts Under Seal	Terms of Contract Expiry	13 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980	Fiona McLaughlin
FIN 1.4	Tender Issuing and Return Documents	Start of Contract	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Fiona McLaughlin
FIN 1.5	Evaluation of Tender Documents – Ordinary Contracts	Terms of Contract Expiry	7 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980	Fiona McLaughlin
FIN 1.6	Evaluation of Tender Documents – Contracts Under Seal	Terms of Contract Expiry	13 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 14B)	Fiona McLaughlin
FIN 1.7	Successful Tender Documents. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tender Documents • Tender Registration Forms • Quotations Ordinary Contracts up to £100k	Terms of Contract Expiry	7 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980	Fiona McLaughlin

1.0 Finance – Procurement – Continued						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
FIN 1.8	Successful Tender Documents. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tender Documents Tender Registration Forms Quotations Contracts Under Seal over £100k	Terms of Contract Expiry	13 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980	Fiona McLaughlin
FIN 1.9	Unsuccessful Tender Documents	Start of Contract	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Fiona McLaughlin
FIN 1.10	Post Tender Clarification Documents - Ordinary Contracts up to £100k	Terms of Contract Expiry	7 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 5)	Fiona McLaughlin
FIN 1.11	Post Tender Clarification Documents - Contracts Under Seal over £100k	Terms of Contract Expiry	13 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980	Fiona McLaughlin
FIN 1.12	Award of Contract Documents, signed Contracts - Ordinary Contracts	Terms of Contract Expiry	7 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 5)	Fiona McLaughlin
FIN 1.13	Award of Contract Documents, signed Contracts - Contracts Under Seal	Terms of Contract Expiry	13 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980	Fiona McLaughlin
FIN 1.14	Contract Management Documents including monitoring	Terms of Contract Expiry	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Fiona McLaughlin

1.0 Finance - Procurement – Continued

Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
FIN 1.15	Management and amendment of contract records - Ordinary Contracts	Terms of Contract Expiry	7 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 5)	Fiona McLaughlin
FIN 1.16	Management and amendment of contract records - Contracts Under Seal	Terms of Contract Expiry	13 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980	Fiona McLaughlin
FIN 1.17	Standing Contract Data. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracts register • Contact Forms • Final accounts 	Instruction from Legal	Instruction from Legal	Destroy	Business Need	Fiona McLaughlin

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2.0 Finance – Accounts and Reporting						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
FIN 2.3	The process of reporting which examines the budget in relation to actual. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly budget monitoring reports • FSG reports 	End of the Financial year to which they were created	7 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 2)	Rebecca Maher

3.0 Finance - Transactions Management						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
FIN 3.8	General Income Records Car loans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General income records • Payment by instalments (including car loans, public health acts etc.) • Debtor assessment files • Departmental income returns • Income assessment files • Supplementary / general income records 	Admin Use Concludes	1 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Rebecca Maher

4.0 Finance – European Structural Funding

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
FIN 4.1	European Regional Development Fund 2007 - 2013 European Social Fund 2007 – 2013 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application • Grant offer letters • Significant changes • Financial and transaction records • Beneficiary records • Publicity • Claims for payment • Procurement Records • Reports • Evidence of outputs, results, impact and evaluation 	NA	Until 2025 / Until Notification from GOWM	Offer to Archivist	Government Office for the West Midlands Legal obligation to retain documents. No Documents should be destroyed until official notification is received from DCLG (ERDF) or DWP (ESF)	Rebecca Maher

4.0 Finance – European Structural Funding - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
FIN 4.2	European Regional Development Fund 2014 – 2020 European Social Fund 2014 - 2020 NOTE: Delivering funding until 2023 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application • Grant offer letters • Significant changes • Financial and transaction records • Beneficiary records • Publicity • Claims for payment • Procurement Records • Reports • Evidence of outputs, results, impact and evaluation 	NA	Until 2033	Offer to Archivist	Government Office for the West Midlands Legal obligation to retain documents. No Documents should be destroyed until official notification is received from DCLG (ERDF) or DWP (ESF)	Rebecca Maher
FIN 4.3	ERDF support for capital project records		10 and 25 Year Rules	Destroy	ERDF Guidance on Document Retention	Rebecca Maher

5.0 Finance - Invoice Management

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
5.1	Invoices	Document Date	6 + Current	Destroy	HMRC – Financial Regs	Rebecca Maher
5.1	VAT Receipts	Document Date	6 + Current	Destroy	HMRC	Rebecca Maher
5.3	Payment Run Documentation	Document Date	3 + Current	Destroy	Audit Requirement	Rebecca Maher

6.0 Finance – Insurance and Risk						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
FIN 6.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insurance Policies and Schedules Emails relating to clarification of insurance cover 	Document Date	100 Years	Destroy	Audit Requirements Employers Liability (compulsory insurance) regulations 1998	Narinder Phagura
FIN 6.2	Document relating to the process of evaluating the tender quotes received and the brokers tender evaluation	Document Date	100 Years	Destroy	Audit Requirements Employers Liability (compulsory insurance) regulations 1998	Narinder Phagura
FIN 6.3	Insurance claims made against the local authority or local authority officers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Claims file, records and forms Correspondence Reports Evidence Statements Court documents 	Date of Birth	100 Years	Destroy	Aggregate Stop Loss (ASL) Audit requirements	Narinder Phagura
FIN 6.4	Risk Registers	Date Register is Superseded	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Narinder Phagura

7.0 Finance - Audit and Fraud						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
FIN 7.1	Audit reports (including interim), where these have included the examination of long-term contracts	Date of Report	6 Years plus current	Destroy	Audit Requirements	Peter Farrow
FIN 7.2	Fraud Reports	Completion of Legal Proceedings	6 Years plus current	Destroy	Audit Requirements	Peter Farrow
FIN 7.3	Audit contingencies and investigations (including working papers)	Date of Document	6 Years plus current	Destroy	Audit Requirements	Peter Farrow
FIN 7.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report papers used in the course of a fraud investigation Fraud cases Report Papers 	Date Investigation Ends	<p>6 Years following Conviction or 6 Years following prison release</p> <p>(and must as a minimum meet the CPS Casework Retention Schedule - which differs dependent upon the type of offence)</p>	Destroy	Audit Requirements	Peter Farrow

7.0 Finance - Audit and Fraud – Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
FIN 7.5	Audit Plans	Last date of Plan	6 Years plus current	Destroy	Business Need	Peter Farrow
FIN 7.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference • Correspondence • Working papers • Annual reports to Accounting Officers • Other audit reports • (including interim reports) 	Date of Documents	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Peter Farrow
FIN 7.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal audit guides • Manual guides relating to departmental procedures • Local auditing standards 	Document Superseded	Until Superseded	Destroy	Business Need	Peter Farrow

8.0 Finance - Revenues and Benefits

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
FIN 8.1	National Non-Domestic Rates Documents	Date of Document	7 Years	Destroy	Part 3, Local Government Finance Act 1988 Limitations act 1980	Ian Dunn
FIN 8.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefit Records Application Forms 	Date of Document	7 Years	Destroy	The Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 and Council Tax benefit Regulations 2006 Sandwell Local Council Tax reduction policy (2022/23) as instructed by the Local Government Finance Act 2012 Limitations act 1980	Ian Dunn
FIN 8.3	Council Tax Records	Date of Document	7 Years	Destroy	Local government finance act 1992 (as amended) Limitations act 1980	Ian Dunn

9.0 Finance - Community Care Business Unit

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
FIN 9.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application for Funding Assessment form Invoices 	Death of Customer	6 Years	Destroy	In line with good practice, the default standard retention period for HMRC records is 6 years plus current	Kay Murphy
FIN 9.2	Records of deferred payment arrangement and debt accrued	Death of Customer	6 Years	Destroy	In line with good practice, the default standard retention period for HMRC records is 6 years plus current	Kay Murphy
FIN 9.3	<p>Client specific correspondence records</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records within the ContrOCC ICT System Examples Record of deferred payment arrangement and debt accrued Financial Assessments Customer notes / letters/emails DRE Calculations 	Service Ends Date	<p>11 Years</p> <p>Mental Health Issues 20 Years</p>	Destroy	<p>The Care Act 2014</p> <p>Mental Health Act 1983/2007</p> <p>The Mental Capacity Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)</p>	Kay Murphy

10.0 Finance - Appointeeship and Direct Payments						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
FIN 10.1	Direct Payment Records	Service Ends Date	11 Years Mental Health Issues 20 Years	Destroy	The Care Act 2014 Mental Health Act 1983/2007 The Mental Capacity Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)	Kay Murphy

11.0 Finance - Independent Sector Management						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
FIN 11.1	Tier 4 Records - Physical, Mental and Other Health Records	Expiry of Contract	6 Years	Destroy	The Limitation Act 1980 sets deadlines within which claims must be started. The statutory limitation period for a breach of contract claim is 6 years from the breach (12 years if signed as a deed).	Kay Murphy

11.0 Finance - Independent Sector Management - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
FIN 11.2	Contracts and Tenders – Performance Records, invoices, original contracts	Expiry of Contract	6 Years Subject to legal action	Destroy	The Limitation Act 1980 sets deadlines within which claims must be started. The statutory limitation period for a breach of contract claim is 6 years from the breach (12 years if signed as a deed).	Kay Murphy
FIN 11.3	ASC Systems, LAS, Controcc, Liquid Logic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client information, • Records, Support Plan, • Assessments, • Funding Regime costs relating to Care/Services, • Financial Assessments, • Provider Payments 	End of Service	11 Years Mental Health Issues 20 Years	Destroy	The Care Act 2014 Mental Health Act 1983/2007 The Mental Capacity Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)	Kay Murphy

11.0 Finance - Independent Sector Management - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
FIN 11.4	Schedule of Care Visits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client Information / • Records Names, Address, • Next of Kin, Date, Time 	End of Service	11 Years Mental Health Issues 20 Years	Destroy	The Care Act 2014 Mental Health Act 1983/2007 The Mental Capacity Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)	Kay Murphy

Housing - Retention Schedule

HOUS 1.0 - Housing - Asset Management and Maintenance						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
HOUS 1.1	Electronic J M Workhub system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Person and Property details Repairs Information 	Termination of Tenancy	3 Years	Redact	Business Need	Dean Epton
HOUS 1.2	Property Allowance Scheme documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property Allowance Form 	Date of Document	6 years plus current	Destroy	Companies Act 2006 Section 388 (4)(b)	Dean Epton
HOUS 1.3	Rechargeable Repairs documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rechargeable repairs form 	Date of Document	6 years plus current	Destroy	Companies Act 2006 Section 388 (4)(b)	Dean Epton
HOUS 1.4	Shared Cost works documents	Date of Document	6 years plus current	Destroy	Companies Act 2006 Section 388 (4)(b)	Dean Epton

HOUS 2.0 - Housing - Sandwell Locals

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
HOUS 2.1	<p>Tenancy File - Housing Management Documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenancy Agreement • Home Check Form • Getting to Know You Form • Income and Expenditure Form • New Tenant Details Form • Welfare Forms • Risk and Support • Needs Form • Notice of Seeking Possession • ASB related Documents • Diary Sheets • Social Services Documents • Housing related forms where tenants signature is required 	Termination of Tenancy	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Jim Brennan
HOUS 2.2	<p>Garage Management documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garage Application • Garage Termination Form 	Termination of Garage Tenancy	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Jim Brennan
HOUS 2.3	CCTV	Date of Footage	<p>General 1 Month Incident 12 Months</p>	Destroy	Business Need	Jim Brennan

HOUS 2.0 - Housing - Housing - Sandwell Locals - Continued						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
HOUS 2.4	Red Warning Flag Process	Date of Incident	Physical 2 Years All Others 12 Months	Destroy / Delete	Business Need	Jim Brennan

HOUS 3.0 - Housing - Housing Solutions - Allocations						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
HOUS 3.1	Housing Allocation Process documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Application Form • Supporting documentation • Change of Circumstances Form • Housing Choice Triage Form • Tenant Assistant Scheme Registration Form • Housing decision review request form 	Rehoused Applicants - Tenancy Termination	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Karl Robinson
		Cancelled Application - Cancellation Date	3 Years			
		No Tenancy Granted - Cancellation Date	3 Years			

HOUS 4.0 - Housing - Housing Solutions – Homelessness – No details received for Homelessness

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
HOUS 4.1	Documentation relating to homelessness assessment and support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness Assessment • Personal Housing Plan • Supporting documentation • Income and expenditure analysis • Legal Decision letters • Review and appeal information • Medical information • Details of housing offers • Financial statements 	End of statutory duty	6 years plus Current	Destroy	Statutory Requirement under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 / Business Need	Karl Robinson

HOUS 5.0 - Housing - Income and Money Advice Services - Income Management

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
HOUS 5.1	Current Rent Arrears Recovery Process records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UC 47 Form • Income and Expenditure Form • Arrears Recovery Reports • Third Party deduction form • Breathing Space Notification 	Termination of Tenancy	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Manjit Rai
HOUS 5.2	Former Rent Arrears Recovery Process records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic Records • Authority to Act • Breathing Space notification 	Date Debt is Cleared	Until Debt is Cleared	Destroy	Business Need	Manjit Rai
HOUS 5.2	Legal Proceedings records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memo for Court • Memo for Eviction • Eviction Authorisation form • Safer Estates Risk Assessment Form • Proportionality Form 	Termination of Tenancy	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Manjit Rai
HOUS 5.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice to Extend • Notice to Terminate 	Termination Date	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Manjit Rai
HOUS 5.4	Notice of Seeking Possession	Date of Notice	13 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Manjit Rai

HOUS 6.0 - Housing - Housing - Income and Money Advice Services - Welfare Rights Service

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
HOUS 6.1	Vulnerability Assessment (Ability to Pay) Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority to Act Form • Tenancy Smart Risk Assessment 	Termination of Tenancy	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Manjit Rai
HOUS 6.2	Benefits Advice Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral Forms • Employment and Support Allowance form • Electronic Case Management Records 	Case Closure	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Manjit Rai

HOUS 7.0 - Housing - Income and Money Advice Services - Home Ownership and Rent Accounting

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
HOUS 7.1	Right to Buy Applications	Date of Acceptance	6 Years plus current	Destroy	Housing Act 1985	Manjit Rai
HOUS 7.2	Right to Buy - Anti Money Laundering Application	Date of Record	5 Years	Destroy	Housing Act 1985	Manjit Rai
HOUS 7.3	Right to Buy - Financial Records	Date of Completion / Refusal	12 Months	Destroy	Financial Limitations	Manjit Rai
HOUS 7.4	Leaseholder Documents	End of Leasehold	6 Years plus current including any notices	Destroy	Housing Act 1985	Manjit Rai
HOUS 7.5	Leaseholder Bills / Statements	Date of Record	6 Years plus current	Destroy	Financial Limitations	Manjit Rai
HOUS 7.6	Leasehold Debt Recovery Letters	End of Leasehold or until debt is cleared	End of Leasehold or until debt is cleared	Destroy	Financial Limitations	Manjit Rai
HOUS 7.7	Leaseholder <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historical Right to Buy completions Audit / Solicitor queries 	End of Leasehold or until debt is cleared	End of Leasehold or until debt is cleared	Destroy	Financial Limitations	Manjit Rai

HOUS 7.0 - Housing - Housing - Income and Money Advice Services - Home Ownership and Rent Accounting - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
HOUS 7.8	Direct Debit Application Forms	Never Dispose in case of indemnity claim	Indefinite	N/A	Financial - BACS Regulations	Manjit Rai
HOUS 7.9	Direct Debit – BACS / Audit Reports	Date of Record	2 Years plus Current	Destroy	Financial - BACS Regulations	Manjit Rai
HOUS 7.10	Rent Refund Form	Date of Record	6 Years plus Current	Destroy	Financial Limitations	Manjit Rai
HOUS 7.11	Insurance Cube Reports	Date of Report	12 Months	Destroy	Financial Limitations	Manjit Rai
HOUS 7.12	Insurance Application Form	Date of Record	6 Years plus Current	Destroy	Financial Limitations	Manjit Rai
HOUS 7.13	Rent books, financial ledgers, rent review	Date of Record	6 Years plus Current	Destroy	Financial Limitations	Manjit Rai
HOUS 7.14	Bankruptcy and debt relief order notifications	Date of Record	6 Years plus Current	Destroy	Insolvency Act 1986	Manjit Rai
HOUS 7.15	Universal Credit / Housing Benefit payment files	Date of Record	6 Years plus Current	Destroy	Financial Limitations	Manjit Rai

HOUS 8.0 - Housing – Community Partnerships

Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
HOUS 8.1	Grant Administration Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenants and Residents Association Application Form Community partnerships application and grant agreements 	Date of Application	7 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Manny Sehmbi
HOUS 8.2	Wheelchair Loan Application	Date of Application	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Geoff Deakin
HOUS 8.3	Community Centre Booking Form	Date of Record	7 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Geoff Deakin
HOUS 8.4	Tanhouse Community Centre CCTV	Date of Footage	General 1 Month Incident 12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Geoff Deakin
HOUS 8.5	Sandwell Mobility Shop Registration Form	Date of Membership	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Geoff Deakin

HOUS 9.0 - Housing - Home Improvement						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
HOUS 9.1	Case files for Housing Grants	End of Grant Condition Period	11 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 / Business Need	Stuart Hall

HOUS 10.0 - Housing - Floating Support						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
HOUS 10.1	Assessment and case records for service users	End of Service	11 Years Mental Health Issues 20 Years	Destroy	The Care Act 2014 Mental Health Act 1983/2007 The Mental Capacity Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)	Vince McCalla

HOUS 11.0 - Housing – Citizen and Protection Accommodation Team

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
HOUS 11.1	Immigration Property Inspection	Closure of Case	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	G Wright / R Hawkins
HOUS 11.2	Service Requests	Closure of Case	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	G Wright / R Hawkins
HOUS 11.3	HMO Licensing	Expiry of License	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	G Wright / R Hawkins
HOUS 11.4	HMO Licensing – Incomplete Application	Date of Application	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	G Wright / R Hawkins
HOUS 11.5	Landlord and letting agent database, and assured Landlord scheme	Cessation of being Landlord / Agent	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	G Wright / R Hawkins

Law and Governance - Retention Schedule

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1.0 - Law and Governance - Legal Services						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
LG 1.1	Title Deeds	Transfer of Land to a Purchaser	Until the Land is transferred to a purchaser	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director
LG 1.2	Contract Under Seal	Expiry of Contract Terms	12 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980	Assistant Director
LG 1.3	Child Care Files	Date of Record	75 Years + Current	Destroy	Children's Act 1989 revision 2006	Assistant Director
LG 1.4	All other files	Last Action	7 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director
LG 1.5	Records and Process of Litigation	Last Action	7 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 2)	Assistant Director
LG 1.6	Records and Process of Litigation – Significant Case or Major Litigation	Last Action	7 Years	Archive	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 2)	Assistant Director

2.0 - Law and Governance – Governance						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
LG 2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freedom of Information Requests Environmental Information Requests 	Date of Response	2 Years 6 Years if request results in policy Change	Destroy	Business Need	Vanessa Maher-Smith
LG 2.2	Subject Access Requests	Date of Response	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Vanessa Maher-Smith

3.0 - Law and Governance - Electoral Services						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
LG 3.1	Electoral Register	Date of Register	15 Years	Destroy	Representation of the People Act 1985 S1 (3)	Tracey Hurst
LG 3.2	Annual Canvass <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canvass Forms Canvass Commination A Canvass Commination B 	Removal of Elector	Until Removal of Elector	Destroy	Business Need	Tracey Hurst

4.0 - Law and Governance - Registration and Elections						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
LG 4.1	Absent Vote Applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Postal Vote Applications Proxy Vote Applications Postal Proxy Vote Applications 	Removal of Elector or absent vote cancelled	Removal of Elector or absent vote cancelled	Destroy	Business Need	Tracey Hurst
LG 4.2	Registration Process Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invitation to register form Registration enquiry form 	Removal of Elector	Removal of Elector	Destroy	Business Need	Tracey Hurst
LG 4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Category Elector Registration Service Voter Application Overseas Voter Application 	Removal of Elector	Removal of Elector	Destroy	Business Need	Tracey Hurst
LG 4.4	Evidence Request Process Records Letter to request additional evidence to support electoral roll application	Removal of Elector	Removal of Elector	Destroy	Business Need	Tracey Hurst
LG 4.5	Nomination of candidates to stand at a General Election. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home Address Form 	Date of UKPGE (UK Parliamentary General Election)	21 Calendar Days	Destroy	Business Need	Tracey Hurst

4.0 - Law and Governance - Registration and Elections - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
LG 4.6	Nomination of candidates to stand at a Local Election. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Address Form 	Date of Local Election	35 Calendar Days	Destroy	Business Need	Tracey Hurst
LG 4.7	Nomination of candidates to stand at an election. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All other documents 	Date of Election	21 Calendar Days	Destroy	Business Need	Tracey Hurst
LG 4.8	Candidate Expenses Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate and Election declarations • Candidate and Election Spending Returns 	Date of Receipt	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Tracey Hurst
LG 4.9	Statutory Election Documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballot papers (counted, unused, rejected, tendered spoilt) • Corresponding Numbers Lists • Marked copies of the polling station registers and absent vote lists • Postal voting statements and undelivered packs 	Date of Election	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Tracey Hurst

4.0 - Law and Governance - Registration and Elections - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
LG 4.10	Returning Officer Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff application and acceptance employment forms 	Date of Election	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Tracey Hurst
LG 4.11	Returning Officer Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Right to work documents 	Employment Ends	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Tracey Hurst
LG 4.12	Polling Station Documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk Assessments Booking Forms List of addresses and contacts 	Date of Election	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Tracey Hurst

5.0 - Law and Governance - Bereavement Services

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
LG 5.1	Burial and Cremation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burial Registers Purchased Grave Registers Cremation Registers 	na	Permanent Record	na	The Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 The Cremation (England and Wales) Regulations 2008	Mark Satchwell
LG 5.2	Memorialisation Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application to purchase memorial (Cremation) Cemetery memorial permit Application 	na	Permanent Record	na	Business Need	Mark Satchwell
LG 5.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low cost funeral records Section 46 funeral records Pet funeral records Wake records 	Date of Record	7 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 2)	Mark Satchwell

6.0 - Law and Governance - Register Office Services

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
LG 6.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Births register • Deaths register • Marriage registers 	na	Permanent Record	na	Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953 Marriage Act 1949	Mark Satchwell
LG 6.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marriage Notices • Record of body disposal • Medical certificates 	Date of Record	5 Years	Destroy	Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953 Marriage Act 1949	Mark Satchwell
LG 6.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificates of birth • Certificates of death • Marriage certificates • Civil partnership certificates 	Use of Counterfoil	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Mark Satchwell
LG 6.4	Certificate applications for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Births • Deaths • Marriages 	Date of Certificate	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Mark Satchwell
LG 6.5	Correspondence relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Births • Deaths • Marriages • Civil Partnerships • Correction Applications • Associated Correspondence 	Date of Record	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Mark Satchwell

7.0 - Law and Governance - Democratic Services

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
LG 7.1	<p>Paperwork relating to meetings of committees, boards, member working groups, including partnership, agency and external meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda • Reports • Background Papers • Minutes 	Date of Meeting	6 Years + current	Destroy	Local Government Act 1972 s100b Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000	Suky Suthi-Nagra
LG 7.2	Signed minutes for committees, boards, member working groups, including partnership, agency and external meetings.	Date of Meeting	Signed Minutes kept indefinitely	Destroy	Local Government Act 1972 s100b Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000	Suky Suthi-Nagra
LG 7.3	Exempt reports containing personal data relating to taxi licensing committee meetings.	Date of meeting	6 Years + current year then redact and archive on internal system permanently	Personal data relating to Taxi Licensing meetings redacted before storing	Local Government Act 1972 s100b Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000	Suky Suthi-Nagra

7.0 - Law and Governance - Democratic Services - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
LG 7.4	All records relating to the administration of appointments & membership of committees & working groups, outside bodies and charities	Date Record Superseded	6 years	Destroy	Local Government Act 1972 s100b Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000	Suky Suthi-Nagra
LG 7.5	Video Footage of public committee meetings streamed live	Date of Meeting	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Suky Suthi-Nagra
LG 7.6	Members Register of Interest records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declarations 	Cessation of Councillor Duties	Length of Office of Member + 3 Months	Destroy	Local Government Act 1972 (Section 94)(1)	Suky Suthi-Nagra
LG 7.7	Members Gifts and Hospitality Register	Cessation of Councillor Duties	Length of Office of Member + 3 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Suky Suthi-Nagra
LG 7.8	Co-opted members / Independent Persons register of interests.	Cessation of Member Duties	Length of Member Duties	Destroy	Business Need	Suky Suthi-Nagra

7.0 - Law and Governance - Democratic Services - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
LG 7.9	Co-opted members / Independent Persons travel / subsistence claims	Cessation of Member Duties	Length of Member Duties	Destroy	Business Need	Suky Suthi-Nagra
LG 7.10	Declaration of Acceptance of Office <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed Acceptance Form 	Date of signing	Indefinitely	Destroy	Local Government Act 1972 (Section 94)(1)	Suky Suthi-Nagra
LG 7.11	Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Mayor and Deputy Mayor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed Acceptance Form 	Date of signing	Indefinitely	Destroy	Local Government Act 1972 (Section 94)(1)	Suky Suthi-Nagra
LG 7.12	Written undertaking to comply with Member Code of Conduct <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form / Declaration of Acceptance of Office 	Date of signing	Indefinitely	Destroy	Retain from end of office for 6 years	Suky Suthi-Nagra
LG 7.13	Register of financial or other interest by members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Declaration Made at the Meeting Form 	End of Term of Office	Duration of Term of Office	Destroy	Business Need	Suky Suthi-Nagra
LG 7.14	School Admission Appeals papers	Date of Record	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Suky Suthi-Nagra
LG 7.15	School Appeal Panel members details	Person Leaves Appeal Panel	As long as person remains on Appeal Panel	Destroy	Business Need	Suky Suthi-Nagra

7.0 - Law and Governance - Democratic Services - Continued

Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
LG 7.16	Petitions (Held by Democratic Services)	Expiry of Right to Appeal	6 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Suky Suthi-Nagra

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8.0 - Law and Governance - Member and Business Support

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
LG 8.1	Register of Members Addresses	End of Term of Office	Retain until end of office + 2 years	Destroy	Local Government Act 1972 Section 94 (1)	Elaine Newsome
LG 8.2	Register of Member Allowances	Date of Register	4 Years	Destroy	Local Government Act 1972 Section 94 (1)	Elaine Newsome
LG 8.3	Elected members travel and subsistence allowance claims	Date of Claim	5 Years	Destroy	Local Government Act 1972 Section 94 (1)	Elaine Newsome
LG 8.4	Civic Activities - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public engagement and interaction records Letters to the Mayor 	End of Term of Office	12 Months	Destroy	Local Government Act 1972 Section 94 (1)	Elaine Newsome
LG 8.5	Civic Activities – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freeman and Alderman related Invite List for Event 	Death	1 Year	Destroy	Business Need	Elaine Newsome
LG 8.6	Records relating to the appointment of Honorary Freemen and Aldermen	Date of record	Indefinitely	NA	Business Need	Elaine Newsome
LG 8.7	Civic Activities - WM Lieutenancy correspondence	End of Term of Office	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Elaine Newsome
LG 8.8	Civic Activities - Faith Leaders contacts	End of Term of appointment + 1 month/death	Indefinitely	Destroy	Business Need	Elaine Newsome

8.0 - Law and Governance - Member and Business Support - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
LG 8.9	Civic Activities - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund bank account / budget statements Mayoral Charity returns 	Date of Record	6 Years plus current	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980 (Section 2)	Elaine Newsome
LG 8.10	Civic Activities - Remembrance contact information and correspondence	End of Term of appointment + 1 month/death	Indefinitely	Destroy	Business Need	Elaine Newsome
LG 8.11	Elected Members PDP records	Date of record	Retain from creation of records for 4 years.	Destroy	Business Need	Elaine Newsome
LG 8.12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member Training Records Member Allowances related records ICT / Mobile phone records Personal records 	End of Term of Office	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Elaine Newsome
LG 8.13	Year Books	Pre-1974 and retained for posterity	Indefinitely	na	Na	Elaine Newsome
LG 8.14	Records created by the Independent Remuneration Panel	Date of meeting	6 years	Destroy	Business Need	Elaine Newsome
LG 8.15	Contact details for IRP Members	End of Term of Appointment	1 Month	Destroy	Business Need	Elaine Newsome

Public Health - Retention Schedule

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PH 1.0 - Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS Trust, Sandwell West Birmingham Primary Care Network						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
PH 1.1	Information on Healthcare Pathways	Date of Last Action	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Consultant Public Health: Anna Blennerhassett

PH 2.0 - Adult Health Improvement Team						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
PH 2.1	Project work, meeting minutes, databases, training notes,	Date of Last Action	5 years	Destroy	Business Need	Consultant Public Health: Anna Blennerhassett Vulnerable Groups Manager: Eilish James

PH 3.0 - Pollution Control (Healthy Urban Development)						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
PH 3.1	Air Quality / Contaminated Land - Industrial Permits, Planning Applications and Reviews, proforma documents, grant bids	na	Permanent Record	na	Environmental Protection Act Part 2a	Assistant Director Public Health: Paul Fisher Healthy Urban Development: Andy Thorpe
PH 3.2	Service Requests, Permit Applications, Permit Information, Inspection Documents	Date of Last Action	Permanent Record	na	Required as part of Public Register for the life of the Permits	Assistant Director Public Health: Paul Fisher Healthy Urban Development: Andy Thorpe

4.0 - Health Improvement Team						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
PH 4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk Leaders Programme register, Attendees register, Leaders contact information 	End of Contract	Until End of Contract	Destroy	Business Need	Consultant Public Health: Anna Blennerhassett Communities and Partnerships Manager: Katie Deeley
PH 4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract performance monitoring Meeting minutes Letters KPI's 	End of Contract	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Consultant Public Health: Anna Blennerhassett Communities and Partnerships Manager: Katie Deeley

4.0 - Health Improvement Team - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
PH 4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weight Watchers Programme information Database of Vouchers issued to service users Application Forms Contract information 	End of Contract	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Consultant Public Health: Anna Blennerhassett Communities and Partnerships Manager: Katie Deeley
PH 4.4	COVID – 19 Vaccine Leaders Programme	Date of Last Action	1 Year	Destroy	Business Need	Consultant Public Health: Anna Blennerhassett Communities and Partnerships Manager: Katie Deeley

5.0 - Health Protection Team

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
PH 5.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Protection Contract information NHS Test and Trace Covid inbox Public Health England Public Staff 	Date of Last Action	6 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980	<p>Interim Director Public Health : Liann BrookesSmith (from March 2023)</p> <p>Service Manager: Valerie Unsworth (leave service end of March)</p>
PH 5.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sexual Health Contract Information Reports Needs assessments Safeguarding Surveillance data Meeting minutes 	Date of Last Action	6 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980	<p>Consultant Public Health: Lina Martino</p> <p>Service Manager Valerie Unsworth (leave service end of March)</p>
PH 5.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care homes Schools Workplaces Individuals Calls Texts emails and tethering 	Date of Action	4 Weeks	Delete	Business Need	<p>Interim Director Public Health : Liann BrookesSmith (from March 2023)</p> <p>Service Manager Valerie Unsworth (leave service end of March)</p>

5.0 - Health Protection Team - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
PH 5.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PID from COVID Pandemic work Outbreak Records Surveys Care Home audits External Representatives 	Date of Last Action	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Consultant Public Health: Anna Blennerhassett, Lina Martino Service Manager Valerie Unsworth (leave service end of March)

6.0 - Learning for Public Health West Midlands

Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
PH 6.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training and event registration details Photos 	Date of Event / Training	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Communications & Social Marketing Project Manager: Chitra Roberts Public Health Network Support Officer: Rajdeep Atwal
PH 6.2	Stakeholder contact details	Cessation of Stakeholder Duties	Cessation of Stakeholder Duties	Destroy	Business Need	Communications & Social Marketing Project Manager: Chitra Roberts Public Health Network Support Officer: Rajdeep Atwal

7.0 - Public Health - Communications

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
PH 7.1	Details of Contact with colleagues	Date of Contact	1 Month	Delete	Business Need	Assistant Director Public Health: Paul Fisher Communications & Social Marketing Project Manager: Chitra Roberts
PH 7.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff records • Appraisals • 1-1 Supervision • DARP • Recruitment 	Date on Record	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Assistant Director Public Health: Paul Fisher Communications & Social Marketing Project Manager: Chitra Roberts
PH 7.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Overviews, • Procurement items, • Project Plans • Reports. 	Date of Last Action	6 Years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980	Assistant Director Public Health: Paul Fisher Communications & Social Marketing Project Manager: Chitra Roberts

8.0 - Lifestyle Health Improvement						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
PH 8.1	Faith Sector Engagement with COVID-19 Pandemic Response	End of Pandemic	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Consultant Public Health: Liann Brookes-Smith Lifestyle Improvement Programme Manager: Ali Al-Osaimi
PH 8.2	Testing for Covid-19 information	End of Pandemic	2 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Consultant Public Health: Liann Brookes-Smith Lifestyle Improvement Programme Manager: Ali Al-Osaimi

9.0 - Healthy Sandwell						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
PH 9.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Sandwell Programme Records Applications Referral information 	Date of Last Action	5 Years	Destroy	NHS Health check Regulations 4 and 5 of the Local Authorities (Public Health and Entry to Premises by Local Healthwatch Representatives) Regulations 2013, S.1.2013/351	Consultant Public Health: Liann Brookes-Smith Lifestyle Improvement Programme Manager: Ali Al-Osaimi Healthy Sandwell Project Manager: Jessie Shran

10.0 – Children’s Public Health						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
PH 10.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SHAPE Records • Registration details • SHAPE forum information • Audio recordings • Residential visits • Information and surveys 	Date of Last Action	5 Years	Destroy	Children Act 2004	<p>Consultant In Public Health Childrens Public Health: Liann Brooks-Smith</p> <p>Programme Manager: Eilish James</p> <p>SHAPE Programme Manager: Neesha Patel</p>
PH 10.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff records • Appraisals • 1-1 Supervision • DARP • Recruitment/JDs • Training records and certificates • Flexi sheets and Annual Leave cards • SAM Meeting notes 	Date on record	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	<p>Consultant In Public Health Childrens Public Health: Liann Brooks-Smith</p> <p>Programme Manager: Eilish James</p>
PH 10.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Plans/Reports • Service Specifications, SLAs and Contracts • KPI Monitoring reports and quality improvement plans • Grant agreements 	Date of Last Action	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	<p>Consultant In Public Health Childrens Public Health: Liann Brooks-Smith</p> <p>Programme Manager: Eilish James</p>

10.0 - Children's Public Health - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
PH 10.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs assessments Anonymised health outcome data Surveys and consultation results Strategies, plans and proposals Reports 	Date of last action	6 Years	Destroy	Business Needs	Consultant In Public Health Childrens Public Health: Liann Brooks-Smith Programme Manager: Eilish James
PH 10.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records of meetings Stakeholder work contact details Project Notes Presentations/briefings 	Date of last action	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Consultant In Public Health Childrens Public Health: Liann Brooks-Smith Programme Manager: Eilish James

11.0 – Addictive Behaviours Team

Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
PH 11.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tier 4 Reports Monitoring information Minutes of meetings 	Date of Last Action	11 years	Destroy	Business Need	Consultant Public Health; Anna Blennerhassett Programme Manager: Mary Bailey
PH 11.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anonymised statistical information regarding addictive behaviours trends in Sandwell 	Date of Last Action	20 years	Destroy	Business Need	Consultant Public Health; Anna Blennerhassett Programme Manager: Mary Bailey

12.0 – Addictive Behaviours Team						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
PH 12.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory Board Information Stakeholder membership Minutes of meetings Photos and registration details for events 	Date of Last Action	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Consultant Public Health; Anna Blennerhassett Programme Manager: Mary Bailey

13.0 - Research and Intelligence						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
PH 13.1	Intelligence on the population of Sandwell	Information no longer required	20 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Consultant Public Health: Lina Martino Principal Research and Intelligence Specialist: Jason Copp
PH 13.2	Meeting Minutes	Date of Last Action	6 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Consultant Public Health: Lina Martino Principal Research and Intelligence Specialist: Jason Copp

Regeneration and Growth - Retention Schedule

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1.0 - Regeneration and Growth – Development Planning and Building Control						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
RG 1.1	Building Regulations Applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Application Form • Eligibility Details 	Date of Record	7 Years	Destroy / Redact	Business Need	John Baker
RG 1.2	Building Regulations Enforcement - to aid investigation of unauthorised work / contravention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email correspondence • Phone Records 	Date of Record	2 Years	Destroy / Redact	Business Need	John Baker
RG 1.3	Dangerous Structures records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal Notice • Emails • Phone Records 	Date of Record	7 Years	Destroy / Redact	Business Need	John Baker
RG 1.4	Planning Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Application • Evidence of Objections • Emails • Committee Reports 	Date of Record	7 Years	Destroy / Redact	Business Need	John Baker
RG 1.5	Planning enforcement - to aid investigation of unauthorised work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint Form • Emails • Formal Notices Served 	Date of Enforcement	Dependent of type of enforcement breach 4 or 10 Years	Destroy / Redact	Business Need	John Baker

1.0 - Regeneration and Growth – Development Planning and Building Control - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
RG 1.6	High Hedges Process records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Hedges Application Form emails 	Date of Application	7 Years	Destroy / Redact	Business Need	John Baker
RG 1.7	Tree Preservation Orders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tree Preservation Application form emails 	Date of Application	7 Years	Destroy / Redact	Business Need	John Baker
RG 1.8	Daily mail received for service area	Date of Receipt	12 Months	Destroy / Redact	Business Need	John Baker
RG 1.9	Controlled Stationery cheque books <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record of payee 	Date of cheque	7 Years	Destroy / Redact	Business Need	John Baker

2.0 - Regeneration and Growth - Planning and Growth - Strategic Planning and Transportation

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
RG 2.1	Land Opportunity Promotion records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development Ready Database 	Date of Record	7 Years	Destroy 2023	Business Need	Hayley Insley/Jenna Langford
RG 2.2	Consultation records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Black Country Plan consultation -responses Planning consultation database Sandwell Local Plan consultation database and response to consultations Sandwell Local Plan Landowner Responses Sandwell Local Plan Examination in Public documents (2024/25 onwards) 	Date of Record	7 Years	Destroy	Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012	Andy Miller

2.0 - Regeneration and Growth - Planning and Growth - Strategic Planning and Transportation - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
RG 2.3	Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIL Additional Information Form • Assumption of Liability Form • Form 2 – Claiming Exemption or relief • Form 5 – Notice of chargeable development • Form 6 – Commencement Notice • Form 7 - Self-build Exemption • Form 8 - Self-build residential Annex • Form 9 – Self-build residential extension exemption • Liability information notice 	Payment of Levy / Land Charge Discharged	Until Payment of Levy / Land Charge Discharged	Destroy	Business Need	Andy Miller
RG 2.4	Self-build records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-build register application form • Self-build and custom house building register 	Construction Completion	15 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Andy Miller

3.0 - Regeneration and Growth - Planning and Growth - Regeneration

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
RG 3.1	Advice Information and Market Development (AIM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Owners Profile 	Project End Date 2016	7 Years	Destroy 2023 Subject to approval from Accountable Body (WCC).	EU Legislation	Gareth Owens / Jenna Langford
RG 3.2	Social Enterprise Fund records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Enterprise Fund Application Form 	Successful Grant End Unsuccessful Date of Decision	Until Grant End 12 Months	Destroyed	Business Need	Gareth Owens / Jenna Langford
RG 3.3	Black Country, Local Enterprise Funding records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> only records which contain personal data 	Close of Programme in March 2023	3 Years (2026)	Destroy	Business Need	Gareth Owens / Jenna Langford
RG 3.4	Enquiries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> only records which contain personal data Think Sandwell Regenerating Sandwell Towns Fund/Deal Wednesbury HAZ Brandhall Consultation 	Response to Enquiry	Until Responded	Destroy	Business Need	Jenna Langford
RG 3.5	Development Ready records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> only records which contain personal data 	Date of enquiry	6 Years	Destroy 2023	Business Need	Hayley Insley / Jenna Langford

3.0 - Regeneration and Growth - Planning and Growth - Regeneration - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
RG 3.6	Town Fund Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> only records which contain personal data 	Close of Programme in March 2026	3 years (March 2029)	Destroy	DLUHC HOT Requirements	Rina Rahim/ Jenna Langford
RG 3.7	Signed Partnership/Funding Agreements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> only records which contain personal data 	Close of Programme	20 Years	Destroy	EU & Government Legislation	Tammy Stokes
RG 3.8	Levelling Up Fund Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> only records which contain personal data 	Successful Grant End	Until Grant End	Destroy	Business Need	Jenna Langford/ Tammy Stokes
RG 3.9	Inclusive Economic Recovery Plan activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> only records which contain personal data Attendee Records Registration Forms Enquiry records 	Close of Programmes March 2025	2027	Destroy	Government Legislation	Gareth Owens/ Jenna Langford

4.0 - Regeneration and Growth - Planning and Growth - Housing and Partnerships

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
RG 4.1	Energy Project records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECO3 LA-Flex – application/eligibility forms 	Date of Record	12 Months	Destroy	Government Requirement	Mark Taylor / Alan Martin
RG 4.2	Tenant Feedback records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questionnaire 	Date of Record	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Alan Martin
RG 4.3	Resident Consultation - Planning process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correspondence 	Date of Record	12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Alan Martin
RG 4.4	General Enquiries	Date of Record	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Alan Martin
RG 4.5	Riverside Housing - Stock Condition Data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repairs history EPC ratings Property condition records Asbestos records Warranties 	End of Contract	15 Years	Destroy	Business Need/ Contractual Requirement	Trevor Fields / Alan Martin

4.0 - Regeneration and Growth - Planning and Growth - Housing and Partnerships - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
RG 4.6	<p>Riverside Housing – Tenancy File Housing Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenancy Agreement • Getting to KnowYou Form • Income and Expenditure Form • New Tenant DetailsForm • Welfare Forms • Risk and SupportNeeds Form • Notice of Seeking Possession • ASB related Documents • Diary Sheets • Social Services Documents • Housing related forms where tenants signature is required 	Termination of Tenancy	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Trevor Fields / Alan Martin

4.0 - Regeneration and Growth - Planning and Growth - Housing and Partnerships - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
RG 4.7	<p>Tenant Management Organisations – Tenancy File Housing Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenancy Agreement • Getting to KnowYou Form • Income and Expenditure Form • New Tenant DetailsForm • Welfare Forms • Risk and SupportNeeds Form • Notice of Seeking Possession • ASB related Documents • Diary Sheets • Social Services Documents • Housing related forms where tenants signature is required 	Termination of Tenancy	3 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Trevor Fields / Alan Martin

5.0 - Regeneration and Growth - Strategic Assets and Land - Facilities Management						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
RG 5.1	Room Hire Booking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Room Hire Booking Form 	Date of Booking	3 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Lee Constable
RG 5.2	CCTV	Date of Footage	General 1 Month Incidents 12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Lee Constable

6.0 - Regeneration and Growth - Strategic Assets and Land – Commercial Property						
Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
RG 6.1	Lease Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application to Lease Form Application for consent to assign Application for consent to underlet Application for consent to alterations Section 40 Notice 	Date of Record	7 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Stefan Hemming
RG 6.2	Key Holder Records	End of Occupation	Duration of Occupation	Destroy	Business Need	Stefan Hemming

6.0 - Regeneration and Growth - Strategic Assets and Land - Commercial Property - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
RG 6.3	Lease Offer records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sealed Offer Form 	Date of Record	Successful 7 Years Unsuccessful 12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Stefan Hemming
RG 6.4	Land Sales Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15-day land disposal form 	Date of Completion	7 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Stefan Hemming
RG 6.5	Assets of Community Value Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Right to Bid Nomination Form 	Date of Record	10 Years	Destroy	Localism Act 2011 Chapter 3	Stefan Hemming

7.0 - Regeneration and Growth - Strategic Assets and Land - Markets

Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
RG 7.1	Markets Operation Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application to hold charity or commercial cart boot sale Trading Consent Form Stall Application Form Entertainment Application Form 	Date of Record	7 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Gerry Ritchie
RG 7.2	Market Trading Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trading Licence Market Trading Application Form 	Expiry of Licence	7 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Gerry Ritchie

7.0 - Regeneration and Growth - Strategic Assets and Land - Markets - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
RG 7.3	CCTV	Date of Footage	General 1 Month Incidents 12 Months	Destroy	Business Need	Gerry Ritchie

8.0 - Regeneration and Growth - Strategic Assets and Land - Urban Design and Building Services

Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
RG 8.1	Atrium Records (Property Information Unit) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic Property Records 	Date of records	Unlimited 3 months /10 years depending on type of data	Suspend / Delete / anonymise record as applicable	Business Need	Mark Drake
RG 8.2	Technology Forge Records (Property Information Unit) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic Property Records 	Date Tenant Leaves Property	Unlimited	Suspend / Delete / anonymise record as applicable.	Business Need	Mark Drake
RG 8.3	Health and Safety Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Safety Records 	Last Incident Last Action	Last Incident 3 Years Last Action 40 Years	Destroy	Legislation	Mark Drake

8.0 - Regeneration and Growth - Strategic Assets and Land - Urban Design and Building Services - Continued

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Ref	Item	Retention Trigger	Retain For	Action	Retention Source	Information Asset Owner
RG 8.4	Asbestos Records	Destruction of Building	40 Years	Destroy	Health and Safety Act	Mark Drake
RG 8.5	Lift Customer Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emails • Letters • System Records 	Date of Record	5 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Mark Drake
RG 8.6	Street Furniture Insurance Claim Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emails • Letters 	Closure / Amount Paid	Till Closure / Amount Paid	Destroy	Business Need	Mark Drake
RG 8.7	Disabled Road Markings Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled Road Markings Applications • Disabled Badge Evidence • Vehicle documentation 	Date of Record	4 Years	Destroy	Business Need	Mark Drake
RG 8.8	Technology Forge Records (Sandwell Property Care) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic Property Records 	Date Tenant Leaves Property	na	Suspend / Delete / anonymise record as applicable.	Business Need	Mark Drake

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BRIEFING NOTE	
Subject Matter	Data Retention Compliance/Covid 19 Inquiry
Meeting	None
Author	Vanessa Maher-Smith Legal Services Manager – Governance & Regulatory & Data Protection Officer
Date	

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To review the Council’s compliance with its Retention Schedule in consideration of the requirement to preserve information that may be required for the Covid-19 Inquiry.

2. BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

- 2.1 The Council has been implementing a data cleanse project for a number of years to ensure compliance with its retention schedule.
- 2.2 In particular, the council intends to introduce the application of an automatic retention to officers’ mailboxes.
- 2.3 On 23rd February 2022, Cabinet resolved:
 - 1.1 That approval be given to the council’s Corporate Retention Policy, Email Retention Policy and the Information Rights Policy as set out in Appendix 1,2 and 3 for the purposes of complying with UKGDPR and in line with good practice as required.
 - 1.2 That the Director Law and Governance and SIRO, in consultation with the Leader, be authorised to undertake requisite steps to ensure the Council complies with the approved E-mail Retention Policy, Corporate Retention Policy and Information Rights Policy.
 - 1.3 That the Director Law and Governance and SIRO, in consultation with the Leader, be authorised to amend the E-mail Retention Policy, Corporate Retention Policy



and Information Rights Policy to comply with changes in good practice and legislation as and when required.

- 2.4 In accordance with this decision, the Council embarked on a plan of action to apply the Retention Schedule, with particular focus on Officers and Members' mailboxes.
- 2.5 The first phase was to deal with leavers (employees or members), the process for this being:
 - i) The retention period is 365 days;
 - ii) ICT will run monthly reports of mailboxes due for deletion and circulate them to key contacts in Audit, Legal, Information Governance.
 - iii) The key contacts will consider the report and identify any where an audit, litigation, subject access request, freedom of information request or investigation is pending or ongoing. Those mailboxes will be retained pending the resolution of the relevant action.
 - iv) The report will then be circulated to Directors for final approval for deletion.
- 2.6 The second phase is the deletion of emails over 8 years old. Officers have been encouraged to review their own mailboxes and ensure that information with a retention period of over 8 years is stored outside of outlook and on the appropriate file share/business system and to soft delete emails that are no longer required or are outside of the relevant retention period.
- 2.7 The plan is to reduce the retention period gradually to 365 days for officers and 6 years for Directors, PA's and Members.
- 2.8 Alongside this, officers have also been encouraged to review their own file shares to ensure that they are only retaining information in accordance with the retention schedule.
- 2.9 In July 2022, the Covid-19 Inquiry was launched. The Inquiry has provided a 'Protocol for the Transfer and Handling of Documents' which includes:

The procedure and conduct of the Inquiry are to be such as the Chair of the Inquiry may direct (s.17(1) Inquiries Act 2005 ('the Act')), and are subject to the provisions of the Inquiries Act and the Inquiry Rules 2006 ('the Rules').

It is an offence under s.35 of the Act to do anything which is intended to have the effect of:

- a. distorting or otherwise altering any evidence, document or other thing that is given, produced or provided to the Inquiry panel, or
- b. preventing any evidence, document or other thing from being given, produced or provided to the Inquiry panel, or to do anything that the person knows or believes is likely to have that effect.

It is also an offence for a person to:

- a. intentionally to suppress or conceal a document that is, and that he knows or believes to be, a relevant document, or
- b. intentionally to alter or destroy such a document.

The procedures set out in this Protocol are not intended to cover every eventuality, and where the Chair needs to make a decision as to the procedure or conduct of the Inquiry not covered by this Protocol, she will, in accordance with her obligations under the Act, act fairly and with regard to the need to avoid unnecessary cost.

2.10 As such, the Council paused the above work pending a risk assessment.

3 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 The Council has to balance the UK GDPR risk of not complying with its Retention Schedule against the risk of unintentionally deleting Covid-19 related data that may become relevant for the Covid-19 Inquiry.
- 3.2 The Council has not been a Core Participant for the Covid-19 Inquiry Modules so far, but has engaged with the Local Government Association, who was a Core Participant in relation to Module 1 which related to Resilience and Preparedness as follows:

Module 1 will examine the resilience and preparedness of the UK for the Coronavirus pandemic. It will consider the extent to which the risk of a Coronavirus pandemic was properly identified and planned for and whether the UK was ready for that eventuality. The module will look at the UK's preparedness for whole-system civil emergencies, including resourcing, the system of risk management and pandemic readiness. It will scrutinise government decision-making relating to planning and seek to identify lessons from earlier incidents and simulations and international comparisons.

- 3.3 All of the information required as evidence to support the Council's contribution for Module 1 has been identified and stored in a file share. There is no risk of this information being deleted.
- 3.4 The Council has not been asked to provide any response or information for Module 2 or Module 3 so far, which are:

Module 2 - Core UK decision making; political governance, and

Module 3 – Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on healthcare systems in the 4 nations of the UK.

- 3.5 The Council has recently (May 2023) been contacted by the LGA in relation to Module 6 – Procurement of PPE and has started the process of identifying relevant information.
- 3.6 The Inquiry will announce further modules in 2023. These will likely cover both ‘system’ and ‘impact’ issues including;
- Vaccines, therapeutics and anti-viral treatment
 - The care sector
 - Government procurement and PPE
 - Testing and tracing,
 - The Government’s business and financial responses
 - Health inequalities and the impact of Covid-19
 - Education, children and young persons
 - Other public services, including frontline delivery by key workers
- 3.6 It is highly likely that the Council will be required to respond and provide evidence to the Inquiry in future modules, whether by itself as a Core Participant or through the LGA. As such, it is essential that information is preserved to ensure the Council does not fall foul of its obligations under s35 Inquiry Act 2005.
- 3.7 The risk assessment can be broken down into the phases the Council had planned in relation to the application of the retention schedule as follows:

Phase 1 – Deletion of Leavers’ Mailboxes

The Council currently holds mailboxes of officers and members who have left since 23rd January 2017.

The likelihood of any information relevant to the Covid-19 Inquiry being held on emails of staff who left pre-2020 is low and therefore mailboxes of officers/members who left up to 31st December 2019 can be permanently deleted.

Consideration needs to be given to mailboxes of officers who left after 1st January 2020. Pertinent questions are:

- Can the list of consultees pre-deletion be extended so that the individuals line manager or service manager can determine whether that individual held any information that was Covid-19 related?
- Are there a core group of officers who were involved in the decision making around the council’s Covid-19 response that could be included in the consultation process?
- Is it possible to undertake a search of mailboxes for key terms to extract any relevant Covid-19 data before deleting the mailbox?
- Would that be sufficient to ensure the Council does not fall foul of the data preservation requirement?

Information Governance Board members have been consulted on this and the proposal is:

- Mailboxes of staff leavers up to 31st December 2019 can be permanently deleted
- Mailboxes of staff leavers after 1st January 2020 can continue to be deleted with additional consultation with core officers who were involved in Covid-19 related activities and/or the officer's line manager
- Communication to all staff to notify them of the requirement to preserve Covid-19 related information and ensure that it is saved outside of outlook. This will reduce the risk for any leavers post this decision and communication.
- Where there is any uncertainty, an electronic search of the mailbox can be conducted with key words relating to Covid 19 and relevant emails can be preserved before the mailbox is deleted.

Phase 2 – Deletion of Emails over 8 years

No emails are currently being deleted permanently from outlook. As such, there are 14 million emails/notifications over 8-years old affecting over 6600 Mailboxes. Some of those will be deleted as and when the leavers mailboxes are deleted.

Whilst the plan would be to apply an automatic retention period to outlook for 8 years, staff would be given time in the first instance to move any emails over 8 years old that need to be kept out of outlook and into another case management system or fileshare. Officers should still be encouraged to do this and to delete any emails that have already exceeded the applicable retention period. The risk given this is being done as a manual process is low as officers will be made aware of the need to keep Covid-19 related data and guidance will be issued to ensure they preserve relevant information.

An 8 year retention period would go back to pre April 2016. The likelihood of any information relevant to the Covid-19 Inquiry being held on emails pre 2016 is low and as such it is proposed that this process can continue.

Consideration needs to be given to whether the 8 year automatic retention period should be implemented. It is likely that information relevant to the Covid-19 Inquiry will be held on emails from January 2020 and as such any automatic retention period would need to be paused by January 2028 if the Covid-19 Inquiry has not concluded by that date. There are not currently any timescales provided for when the Covid-19 Inquiry may conclude.

Information Governance Board members have been consulted on this and the proposal is:

- Staff should continue to manually cleanse their mailboxes to delete or move items over 8 years.
- A date should be identified for this to be completed.
- ICT to permanently delete all items over 8 years as a one off exercise.

- Review whether the automated retention can be implemented depending on feedback as to the manual process.
- Guidance to be issued to all staff on the preservation of Covid-19 information to ensure compliance.

Stage 3 – Data Cleanse

Given this is a manual process, whereby each team reviews the information they hold on fileshares, it is considered that this should continue. As long as officers are aware of the need to keep Covid-19 related information and store it in place that is easily accessible should it be needed, there should be no risk of deletion of information that would be in breach of the preservation requirements.

By failing to do this, the Council may be in breach of other UK GDPR principals in particular, failing to comply with the storage limitation principal (ie adherence to the retention schedule).

The Retention Schedule is being reviewed and makes clear reference to the need to preserve Covid-19 related information. Provided that officers adhere to the retention schedule, the risk of any Covid-19 data being deleted through this process is low.

Information Governance Board members have been consulted on this and the proposal is:

- This should continue as it is low risk due to it being a manual exercise.

4. NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 Leadership Team to consider what actions can be continued and which actions should be paused.

Report to Cabinet

13 September 2023

Subject:	Professional Services Partnership 4
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member Environment and Highways, Danny Millard
Director:	Director of Borough Economy, Alice Davey
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Assistant Director – Highway Services, Robin Weare robin_weare@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given for Sandwell MBC to continue with membership of the Midland Highways Alliance Professional Services Partnership Framework (PSP 4).

2 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 2.1 This report seeks approval for Sandwell MBC to continue with membership of the Midland Highways Alliance Plus Professional Services Partnership Framework (PSP 4).

3 Reasons for Recommendations






- 3.1 Membership of the Midland Highway Alliance Plus provides Sandwell MBC the opportunity to share best practice, benchmark and improve performance and deliver efficiency savings through working collaboratively together with other members.



- 3.2 Midlands Highway Alliance Plus (MHA+) was formed from the merger of three regional efficiencies groups, the Midlands Highway Alliance, the Midlands Service Improvement Group and the West Midlands Highway Alliance.
- 3.3 The new MHA + Alliance (July 2020) has a membership of 35 local highway authorities from across the Midlands and beyond.
- 3.4 The purpose of the Professional Services Partnership Framework (PSP4) is to ensure members have efficient access to consultancy services and offers good value for money through economies of scale.
- 3.5 The ability to use a 'ready-made' consultancy service framework contributes to Sandwell's Corporate Plan objectives by giving us direct access to specialist expertise, seconded staff when we need them and web-enabled collaboration tools with the associated governance and processes.
- 3.6 On 28 August 2023, the MHA + Alliance launched the Professional Services Partnership 4 (PSP4). This is the 4th generation framework following the successful PSP 1,2 and 3 frameworks. The PSP 4 contract will commence on 28th August, is expected to be in place until 2031 and with the contract end date for PSP 3 being 27th August 2023.
- 3.7 The scope of the framework enables procurement of professional services to deliver a range of Council activities. This includes highway improvements, maintenance, road safety schemes either directly or through secondments. A number of other Council teams use the PSP framework to procure specialist services. Transportation Planning, Building Services, Regeneration, Parks and Green Spaces also commission services through this framework. The commissioning of seconded professionals is particularly useful in supplementing Council expertise through cyclical and project-based peaks in workload.
- 3.8 This framework is administered through Leicestershire County Council on behalf of MHA members.



3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people: Good, well maintained highway infrastructure will encourage more walking and cycling increasing wellbeing, improving road safety and promoting cleaner air quality.</p>
	<p>People live well and age well: The Highway environment plays an important role in the life of the community, particularly the positive opportunities that they can bring from social inclusion and interaction.</p>
	<p>Good quality Highways infrastructure will make our communities feel safe, more protected and confident in their homes and neighbourhoods.</p>
	<p>Well maintained highways bring increased economic and physical activity and reduces wear and tear and accident damage.</p>
	<p>Our highways are the arteries of our communities. They connect our residents to employment, education, local services and indeed the wider world. They enable economic growth, social mobility and are vital in ensuring good health outcomes.</p> <p>The recent Enventure survey was conducted to gain insight from residents to support Sandwell Council in the development of the budget proposals and future spending priorities. The survey found that “Maintaining Roads and Pavements” was selected as important by high proportions of respondents in both the representative survey (72%) and the online survey (79%).</p>

4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 Sandwell Highway Services currently have eleven seconded staff employed through the PSP 3 Framework to support delivery of major highway improvement and maintenance schemes such as Local Transport Plan projects, in addition to a commission for the design and project management of the Birchley Island major scheme.



4.2 In the financial 2022/23, the Council spent approximately £1,500,000 under this Framework agreement across a number of Council Services including Transport Planning, Building Services, Landscape Architecture as well as Highway Services.

4.3 It is proposed to use the PSP4 Framework to provide supplementary resource to support the delivery of an estimated £168m of new external capital funded highway and transportation programmes of work. The estimated resources needed for this planned regeneration of the Borough would result in an estimated additional annual spend of several hundred thousand per year on this framework, taking total forecast estimated spend to around £2m to £2.5m per year. The annual amount would vary depending on the phasing of schemes and programmes of work.

5 Alternative Options

5.1 Membership of the MHA + PSP4 framework represents the most cost-effective method of quickly providing supplementary resource for externally funded capital programmes. This flexibility in resource provision facilitates delivery of capital programmes through peaks in the investment cycle together with occasional short-term specialist commissions. The alternative would be a cycle of hiring specialists on temporary contracts and then terminating employment on completion of projects and programmes. There would also be no guarantee of continuity of involvement of the specialist staff working on partly completed projects if we did not continue with our membership of the PSP 4 framework.

5.2 There are other advantages to be gained by participating in this framework. It delivers benefits beyond access to specialist services. Membership of MHA facilitates benchmarking and delivers efficiency savings by collaborative working. Having access to a 'ready-made' framework contract to commission for larger projects also reduces the cost associated with the administration in tendering and obtaining market quotations for individual pieces of work.



For these reasons, discontinuing with membership of the MHA + PSP framework is not recommended.

6 Implications

<p>Resources:</p>	<p>A value of around £18m is estimated for the 8 years the framework is expected to be in place.</p> <p>Commissions through the MHA + PSP4 framework are funded almost entirely through external capital grant funding or the income streams generated by the specialist work. The commissions are funded from existing budgets.</p>
<p>Legal and Governance:</p>	<p>The principal statutory duty imposed on local highway authorities is to maintain the highway maintainable at public expense.</p> <p>The Council, in carrying out transportation, highways and infrastructure related work, will do so under the relevant primary legislation comprising the Highways Act 1980; Road Traffic Act 1974; Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984; Local Government Act 1972; Traffic Management Act 2004; and Transport Act 2000 and other related regulations, instructions, directives and general guidance.</p> <p>The Traffic Management Act 2004 imposes a network management duty on a council to manage day-to-day operational use of its highways to ‘keep traffic moving’.</p> <p>Framework Agreements that have been procured in accordance with the relevant legislation and regulations are an effective and legally compliant route to market, that helps to ensure good value and effective contract management.</p>
<p>Risk:</p>	<p>The Council has a duty to meet its legal obligations to mitigate service risks related to third party liability claims arising from accidents and injury due to condition of the highway.</p>



	The key service risk relates to third party liability claims arising from accident and injury due to condition of the highway or non-compliance with statutory obligations. The duty is not absolute, but decisions must be taken on reasonable grounds with due care and regard to relevant considerations as set out in best practice guidance 'Well-managed Highway Infrastructure'.
Equality:	There are no specific equality issues regarding the proposals contained in this report. The requirements of the Equality Act 2010 are included in the Framework Agreement Documentation to draw attention to the detail of, and the need to comply with, the Act.
Health and Wellbeing:	The Highway environment plays an important role in the life of the community, particularly the positive opportunities that they can bring from social inclusion and interaction.
Social Value:	Social Value commitments have been built into the tender evaluation criteria to ensure the successful contractor(s) complies with nationally recognised standards and contributes to the Council's Vision 2030 ambitions.
Climate Change:	Well maintained highways support climate change objectives through the supporting more activate travel arrangements, the increased use of public transport, delivery of carbon reduction savings and associated benefits outlined in the Corporate Plan.
Corporate Parenting:	Good, well maintained highway infrastructure promotes improved physical and mental health and well-being of children and young people through more walking and cycling, improving road safety and promoting cleaner air quality.

7. Appendices

None

8. Background Papers

None



Report to Cabinet

13 September 2023

Subject:	Improvement Plan Progress
Cabinet Member:	Leader of the Council Cllr Kerrie Carmichael
Director:	Chief Executive Shokat Lal
Key Decision:	No
Contact Officer:	Strategic Lead – Service Improvement Kate Ashley Kate1_ashley@sandwell.gov.uk Senior Lead Officer – Service Improvement Rebecca Jenkins Rebecca_jenkins@sandwell.gov.uk Lead Officer – Service Improvement Dawn Webster Dawn_webster@sandwell.gov.uk

1. Recommendations

- 1.1. That progress against the Improvement Plan up to 3 August 2023 be received
- 1.2. That Cabinet receive the Improvement Plan Risk Register
- 1.3. That Cabinet receive changes to the Improvement Plan



- 1.4. That Cabinet note that Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board and Audit and Risk Assurance Committee will consider the Improvement Plan Progress report on 14 and 21 September respectively, and that any recommendations or comments made in relation to the Improvement Plan progress will be reported to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

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 original Grant Thornton Value for Money 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. As part of the council's assurance framework for the Improvement Plan, the LGA, Grant Thornton and CIPFA conducted follow-up reviews in Autumn 2022 to evaluate the council's progress on implementing the specific recommendations from those individual reviews. The responses to the findings from the follow-up visits were reported to Cabinet in March and June 2023.
- 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 the established change control process to form a refresh of the Improvement Plan.
- 2.4. Risk management is embedded within the council's programme management of the Improvement Plan. A risk register is in place 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.
- 2.5. 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 September and any recommendations or comments will be presented for Cabinet's consideration at a future meeting.

2.6. 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. Reports have been submitted in December 2022 and June 2023 with the next report due December 2023.

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

	<p>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.</p>
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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 Grant Thornton 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 fifth update to Cabinet on progress of the Improvement Plan.

5. Improvement Plan Quarterly Progress

- 5.1. Over the three months to 3 August 2023, significant progress has continued to be made to deliver the actions within the Improvement Plan. This includes the handover of Sandwell Aquatics Centre to Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT) in July 2023 and the agreement for future delivery of leisure services, the launch of the One Team Framework (values and behaviours), and the conclusion of historic matters through a report to Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.
- 5.2. A comprehensive monitoring tool has been developed which includes a progress status rating for all actions. 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. The Improvement Plan Monitoring Tool is included at Appendix 1.
- 5.3. Progress against each theme of Improvement Plan is contained within Appendix 2. This includes a description of workstream progress including progress against milestones and achievements, and any progress issues. A summary by theme is provided below.

5.4. Organisational Culture Theme

- 5.4.1. Achievements this quarter:
- Values and Behaviours Launch and Share events with 419 people managers carried out.



- Approach agreed for Corporate Governance training and development with preparations being made for a series of scenario-based learning events.
- Member Development Plan in place for 2023-24 Municipal Year and Member Handbook created.

5.4.2. Organisational Culture Progress Issues:

- **Identify mechanisms for ongoing insight and assurance around the Officer and Member Relationship**
 - In relation to the Member-Officer Relationship, there are ongoing mechanisms in place for insight and assurance around the Officer Member Relationship include views from external reviews, standards cases, feedback from Directors, Group Leaders and Chief Whips. The external reviews in late 2022 acknowledged the significant strides in improving the relationship
 - A Member-Officer relationship survey was launched in April to gain further insight into the relationship and provide a source of insight to aid continuous improvement activity.
 - The reason for the exception report is that the survey received a lower response rate from Officers and Members than was expected. As a result, new plans have been formed for additional insight-gathering to take place in Autumn 2023. The insight will be used in sessions focusing on the Member-Officer Relationship led by the LGA. The approach takes into account feedback from Officers and Members around the response rate and style of engagement.
 - Following the Autumn insight-gathering, consideration will be given to whether an ongoing mechanism is needed and to embed this within our continuous improvement approach.

5.5. Corporate Oversight Theme

5.5.1. Achievements this quarter

- SEND 2 Transport procurement project lessons learnt shared with Wider Leadership Team. Actions embedded into plans for SEND 3 procurement
- Refreshed Corporate Plan agreed, and Directorate business plans finalised
- Improvement Plan Annual Report and Report to Secretary of State on the Improvement Plan progress submitted



- Local Partnerships Review to inform Corporate Programme Management Office complete
- Member engagement held to inform Customer Journey Programme

5.6. Corporate Oversight Progress Issues:

- **Oracle Transformation Programme**
 - The Oracle Transformation Programme is currently in its modelling phase.
 - The reason for the exception report is that there have been delays to some workstreams within the modelling phase of the programme. A revised plan has been created and approved by the Oracle Programme Board. The programme is still on track for its planned Go Live date of April 2024.
- **Integration of Performance Reporting on revenue, capital and performance information**
 - Quarterly performance reports are made to Cabinet and Leadership Team across the Performance Management Framework. This includes separate financial reports and performance management reports.
 - The intention is to bring the reporting together to improve collective insight into performance.
 - The reason for the exception report is that work to commence on this has been revised to commence from March 2024. This will allow the work to be informed by the reporting ability of Oracle Fusion once implemented.
- **Directorate level restructuring and review of Spans and Layers**
 - An appointment has been made to the Assistant Chief Executive position and they are due to commence in post in September
 - The reason for the exception report is that the Directorate-level structure is under discussion, and the spans and layers review is being considered in line with the workforce strategy implementation.
 - Actions are currently placed on hold within the Plan, however work to map existing spans and layers has been completed.

5.7. Strategic Direction Theme

5.7.1. Achievements this quarter



- Cabinet approval to new Terms of Reference for the Equalities Commission Board
- Cabinet approval to appointment of Strategic Delivery Partner for the Regeneration Pipeline
- Appointment of Contractor for housing stock condition surveys
- Budget Consultation launched

5.7.2. Strategic Direction Progress Issues

- **HRA Business Plan: Stock condition surveys**
 - The HRA Business Plan was agreed by Cabinet in February.
 - A range of factors need to be taken into account in reviewing and amending the plan in future years including the results of stock condition surveys.
 - The reason for the exception report is that problems were encountered with the initial procurement resulting in a revised approach and a new procurement activity being conducted.
 - A contract has now been awarded and the contractor is due to commence work in September.
- **Commercial Strategy – Business Cases and Resourcing**
 - The Commercial Strategy was agreed in March 2023. A set of project outlines were agreed, and work has commenced to develop these to full business case stage and monthly highlight reporting is in place.
 - The reason for the exception report is that there is slippage against the action plans for developing the full business cases. This continues to be monitored by the Corporate Transformation Board. There has also been difficulty in recruiting a Commercial Project Officer. Other options are being considered for the recruitment.
- **Customer Journey Strategy**
 - Work is progressing on the Customer Journey Programme with governance arrangements and a plan in place.
 - The reason for the exception report is that engagement sessions with residents were put on hold due to planned sessions coinciding with Serco strike action.
 - Engagement with Members has been conducted focusing on ward and casework management and these have been positively received.



- New plans have been formed for the resident engagement sessions and the date for the approval of the strategy adjusted to March 2024.

5.8. Decision Making Theme

5.8.1. Achievements this quarter

- Position of historic issue report received by ARAC June 2023 and matter concluded.

5.8.2. Decision Making Progress Issues

- No issues in this theme

5.9. Procurement and Commercial Theme

5.9.1. Achievements this quarter

- Handover of Sandwell Aquatics Centre to SLT
- Agreement reached with SLT to extend SLT's operation of leisure centres
- Contract Management Guidance and Templates live on Council's intranet
- Street Cleansing Recovery plan incorporated into the annual service delivery plan provided by Serco.
- Completion of Phase 2 Tech Forge Asset Management System (transfer of data into the system)

5.9.2. Procurement and Commercial Progress Issues:

- **Completion of Fleet Replacement**
 - The waste service fleet replacement continues to be overseen through contract management arrangements with Serco.
 - The reason for the exception report is that there has been a delay to the final order of 16 Refuse Collection Vehicles linked to supplier issues for build slots and discussions around the waste management strategy. The final order is now in place with delivery of vehicles expected by end 2023.
- **Performance Management System: Options Appraisal**
 - A performance management system is being explored to support business intelligence across the council and facilitate reporting within the performance management framework.



- The reason for the exception report is that the original timescales to bring forward an options appraisal have been pushed back due to supplier availability for system demos. The final system demo is being held in August.
- The options appraisal is due to be completed by October 2023.

5.10.Partnerships and Relationships Theme

5.10.1. Achievements this quarter

- Continuation of effective governance arrangements and joint work with Sandwell Children's Trust including launch of Family Hubs programme with partners.
- Commencement of modelling of currently processes relating to the transition from children's to adults' services
- Engagement with key regional and sub-regional groups continues to bring benefits for Sandwell including forthcoming Devolution Deal (due to be reported to Cabinet in September), securing funding for 2-3 sites under the OPE programme, submission of a substantial bid for affordable homes to the WM Growth Company, and ongoing engagement in relation to the Commonwealth Games Underspend (having already secured £2m to fund increased utility costs at the Sandwell Aquatic Centre).

5.10.2. Partnerships and Relationships Progress Issues

- **Consultation on VCS Draft Strategy**
 - An annual report on grants with the VCS is being prepared for Cabinet in Autumn with the next steps for delivering the strategy.
 - The reason for the exception report is that the strategy is being developed over a longer period to enable a more fundamental look at the relationship with the VCS to take place.
- **Preparing for Adulthood Project**
 - Work on this project has commenced and modelling of current processes is taking place.
 - The reason for the exception report is due to resources as there have been difficulties recruiting to a project manager position. The project is being supported by the Corporate Transformation Office

6. Statutory Recommendations



- 6.1. The Grant Thornton Value for Money Governance Review 2021 included 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.
- 6.2. In their follow up review 2022, Grant Thornton recognised progress against all three statutory recommendations.
- 6.3. 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.
- 6.4. **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.
 - Sandwell Leisure Trust – agreement reached to extend SLT’s operation of leisure centres to March 2027.
 - Handover of Sandwell Aquatic Centre to SLT
 - Sandwell Children’s Trust – Governance arrangements remain in place. Joint work in place with SCT in relation to corporate parenting and early help. Revised contract commenced 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.
 - Regeneration Strategy and Pipeline to underpin significant regeneration in Sandwell approved by Cabinet 23 March 2022. First monitoring provided to Cabinet in November.
- 6.5. **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 first phase of the Governance Review has completed with the Constitution refresh.
 - Corporate Governance Training - Programme of training and development commenced in September 2022 on effective decision-making, good governance, and revised contract procedure rules. Next phase of Corporate Governance Development is being rolled out during 2023-2024.
 - Commercial Strategy approved in March 2023.
 - Corporate Asset Management Strategy approved by Cabinet in November 2023.
 - SEND Transport lessons learnt completed and shared with Wider Leadership Team

6.6. **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 arrangements are in place. Member Development Programme is being regularly reviewed by Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee. Member Handbook created for Municipal Year 2023-24.
 - 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 Strategy.
 - Organisational Culture – Extensive engagement held to inform the One Team Framework (Values and Behaviours) which was approved in March 2023. Values and behaviours launched.
 - Meeting structures to facilitate Cabinet Member and Leadership Team cross-working in place and meeting needs.



7. Reporting Framework, Governance and Assurance

- 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.
- 7.2. This report forms the fifth quarterly update to Cabinet on the Improvement Plan. Leadership Team have reviewed progress against the plan every month.
- 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 last report was made in June 2023. The next report is due December 2023
- 7.4. Member-led committees, such as the Governance & Constitution Review Committee, Audit & Risk Assurance Committee and Scrutiny Committees, are used for providing a steer and maintaining oversight of the actions and implementation of the Improvement Plan.
- 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 last year.
- 7.6. Audit & Risk Assurance Committee receive quarterly updates on the Improvement Plan and the Improvement Plan Risk Register. They received the last quarterly update in June 2023 and are due to consider this quarterly progress update in September 2023.
- 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. This has included a 'deep dive' focus on the work under the Organisational Culture theme and engagement with the workforce, as well as Customer Journey. The Board will receive this quarterly update in September 2023.
- 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 at a future meeting.

8. External Reviews

- 8.1. External assurance continues to play a part in our improvement journey to monitor our progress in addressing the recommendations made through external reviews. Grant Thornton, LGA and CIPFA conducted follow up reviews in late 2022 with all reviews acknowledging the positive progress made.
- 8.2. Reports from Sandwell's Commissioners have been submitted to the Secretary of State on a six-monthly basis. In their June 2023 report, Commissioners noted the considerable progress made over the first fifteen months of the intervention towards addressing the significant challenges facing the authority. In their third report, the Commissioners outlined that their focus over the coming months will be in the following areas:
- Developing the strategic capacity of the organisation
 - Implementation and embedding of the council's values and behaviours (One Team Framework)
 - Establishing a comprehensive transformation programme linked to the delivery of the medium-term financial strategy
 - Approval of the 2020/21 accounts by the external auditors and a clear timetable for approval of the 2021/22 accounts
- 8.3. Planning is underway for a return follow-up visit by Grant Thornton in Autumn 2023.

9. Resources

- 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. A summary of the quarterly position is provided within the council's quarterly budget monitoring report.



- 9.2. The fund has enabled recruitment to key positions including corporate transformation capacity, work on organisational culture and resources to support the implementation of finance improvements and the Governance review. Where longer-term staffing capacity has been required, this has been built into base budgets to ensure sustainability.
- 9.3. To provide additional capacity across improvement activities, the Improvement Reserve is being used to fund graduate placements within the National Graduate Development Programme which will commence from October 2023. These placements will not only provide capacity to council's current improvement journey but will also develop skills in the workforce of the future that will support sustainability.

10. Risk Management

- 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.
- 10.2. 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 corporate programme management office. The financial resources required have been identified and were approved by Council in June. To provide additional capacity across improvement activities, the Improvement Reserve is being used to fund graduate placements within the National Graduate Development Programme which will commence from September 2023.
 - **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.
 - **Investment and Financial Resources** – to ensure financial resources are made available resource gaps/ pressures associated with the Improvement Plan have been identified
 - **Constitutional Changes**- If key governance changes (agreed during 2022) are not embedded throughout the organisation then opportunities will be missed. First round of training has been delivered along with revised templates and guidance. Phase 2 of the Corporate



Governance Review is underway, and this will focus on embedding the constitutional changes

10.3. Since the last quarterly report to Cabinet, the following risk has reduced:

- IP10 Performance Management Framework (PMF) and Data Quality- Amber to Green

10.4. Since the last quarterly report to Cabinet, the following risks have been closed:

- IP2 Programme Management Arrangements - target score reached

11. Changes to the Improvement Plan – Phase 3 Refresh

11.1. The Improvement Plan is intended to be a live document updated to take account of progress and relevant changes.

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.

11.3. The list of all changes is provided in Appendix 6. Where new actions have been added to the Improvement Plan, these are displayed within the monitoring tool with red font colour.

11.4. The changes made are summarised below.

- 3 new sub-actions have been added
- 14 changes have been made to action delivery timescales, and milestones (6 of which are of more than 3 months)
- 2 changes have been made to descriptions of actions
- 3 Main actions have been closed as the activity is complete (this includes 1 main action that also closing results in a Workstream closure)
- 2 Assurance actions have been closed.

12. Alternative Options

12.1. 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.



12.2. 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.

12.3. Reviewing progress against the Improvement Plan enables senior officers and members to have oversight of delivery, and take corrective action, as necessary. Alternative methods of monitoring progress could be adopted. The current monitoring method is regularly reviewed to ensure it remains fit for purpose and provides Leadership Team with the oversight they require.

13. Implications

<p>Resources:</p>	<p>The monitoring of the Improvement Plan is being carried out within existing resources. Council’s approval of the single Improvement Plan included allocation of resources to ensure delivery of the Improvement Plan. These resources are monitored regularly by the Programme Management Office and Leadership Team.</p>
<p>Legal and Governance:</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 delivery of actions within the Plan agreed by Council in June 2022, as well as any subsequently identified actions, will support the council to achieve sustainable improvement. This will support the end of government intervention.</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>Risk:</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 is in place and 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 will be reported monthly to Leadership Team, quarterly to Cabinet and will be regularly reported to Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.</p>
<p>Equality:</p>	<p>The successful delivery of this 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>Health and Wellbeing:</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, 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>Social Value</p>	<p>Within the Improvement Plan, the council is committed to developing the 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</p>



	council will be able to maximise its social value return.
Climate Change	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.
Corporate Parenting:	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 include being a good Corporate Parent for the children in our care and supporting young people once they leave care. Therefore, any improvements to the council's governance structures will strengthen the council's ability to be a good Corporate Parent.

14. Appendices

1. Improvement Plan Monitoring Tool July 2023
2. Improvement Plan Theme Progress Summary July 2023
3. Statutory Recommendations Reporting July 2023
4. Improvement Plan Governance Diagram
5. Improvement Plan Risk Register July 2023
6. Changes to the Improvement Plan July 2023

15. Background Papers

- [Sandwell Council Improvement Plan](#)
- Approval of Sandwell Council Improvement Plan [Report to Council 7 June 2022](#)
- Reports to the Secretary of State for Levelling up Housing and Communities:
 - June 2022 Reports
 - [Sandwell Council Report to Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing and Communities, June 2022](#)



- December 2022 Reports:
 - [Sandwell Council Report to Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing and Communities, December 2022](#)
 - [Sandwell Council Commissioners: second report to Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing and Communities, December 2022 \(published March 2023\)](#)
 - [Ministerial response to second letter \(March 2023\)](#)
- June 2022
 - [Sandwell Council Commissioners: third report to Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing and Communities, June 2023 \(published July 2023\)](#)
 - [Ministerial response to third letter \(July 2023\)](#)
- Improvement Plan Progress Reports:
 - To Council: [13 December 2022](#)
 - To Cabinet:
 - [June 2023](#)
 - [March 2023](#)
 - [December 2022](#) including LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Review Report Nov 2022
 - [September 2022](#)
 - To Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
 - [June 2023](#)
 - [March 2023](#)
 - [January 2023 \(External Review Reports\)](#)
 - [November 2022](#)
 - [September 2022](#)
 - [June 2022](#)
 - To Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board
 - [June 2023](#)
 - [March 2023](#)
 - [November 2022](#)
 - [September 2022](#)
- External Review Reports
 - [Grant Thornton Value for Money Governance Review Follow-up Report 2022](#)
 - [Grant Thornton Value for Money Governance Review December 2021 – reissued October 2022](#)



- [LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Review Report 2022](#)
- [LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Report February 2022](#)
- [CIPFA Financial Management Report January 2022](#)





IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Progress against Plan Status Rating	Definition	Leadership Team Action as a result
On Track	Progress against the action is good and there is i) a low level of issues; and/or ii) progress is in line with the delivery date with no/ minor slippage (e.g. less than 1 months); and/or that	Leadership Team note progress and seek assurance that on track
Medium progress	Progress on the action is being made but there is i) a medium level of issues and/or ii) slippage (actual / projected) of 1-2 months	Leadership Team watching brief and review impact on dependencies
Significant issues / slippage	There is a significant level of issues and/or slippage (e.g. more than 2 months)	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
On hold	Action placed on hold due to different approach being considered	

Theme 1 -Organisational Culture

Static data			Owners					Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Milestones	We will statement (code & statement in full)	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)/June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)/July 2023)
Establishing Organisational Culture	OCA2.0	Create the right environment for that organisational culture to thrive	Workforce Strategy approved	(New) O1 We will embed the One Team Framework	Chief Executive	Deputy Leader					Focus 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Establishing Organisational Culture	OCA2.1	Workforce Strategy approved			Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		Head of HR	Dec-22	Jul-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	The draft of the workforce strategy is being taken to Leadership in July 2023 for approval. (N. DS 3.7.23)	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Workforce strategy being agreed at September Leadership. There is no delay to the workstreams within the strategy whilst this approval is pending. (DS)
Establishing Organisational Culture	OCA2.3	Project Plan for launch of One Team Framework and alignment to people management practices - Launch and share events with people managers (June & July 2023) - Alignment of One Team framework values and behaviours in people practices and L&D offer .			Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		Head of HR	Mar-23	Jul-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	3 sessions completed. 5 remaining - Programme plan drafted and key workstreams identified.	On Track- little or no slippage	Final launch and share session 21 July 2023. Feedback and evaluation from launch is being collated. Programme plan meeting with stakeholders of the wider OTT embedding taking place 19.7.23. (DS)
Establishing Organisational Culture	OCA2.4	Employee performance review and objective setting, linked to Corporate Plan and Directorate Plans (Appraisal) a) confirm approach for 2023 b) determine fully refreshed approach for 2024 onwards			Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		Head of HR	Mar-23	Mar-24	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Project scoping taking place inline with programme plan	On Track- little or no slippage	L&OD have a draft proposal and will commence a timeline to consult with stakeholders as part of the project plan in OCA2.3. (DS)
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B2.0	Develop a clear programme of management development	Management Development Programme Agreed	(New) O2 We will develop and embed excellent people management practices, by effectively leading, supporting and improving our workforce, fostering a workforce that is engaged and productive	Chief Executive	Deputy Leader	Director- Law & Governance				Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B2.1	Management and Development Programme Scope, Content and Budget Agreed			Chief Executive	Deputy Leader	Director- Law & Governance	Head of HR HR Team Manager L&D/OD	Oct-22	April 23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Manager essentials sessions and Sandwell training offer promoted in June team talks and schedule of face to face	Complete	Can this marked as complete now as Sandwell Manager essentials will continue as BAU. Learning for managers
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B2.4	Management Development Programme Delivery			Chief Executive	Deputy Leader	Director- Law & Governance		Apr-23	tbc	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	As above	Complete	As above
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B2.5	New action: Senior Leadership Development Programme Scope, Content and Budget Agreed			Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		Head of HR HR Team Manager L&D/OD		TBC	N/A	New Action Added	VL and DS to meet with SL (13th July) scope requirements	New Action Added	VL/DS met with Shokat and provisional ideas and plans are being developed for a pilot of a programme approx January 2024. (DS)
Officer and Member Relationship	OC.C4.0	Assurance Activity to sustain positive Officer and Member Relationship		(New) O4-We will continue to improve Officer-Member Relationships	Director - Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Jan-23		Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Officer and Member Relationship	OC.C4.1	Identify mechanisms for ongoing insight and assurance around the Officer and Member Relationship			Director - Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Jan-23	May-23	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	The ongoing mechanisms for insight and assurance around the Officer-Member Relationship include views from external reviews, standards cases, feedback from Directors, Group Leaders and Chief Whips. Following discussions with ARAC and BCSMB around the Officer-Member	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	The ongoing mechanisms for insight and assurance around the Officer-Member Relationship include views from external reviews, standards cases, feedback from Directors, Group Leaders and Chief Whips. Following discussions with ARAC and BCSMB around the Officer-Member survey conducted in April, there is
Officer and Member Relationship	OC.C4.2	New action: Compile insight into the Member-Officer Relationship in preparation for Autumn sessions with LGA around the Member-Officer Relationship			Director - Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Jul-23	Nov-23	N/A	New Action Added	To commence following discussions with Group Leaders and Chief Whips and Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee around approach ahead of LGA sessions	New Action Added	Preparations underway for Autumn insight gathering around the Member-Officer relationship.
Member Learning and Development	OC.D3.0	Continue forward plan for all Member briefings based on themes of work / areas for development	LT review of All Member briefings	(New) O4-We will continue to improve Officer-Member Relationships	Director - Law & Governance	Leader of the Council					Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
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	Jun-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Continuous learning has been taking place throughout the previous Municipal Year. Once next All Member briefing has been scheduled (likely end July), discussion will take place with Leadership Team on content and preparation including continuous learning around how the briefings are working.	On Track- little or no slippage	Leadership Team conversation held 18/07/23 around All Member briefings and agreed level of detail to be shared and approach. Next briefing will take place mid August. Once forward plan of All Member briefing dates in place this action will be closed.
Member Learning and Development	OC.D5.0	Member development programme	Approval of refreshed Member Development Programme for start of Municipal Year	(New) O4-We will continue to improve Officer-Member Relationships	Director - Law & Governance						Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Member Learning and Development	OC.D5.1	Approval of next iteration of MDP that includes actions as a result of Member POP analysis			Director - Law & Governance	Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee			Mar-23	23-Mar	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	complete

Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating		
Workstream	Ref	Action	Milestones	We will statement (code & statement in full)	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)/June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)/July 2023)
Member Learning and Development	OC.D5.2	New action: New Member Survey conducted and any required amendments made to MDP / New Member Induction programme			Director - Law & Governance	Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee			Jul-23	23-Aug		New Action Added		On Track- little or no slippage	Due to be launched at end July.
Internal Communications	OC.E2.0	Deliver the communications strategy to assist with more effective internal communications		(New) O5- We will ensure we are effectively communicating and engaging with our residents, internal workforce and external stakeholders (See O20 - O22)	Chief Executive	Leader of the Council			Feb-22	Ongoing	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Internal Communications	OC.E2.1	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 - We are Sandwell e-bulletin (New)			Chief Executive	Leader of the Council		Strategic Lead - Communications	Ongoing	Monthly updates through IP	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	CE blog, Team Talk, Directorate events and We are Sandwell bulletins delivered. A corporate live event was held to mark Corporate Parenting Week and work is underway to deliver an in person all staff briefing at the SAC in July.	Complete	First in person all staff briefing held at the SAC on 19th July setting out the vision for the organisation and the high-level roadmap on how we get there. This has been followed up with comms for those unable to attend on the day, including a booklet going to colleagues who do not have an email account. Other BAU internal comms channels maintained.
Internal Communications	OC.E2.2	Chief Executive's Comms Plan launch			Chief Executive	Leader of the Council		Strategic Lead - Communications	Spring 2023 TBC	TBC	N/A	Complete	Matt / Harps - suggest this is closed as the plan is now in place	Complete	Complete
Internal Communications	OC.E2.3	Develop proposal for all staff conference			Chief Executive	Leader of the Council		Strategic Lead - Communications	TBC Aligned to CEX 100 day plan	TBC	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Being held on 19th July.	Complete	Delivered on 19th July.
Internal Communications	OC.E2.4	Formal Employee Recognition Scheme - approach and resources identified			Chief Executive	Leader of the Council		Strategic Lead- Service Improvement	Mar-23	Oct-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Development of Employee Recognition Scheme is being linked to values and behaviours roll out. Aiming for October for proposal for scheme.	On Track- little or no slippage	Development of Employee Recognition Scheme is being linked to values and behaviours roll out. Aiming for October for proposal for scheme.
Internal Communications	OC.E2.5	Continuous feedback on effectiveness of internal comms			Chief Executive	Leader of the Council		Strategic Lead - Communications	Ongoing	Quarterly Reporting Jan, Apr, July, Oct	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	dashboard to monitor engagement levels of internal bulletins established.	Complete	Survey being conducted to get feedback from the all staff briefing. Continue to add pulse/feedback surveys to internal comms channels and directorate.
Internal Communications	OC.E2.6	Regular comms activity around the scale of financial activities and how the organisation is addressing them.			Chief Executive	Leader of the Council	Director - Finance	Strategic Lead - Communications	Jan-23	ongoing	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	as last month- Regular comms setting out the MTS as one of the top priorities for the organisation - this will be covered in the all staff briefing in July.	Complete	Reminder of the financial position of the council included in the CE's message at all staff briefing.
Internal Communications	OC.E2.7	Review social media policy and create guidance/ protocol for working with MPs			Chief Executive	Leader of the Council		Strategic Lead - Communications AD - HR	Jan-23	23-Aug	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Revised policy was taken to last TU meeting.	On Track- little or no slippage	Meeting with TUs to discuss their proposed changes on 25th July.
Internal Communications	OC.E2.8	Regular comms activity around the golden thread			Chief Executive	Leader of the Council		Strategic Lead - Communications	Jan-23	ongoing	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Main method to do this is now the CE blog.	Complete	Golden thread articulated as part of the CE's presentation at the all staff briefing.
Embedding Constitutional Changes	OC.G1.0	Governance review training Phase 2		- Corporate Governance Development Programme Agreed - Delivery of Corporate (New)O10- We will ensure that our refreshed governance arrangements are embedded	Director - Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Jan-23	TBC	Focus 2	N/A		N/A	
Embedding Constitutional Changes	OC.G1.3	Governance Training and Development	Corporate Governance Training Delivery		Director - Law & Governance	Leader of the Council	Director-Finance		Jan-23	May-24	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	First round of scenario-based learning to be delivered in October across DSU, Procurement, Legal and Finance.	On Track- little or no slippage	First round of scenario-based learning to be delivered in October across DSU, Procurement, Legal and Finance.
Embedding Constitutional Changes	OC.G1.4	Annual Refresher of Corporate Governance Training			Director - Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			June 2023	Dec-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Code of Corporate Governance Training Contained within MDP. 2 further training dates are being identified to capture Members who didn't attend first session. AGS has to be presented alongside Annual Accounts.	On Track- little or no slippage	Code of Corporate Governance Training Contained within MDP. 2 further training dates are being identified to capture Members who didn't attend first session. AGS has to be presented alongside Annual Accounts.

Static data			Owners						Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating
Workstream	Ref	Action	Milestones	We will statement (code & statement in full)	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)/June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)/July 2023)
Embedding Constitutional Changes	OC.G1.5	Delivery of Directorships and Trusteeships Training			Director - Law & Governance	Deputy Leader			Jan-23	Jul-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Contained within MDP. Delivery due in August	On Track- little or no slippage	Contained within MDP. Delivery due in August
Role and Function of Scrutiny and Audit	OC.H1.0	Assurance Activity to ensure effective contribution of Scrutiny and Audit is sustained		New O10- We will ensure that our refreshed governance arrangements are embedded	Director - Law & Governance						Focus 2	N/A		N/A	
Role and Function of Scrutiny and Audit	OC.H1.2	Quarterly survey of Member and Officers participating in Scrutiny and Audit meetings			Director - Law & Governance			Strategic Lead - Service Improvement Democratic and Member Services Manager		Jan April July October	N/A	Complete	Surveys of Officers and Members attending Scrutiny and Audit ended April 2023 and findings shared with IPRM and Chairs. Next steps are for feedback to be sought from New Members on their experiences of Committee Meetings to ensure that they are receiving the required support to participate fully in these meetings. Autumn engagement around Member-Officer Relationship will be a route for continuous improvement and learning.	Complete	complete

Theme 2- Corporate Oversight

Theme 2- Corporate Oversight															July Update Due	
Static data				Owners					Dates		Focus	Progress against plan		Evidence of status rating		
Workstream	Ref	Action	Milestones	We will statement (code & statement in full)	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(July 2023)	
ERP	CO.A1.0	Implement Oracle Fusion	Oracle Fusion Implemented Discovery phase complete Modelling phase complete	(New) O15 We will deliver the Oracle transformation programme	Director-Finance	Deputy Leader	Director-Business Strategy & Change Director- Law		Apr-22	Apr-24	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
ERP	CO.A1.9	Completion of the modelling phase			Director-Finance	Deputy Leader		PMO lead	Feb-23	Jun-23	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Modelling phase complete for Finance and Procurement. Extended until mid-July for HR and Payroll. Amended Project Plan being considered by Programme Board to use contingency and ensure April 2024 Go Live is still achievable.	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	CRP3 completed for SCM and Finance. Modelling phase further extended for HCM to complete and Sign-Off Design BPS and DM design into August. Preparation for DM3 start in progress. Revised plan submitted and approved by Programme Board on 9th July. Go Live still planned for April 2024.	
ERP	CO.A1.10	Go live			Director-Finance	Deputy Leader		PMO Lead	Apr-24	Apr-24	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	As above - some slippage in HR and Payroll but April Go Live still achievable	On Track- little or no slippage	Go Live still planned for April 2024.	
ERP	CO.A1.11	Programme benefits will be defined during the duration of the programme and agreed with the programme board -a process will be agreed for monitoring and reporting the benefits -benefit realisation will take place post go live.			Director-Finance	Deputy Leader		PMO lead	Feb-23	quarterly May Aug Nov Feb	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	due August		due August	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B1.0	Single Improvement Plan Phase 1	6 monthly report to SoS	(New) O17 We will complete a review of strategic capacity at Senior Leadership level to support successful delivery of the Corporate Plan and long term planning.	Leadership Team	Leader of the Council			Mar-22	Ongoing	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B1.4	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	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Quarterly reports made to Cabinet, Scrutiny and Audit in June. Council approved report to SoS and report. Next monthly report due to IPRM 13/07. R120/06/23	On Track- little or no slippage	Quarterly reports made to Cabinet, Scrutiny and Audit in September	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B1.5	6 monthly report to Secretary of State			Leadership Team	Council		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement	Dec-22	June & December each year throughout intervention	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	June report submitted. Next report due December. R120/06/23	On Track- little or no slippage	June report submitted. Next report due December. R120/06/23	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B1.6	Employee Engagement Survey Action Plan monitored and reviewed by Leadership Team		(New) O22 We will develop and embed excellent people management practices, by effectively leading, supporting and innovating our workforce	Chief Executive	Deputy Leader			Jan-23	Jan July each year	Focus 2	On Track- little or no slippage	Included in monitoring return for June and on IPRM agenda 13/07/23 Preparations underway for Autumn 2023 EES.	Complete	Compiled for IPRM on 13/07/23 and key messages are being included in comms for all staff event on 19/07/23. Final sign off on questions for Autumn 2023 survey due in July.	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B1.7	New action to be added: Conduct Employee Engagement Survey for 2023 and consider actions required in response to the findings		(New) O22 We will develop and embed excellent people management practices, by effectively leading, supporting and innovating our workforce	Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		AD - HR Strategic Lead - Service Improvement	Jul-23	early 2024	Focus 2	New Action Added	new action added	New Action Added	Preparations underway for EES to be launched in Autumn 2023. Leadership Team sign off on questions due in July.	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B2.0	Single Improvement Plan Phase 2 and Phase 3	SIP phase 2 approved	(New) O17 We will complete a review of strategic capacity at Senior Leadership level to support successful delivery of the Corporate Plan and long term planning.	Leadership team	Leader of the Council			Dec-22	Jun-23	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B2.2	Approval of Improvement Plan Phase 3			Leadership team	Leader of the Council		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement	Mar-23	Jun-23	N/A	Complete	Reported to Cabinet in June 2023.	Complete	complete	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B3.0	Continuous Improvement	CI framework developed LL framework developed SEND 2 LL actions embedded in business plans	O17 We will hold ourselves to account for the delivery of the improvement plan and continuously improve	Chief Executive	Leader of the Council			Autumn 2022	Oct-23	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B3.1	Develop a Continuous Improvement framework			Chief Executive	Leader of the Council			Autumn 2022	Oct-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Framework will utilise transformation principles. Being planned for October.	On Track- little or no slippage	Framework will utilise transformation principles. Being planned for October.	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B3.2	Develop a lessons learnt framework			Chief executive	Leader of the Council			23-Jan	Oct-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Lessons Template and Guidance being prepared	On Track- little or no slippage	Lessons Template and Guidance being prepared	

Static data		Owners							Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	July Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Milestones	We will statement (code & statement in full)	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(July 2023)
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B3.3	Ensure SEND 2 lessons learnt applied			Leadership Team	Leader of the Council			23-Jan	June	N/A	Complete	SEND2 transport Lessons Learnt shared with WLT 08/06/23. Actions embedded in plans for SEND3. Tools falling out of this capture will be used across the organisation to support wider procurement activity. Included in business plans.	Complete	complete
Performance Management	CO.C1.0	Performance Management Framework (PMF)	Q4 report Performance Management Framework	New O16- We will embed a performance culture	Chief Executive	Deputy Leader			Sep-22	Ongoing	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Performance Management	CO.C1.3	Quarterly Performance Reports made to Cabinet			Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement	Ongoing action	Quarterly monitoring to ensure approach embedded	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Preparations on track for Q4 report to Cabinet in July. SI Team preparing new template for Q1 reporting. KW 27/06	On Track- little or no slippage	Q4 went to Cabinet in July. Q1 report now being drafted which will go to Leadership Team in September and Cabinet in October.
Performance Management	CO.C1.4	Review Corporate KPIs for organisational health to reflect workforce strategy			Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement	January 2023	Mar-24	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	There are significant capacity issues in HR services due primarily to the (growing) demands of Oracle Fusion. However, Pis are being reviewed and may be ready to be reported earlier than originally scheduled (Q1 2024/25). As updated in April, the existing set of organisational health metrics have been prepared for year end reporting within the PMF which will go to Leadership Team in May and Cabinet in July. KW 27/06/023	On Track- little or no slippage	There remain capacity issues in HR services due primarily to the (growing) demands of Oracle Fusion. However, Pis are being reviewed and may be ready to be reported earlier than originally scheduled (Q1 2024/25). The existing set of organisational health metrics were included in the Q4 report that went to Cabinet in July.
Performance Management	CO.C1.5	Review Corporate KPIs for customer experience to reflect customer experience programme			Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement	January 2023	Apr-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	The Customer experience measures have been reviewed and went to Cabinet on June 7 as part of the Corporate Plan refresh. The Customer Service Standards were agreed at Leadership Team on the 23 May. Performance against the Customer Service Standards will be included in the Corporate Performance Reports, starting in Q1. KW 27/06/2023	Complete	No change for August, we are now putting together the Q1 report.
Performance Management	CO.C1.6	Review PMF and put in place plans to address data gaps			Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement	Mar 23	Jun-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	The Corporate Plan which includes revised Pis has been to Cabinet on 7 June. The new measures will be included in the Q1 Corporate Performance Report. KW 27/06	Complete	No change- we are putting together the Q1 reports
Performance Management	CO.C1.7	Q4 SCT Contract Report to include overview of ITS (invest to save) activity.			Director - Children & Education	Deputy Leader		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement	June-23	Jun-23	N/A	Complete	Complete - Q4 report submitted to PMO.	Complete	Complete
Performance Management	CO.C1.8	Corporate performance team in place			Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement	dec 22	Sep-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	The start date for the G grade has been confirmed as the 4 September. Recruitment for the F grade to begin later in the summer. KW 27/06	On Track- little or no slippage	as June update
Performance Management	CO.C1.9	Consider integrating revenue, Capital and Performance reporting			Director-Finance	Deputy Leader		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement	July 23	Mar-24	N/A	Not due to start	due July23	Significant issues / actual/projected slippage more than 2 months	This will be fully reviewed once Oracle Fusion is in place and we can fully understand the reporting capabilities of the systems. Change of timescales proposed to commence work in March 24 aligned to Oracle implementation.
Performance Management	CO.C2.0	Budget Monitoring	n/a AA	New O11- We will set a sustainable and balanced budget each year	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Mar-22	Ongoing	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Performance Management	CO.C2.4	Assurance action: Quarterly Budget Monitoring Reports made to Leadership Team, Cabinet and Scrutiny			Director-Finance	Deputy Leader			Ongoing action- March, June, Sep, Dec	Quarterly monitoring to ensure approach embedded	N/A	Assurance Action	Financial Outturn report made to Cabinet and Scrutiny in June.	Assurance Action	due sept
Performance Management	CO.C2.5	Assurance action: 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	N/A	Assurance Action		Assurance Action	
Performance Management	CO.C2.6	Embed financial benchmarking in budget planning			Director-Finance	Deputy Leader			Apr-23	Jan-24	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Benchmarking used in budget planning to date	On Track- little or no slippage	Benchmarking used in budget planning to date
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D1.0	Restructuring			Leadership Team	Deputy Leader			Dec-20	on hold	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Static data		Owners							Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	July Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Milestones	We will statement (code & statement in full)	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(July 2023)
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D1.1	Directorate Level restructuring	All Directorate-level restructuring completed		Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		Head of HR	TBC	TBC	N/A	Action on Hold		Action on Hold	ACE appointed and due to commence in September 2023. Next steps and timeline for Directorate Level Restructuring to be confirmed.
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D1.2	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)			Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		Head of HR	July 23	TBC	N/A	Action on Hold		On Track- little or no slippage	Work is underway. Initial report due to Leadership Team in August. Timeline and next steps to be confirmed.
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D2.0	Embedding Finance Business Partner role		New O13- We will embed the finance business role	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Jan-22	Jul-23	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
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		Jul-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Skills gap analysis completed and training programme being finalised		
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D2.5	Assurance Action: Performance against KPIs for financial services section			Director- Finance	Deputy Leader	Finance Improvement Manager	Finance Improvement Manager	Quarterly	Jun Sep Dec Mar	N/A	Assurance Action		Assurance Action	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D3.0	Reduction of financial transactional activity		New O18- We will establish a corporate transformation programme and programme management office	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Jan-22		Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D3.6	Implement recommended processes for a single view of debt	Business Case for Transactional Finance Team approved		Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Jun-23	TBC	N/A				
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D3.4	Programme of end to end process reviews			Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			May-22	May-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Complete for Finance. Will want to consider adopting similar practice in other services.		
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D3.5	Implementation of Recommendations from CIPFa in relation to internal charges			Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Oct-22	Apr-24	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	As May update		
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D3.7	Develop Business case for Transactional Finance Unit			Director- Finance	Deputy Leader				TBC	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Suggest adding milestones from implementation plan - SH to discuss with Kae/Rebecca	On Track- little or no slippage	This has been progressed and links with the business support review
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D4.0	Resolve issues relating to the completion and sign off of final accounts.	AA n/a	New O11- We will set a sustainable and balanced budget	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Jan-22	AA- ongoing	Focus 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D4.4	Assurance Action: GT sign-off of 2020/21 Accounts (assurance that previous issues raised have been resolved)	sign off of 2020/21 accounts		Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Monthly monitoring	Monthly monitoring	N/A	Assurance Action	As May update-Grant Thornton have final adjustments in relation to revaluation error. Awaiting feedback.	Assurance Action	As May update- Grant Thornton have final adjustments in relation to revaluation error. Awaiting feedback.
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D4.5	Assurance Action: Preparation of Draft Accounts for 2021/2022 (assurance that approach to completion and sign-off of final accounts is becoming embedded)	sign off of 2021/22 accounts		Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Monthly monitoring	Monthly monitoring	N/A	Assurance Action	As May update-Agreed with Grant Thornton that audit dates for 2021/22 will be moved to October to allow more internal quality assurance process before external audit takes place.	Assurance Action	As May update-Agreed with Grant Thornton that audit dates for 2021/22 will be moved to October to allow more internal quality assurance process before external audit takes place.

Static data			Owners						Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	July Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Milestones	We will statement (code & statement in full)	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(July 2023)
Corporate Transformation	CO.E1.0	Corporate Transformation programme		New O18- We will develop a corporate transformation programme and a corporate programme management office and approach	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Dec-21		Focus 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Corporate Transformation	CO.E1.3	Corporate Transformation PMO established - Local Partnerships Review Concludes - Establishment of PMO	Transformation PMO in place Corporate PMO in place		Director-Finance	Deputy Leader		AD-Transformation	Sep-23		N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Final PMO report to LT on 11th July.	On Track- little or no slippage	Reported to leadership team 11 July, governance arrangements approved now moving to implementation.
Corporate Transformation	CO.E1.4	Programme and Project Management System Implementation	Verto system implemented		Director-Finance	Deputy Leader		AD-Transformation	Jul-23		N/A				Work underway to develop Verto following the approval of the PMO framework and threshold tool. Timeline for roll out to be determined following presentation at LT 08.08.23. PMO Comment: Change control to be proposed for a change to timescale following LT discussion 08.08.23
Corporate Transformation	CO.E1.5	Corporate Transformation Board operational -TOR finalised -Membership confirmed -Board dates in place	Corporate Transformation Board operational		Director-Finance				23-Jan	Jun-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	CTB TOR revised and meeting scheduled for 5th July.	Complete	TOR have been finalised, board is in place and dates confirmed.
Customer Journey	CO.F5.0	Customer Journey Programme		New O8 We will deliver the customer journey programme	Director – Regeneration & Growth	Deputy Leader		Transformation Programme Manager	22-Sep	TBC	Focus 1	N/A	On track with the customer journey plan.	N/A	
Customer Journey	CO.F5.4	Ward and Casework Management - Member Engagement held			Director – Regeneration & Growth			Strategic Lead - Customer	TBC	TBC	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Presentation has been taken to 4 Town Meetings so far with good Member attendance at all, data being collected and follow up meetings will be held once all meetings have been attended. Follow up meetings will identify all issues raised and solutions and actions to address concerns.	On Track- little or no slippage	All 6 Town Meetings attended. Presentation provided to Cabinet Member, Town & Vice Chair Meeting held on 10/07/23. This detailed the issues raised by Members in the Town Meetings and what the next steps were, commitment made to attend future meetings with solutions/quick wins and any items that may need further exploration. Positive feedback received from Members to the approach taken and they also highlighted that they felt that they had been listened to.
Customer Journey	CO.F5.5	Ward and Casework Management - Action plan in place Plan for Responsiveness re: Ward & Casework Management 2023/24.			Director – Regeneration & Growth			Strategic Lead - Customer	TBC	TBC	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	See above, 4 of 6 sessions have been held. Leadership Team are also continuing to receive a weekly report on open member cases.	On Track- little or no slippage	LT continue to receive weekly updates on cases. Solutions are being worked up based on the issues and suggestions highlighted in the recent meetings held with Members.

Static data			Owners						Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	July Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Milestones	We will statement (code & statement in full)	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(July 2023)
Strategic Planning framework	CO.G1.0	Strategic Planning framework	Refreshed Vision 2030 Refreshed Directorate Business Plans Refreshed appraisal process	New O16- We will embed a performance culture	Chief Executive					2024	Focus 2	N/A	new action	N/A	new action
Strategic Planning framework	CO.G1.1	Refresh of partnership wide vision 2030	State of Borough report Sept 23, Strategic Partnership eng		Chief Executive			Strategic Lead - Service Improvement		early 2024	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Joint Strategic Chairs Board agreed the refresh process and to prioritise partnership discussions on the State of the Borough report. State of Borough report on track for September, draft end of July	On Track- little or no slippage	State of the Borough data on track to be drafted by end of July
Strategic Planning framework	CO.G1.2	Finalise directorate business plans 2023-2026			Chief Executive			Strategic Lead - Service Improvement		Jun-23	N/A	Complete	Finalised in line with Cabinet's approval of Corporate Plan refresh in June 2023 (RJ 03/07/23)	Complete	complete
Strategic Planning framework	CO.G1.3	Refresh appraisal process			Chief Executive			AD - HR Strategic Lead - Service Improvement		TBC	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	2022-23 appraisal season underway. Planning commenced for new appraisal arrangements from 2024 onwards	On Track- little or no slippage	2022-23 appraisal season conducted. Planning commenced for new appraisal arrangements from 2024 onwards
Strategic Planning framework	CO.G1.4	Pilot an approach to service planning			Chief Executive			Strategic Lead - Service Improvement		TBC	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Resource remained aligned to CP Refresh and realignment of Directorate BP's.	On Track- little or no slippage	commenced refresh of business planning framework for 24/25, seeking to incorporate key strategic themes within template eg. workforce, ICT, procurement, assets, EDI to fully embed changes and key agendas in service planning. Ready for launch in Autumn 23

Theme 3 -Strategic Direction

Static data													July Update Due			
Static data			Owners						Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Milestones	We will statement (code & statement in full)	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(July 2023)	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A1.0	Regen Pipeline Development and Delivery	Strategic delivery partner in place	E10- We will develop an overarching Regeneration Strategy supported by an approved Pipeline of Regeneration Projects to support economic recovery from Covid19.	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth			Autumn 2021	Apr-27	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A1.2b	Assurance Action- Pipeline projects updated to IPRM on a 6-monthly basis			Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth			22-Dec	6 monthly update	N/A	Assurance Action	Pipeline is broadly on track but has been impacted in some areas by construction cost inflation which is making certain schemes not viable to take forward. 6 monthly report due for July cabinet.	Assurance Action	6 monthly update completed in June - check for closure at CC	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A1.3	Regeneration Pipeline: Agreement to procure a strategic delivery partner			Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth			Mar-22	Jul-23	N/A	OnTrack- little or no slippage	Process of signing the initial access agreement. We are pulling the internal working group together. Presentation is due to Leadership Team the 23rd May and will go to Cabinet in July 23. Cabinet members have been briefed and report due to be published tomorrow	Complete	Went to Cabinet in July and secured approval to enter in to procurement. Report will return to Cabinet once procurement has been successful.	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A3.0	Communications and Corporate Affairs Strategy Development and Delivery	Approval of Communications and Corporate Affairs Strategy	(New) O5 - We will ensure we are effectively communicating and engaging with our residents, internal workforce and external stakeholders	Chief Executive	Leader of the Council		Strategic Lead-Communications	Autumn 2021	Ongoing	Focus 2	OnTrack- little or no slippage		On Track- little or no slippage	First in person all staff briefing held at SAC on 19th July that set out the vision and next steps for the council.	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A4.0	Refresh and embed the Corporate Procurement Strategy	Corporate Procurement Strategy Approved	E2 - We will spend more money directly with suppliers in Sandwell. We will do this by developing better intelligence and improving our knowledge of local supply chains, as well as working with major contractors to encourage spending and sub-contracting with local suppliers.	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader		Interim Procurement Strategy Manager	Autumn 2021	Jul-23	Focus 2	N/A		N/A		
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A4.4	Action Plan to address gap analysis in strategy to be completed			Director- Finance	Deputy Leader		Interim Head of Procurement	Apr-23	Jul-23	N/A	OnTrack- little or no slippage	As May update - action plan drafted for approval	On Track- little or no slippage	Reporting on local spend is being built into the fusion project in a different way. We will start collating supplier data on whether they deliver the goods and services out of a WMBC postcode by West Midlands combined authority postcode. This way we can reflect a more educated view on money passing into smbc authority area but also recognised that due to the high manufacturing density of smbc that our opportunities may be reduced for local spend v our needs. Many residents may be working in WMCA areas and therefore value is still being added by widening the post code area reporting but with an ability to separate out. In the meantime the message for local spend has been communicated widely via CPR's, Leadership team, Wider	
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A5.0	Develop and Implement the Commercial Strategy	Commercial Strategy Approved	O19 - We will develop our commercial approach including our approach to contract management and monitoring and deliver our first commercial business streams.	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Autumn 2021	Ocr 23	Focus 2	N/a		N/a		
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A5.3	Complete Full Business Cases for identified Business Steams in line with Commercial Project Plan approved by Leadership Team			Director- Finance					Oct-23	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Highlight reports for each workstream shows slippage against action plans. Escalated at LT/CTB	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Highlight reports/ project scopes due to be presented at LT 01.08.23	

Static data			Owners					Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	July Update Due		
Workstream	Ref	Action	Milestones	We will statement (code & statement in full)	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(July 2023)
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A5.4	Recruit Commercial Project Officer			Director- Finance					Jun-23	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/projected slippage of 1-2 months	Recruitment unsuccessful - considering other options.	Medium Progress- actual/projected slippage of 1-2 months	Post re-advertised via HAYS WC 31.07.23
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A6.0	HRA 30 year Business Plan	HRA 30 year Business Plan approved	H17- We will ensure that council homes are safe places to live by fully complying with fire and building safety requirements and regularly reviewing compliance. We will support people in the private rented sector to ensure their landlords comply with safety standards too. H15- We will modernise our tenancy and estate management offer, delivering a more proactive service, early identification and intervention to mitigate risks to tenancy sustainment and a new neighbourhood management working in partnership with communities to address their priorities.	Director- Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing	Assistant Directors - Housing Management and Asset Management		Autumn 2021	Jun-23	Focus 2				
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A6.4	Procurement of stock condition surveys	Tendering process complete and contract awarded		Director- Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing				Jun-23	N/A	Significant issues / actual/projected slippage- more than 2 months	Tender bids now received through framework and being evaluated. Contract award due to be made on 1st August 2023. Number of surveys has been reduced to 5,000 due to competition for surveyors in the market. Will be completed over 12 mths.	Significant issues / actual/projected slippage- more than 2 months	Contract award has been signed off and contractor will start surveying properties from 1st September 2023.
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A6.5	New action: Stock Condition Surveys Undertaken to inform HRA business plan			Director- Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing			Sep-23	Sep-24				New Action Added	New action added
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A7.0	Refresh the Early Help Strategy		B11 -We will work with partners to make sure that vulnerable children in our community receive the right support to enable them to thrive and have successful adult lives. B15- We will work with partners to ensure early help is available to children and young people at the earliest opportunity depending on their need.	Director- Children & Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Autumn 2021	ongoing	Focus 2				
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	Assurance Action	Due April 24	Assurance Action	Due April 24
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A8.0	Refresh Corporate Parenting Strategy		B14- We will be a good Corporate Parent for the children in our care, ensuring that those children are fully a part of our 'family', and promoting fostering and adoption.	Director- Children & Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Jan-22	Ongoing	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
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	Assurance Action	Due September 23	Assurance Action	Due September 23
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	SD.B1.0	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Appointment of Consultant for Data Analysis Appointment of Consultant for Strategy Development	(New) O3 - We will progress and drive our equality performance through the Equality Framework for Local Government and utilise Council resources to support our equalities needs.	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Autumn 2021	Ongoing	Focus 2	N/A		N/A	

Static data			Owners					Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	July Update Due		
Workstream	Ref	Action	Milestones	We will statement (code & statement in full)	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(July 2023)
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	SD.B1.13	Refresh Equalities Commission Board Renew terms of reference			Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council		Manager, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team	Feb-23	Jun-23	N/A	Complete	Cabinet approval to new ToR for Equalities Commission Board 21/06/23	Complete	complete
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	SD.B1.14	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Assessment - appointment of consultant for data analysis - appointment of consultant for strategy development			Director- Law & Governance			Manager, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team	Feb-23	Jul-24	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Data consultant has commenced. Audit and assessment stage has commenced and is due to be completed in Jul. The baseline data and feedback will be shared with Leadership Team and Cabinet. Following this stage, strategy development stage will commence. On track for strategy approval in July 2024.	On Track- little or no slippage	Report scheduled at Leadership Team 8 August on findings of the audit and assessment stage. Following this stage, a more detailed assessment will commence. On track for strategy approval in July 2024. No issues to report
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	SD.B1.15	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy approved and published			Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council		Manager, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team	Jun-24	Jul-24	N/A	Not due to start	due July 24	Not due to start	due July 24
MTFP & Capital Strategy	SD.D1.0	Fundamental review of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Capital Strategy	Approval of Medium-Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy	O12 - We will update the Medium Term Financial Strategy at least annually	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Jan-22	Ongoing	Focus 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
MTFP & Capital Strategy	SD.D1.2	Approval of MTFP and Capital Strategy			Director- Finance	Deputy Leader				Nov-22	N/A	closed	closed	closed	closed
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	N/A	Assurance Action	Due feb 2024	Assurance Action	Due feb 2024
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	N/A	Assurance Action	Due October 2023	Assurance Action	Due October 2023
Consultation and Engagement	SD.E2.0	Incorporate Public Consultation Results into Performance Management Framework	Regular Residents' Survey in Place	(New) O5 - We will ensure we are effectively communicating and engaging with our residents, internal workforce and external stakeholders (New) O16 - We will embed a performance culture.	Chief Executive	Leader of the Council			Autumn 2022		Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Consultation and Engagement	SD.E2.6	Procurement of Consultant to deliver regular residents' survey, budget consultation and Citizens' Space			Chief Executive	Leader of the Council		Strategic Lead Service Improvement			N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete
Consultation and Engagement	SD.E2.7	Consultation and Engagement Framework produced			Chief Executive	Leader of the Council		Strategic Lead Service Improvement			N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Training continues to be rolled out, a number of surveys are live on the site with activity increasing month on month. Consultation and Engagement Principles and Standards agreed by Leadership Team 13/6, now being rolled out across the Council.	Complete	Continuing to roll out the framework and develop a schedule of planned consultation and engagement activity to embed this within normal practice, working group continues to be engaged.
Customer Journey	SD.F1.0	Customer Journey Strategy	Customer Journey Strategy Approved	O8 - We will deliver the customer journey programme and improve customer experience across all of our channels	Director- Regeneration & Growth	Deputy Leader	Director Business Strat.	Strategic Lead Customer	Oct-22	Oct-23	Focus 2	Medium Progress- actual/projected slippage of 1-2 months	Delays with face to face customer engagement sessions, these are currently not being promoted and the on-line survey has also been put on hold, this will impact timescales for the completed Strategy.	Significant issues / actual/projected slippage more than 2 months	Delays with face to face customer engagement sessions, these are currently not being promoted and the on-line survey has also been put on hold, this will impact timescales for the completed Strategy. As the sessions have not been able to be promoted the last 4 sessions have only been attended by 6 people in total.

Theme 4 - Decision Making

Static data			Owners						Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	July Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Milestones	We will statement (code & statement in full)	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Evidence of status rating
Role and Function of Scrutiny and Audit	DM.C3.0	Manage position on historic issues through work with ARAC chair	Leader to confirm Executive's position on any further review relating to the Wragge and Cox reports		Director - Law & Governance	Deputy Leader			Dec-21	Ongoing	Focus 2	Complete	Received by ARAC 05/06/23 and matter concluded.	Complete	complete
Role and Function of Scrutiny and Audit	DM.C3.1	New assurance action: Watching brief to ensure that historic matters do not re-surface			Director - Law & Governance	Deputy Leader			Quarterly	Sep Dec Mar June		New Action Added	New assurance action	Assurance Action	No issues to report. Minutes of ARAC will be reported to Council in July.

Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	July Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(July 2023)
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	Focus 2	Complete	assurance actions in place	Complete	assurance actions in place
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-23	quarterly (from Feb) Feb May Aug	N/A	Assurance Action	Quarterly performance reports continue to be reported through PMF	Assurance Action	Quarterly performance reports continue to be reported through PMF
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	Assurance Action	Next annual reports due by Nov 23	Assurance Action	Due November 23
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				monthly	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Steady progress continues with the upload of the waste contract	On Track- little or no slippage	Additional enhancement works commissioned from Intend.
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	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	July Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(July 2023)
Waste Contract	PC.A2.5	Delivery of recommendations – as appropriate	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services			Apr-23	Mar-24	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Leadership reporting in place	On Track- little or no slippage	Waste Review reported to Leadership Team. Proposed to progress "Shared Improvement Plan" with Serco. May now include "lessons learned" exercise post June's industrial action.
Waste Contract	PC.A4.0	Street Cleansing Recovery Plan – completion and implementation	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services			Autumn 2021	Mar-23	Focus 2	N/A		N/A	
Waste Contract	PC.A4.2	Recovery plan implemented	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services			22-Oct	ongoing delivery	N/A	Complete	This is now incorporated in the annual service delivery plan provided by Serco. Action complete.	Complete	complete
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			22-Nov	quarterly (from Nov) Nov Feb May Aug	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Waste board completed in June - some delay to date due to local elections in May 2023	On Track- little or no slippage	Next Waste Board scheduled September 2023

Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	July Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(July 2023)
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	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Waste Contract	PC.A5.2	Fleet replacement complete	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Environment Services				Mid 2023	N/A	Medium Progress-actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Reported to Waste Board in June 2023 final order for 16 RCVs in place with build slots meaning that delivery will be	Medium Progress-actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Next tranche of fleet replacement remains due end 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			22-Nov	quarterly (from Nov) Nov Feb May Aug	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Fleet discussions and meetings are guiding replacement programme effectively. Final RCV order placed, no further large orders anticipated until decision around alternative collection regimes is complete	On Track- little or no slippage	Formal Fleet Steering Group Meeting did not take place in June due to industrial action, but officers discussed fleet matters informally. No issues identified.
SEND Transport	PC.B3.0	Procurement of 2024 SEND Transport Contract	Director - Children and Education				Nov-22	Apr-25	Focus 2	N/A	n/a	N/A	n/a
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	Aug 23	Sept 23	N/A	Not due to start		Not due to start	not due to start
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	Sep-23	Sep 23	N/A	Not due to start	need a new start date for change control	Not due to start	need a new start date for change control
SEND Transport	PC.B3.4	Working with contract management consultant to introduce and embed robust contract management arrangements	Director- Finan	Dept Leader / Cabinet Member for Children and Education	Director - Children & Education		Jan-23	Ongoing	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	TAS working with consultants to ensure new contract management arrangements align with the Framework specification & operational policies and procedures		

Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	July Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(July 2023)
New System Procurement	PC.C1.0	Explore implementation of a corporate performance management system	Chief Executive	Deputy Leader			Jun-21		Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New System Procurement	PC.C1.1	Options Appraisal	Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		Strategic Lead - Service Improvement		Aug-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Options appraisal is continuing, focusing on exploring current systems/tools, including Verito, Oracle Fusion and Power BI or the procurement of a new Performance Management System. Options appraisal including internal consultation and engagement to completed by August 2023, with recommendation to Leadership Team to follow.	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Options appraisal will be delayed because a date for the demo of Oracle Fusion system will be the end of August.
New System Procurement	PC.C1.2	Business Case and Implementation Plan Considered	Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		Strategic Lead - Service Improvement		TBC based on selected option	N/A	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start
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	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	July Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(July 2023)
Leisure Contract	PC.E1.5	Arrangement in place for future delivery of leisure facilities	Director - Borough Economy	Cabinet Member for Leisure and Tourism				Jul-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Agreements drafted to continue partnership with Sandwell Leisure Trust (inclusive of Sandwell Aquatics Centre) to 31.03.27.	Complete	Supplementary agreement with SLT agreed 13.07.23 to extend SLT's operation of leisure centres (including SAC) to 31.03.27. Enhanced contract management regime and framework in place.
Leisure Contract	PC.E1.6	Aquatic Centre Handover	Director - Borough Economy					Jul-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Handover to operator (Sandwell Leisure Trust) on schedule for 13 July, open to the public 24 July	Complete	Handover to SLT took place 13/07/23. Heads of Terms for lease agreed.
Asset Management	PC.F1.0	Asset Management	Director – Regeneration & Growth				23-Jan		Focus 2				
Asset Management	PC.F1.1	Implementation of Phase 2 Tech Forge: Integration of Data in to the system	Director – Regeneration & Growth			Assistant Director – Property, Strategic Assets and Land Transforming Local services- programme manager		May-23	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete
Asset Management	PC.F1.3	Implementation of Phase 2 Tech Forge: Configuration and organisation of data Implementation of supplementary modules.	Director – Regeneration & Growth			Assistant Director – Property, Strategic Assets and Land Transforming Local services- programme manager	23-May	Aug-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	All on track for completion in Sept 23.	On Track- little or no slippage	All on track for completion in Sept 23.

Static data							Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	July Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(July 2023)				
Asset Management	PC.F1.2	Corporate Asset Management Strategy delivery plan in place	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth			23-Jan	ongoing	N/A	Complete	Covers 3 years- working towards targets with a working group set up. Leader and Cabinet have been briefed and it is an ongoing agenda item to leadership team and leaders meeting.	Complete	complete				

Theme 6-Partnerships & Relationships

Static data															Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan		Evidence of status rating		July Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Milestones	We will statement (code & statement in full)	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(July 2023)	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating								
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	Review of SCT Contract concludes	B13 - We will work with Sandwell Children's Trust to improve the quality of children's social care.	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Autumn 2021	Ongoing	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A												
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A1.7	New KPIs reported through PMF			Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Aug-23	Sep-23	N/A	Not due to start	due Sept 23	Not due to start	due Sept 23												
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A1.8	KPI's (along with accompanying tolerances) implemented in Q2			Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Jul-23	Oct-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Due to start Sept 23	On Track- little or no slippage	Due to start Sept 23												
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A2.0	Establish and maintain positive relationship between SMBC and SCT at senior officer and member level	n/a assurance	B13 - We will work with Sandwell Children's Trust to improve the quality of children's social care.	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Autumn 2021	Ongoing	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A												
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A2.3	Assurance action: Feedback provided on a 6 monthly basis on the continuation of regular cross - SMBC/SCT leadership team meetings.			Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Jan	6 monthly Jan July	N/A	Assurance Action	July update	Assurance Action	Monthly schedule of meetings will recommence in Autumn Term, and include the Chair of SCT Board and CE of Trust, Lead Member and Director of Education and Childrens Services												
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	n/a assurance	B15-We will work with partners to ensure early help is available to children and young people at the earliest opportunity depending on their need.	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Autumn 2021	Ongoing	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A												
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A3.3	Assurance action- Twice yearly performance reports tabled at Children and Education Scrutiny Board			Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Apr-23	6 monthly	N/A	Assurance Action	Due October 23	Assurance Action	Due October 23												
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A3.4	New Assurance Action: Outcomes around early help and corporate parent reporting through PMF at Q1			Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Sep-23	Sep-23	N/A	New Action Added	new action	New Action Added	new action												
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	n/a assurance	A1 -We will work with the WMCA to ensure that our residents can access employment opportunities across the region, particularly by public transport. H18 Housing - CP Action	Director-Regeneration & Growth	Leader of the Council / Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth	Cabinet Chief Executive		Jan-22		Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A												
	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	Assurance Action	Due July 23	Assurance Action	Engagement at key meetings continues to bring benefits to Sandwell these include: The Devolution deal due at Cabinet in Sept 23, includes the levelling up zone, retention of business rates and funding for housing. We also continue to engage with the Commonwealth Games underspend, having												
Effective Local Structures	PR.C1.0	Review partnership structures within the 'People's sphere'	- Transitions Project Commences - Transitions Project incorporated within Corporate Transformation Programme	(New) L17 We support people to manage their health and wellbeing so they can maximise their independence, choice and control, live healthier lives and where possible, reduce future needs for care and support.	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				Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A												
Effective Local Structures	PR.C1.1	Initiation of Project to review and remodel the pathway between children's and adults' services (preparing for adulthood project)			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			May-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Project Manager post is due to be advertised shortly- the 'as is' modelling has been completed and further work in underway to look at opportunities to improve our internal processes as these need to be changed and strengthened in the first instance. The work completed thus far will be presented to Leadership in July/August. We have also agreed an apprentice to assist with the project.	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	This action is being led by Adults Social Care with contributions from Children's Services. Project has technically commenced - but PM role recruitment not yet complete. Being supported by Corporate Transformation Office.												
Effective Local Structures	PR.C1.2 b	To broaden scope of partnership structures to explore the integration of adult services where appropriate			Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education / Cabinet Member for Adults, Social Care and Health			Feb-23	TBC	N/A	Complete	Action no longer needed in IP since formation of 5 boards strategic group which includes children and adult governance structures MWJ 23.6.23	Complete	Complete												
Effective Local Structures	PR.C1.5	Assurance action: link to PC.C1.4 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 - Public Health		Director - Adult Social Care		Quarterly	Jan 23 Apr 23 July 23 Oct 23	N/A	Assurance Action	Due July 23	Assurance Action													

Static data			Owners						Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating		July Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Milestones	We will statement (code & statement in full)	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (June 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(June 2023)	Status (July 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(July 2023)	
VCS Relationships	PR.D1.0	Relationship with Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) and Funding to Voluntary & Community Sector.	VCS Strategy approved	C1 We will ensure our grant funding of community/voluntary sector activity supports the priorities we're outlining in this plan.	Leadership Team	Cabinet Member for Communities			Mar-22	Jul-23	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
VCS Relationships	PR.D1.3	Consultation on VCS Draft Strategy			Leadership Team			Director - Housing	Jan-23	TBC	N/A	Action on Hold	A more fundamental look a the relationship with the VCS is being taken. An annual report is being prepared that will focus on investment and impact. A Cabinet session is planned for June/July with the strategy due for approval in Autumn.	Action on Hold	Report to Cabinet in the Autumn with next steps on developing the strategy	
VCS Relationships	PR.D1.4	Approval of VCS Strategy			Leadership Team			Director - Housing	23-Apr	Autumn 23		Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start	

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Improvement Plan Theme Progress Summary July 2023

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
Organisational Culture	<p>Focus 1 <u>Establishing Organisational Culture</u> Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Team Framework has been agreed and is in the process of being implemented across the Council. Launch and Share events with managers have now concluded with positive feedback from managers around the events and the implementation of the values and behaviours. Framework was introduced at all staff briefing in July. Workforce strategy is in final stages of preparation. Organisational health indicators have been reported for 2022-23 and the trends are being used to inform the workforce strategy and roll out of the One Team Framework. Preparations underway for Employee Engagement Survey to be launched in Autumn which will provide a temperature check on culture. The Member and Officer relationship continues to be positive and is enabling the Council to move forward with decisions. To support continuous improvement, further insight will be collated in Autumn through the Employee Engagement Survey and semi-structured interviews with a sample of Members and Officers. <p>Progress this month:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Values and Behaviours Launch and Share events with managers have taken place. 	<p>July</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership Team conversation held around All Member briefings Management and Development Programme Scope, Content and Budget Agreed First in person all staff briefing held at the SAC on 19th July with Leader and Cabinet Members present <p>June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Values and Behaviours Launch and Share events with people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 2 Engagement: Determining Desired Culture - March 2023. Complete Approval of document setting out the desired organisational culture - March 2023. Complete Workforce Strategy approved- Due for approval in September Management Development Programme Agreed- Pilot held in April Corporate Induction Revised. Complete Leadership Team review of All Member

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The programme plan is drafted and key workstreams have been identified. Project scoping for Employee performance review (appraisal) is taking place in line with programme plan. <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separate plan for Appraisal redesign in 2024. Feedback and evaluation from launch and share events to be collected and analysed. Programme plan meeting with stakeholders of the wider One Team Framework embedding taking place. Senior Leadership Development Programme (subject to discussions with LT). Draft of workforce strategy is being taken to Leadership September 23 for approval. <p>Issues raised: no issues raised</p> <p>Focus 2 Exceptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OC.C4.1 Identify mechanisms for ongoing insight and assurance around the Officer and Member Relationship - Amber rated Due in May 23. Change control to December 23 <p>Progress commentary: The ongoing mechanisms for insight and assurance around the Officer Member Relationship include views from external reviews, standards cases, feedback from Directors, Group Leaders and Chief Whips.</p>	<p>managers have started with 3 complete</p> <p>May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager skills workshops booked for May and June Approach agreed for Corporate Governance Development to be delivered via a series of scenario-based learning Member Development Plan in place and Member Handbook created. 	<p>briefings - Meeting held in July</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Processes relating to employment of Chief Officers included in induction programme for committees at start of Municipal Year- Included in MDP Approval of refreshed Member Development Programme for start of Municipal Year. Complete Employee Recognition Scheme launched- Date tbc Guidance in place for effective working with MPs- August 2023 work commenced Social Media policy reviewed- August

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<p>Insight gathering being prepared for Autumn '23 involving semi-structured interviews along with survey for Members and inclusion of questions in EES for staff. The data will feed into LGA sessions planned for Autumn alongside regular insight. The briefing note has been circulated to Group Leaders and Chief Whips, and to the Chair of Ethical Standards Committee for input to the proposed approach.</p> <p>Amber rating reflects that Spring survey did not provide robust insight and the need for a revised approach which is now being implemented. Date change will be required so that Autumn insight-gathering can inform the longer-term continuous improvement approach.</p> <p>Next steps: Action plan to be drawn up for the approved approach. Interviews to be carried out alongside a survey LGA to return in Autumn</p>		<p>2023 work commenced</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Governance Development Programme Agreed – approach agreed to deliver via scenario-based learning. 1st sessions due in October. Delivery of Corporate Governance Programme commences- Commenced
Corporate Oversight	<p>Focus 1</p> <p><u>Customer Journey Programme</u></p> <p>Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme governance remains in place. Work is underway with Housing Solutions to map three priority areas. Further 	<p>July</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate transformation board ToR finalised; board is in place and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oracle- Discovery phase complete- Feb 23. Complete Oracle- Modelling phase complete- June 23. Slippage to Mid-July

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<p>workshops have been scheduled for Adult Social Care, Borough Economy, Housing Options and Revenues and Benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resident engagement as part of the Customer Strategy development has been halted in light of the ongoing Serco strikes and is being rescheduled. The council has collectively (including Housing, Regeneration, Borough Economy) been working to improve the response to cases on the member portal. They have been steadily bringing the number of open cases down with weekly monitoring at Leadership team. <p>Progress this month:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In relation to ward and case work management strand, the presentation has been taken to all 6 Town Meetings. Member attendance has been good at all meetings, data has been collected and will be used at follow up meetings. Presentation provided to Cabinet Member; Town & Vice Chair Meeting held on 10/07/23. This detailed the issues raised by Members in the Town Meetings and what the next steps were, commitment made to attend future meetings with solutions/quick wins and any items that may need further exploration. Positive feedback received from Members to the approach taken and they also highlighted that they felt that they had been listened to. Leadership team continue to receive weekly updates on cases. Solutions are being worked up based on the issues and suggestions highlighted in the recent meetings held with Members. 	<p>meeting dates confirmed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EES action plan taken to IPRM and key messages included in all staff event. <p>June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND 2 transport lessons learnt shared with WLT. Actions embedded into plans for SEND 3. Improvement plan phase 3 reported to Cabinet alongside Annual Report. Report to Secretary of State on the Improvement Plan progress made Refreshed Corporate Plan agreed, and Directorate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oracle Fusion implemented- April 24. Impact of modelling phase slippage being considered by Programme Board Corporate debt recovery processes reviewed- Complete April 23 Sign off of 2020/21 accounts Approved by ARAC. Final adjustments with GT. Sign off of 2021/22 accounts Due to be submitted to GT in October Transformation PMO in place – Local Partnerships Review complete. Final report to LT due 11 July.

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resident engagement to be rescheduled Future meetings to be arranged to identify issues raised and solutions/actions. <p>Issues raised: No issues raised.</p> <p><u>Resolve Issues relating to the completion and sign-off of final accounts</u></p> <p>Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated 20/21 accounts were completed and handed to Grant Thornton week commencing 8th May 23. Grant Thornton have made final adjustments in relation to revaluation error. Feedback due. 21/22 accounts – agreed with Grant Thornton that audit dates will be moved to October to allow more internal quality assurance process before external audit takes place <p>Progress this month:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As reported previously <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback from GT on 2020/21 accounts. Provision of 2021/22 accounts to GT in October. <p>Issues raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awaiting feedback from GT on 2020/21 accounts. 	<p>business plans finalised</p> <p>May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Partnerships Review to inform Corporate PMO complete CCo report to inform workforce development plan for financial services section complete. New methodology in place for internal charges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate PMO in place – Local Partnerships Review complete. Final report to LT due 11 July Verto system implemented – Commenced Corporate Transformation Board operational-ToR and Membership to be re-set following Local Partnerships Review - Local Partnerships Review complete. CTB meeting 5 July.

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<p><u>MTFP</u></p> <p>Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTFP projects are being managed within the Corporate Transformation Programme and project management methodology and transformation design principles are being applied. • Further set of projects agreed May/ June. <p>Progress this month:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTFP programme has been reviewed and RAG ratings applied to projects already in train. These projects will commence highlight reporting to Corporate Transformation Board. Projects that are red rated are due to be reported to LT on 1 August. • MTFP projects agreed in May/June are being developed to project scope stage. <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing oversight of MTFP projects by Corporate Transformation Board and reporting to LT. <p>Issues raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red rated projects are being raised with LT 1 August. <p><u>Corporate Transformation</u></p>		

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<p>Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transformation Design principles agreed. Review was held with Local Partnerships and the report is informing the establishment of Corporate PMO. The Corporate Transformation Board's terms of reference have been revised and first meeting held 5 July 23. <p>Progress this month:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Partnerships review reported to leadership team 11 July, governance arrangements approved now moving to implementation. Work underway to develop Verto following the approval of the PMO framework and threshold tool. Timeline for roll out to be determined following presentation at LT 08.08.23 Corporate Transformation Board ToR have been finalised, board is in place and meeting dates confirmed <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work underway to develop Verto following the approval of the PMO framework and threshold tool. Timeline for roll out to be determined following presentation at LT 08.08.23 <p>Issues raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No issues raised <p>Focus 2 Exceptions</p>		

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CO.A1.9- Oracle: Completion of the modelling phase Due June 23 – Amber rated • Modelling phase complete for finance and procurement. Modelling phase further extended for to complete and Sign-Off HR and payroll. Revised plan submitted and approved by Programme Board on 9th July. Go Live still planned for April 2024. • CO.C1.9 Consider integrating revenue, capital and performance reporting – Red rated • This will be fully reviewed once Oracle Fusion is in place and we can fully understand the reporting capabilities of the system. Change of timescales to commence work in March 2024 linked to Oracle Implementation. • CO.D1.1 Directorate level restructuring placed On Hold. • Progress commentary: ACE appointed and due to commence in September 2023. Next steps and timeline for Directorate Level Restructuring to be confirmed. 		
Strategic Direction	<p>Focus 1 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion</p> <p>Progress this month: Cabinet approved new ToR for Equalities Commission Board. Data consultant has commenced for the EDI (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion) strategy. Audit and assessment stage has started and is due to be reported in August.</p>	<p>July</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration Pipeline agreement to procure a strategic delivery partner approved at cabinet July 2023. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial Strategy Approved- Approved March 23 • Regeneration Pipeline: Strategic delivery partner in place- Cabinet report approved July 23

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<p>Next steps: Baseline data and feedback will be shared with Leadership Team and Cabinet. Report due to Leadership Team on 8 August. Following this stage more detailed assessment will commence on track for approval in July 2024</p> <p>Issues raised: No issues raised.</p> <p>Focus 2 Exceptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SD.A6.4- Procurement of stock condition surveys- Red rated. Due June 23 • Progress commentary: Contract award has been signed off and contractor will start surveying properties from 1st September 2023. Change control to adjust date to September to allow for contract mobilisation before action is complete and new action to be added to IP to ensure progress of surveys over the next 12 months. • SD.A5.3- Commercial Strategy: Complete Full Business Cases for identified Business Streams in line with Commercial Project Plan approved by Leadership Team- Amber rated- update pending (assumption that update the same as previous month) Due October 23 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRA Business plan- stock condition surveys- contract award has been signed off and contractor to start surveying 1st Sept 2023 <p>June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet approved new ToR for Equalities Commission Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of Communications and Corporate Affairs Strategy- Date tbc • ED&I Strategy Approved- September 2024. On track • Regular Residents' Survey & Budget Consultation in Place – Budget consultation on track to commence June 2023. Resident's survey halted due to impact of Serco strike action • Customer Journey Strategy Approved- Expected March 2024. • Approval of Medium-Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy- Approved February 2023 • HRA 30-year Business Plan

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<p>Progress commentary: Transformation team has been supporting services to develop business cases. Highlight reports for each workstream shows slippage against action plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SD.A5.4- Recruit Commercial project Officer- Amber rated. update pending (assumption that update the same as previous month) Due June 2023 Progress commentary: Recruitment in May was unsuccessful - we are now considering other options. • SD.F1.0- Customer Journey Strategy- Red rated Due October 23 change control date to March 24 Progress commentary: Delays with face-to-face customer engagement sessions, these are currently not being promoted and the on-line survey has also been put on hold, this will impact timescales for the completed Strategy. As the sessions have not been able to be promoted the last 4 sessions have only been attended by 6 people in total. 		approved- Approved February 2023
Decision Making	<p>Focus 1- no focus 1 in this theme Focus 2- no exceptions to report</p>	<p>June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position of historic issue report received by ARAC June 2023 and matter concluded. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader to confirm Executive's position on any further review relating to the Wragge and Cox reports –Complete-

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
			Report received by ARAC on 5th June
Procurement & Commercial	<p>Focus 1 Leisure Services</p> <p>Progress this month: Agreements drafted to continue partnership with Sandwell Leisure Trust (inclusive of Sandwell Aquatics Centre) to 31.03.27. Aquatic Centre Handover to operator (Sandwell Leisure Trust) took place and open to the public 24 July</p> <p>Next steps: Further discussions with Cabinet to take place late Aug/early Sep around longer-term arrangements for leisure services.</p> <p>Issues raised: No Issues raised this month</p> <p>Focus 2 Exceptions</p> <p>PC.A5.2- Fleet replacement complete - Amber rated- Due Mid 2023 (change control to Dec 23)-Now expected end 2023</p> <p>Progress commentary Reported to Waste Board in June 2023 final order for 16 RCVs (Refuse Collection Vehicles) in place with build slots meaning that delivery will be around end 2023</p> <p>PC.C1.1- Corporate Performance Management System Options Appraisal- Amber rated- Due August 23 (change control October 23)</p>	<p>July</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handover of Aquatics Centre to SLT took place 13/07/23. Heads of Terms for lease agreed. Supplementary agreement with SLT agreed 13.07.23 to extend SLT's operation of leisure centres (including SAC) to 31.03.27. Enhanced contract management regime and framework in place <p>June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Street Cleansing Recovery plan incorporated into the annual service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste and Leisure Contracts added to In-tend contract management module- Steady progress. Additional enhancement work commissioned from Intend Street Cleansing Recovery Plan implemented- Ongoing delivery Fleet replacement complete- Delay on Serco fleet order (anticipated end 2023) SEND Transport Contract Monitoring arrangements in place- On track SEND3 procurement commences – due to

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<p>Progress commentary: Options appraisal will be delayed due to the date for the demo of Oracle Fusion system at the end of August.</p>	<p>delivery plan provided by Serco.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Asset Management Strategy delivery plan in place covering 3 years. Work towards target has begun with working groups set up. Leader and cabinet have been Briefing and it is an ongoing agenda item to Leadership Team and Leaders meeting • Contract Management Guidance and Templates live on Council's intranet <p>May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of Phase 2 Tech forge: transfer of 	<p>commence in September 23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Performance Management System in place- Options appraisal due September • Lion Farm - Report to Cabinet on determination of position of developer- Complete • Arrangement in place for future delivery of leisure services- Complete • Phase 2 Tech Forge implemented- On track for completion September 2023

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
		<p>data into the system- complete</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handover date for transfer of Aquatic Centre confirmed as 13 July 	
Partnerships & Relationships	<p>Focus 1- no Focus 1 in this theme</p> <p>Focus 2 Exceptions</p> <p>PR.C1.1 Initiation of Project to review and remodel the pathway between children's and adults' services (preparing for adulthood project)- Amber Rated</p> <p>Progress commentary: This action is being led by Adults Social Care with contributions from Children's Services. Project has technically commenced - but PM role recruitment not yet complete. 'As is' modelling started in May. Being supported by Corporate Transformation Office.</p> <p>PR.D1.3- Consultation on VCS (Voluntary and Community Sector) Draft Strategy- On hold</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress commentary: Report to Cabinet in the Autumn with next steps on developing the strategy. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of SCT (Sandwell Children's Trust) Contract concludes- complete. 2 remaining KPIs due to be finalised in Q1. • Transitions Project Commences- Project commenced and 'as is' modelling started in May. • Transitions Project incorporated within Corporate Transformation Programme- Complete • VCS Strategy approved- Due Autumn 2023

Appendix 3 – Statutory Recommendation Status Summary July 2023

Statutory Recommendation	Summary	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><u>Organisational Culture</u> Assurance Activity to ensure effective contributions of Scrutiny and Audit and to sustain positive Officer and Member Relationship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ongoing mechanisms for insight and assurance around the Officer Member Relationship include views from external reviews, standards cases, feedback from Directors, Group Leaders and Chief Whips. • Following discussions with ARAC and BCSMB around the Officer-Member survey conducted in April, there is appetite from Members to provide input around the Member-Officer Relationship. Reflecting on their feedback on the Spring survey, the plan is for a sample of Members and Officers to be invited to semi-structured interviews. The data will feed into LGA sessions planned for Autumn alongside regular insight. Briefing note has been circulated to Group Leaders and Chief Whips, and to the Chair of Ethical Standards Committee for input. • In addition, a separate session for New Members is being held with LGA in July to bring them up to speed on the content delivered Autumn 2022 to other Members. <p><u>Corporate Oversight</u> ERP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRP3 completed for SCM and Finance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oracle Fusion Implemented- Slippage in modelling phase. Programme Board reviewing plans to ensure go live date achievable. • Regeneration pipeline: strategic delivery partner in place – due in July <p>Completed milestones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of SCT Contract concludes- Complete • Review of scrutiny arrangements- Complete • Approval of any changes to scrutiny (if required following review)- Complete • Termination notice for SLT contract approved by Cabinet- complete • Revised contract governance arrangements in place for Serco contract- complete • Waste and Recycling Recovery Plan Implementation - Complete

Statutory Recommendation	Summary	Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modelling phase further extended for HCM to complete and Sign-Off Design BPS and DM design into August. Preparation for DM3 start in progress. Revised plan submitted and approved by Programme Board on 9th July. Go Live still planned for April 2024. <p><u>Strategic Direction</u></p> <p><u>Strategy Development and Refresh</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regen Strategy and Pipeline: Pipeline 6 monthly update presented to Cabinet July 23. Regeneration pipeline- agreement to procure a strategic delivery partner was agreed at Cabinet in July 23. Report will return to Cabinet once procurement has been successful. VERTO- Procurement complete and implementation phase has commenced. <p><u>Decision Making</u></p> <p>No actions in this theme</p> <p><u>Procurement & Commercial</u></p> <p><u>Waste Contract:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuation of quarterly monitoring through PMF. Annual reports on Leisure and waste due November 2023 Additional enhancement work commissioned from Intend to support the large contracts for BE being added to Intend contract management. Waste Review reported to Leadership Team. Proposed to progress "Shared Improvement Plan" with Serco. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Street Cleansing Recovery Plan approval – Resubmission to Waste Management Board in - Complete SERCO contract performance reporting embedded in Performance Management Framework - Complete Option appraisal for future leisure management options – Complete Scrutiny work Planning event - Complete Procure new support provider to deliver Oracle Fusion-complete Approval of Regeneration Strategy and Pipeline- Complete Early Help Strategy approved and launched- Complete Corporate Parenting Strategy Refresh Approved- Complete SEND Transport procurement published- complete SMBC/SCT Leadership meetings - Complete SCT Contract performance reporting embedded within Council PMF-Complete

Statutory Recommendation	Summary	Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May now include "lessons learned" exercise post June's industrial action. • Next tranche of fleet replacement remains due end of 2023. • Formal Fleet Steering Group Meeting did not take place in June due to industrial action, but officers discussed fleet matters informally. No issues identified. <p>SEND Transport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparations being made for SEND3 procurement with initial scoping discussions. Project plan and implementation to follow. • Lessons learnt completed and presented to Wider Leadership Team in June. • TAS working with consultants to ensure new contract management arrangements align with the Framework specification & operational policies and procedures <p>New System Procurement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Management System- Options appraisal being prepared for September2023 due to the demo of the Oracle Fusion system not being possible until the end of August. • Asset Management - Phase 2 of Tech Forge project data transfer completed. Integration of data into the system has begun with an expected completion date of September 2023. <p>Lion Farm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert Determination process has been completed and removed from the Improvement plan to be managed as BAU. 	

Statutory Recommendation	Summary	Milestones
	<p>Leisure Contract:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplementary agreement with SLT agreed 13.07.23 to extend SLT's operation of leisure centres (including SAC) to 31.03.27. • Enhanced contract management regime and framework in place. • Aquatic Centre Handover to operator (Sandwell Leisure Trust) took place as scheduled on 13 July, open to the public 24 July • Continuation of quarterly reporting through PMF. <p><u>Partnerships & Relationships</u></p> <p>Sandwell Children's Trust</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new KPIs along with accompanying tolerances will be finalised in Q1 for implementation in Q2 due to start in September 2023 • Continuation of quarterly reporting through PMF alongside SCT governance arrangements • Monthly schedule of meetings will recommence in Autumn Term, and include the Chair of SCT Board and CE of Trust, Lead Member and Director of Education and Childrens Services 	
S2 - The Council must ensure that the learning in relation to commercial decisions, procurement and contract management highlighted in this	<p><u>Organisational Culture</u></p> <p>Officer Learning and Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandwell Manager essentials will continue as BAU. • Learning for managers from the Improvement Plan learning interventions will be incorporated into the programme on an ongoing basis. • Provisional ideas and plans are being developed for a pilot of a programme for Senior Leadership Development Programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Governance Training Delivery –Commenced and approach to next phase agreed <p>Completed milestones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular Resident Survey in place – procured and preparations underway for Resident Survey and

Statutory Recommendation	Summary	Milestones
<p>report are understood through the organisation</p>	<p>Embedding Constitutional Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First round of scenario-based learning to be delivered in October across DSU, Procurement, Legal and Finance. • Code of Corporate Governance Training Contained within MDP (Member Development Programme). Two further training dates are being identified to capture members who did not attend first session. AGS to be presented alongside annual accounts. • Regular reports on timescales for submitting decision reports are being made to Leadership Team <p>Member Learning and Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership Team conversation held 18/07/23 around All Member briefings and agreed level of detail to be shared and approach. • Next briefing will take place mid-August. • Once forward plan of All Member briefing dates in place this action will be closed • New Member Survey due to be launched end of July and any required amendments made to MDP / New Member Induction programme <p>Corporate Oversight</p> <p>Performance Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q4 report went to Cabinet in July. 	<p>budget Consultation in Summer 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial Strategy approved – approved • HRA 30 Year Business Plan approved • Revised Financial Regs - approved • Implementation of Asset Management System -phase 1 complete • Revised Scheme of Delegation – approved • Corporate Asset Management Strategy Approved- Approved • 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

Statutory Recommendation	Summary	Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q1 report now being drafted which will go to Leadership Team in September and Cabinet in October. • In relation to organisational health metrics – There are capacity issues in HR services due primarily to the (growing) demands of Oracle Fusion. However, PIs are being reviewed and may be ready to be reported earlier than originally scheduled (Q1 2024/25). The existing set of organisational health metrics were included in the Q4 report that went to Cabinet in July. • The Corporate Plan which included revised PIs went to Cabinet on 7 June. The new measures will be included in the Q1 Corporate Performance Report. Q1 reporting is now being put together. • In relation to capacity for Corporate Performance, G Grade due to commence in September and F grade recruitment to begin later in the summer. <p><u>Strategic Direction</u></p> <p>Strategy Development and Refresh</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial Strategy: Highlight reports/ project scopes due to be presented at LT 01.08.23. • The post was re-advertised via HAYS wc 31/07/2023 for the recruitment of Commercial Project Officer. <p><u>Procurement & Commercial</u></p> <p>Corporate Asset Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1 implemented. • Phase 2 commenced. The integration of data into the system complete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Management System Procured- complete

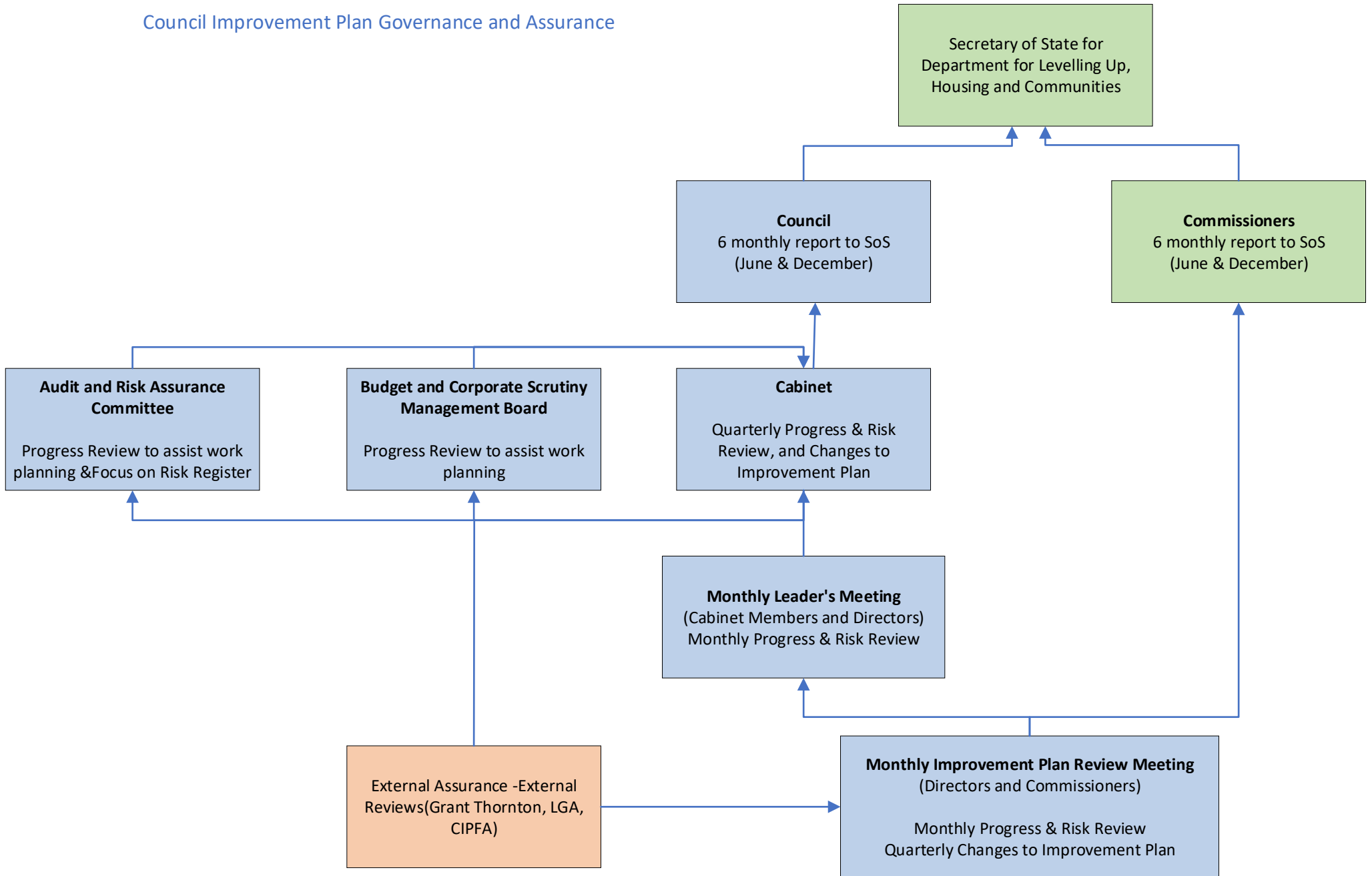
Statutory Recommendation	Summary	Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 2 Configuration and organisation of data started and due for completion by September 23. <p><u>Partnerships & Relationships</u> No actions in this theme</p>	
<p>S3 - Senior leadership, both officers and members, must demonstrate that they can continue to work together effectively, that they operate in line with 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>	<p><u>Organisational Culture</u> <u>Establishing Organisational Culture</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workforce strategy being agreed at September Leadership. There is no delay to the workstreams within the strategy whilst this approval is pending. Final launch and share session 21 July 2023. Feedback and evaluation from launch is being collated. Programme plan meeting with stakeholders of the wider OTF (One Team Framework) embedding taking place 19.7.23. L&OD have a draft proposal and will commence a timeline to consult with stakeholders as part of the project plan <p><u>Officer Learning and Development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sandwell Manager essentials will continue as BAU. Learning for managers from the Improvement Plan learning interventions will be incorporated into the programme on an ongoing basis. Provisional ideas and plans are being developed for a pilot of a programme for Senior Leadership Development Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workforce Strategy – To be agreed at September Leadership. <p>Completed milestones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational Culture – Part 2 Engagement – determining the desired culture – complete Approval of document / statement setting out desired organisational culture – ‘Our Values: Our Behaviours’- Complete Organisational Culture - Part 1 Engagement – Starting the Conversation- Complete New Member Induction - Complete Meeting structures to support Senior Leadership (Officer and Member) – Complete

Statutory Recommendation	Summary	Milestones
	<p>Officer and Member Relationship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ongoing mechanisms for insight and assurance around the Officer Member Relationship include views from external reviews, standards cases, feedback from Directors, Group Leaders and Chief Whips. Following discussions with ARAC and BCSMB around the Officer-Member survey conducted in April, there is appetite from Members to provide input around the Member-Officer Relationship. Reflecting on their feedback on the Spring survey, the plan is for a sample of Members and Officers to be invited to semi-structured interviews. The data will feed into LGA sessions planned for Autumn alongside regular insight. Briefing note has been circulated to Group Leaders and Chief Whips, and to the Chair of Ethical Standards Committee for input. In addition, a separate session for New Members is being held with LGA in July to bring them up to speed on the content delivered Autumn 2022 to other Members. The Spring survey did not provide robust insight and there is a need for a revised approach which is now being implemented. Work will be carried out in Autumn with insight-gathering to inform the longer-term continuous improvement approach. <p>Member Learning and Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership Team conversation held 18/07/23 around All Member briefings and agreed level of detail to be shared and approach. Next briefing will take place mid-August. Once forward plan of All Member briefing dates in place this action will be closed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member Development Programme approved- Complete

Statutory Recommendation	Summary	Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New Member Survey due to be launched end of July and any required amendments made to MDP / New Member Induction programme <p><u>Corporate Oversight</u></p> <p>No Actions in Theme</p> <p><u>Strategic Direction</u></p> <p>No actions in Theme</p> <p><u>Decision Making</u></p> <p>No actions in Theme</p> <p><u>Procurement & Commercial</u></p> <p>No actions in Theme</p> <p><u>Partnerships & Relationships</u></p> <p>No actions in Theme</p>	

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Council Improvement Plan Governance and Assurance



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Improvement Plan Risk Register

July 2023



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 (April 23)	Current Risk Score (July 23)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)
IP1	<p>Improvement Plan objectives and member / officer engagement in those objectives</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>Current and Ongoing Controls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement as part of the development of the Improvement Plan - sharing themes and workstreams with staff and members • Communications Plan implemented for governance review, CPC and Statutory Notice • Objectives for each Theme within the Improvement Plan identified • Regular reporting to Cabinet, ARAC and Scrutiny in place. Council approval of Improvement Plan and reports to SoS. • Regular Staff communications on progress of Improvement Plan in place • Improvement Plan Actions embedded into Corporate Plan and Business Plans to provide assurance of sustainable improvement • Key components of Finance Improvement Plan embedded in IP and Corporate Plan • All Improvement Plan actions have an identified Responsible Officer and Cabinet Member <p>Further Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications Plan delivered including all staff briefings including key messages around Improvement Plan • Staff and member engagement through Organisational Culture change programme • Discussion with SH and GD to identify interim Responsible Officers for IP workstreams to provide business continuity.



Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (April 23)	Current Risk Score (July 23)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)
IP2-	<p>Risk Closed</p> <p>Programme management arrangements</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"> • The project will not be delivered to scope • The required improvements will not be made within the necessary timescales • The government may lose confidence in the council's ability to improve and intervention may be extended • The borough's residents may lose confidence in the council ability to deliver effective services • Inefficient use of limited resources • Continued reputational damage 	4 (Green)	4 (Green)	4 (green)		<p>Current and Ongoing Controls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Mgmt arrangements established including progress reporting, risk management arrangements and change control.
IP3	<p>Allocation of sufficient resources to project management and project delivery/ maintaining Business as Usual while delivering the Improvement plan</p>	8 (Amber)	8 (Amber)	4 (green)		<p>Current and Ongoing Controls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference for internal Improvement Plan Review Meeting updated to reflect government intervention, single Improvement Plan and assurance framework • PMO support being provided by existing experienced resources within Service Improvement

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (April 23)	Current Risk Score (July 23)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)
	If sufficient resources (capacity and capability) and where 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"> Resource gaps / pressures associated with actions within the Improvement Plan have been identified Council on 07/06/22 approved Use of Improvement & Capacity Reserve and 2021/22 underspend allocated to Improvement Plan actions Resource issues and risks associated with the Improvement Plan reviewed monthly by Leadership Team and Register maintained Appointment of interim corporate transformation capacity to establish programme and project management governance arrangements, as well as moving forward key transformational activity Improvement Plan Actions embedded into Corporate Plan and Business Plans to provide assurance of sustainable improvement Local Partnerships Review of PMO concluded <p>Further Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT work on prioritisation to conclude to ensure that the improvement priorities are clear and resources are available to manage risk of officer fatigue and loss of motivation. Establishment of resourced Corporate PMO National Graduate Development Scheme - placements to be focused on IP priorities
IP4	<p>Project and risk governance assurance arrangements</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>Current and Ongoing Controls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointment of additional capacity to support delivery and implementation of key projects taken place in Asset Management, Finance, Service Improvement and Legal Services Terms of Reference for Improvement Plan Review Meeting in place Governance approach included within Council report 07/06/22 Risk identification has taken place Agreement for Grant Thornton, LGA and CIPFA to review progress regularly Improvement Plan Risk Register in place Terms of Reference for internal Improvement Plan Review Meeting updated to reflect government intervention, single Improvement Plan

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (April 23)	Current Risk Score (July 23)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)
						<p>and assurance framework including role of Scrutiny and Audit Committees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles of Cabinet, Scrutiny and Audit agreed with Chairs • Quarterly reports to Cabinet, Audit and Scrutiny well-established and on forward plan for 2023-24 • Scrutiny consideration of culture theme progress in Dec 22 • Consideration of external review reports by Scrutiny and Audit • Update to Improvement Plan to reflect findings from GT, LGA and CIPFA follow-up reviews <p>Further Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny regular review on Culture Theme progress • Agreement for ongoing external assurance activity
IP5	<p>Communication Strategy</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>Current and Ongoing Controls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review visits from GT, LGA and CIPFA held Autumn 2022. Reports received from GT and LGA and presented to Cabinet. Review report from CIPFA received Jan 23 and presented to ARAC. Due to be presented to Cabinet and Scrutiny in March • Communications Approach set out in Improvement Plan approved by Council 07/06/22 • Key messages document for stakeholders in place • Regular PMO/Communications meetings to ensure key messages are embedded within internal and external communications • Communication with stakeholders to share details of transition between KBD and SL. • Communication with stakeholders to share progress update and annual report June 2023. <p>Further Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with stakeholders to share details of Improvement Plan

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (April 23)	Current Risk Score (July 23)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment to vacancy within comms structure
IP6	<p>Investment and Financial Resources</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>	8 (Amber)	8 (Amber)	8 (Amber)		<p>Current and Ongoing Controls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular comms with stakeholders taking place as per comms plan including incorporation in all staff briefings Resource gaps / pressures associated with actions within the Improvement Plan identified Council on 07/06/22 approved use of Improvement & Capacity Reserve and 2021/22 underspend allocated to Improvement Plan actions Resource issues and risks associated with the Improvement Plan reviewed monthly by Leadership Team Appointment of interim corporate transformation capacity to establish programme and project management governance arrangements, as well as moving forward key transformational activity Regular monitoring of improvement plan is in place and key milestones are being delivered <p>Further Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review resource allocation to deliver the Improvement Plan and determine if there are any gaps Identify additional resources or reprioritise activity following identification of resource gaps Graduate recruitment to focus on IP priority projects
IP10	<p>Performance Management Framework (PMF) and Data Quality</p> <p>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</p>	8 (Amber)	4 (Green)	4 (Green)		<p>Current and Ongoing Controls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance Management Framework approved in April 2022 Evidence of success outlined within each of the Improvement Plan themes focusing on outcomes for each theme Improvement Plan Monitoring approach approved by Council and regular monitoring in place Resources approved by Council to address staffing resources required to sustain PMF 2022/23 Quarterly Corporate Performance Report presented to Cabinet and Scrutiny (Q1 Sept/Oct 22, Q2 Dec 22/Jan 23)

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (April 23)	Current Risk Score (July 23)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)
	in a failure to achieve the Council's objectives.					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents Survey and Budget Consultation exercise conducted in Summer 2022 to feed into PMF and 2023/24 service and financial planning Process in place for monthly and quarterly monitoring at corporate level Corporate approach to consultation and engagement with residents, including regular residents survey agreed by Leadership Team. Member Officer Survey conducted to provide a temperature check on the relationship Improvement Plan activity embedded in Corporate Plan and Business Plans Refreshed KPIs included in Corporate Plan refresh and streamlined reporting to Leadership Team (from Q1 report) Development of Customer Experience metrics as part of Corporate Plan refresh <p>Further Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence collation to be produced to support IP Recruitment to additional corporate performance team posts Performance Management System options appraisal and procurement to provide capability for performance management Refresh of Member Officer Survey / alternative mechanism conducted to provide a temperature check on the relationship
IP11	<p>Continued focus and resources allocated to historic issues</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>	4 (Green)	4 (Green)	4 (green)		<p>Current and Ongoing Controls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assurance from LGA CPC Follow up Review around development of PMF Improvement Plan contains activity to be concluded, and lessons learnt embedding from historic issues Cabinet and Leadership Team approach to historic issues Regular monitoring of improvement plan is in place Progress on GT recommendations specifically related to the proper functioning of Scrutiny and Audit Committees. Lessons learnt captured in relation to SEND transport

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (April 23)	Current Risk Score (July 23)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leader has confirmed executive's position in relation to a further review in relation to Wragge/Cox and this was reported to ARAC in June 2023 <p>Further Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 Maintain watching brief of council activity to ensure resources are not diverted to historical issues
IP12	<p>Risk approach and progress monitoring (optimism bias):</p> <p>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.</p>	6 (Green)	6 (Green)	6 (Green)		<p>Current and Ongoing Controls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant Thornton follow up review of progress against historical issues Corporate risk scoring definitions applied Definition in place for progress monitoring Red/Amber/Green progress monitoring for Improvement Plan Roles of Scrutiny and Audit confirmed Reports to Scrutiny and Audit Committees presented in September 2022 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). <p>Further Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular reporting to Cabinet, Scrutiny and ARAC and Commissioners' views
IP13	<p>Constitutional Changes</p> <p>If key governance changes (agreed during 2022) are not embedded throughout the organisation and put into practice, then opportunities will be missed, progress will be limited, and there may be non-</p>	9 (Amber)	9 (Amber)	6 (Green)		<p>Current and Ongoing Controls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GT, LGA, and CIPFA follow up reviews provide assurance Alignment of workstream with organisational culture theme through Officer participation in Culture Working Group Revised set of guidance and templates in place to support the changes made around key decisions

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (April 23)	Current Risk Score (July 23)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)
	compliance with council processes.					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First round of training delivered to budget holders and procurement card holders in relation to spend thresholds and procurements processes. • New Scrutiny Handbook launched • New EIA guidance issued for decision-making • Sub-delegation schemes developed with Directors • Member Development Plan Refreshed • Decision-making arrangements (forward plan, report sign off etc.) reviewed. • Governance Review Phase 2 project plan in place to embed the constitutional changes (Corporate Governance Development Programme) <p>Further Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Phase 2 of Mod.Gov • Implement a programme of learning for Officers around effective-decision making • Development of local KPIs to monitor performance in relation to decision-making e.g. timeliness of report submissions, publication of reports, use of exemptions, forward plan notice given on time. • MDP Delivery • Monitoring of local KPIs (once introduced)

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						Jul-23				Change Control
To be completed by action owner										
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		
290	Organisational Culture	OC.H1.0	Assurance Activity to ensure effective contribution of Scrutiny and Audit is sustained	Director-Law & Governance	14/06/2023	Closure of Main Action	n/a	n/a	Surveys of Officers and Members attending Scrutiny and Audit ended April 2023 and findings shared with IPRM and Chairs. Next steps are for feedback to be sought from New Members on their experiences of Committee Meetings to ensure that they are receiving the required support to participate fully in these meetings. Autumn engagement around Member-Officer Relationship will be a route for continuous improvement and learning.	
291	Strategic Decision	SD.A6.4	Procurement of stock condition surveys	Director-Housing	26/07/2023	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Jun-23	Sep-23	Contract award has been signed off and contractor will start surveying properties from 1st September 2023	
292	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	14/06/2023	Change to action description	n/a	n/a	Change from an assurance action to an action be monitored with RAG rating	
293	Procurement & Commercial	PC.F1.3	Implementation of Phase 2 Tech Forge: Configuration and organisation of data Implementation of supplementary modules.	Director-Regeneration & Growth	14/06/2023	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Aug-23	Sep-23	change to September 23 for completion date-incorrect date of August imputed previously	
294	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A1.8	KPI's (along with accompanying tolerances) implemented in Q2	Director-Children & Education	14/06/2023	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Oct-23	Dec-23	Change to date to allow time for Q2 to be taken to cabinet	
295	Organisational Culture	OC.C4.1	Identify mechanisms for ongoing insight and assurance around the Officer and Member Relationship	Director-Law & Governance	23/06/2023	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	May-23	Dec-23	Following discussions with ARAC and BCMB around the Officer-Member survey conducted in April, there is appetite from Members to provide input around the Member-Officer Relationship. Reflecting on their feedback on the Spring survey, emerging thinking is for a sample of Members and Officers to be invited to semi-structured interviews. The data would feed into LGA sessions planned for Autumn alongside regular insight. Date change will be required to reflect that mechanism for Autumn will be agreed by August.	
296	Procurement & Commercial	PC.B3.3	Commence Procurement	Director-Children & Education	23/06/2023	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Jun-23		Procurement not started yet- new date to be added.	

297	Organisational Culture	OC.A2.1	Workforce Strategy	Chief executive	22/07/2023	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Jul-23	Sep-23	Approval moved to September to enable reference to Transformation Strategy - aligned narrative
298	Strategic Decision	SD.A1.2b	Assurance Action- Pipeline projects updated to IPRM on a 6-monthly basis	Director-Regeneration & Growth	22/07/2023	Closure of Assurance Action	n/a	n/a	Reported twice to IPRM and continues to be taken to Cabinet on a 6 monthly basis
299	Corporate Oversight	CO.B1.7	New action to be added: Conduct Employee Engagement Survey for 2023 and consider actions required in response to the findings	Chief executive	26/07/23	Add - New Sub Actions	n/a	n/a	new action to be added
300	Strategic Decision	SD.A5.4	Recruit Commercial Project Officer	Director-Finance	22/07/2023	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Jun-23	Sep-23	Recruitment unsuccessful - considering other options.
301	Strategic Decision	SD.B1.14	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy developed - appointment of consultant for data analysis - appointment of consultant for strategy development	Director-Law & Governance	22/07/2023	Mistake on Document	Jun-24	Jul-24	change to correct error on document
302	Strategic Decision	SD.F1.0	Customer Journey Strategy	Director-Regeneration & Growth	22/07/2023	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Oct-23	Mar-24	Delays with face to face customer engagement sessions, these are currently not being promoted and the on-line survey has also been put on hold, this will impact timescales for the completed Strategy. As the sessions have not been able to be promoted the last 4 sessions have only been attended by 6 people in total.
303	Decision Making	DM.C3.1	New assurance action: Watching brief to ensure that historic matters do not re-surface	Director-Law & Governance	22/07/2023	Add- New Assurance Action	quarterly	sep/dec/mar/june	new assurance action added
304	Procurement & Commercial	PC.A5.2	Fleet replacement complete	Director-Borough Economy	22/07/2023	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Mid 2023	End 2023	
305	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 & Growth	22/07/2023	Closure of Assurance Action	n/a	n/a	Proposing closure on basis that we will have been through first round of regional engagement following Full Council. Ongoing assurance is through dialogue between Leader and Chief Exec and their discussion with Regional Groups, and between CMs and Directors via briefings.
306	Corporate Oversight	CO.B2.0	Single Improvement Plan Phase 2 and Phase 3	Leadership team	26/07/23	Closure of Main Action	n/a	n/a	All actions have been carried out and the IP remains updated through change control process.
307	Procurement & Commercial	PC.C1.1	Options Appraisal (corp performance management system)	Chief executive	26/07/23	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Aug-23	Oct-23	CRP3 completed for SCM and Finance. Modelling phase further extended for HCM to complete and Sign-Off Design BPS and DM design into August. Preparation for DM3 start in progress. Revised plan submitted and approved by Programme Board on 9th July. Go Live still planned for April 2024.

308	Corporate Oversight	Co.A1.9	Completion of the modelling phase	Director-Finance	26/07/23	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Jun-23	Aug-23	CRP3 completed for SCM and Finance. Modelling phase further extended for HCM to complete and Sign-Off Design BPS and DM design into August. Preparation for DM3 start in progress. Revised plan submitted and approved by Programme Board on 9th July. Go Live still planned for April 2024.
309	Partnership & Relationships	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	26/07/23	Closure of Main action resulting in closure of workstream	n/a	n/a	Ongoing assurance is through dialogue between Leader and Chief Exec and their discussion with Regional Groups, and between CMs and Directors via briefings.
310	Organisational Culture	OC.D5.2	New action: New Member Survey conducted and any required amendments made to MDP / New Member Induction programme	Director-Law & Governance	26/07/2023	Add - New Sub Actions	n/a	n/a	new action added
311	Organisational Culture	OC.G1.0	Governance review Phase 2- change to Governance review training phase 2	Director-Law & Governance	26/07/2023	Change to action description	n/a	n/a	change to action description
312	Strategic Decision	SD.A6.5	Stock Condition Surveys Undertaken to inform HRA business plan	Director-Housing	08/01/2023	Add - New Sub Actions	n/a	n/a	To monitor progress of stock condition surveys
313	Corporate Oversight	CO.E1.4	Programme and Project Management System Implementation	Director-Finance	08/01/2023	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Jul-23	TBC	Timeline for roll out being discussed by LT 08.08.23. Date change to be populated following 08/08/23
314	Corporate Oversight	CO.C1.9	Consider integrating revenue, Capital and Performance reporting	Director-Finance	08/01/2023	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Mar-24	Aug-24	To be fully reviewed once Oracle Fusion is in place and we can fully understand the reporting capabilities of the systems. Timescale aligned to Oracle Implementation

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Report to Cabinet

13 September 2023

Subject:	Recommendations from Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board in response to Sickness Absence Outturn 2022-23.
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources – Cllr Piper
Director:	Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer
Key Decision:	No
Contact Officer:	Suky Suthi-Nagra, Democratic Services Manager Suky_suthinagra@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Director of Finance – Section 151 Officer be authorised, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, to consider the feasibility of introducing bonuses and/or incentives to improve staff absenteeism.
- 1.2 That, in connection with 1.1, a further report be submitted to the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board, within 2 months' time, on the decision of Cabinet.

2 Reasons for Recommendations


- 2.1 The Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board received the Sickness Absence Outturn 2022/23 at their meeting on 27 July 2023 and considered the feasibility of introducing incentives for staff who displayed consistent attendance at work.



2.2 Having considered sickness levels within the Council, the Board requested that the Cabinet consider the feasibility of offering incentives to reduce staff absenteeism and, in turn, discover if this method was more cost efficient when compared to the costs needed to source agency staff to cover for absent employees.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

3.1 Scrutinising the Sickness Absence Outturn 2022/23 report supports the Council's activities towards the delivery of the Corporate Plan objectives:

	<p>The Council continues to build on existing workforce mental health and wellbeing resources, by proactively responding to emerging challenges and trends, enabling our employees to effectively support their own, and their colleague's, positive mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The Council will develop and embed excellent people management practices, by effectively leading, supporting and improving our workforce, fostering a workforce that is engaged and productive.</p>
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4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 The sickness absence rate for the last financial year (2022-23) was 10.81 days per employee. This equates to 4.87% working days lost to sickness absence, compared to a national average of 2.6% for the UK overall and 3.6% across the public sector.

4.2 Sickness absence rates were higher for every quarter in 2022-23 compared to the previous year; representing an overall increase of 0.5 days per person compared to 2021-22. The increase was evenly spread across the year.



- 4.3 Rates of absence have increased each year since 2018-19, with the exception of 2019-20 and 2020-21. The reduction in sickness absence for the years including the height of the pandemic were unsurprising and reflected temporary changes to roles and ways of working, as well as restrictions to social mixing and a corresponding reduction in usual seasonal illness patterns.
- 4.4 HR are currently reviewing the council’s sickness absence management (SAM) processes with particular attention being applied to directorate and service-level absence review process; discretion within the SAM policy; and SAM Policy, Guidance and Process (with focus on language, documentation, and the move to self-service with Oracle Fusion). Workshops have been carried out with colleagues within HR and managers across the council who frequently apply the SAM policy, alongside ongoing discussions with our trade union representatives, in the updating of arrangements.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, Cabinet is requested to respond to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Management Board within two months, setting out any approved recommendations, and how they will be implemented.

6 Implications

Resources:	In considering and approving the proposals, Cabinet would need to consider the cost associated with exploring the feasibility of introducing incentives to attempt to improve staff absenteeism.
Legal and Governance:	In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, Cabinet is requested to respond to the recommendations of the scrutiny board within two months, setting out any approved recommendations, and how they will be implemented.
Risk:	There are no risk implications associated with this report.



Equality:	No Equality Impact Assessment is required in relation to this report.
Health and Wellbeing:	No health and wellbeing implications associated with this report.
Social Value	Ensuring that staff are present enables a consistent approach to enable residents and services users to receive the best possible outcomes.
Climate Change	No Climate Change implications associated with this report.
Corporate Parenting	No Corporate Parenting implications associated with this report.

7. Appendices

None

8. Background Papers

Sickness Absence Outturn 2022/23



Report to Cabinet

13 September 2023

Subject:	Contract award for the provision of Digital Autopsy services on behalf of the Black Country Coroner.
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Public Health & Communities Councillor Syeda Khatun.
Director:	Director – Law and Governance, Monitoring Officer. Surjit Tour
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Assistant Director – Law and Governance Mark Satchwell

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That, approval be given to the Director of Law and Governance, Monitoring Officer to award a contract for the provision of Digital Autopsy services on behalf of the Black Country Coroner commencing 1 October 2023 for a 5-year period to Advanced Visualisation Technologies Ltd, 30 Watery Street, Sheffield, England, S3 7ES.
- 1.2 That the Director of Law and Governance – Monitoring Officer be authorised to execute any documentation necessary to enable the action referred to in 1.1 above to proceed.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 For the purposes of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009, Sandwell acts as “the relevant authority” for coronial services in the Black Country. It is therefore incumbent for Sandwell to provide the necessary resources to enable the Coroner to discharge his or her judicial responsibilities which includes the provision of post-mortem type services.




- 2.2 In order for the Coroner to ascertain the cause of sudden or unexplained deaths it is often necessary for post-mortem examinations to be undertaken.
- 2.3 As a result of advances in medical related technology it is possible to carry out a digital autopsy as an alternative to post-mortem. Using a medical scanner and advanced software to produce detailed three-dimensional images, it is now increasingly possible to determine the cause of death. This technology has now been used by the coroner in Sandwell and now the wider Black Country for many years.
- 2.4 In support of this, the Council has an on-going requirement for the provision of Digital Autopsy services, therefore, the Council as the relevant authority for the coroners service through the award of this contract will be able to continue to support the coroner in the discharge of their judicial responsibilities.
- 2.5 In accordance with the Council's Contract Procedures Rules, a tendering exercise has been undertaken to establish a five-year contract from 1 October 2023 until 30 September 2028 for the provision of services.
- 2.6 Tenders were invited using public advertisement to cover the requirements as outlined in 1.1 above and a total of three compliant bids were returned by the tender closing date.
- 2.7 Following analysis of the returned tenders, it is recommended Advanced Visualisation Technologies Ltd, 30 Watery Street, Sheffield, England, S3 7ES that Gem be awarded the contract.
- 2.8 Whilst the value of any contract of this type is dependent on the volume of cases referred to the coroner, it is estimated that this new contract will see annual expenditure of circa £413,000. Over the course of a five-year contract ,Sandwell's expenditure will be circa £2,065,000.
- 2.9 In accordance with the existing collaborative agreement for the shared coroners service with the other Black Country Councils, Sandwell will



recover 75% of all expenditure for the provision of Digital Autopsy services as outlined in 2.8 above.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	The proposals as outlined in this report will ensure key bereavement related services can continue to be delivered at very important moments in people's lives.
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4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 A death will be referred to the coroner if it is:

- Unexpected, violent, unnatural or suspicious,
- The result of an accident or injury, in custody,
- Occurred during or soon after a hospital procedure or the cause of death is unknown.

4.2 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council is the relevant authority for the Black Country Coroners jurisdiction.

4.3 In order for the Coroner to ascertain the cause of sudden or unexplained deaths it is often necessary for post-mortem examinations to be undertaken.

4.4 As a result of advances in medical related technology it has become possible to carry out a digital autopsy as an alternative. Using a medical scanner and advanced software to produce detailed three-dimensional images, it is now increasingly possible to determine the cause of death.

4.5 The Digital Autopsy provides a number of benefits, including:

- Easing the emotional burden on families at a time of intense stress with a dignified, compassionate and minimally-invasive investigation;
- Improved speed of examination and investigation.
- Some findings that are difficult to spot during a conventional post mortem can be more easily identified and examined in line with the needs of forensic pathologists, improving the accuracy of results in some instances.



- 4.6 The development of this new technique was welcomed by the then Chief Coroner, His Honour Judge Peter Thornton, who said "...where a scan can, properly and in the right case, be used as a viable alternative to an autopsy, the preservation of the body intact is often greatly valued by the family." and "As science and technology develop, digital scanning is undoubtedly one of the ways forward for the coroner service."
- 4.7 The Council was notified that a cessation of trading of the existing supplier to the Council for Digital Autopsy Services, would take effect on 12 December 2022, and they were now unable to honour their contractual obligations with Sandwell and other partner organisations.
- 4.8 They granted a licence to Advanced Visualisation Technologies Limited ("AVT") to use its assets and premises pending their permanent transfer to enable the continuation of these services in Black Country coronial jurisdiction.
- 4.9 Given there were no reasonable alternative options available to the Council for the provision of this type of service to the Coroner to enable him or her to discharge their judicial responsibilities, a short-term contract to 30 September 2023 was awarded to Advanced Visualisation Technologies Limited.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The Council in consultation with the coroner and its residents could revert to the more traditional approach to post-mortem investigations and no longer provide Digital Autopsy to support the coroner in the discharge of their judicial responsibilities. In doing so this may adversely impact the Council's reputation particularly with some community groups whose cultural preference is for a minimally invasive approach.



6 Implications

<p>Resources:</p>	<p>The value of any contract of this type is dependant of the volume of cases referred to the Coroner. It is estimated that this new contract will see annual expenditure of circa £413,000. Over the course of a five-year contract Sandwell’s expenditure will be circa £2,065,000.</p> <p>In accordance with the existing collaborative agreement for the shared coroners service with the other Black Country Councils, Sandwell will recover 75% of all expenditure for the provision of Digital Autopsy services.</p>
<p>Legal and Governance:</p>	<p>In accordance with the Coroners and Justice Act 2009, a coroner who is made aware that the body of a deceased person is within that coroner's area as duty as soon as practicable to conduct an investigation into the person's death if the coroner has reason to suspect that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the deceased died a violent or unnatural death, (b) the cause of death is unknown, or (c) the deceased died while in custody or otherwise in state detention. <p>For the purpose of this act, Sandwell is the lead authority for the Black Country Coronial Jurisdiction, known as the “relevant authority”.</p> <p>The Council has to comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council’s own Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules 2022 and confirms that this tender exercise has been conducted in accordance with the required procedures.</p>
<p>Risk:</p>	<p>The Coroners Service in the Black Country is a shared service between the four local authority areas. Governance arrangements to include risk and insurance are accounted for by a formal collaborative agreement between the participating authorities.</p>
<p>Equality:</p>	<p>Equality impact screening has been undertaken and the recommendations in this report do not seek changes to existing service delivery.</p>



Health and Wellbeing:	The provision of Digital Autopsy services as outlined within this report will ensure key bereavement related services can continue to be delivered at very important moments in people's lives
Social Value:	The provision of these services will be undertaken locally within the Black Country Jurisdiction. Wherever possible AVT will employ local people. They will also provide work placements for students studying for radiography qualifications
Climate Change:	There are no climate change implications associated with the recommendations within this report.
Corporate Parenting:	There are no corporate parenting implications associated with the recommendations within this report.

7. Appendices

None

8. Background Papers

None



By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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