

# Agenda

## Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board

**Wednesday, 20 March 2024 at 6.00 pm**  
**At Council Chamber - Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

**1 Apologies for Absence**

**2 Declarations of Interest**

Members to declare any interests in, or party whips related to, the matters to be discussed at the meeting.

**3 Minutes** 7 - 12

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2024 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 Impact on Registration related services when the new Midland Metropolitan University Hospital opens in 2024** 13 - 30

That the Board considers and comments upon the impact, actions, progress, and approach taken to



the opening of the new Midland Metropolitan University Hospital (MMUH) in 2024 for Registration related services.

6 **Performance Management Framework - 2023/24 Quarter 3 Monitoring** 31 - 136

That the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board notes progress on the further development of the Corporate Performance Management Framework and provides comment on the 2023/24 Quarter 3 monitoring reports.

7 **Improvement Plan Progress** 137 - 224

That the Board considers and comments upon the progress of the Improvement Plan up to January 2024.

8 **Q3 Budget Monitoring 2023/24** 225 - 266

That the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board considers the Q3 Budget Monitoring 2023/24 report and identifies any recommendations that it wishes to make to Cabinet.

9 **Tracking and Monitoring of Scrutiny Recommendations** 267 - 288

To consider and note progress on the implementation of actions and recommendations.

10 **Cabinet Forward Plan and Board Work Programme** 289 - 304

To note and review the Cabinet Forward Plan and the Board's Work Programme 2023/24.

**Shokat Lal**

**Chief Executive**

Sandwell Council House

Freeth Street

Oldbury

West Midlands

**Distribution**

Councillor Moore (Chair)

Councillors Fenton, Chambers, Fisher, E M Giles, Hinchliff, Lewis, Taylor,  
Tipper, Trumpeter and Owen

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## Minutes of Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board

**Thursday 1 February 2024 at 6pm**  
**In the Council Chamber at Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

**Present:** Councillor Moore (Chair);  
Councillors Fenton, E Giles and Lewis.

**In attendance:** Shokat Lal (Chief Executive), James McLaughlin (Assistant Chief Executive), Brendan Arnold (Interim Section 151 Officer), Suky Suthi-Nagra (Democratic and Member Services Manager) and Alexander Goddard (Scrutiny Lead Officer).

**Representing the West Midlands Combined Authority**  
Councillor Bayton (Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee) and Councillor McNicholas (Chair of Transport Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Committee).

Laura Shoaf (Chief Executive), James Hughes (Member Relationship Manager), Sam Maybee (Strategic Advisor) and Lyndsey Roberts (Statutory Scrutiny Officer).

### 13/24 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Fisher, Hinchliffe, Owen, Taylor and Tipper.



14/24      **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made. Councillor Moore advised the meeting that he was a member of the West Midlands Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

15/24      **Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meetings held on 4 and 15 January 2024 are approved as correct records.

16/24      **Additional Items of Business**

There were no additional items of business.

17/24      **Draft Budget 2024/25 – Recommendations to the Cabinet**

At its meeting on 15 January 2024, the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board considered the draft proposals for the Budget 2024/25. This had been a changed approach to previous years, with an all-day session held to allow members to scrutinise, in-depth, the proposals for individual directorates' budgets. Further discussions had been held and additional detail was provided where requested.

The Scrutiny Management Board identified a number of recommendations to propose to Cabinet as well as items for its own work programme.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) that the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board is assured that there is a clear plan, underpinned by data, for the Council's Budget 2024/25;
- (2) that the Cabinet and the Executive team review the proposals for Borough Economy again to ensure the assumptions upon which they are based are robust and take account of the missed income targets from 2023/24;

- (3) that the Cabinet and Executive team review:-
  - (a) Council, the Housing Revenue Account, Capital Programme, Public Health and Sandwell Children's Trust contracts and agreements to ensure they are fit for purpose, take a whole-council approach to meeting the Council's strategic objectives and represent value for money;
  - (b) contract monitoring management processes to ensure they are robust and ensure value for money;
- (4) that the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board consider reports within the next three months on detailed proposals to achieve savings in:-
  - (a) Children's External Educational and Care Placements; and
  - (b) Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transport;
- (5) that the following topics be included on the work programme of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board:-
  - (a) the customer journey;
  - (b) the effect on performance and sickness levels of reduced budgets;
  - (c) funding for the Voluntary and Community Sector.

18/24      **Tracking and Monitoring of Scrutiny Recommendations**

The Board noted the status of actions and recommendations it had made. Further updates would be reported to future meetings of the Board.

19/24      **Cabinet Forward Plan and Work Programme**

The Board received and noted the Cabinet Forward Plan and the Board's work programme.

20/24      **West Midlands Combined Authority Scrutiny Annual Report**

The Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board welcomed representatives of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) to the meeting.

The WMCA Scrutiny Annual Report set out an overview of the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Transport Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2022/23. The Chairs of both of those committees presented the report and outlined the structure and operating methods of the Committees.

The WMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee had contributed to shaping and delivering a comprehensive ask of government regarding the deeper devolution deal.

It was reported that the Scrutiny functions themselves had been reviewed and, whilst previously there had been a sub-committee for Transport scrutiny, with the importance of transport, the amount of money invested, it was felt that a Transport Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Committee would ensure proper scrutiny of transport in the region could be carried out.

Following on from 2022/23, there had been a focus by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on performance of the Combined Authority, making sure that all elements were delivering against the WMCA Strategic Plan.

A key issue for the WMCA scrutiny function was attendance and participation from appointed members. Proposals to seek multi-year appointments to build understanding of the scrutiny function was being considered by the WMCA. The Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board confirmed that meetings were chaired well at the Combined Authority and that the quality of discussion was good.

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

- The WMCA had acknowledged that it needed to improve engagement with local authorities across the region, with a Member Relationship Manager appointed to help deliver on this important issue.
- A survey of all councillors in the region had been carried out in December 2023, but response rates had been low.

- WMCA colleagues would be willing to attend a pre-Council meeting marketplace event to meet Sandwell councillors and improve awareness and understanding of the work of the Combined Authority.
- An assessment of bus franchising was underway and was expected to be reported to the WMCA Board in Summer 2024.
- It was reported that in the West Midlands, 50m trips were made on trains, 45m on the Metro but circa 300m were made by bus.

**Resolved that:-**

- (1) the Assistant Chief Executive ensure that the Council's Member Development Programme includes the role and purpose of the West Midlands Combined Authority and invites the Combined Authority as part of the Programme;
- (2) the Chief Executive and Leader consider the merits of multi-term appointments to the West Midlands Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny function;
- (3) the Assistant Chief Executive invite representatives of the West Midlands Combined Authority to attend some of the 'marketplace' sessions held before meetings of Council.

21/24      **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

**Resolved** 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 or business affairs of any person, including the authority holding that information.

22/24      **West Midlands Combined Authority Activity – Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council**

The Scrutiny Management Board received a report on West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) activity in Sandwell. This included where investment had been to date, progress and areas where the WMCA was working with Sandwell MBC.

Some key areas of WMCA activity included:-

- Black Country Strategic Transport Plan (one of four for the West Midlands) that would form part of the statutory transport plan;
- additional funding for potholes and resurfacing;
- funding streams such as the Shared Prosperity Fund and the Commonwealth Games Legacy funding;
- various housing and regeneration schemes;
- Net Zero Neighbourhoods.

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

- Education was a key route out of poverty and the WMCA's work on the skills agenda was vital, with an annual increase in WMCA adult education budget received from the Government.
- The State of the Region report would be circulated once it was published.
- Further information on district heating plans could be brought to a future meeting.
- The working relationship between Sandwell MBC and the WMCA had been reset and was greatly improved, with Sandwell engaging in the right way and ensuring its voice was heard as part of the Combined Authority.

The Chair thanked WMCA colleagues for attending the meeting.

Meeting ended at 7.13pm

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



## Report to Budget & Corporate Scrutiny Management Board

20 March 2024

<b>Subject:</b>	Impact on Registration related services when the new Midland Metropolitan University Hospital opens in 2024
<b>Director:</b>	Interim Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer, Brendan Arnold
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Assistant Director <a href="mailto:Mark_Satchwell@sandwell.gov.uk">Mark_Satchwell@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

### 1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Board considers and comments upon the impact, actions, progress, and approach taken to the opening of the new Midland Metropolitan University Hospital (MMUH) in 2024 for Registration related services.
- 1.2 That the Board identifies any recommendations it wishes to make.



### 2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 From 2024 an increase in demand for Registrations related services is certain, as acute health care services move from City hospital in Birmingham to the new MMUH in Smethwick.
- 2.2 This will likely see an increase of up to 5000 registration (4000 birth and 1000 death) events for Sandwell as a Local Registration Service, more complex and an increased volume of cases referred to the Black Country Coroner, as well an increased number of cases referred to the Bereavement Services team related to Public Health Act funerals.



2.3 The Board is now requested to consider and note the current position, progress made to manage this increased demand and make any recommendations it wishes to make.

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

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people. Timeliness of birth registration events affords families and their children access to key services support services early and at a point of need.</p>
	<p>A strong and inclusive economy The proposals and actions taken to date will ensure key bereavement related services continue to be available locally to families in Sandwell.</p>

### 4 Context and Key Issues

#### Impact on birth related registration events.

- 4.1 Following the closure of the Sandwell and Solihull maternity units in 2011, Birmingham’s Local Registration Service have consistently been registering 7,000 extra births per annum.
- 4.2 Of these, Solihull Local Registration Service historically registered 3,000 a year prior to their maternity unit closing. Therefore, an estimated 4,000 extra births registrations are likely to take place at the MMUH when it opens in 2024.
- 4.3 It is anticipated as with all other registration events in Sandwell, these will take place at the Register Office, Highfields House, West Bromwich.

#### Action planned and taken to date.

- 4.4 An assessment has been completed to identify the number of additional posts that will be necessary to help manage the impact MMUH will have on registration events. To date, we have successfully accounted for from a financial perspective and subsequently appointed 2 x additional Registration Officers who are due to commence their employment with



our Register Office Team in February 2024. We will seek to appoint an additional 1 x Senior Registration Officer who will be more experienced in this type of work in the new financial year, 2024/2025.

- 4.5 To ensure that the service is efficient across all registration events, we are conducting Business Process reviews for all services that are to be provided. In addition, a training plan has been pulled together to ensure all staff are back up to speed with birth registration events.
- 4.6 Our customers can now book appointments to register the birth of their new baby online or by telephone via our Councils customer services contact centre. We also have a dedicated reception area at the Register Office where our customers can walk in and make arrangements directly with our Register Office team.
- 4.7 It is anticipated that we will have completed the reviews we have started of how we undertake birth registrations by April 2024.

#### **Impact on death related registration events:**

- 4.8 Historically some Sandwell residents who have been admitted to City Hospital for treatment and care have and will continue to sadly pass away. It is anticipated that these deaths will likely occur at MMUH in Sandwell when it opens in 2024 following the cessation and transfer of some acute health services at City Hospital which will transfer to the Midland Metro Hospital.

Historic total number of deaths at City Hospital are detailed below:

1 January 2018 – 31 December 2018 - 754 deaths

1 January 2019 – 31 December 2019 - 838 deaths

- 4.9 The above figures are pre-Covid and actual numbers which have been provided by Birmingham Register Office and City Hospital in Birmingham.
- 4.10 Other Birmingham hospitals have reported a general increase in the number of deaths, and we would therefore reasonably expect an increase in death related registration events up to 1000 per year.



## Action planned and taken date.

- 4.11 As outlined in 4.4 above, we will as MMUH opens, have 3 new additional members of trained staff allocated to our Register Office Team.
- 4.12 A recent review of our approach to death registration has already been completed. This will subject to a further amendment to account for the death certification reforms following introduction of the Statutory Medical Examiner Service in April 2024 which will see all deaths reviewed by either a Medical Examiner or the Coroner.
- 4.13 Due to resourcing pressures, many Local Registration Services have dispensed with the “Tell us Once and Enrichment Service” which helps bereaved families notify key stakeholders of their loved ones passing. Despite the increase in anticipated death registration events, we will continue to resource and provide this service as we know this helps our customers and other relevant stakeholders at a very difficult time.
- 4.14 In addition, we have reviewed our approach to certificate production to capture a more efficient way of searching and producing registration certificates. This work was completed with a view of freeing up and maximising existing resources to help support the impact of MMUH on registration events.
- 4.15 Sandwell Register Office, Highfields House has long been the home of all registration events in Sandwell. We have invested in the iconic Grade Two listed building to improve facilities for both our customers and our staff. This includes but not limited to; the refresh of additional appointment rooms and welfare facilities for our staff, a new inclusive reception area, a new lift and refreshed ceremony rooms as well as music, recording and webcasting facilities.

## Impact on the Black Country Coroners Service

- 4.16 For the purpose of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and where a coronial area covers one or more local authority areas, Schedule 2 of the Act requires those authorities to agree which of them will be the ‘relevant authority’ (formerly known as the ‘lead authority’). For the Black Country jurisdiction, it is Sandwell.



- 4.17 The Black Country Coroners Service will investigate a death which occurs in any of these areas, and:
- The cause of death is unknown
  - The cause of death is unnatural; or
  - The deceased was in a state of detention, e.g. police custody, at the time of their death
- 4.18 Accounting for a potential 1000 additional death registrations as outlined above, and with on average 34% of all deaths in 2020 referred to our Coroner, it is anticipated 340 additional cases will be referred into our coronial jurisdiction.
- 4.19 Hospital deaths referred to a coroner given the setting can often be more complex by nature which could see as many as 66 complex cases (19%) referred for inquest.
- 4.20 Revenue implications associated with the service are share equally by the four Black Country local authorities in accordance with the existing collaborative agreement.

**Action planned and taken date.**

- 4.21 The Coroners facilities at Jack Judge House in Oldbury have been improved. In 2023, a new additional digital court was opened along with a new reception area and jury/family rooms.
- 4.22 An additional Senior Coroners Officer has been accounted for and successfully appointed to. In addition, to support both the Senior and Area Coroner, new Assistant Coroners have been appointed to support the service primarily from a resilience perspective.
- 4.23 A new case management system iCasework was introduced in November 2022 which is now embedded and has already led to improvements in the efficiency of case management. We will now complete a post implementation review of this system to identify any further opportunities to improve the functionality which will be completed by the opening of the MMH.
- 4.24 With coroner's service being shared across the four Black County Local Authority areas, an updated formal collaboration agreement for the next



four years has been reviewed and agreed effective from 1 April 2023. This agreement accounts for the governance arrangements along with the equal (25%) sharing of all costs associated with the delivery of the service.

## Impact on Public Health Act Funerals

- 4.25 The Council is responsible for making funeral arrangements for anybody who dies within the borough, when no other arrangements are being or are likely to be made for example; when the deceased has no family and the deceased hasn't left a will. The responsibility is placed upon the Council by Section 46 of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984. This includes deaths in hospitals.
- 4.26 In 2020, the Council through its Bereavement Service made the necessary funeral arrangements on behalf 60 deceased persons, of which 36 were referred from Sandwell Hospital. The remaining deaths were in the community.
- 4.27 Again, historically some Sandwell residents who have been admitted to City Hospital for treatment and care will have sadly passed away at the hospital. It is anticipated that some of these deaths will in the future occur at the Midland Metro Hospital in Sandwell following the cessation of some healthcare services at City Hospital which will transfer to the Midland Metro Hospital.
- 4.28 The number of deaths referred by City Hospital to Birmingham City Council to make funeral arrangements in accordance with its obligations for Public Health Act funerals is according to the trust on average 3% of all deaths at City Hospital.
- 4.29 When the number of deaths outlined above are considered, we can therefore anticipate an additional 24 cases being referred to Sandwell, which equates to estimated 40% increase in the number of Public Health Act funerals which will need to be arranged and administered by our Bereavement Services team.

## Action taken to date.

- 4.30 Two additional posts for our bereavement administration team have been accounted for and successfully appointed to in support of the





increased demand which is likely to be more broadly across our bereavement services team.

- 4.31 A new case management system for our bereavement services team in support of more efficient ways of working and an improved customer experience for our service users is being progressed which is expected to be in place by July 2024.
- 4.32 We are also in discussion and have drafted for a Service Level Agreement with Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospital Trust for the provision of Public Health Act funerals where someone passes away at MMUH and there is no known next kin or arrangements cannot be made.
- 4.33 In addition, the Council through its bereavement service continues to provide a more affordable funeral option for families where the cost of using a local funeral director for more traditional approach is an issue for them.

## 5 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	<p>When the new demand for registration related services in Sandwell were considered and benching marking with current resources that are in place to meet the existing business need, it was estimated that an additional six full-time equivalent posts was needed across the three teams within Registration Services to ensure that adequate resource is in place to meet the new business need.</p> <p>The cost associated with these posts to contract end are estimated to be £280,000 and have already been accounted for from 2022/2023 onwards as part of the Council budget setting processes.</p> <p>This additional expenditure will be partly offset by an increased income target for Register Office Services of £60,000 which will be generated from certificate production for registration events.</p> <p>An increase in Public Health Act Funerals will likely see expenditure rise by an estimated £8,000 which we will look to mitigate by costs recovery from estates</p>
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	and as part of the annual budget setting process for the service.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	<p>The Registration Service Act 1953 is an Act to consolidate certain enactments relating to the registration of births and deaths in England and Wales.</p> <p>For the purpose of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and where a coronial area covers one or more local authority areas, Schedule 2 requires those authorities to agree which of them will be the ‘relevant authority’ (formerly known as the ‘lead authority’), for the Black Country that is Sandwell.</p> <p>The responsibility is placed upon the Council by Section 46 of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 where people who have passed away and have no next of kin, or whose next of kin, relatives or friends are unable or unwilling to make the necessary arrangements for a funeral. This includes deaths in hospitals.</p>
<b>Risk:</b>	The analysis and actions undertaken taken to date it is felt will ensure appropriate mitigations have been put in place to manage the impending increase in demand for Registration related services.
<b>Equality:</b>	Services provided by Registration services have and will continue to ensure the needs of all community groups and protected characteristics are met.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	The proposals and actions taken to date will ensure Registration related services continue to be available locally to families in Sandwell at key moments in their lives.
<b>Social Value</b>	There are no specific Social Value issues regarding the proposals contained in this report.

## 6 Appendices

None





## 7. Background Papers

Report to Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Board 13 October 2022



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# Budget & Corporate Scrutiny Management Board 20 March 2024

**Progress update related to the impact on Registration related services  
when the new Midland Metropolitan University Hospital opens in  
2024**



## When and why

- From 2024 an increase in demand for Registration related services is certain
- Acute healthcare services will move from City Hospital in Birmingham to the new Midland Metropolitan University Hospital in Smethwick.



# Impact

- Increase of up to 5000 registration (birth 4000 and death 1000) events for Sandwell as a Local Registration Service.
- Estimated 300- 400 more cases referred to the Black Country Coroner.
- 40% increase in the number of cases referred to the Bereavement Services team related to Public Health Act funerals.



# What have we been working on ?

## Recruitment and training

- Five out of six additional six full-time equivalent posts needed have successfully been budgeted for and recruited to across the three areas of work within Registration Services. We anticipate the one remaining vacancy will be filled by June 2024.
- To support both the Senior and Area Coroner, new Assistant Coroners have been appointed to support the service primarily from a resilience perspective.
- Training and development of all staff is progressing well.



# Facilities

- Changes and improvements to Highfields House, West Bromwich (Sandwell's Register Office).
  - DDA compliance facilities now in place. New access lifts installed across the building.
  - Improved reception area and new appointment rooms are now available for use.
  - Updated and improved welfare facilities for our staff.
  - Refreshed and new ceremony rooms as well the installation as music, recording and webcasting facilities.
- Our coroners court and customer facilities at Jack Judge House have been expanded and improved.
  - A new purpose-built digital second court is now in use
  - A new reception area, advocate and jury rooms have been created.



# Case management systems, business process service reviews and customer access

- Reviews in our approach to death, birth registration and certificate production has been completed.
- Death certification reforms preparation with the introduction of the Statutory Medical Examiner Service in April 2024, which will see all deaths reviewed by either a Medical Examiner or the Coroner.
- Sustained approach to “Tell us Once and Enrichment Service” which helps bereaved families notify key stakeholders of their loved ones passing.
- A new more efficient case management system for our Coroners Team iCasework has been introduced.
- A new case management system for our bereavement services team in support of more efficient ways of working and an improved customer experience for our service users is being progressed which is expected to be in place by July 2024.
- Access to our service for our customers across all three areas, is available online, by telephone and in person.





# Recommendations

- Board considers and comments upon progress approach taken and progress to date.
- Identifies any recommendations it wishes to make.



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## Report to Budget & Corporate Scrutiny Management Board

**20 March 2024**

<b>Subject:</b>	Performance Management Framework – 2023/24 Quarter 3 Monitoring
<b>Director:</b>	Chief Executive – Shokat Lal
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Kate Ashley – Strategic Lead: Service Improvement Kayleigh Walker – Senior Lead: Service Improvement Sarah Sprung – Senior Lead: Service Improvement

### 1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board notes progress on the further development of the Corporate Performance Management Framework and provides comment on the 2023/24 Quarter 3 monitoring reports.

### 2. Reasons for Recommendations







- 2.1 Council approved a Corporate Performance Management Framework (PMF) on 12 April 2022, to address the recommendations of the Governance Value for Money Review by Grant Thornton and as a key element of the Council's Improvement Plan.
- 2.2 Since then, the corporate PMF has been further refined and built into business processes. In June 2023, Cabinet approved a revised Corporate Plan with a revised set of Corporate Performance Indicators. This report sets out the Council's performance against the Corporate



Performance Indicators for Q3 of 2023/24. **Appendix 1** lists the measures and performance, including a RAG rating against target where applicable. The appendix also includes the direction of travel of performance since last quarter (Q2) and compared to the same period last year. Progress against Business Plan actions that contribute towards delivering the Corporate Plan have also been included as part of this report (attached as **Appendix 2**).

2.4 Performance of key contracts is included in the quarterly performance reports to provide oversight of the performance of these services and assurance that contract management mechanisms continue to be in place and effective.

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

	The corporate PMF includes measures under all strategic objectives in the Corporate Plan to monitor progress in these key areas. The PMF also includes elements that measure the council's use of its resources to ensure delivery of the strategic objectives.
	
	
	
	
	

3.1 An effective performance management framework facilitates increased accountability, learning and improvement. It also provides early warning signals and facilitates decision-making.



- 3.2 On a quarterly basis, the council gathers and analyses a wide range of data and information to understand how effectively its plans are being implemented and whether the strategic outcomes contained in the Corporate Plan are being achieved.
- 3.3 The information collected is used to enable the authority to better understand the impact of its work on local people, and where necessary, target actions and resources.
4. **Quarter 3 Performance – key messages**

### Corporate Performance Report

4.1 In Q3, the number of Quarterly PIs given a RAG status has increased from 71 to 76 (out of a total of 121). In total, the percentage of ‘red’ and ‘amber’ PIs has decreased, and the number of ‘green’ PIs has increased, as can be seen below.

- 4.2 Of the 76 indicators given a RAG status this quarter,
- 21 (27.6%) are RAG rated ‘red’ (compared to 25 (35%) in Q2)
  - 12 (15.8%) are rated ‘amber’ (compared to 15 (21%) in Q2)
  - 43 (56.6%) are rated ‘green’ (compared to 31 (44%) in Q2)

40 do not have a RAG rating as a target is not applicable and the PI is for information only. For 5 PIs no data is available this quarter.

Area	Total	Red	Amber	Green	RAG NA	Data not available	Annual
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<b>Best Start</b>	39	6 (3)	4 (7)	6 (7)	1 (1)	0 (0)	22 (2 reported in Q3: 1 'green', 1 No RAG)
<b>Live well Age Well</b>	33	0 (1)	1(1)	10 (3)	3 (4)	2 (11)	17
<b>Strong Resilient Communities</b>	24	2 (2)	0 (2)	7 (5)	3 (3)	0 (1)	12
<b>Quality Homes</b>	21	4 (8)	2 (1)	7 (4)	1 (1)	0 (0)	7 (3 reported in Q3: 2 'amber' and 1 'green')
<b>Strong Inclusive Economy</b>	15	1 (2)	0 (0)	2 (1)	5 (3)	1 (3)	6
<b>Connected and Accessible</b>	11	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	10
<b>One Team One Council</b>	57	8 (9)	5 (4)	10 (10)	27 (20)	2 (10)	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>79</b>

## Corporate Plan

4.3 In total in Q3, 243 Business Plan actions were given an update, compared to 211 in Q2. In total, the number of 'red' actions has slightly decreased, the number of 'amber' actions has stayed the same and the number of 'green' actions has increased.

4.4 Of the 243 Business Plan actions given a RAG Status this quarter:

- 4 (1.6%) are rated as 'red' (significant issues) (compared to 8 (3.8%) in Q2)
- 42 (17.3%) are rated as 'amber' (medium issues) (compared to 42 (19.9%) in Q2)
- 197 (81.1%) are rated as 'green' (on track) (compared to 161 (76.3%) in Q2)

There were 12 actions with no update available.



Q3 Headlines								
	Best Start	Live Well & Age Well	Strong Resilient Communities	Quality Homes	Strong Inclusive Economy	Connected & Accessible	One Council One Team	Total
No of Corporate Plan 'we wils'	12	21	20	17	11	8	18	107
No of Directorate Business Plan Actions	23	85	38	23	18	17	51	255
On Track	14 (9)	67 (59)	32 (21)	16 (15)	15 (15)	16 (13)	37 (29)	197(161)
Medium Issues	7 (2)	10 (12)	5 (6)	6 (7)	1(2)	1 (2)	12 (11)	42 (42)
Significant Issues	1(0)	2 (5)	0 (2)	0 (0)	-	-	1 (1)	4 (8)
No Update available	1 (12)	6 (9)	1 (9)	1 (1)	2 (1)	0 (2)	1 (10)	12 (44)
Totals	23	85	38	23	18	17	51	255

### Key themes in Q3

- 4.5 Inflation continues to be a theme across a number of areas in Q3 and is referenced in regard to delivering the agreed Town Deals in collaboration with our partners across Rowley Regis, Smethwick and West Bromwich and the delivery of HRA/residential schemes.
- 4.6 Staff capacity is also a theme referenced in the commentary for 6 performance indicators. However, there are plans in place to address this issue across all areas, with performance expected to improve as a result in Q4, with the exception of the Adults Contact Centre where a transformation partner is being sought to address the issue holistically, looking at the number of customers using the service and the processes that are being followed.

## 5. Our achievements in Q3

- 5.1 Performance for 'FOI Compliance in timescales' was 92% in Q3 against a target of 95%, just below target but the best performance recorded to date over a quarter. Taking December alone, performance was 96%. A



great deal of work has taken place to improve performance over recent months – this time last year performance was 78%, so we have seen a big increase. The focus will now be to retain performance at current levels to achieve the target in Q4.

- 5.2 Performance for 'Corporate Contact Centre average call wait time' was 3 minutes 11 seconds in Q3, better than the target of 3 minutes 30 seconds. This is a real improvement in performance compared to this time last year when the average call wait time was 8 minutes 29 seconds.
- 5.3 Forge Mill Farm has improved performance across all income strands and is now performing above target, with the new Education Barn capital project in development.
- 5.4 Grant Thornton's findings from their second follow-up review in Autumn 2023 concluded that we have made sufficient progress for them to lift the three statutory recommendations. This represents a hugely significant milestone in our improvement journey towards coming out of government intervention.
- 5.5 A successful scrutiny budget session was held in January where cabinet members were held to account on their budget proposals for 2024-25, demonstrating openness and transparency.
- 5.6 We have been allocated £18m for the Grove Lane Masterplan and have secured £20m under the Long-Term Plan for Towns (Smethwick).
- 5.7 Housing provide the most work experience (22 of 129) and apprenticeship (11 of 50) opportunities for young people. This good practice forms part of their workforce strategy
- 5.8 Secondary School attendance in Sandwell is now in line with the national average (91.50% Sandwell and NA), the targeted support model has worked well. The School Attendance Service is working with Sandwell





Residential Education Service to pilot focused support for vulnerable cohorts.

- 5.9 Sandwell was successful in its launch of the Priority Education Investment Area programme to run across both phases and all schools. This DfE investment is hoped to further drive up the attainment rates across the borough.
- 5.10 Over the last 5 years, Sandwell schools have consistently had a higher percentage of pupils achieving any passes at GCSE equivalent than nationally or regionally. In the 2022/23 academic year Sandwell 97.2% (96.8% in England and 96.9% in the West Midlands).
- 5.11 The development of intermediate care and reablement services for Harvest View, Sandwell's flagship social care and health facility, has been implemented on the top floor which opened January 2024. Here, therapists will speak to a patient who needs rehabilitation after they are discharged from hospital about how best to continue their treatment, giving them tailored short-term care to re-learn the skills required to keep them safe and independent at home, or to adapt to be as independent as possible.
- 5.12 The 'Percentage of properties with a Domestic Electrical Installation Condition report (DEICR) under 5-years old (or in legal resolution)', whilst below the target of 100% has improved considerably (95.35%) since last quarter (93.31%) and latest data in Q4 shows that performance has improved further (98%). Historic no-access cases are seeing a positive impact following new processes we have introduced (all of these either now have an appointment or are going through a legal process). Further work is being done on re allocating internal resource to deal with the backlog.
- 5.13 The proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out is 99.39% in Q3 against a target of 100%. Latest figures (February 2024) show that this has improved (99.55%) due to additional resources and management focus and Q4 figures should again illustrate an improvement.



## 6. Areas for improvement - The Best Start in life for Children and Young People

### Performance Monitoring

- 6.1 At the end of Q3 Sandwell Children's Trust (SCT) are projecting a year end deficit of £3,628k against the Contract Sum, in real terms this is an overspend of £4,370k as there is an expectation for SCT to achieve a surplus of £740k by the end of the year (rated 'red'). These projections are based on nine months of activity and subject to change. Costs are being driven up by the increase of children placed in residential care (49 in March 2023 which has increased to 62 at the end of December 2023). There has also been an increase in the average unit cost of each placement; from £5,225 in 2022/23 to £6,035 2023/24 year to date, an increase of 16.2%. SCT has advertised a block contract for the provision of up to nine residential care beds, across three homes, for Sandwell children. The tender invitation was issued at the end of September however only one provider submitted a bid, and this was non-compliant. Discussions are taking place with SCT on what other transformation activity could be undertaken in respect of placements.
- 6.2 The '% of Schools 'Good' or 'Outstanding' OFSTED rating - Special and alternative provision' is below target (71% against a target of 86%, rated 'red'). Performance for Primary and Secondary Schools is also just below target ('amber'). However, this data includes academies as well as Local Authority maintained schools.
- 6.3 'Early Help - Referrals to Social Care with no evidence of Multi-Agency Early Help in the prior 12 months' is above target at 84% (rated 'red'). Some of this may be risk aversion by partners making referrals due to the Christmas period. Taking into consideration those referrals that had an assessment completed and were either stepped down to early help or were "no further action", this decreases to 67%, placing the indicator well within tolerance. The Early Help Partnership will discuss at the next strategic group the definition of this indicator, and this may result in a change as to how this indicator is presented from the new financial year.



- 6.4 The number of Children on a Child Protection Plan has increased in December 2023 to 501, now at a rate of 59 per 10,000. This is above Statistical Neighbour Average (48.6 per 10,000) (rated 'red'). The number of children subject to CP plans are being monitored closely by both the operational teams and Safeguarding Unit. Given the increase in numbers, the Director of Partnerships and Practice led a review of the children who had been made subject to a child protection plan. The analysis focused on threshold application and decision making. The review concluded overall that threshold application was appropriate with evidence of timely decision making and it also found that a higher number of large sibling groups were entering onto a Child Protection Plan; 10 families and 48 Children who have started on a Child Protection plan were part of a sibling group of 4+ Children. However, given the increase in child protection numbers, the Director of Operations has arranged a meeting between Operations and the Safeguarding Unit to consider some of the wider issues which may be impacting on child protection numbers, namely timely step down from CP following intervention, effectiveness of Children in Need (CIN) planning and the impact of the intervention hub.
- 6.5 Performance for '% Care leavers that are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) (aged 19-21)' is above target at 58% (rated 'red'). A Corporate Parenting Board has been set up and has an action plan, which includes how to improve performance for this indicator. The delivery of the Corporate Parenting Action Plan is also rated as 'amber' in the Corporate Plan updates. The development of a Corporate Parenting Strategy is an item on the action plan and is being co-produced with young people and partners in readiness for March. In addition, an Emotional well-being pilot started in January. Further actions include the Employment and Skills Team continuing to attend sessions at METSEC where there is a young persons space, to develop relationships with care leavers and to update on support available. Links have also been made with staff at Coventry Council, who have developed bespoke approaches to help young people, including



residential trips to develop confidence, and effective use of their Post 16 Advisor in their Virtual School.

- 6.6 The ‘% of 16s and 17s not in employment, education or training (NEET)’ is above the target of 1.75% (2.3%, rated ‘red’). The increase in % of NEET is a reflection of the national and regional trend as part of a Covid legacy. However, Sandwell’s performance compares well with West Midlands (2.7%) and England (3.1%). European Social Fund provision ended in October last year which provided keyworker posts and provision to remove barriers for young people further from the labour market. We will be using UK Shared Prosperity Funding from April 2024 to commission appropriate provision and fund a key worker post, but there has been a funding gap between November 2023 and March 2024. The team remains proactive and has been successful in working with one training provider to take additional trainees, whilst exploring options with other training providers and looking at how we can work closer together and increase access for Sandwell young people. It is worth noting that more than half our NEET young people are reporting emotional wellbeing and mental health issues.

### **Corporate Plan Monitoring**

- 6.7 There are issues with delivery of the School Nursing contract due to staffing levels being below the acceptable threshold. A report has been requested with procurement and the Director of Public Health (DPH) advised. An internal action plan is currently being implemented to address under-performance and identify next steps (rated 'red').
- 6.8 With regards to the implementation of the Early Help Strategy, the pace of change not been as swift as the partnership hoped in relation to partners offering early help. During November – December 2023, the Early Help Partnership reconfigured to form two arms; one strategic and the second operational. The Strategic group will represent all key partners and will be accountable for their services’ response to early help and act as champions to ensure change within their service. The



Operational group will offer assurance around quality assurance and will help bring about grass roots change within their service (rated 'amber').

## 7. Areas for improvement - People Live Well and Age Well

### Performance Monitoring

- 7.1 'The proportion of section 42 safeguarding enquiries where a risk was identified, and the reported outcome was that this risk was reduced or removed' has improved since Q2. Whilst we are still below target (94% against a target of 95% -rated 'amber'), the figure for October - December is 98% so performance at the end of Q4 overall should improve further (PI measured cumulatively). The actions taken following Q2 to support staff through surgeries, provide feedback from learning from performance validation meetings and also address practitioner knowledge have had a positive impact.

### Corporate Plan Monitoring

- 7.2 The joint Equipment Stores site development and relocation of Community Alarms remains rated 'red'; there are still legal issues with the site barriers of A1 Clutches (A1 clutches share land on site at Dolton Way alongside several other businesses and installed a barrier that they padlock closed each evening and at weekends. Community Alarms require 24/7 access when they relocate and ideally barrier needs to be removed. Staff safety will be a concern if they have to get in and out of vehicles to unlock a padlock barrier each time they want to access/exit the site). The Councils Legal team have repeatedly tried to contact A1 clutches over last few months but are still awaiting a response. The relocation of Community Alarms will be end of February/March 2024. A meeting was held with BT in January and live tests will be agreed with Jontek in February 2024.
- 7.3 There is currently no feasibility study completed against planned design for the communal areas at Walker Grange (site survey and drawings were completed 2022). Plans to take this forward will be formalised once HRA forecasts are remodelled (which will be February onwards, when stock condition data has been collected and some assumptions can be made) (rated 'red').





7.4 Implementing a new Day opportunities model across the market is rated as 'amber' and the update from Q2 remains. Until blockages in the system around Direct Payments are resolved we cannot move forward in terms of diversifying the market. A workshop is being arranged to try and resolve some of the issues both from the administration of Direct Payments and the perception in the use and application of Direct Payments by Social Work staff and people who draw upon social care and support. Discussions with the Hospital Brokerage team are taking place to pilot rollout opportunities.

## 8. Areas for improvement - Strong Resilient Communities

### Performance Monitoring

- 8.1 The number of library visits in person is below target (153,150 visits against a target of 163,125, rated 'red'). This can be attributed to a number of factors:
- Issues of library books were down 19% against target (largely due to budget and increases to the cost of books which mean we are unable to buy as many copies as in previous years.)
  - A charge to reserve books was introduced in 2023-24.
  - Since Covid, we have lost many experienced staff which has also impacted capacity for outreach work to promote libraries and develop partnerships.
  - Some libraries were above target and there is a general correlation with the number of activities being held in those libraries.

The service is developing plans to impact visitor numbers moving forwards, particularly individual libraries where visitor numbers have dropped. These plans will be ready by mid-February.

- 8.2 Improved street and environmental cleanliness (Litter, Detritus, Graffiti and Flyposting) is measured 3 times per year through SERCO. For August – November, the % of litter and detritus has increased by 2% since last quarter, although graffiti has reduced by 0.5%, rated 'red').

## 9. Areas for improvement - Quality homes in Thriving Neighbourhoods



## Performance Monitoring

- 9.1 The 'Percentage of homelessness cases successfully prevented (under Homelessness Reduction Act duty)' is below target (51.5% - rated 'red'). This is because of the challenging housing market and the volume of cases that are presenting very late in the process. The housing market is at its most challenging for securing longer term alternative accommodation for our clients. The turnover of council properties has seen a 30% reduction over the last 12 months (meaning there are less properties becoming available) and the accessibility and affordability of private rented properties is at its lowest point in years. This is in part due to affordability issues and also due to the very buoyant market. The service works very hard in securing properties for our clients and has one of the best offers in the country as recognised by the National Resident Landlord Association (NRLA). The increase to Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates in April 2024 will help bridge this gap but the market will remain very challenging for a number of years to come. Our Q3 performance on homelessness prevention is below target but we did see improvements in November and December months which suggests we should see performance improve in Q4.
- 9.2 The 'Number of long-term empty homes brought into use' remains below target (3 against a target of 10 – rated 'red'). This is due to the delay in attracting and recruiting the right person for the Empty Homes Officer role earlier in the year. The new officer has been in post since September 2023 and is making good progress but has required a lead in time to understand Sandwell and the challenges around the agenda. Performance has improved with 2 new properties brought back into use in Q3 compared to 1 in Q2 and none in previous quarters. Whilst this is slower pace than intended when the target was set at the start of the year (again due to recruitment delays), we expect performance to improve exponentially and to recover to projected levels by the end of Q2 of 2024/25.
- 9.3 The percentage of current tenancies with a live valid Home Check in place (in the last 3 years) is below target (21.9% against a target of 30% - rated 'red') but has improved since last quarter (17.60% in Q2). Temporary resources (an additional Coordinator and six Housing Advisors) should come online in Q4 and will be in place for six months,



which will enable Housing Services Officers to focus more of their time on Home Checks.

- 9.4 The number of residents assisted by Welfare Rights is below target (RAG rated 'Red'), although the number of residents assisted is higher in Q3 (2,570) compared with Q2 (2,476). This is due to the increase in complex cases which is resulting in officers having to spend more time on each case. The team are still working overtime which has been introduced within the service to support the increasing number of residents and the service has recruited two new members of staff into temporary posts which will increase the support to residents. This did not hinder performance on the monetary gains for the quarter as the service were successful in gaining £5,386,275 for residents, which was above target. Welfare Rights also are the lead agency for preparing and providing representation for Tribunal appeals, of which there are significantly more which take additional time to prepare and represent.

### **Corporate Plan Monitoring**

- 9.5 With regards to delivering new affordable homes, construction cost inflation and ground conditions continue to impact on HRA/residential schemes. Specific schemes are being reviewed and value engineered, prior to re-tendering (rated 'amber').
- 9.6 Work continues on the refurbishment programmes to High Rise blocks, with all blocks in progress however, due to rebalancing of HRA, the schemes that are yet to be on site (Allen House and Moorlands and St.Giles scheme) have been reprofiled to start in future years – Cabinet paper to be submitted (rated 'amber').

## **10. Areas for improvement - A Strong Inclusive Economy**

### **Performance Monitoring**

- 10.1 'The number of 'Businesses receiving Financial Assistance or Grants' is below target at 17 against a target of 60 (rated 'red'). There was a temporary delay in grant administration due to policy refinement. Despite





this, we successfully awarded 15 grants this quarter. There is a robust pipeline of businesses eagerly expressing their interest in applying for grants and now the process is established we anticipate administering the remaining 52 grants and financial assistance in Quarter 4.

### **Corporate Plan Monitoring**

10.2 The development of a Safer Green Spaces strategy has been delayed due to the priority focus being on income generation in the service to meet targets set in the 2023/24 budget (rated 'amber'). This is now scheduled to go to Scrutiny in May and Cabinet in June 2024.

## **11. Areas for improvement - A Connected and Accessible Sandwell**

### **Corporate Plan Monitoring**

11.1 The action 'Develop and deliver projects that reduce barriers to the use of public transport and sustainable travel choices including working with Transport for West Midlands in relation to bus and metro provision and the Rail Alliance' is rated as 'amber' as bus service reductions are still an issue. The WMCA lead on the delivery of the Bus Service Improvement Plan which sets out a roadmap to better services for passengers and communities, urban and rural, fully informed by local needs. This plan is supported by individual local authorities and has targets set for 2024/25 and 2029/30 and is available at <https://www.tfwm.org.uk/media/1xebdeu4/wmca-bsip-05-november-2021.pdf>. The Wednesbury to Dudley metro extension is progressing and is broadly on track.

## **12. Areas for improvement - One Team One Council**

### **Performance Monitoring**

12.1 In Q3 an average of 8.8 working days were lost per employee due to sickness compared to 8.28 working days during the same period last year. Stress, depression, mental health related sickness remain as the leading cause of sickness. Working days lost for short term sickness



reduced by 16%, whilst long term sickness increased by 20% compared to Q3 last year. 4 of the 9 Directorates achieved a reduction in sickness compared to last year (ASC, Children and Education, Housing, Law and Governance), but performance for all Directorates was above the 6.21 day target.

- 12.2 The number of new formal grievance cases was 7 in Q3 against a target of 4 (rated 'red'). So far this year there have been 20 new formal grievance cases. The year-end total for 2022/23 was 32.
- 12.3 Performance across all customer service 'front door' measures has improved in Q3 compared to Q2, although some continue to perform worse than the target.
- 12.4 The average waiting time in the Adults Contact Centre is 1 minute 14 seconds in Q3, against a target of 30 seconds (rated 'red'). However, performance has improved since Q2 (1 minute 27 seconds). The service is unable to manage the demand within the current structure/resources available. The Abandonment rate in the Adults Contact Centre was better than target (4% against a target of 6%).
- 12.5 The Revenues and Benefits Contact Centre Average Wait was 4 minutes 40 seconds in Q3 (rated 'red') against a target of 3 minutes 30 seconds. The abandonment rate was better than target at 5.60%. Both the abandonment rate and average wait time have significantly improved on the last quarter and compared to the same time last year. We have taken on some additional staff who have come out of their 6-week training and this has helped to improve the current performance. Whilst waiting to speak to an advisor, residents are being sent links to the website to encourage self-service and we are also promoting the live chat facility to reduce the number of calls.
- 12.6 Performance for 'SARs compliance with timescales' is below target at 62.07% (rated 'red'). The compliance rate is being significantly impacted by the volume of requests for Housing Disrepair claims whereby the documents required to make a HDR claim are being requested through



the SAR process. Excluding SARs made for HDR claims the compliance rate would be 77%. SARs for HDR claims make up 23% of all SARs received in Q3 (16 out of 70). Processes have been implemented to prevent the need for the documents required for a HDR claim being requested under a SAR. Improvements should be seen in our future quarterly performance.

- 12.7 With regards to ‘% of stage 1 complaints responded to in 10 working days (excl. ASC)’, Q3 Performance is below target at 73%, although there has been an improvement since Q2 (68%) and Q1 (52.29%). The areas of concern are Children and Education (30%), the Children’s Trust (37%) and Housing (63%). The Customer Feedback Team (CFT) continue to assist all directorates to respond promptly to corporate complaints within a 10-day timeframe and there is an increased focus on this across the organisation that is driving improvement. This improvement also focuses on the quality of the response, including resolving queries at the first point of contact. For Q3 the average time taken to respond to stage 1 complaints (excl. ASC) was 10 days, a reduction from 14 days in Q2.
- 12.8 The average satisfaction rating from members using the Councillor portal is below target at 3.93/5 (rated ‘red’- the target is 4.5/5). In Q3 there were 27 Cllr ratings. Of these, 6 were given a 1 or 2 star rating. Of these 6, 2 were given a low rating because of officer management of the case and 4 were given a low rating because of the quality of the final response.
- 12.9 There is an overspend of £1.120m against the gross expenditure budget of £141.160m for the HRA. There is an ongoing review to find ways to mitigate this overspend (rated ‘red’).

### **Corporate Plan Monitoring**

- 12.10 Collective income targets were not met for Sandwell Valley Visitor Centre, Forge Mill Farm, Lightwoods House and Park (Visitor Services) due to weather and lack of wet weather provisions, and lack of current



offer at Sandwell Valley Visitor Centre. This will be addressed through the adoption of the Masterplan for Sandwell Valley which goes to Cabinet on the 13<sup>th</sup> March and setting of targets for 2024/25 (rated 'red').

- 12.11 During Q3 work has commenced on the development of the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) Audit Action plan which will support the development of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy. There is some slippage in regards to the EDI Strategy, due to staffing resource (rated 'amber').

### **13. Housing Improvement and Transformation Plan**

- 13.1 A series of additional directorate and service level performance dashboards and monitoring plans are being developed as part of a wider Housing Improvement and Transformation Plan. This will also take into account existing internal and external improvement plans to ensure better governance, service delivery and improve the management of resources across the Housing Directorate. An Officer has now been recruited to lead this work and a team is being put together. Weekly meetings are being held to review performance and progress made. The Housing Improvement and Transformation Plan will form part of the wider Corporate Transformation programme. The Housing Directorate will work with the Corporate Team to identify what information needs to be included in the Corporate Performance Report moving forwards to ensure corporate oversight. An update will be provided in the Q4/annual report.

### **14. Contract Governance**

- 14.1 Reports on contract governance have been provided for Sandwell Children's Trust, Serco, Places Leisure and Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT) and assurance of governance arrangements has been provided through these reports. A summary for each one is detailed below.

#### **Sandwell Children's Trust (SCT)**



- 14.2 Since April 2018, children's services have been delivered by Sandwell Children's Trust on behalf of the Council. The Trust delivers the following range of services:
- Children's Social Care
  - Fostering
  - Targeted Early Help
- 14.3 SCT annual review report was presented to Cabinet on the 18<sup>th</sup> October in line with their contractual obligations. Approval was gained from Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> October to extend the appointment of the independent non-executive director Stephen Rimmer for up to 3 years and the process of agreeing the contract sum for 2024/25 has commenced in line with the process laid down in the Service Delivery Contract.
- 14.4 As set out in para 5.1, at the end of Q3 SCT are projecting a year end deficit of £3,628k against the Contract Sum, in real terms this is an overspend of £4,370k as there is an expectation for SCT to achieve a surplus of £740k by the end of the year. These projections are based on 9 months of activity and subject to change.
- 14.5 The total number of children in care, as of December 2023, is 829. This is a slight decrease since last month but still an overall increase of 26 children since the beginning of the financial year, some of this increase is due to an increase in the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) in Sandwell.
- 14.6 The rate per 10,000 of children in care in December is 97.7. This is a worse position than December 2022, when the rate per 10,000 was 96.2. However, this is in line with increases regionally and nationally. The number of children on a child protection plan has increased as set out in para 5.4.
- 14.7 Sandwell is outperforming statistical neighbours in respect of the number of children coming into care, with fewer children coming in to care however this is balanced by the fact that fewer children are leaving care compared to statistical neighbours. SCT need to ensure that children are leaving care appropriately and that there is not drift and delay in this occurring.
- 14.8 In July 2023 Cabinet agreed a package of financial incentives to improve the recruitment and retention of social workers, this is collectively known





as the Sandwell Deal. The initial impact of the Sandwell Deal is currently being reviewed; those findings will be included in the Q4 report.

14.9 Since December 2022 there has been an improvement in the balance of agency to permanent social workers, with agency workers now accounting for under 20% of the total social worker cohort. In addition to there being a better balance, there are also fewer vacancies. Over the last quarter the number of vacancies has fallen by just over 5% to an all-time low.

## Serco

14.10 The council's contract with Serco was awarded in 2010 and runs until 2035. It has a contract value in the region of £34m per annum. The contract covers services including waste and recycling collection, household recycling centre management, street cleansing and fleet management and renewal.

14.11 The contract has a set of regular meetings in place with standard agendas relating to the contractual requirements from key outcome targets (KOTs) to operational issues. These meetings are supported by regular cross channel communications between the SMB and Serco teams. Leadership Team also receive regular contract reports that provide oversight and issues are raised as appropriate.

14.12 The contract contains the requirement for the provision of regular data from the contractor to be provided, there is also an associated requirement for SMBC to provide information to Serco, relating to Council priorities annually and fleet maintenance through a set of KPIs. In addition, there is an integration with the Council's My Sandwell reporting tool.

14.13 Serco's performance reporting was significantly delayed at the end of Q2 and Q3. This matter was raised with Serco at senior level and the reporting has subsequently been caught-up. Serco have identified a number of measures that should prevent this circumstance recurring. Work is almost concluded to upload the Serco contract onto the Council's Intend Contract Management platform. It is intended to commence contract management through the Intend platform as soon as practicable. This system will further expedite the submission and approval of performance data.



- 14.14 Overall service performance in Q3 was good. Serco and Council officers jointly updated the annual leaf clearance plan leading to a significant reduction in resident complaints. The rescheduling of Christmas collections worked effectively and the first year of the subscribed garden waste service came to a successful conclusion. Q3 also saw the arrival of the next tranche of new refuse collection vehicles (RCVs). This will allow the replacement of the older vehicles improving service reliability.
- 14.15 The financial settlement for the missed service during the summer's industrial action resolved and will be formally agreed and settled in Q4.

### Places Leisure

- 14.16 The Council has a 25-year contract with Places Leisure to operate West Bromwich Leisure centre. The contract is a Design, Build, Operate and Maintain contract which ensured value for money by reducing design and build costs as well as ongoing maintenance liabilities
- 14.17 Monthly operational reports are provided to update on performance, – operational and technical. Quarterly contract management meetings are held to ensure the ongoing monitoring of the contract and performance. These cover Operational Performance, Health and Wellbeing outputs and Customer Feedback.
- 14.18 A highlight this quarter is that Places Leisure were finalists for the UK Active Award for Healthy Communities for our Drug and Alcohol Recovery project running in Sandwell in partnership with Sandwell Council and Cranstoun. Although they didn't win, they did however play an overall part in Places Leisure winning both the Organisation of the Year award and the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion award.
- 14.19 In terms of Q3 participation, Places Leisure's performance is returning to pre-pandemic levels. Participation levels are continuing to rise, and memberships are significantly above 2019/20. Only learn-to-swim numbers remain below pre-pandemic levels.
- 14.20 Based upon projected operational, and therefore financial performance, a business plan was agreed for the duration of the contract. The



business plan results in an annual management fee payment to the Council of circa £20,000.

14.21 There is also a utility benchmarking arrangement included in the contract, whereby PL own the risk on consumption and the Council are liable for the risk on tariff. Pre-pandemic operations resulted in a net gain for the Council – Management Fee minus Utility Benchmarking Payment. This is calculated and paid at the end of each financial year. In 2022/23 the utility benchmark resulted in a payment from the Council to PL of £239k. Modelling for 2023/24 indicates that the utility benchmarking will require a payment from the Council to PL of £202k.

### **Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT)**

14.22 With regards to governance and contract management, work continues between Council Officers, Bevan Brittan solicitors and SLT's solicitor to finalise the Deed of Variation (DoV) to the Management and Funding Agreement (MFA). This DoV will extend the termination and subsequent period of operation to 31 March 2027 and refine the partnership as agreed and signed on 13 July 2023. This position was confirmed by Cabinet on 18 October 2023.

14.23 In Q3, Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT) managed the following leisure centres in Sandwell:

- Haden Hill Leisure Centre
- Hadley Stadium
- Harry Mitchell Leisure Centre
- Portway Lifestyle Centre
- Sandwell Aquatics Centre
- Tipton Leisure Centre
- Tipton Sports Academy
- Wednesbury Leisure Centre

14.24 With regards to operational performance, the headline figures are below. However, these are not directly comparable because of the swimming pools at Haden Hill Leisure Centre being closed for Q3 and the Langley and Smethwick swimming centres closing and Sandwell Aquatics centre opening over the summer (the offer was different for Q3 in 2022/23).





Also, as with effect from Q3, concessionary memberships are no longer included due to their subsidy.

- 525,820 attendances October – December 2023. **15.6%** up on Q3 FY23 (454,691)
- From October 2022 to October 2023, memberships increased by **13%**
- 4,880 enrolled on Learn to Swim – **2.6%** up from Q3 FY23

14.25 In terms of finance, the same as in Q2; the current forecast outturn is £167k over budget; SLT have identified management action to bring this back to budget by the end of the year.

## 15. Strategic Risk Register

15.1 Effective risk management is a key element of good corporate governance, as noted in the council's [Code of Corporate Governance](#), and is essential to the overall performance of the council in meeting its corporate plan objectives. Good risk management will ensure that resources are used efficiently and effectively, and that assets and resources are protected against risk in the most efficient way.

15.2 The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) receive the Council's Strategic Risk Register (SRR) on a regular basis for review and comment. The role of the ARAC is to provide assurance to the Council that it has a system of governance, risk management and internal control in place and that the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements continue to inform decision making.

15.3 The SRR does not include all of the risks faced by the Council. Other risks are captured within directorate, programme and project risk registers in line with the Council's risk management framework. The latest SRR was presented to ARAC in January 2024 and is attached as **Appendix 3**.



## 16. Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	There are no direct financial implications to this report.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	A corporate performance management framework was identified as a key gap in the council's governance arrangements by Grant Thornton in 2021. The establishment of the corporate performance management framework was a key action in the council's Improvement Plan agreed by Council in January 2022 and updated in June 2022. The PMF will enable officer and political leadership to improve oversight and corporate grip of the council's performance.
<b>Risk:</b>	Should the council not implement a robust performance management framework, then it will not have the corporate oversight and intelligence to inform decision making and effectively manage risks to achieving service delivery and the strategic objectives identified in the Corporate Plan. These risks and the associated mitigations are noted in the SRR. The corporate performance management framework is a key mechanism to report progress and performance to the Government appointed Commissioners.
<b>Equality:</b>	Equality measures are included in the PMF, including the Organisational Health workforce indicators and the progress of the Corporate Plan.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	The measures to track progress of the Corporate Plan include a series of health and wellbeing indicators. This enables the council's leadership to see at a high level the direction of travel of the borough's health and wellbeing and seek to continue good practice or identify mitigating actions to address issues.
<b>Social Value</b>	Measures in the PMF include looking at percentage of spend in the local area.
<b>Climate Change</b>	There are measures in the PMF that look at air quality and passenger journeys on public transport and 'we will'



	statements in the Corporate Plan on renewable energy measures in the build of new homes.
<b>Corporate Parenting</b>	There are measures in the PMF that look at children in care related to education, placements moves, health assessments and NEET figures.

## 17. Appendices

- Appendix 1 – CPR Q3
- Appendix 2 – Corporate Plan Updates
- Appendix 3 – Strategic Risk Register (December 2023)
- Appendix 4 – PIs to be removed or amended

## 18. Background papers

[Performance Management Framework – Q2 Monitoring Q2 Monitoring Appendices](#)

Report to Council 21 April 2022 - [Performance Management Framework for the Council](#)



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Corporate Performance Report 2023/24 - Quarter 3

Rag Rating

<b>Green</b>	On or better than target	<b>DOT</b>	Direction of travel - comparator to previous quarter and the same quarter in the previous year
<b>Amber</b>	Worse than target but within target tolerance		
<b>Red</b>	Worse than target and outside the target tolerance		

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CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
<b>The Best Start in Life for Children and Young People</b>									
B3e	% of Schools 'Good' or 'Outstanding' OFSTED rating Special and alternative provision	Bigger is better	86%	5%	71% (31st Dec 2023)	71% (30th Sep 2023)	86% (31st Dec 2022)	Data for published Ofsted reports as at 31st December 2023. England 89%, West Midlands 80%. Please note that this data includes academies.	Children and Education
B6a	Rate of Children on a Child Protection Plan per 10,000 CYP population	Smaller is better	45	45.1 to 55	59	54.4	45.5	<p>The number of Children on a Child Protection Plan has increased in December 2023 to 501, now at a rate of 59 per 10,000, this is above Statistical Neighbour Average (48.6). The number of children subject to CP plans are being monitored closely by both the operational teams and Safeguarding Unit.</p> <p>Given the increase in numbers, the Director of Partnerships and Practice led a review of the children who had been made subject to a child protection plan. The analysis focused on threshold application and decision making. The review concluded that overall that threshold application was appropriate with evidence of timely decision making and also found that a higher number of large sibling groups entering onto a Child Protection Plan, 10 families and 48 Children who have started on a Child Protection plan were part of a sibling group of 4+ Children.</p> <p>However given the increase in child protection numbers, the director of operations has arranged a meeting between operations and the safeguarding unit to consider some of the wider issues which may be impacting on CP numbers, namely timely step down from CP following intervention, effectiveness of CIN planning and the impact of the intervention hub.</p>	Children and Education

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
B6c	% Care leavers that are NEET (aged 19-21)	Smaller is better	46.5%	46.6%-55%	58%	54%	61%	The number of Care Leavers not engaged in employment education and training has increased over the last quarter to 58% this is above West Midlands, England and SN averages for 2023. A Corporate Parenting Board has been set up and has an action plan, which includes how to improve performance for this indicator. The Corporate Parenting Strategy is being co-produced with young people and partners in readiness for March and an Emotional well-being pilot started in January. The Employment and Skills Team continue to attend sessions at METSEC where there is a young persons space, to develop relationships with care leavers and to update on support available. Links have been made with staff at Coventry Council, who have developed bespoke approaches to help young people, including residential trips to develop confidence, and effective use of their Post 16 Advisor in their Virtual School.	Children and Education
B8c	SCT Financial performance against budget	Bigger is better	£740k Annual Surplus	5%	£3,628K deficit	£207k Annual Deficit	£0k - breakeven	At the end of Q3 SCT are projecting a year end deficit of £3,628k against the Contract Sum, in real terms this is an overspend of £4,370k as there is an expectation for SCT to achieve a surplus of £740k by the end of the year. These projections are based on 9 months of activity and subject to change. Costs are being driven up by the increase of children placed in residential care (49 in March 2023 which has increased to 62 at the end of December 2024). There has also been an increase in the average unit cost of each placement; from £5,225 in 2022/23 to £6,035 2023/24 year to date, an increase of 16.2%. SCT has advertised a block contract for the provision of up to 9 residential care beds, across three homes, for Sandwell children. The tender invitation was issued at the end of September however only one provider submitted a bid and this was non-compliant. Discussions are taking place with SCT on what other transformation activity could be undertaken in respect of placements.	Children and Education

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
B12b	Early Help - Referrals to Social Care with no evidence of Multi-Agency Early Help in the prior 12 months	Smaller is better	<70%	70.1%-75%	84%	77%	78%	This indicator has seen a decline in performance this quarter. Some of this may be risk aversion by partners making referrals due to the Christmas period. Taking into consideration those referrals that had an assessment completed and were either stepped down to early help or were "no further action", this decreases to 67% placing the indicator well within tolerance. EH Partnership will discuss at the next strategic group the definition of this indicator and this may result in a change as to how this indicator is presented from the new financial year.	Children and Education
B6d	% of 16s and 17s not in employment, education or training (NEET)	Smaller is better	1.75%	5%	2.10%	1.70%	1.70%	The increase in % NEET is a reflection of the national and regional trend as part of a Covid legacy. However, Sandwell's performance compares well with West Midlands (2.5%) England (2.7%) Statistical Neighbours (2.9%) and Black Country (2.0%).  European Social Fund provision ended in October last year which provided keyworker posts and provision to remove barriers for young people further from the labour market. We will be using UK Shared Prosperity Funding from April to commission appropriate provision and fund a key worker post, but there has been a funding gap between November 2023 and March 2024. The team remains proactive and has been successful in working with one training provider to take additional trainees, whilst exploring options with other training providers and looking at how we can work closer together and increase access for Sandwell young people. It is worth noting that more than half our NEET young people are reporting emotional wellbeing and mental health issues.	Children and Education
B3c	% of Schools 'Good' or 'Outstanding' OFSTED rating Primary	Bigger is better	89%	5%	87% (31st Dec 2023)	87% (30th Sep 2023)	87% (31st Dec 2022)	Data for published Ofsted reports as at 31st December 2023. England 91%, West Midlands 89%. Please note that this data includes academies.	Children and Education

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
B3d	% of Schools 'Good' or 'Outstanding' OFSTED rating Secondary	Bigger is better	80%	5%	79% (31st Dec 2023)	79% (30th Sep 2023)	79% (31st Dec 2022)	Data for published Ofsted reports as at 31st December 2023. England 83%, West Midlands 83%. Please note that this data includes academies.	Children and Education
B9e	Children in Care - Same Placement for 2+ years	Bigger is better	68%	60-68%	62%	64%	68.5%	339/547 Children in Care for over 2.5 years have been in same placement for 2+ years this has decreased slightly on the previous quarter. Fostering, commissioning and the Children in Care service are working with intervention hub to support Children with placement disruptions to ensure Children in Care have improved placement stability. We are working on long term matching within the Trust to ensure longer term stability of our Children in Care. We would therefore expect this PI to continue to remain in 'amber' for a number of months due to the size of the cohort of Children in Care.	Children and Education
B9f	Children in Care with 3+ moves (placement moves)	Smaller is better	9%	9-12%	9.2%	8.7%	8.9%	76 out of 829 Children in Care have had 3+ placement moves in last 12 months (see commentary above). 9.2% is in line with our comparators and below England Average of 10%. Again, we are working on long term matching within the Trust to ensure longer term stability of our Children in Care. We would therefore expect this PI to continue to remain in 'amber' for a number of months due to the size of the cohort of Children in Care.	Children and Education
B12c	Early Help - Number of Step Downs to Multi-Agency Early Help that do not return to Social Care within 12 months	Bigger is better	>80%	75%-79.9%	89%	79%	89%	This indicator is currently at its strongest position since Q2 2021-2022 with nearly 90% of step downs not returning to social care within 12 months	Children and Education
B6b	% children becoming subject of a CP Plan for the second or subsequent time (within two years)	Smaller is better	15%	15% to 22%	9.80%	22.00%	21.00%	The number of Children on a plan for 2nd and subsequent time within two years has decreased to 9.8% and better than target (15/152) this coincides with the reduction in re-referral rates over the quarter.	Children and Education



CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
B8a	Permanent vacancy rate of social workers	Smaller is better	<37%	37.1%-43%	24.60%	27.40%	41%	The number of permanent social work vacancies continue to reduce, with turnover of staff also reducing, there are currently 49.4 vacancies across the social work establishment, if including agency the real vacancy rate is 11.96 workers (6.4%)	Children and Education
B9h	Children missing from placement and return interviews in time (based on accepting and completed within 72 hours)	Bigger is better	75%	65-75%	76.70%	80.90%	78.40%	Missing return interviews remains above target at 76.7%, the main reasons for missing return interviews going out of timescale are due to the following: difficulty in contacting family/placement, family refused return home interview, multiple attempts to contact family and young person.	Children and Education
B12a	Early Help - Number of Allocated Lead Professionals by Organization	Smaller is better and Bigger is better	Strengthening Families <60% Other Partners >40%	Strengthening Families 60.1%-65% Other Partners 35-39.9%	55% Strengthening Families 45% Other Partners	52% Strengthening Families Other Partners 48%	63% Strengthening Families 37% Other Partners	Slight increase in the number of Lead Professionals within Strengthening Families service but remains well below (better) than the same position a year ago at 8% lower.	Children and Education
B12d	Early Help - Number of Children/Young People receiving intervention	NA - dependent	900-1200	<>10% of the range	1061	1023	934	Indicator is comfortably within target. 580 young people open to Strengthening Families with 481 young people open to Multi-Agency Early Help. The highest position for a quarter 3 recorded.	Children and Education

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
B11c	The number of Children who receive travel assistance (that is not transport to school)	Bigger is better	201 (year-end 2023/24)	5%	172 (Q3)	168 (1 Nov 23)	NA - New PI	<p>There is a year-end target for this PI and it is also being monitored quarterly.</p> <p>As of 31/12/2023, there were 971 on Transport and 172 receiving travel assistance (made up of 75 claiming parent mileage, 92 claiming a PTB and 5 with a travel pass). This compares to 848 on transport and 175 (made up of 63 claiming parent mileage, 108 claiming a personal transport budget and 4 with a travel pass) receiving travel assistance at the end of Q1. The number of pupils on Transport has increased since Q1. We continue to encourage parents wherever possible to not use transport but to claim mileage, a personal travel budget or travel pass to reduce overall costs. Increases in pupils using transport will inevitably impact on the budget, however, the service is working on a range of mitigations that have been shared with Cabinet and the Leadership Team.</p>	Children and Education
<b>The Best Start in Life for Children and Young People - Annual PIs reported this quarter</b>									
B5b	Percentage point gap between LA disadvantaged and not disadvantaged pupils nationally at KS2, achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths	Smaller is better	-21 (2023)	5%	-21 (2023 Revised) (annual data)	NA	-22.1 (2022 Revised)	Sandwell 2023 data indicates a 1.1 ppt reduction in the disadvantaged gap compared to 2022. Nationally the gap reduced by 0.5 to -22.4, in the West Midlands the gap reduced by 0.8 to -20.8.	Children and Education
B1	Percentage of children achieving a Good Level of Development in the Early Years Foundation Stage	Bigger is better	NA	5%	61% (2022/2023 AY Final)	NA	59% (2022)	Based on published data for summer 2023 Sandwell improved by 2 ppt when compared to 2022. National and Regional data also improved by 2 ppts between 2022 and 2023 to 67% and 66% respectively. A target of 62% has been set for 2023/24.	Children and Education

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
L17b/ASCOF 4B	The proportion of section 42 safeguarding enquiries where a risk was identified and the reported outcome was that this risk was reduced or removed	Bigger is better	95%	92% (tolerance score)	94%	90%	NA - New Pi	This PI is measured cumulatively. Performance has improved since Q2. Whilst we are still below target, the figure for October - December is 98% so performance at the end of Q4 overall should improve further. The actions taken following Q2 to support staff through surgeries, provide feedback from learning from performance validation meetings and also address practitioner knowledge have had a positive impact.	ASC
L18a/2D (formerly 2B)	The proportion of older people (65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into rablement/rehabilitation services	Bigger is better	68%	66% (tolerance score)	68.3% (Q2)	66% (Q1)	NA	Figure reported is for Q2 as the Q3 figure is not yet available. Performance in Q2 is slightly better than Q1, and is within target tolerance.	ASC
L14b/2E (formerly 1G)	The proportion of people who receive long-term support who are enabled to live in their home or with family	Bigger is better	70%	66% (tolerance score)	70%	70%	NA	This figure is an estimate based on October and November - awaiting full Quarters data.	ASC
L21b/6B	The percentage of adult social care providers rated good or outstanding by the Care Quality Commission	Bigger is better	70%	66% (tolerance score)	70%	70%	NA - New PI	Performance is on target. Performance has improved from 57% in Q4 2022/23.	ASC

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
L1d	The number of learners engaged in the use of the Sandwell Language Network to support learning English and Health literacy.	Bigger is better	325	5%	325	586	NA	This PI is reported on a contract that runs Sept 2023-Aug 24. In Q2 it was reported that the annual target was achieved for the preceding contract year. For the period September 23 - Aug 24, the target is to reach 325 individual learners by delivering 20 employability booster sessions, 21 ESOL courses and 1x IELTS course. SLN is on track to meet annual targets with 325 learners enrolled for the year, 18 employability sessions and 26 ESOL courses started delivery with 2 additional planned to start in Qtr 2, 1x IELTS course started and 20 new volunteers engaged for the year. This PI will be reported on each quarter. Whilst some will inevitably not complete the course, other courses may be added if demand dictates. The performance figure may therefore decrease and increase throughout the year.	Public Health
L1b	Engagement of faith sector in Public Health work	NA	Set up faith sector boards and recruit Faith Sector and Inclusion Health Development Officer	NA	Complete	NA	NA	The Faith Sector and Inclusion Health Development Officer recruited has been recruited and the Faith Sector Board meetings have been set up and are held bi-monthly. Each of the larger faiths in Sandwell now represented at the Faith Sector Board. New metrics to capture ongoing engagement for this indicator will be established for 24/25.	Public Health
L1f	The release of the Healthy Aging App - directed at providing information in multiple languages	NA	To develop and release the Healthy Aging App	NA	Complete	NA	NA	The app has successfully been developed and released. The service is monitoring usage figures.	Public Health
L4b	LGBTQ+ needs assessment and Challenge fund to support outcomes.	NA	Set up the Challenge Fund and complete the Needs Assessment	TBC	Complete	NA	NA	The Needs Assessment has been completed. The Health Challenge Fund has allocated 5 small grants to CVS organisations. The service is looking at monitoring information for 2024/25.	Public Health

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
L4c	Inclusive cycling programme	Bigger is better	Successful delivery of the programme	TBC	Complete	NA	NA	The programme was successfully delivered and now has ceased. A provider is being appointed for the summer of 2024 to deliver learn to ride sessions as part of the Cycle More Sandwell Programme and the service is looking at how this can be monitored through performance indicators.	Public Health
L6a	Towns based awareness of Public Health offer/ Stronger Sandwell - meetings held	Bigger is better	6 meetings are held each quarter for the 6 Towns in the borough	5%	6	NA	NA	6 town meeting in Q3 (aim for a PHDO Network Meeting in each town each Q) average attendance each meeting stands at 20.	Public Health
L8	Greenspace utilisation (physical activity in parks and open spaces)	Bigger is better	1 session per week for each of the 6 towns	5%	10 weekly sessions on offer across the 6 towns	NA	NA	In Q3 there were 10 weekly physical activity sessions on offer in parks and open spaces, with 597 participants attending.	Public Health
L1e	The targeting of the health checks at those most in need (% of checks delivered)	Bigger is better	100% (12,000 checks) (over 2 years - no quarterly target)	5%	17.6% (2,115) Cumulative	1,753 (revised)	NA	The NHS Health Check contract is over two years (Feb 2023 - Feb 2025 + possible 1 year) with a 6,000 Health Checks per year. Health Check performance is being managed by a Remedial Action Plan (RAP) for the 1st year whereby underachieved PBR target for contract Year 1 can be accessed in contract Year 2. This is caveated that all block target for year 1 and year 2 must be completed prior to any PBR being claimed. Overall target for the 2 years is 12,000 Health Checks. The underachieved target is partially due to the delays in the installation of the Software system within GP clinical systems.	Public Health
L3	We will continue to push for improved vaccine take up, childhood vaccines, flu season and COVID boosters	Bigger is better	90%	5%	NA	NA	NA	Information not available	Public Health

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
L2	Number of grants provided concerning Vision 2030, Better Mental Health and Healthy Lifestyles	Bigger is better	NA	NA	Mental Health - 10 Vision 2030 and Healthy Lifestyles - 25	7	NA	No targets are set for this indicator. As of Q3, there are 10 active Better Mental Health grants operating across the Borough. Under Vision 2030 and Healthy Lifestyles there are 25 operational awards (June: 9 awards, Sept: 10 awards, Dec: 6 awards).	Public Health
L5b	Grants to the SCVO around child wellbeing, Grants for child wellbeing for special school mental health and wellbeing	Bigger is better	NA	NA	Q3 - NA	Over £100K	NA	A target is not applicable for this PI. In Q3 pre-procurement is being undertaken for grant to support headteachers and senior leaders wellbeing for additional 70k investment towards this indicator in Q4.	Public Health
L7	Sandwell Stride programme (volunteer-led walking scheme) and digital App based walking offer	Bigger is better	NA	5%	1,465	NA	NA	A target is not applicable for this indicator. Walk attendances for Oct – Dec 2023 were 1,465 with an average weekly attendance of 112.  One new weekly walk started at Brandhall Community Hub.	Public Health
<b>Stong Resilient Communities</b>									
C14/ NI195a,b,c,d	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly-posting).	Smaller is better	litter - 2.50% detritus - 6.50% graffiti - 1.50% fly-posting - 0%	5%	Litter - 6% Detritus - 9% Graffiti - 1% Flyposting - 0% (Aug - November 2023/24)	litter - 4% detritus - 7% graffiti - 1.50% fly-posting - 0% (Apr -July 2023/24)	NA	This PI is measured 3 times a year and is provided by SERCO: April-July, August-November, December-March. The % of litter and detritus has increased by 2% since last quarter, although graffiti has reduced by 0.5%.	Borough Economy

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
C7a	The number of library visits in person	Bigger is better	163,125 (491,250 cumulative)	5%	153,150 (474,159 cumulative)	163,278 (321,009 cumulative)	NA - New PI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues of library books were down 19% against target – cuts to stock budget and increases to the cost of books (UK inflation, global rise in the cost of paper, distribution) mean we are unable to buy as many copies as in previous years. 46% of library custom is to borrow a book (Adult PLUS, 2019).</li> <li>• A charge to reserve books was introduced in 2023-24. This has seen a reduction in the number of reservations being placed (and therefore, collection and return visits). 62% drop in the number of reservations placed in Q3 compared to 2022-23.</li> <li>• Since Covid, we have lost many experienced staff. Existing staff are required to relocate at short notice to other libraries. Whilst the number of activities being held is up against target, compared to pre-Covid levels it is running at around 70%.</li> <li>• The lack of staff capacity has impacted on the levels of outreach work to promote the service and the development of new partnerships to provide activity in libraries.</li> <li>• Some libraries were above target (Blackheath, Bleakhouse, Brandhall, Smethwick, Stone Cross, Tipton), and there is a general correlation with the number of activities being held in those libraries.</li> </ul> <p>The service is developing plans to impact visitor numbers moving forwards, particularly individuals libraries where visitor numbers have dropped.</p>	Borough Economy
C5a	The number of Friends Groups working in Partnership with The Council	Bigger is better	Q3 - 10	5%	10	9	NA - New PI	All of the groups across the borough have signed a partnership agreement with the Council and work to support Friends Groups is in development.	Borough Economy
C7c/L2	Under 16 issue figures (physical & electronic to include books, audiobooks, magazines & comics) (c)	Bigger is better	51000 (139,000 cumulative)	5%	73,731 (159,733 cumulative)	44,169 (86,002 cumulative)	44,462 (144,015 cumulative)	The under 16s issue figures are on track. Book borrowing is promoted at all children's activities which may have impacted the increase in issues since Q2.	Borough Economy

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
C7b/L3	The % of Meaningful gifting of Booktrust packs	Bigger is better	95%	5%	95%	95%	NA - was Annual	Meaningful gifting of Bookstart packs – this is an annual indicator which is monitored throughout the year and will be reported at year end.	Borough Economy
C7d/L4	The number of community activities & events held in libraries or online (c)	Bigger is better	1,750 (5,250 cumulative)	5%	2,456 (7,426 cumulative)	2,528 (4,970 cumulative)	1843 (4,549 cumulative)	Number of community activities and events held in libraries or online per quarter – on track, partly supported by external funding to pay for activities.	Borough Economy
C7e/L6	The number of PC sessions held in libraries (c)	Bigger is better	22,000 (63,000 cumulative)	5%	30,154 (108,530 cumulative)	35,193 (78,376 cumulative)	39,491 (68,779 cumulative)	Number of PC sessions held in libraries – on track. Anecdotal evidence suggests users carrying out job searches and accessing MySandwell.	Borough Economy
C10a	Forge Mill Farm Education Visits (students)	Bigger is better	2,100 (6,300 cumulative)	5%	2,206 (5,737 cumulative)	2,535 (3,531 cumulative)	NA - New PI	Education visits to Forge Mill Farm had a slow start this year but it now performing at an improved level due to the significant work undertaken to attract Education providers to the facility.	Borough Economy
C10b	Forge Mill Farm Income (admissions, events, other & education)	Bigger is better	£373,310	5%	£428,681.00	£294,709	NA - New PI	Forge Mill Farm has developed performance across all income strands and is now performing above target, with the new Education Barn capital project in development.	Borough Economy
C16a	Total recorded crime in Sandwell	Smaller is better	No target	5%	8,960	9,111	NA - New PI	Total recorded crime in Sandwell has dropped slightly in Q3 compared with Q2.	Borough Economy
C16b	Domestic Abuse incidents in Sandwell reported to police	Smaller is better	No target	5%	1,649 Crime / 967 Non-crime	2,812 Crime / 1,068 Non-crime	NA - New PI	The number of domestic abuse incidents has reduced in Q3 compared to Q2 (both crime and non-crime). However the number of cases referred to the MARAC has increased.	Borough Economy



CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
C16c	The number of cases referred to MARAC	Smaller is better	No target	5%	294	238	NA - New PI	<p>MARAC cases saw a 28.4% increase in 2022/23, in comparison to the previous year. This includes a repeat rate of 49%, which is above the Safelives recommendation of 28-40%.</p> <p>MARACs are regionally coordinated through the Office of Police and Crime Commission. Sandwell have responded to the high demand as a local partnership with a contingency plan that is enabling additional MARACs to be held. These challenges are reflected across the West Midlands region, with partnering Local Authorities experiencing similar demands. The Office of Police and Crime Commission (OPCC) are working with partner local authorities on a shared case management system and triage. The OPCC also provide LAs with a budget for Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs). With the scope of these reviews being increased, Sandwell has seen an increase in the number of DHRs requested and the current funding allocated by the OPCC is no longer covering these costs. This is being reviewed currently with the OPCC regionally and is subject to a national government consultation.</p>	Borough Economy

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
CP74 / HM02	Percentage of homelessness cases successfully prevented (under Homelessness Reduction Act duty)	Bigger is better	65%	5%	51.5%	57.6%	67.1%	This figure is below target due to the challenging housing market and the volume of cases that are presenting very late in the process. The housing market is at its most challenging for securing longer term alternative accommodation for our clients. The turnover of council properties has seen a 30% reduction over the last 12 months (meaning there are less properties becoming available) and the accessibility and affordability of private rented properties it at its lowest point in years. This is in part due to affordability issues and also due to the very buoyant market. The service works very hard in securing properties for our clients and has one of the best offers in the country as recognised by the National Resident Landlord Association (NRLA). The increase to LHA rates in April 2024 will help bridge this gap but the market will remain very challenging for a number of years to come. Our Q3 performance on homelessness prevention is below target but we did see improvements in November and December months which suggests we should see performance recover in Q4.	Housing
CP79 / PRS07	Number of long term empty homes brought into use (c)	Bigger is better	Q3-10	5%	3	NA - C	2	As per previous updates, there was a delay in attracting and recruiting the right person for this role. The new officer has been in post since September 2023 and is making good progress but has required a lead in time to understand Sandwell and the challenges around the agenda. Performance has improved with 2 new properties brought back into use in Q3 compared to 1 in Q2 and none in previous quarters. Whilst this is slower pace than intended when the target was set at the start of the year (again due to recruitment delays), we expect performance to improve exponentially and to recover to projected levels by the end of Q2 of 2024/25.	Housing

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
H12 / HC2	The % of current tenancies with a live valid Home Check in place (in the last 3 years) (c)	Bigger is better	Q3-30%	5%	21.90%	17.60%	8.60%	The rate at which Home Checks are completed has increased from Q1 to Q2 ( up by 460) but not to the level to meet target. Additionally temporary resources (an additional Coordinator and six Housing Advisors) should come online in Q4 and will be in place for six months, which will enable Housing Services Officers to focus more of their time on Home Checks.	Housing
CP78b/SLM054	The total number of people assisted by Welfare Rights Service to claim additional benefits (c)	Bigger is better	Q3-8250	5%	7521	NA - C	9609	The number of residents assisted by Welfare Rights in Qtr 3 is below target by 178 (RAG rated 'RED') based on a target of 2750 per quarter. This is due to the increase in complex cases which is resulting in officers having to spend more time on each case. The team are still working overtime which has been introduced within the service to support the increasing number of residents and the service has recruited two new members of staff into temporary posts which will increase the support to residents. This did not hinder performance on the monetary gains for the quarter as the service were successful in gaining £5,386,275 for residents, which was above target. Welfare Rights also are the lead agency for preparing and providing representation for Tribunal appeals, of which there are significantly more which take additional time to prepare and represent.	Housing
H14 / RM3	The percentage of properties with a Domestic Electrical Installation Condition report (DEICR) under 5-years old (or in legal resolution)	Bigger is better	100%	5%	95.35%	93.31%	82.71%	Historic no-access cases are seeing a positive impact following new processes we have introduced. Further work is being done on re allocating internal resource to deal with the backlog.	Housing

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
H14 / BS01	Gas Safety Checks - Proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out	Bigger is better	100%	5%	99.39%	99.45%	99.40%	<p>There are 152 properties without a valid Landlords Gas Safety Certificate.</p> <p>There are still ongoing issues with the contractor in getting the correct amount of resources to fulfil the number of Landlords Safety checks needed. We are working with them to resolve this without compromising the quality of works carried out and ensuring that appliances are serviced correctly &amp; safely.</p> <p>Resources are being brought into Sandwell but need an induction period to ensure they are up to the standard we require. An improvement has already started since work recommenced on Sandwell as we are now at 110 addresses non-compliant which is an compliance rate of 99.55%.</p>	Housing
H8 / RS04	Rough sleepers bi-monthly count outturn	Smaller is better	Q3 -3	5%	0	5	3	The service continues to perform well in supporting rough sleepers	Housing
H14 / BS02	Fire Safety Checks - Proportion of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out	Bigger is better	100%	5%	100.00%	81.43%	NA - New PI	All relevant sites that fall under the Fire Safety Order currently have a Fire Risk Assessment in place. The intention is to undertake periodic reviews ( high risk - 12 months, other risk - 3 years) to ensure the FRA remain suitable and sufficient. Due to the completion of the BSR data collation and verification for the Building Safety Regulator that was due in on the 1 October 2023, we are 11 FRA reviews down on our internal review target for October but we have programmed to catch up in Q4. Low rise blocks FRA reviews have been paused for a short period to allow capacity to develop Building Safety Cases.	Housing

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
H14 / BS03	Asbestos Safety Checks - Proportion of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out	Bigger is better	100%	5%	100%	92.35%	NA - New PI	Regulation 4 re-inspections surveys completed August 2023.	Housing
CP77a / HIA2	Home Improvement Agency - Number of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) approved (c)	Bigger is better	Q3 - 207	5%	210	NA - C	440	Target met. However, the overall performance for the approval of Disabled Facilities Grants continues to be impacted by a lower than anticipated referral level from the Council's Occupational Therapy Service. A new supplier for lifts and hoists has been appointed and the backlog of cases that resulted from a previous supplier entering administration is being addressed.	Housing
CP77b / HIA3	Number of DFG's certified as complete (c)	Bigger is better	Q3 - 165	5%	262	NA - C	272	Target exceeded. The Home Improvement Agency has put significant resources into agreeing final accounts with suppliers. The result of this work means that the number of Disabled Facilities Grants that have been certified as complete is higher than anticipated. This work will continue in QTR4 as final accounts are agreed and grants can be certified as complete.	Housing
H14 / BS04	Water Safety Checks - Proportion of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out	Bigger is better	100%	5%	100.00%	100.00%	NA - New PI	The figures come from the Compass system (procured corporate water safety database) which is managed and reviewed by the SMBC Corporate Water Safety Group (includes contractor representation) Housing currently have 71 sites on the portfolio. All 71 have a current water hygiene risk assessment in place.	Housing
H14 / BS05	Lift Safety Checks - proportion of homes for which all required communal passengers lift safety checks have been carried out	Bigger is better	100%	5%	100.00%	100.00%	NA - New PI	Each communal passenger lift receives a regular thorough examination at 6-monthly intervals by a third party insurance company to ensure compliance, no current issues with this process.	Housing

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
CP76 / PRS04	No. of private sector properties reported to be in state of disrepair with a positive resolution (c)	Bigger is better	NA	NA	246	NA - C	571	Cases are being kept open in duty longer due to increased demand and complexity of cases coming through. The service has also seen an increase in landlords reporting difficulty in accessing their properties to carry out repair works which delays our response times. The service has been working very hard since the redesign (Q1 of the year) to ensure we increase resources in line with the proposed model and have just reached full establishment across the board. The time taken to secure the new staff and the mobilisation of a new operating model led to fewer cases being closed in a timely manner, however, we expect this to improve exponentially during Q4. We are currently addressing this with robust training and embedding of the new operating principles and practice.	Housing
<b>Quality Homes in Thriving Neighbourhoods - Annual Pls reported this quarter</b>									
H1/H17/TP05	Satisfaction that home is safe (Tenant satisfaction survey)	Bigger is better	78%	5%	77%	NA	76% Yr. 22/23	Over three-quarters of tenants (77%) are satisfied that their home is safe, this being up marginally from 2002 (76%). 16% are dissatisfied with their homes safety. Tenants who do not feel safe were asked to explain why and what could be improved, and 433 tenants made comments. Dealing with outstanding or forgotten repairs attracted the most comments (19%) followed closely by damp and Mould issues. (Annual - results are from the Tenant Satisfaction Survey)	Housing
H17 / TP04	Satisfaction that home is well maintained (Tenant satisfaction survey)	Bigger is better	75%	5%	71%	NA	73% Yr. 22/23	71% of tenants feel their home is well maintained with a fifth being dissatisfied. Satisfaction in this area has fallen 2% since 2022. (Annual - results are from the Tenant Satisfaction Survey)	Housing

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
H17 / TP01	Satisfaction with the overall service provided (Tenant satisfaction survey)	Bigger is better	70%	5%	74%	NA	68% Yr. 22/23	Around three-quarters of tenants (74%) are satisfied, although fewer are very satisfied (35%) than fairly satisfied (39%). Just 16% of tenants are dissatisfied with the overall services provided and a further 11% are neither satisfied or dissatisfied. When looking at the results from previous surveys, satisfaction was around 80% from 2011 through to 2017. However, in 2022 this took a dip to 68% but in the current survey it has recovered somewhat to 74%. Sandwell Council operates over six towns within its district but shown here are only those areas where 20 or more responses were received, and the Sandwell PFI properties are excluded, but reported separately.	Housing
<b>A Strong and Inclusive Economy</b>									
E7b	Business receiving Financial Assistance or Grants	Bigger is better	60	5%	17 (Q3 - 15)	2	37	Despite a temporary delay in grant administration due to policy refinement, we successfully awarded 15 grants this quarter. It's encouraging to note that we have a robust pipeline of businesses eagerly expressing their interest in applying for grants and now the process is established we anticipate administering the remaining 52 grants and financial assistance in Quarter 4.	Regeneration
E7a	The number of Businesses supported (c)	Bigger is better	260	5%	276 (Q3 - 178)	98	187	The Q3 target has been achieved. Forecast to meet or exceed target by end of financial year. 276 achieved, 44 required next quarter to achieve end of year target.	Regeneration
E11a	The number of work experience placements (c)	Bigger is better	100	5%	129	NA - C	NA	This indicator is measured by calendar year. In 2023 129 young people have been supported into work experience placements against a target of 100. Whilst only 4 of these were in Q3 (Q4 of the calendar year) a high number were delivered in Q1 (38) and Q2 (78). The team will set a new target for 2024.	Assistant Chief Executive

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
E10	Employment rate (nomis)	Bigger is better	NA	5%	70.2% (Oct 22 - Sep 23)	64.7% (Apr 22 - Mar 23)	64% (Oct 21 - Sep 22)	Data provided is the latest available. In Sandwell, of the 74.5% of people economically active, 70.2% are employed. For the West Midlands, 78.4% are economically active with 74.8% in employment and for Great Britain, 78.8% are economically active, with 75.8% in employment. The employment rate in Sandwell had been on a downward trajectory since March 2021 when it peaked at 74%; however the last two quarters have shown an increase.	Regeneration
E11b	The number of supported internships	Bigger is better	TBC	5%	NA	NA	NA	This PI is under development.	Assistant Chief Executive
E11c	Number of apprentices	Bigger is better	TBC	5%	50	51	NA - was annual	Marginal reduction of 1 apprentice compared to Q2	Assistant Chief Executive
E11d	The number of graduates on the Sandwell Management Graduate Programme	Bigger is better	TBC	TBC	7	1	NA - was annual	5 out of the 7 Graduates have been recruited on the Sandwell Graduate Programme from Oct-23.	Assistant Chief Executive
E1	% of council spend spent locally (Finance PI)	bigger is better	TBC	NA	38%	38%	NA	Council spend spent locally has remained the same as in Q2	Finance
E2	Money spent directly with suppliers in Sandwell	bigger is better	TBC	NA	£45,033,525	£38,851,914	NA	The money spent directly with suppliers in Sandwell has increased compared to Q2.	Finance



CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
A2d/DSS5	The number of road safety improvement schemes (c)	Bigger is better	10	5%	12 (3 in Q3)	9 (6 in Q2)	N/A - New PI	We are above target for this indicator. Schemes completed in quarter 3 were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Road Safety Scheme – Oakham Road, Tividale - Updated electronic signage, new central refuges and associated road markings to help tackle concerns raised regarding speed vehicles as number of loss of control accidents.</li> <li>o Hallens Drive, Wednesbury – Installation of permanent Speed Cushions to deter Road racing where road casualties had been recorded. Installed in partnership with WM Police. Replaced temporary bolt down cushions.</li> <li>o Melbourne Road, Smethwick - Installation of drop kerbs and tactile paving to assist visually impaired road users.</li> </ul>	Borough Economy
One Team One Council									
O1b	Average working days lost per employee due to sickness absence (FTE)	smaller is better	6.21 days	5%	8.8 days	NA - C	8.28 days	In Q3 an average of 8.8 working days were lost per employee due to sickness compared to 8.28 days during the same period last year. Stress, depression, mental health related sickness remain as the leading cause of sickness. Working days lost for short term sickness reduced by 16%, whilst long term sickness increased by 20% compared to Q3 last year. 4 of the 9 Directorates achieved a reduction in sickness compared to last year (ASC, Children and Education, Housing, Law and Governance), but performance for all Directorates was above the 6.21 day target.	Assistant Chief Executive
O1n	Number of new formal grievance cases	smaller is better	4 per quarter	5%	7	5	NA - was annual	Q2 was 5. Cumulative for year to-date (Q1-Q3) is 20 compared to 32 at the end of Q4 last year.	Assistant Chief Executive

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
O8e	Adults Contact Centre Average Wait Measure	Smaller is better	30 seconds	5%	1 Min 14 Sec	1 min 27 secs	49 Seconds	<p>The average wait time has reduced from the last quarter by 13 seconds.</p> <p>The service is unable to manage the demand within the current structure/resources available. Additional resources have been allocated on a temporary basis, which expires March 2024 and due to the temporary nature have proved difficult to recruit to. This is compounded by absences and vacancies at present. Adults are currently looking for a transformation partner. The holistic programme will take a look at the numbers using the service and the processes that are being followed.</p>	ASC
O8g	Revs and Bens Contact Centre Average Wait Measure	Smaller is better	3 minutes 30 seconds	5%	4mins 40 seconds	6 mins 38 secs	9 mins 42 secs	<p>Both the abandonment rate and average wait time have significantly improved on the last quarter and compared to the same time last year and the abandonment rate is better than target. We have took on some additional staff who have come out of their 6 week training and this has helped to improve the current performance. Whilst waiting to speak to an advisor residents are being sent links to the website to encourage self-service and also we are also promoting the live chat facility in an effort to reduce the number of calls.</p>	Finance

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
O8p	% of stage 1 complaints responded to in 10 working days (excl. ASC) (also service standard)	Bigger is better	90%	5%	73% (65% cumulative)	68% (60% cumulative)	NA	Q3 Performance is below target at 73%, although there has been an improvement since Q2 (68%) and Q1 (52.29%). The areas of concern are Children and Education (30%), the Children's Trust (37%) and Housing (63%). The Customer Feedback Team (CFT) continue to assist all directorates to respond promptly to corporate complaints within a 10-day timeframe and there is an increased focus on this across the organisation that is driving improvement. This improvement also focuses on the quality of the response, including resolving queries at the first point of contact. For Q3 the average time taken to respond to stage 1 complaints (excl. ASC) was 10 days, a reduction from 14 days in Q2.	Assistant Chief Executive
O4c	Average satisfaction rating from members using the Councillor portal	Bigger is better	4.5 / 5	5%	3.93/5	4.54/5	3.98	In Q3 there were 27 Cllr ratings. Of these, 6 were given a 1 or 2 star rating. Of these 6, 2 were given a low rating because of officer management of the case and 4 were given a low rating because of the quality of the final response.	Assistant Chief Executive
O8l	SARs compliance with timescales	Bigger is better	95%	5%	62.07%	50.00%	71%	The compliance rate for SARs is being significantly impacted by the volume of requests for Housing Disrepair claims whereby the documents required to make a HDR claim are being requested through the SAR process. Excluding SARs made for HDR claims the compliance rate would be 77%. SARs for HDR claims make up 23% of all SARs received in Q3 (16 out of 70).  Processes have been implemented to prevent the need for the documents required for a HDR claim being requested under a SAR. Improvements should be seen in our future quarterly performance.	Finance
O11b	Variance from budget - Housing Revenue Account	smaller in better	0%	0.5%	£1.120m overspend	£0.596m overspend	(£0.719m) underspend	The gross budget for the HRA is £141,159,600. The current forecast is a £1.120m overspend. There is an ongoing review to find ways to mitigate this overspend.	Finance

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
O8h	Corporate Contact Centre Abandonment Rate	Smaller is better	8%	5%	8.07% (11% cumulative)	9.09%	17.44%	A breakdown of Q3 figures is as follows: 7.30% (Contact Centre), 18.35% (Rents), 6.67% (Call out). The cumulative figures are: 11% (Overall), 10.23% (Contact Centre), 20.29% (Rents), 6.56% (Call out). For Q3 the Contact Centre and Call Out have achieved the target but the Rents Team are above the target. The Contact Centre are not responsible for the calls received by Rents and Call Out as these are managed differently.	Assistant Chief Executive
O8n	FOI compliance with timescales	Bigger is better	95%	5%	92%	83%	78%	<p>Performance figures for December 2023 have achieved a 96% compliance rate which is the first time the Council has met or exceeded our performance target of 95% .</p> <p>Similarly, our Q3 performance is the Councils best ever performing Quarter.</p> <p>Directorate breakdown as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Adult Social Care - 7 Met, 6 Missed, 0 Open - 13 in Total = 54%</li> <li>* Children &amp; Education - 25 Met, 7 Missed, 0 Open, 32 in Total = 78%</li> <li>* Housing - 41 Met, 4 Missed, 0 Open, 45 in Total = 91%</li> <li>* Finance - 27 Met, 2 Missed, 0 Open, 29 in Total = 93%</li> <li>* Borough Economy - 68 Met, 1 Missed, 0 open, 69 in Total = 99%</li> <li>* Regen and Growth - 27 Met, 0 Missed, 0 Open, 27 in Total = 100%</li> <li>* Business Strategy and Change - 23 Met, 0 Missed, 23 in Total = 100%</li> <li>* Law and Governance - 11 Met, 0 Missed, 11 in Total = 100%</li> <li>* Public Health - 5 Met, 0 Missed, 5 in Total = 100%</li> <li>* Corporate Enquiries - 4 Met, 0 Missed, 0 Open, 4 in Total = 100%</li> </ul>	Finance

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
O11c	Council Tax Collection (c)	bigger is better	78.62%	5%	78.14%	NA	78.62%	Collection is slightly down on last year but the difference is reducing each month. Recovery has been affected by the cost of living crisis and we have an extra 2000 residents since April now paying over 12 months so more Council tax will be received in Feb/March 24. Recovery document numbers being issued have been increased and in January we have just awarded over £300k in Council tax support (out of the funding for 23/24) so this should help to reduce the difference to the target between now and the end of March.	Finance
O11d	Business Rates Collection rates (c)	bigger is better	81.67%	5%	80.81%	NA	81.67%	Collection is slightly down on last year but the difference is reducing each month and 22/23 collection rate was significantly affected/improved by £6m in Covid payments put onto business rates accounts at the end of 21/22. The difference was over 3.5% in April 24, and it is now at its lowest less than 1%. Recovery documents issued are up to date, and we expect the difference to continue to reduce until the end of the financial year.	Finance
O11a	Variance from budget - General Fund	smaller is better	0%	0.5%	(£2.985m) underspend	£1.222m overspend	(£1.824m) underspend	The gross budget for the General fund is £733.967m. The current forecast is a (£2.985m) underspend.	Finance
O3	Completion of the Audit and Assessment against the Equality Framework for Local Government (completed by June/July).	NA	July completion	NA	Completed	NA	NA	Audit and Assessment to be considered by LT on 8 Aug. Following this audit further performance measures will be consider and developed as part of the LGA Equalities Framework.	Assistant Chief Executive
O1m	Number of new formal disciplinary investigations	smaller is better	8 per quarter	5%	4	3	NA - was annual	Q2 was 3. Cumulative for year to-date (Q1-Q3) is 11 compared to 21 at the end of Q4 last year.	Assistant Chief Executive

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
O8d	Adults Contact Centre Abandonment Rate	Smaller is better	6%	5%	4%	5.84%	3.00%	<p>Performance is better than target. However, long term absences remain an issue with an average of 7 agents off sick each month throughout the whole quarter. Vacancies remain to 3 and adverts have been placed with agency's however we are struggling to attract the calibre we require for a Contact Centre coupled with knowledge of Adult Social Care. Requests have also been submitted to HR for agency staff as our current temp agent finishes on 31/03/2024. There has been a new starter in the team, who underwent training throughout Nov/Dec.</p> <p>Agents at home and a few within the office are reporting Internet issues affecting LAS and the Blue Badge system, in regards to the speed and when trying to key from tab to tab. This affects the agents overall time when trying to wrap up a call as they often have to restart either the application or on occasion the laptop.</p>	ASC
O8f	Revs and Bens Contact Centre Abandonment Rate	Smaller is better	8%	5%	5.60%	8.57%	12.98%	<p>Both the abandonment rate and average wait time have significantly improved on the last quarter and compared to the same time last year and the abandonment rate is better than target. We have took on some additional staff who have come out of their 6 week training and this has helped to improve the current performance. Whilst waiting to speak to an advisor residents are being sent links to the website to encourage self-service and also we are also promoting the live chat facility in an effort to reduce the number of calls.</p>	Finance

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
O8i	Corporate Contact Centre Average Wait Measure	Smaller is better	3 minutes 30 seconds	5%	3 mins 11 secs	3 mins, 39 secs	8 minutes 29 seconds	Performance is better than target and significantly better than the same point last year. A breakdown of Q3 figures is as follows: 3 mins 11 secs (Contact Centre), 3mins, 8 secs (Rents), 2 mins 41 secs (Call out) The cumulative figures are: 4 mins 11 secs (Overall), 4 mins 17 secs (Contact Centre), 3 mins 3 secs (Rents), 2:mins 32 secs (Call out)	Assistant Chief Executive
O11e	Sundry Debt Collection (c)	bigger is better	79.87%	5%	88.84%	NA	79.87%	Collection is up compared to last year. Performance for 23/24 is measured allowing 14 days for payment which wasn't the case for 22/23	Finance
O11f	Prior year Council Tax collection (c)	bigger is better	93%	5%	94%	NA	94.00%	Collection has improved and is on target	Finance
O11g	Prior year Business Rates Collection (c)	bigger is better	96%	5%	98%	NA	98.00%	Collection has improved and is on target	Finance
O11h/SI66a	Rent collected as a % of rent due (including arrears brought forward)	bigger is better	Q3 - 94.35%	5%	94.69%	95.34%	94.51%	The quarter three outturn of 94.69% has exceeded the profile target of 94% and is an improvement on the same period last year at 94.51%, however it is slightly down on the quarter two this year. To maintain performance the service will continue to focus on early intervention and work with partner agencies to identify customers most in need of additional financial support.	Finance
O11i	% of invoices paid on time	bigger is better	95%	5%	98%	98%	NA	Performance is better than target	Finance
O4b	Members to undertake a minimum of 10 hours of development annually	Bigger is better	NA	5%	40.2% (Municipal Year)	NA	NA- new	A data quality issue has been identified with regards to this PI and historical data is inaccurate. A target of 65% is proposed for Q4.	Assistant Chief Executive
O4e	No. of Standards Complaints	Smaller is better	NA	NA	1	4	NA	The nature of the complaints are low level. No specific trends emerging.	Assistant Chief Executive
O1c	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are women	Bigger is better	TBC	TBC	52.60%	52.90%	NA - was annual	Marginal reduction compared to the previous quarter of 52.9%.	Assistant Chief Executive

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
O1d	The percentage of top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic Communities	Bigger is better	TBC	TBC	23.60%	24.00%	NA - was annual	Marginal reduction compared to the previous quarter of 24.0%.	Assistant Chief Executive
O1e	The percentage of top 5% of earners who have a disability	Bigger is better	TBC	TBC	2.20%	1.80%	NA - was annual	Marginal increase compared to the previous quarter of 1.80%.	Assistant Chief Executive
O1g	The percentage Disabled employees	Bigger is better	TBC	TBC	4.60%	4.50%	NA - was annual	Marginal increase compared to the previous quarter of 4.50%.	Assistant Chief Executive
O1h	The percentage Ethnic Minority employees	Bigger is better	TBC	5%	25.90%	25.60%	NA - was annual	Marginal increase compared to the previous quarter of 25.60%.	Assistant Chief Executive
O1i	The percentage leavers from Sandwell Council (aligned to WME definition from 2021/22 onwards).	smaller is better	TBC	5%	6.90%	5.00%	NA - was annual	Q2 outturn was 5.0%. The 2022/23 year-end outturn was 10.1%. The year-end outturn for 2023/24 will be compared with the available benchmark for WM Authorities.	Assistant Chief Executive
O1j	The percentage new starters to Sandwell Council (include apprentices)	Bigger is better	TBC	5%	9.70%	6.70%	NA - was annual	The Q2 outturn was 6.70%. The 2022/23 year-end outturn will be compared with outturn for 2022-23 (10.9%)	Assistant Chief Executive
O1o	Employee Engagement Score (overall)	Bigger is better	TBC	TBC	60%	NA	63%	Minus 3% compared to the 2022 Employee Survey. The overall response rate for the 2023 employee survey was 50% compared to 61% in 2022.	Assistant Chief Executive
O1p	I am proud to work for the council	Bigger is better	TBC	TBC	67%	NA	68%	Minus 1% compared to the 2022 Employee Survey.	Assistant Chief Executive
O1q	I would recommend this council as a good place to work	Bigger is better	TBC	TBC	62%	NA	65%	Minus 3% compared to the 2022 Employee Survey.	Assistant Chief Executive
O1r	I feel a strong sense of belonging to this council	Bigger is better	TBC	TBC	53%	NA	59%	Minus 6% compared to the 2022 Employee Survey.	Assistant Chief Executive
O1s	Considering everything, I am satisfied to be working for this council	Bigger is better	TBC	TBC	71%	NA	72%	Minus 1% compared to the 2022 Employee Survey.	Assistant Chief Executive
O1t	This council motivates me to do more than is normally required in my work	Bigger is better	TBC	TBC	46%	NA	52%	Minus 6% compared to the 2022 Employee Survey.	Assistant Chief Executive



CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
O4d	Member PDPs completed	Bigger is better	80%	5%	NA	27% (Q4 22/23)	NA	No Member PDPs have been completed to date this year. The approach to Member PDPs will be reviewed and these will be completed following the election in May. As part of the redesign of the Member Development Plan and induction process, further work will continue to complement these plans and ensure that a process for members to identify their learning needs are created, including capturing their current skills and aligning this to suitable roles.	Assistant Chief Executive
O5d	Number of surveys conducted through the Sandwell Consultation Hub	Bigger is better	TBC	TBC	67 surveys (Q3 23/24)	47 surveys (Q1 23/24)	NA	This PI is reported in Q1 and Q3. In Q3 the breakdown is as follows: ACE: 16, Children & Education: 14, Housing: 9, Regeneration & Growth: 13, Public Health: 5, Borough Economy: 4, Finance: 4, ASC: 1, L&G: 1. The Consultation Hub, Citizenspace, is becoming more embedded across the organisation and training is being delivered across all Directorates.	Assistant Chief Executive
O8a	Contact by Channel (c)	NA - awaiting strategy	NA	NA	T: 430,204 (134,185) MS: 625,206 (204,135) F2F: 41,753 (13,051) Email: 35,356 (11,804)	T: 296,019 (143,869) MS: 421,071 (186,825) F2F: 28,702 (14,199) Email: 23,542 (11,971)	T: 460,460 (154,097) MS: 583,660 (176,258) F2F: 42,951 (12,836) E: 33,680 (11,245)	Figures are provided for information only. The general trend is a decrease in contact by telephone and an increase in My Sandwell. Email and face to face contact remain consistent.	Assistant Chief Executive
O8b	% Contact by channel (c)	NA - awaiting strategy	NA	NA	T: 38% MS: 55% F2F: 4% Email: 3%	T: 38% MS: 55% F2F: 4% Email: 3%	T: 44% MS: 50% F2F: 4% E: 3%		Assistant Chief Executive
O8c	Satisfaction from process submissions (out of 5)	Bigger is better	NA - Establishing baseline	NA	4.57 out of 5 (86,838 ratings)	4.58 out of 5 (67,834 ratings) (cumulative)	NA	No major changes to any process ratings which suggest processes remain stable and meeting residents needs and expectations as far as ratings on submission.	Assistant Chief Executive

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
O8j	The number of Ombudsman Cases Upheld	Smaller is better	NA	NA	Housing Ombudsman:1, Local Government Ombudsman 2	Housing Ombudsman: 4 , Local Government Ombudsman: 6	NA	There are fewer cases in Q3 compared to Q2. The figures provided are for information only.	Assistant Chief Executive
O8k	SARs volumes	Smaller is better	NA	NA	76	75	38	There is no target for the number of SARs received as this can't be controlled. Figures are provided as information only.	Finance
O8m	FOI volumes	Smaller is better	NA	NA	258	274	239	There is no target for the number of FOIs received as this can't be controlled. Figures are provided as information only.	Finance
O8o	Numbers of complaints received	Smaller is better	NA	NA	908 (2,786 cumulative)	861 (1,883 cumulative)	NA	Figures are provided as information only. Figures are not comparable to this time last year because of changes in methodology.	Assistant Chief Executive
O8q	Numbers of stage 1 and stage 2 Complaints upheld	Smaller is better	NA	NA	27% (26% cumulative)	22% (25% cumulative)	NA	Figures are provided as information only. Figures are not comparable to this time last year because of changes in methodology.	Assistant Chief Executive
O8r	Number of MP Enquiries received	Smaller is better	NA	NA	567 (1,869 cumulative)	584 (1,247 cumulative)	495 (1,669 cumulative)	Figures are provided as information only	Assistant Chief Executive
O8s	Numbers of compliments received	Bigger is better	NA	NA	105 (323 cumulative)	106 (218 cumulative)	92 (272 cumulative)	Figures are provided as information only	Assistant Chief Executive

CP & D reference	CP Indicator	Value (Bigger is better or smaller is better)	Target	Target Tolerance	Performance	DOT (Short term - last quarter)	DOT (long term - same point last year)	Commentary	Directorate
O8t	Satisfaction with Member Enquiries - the average satisfaction rating of a response	Bigger is better	NA - Establishing baseline	NA	4.22 (87 ratings)	4.35	New KPI	Satisfaction rates are good. 85% of cases were rated 4 or 5 stars, with Borough Economy and Housing amassing the vast majority of ratings (71 of the 87). Where 3 stars or below were left, the "quality of the final response" was most cited, as the reason for the lesser rating, followed by "officer management of the case". The proportion of cases councillors are rating is still very low, over 6,000 enquiries have been received year-to-date. Despite the system being improved to contain the link to rate a case within the confirmation email (no need to login to the portal to rate) only 87 have been rated. Attendance is taking place by corporate customer to all Town Members Board Meetings, where members are being prompted to rate their cases so we can base improvement on evidence – help us to help them.	Assistant Chief Executive
O8u	Lessons learnt from Complaints	NA	NA	NA	265 complaints looked in to in Q3	170 complaints looked into in Q2	NA	Out of the 265 complaints that were looked at in quarter 3 only 20 (7.5%) had any lessons learnt evidence attached to the investigation.	Assistant Chief Executive

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## The Best Start in Life for Children and Young People

	CP Ref	Deliverable	BP Ref.	Key deliverables (Directorate Action)	Q3 Rating - RAG	Q3 October - December
Page 89 First 1000 Days	B1	We will promote the importance of communication and language to parents, and we will provide earlier support to children who need it.	CH11	Deliver the Family Hubs Programme, creating a network of Family Hubs and spokes which provide services for children 0 - 18 (25 if SEND)	On Track	Family Hub model has been signed off and includes 7 main family hubs, spokes, specialist spokes and mobile spokes. Mapping is complete and spoke locations identified. The number of partners working from family hubs and or delivering services from family hubs has increased: 4 additional stakeholders and additional health clinics across Sandwell. Close working with SCT to ensure families receive support as soon as possible. Families known to SCT are made aware of Family Hubs for ongoing support when statutory support is no longer required. Strategic Lead for Early Help and Family Hubs work closely together and meet fortnightly. Lead for Family Hubs joined Strategic Lead for Early Help in a monthly meeting with all Head of Service's from SCT and an action was set for all statutory teams to visit or hold a Team mtg in the Family Hubs during January 2024. Strengthening Families locality teams and Family Hub teams are closely aligned and meet regularly.
			PH8	Public Health support to babies and parents	On Track	Sandwell achieves 97.9 of their new birth visiting, against a national average of 97.6. Percentage of 6-8 week reviews completed: Sandwell achieves a remarkable completion rate of 94.1% for our 6-8 week checks, surpassing the national average of 80.2%. This showcases our commitment to promptly engaging with families and conducting essential assessments within the recommended timeframe.
			BE5	Deliver Play, Talk, Read in all libraries	On Track	126 sessions delivered
			BE6	Increase library membership of under 5's through Sandy Bear project	On Track	969 active members
	B2	We will seek additional support for social mobility projects that address early language, with an intention to increase aspiration and ability.	CH9	To ensure that all children have a good start to their education by attending good quality early years provision	Medium Issue/Slippage	Participation campaign shows signs of impact. Two year old uptake increased to 75% and 140 more 3&4 year olds are being funded in PVI nurseries. 96% of PVI and Child Minders are rated Good or better by Ofsted.
Ready for School	B3	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.	CH6	Ensure that every child in Sandwell has access to a place in a good or outstanding school	On Track	Work to align specialist place planning is supported by the needs assessment which is being undertaken as part of the SEND Transformation Plan
			ACE 27	Our school admission appeals service will grow their offer for the delivery of an impartial and independent admission appeals function	Medium Issue/Slippage	Annual school appeals have now concluded and the manager role has been appointed to. Further work is ongoing to ascertain charging rates and review processes to ensure that efficiencies can be made and vacant roles are filled to be able to grow our offer.
	B4	We will work with our partners, and the wider community, to support schools to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence	CH5	Attendance is Everybody's Business : Supporting schools to Improving school attendance and reduce persistent absence	On Track	DfE Advisor to step down support offered to Sandwell as sufficiently reassured of progress made Sandwell's "Working Together to Improve School Attendance" model as envisaged by DfE. Attendance is now in line with national averages Targeted support meeting approach working well School Attendance Service working with Sandwell Residential Education Service to pilot focused support for vulnerable cohorts
	B5	We will work with schools and other learning providers to improve educational outcomes for children and young people.	CH8	To challenge and support schools to raise standards in all key stages to close the gaps with national. Increase the proportion of schools and academies rated good or better by Ofsted.	On Track	Positive picture seen in most of the recent Ofsted inspections, with 2 schools gaining an Outstanding status. No further data update at this point. PEIA project support was launched for remaining strands in January 2024.

B6	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.	CH12	Lead on the implementation of the Early Help Strategy in partnership with Sandwell Children's Trust, SCVO and Krunch	Medium Issue/Slippage	The pace of change has not been as swift as the partnership would have hoped in relation to partners offering early help. In response, during November – December 23, the Early Help Partnership have reconfigured to form two arms of the partnership, one strategic and the second operational. The strategic group will represent all key partners and will be accountable for their services' response to early help and act as champions to ensure change within their service. The operational group will offer assurance around quality assurance and will help bring about grass roots change within their service. Meetings of both groups took place in January 2024.
		PH17	Relationship and Sex Education	On Track	Brook has now completed the first quarter of a renewed contract. The contract offers a holistic approach to RSHE and supports: young people directly, the school system, parents/carers and professionals who work with young people. The means of providing support, education and information is through traditional one-to-one, themed youth participating events, online training events, public health events, e-learning modules, information bulletins. This contract has been instrumental in reducing teenage pregnancies in Sandwell with the rate (for the most recent data) indicating an >18 rate per 1,000 in Sandwell of 14.1 compared to 15.2 in the West Midlands Region and just below the England rate (13.1).
B7	We will be a council that understands the impact of adverse childhood experiences and trauma, with a workforce that provides services with compassion and understanding.	PH9	School Nursing	Significant Issues/risks/slippage	Quarter 3 contract reporting has identified issues with delivery of the contract due to staffing levels being below the acceptable threshold. A report has been requested with procurement and DPH advised. Internal action plan currently being implemented to address the under performance and identify next steps.
B8	We will work with Sandwell Children's Trust to improve the quality of children's social care.	CH15	Continue to support Sandwell Children's Trust to improve the quality of children's social care through robust contract monitoring and management	On Track	SCT continues to maintain performance with no KPIs in the red zone in November and only one in October. Regular OPB meeting have taken place and the Strategic Partnership Board meeting took place in November. Contract Sum negotiations commenced in September and a provisional sum has been agreed, it is subject to approval by Cabinet and Full Council.
		LG6	Legal and Assurance will provide high quality advice, support and training to Sandwell Children's Trust and assist in improving performance and providing better outcome for children in care	On Track	Regular meetings taking place between MO/AD Legal & Assurance and senior officers of SCT. Direct engagement and support provided on a range of high level legal and governance activities relating to the operation of SCT. Comprehensive review undertaken of existing service standards frameworks governing provision of legal services and support to SCT. Detailed report prepared for submission to OPB and SPB. Shared understanding and approach agreed to prioritisation and commissioning activities, improvements made by the MO/AD to operational practices within Safeguarding Team of Legal Services
B9	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.	CH4	Ensuring the Council maintains a safeguarding oversight of all Children and Young People	On Track	MASH continuing to work with schools through the DSL Forum to improve support, share best practice and a better awareness of thresholds to reduce unnecessary referrals MASH Education Manager working with SIA's to complete safeguarding reviews Encouraging schools to engage in the early help operational board Working with partners to review the MASH offer with the aim of moving towards an Integrated Front Door
		CH10	Improve the quality of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) so that funding is appropriately targeted to meet the needs of all Sandwell Children in Care; particularly in closing the attainment gap to peers (LACE Virtual School).	On Track	KS1 - Reading 60% only 4% below All Sandwell Children. KS4 4+Eng&Maths 32% up by 11% 2021; Progress 8 -069 Sandwell CiC performing 1/2 grade better than All CiC National.
		CH14	Deliver the Corporate Parenting Action Plan, continuing to review and strengthen the corporate parenting function and governance arrangements	Medium Issue/Slippage	The CiC/CL emotional well-being pilot was due to start on 1st December 23, this has been pushed back and will now start on 8th January 2024 for 15months. 19-21 care leavers who are NEET continues to increase further from 47.1% to 56.3%. CP strategy is currently being coproduced with young people and partners in readiness for March 24.
B10	We will work with partners to ensure early help is available to children and young people at the earliest opportunity depending on their need.	CH2	Work collaboratively with partner agencies across Health, Children's Trust and Adults Social Care to prepare children/young people with SEND for adulthood from an early age.	Medium Issue/Slippage	Under our comprehensive transformation programme, we are steadfast in our commitment to co-producing actions with all stakeholders involved. This involves regular, weekly engagements with health partners to foster a truly collaborative approach. Our objective is to fortify the synergy between education, health, and social care, ensuring that every strategy and initiative is co-produced with the full spectrum of expertise and insights. This integrated approach not only aligns with best practices but also ensures that our children and young people with SEND receive a cohesive, well-rounded preparation for adulthood from the earliest stages. Furthermore, our (ECP) recovery plan is in place, and our team is diligently working with health and social care counterparts to craft a forward-looking SEN development plan. This proactive approach is not just about managing new plans effectively; it's also about strategically addressing tribunal cases, ensuring a more seamless and integrated service delivery.

B11	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	CH1	To deliver the requirements of the special educational needs and disability (SEND) Code of Practice and innovate our services across local area to meet needs of C/YP with SEND in Sandwell. Sandwell has seen a 48% increase in C/YP with EHC Plans since 2019, staff capacity to support C/YP and deliver timely EHC Plan within statutory timelines is now a red risk.	Medium Issue/Slippage	In response to the escalating demand for EHC Plans, we have embarked on an active recruitment strategy. This proactive approach is aimed at bolstering our staff capacity, ensuring the timely production of EHC Plans within, or as close as possible to, the 20-week statutory timeframe. It's important to note that the current completion percentage is adversely affected by a historical backlog, which inaccurately reflects our recent improvements. We've made significant strides by appointing a dedicated Tribunal and Mediations Officer. This strategic hire is instrumental, focusing not only on new tribunal cases but also diligently addressing the backlog of prior cases. This role is critical in mitigating risks and ensuring we meet our statutory obligations more efficiently. Additionally, we are actively collaborating with legal teams to reinstate any lapsed processes or protocols. This partnership is vital in ensuring our compliance with legal standards and fortifying our commitment to providing timely and effective support to C/YP with SEND in Sandwell. These concerted efforts demonstrate our unwavering commitment to not only meeting the current needs but also continuously improving our service delivery in alignment with the SEND Code of Practice. Currently, our team is not only focusing on improving performance through our existing SEN recovery plan but is also in the process of refining and updating this plan. The aim is to develop a forward-thinking, co-produced strategy, integrating contributions from educational, health, and social care sectors, to effectively manage timelines and workloads.
		CH3	To work across agencies to deliver improvements specified in the SEND Operations Board Development Plan and meet aims of the SEND Strategy. Priority areas are: Quality Assurance of Statutory Responsibilities, Workforce development, Improving provision within local area and Improving attainment and progress of C/YP with SEN	Medium Issue/Slippage	Collaborative efforts across agencies are pivotal in actualising the enhancements proposed in the SEND Operations Board Development Plan and in achieving the overarching goals of the SEND Strategy. Our concerted actions are concentrated on four critical areas. Firstly, we are dedicated to the Quality Assurance of Statutory Responsibilities, ensuring that all statutory mandates are met with the utmost diligence and efficiency. This involves rigorous monitoring and evaluation to maintain the highest standards of compliance and service delivery.
		CH7	Maintain the continued and sustained improvement of SEND Transport	On Track	Work already undertaken to address increasing cost of Travel Assistance include All families currently on transport contact to discuss alternative assistance Review of all existing transport arrangements to identify efficiencies around routing/vehicle occupancy Further work planned to review transport arrangements i.e. Travel Alone/Multiply Addresses/Part-Time timetables Seven key areas have been identified to drive SEND Travel Assistance Transformation Plan • Use of Adult Social Care Fleet: • Review of the Travel Assistance Policy: • SEND 3 Procurement • Budget Management & Forecasting • EHCP & Travel Assistance Eligibility • Data Analysis & Pupil Forecasting • Communication Strategy & Plan Robust governance and monitoring in place with monthly reporting to Leadership Team/Leaders Briefing/Transformation Board & Sandwell Inclusion Board
B12	We will ensure that emotional health and wellbeing support is in place for children and young people.	PH6	Investment and support of community mental health programmes		No update available
		CH13	Deliver Phase 2 of Emotional Wellbeing Grant Programme for children and young people	On Track	Phase 2 is on track to complete in December 2024. Final data is currently being collated. Planning for Phase 3 is underway, awaiting Value for Money panel sign off. Programmes will be delivered until June 2025.

# People Live Well and Age Well

	CP Ref	Deliverable	BP Ref.	Key deliverables (Directorate Action)	Q3 Rating - RAG	Q3 October - December
Page 92	L1	We will identify and tackle health inequalities (especially those which have been widened by the Covid pandemic), including inequalities emerging across vulnerable groups	PH5	Healthy Sandwell advice and referral service	Medium Issue/Slippage	Installation of Health Diagnostic Software continued during Q3 with only 2 GP practice out of 47 still to sign the DPA. Cumulative Uptake of Health Checks also continued to improve to 1796 high CVD risk Health Checks completed which is 30% of target for the Year (6000 HC). 1486 of these Health Checks have been referred to their GPs for further assessment and follow up. Of those people completing the Health Checks 615 referred to Healthy Sandwell for weight management, 571 physical activities, 361 CVD risk above 10%, smokers 57, 16 to alcohol services and 118 to wellbeing services. Healthy Sandwell continued to reach large number of people through various referral pathways and follow up to various Public Health programmes. 5421 contacts made over Q3 with an average of 1807 contacts per month which is above the target of 1600 contact per month. Main areas for referrals were general follow ups, pre-diabetes, health Checks referrals and follow up, Health Fabric, physical activities, general health and wellbeing, stop smoking, sexual health and other Public Health referrals.
			PH10	Stop Smoking Support	On Track	Our quit rate per 100,000 population shows that we continue to engage and support a far higher number of smokers to quit than regional or national levels, however Sandwell's smoking prevalence rate at 21% remains above regional and national levels (13% and 12% respectively). We are working to ensure continued targeted engagement of priority groups known to have higher prevalence of smoking, whilst also delivering a universal digital offer and vapes as a harm reduction method. Work to ensure Sandwell secures further vape supplies is currently being developed through a local bid to the national 'Swap to Stop' scheme. Further work to bolster the reach and capacity of the local smoking cessation service is also underway given the recent announcement of additional grant funding for local smoking cessation services. Whilst we await further guidance from central government, planning discussions and work to prepare for a contract variation and secure approvals is underway. We are also currently recruiting additional enforcement capacity to bolster our response to illegal vapes which remain prevalent in Sandwell. Our young person's service continues to deliver education and prevention sessions across local schools on this issue.
			PH20	Air Quality		No update available
	L2	We will invest in the community, voluntary and faith sector through grants, upskilling and co-development.	PH15	Engagement of faith sector in Public Health work	On Track	The Faith Sector and Inclusion Health Development Officer recruited has been recruited and the Faith Sector Board meetings have been set up and are held bi-monthly. Each of the larger faiths in Sandwell now represented at the Faith Sector Board. New metrics to capture ongoing engagement for this indicator will be established for 24/25.
	L3	We will continue to prepare for emerging Health Protection risks and support uptake of all vaccination programmes to protect our population.	PH4	Going support with vaccination programmes (COVID and flu)		No update available
			PH7	Outbreak Management		No update available
	L4	We will work with our partners, including the community and voluntary sector, to reduce social isolation and ensure people are connected within their local communities and beyond.	PH18	Falls Prevention	On Track	Procurement activity continues to progress with ITT advertisement due to go out early Q4. Public health have committed to fund the programme as it is the only preventative programme in Sandwell that helps to improve strength and balance to reduce falls in the home. Current contract is performing well having received 273 referrals (annual target 300).
	L5	We recognise our responsibility to continue to invest in	PH3	Healthy eating and weight management		No update available
			PH12	Inclusive cycling programme	On Track	The programme was successfully delivered and now has ceased. A provider is being appointed for the summer of 2024 to deliver learn to ride sessions as part of the Cycle More Sandwell Programme and the service is looking at how this can be monitored through performance indicators.
			PH14	Greenspaces utilisation	On Track	In Q3 there were 10 weekly physical activity sessions on offer in parks and open spaces, with 597 participants attending.



		PH16	Expand the Charter Mark framework into the Voluntary and Community Sector	On Track	3 year SLA is now signed and delivery is on track.
L6	We will develop a strength-based approach to further develop a Stronger Sandwell, by working with our public sector partners and voluntary and community organisations.	ASC10	Embedding Strengths Based Practice Project.	Complete	Project Plan with milestones in place.
		ASC17a	Refresh existing market position statement.	On Track	Draft MPS now complete and to go to Commissioning Board for ratification
L6	We will develop a strength-based approach to further develop a Stronger Sandwell, by working with our public sector partners and voluntary and community organisations.	ASC17b	Dynamic market position statement.	Medium Issue/Slippage	No further update to that provided in Qtr. 1 and 2 - Place holder for a link to the Market Position Statement has been included in the refreshed Commissioning Page on the Council Website <a href="https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/commissioning">https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/commissioning</a> but we need to commission or build internally a portal or pages for the Market Position Statement to sit .
		ASC33	Dynamic market position statement.		Duplicate - see ASC17a
		ASC52	Embedding Strengths Based Practice Project.	On Track	Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) will be presenting their findings report to the Director of Adult Social Care, Assistant Directors and Operational Heads in February 2024 and we will then look at the recommendations/next steps to action.
		H2	Develop an alternative operating model for Shop Mobility	Complete	Complete
L7	We will support people to get accessible information and advice about their health, care and support and how they can be as well as possible – physically, mentally and emotionally.	ASC8	To ensure all Adult Social Care web pages have been updated to provide easily accessible information, advice and guidance.	Complete	All pages live on new site. Accessibility rating improved from 350th to 22nd UK councils from old to new pages.
		ASC31	To continue updating the Adult Social Care web pages as and when required throughout the year. Adding accessibility elements to the website to support residents access information on the website.	Complete	Website live, continuing to update. We have added elements to support residents to access information. All pages are WCAG compliant.
		BE2	Contract management for leisure services inc. establishment of new LATC	Complete	Complete
		BE8	CWG legacy (cycling, walking, accessibility) delivery of long-term infrastructure (council also go in stronger communities)	Complete	Community sport plan in delivery phase.
		BE9	Develop sustainable business model for Living Well Leisure	Complete	Complete

		BE11	Plan and launch Aquatics Centre	Complete	Complete
		BE12	Programme of cultural events and activities across all libraries and museums	On Track	204 events with 4407 attending
L8	We will continue to support access to food through food banks and opportunities for children in school holidays.	ASC23	To continue to monitor demand on Enquiry Service in light of current economic situation. Especially in relation to cost of living crisis and fuel crisis.	On Track	Demand continues to be monitored and does not match capacity. A number of transformation approaches are being considered for the Adult Social Care front door, alongside the implementation of the new corporate contact centre solution due in April 2024. A report will be presented to DMT in February 2024 to consider the resources currently allocated to this service.
L9	We will ensure that we have sufficient mental health provision and we will promote good mental health through a range of initiatives, ensuring equitable access to mental health support.	PH6	Investment and support of community mental health programmes	On Track	The programme of activities/projects focusing on older adults, carers, people with disabilities/long-term conditions, people who are blind or visually impaired, and people who are deaf or hearing impaired continue to be delivered during Q3. Expression of interests have been received and evaluated for projects focusing on Black communities and Eastern European communities with successful projects expected to start delivery in Q4. Total funding allocated to this work to date is £290,550.
L10	We will contribute to better air quality and climate change through raising public awareness, increasing active travel and supporting sustainable transport.	R1	Develop and implement council-wide programme of carbon literacy	On Track	Additional sessions for Assistant Directors booked in for Feb 24. Sessions for Member Steering Group also being arranged.
		R2	We will deliver the Active Travel projects funded by both Towns Fund Programme and City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement	On Track	Programme on track, some amendments due to public feedback following consultation.
L11	We will ensure continued investment into health and wellbeing services including drugs and alcohol, adult obesity and smoking cessation.	PH1	Drug Misuse Services	On Track	The latest drug related deaths data released 19th Dec 2023 shows Sandwell's drug rate deaths has further improved to now just 2.1 per 100,000 population for the latest period 2020-22 (was 2.2 for previous period). This decrease is in contrast to regional and national trends which have both got worse and remain worse than Sandwell levels (5.7 regionally and 5.2 nationally). We know this is due to the enhanced harm reduction and outreach approach which Sandwell has developed in conjunction with system-wide partners. Our developing Recovery offer will also further continue to have an impact on this and we are delighted to have representation from a number of individuals with lived and living experience at our Strategic Drug & Alcohol Partnership (SDAP) meetings. Full info: <a href="https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/deathsrelatedtodrugpoisoninginenglandandwales2022registrations">https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/deathsrelatedtodrugpoisoninginenglandandwales2022registrations</a>
		PH2	Alcohol Misuse Services	On Track	Sandwell's hospital based Alcohol Care Team have worked closely with community alcohol treatment services to ensure seamless pathways and joined up care. Work to explore more community based engagement events including fibro scanning activity is currently being explored. Identification of alcohol support needs via health check delivery has been recognised as good practice from the national OHID Addictions team who are looking to develop Sandwell as a best practice case study nationally. The vacant Public Health Alcohol Project Manager -new starter to commence Feb 4th 2024.
L12	We will support more people to achieve healthier life choices and be informed around their health through; delivering Making Every Contact Count, Health Checks, the Healthy aging app and access to health interventions through Healthy Sandwell and social prescribing support.	PH11	Public Health marketing campaigns		No update available
L13	We will encourage more people to be healthy through being physically active and eating good nutrition. Through #movemoresandwell, School meal review and weight management support.	PH13	Sandwell Stride programme and digital app-based walking offer	On Track	Walk attendances for Oct – Dec 2023 were 1,465 with an average weekly attendance of 112. One new weekly walk started at Brandhall Community Hub.

L14	We will actively seek out and listen to information about people who are most likely to experience inequality in experience or outcomes. We will tailor the care, support and treatment in response.	ASC2	Prioritisation and delivery of Discharge 2 Assess Action Plan.	Medium Issue/Slippage	Pathway 2 recovery plan projects continue. Two are complete. Progress has been hindered by capacity of Operational HUB leads to progress due to increasing discharge pressures and complexity of discharge needs. A meeting is being held week commencing 29th January 2024 to review progress and map support options to pull back on track. Place leads are reviewing the current program requirements to identify the top 3 key priority areas for 2024/2025.
		ASC35	Implementation of Charging Reform/Care Cap.	On Track	The government announced there will be a 2 year delay in the introduction of the Charging Reform for Adult Social Care from October 2023 - 2025. Milestones and project plan have been aligned to the revised timeframes and regular workstream meetings are in place.
		ASC56	The Local Authority will need to implement the Charging Reform. As part of the charging reform a Care Cap is being introduced on the amount a person with eligible care and support needs, will spend on their care in their lifetime.	On Track	The government announced there will be a 2 year delay in the introduction of the Charging Reform for Adult Social Care from October 2023 - 2025. Milestones and project plan have been aligned to the revised timeframes and regular workstream meetings are in place.
		ASC57	The Local Authority will need to implement the Charging Reform. As part of the charging reform a Care Cap is being introduced on the amount a person with eligible care and support needs, will spend on their care in their lifetime.	On Track	The government announced there will be a 2 year delay in the introduction of the Charging Reform for Adult Social Care from October 2023 - 2025. Milestones and project plan have been aligned to the revised timeframes and regular workstream meetings are in place.
		ASC59	Go live with supported living framework.	Medium Issue/Slippage	No further progress since last report but this has no financial implications to the Directorate as financially the supported living market has been stabilised as reported in Qtr. 1. There may be financial benefits by reviewing all supported living placements with a strength based approach and looking to replace support hours with assistive technology. Conscious of capacity in procurement and contract functions to go through approval process for supported living providers wanting to join the framework. Conscious also of demands on Care Management to transfer people who's providers choose not to apply or who are unsuccessful in applying to join the new framework. Day Services framework right now is more of a priority
L15	We will promote access to employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities and those with mental ill health.	PH.6	Investment and support of community mental health programmes		No update available
L16	We will review access to day care provisions to ensure that people have access to community resources to improve independence and choice.	ASC6	Review and option appraisal for in-house day service offer.	Complete	12 week pathway staff team established. Launch presentation being completed.
		ASC20	Implement new Day opportunities model across the market.	Medium Issue/Slippage	Update provided at Q2 remains. We are working on developing improved pathways around Direct Payments before we move forward in terms of diversifying the market. Workshop being arranged to try and resolve some of the issues both from the administration of Direct Payments and the perception in the use and application of Direct Payments by Social Work staff and people who draw upon social care and support
		ASC30	Implement outcome of the options appraisal for both community and building based day service offer.	Complete	Postural care plans being identified per individual in co-production with Health, physio & Occupational Therapists.

L17	We work with people to understand what being safe means to them and work with our partners to develop the best way to achieve this. We concentrate on improving people's lives while protecting their right to live in safety, free from bullying, harassment, abuse, discrimination, avoidable harm and neglect. We will make sure we share concerns quickly and appropriately.	ASC9	A review of Safeguarding Improvement Plans.	Complete	The Safeguarding Improvement Plan continues to be reviewed on a monthly basis.
		ASC18	A new Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board Strategic Plan to be in place in 2024 and action plan to be reviewed and revised from an Adult Social Care perspective in response to the new strategic plan.	On Track	The current Strategic Plan is until March 2024. Adult Social Care Board members attended the Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board Development Session on the 15th November 2023 to be part of developing the new Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board Strategic Plan.
		ASC19	Adult Social Care response to Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board Strategic Plan.	Complete	The Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board Strategic Plan has been reviewed and actions are monitored via the workstreams that are in place.
		ASC11	Adult safeguarding improvements in practice and performance. Monitor progress and review need for new actions.	On Track	There is a further reduction in contact and duty backlogs. Staffing levels have increased and were a full establishment of social workers (agency staff) including extra staffing resource to clear the backlog by the end of the financial year. The permanent recruit of staff is taking place as wider ASC recruitment campaign.
		ASC34	Implementation and review of Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS).	On Track	Adult Social Care is undertaking work in readiness and preparedness for implementation of Liberty Protection Safeguards - this remains on hold pending government guidance.
		ASC36	Implementation of the operational model in relation to Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS).	On Track	Adult Social Care is undertaking work in readiness and preparedness for implementation of Liberty Protection Safeguards - this remains on hold pending government guidance.
		ASC37	Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) will replace Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS). LPS will provide a framework for people aged 16 and above to determine whether a deprivation of liberty is necessary and proportionate to enable care or treatment for the individual.	On Track	Adult Social Care is undertaking work in readiness and preparedness for implementation of Liberty Protection Safeguards - this remains on hold pending government guidance.
		ASC51	Embedding learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews and Serious Case Reviews. Establish a clear procedure for learning in Sandwell for all levels of Adult Social Care to disseminate information and raise awareness. Frontline practitioners to be clear of the organisations approach to learning and developing a culture of learning.	On Track	We have continued to review the Quality Assurance Framework and continued to deliver bespoke sessions for staff. Recent adult safeguarding audits have identified training for staff and managers across teams. Currently working with Learning and Development to plan safeguarding training for managers and staff.
		ASC1	Operating model for intermediate care services.	Medium Issue/Slippage	Officers from Health and Adult Social Care have been meeting regularly to discuss Intermediate Care. Operating model for STAR and Harvest View in place. Review undertaken with Harvest View admission criteria, with work now moving to the service descriptions on LAS, to ensure they both capture and mirror the services being delivered i.e. crisis, reablement or enhanced assessment. There is currently a draft Intermediate Care Operating Model which requires some amendments following consultation with the Assistant Directors and will need to obtain input from the SWBH Clinical Lead - this has been delayed due to capacity.

ASC3	Joint Equipment Stores site development and relocation of Community Alarms.	Significant issues/risks/slippage	<p>Legal issue with barriers of A1 Clutches still remains - chased on 22/09/23, 29/09/2023, November 2023 and on 22.01.2024 and still awaiting a response.</p> <p>Relocation of Community Alarms will be end of February/March 2024. Meeting with BT on 23.01.2024 and then plan to agree live tests with Jontek in February 2024.</p>
ASC4	Established intermediate care service in relation to an integrated offer across all partners.	On Track	<p>Redesign of STAR in relation to the wider intermediate care offer consultation has commenced and on track to be completed by May 2024.</p> <p>The development of intermediate care and reablement services for Harvest View has been implemented on the top floor which opened January 2024.</p>
ASC5	Established intermediate care service in relation to social care operating models.	On Track	<p>Redesign of STAR in relation to the wider intermediate care offer consultation has commenced and on track to be completed by May 2024.</p> <p>The development of intermediate care and reablement services for Harvest View has been implemented on the top floor which opened January 2024.</p>
ASC7	Options appraisal on STAR service due to impact of Discharge 2 Assess.	Complete	<p>An options appraisal has been completed and agreed at the Directorate Management Team and Joint Partnership Board Meetings as the agreed way forward for STAR, the actual project to deliver the appraisal will be in April/May2024.</p>
ASC15	<p>Establish a programme of complete actions required for the transformation of social work and therapy including the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Integrated Town Teams</li> <li>• Reviews</li> <li>• Liberty Protection Safeguards</li> <li>• Community DoLS</li> <li>• Workforce Strategy</li> <li>• Staff Survey</li> <li>• Charging Reform</li> <li>• Adult Social Care Process and Procedures</li> <li>• Direct Payments</li> <li>• Appointeeship</li> <li>• Adult Social Care Restructure</li> <li>• Creation of Learning Disabilities/Autism Team</li> <li>• Continuing Health Care</li> </ul>	On Track	<p>All programme of actions are monitored via the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Action Plan and relevant lead for each of the four themes in the plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated Town Teams - These have been established in the 6 towns and meet with partners on a regular basis.</li> <li>• Reviews - A dedicated Strength based project for reviews is in place.</li> <li>• Liberty Protection Safeguards - The implementation is currently on hold by the government.</li> <li>• Community DoLS - Processes and procedures are being updated and will be linked to the Tri.x implementation.</li> <li>• Workforce Strategy - has been completed and approved.</li> <li>• Staff Survey - A presentation of the results was presented to DMT and the Op's Managers in order for each Op's Head to discuss with their teams and assist in developing actions on key issues in their areas.</li> <li>• Charging Reform - The implementation is currently on hold by the government.</li> <li>• Adult Social Care Process and Procedures - Tri.x Implementation Project now in place and monitored by the CQC Project Board.</li> <li>• Direct Payments - Adult Social Care has a project team in place and the policies and procedures will be reviewed via the Tri.x Project.</li> <li>• Appointeeship - The policies and procedures will be reviewed via the Tri.x Project.</li> <li>• Adult Social Care Restructure - The Adult Social Care Restructure has been completed.</li> <li>• Creation of Learning Disabilities/Autism Team - The specialist Younger Adults, Learning Disability and Autism team has been created. Project Group will look at the operating model.</li> <li>• Continuing Health Care (CHC) - We are working with partners to develop a robust and consistent CHC pathway for Sandwell residents. We have an identified CHC lead who will lead on the CHC pathway. Project Group will look at the operating model.</li> </ul>

<p>ASC16</p>	<p>Implement the transformation programme identified for social work and therapy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated Town Teams</li> <li>• Reviews</li> <li>• Liberty Protection Safeguards</li> <li>• Community DoLS</li> <li>• Workforce Strategy</li> <li>• Staff Survey</li> <li>• Charging Reform</li> <li>• Adult Social Care Process and Procedures</li> <li>• Direct Payments</li> <li>• Appointeeship</li> <li>• Adult Social Care Restructure</li> <li>• Creation of Learning Disabilities/Autism Team</li> <li>• Continuing Health Care</li> </ul>	<p>On Track</p>	<p>All programme of actions are monitored via the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Action Plan and relevant lead for each of the four themes in the plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated Town Teams - These have been established in the 6 towns and meet with partners on a regular basis.</li> <li>• Reviews - A dedicated Strength based project for reviews is in place.</li> <li>• Liberty Protection Safeguards - The implementation is currently on hold by the government.</li> <li>• Community DoLS - Processes and procedures are being updated and will be linked to the Tri.x implementation.</li> <li>• Workforce Strategy - has been completed and approved.</li> <li>• Staff Survey - A presentation of the results was presented to DMT and the Op's Managers in order for each Op's Head to discuss with their teams and assist in developing actions on key issues in their areas.</li> <li>• Charging Reform - The implementation is currently on hold by the government.</li> <li>• Adult Social Care Process and Procedures - Tri.x Implementation Project now in place and monitored by the CQC Project Board.</li> <li>• Direct Payments - Adult Social Care has a project team in place and the policies and procedures will be reviewed via the Tri.x Project.</li> <li>• Appointeeship - The policies and procedures will be reviewed via the Tri.x Project.</li> <li>• Adult Social Care Restructure - The Adult Social Care Restructure has been completed.</li> <li>• Creation of Learning Disabilities/Autism Team - The specialist Younger Adults, Learning Disability and Autism team has been created. Project Group will look at the operating model.</li> <li>• Continuing Health Care (CHC) - We are working with partners to develop a robust and consistent CHC pathway for Sandwell residents. We have an identified CHC lead who will lead on the CHC pathway. Project Group will look at the operating model.</li> </ul>
<p>ASC21</p>	<p>Commissioning Place Based Model - map current commissioning model and activity across place to identify any duplication or gaps.</p> <p>Establish a Place Based Commissioning Board.</p>	<p>Complete</p>	<p>We have reviewed the Joint Partnership Board and incorporated the Commissioning Board Terms of Reference.</p>
<p>ASC22</p>	<p>Agree a position in response to market requests for uplifts and agreed annual increases.</p>	<p>Complete</p>	<p>There are many separate elements to this including dealing with issues within the existing day services markets.</p>
<p>ASC24</p>	<p>Monitor progress against key performance indicator's through performance management dashboard.</p>	<p>Medium Issue/Slippage</p>	<p>KPI data is live and reported monthly through the Intermediate Care and Care Navigation Program Delivery Group. There is a need to ensure all areas are reporting data in the same format to enable accurate comparison which will be implemented by February's report. Publication of partnership data is now significantly delayed. Craig Watkins, Business Partner – Place Information Team – Performance &amp; Insight is leading this work. This is being chased weekly at the Senior Leads meetings and monthly by the Intermediate Care and Care Navigation Program Delivery Group. Work continues to ensure the Community National weekly Sitrep includes all pathway 2 beds (currently only health beds are reported). A meeting has been requested with Binda Rana to discuss how the required delayed data fields can be built into current SMBC systems. An operational implementation plan for delay reason recording will then be required once data fields are complete.</p>
<p>ASC25</p>	<p>Agree a position in response to market requests for uplifts and agreed annual increases.</p>	<p>Complete</p>	<p>A three year financial plan agreed by Cabinet in August 2022. Also received the Market Sustainability and Improvement Funding to support uplifts to the market which has now been confirmed for a further 2 years.</p>
<p>ASC26</p>	<p>Agree a position in response to market requests for uplifts and agreed annual increases.</p>	<p>Complete</p>	<p>A three year financial plan agreed by Cabinet in August 2022. Also received the Market Sustainability and Improvement Funding to support uplifts to the market which has now been confirmed for a further 2 years.</p>

L18

We will 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.

ASC28	Develop a Co-production Strategy with place based partners, citizens and carers.	On Track	Again as reported in previous Quarters Co-production remains on track. The Directorates Our Plan has been approved by the Directorate and by Health and Wellbeing Board. This now needs to be implemented. Recruitment for the 2 Commissioning Support Officers is in progress and should subject to approval by VFM panel be going out to the market very soon. Work is also underway in finalising the corporate commitments to Co-production involving a wide range of partners and stakeholders. This will inform the Council Corporate Commitment to Co-production. Attention will then turn to a commitment across Place, but much of the work will already be done with the excellent partnership and stakeholder work already undertaken.
ASC29	To upgrade the Walker Grange accommodation and communal areas in order to provide a modern service at the Grange.	On Track	Accommodation - Contractors due on site week commencing 5th February 2024 - delayed due to electrical panel upgrade required. Once works commence on the 5th February, anticipated time scale is 3-4 months for completion of the remaining 5 Flats.
ASC32	As technology develops continued review of new opportunities available for deployment.	On Track	We continue to review opportunities as progress develops for Adult Social Care across Place and the Integrated Care Systems. The Ethal remote monitoring system has now been procured for use by the Integrated Care Board across the Black Country. Place meeting arranged to agree rollout in Sandwell. Further rollout of digital kit will be linked to Adult Social Care transformation programme as it develops.
ASC38	Realignment of intermediate Social Work Team with Community Social Work Teams.	Complete	The realignment of intermediate Social Work Team with Community Social Work Teams is complete.
ASC39	Fair Cost of Care Exercise. Implement outcomes of mandated cost of care. Undertake cost of care exercise for supported living market.	Complete	Fair cost of Care exercise completed for mandated services and supported living market.
ASC40	Fair Cost of Care Exercise. Implement outcomes of supported living cost of care. Undertake cost of care exercise for day services and complex residential care.	Complete	There are no plans to continue with day services and residential care at the moment whilst we explore the framework opportunities.
ASC41	Identify resources to scope, develop and rollout digital offer and integrated communications. Initial implementation focussed on in-house services	On Track	We continue to review opportunities as progress develops for Adult Social Care across Place and the Integrated Care Systems. The Ethal remote monitoring system has now been procured for use by the Integrated Care Board across the Black Country. Place meeting arranged to agree rollout in Sandwell. Further rollout of digital kit will be linked to Adult Social Care transformation programme as it develops.
ASC42	Commissioning Place Based Model - Agree a Market Development Strategy which defines current gaps in provision and how these will be addressed across place together with agreed commissioning priorities for development.	Complete	We now have a Market Development Strategy in place which has been published.

ASC43	Identify resources to scope, develop and rollout digital offer and integrated communications. Testing market and digital rollout.	On Track	We continue to review opportunities as progress develops for Adult Social Care across Place and the Integrated Care Systems. The Ethal remote monitoring system has now been procured for use by the Integrated Care Board across the Black Country. Place meeting arranged to agree rollout in Sandwell. Further rollout of digital kit will be linked to Adult Social Care transformation programme as it develops.
ASC44	Walker Grange fully developed and modernised.	Significant issues/risks/slippage	Currently no feasibility study completed against planned design or developments. This will put the development of the service at risk, should the project be deemed not-viable. A site survey and drawings were completed 2022. These have not progressed to costing stage
ASC45	Implement agreed STAR operating model integrated with I Cares and Harvest View to deliver intermediate care at home.	Medium Issue/Slippage	Initially we were advised that we would require Cabinet approval to progress with this action, however in December 2023 we were informed by legal and the Section 151 Officer to amend the paperwork to request Cabinet Member approval instead. The above and the closedown period caused a slight delay the process. New deadline for implementation is May 2024.
ASC47	Walker Grange - work undertaken to implement upgrade and develop dementia offer.	Medium Issue/Slippage	Work on remaining flats for phase 1 is scheduled to commence on 5th Feb. Show flats completed, agreed spec for development 5 flats now being brought up to spec. Work to be completed in Q4. Contractor starts on site next week (5 Feb).
ASC49	Implement agreed STAR operating model integrated with I Cares to deliver intermediate care at home.	On Track	The Cabinet Member report was approved in January 2024 and consultation with Unions has commenced.



<p>ASC50</p>	<p>Review progress and refresh the transformation programme identified for social work and therapy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated Town Teams</li> <li>• Reviews</li> <li>• Liberty Protection Safeguards</li> <li>• Community DoLS</li> <li>• Workforce Strategy</li> <li>• Staff Survey</li> <li>• Charging Reform</li> <li>• Adult Social Care Process and Procedures</li> <li>• Direct Payments</li> <li>• Appointeeship</li> <li>• Adult Social Care Restructure</li> <li>• Creation of Learning Disabilities/Autism Team</li> <li>• Continuing Health Care</li> </ul>	<p>On Track</p>	
<p>ASC53</p>	<p>Seamless Transition from Children's services to Adults services. Map out the current transitional model.</p>	<p>On Track</p>	<p>New deadline for implementation is May 2024.</p>
<p>ASC54</p>	<p>Seamless Transition from Children's services to Adults services. Robust pathway for Looked After Children (LAC) and Care Leavers who may be eligible for adult social care services.</p>	<p>On Track</p>	<p>Development of Operating model with identified roles, responsibilities, timeframes-co produced with partners.</p> <p>There will be a Preparing for Adulthood Monitoring Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 times a year</li> <li>• Service representatives from adult and children's social care, health and education.</li> </ul> <p>High level data analysis has also been completed through Power BI, to establish contact created, associated outcome information and service costings for the specified period. High level analysis has also been completed on the Demographic Panel spreadsheet information.</p>
<p>ASC55</p>	<p>Seamless Transition from Children's services to Adults services. The intention is to create a seamless and robust pathway from a child-centred care system to adult strength based orientated services.</p>	<p>On Track</p>	<p>The Preparing for Adulthood protocol will be signed off by the Leadership team and this will continue to be updated and reviewed annually. We are also ensuring whole system approach and seamless pathway joint approach and training is in place.</p>

		ASC58	Re-commission PIP Pathway, Domiciliary care provision to deliver outcomes focussed reablement support alongside intermediate care at home service.	On Track	Cabinet Member report approved in January 2024 and consultation with Unions has commenced. Meetings to consult staff are scheduled during January 2024. New deadline for implementation is May 2024.
		ASC60	Commissioning Place Based Model is in place.	Complete	Commissioning Place Based Model now in place. All commissioning activity for Place to be managed through the Joint Partnership Board.
		ASC61	To rollout the Implementation of the E-brokerage system to support the wider social care provision.	Medium Issue/Slippage	Discussions with the Hospital Brokerage team are taking place to pilot rollout opportunities.
L19	We will understand our duty to collaborate and work in partnership, so our services work seamlessly for people. We will share information and learning with partners and collaborate for improvement.	ASC27	Implement agreed Carers Strategy and Delivery Plan. Review current commissioned services to ensure fit for purpose and agree revised commissioning plan.	On Track	A story board showing the actions to be undertaken, that also meet the strategy has been developed. Communication was developed by the Council's team that was shared in December to promote the strategy to key stakeholders. Websites have been refreshed to support people to find carers services and a community resource pack has been developed with a new carers section to ensure people can have more options to meet their care and support needs. this has been shared with the social work teams and Voluntary Sector Community. A new series of meetings are being issued to keep strategy implementation on track. All carers grants have been reviewed and intentions are being agreed Week commencing 29 January 2024. Support from health has been requested. December's meeting was cancelled due to Winter pressures.
L20	We will ensure that all carers in Sandwell are offered support in a timely way and that they have access to the information, guidance and advice that they need.	ASC46	Review and refresh Carers Strategy.	On Track	Carers grants have been reviewed and a joint meeting to agree intentions with Voluntary Sector Support Team is planned for week commencing 29 January 2024.
		ASC12	An approved and resourced workforce strategy for social work and therapy is implemented.	Complete	The Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy has been completed and signed off for the directorate. Currently developing an action plan to improve recruitment, retention and workforce development.
L21	We will develop a comprehensive Workforce Strategy - one that incorporates recruitment and retention, whilst also assessing joint health and social care roles.	ASC13	An approved and resourced workforce strategy for social work and therapy is in place.	Complete	The Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy has been completed and signed off for the directorate. Currently developing an action plan to improve recruitment, retention and workforce development.

ASC14	Develop a comprehensive workforce strategy for social work and therapy to improve recruitment and retention.	Complete	The Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy has been completed and signed off for the directorate. Currently developing an action plan to improve recruitment, retention and workforce development.
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## Strong Resilient Communities

	CP Ref	Deliverable	BP Ref.	Key deliverables (Directorate Action)	Q3 Rating - RAG	Q3 October - December
Page 104	C1	We will ensure our grant funding of community/voluntary sector activity supports the priorities we're outlining in this plan.	PH19	Community champions programme		No update available
			ACE5	Bring together governance arrangements and budgets to ensure VCS grants are aligned to corporate objectives	Medium Issue/Slippage	Work still ongoing with Finance to identify budgets to be built into centralised budget. Annual report of 2022/23 grants and impact produced and discussed with members. Scope of the project to be reviewed with new Assistant Chief Executive
			ACE6	Voluntary Sector Support - ensure grants given to the voluntary and community sector by the council conform to the Voluntary & Community Sector Grant Funding Guidance and Procedures and wider Financial Regulations, and deliver value for money in achieving the council's strategic priorities	Complete	Grant Procedure rules completed and aligned with Contract procedures. Revised Grant Agreement approved by Legal in January 2024. Both documents communicated to commissioners and Intranet page updated.
	C2	We will deliver the Towns Investment Plans in West Bromwich, Smethwick and Rowley Regis, secured through £67.5m of Town Deal Funding.	R3	We will deliver the agreed Town Deals in collaboration with our partners (NHS, Sandwell College, Canal & River Trust) across Rowley Regis, Smethwick and West Bromwich	Medium Issue/Slippage	Broadly on track, achieved planning consent for NHS Learning Hub on MM site. Refurb/Regen of WB Town Hall has commenced with Morgan Sindall. Construction cost inflation remains an issue.
	C3	Through working with the SHAPE Forum, we will make sure that our towns become welcoming places for young people and that they have jobs, activities and facilities to give them a part in the local community.	BE12	Programme of events and activities across all libraries and museums	On Track	204 events with 4407 attending
	C4	We will put the needs of our residents at the heart of what we do, establishing processes to engage with them to ensure that our residents guide and influence our services.	BE27	Development of Heritage Strategy for the Borough	On Track	To be incorporated into Cultural Strategy
			BE36	Playing Pitch Strategy	Complete	
			ACE 28	Undertake a review of Neighbourhood Working arrangements and governance	On Track	Identified all existing resources and activities in relation to locality working. Completed SWOT analyses of locality working from different service provider/ user. perspectives, to identify strengths and weaknesses of current neighbourhood working (obtaining views of members, officers and public and looking at best practice elsewhere). Next steps: work with the project team on the development of a new model. Identify the optimum building blocks for a neighbourhood working model. Identify efficiencies and new ways of working where appropriate.

		BE37	Customer Access and Management	Complete	Waste and Street Cleansing workflow now BaU for Business Management Team
C5	We will strive to maintain Green Flag status in 14 parks, whilst also working to enhance our existing green and open spaces, create new places to play and committing to plant 10,000 trees by 2030.	BE30	Implementation of PSS Ultimate for green services, green spaces, and service assets and stock tracking	Complete	Currently in use
		BE31	Delivery of trees strategy and planting programme for 23/24 planting season	On Track	c. 2,000 trees to be planted in 2024 spring, ahead of target
		BE32	Delivery of 23/24 Green Spaces Strategy Objectives.	On Track	Green space programme of works 23/24 as published on track to be delivered.
		BE46	Develop 10 year green spaces master plan and funding plan (based on improvement plan and assets review).	Complete	
		LG8	Through our bereavement teams, we will strive to maintain and approve Green Flag status in our cemeteries and crematoria, whilst also working to enhance our existing and new cemeteries and crematoria	On Track	2024 Green Flag submissions to be sent by 31 January 2024.
				BE12	Programme of events and activities across all libraries and museums
C6	We will support our residents to cope with the current cost of living crisis and address the long term underlying causes of poverty.				
C7	We will develop and deliver a libraries strategy that works together with the community. We will start to roll out the Open+ model which represents a different way of working for public libraries.	BE7	Delivery of Libraries and Archives Strategy including rollout of Library+ (a new model of delivery)	On Track	7 libraries live with Library Plus
		BE10	Deliver feasibility and funding strategy for new Archives Centre	On Track	Feasibility complete. Cabinet paper taken on the 7th February to agree funding strategy

C8	We will work the community and local stakeholders to develop a legacy plan that maximises the benefits of the Commonwealth Games Sandwell Aquatic Centre.	BE35	Leisure Built Facilities Strategy	Medium Issue/Slippage	With the launch of SAC and the LUF 2 Project to rebuild Haden Hill Leisure Centre work to develop the built facility/strategy has been paused until 2024.	
		R4	We will develop and commit to delivering a Commonwealth Games Legacy Plan which ensures sustainable economic, wellbeing and cultural benefits of the Games for our communities.	Complete	Complete	
		R5	We will deliver the Legacy Build phase for the Sandwell Aquatics Centre and make facility available for public use from Summer 2023.	Complete	Complete	
C9	We will showcase local, regional, national and international talent in an engaging and inspiring programme of events.		Programme of cultural events and activities across all libraries and museums	On Track	204 events with 4407 attending	
C10	We will explore and develop a Sandwell Valley phased investment programme over the next five years—towards the Valley becoming a key Visitor and Destination Gateway into Sandwell.	BE28	Approved Master Plan for Sandwell Valley (10 year plan)	On Track	Currently public consultation and approved by Capital Board, and pre-decision scrutiny. Going to Cabinet for decision in March 24	
		BE29	Delivery of Forge Mill Farm Education and Outreach Barn Project	On Track	Due for completion in March / April 2024	
Green	C11	We will work with partners to deliver initiatives that will help up to achieve our climate change strategy and the target of being a carbon neutral borough by 2041.	R6	Produce Corporate Climate Change Action Plan to ensure we can meet our 2030 and 2041 targets for carbon neutrality	Complete	
	C12	We will embed climate change considerations into our decision making to enable us to become a carbon neutral council by 2030.	H15	Plan for replacement of diesel fleet with sustainable fuel vehicles	Significant issues/risks/slippage	Estate Services - no lease or vehicle renewals due within the short term. When vehicles are due for replacement we will consult to ensure the most appropriate type of vehicles are ordered. The Corporate Fleet Review will make recommendation on the transition to Electric Vehicles (EVs). SMBC has now funded the installation of EV charging points at Serco's Shidas Lane Depot which will allow the replacement of their light-commercial fleet with EVs later this year. This will be 44 Internal Combustion Engine vehicles replaced with EVs.
	C13	We will review our corporate fleet, so that they are low carbon and compatible with our climate change strategy for 2030. Working with our partners, we will make refuse collection and street cleansing greener with the rollout of electric street cleansing vehicles and participation in pilot projects to test other green vehicles.	BE18	Support the delivery of SMBC Carbon reduction action plan	On Track	Included in commission to EVP Solutions as part of Corporate Fleet review.

C14	We will improve and transform our street cleansing programmes post Covid.	BE43	Deliver hot spot solutions group to deal with long standing sites for embedded fly tips, ASB and other issues relating to the urban environment	On Track	Team currently in delivery mode until March 2023
C15	We will increase recycling rates and encourage cultural change.	BE1	Contract Management for wate services including introduction of charging for garden waste	On Track	Garden waste year 2 now active. Alternative collection methodology work continues.
C16	Sandwell's Community Safety Strategy will be reviewed and priorities will include ongoing work around prevention of violence and exploitation, reducing offending, reoffending and serious organised crime and supporting victims. We will implement our Domestic Abuse strategy in line with the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.	BE13	Delivery of Domestic Abuse Strategy to continue to improve community safety	On Track	Numbers of Domestic Abuse crimes/non-crimes reported to the police: 1,649 Crime / 967 Non-crime , Nos accessing multi agency training: 296; MARAC cases 294
		BE15	Delivery of the Sandwell Community Safety Strategy	On Track	Quarter 3 report provided to Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board at the end of January 2024
C17	We will continue to work with partners and agencies to ensure that there is a joined up and effective approach to hate crime.	BE15	Delivery of the Sandwell Community Safety Strategy	On Track	Quarter 3 report will be provided to Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board at the end of January 2025
C18	We will strengthen our approach and raise awareness across partner agencies, businesses and communities, to address modern slavery and work collaboratively to target perpetrators and support victims.	BE15	Delivery of the Sandwell Community Safety Strategy	On Track	Quarter 3 report will be provided to Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board at the end of January 2026
C19	We will strengthen our multi-agency tasking processes for community safety and take steps to foster resilience, shared understanding, support networks and cross-community working	BE15	Delivery of the Sandwell Community Safety Strategy	On Track	Quarter 3 report will be provided to Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board at the end of January 2027
	We will deliver more responsive, robust and co-ordinated and integrated enforcement service across the council.	BE14	Implement a zero tolerance approach to perpetrators of fly tipping and landowners who fail to clear fly-tipped waste from their land.	On Track	There were 3150 fly tips attended in quarter 3. The cost of removal was £167,681
		BE16	Deliver more effective integrated enforcement	Medium Issue/Slippage	Report on progress taken to Leadership 24 October 2023. Pilot case management approach in progress. Discussion with Leaders scheduled for February 2024 . some slippage due to recruitment issues but some capacity now identified and data system work started. Report back to Leadership due April 2024.

BE42	Report to Cabinet for Enforcement of Moving Traffic Contraventions Approval	On Track	Now received letter of support from West Midlands Police. Now sat with DFT to consider approval by March 2024.
BE43	Deliver Hot Spot Solutions Group to deal with long standing sites for embedded fly tips, ASB and other issues relating the urban environment	On Track	Hot spot team currently in delivery made until March 2024
LG9	We will work with colleagues across the council and be a key player on the board providing strategic advice and strategy to make our communities a safer place	On Track	The new Monitoring Officer/AD Legal & Assurance continues to engage pro-actively with all Directorates and Service Areas. Advice and support offered from Legal Services is being offered in accordance with client instruction and with additional content to assist and provide client services with additional opportunities to innovate and deliver best practice to ensure both compliance with governance frameworks and increased agility and quality of decision-making.



# Quality Homes in Thriving Neighbourhoods

	CP Ref	Deliverable	BP Ref.	Key deliverables (Directorate Action)	Q3 Rating - RAG	Q3 October - December
Page 109	H1	We will deliver much needed new homes across the borough, especially affordable homes, on our own land and other viable sites in order to help meet the demand for affordable housing in our communities	R7	We will introduce town centre living in appropriate locations ensuring council developments maintain excellent standards in urban design.	Medium Issue/Slippage	Construction cost inflation and ground conditions have impacted on HRA/residential schemes. Specific schemes are being reviewed and value engineered, prior to retendering.
			R8	We will work with Housing Associations to increase the supply of affordable homes across the Borough.	On Track	In Q3 there has been a start on site on the Old Gas Works at Swan Lane, West Bromwich. The Council are supporting Green Sq Accord to deliver 147 affordable homes. £3.2m Council has secured to support the scheme, BCLEP legacy funding.
	H2	We will help keyworkers to access affordable housing in order that Sandwell can attract and retain a strong local health and social care workforce for the benefit of our communities.	R8	We will work with Housing Associations to increase the supply of affordable homes across the Borough.	On Track	In Q3 there has been a start on site on the Old Gas Works at Swan Lane, West Bromwich. The Council are supporting Green Sq Accord to deliver 147 affordable homes. £3.2m Council has secured to support the scheme, BCLEP legacy funding.
	H3	We will help to keep people independent in their own homes for as long as possible through use of the Disabled Facilities Grants and adapting council homes for tenants with disabilities.	H3	Implement revised policy statements to maximise the use of Disabled Facilities Grant funding	On Track	
			H4	In Partnership with Adult Social Care, access the Housing Transformation Fund to support Independent Living	Medium Issue/Slippage	Work to transform 5 flats at Walker Grange to support older persons with dementia programmed for completion in Q4. Other innovation projects between housing and adult social care being explored and funded through use of the Disabled Facility Grant reserves.
	H4	We will ensure there are housing options available to children and young people who have complex needs and those who have been in care so that they have a sustainable roof over their head.	H1	Review of the Housing Offer for Young People, including Care Leavers	On Track	The St Basils Scheme is nearing completion, nominations agreement and allocation processes in place in preparation for when the scheme is available for occupation. Work commenced with Children's Trust to support fostering by reviewing housing options available to those who wish to foster.
	H5	We will focus more of our council house building and adaptations on the needs of people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health needs.	R8	We will work with Housing Associations to increase the supply of affordable homes across the Borough.	On Track	In Q3 there has been a start on site on the Old Gas Works at Swan Lane, West Bromwich. The Council are supporting Green Sq Accord to deliver 147 affordable homes. £3.2m Council has secured to support the scheme, BCLEP legacy funding.
H6	We will incorporate renewable energy measures into the design of new-build Council homes.	R7	We will introduce town centre living in appropriate locations ensuring council developments maintain excellent standards in urban design.	Medium Issue/Slippage	Construction cost inflation and ground conditions have impacted on HRA/residential schemes. Specific schemes are being reviewed and value engineered, prior to retendering.	

	H7	We will work to identify the needs of the most vulnerable people in Sandwell and work upstream to prevent homelessness where ever possible.	H14	Delivery of Homeless & Rough Sleepers Implementation Plan	On Track	The strategy delivery plan is progressing well with 14 of the 35 actions complete and a further 15 on track to be completed by target date (29 of the 35 in total). There is only one action that is significantly off track which relates to further partnership work around intervention points and potential wider system redesign.
	H8	We will work to prevent and end rough sleeping.	H14	Delivery of Homeless & Rough Sleepers Implementation Plan	On Track	The strategy delivery plan is progressing well with 14 of the 35 actions complete and a further 15 on track to be completed by target date (29 of the 35 in total). There is only one action that is significantly off track which relates to further partnership work around intervention points and potential wider system redesign.
	H9	We will explore all options for housing delivery, including new partnerships and new funding opportunities.	R8	We will work with Housing Associations to increase the supply of affordable homes across the Borough.	On Track	In Q3 there has been a start on site on the Old Gas Works at Swan Lane, West Bromwich. The Council are supporting Green Sq Accord to deliver 147 affordable homes. £3.2m Council has secured to support the scheme, BCLEP legacy funding.
	H10	We will raise the standard and safety of homes in the private rented sector and bring more empty homes back into use.	H9	Pro-active enforcement of Standards across Private Rented Accommodation	On Track	The service is now up to full establishment after 9 months of intensive recruitment. The service is midst a comprehensive training programme for the new trainee enforcement officers and CPD for the experienced staff in recent legislative changes. Demand is increasing but the team is coping well with increased support and enforcement capacity and activity already having a positive impact on the lives of tenants in private rented properties
			H10	Implementation of Empty Homes Strategy	Medium Issue/Slippage	The new Empty Property Officer is in post and is making significant progress in addressing the empty properties in Sandwell and in implementing the strategy. The delays in recruitment have meant that we have slower than planned progress at the start of the year but making up ground quickly as a lot of prep work was done to enable the officer to move quickly when in post.
Regeneration & Resources	H11	We will take a proactive approach to accessing national funding for Sandwell that benefits our tenants and people who are homeless or in housing need.	H15	Bid for funding and delivery of projects to retro fit properties to support climate change objectives	On Track	SHDF Wave 1 has been successfully delivered and preparation for delivery of wave 2.1 is underway
	H12	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.	H7	Refresh the Asset Management Strategy for HRA stock	Medium Issue/Slippage	Cabinet paper withdrawn. Decision made by leadership team to re-submit once some stock condition data available. In Q4 new consumer standards will come into force from 1/4/24, we are expecting the final version to be published in February 2024. Stock condition work has commenced, once 1200 (5%) properties have been assessed we will be able to conduct analysis to projected outcomes. We will be able to draw business plan level conclusions on the condition of the stock.
			H6	Respond to findings from the tenant satisfaction survey to improve the customer journey for access to housing services	On Track	Satisfaction Survey completed on time, overall satisfaction at 74% which is an improvement on previous year. Work to address areas of low satisfaction underway including the recruitment of a new Housing Resolution Team to transform our response to housing complaints.

H13	We will work to ensure our tenants live in safe and thriving neighbourhoods and that social housing is a tenure to be proud of.	H8	Continuation of major refurbishment programmes to High Rise blocks including the installation of sprinklers and CCTV	Medium Issue/Slippage	Work continues with all block in progress, however due to the rebancing of the HRA, the schemes that are yet to be on site (Allen House and Moorlands and St.Giles scheme) have been re-profiled to be started in 24/25. A cabinet paper will be submitted for major projects with business cases.
H14	We will ensure that council homes are safe places to live by fully complying with fire and building safety requirements and tackling damp and mould.	H5	Preparation and compliance with new regulatory requirements as set out by the Housing Regulator & Building Safety Regulator		No update available
H15	We will improve the energy efficiency of council housing through retrofit programmes and stock improvements.	H11	Bid for funding and delivery of projects to retro fit properties to support climate change objectives	On Track	SHDF Wave 1 has been successfully delivered and preparation for delivery of wave 2.1 is underway
H16	We will aim to be a Borough of Sanctuary, offering a safe place for asylum-seekers and refugees to live, while recognising our leadership role in promoting integration and community cohesion.	H12	Resettlement of new arrivals to Sandwell via the asylum dispersal and other resettlement programmes	On Track	9 properties in legal process to complete purchase for the LAHF funded properties. Response sent to Government consultation on number of asylum seekers the LA will support arriving through Safe & Legal Routes. No commitment given to numbers but opportunity used to canvass for changes to operating model of resettlement and fairer funding arrangements.
		H13	Become an awarded Council of Sanctuary, as part of being recognised as a Borough of Sanctuary	On Track	Work on embedding the actions in the BOS plan ongoing
H17	We will increase our engagement with tenants, including tenants in high rise blocks.	H6	Respond to findings from the tenant satisfaction survey to improve the customer journey for access to housing services	On Track	Satisfaction Survey completed on time, overall satisfaction at 74% which is an improvement on previous year. Work to address areas of low satisfaction underway including the recruitment of a new Housing Resolution Team to transform our response to housing complaints.
		ACE 32	Democratic Services will support the introduction of the new tenant scrutiny panel and development of links into corporate scrutiny functions	Complete	

## A Connected and Accessible Sandwell

	CP Ref	Deliverable	BP Ref.	Key deliverables (Directorate Action)	Q3 Rating - RAG	Q3 October - December
A Connected & Accessible Sandwell	A1	We will ensure improvements to the highway network are facilitated to support the local economy and the movement of goods and people across the borough.	BE38	Sandwell Strategic Road Safety Plan 2023 – 2030 Development	Complete	New road safety strategy approved at cabinet on 6th December 2023
			BE39	Analyse Accident Statistics 2018 to 2022	Complete	New road safety strategy approved at cabinet on 6th December 2023
			BE40	Update Strategic Road Safety Plan	Complete	New road safety strategy approved at cabinet on 6th December 2023
			BE41	New Strategic Road Safety Plan 2023 to 2030b Scrutiny Review	Complete	New road safety strategy approved at cabinet on 6th December 2023
Clean & Green	A5	We will enable people to get around in a healthy and sustainable way, supporting our health and wellbeing and our climate change strategies.	R16	We will continue to develop and deliver projects that reduce barriers to the use of public transport and sustainable travel choices including working with Transport for West Midlands in relation to bus and metro provision and the Rail Alliance.	Medium Issue/Slippage	Bus service reductions still an issue. BSIP - bus service imp plan. WMCA lead on this supported by individual LA's. (Andy M) Wednesbury to Dudley metro extension is progressing and broadly on track.
Partnerships	A6	We will work with the Environment Agency in our role as Lead Local Flood Authority to adopt a Flood Risk Management Plan for 2021 to 2027.	BE38	Sandwell Strategic Road Safety Plan 2023 – 2030 Development	Complete	

## A Strong and Inclusive Economy

	CP Ref	Deliverable	BP Ref.	Key deliverables (Directorate Action)	Q3 Rating - RAG	Q3 October - December
Page 113	E1	We will work with our partners to spend local wherever possible and make long term investment decisions that benefit our borough	BE1	Contract management for waste services, inc. introduction of charging for garden waste	On Track	Garden waste year 2 now active. Alternative collection methodology work continues.
			BE4	Review of major assets (within Corporate Fleet area) and provision for replacement, maintenance & efficiency	On Track	Folded into Corporate Fleet review (above action)
			R9	We will work with local partners as part of the Sandwell Anchor Network to maximise the amount of public funding spent within the (1) Borough, (2) the Black Country and (3) West Midlands		No update available.
	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.	BE3	Development of Corporate Fleet Strategy	On Track	Progress reported to LT 21/11/23. Further update (final strategy) scheduled to LT 27/02/24.
			BE17	Development of safer green spaces strategy	Medium Issue/Slippage	Development now scheduled for Cabinet report in June 2024, delay due to priority focus on income generation in the service.
			R10	We will work more closely with the Council's contractors to ensure that local businesses and supply chain benefit from the capital investments in the Regeneration Pipeline.	On Track	New policy being put forward to Cabinet in Q4. SV targets are being built into the forthcoming Pagabo procurement for a strategic partner.
	E3	We will develop the levelling up partnership with Government to provide place based regeneration in Sandwell.	R21	We will work with central Government Departments as part of the Sandwell Levelling Up Partnership to secure investment and support for our deprived communities (£400m available nationally for 20 places)	On Track	Programme established with WLUP Board in place and first meeting held, internal reporting and risk management mechanisms established and programme manager in place. Grant agreement received. Capital appraisals completed for 3/6 projects. Procurement activity commenced and operational delivery underway. Over next quarter, CCTV and greenspaces delivery will commence.
	E4	We will work proactively with our partners at the West Midlands Combined Authority and with central government to secure appropriate funding opportunities to deliver Sandwell regeneration projects.	R11	We will work in partnership with Chance Heritage Trust to submit a funding bid to the West Midlands Combined Authority for circa £21m for a mixed use scheme regeneration of Chance Glassworks, Smethwick	On Track	WMCA requested further info on bid, technical info, pulling this together. Continue to participate in the project board to move bid and proposals forward.

	E5	We will develop a new local plan for the borough to ensure development takes place in appropriate locations, including housing, employment opportunities, amenities and community facilities.	R12	We will consult with all interested stakeholders, residents and businesses in developing the Local Plan for Sandwell.	On Track	REG 18 public consultation completed. Results now being analysed.
			R13	We will aim to increase the number of new homes in Sandwell in order to address a housing supply shortage.	On Track	Focus at the moment is about agreeing a funding strategy for the replacement primary school. Homes element paused whilst this is resolved.
	E6	We will develop and deliver the projects within the approved Regeneration Pipeline.	R14	We will support the delivery of the 66 strategically important Regeneration Pipeline Projects to maximise the level of investment in the Borough's infrastructure e.g. homes, schools, businesses, apprenticeships, local spend etc.	On Track	We have secured further funding to support delivery of the Regeneration pipeline in Q3 we have been allocated £18m for the Grove Lane Masterplan and have secured £20m under the longer term plan for towns (Smethwick).
Working with Businesses	E7	We will deliver the Economic Plan for Sandwell to support businesses and grow the local economy.	R15	We will deliver the Sandwell Inclusive Recovery Action Plan for Business 2022 to 2027, to support businesses and grow the local economy. Start in Sandwell, Grow in Sandwell etc (7) follow up with Gareth	On Track	High level of use of new facilities at Jack Judge. Nicy to confirm numbers.
Jobs and Training	E8	We will ensure that local people have the skills and knowledge to fill any vacancies by reducing the number of residents with no/low qualifications and offering local training and skills development opportunities via the Adult Education Budget and other funding streams.	B11	To challenge and support schools to raise standards in all key stages to close the gaps with national. Increase the proportion of schools and academies rated good or better by Ofsted	On Track	To challenge and support schools to raise standards in all key stages to close the gaps with national. Increase the proportion of schools and academies rated good or better by Ofsted
	E9	We will work to ensure our young people have access to good jobs and we will work with all education institutions to guide young people to the pathways that enable them to meet their aspirations. We will do this through the provision of independent advice and guidance.	BE34	Deliver the new education and outreach, and volunteer programme.	On Track	On Track except for apprenticeships because of budget / vacancy holds.
	E10	We will support people into employment through the delivery of the Skills Strategy with our strategic partners in the Employment and Skills Partnership.	H16	Generate work experience and apprenticeship opportunities within Housing Services and through strategic partnerships	On Track	This is part of our workforce strategy and included in the BAU approach
			ACE15	Develop approach to promote our successful work experience, apprenticeship, intern and graduate programmes, targeting local people to ensure that they are aware of the opportunities available.		No update available.

E11

We will offer a range of opportunities within the Council including work experience, supported internships, apprenticeships and graduate opportunities.

LG5

We will support schools providing work experience places, continue to do exam preparation with our legal professional experience and provide careers advice to students from local schools. Stand at careers fayres for Sandwell schools

On Track

MO continuing to explore options to engage FE colleges and providers to maximise work experience opportunities for Sandwell residents. Use of apprenticeship levy being explored as alternative vehicle to create opportunities.

LG7

Apprenticeships, learning and development opportunities in Law and Governance will help people make everyday choices around not just how they are supported, but also how they choose to live their lives.

On Track

Three of the four apprentice opportunities within Registration Services continue to be successfully appointed to. One remaining vacancy to be progressed through the normal HR recruitment process.

## One Council One Team

	CP Ref	Deliverable	BP Ref.	Key deliverables (Directorate Action)	Q3 Rating - RAG	Q3 October - December
Page 116	O1	We will embed the One Team Framework	ACE1	Development, delivery and embedding the <b>Corporate Plan</b> and service planning framework – coordinating the corporate approach and embedding the Fairer Sandwell Principles	On Track	3 workshops were held in Q3 for Assistant Directors to attend to drive quality and consistency across all business plans. Teams channel to manage all activity live. On track for all BP's to be signed off in Q4.
			ACE2	Lead the refresh of <b>Vision 2030</b> and development of a performance framework to track progress across the borough	On Track	Vision 2023 refresh event took place in November 2023 with partners. Further conversations to take place in Q4.
Page 116	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 (combine previous O11, O12 and O13).	ACE11	We will invest in a range of opportunities, qualifications and experiences for our workforce. We will do this through workforce development plans to ensure our workforce is an enabler for current and future service delivery.	On Track	As for Q1. Report on learning interventions provided to Leadership team in October 2023 demonstrating the range of provision of learning interventions provided to the workforce. The development of the AD business plans will inform the forward planning of learning interventions based on service and organisational needs.
			ACE12	We will enable all our staff to fulfil their full potential and have opportunities to progress within the organisation regardless of their protected characteristics by understanding the barriers faced by employees, establishing stakeholder staff groups and implementing the approved workforce action plan	Medium Issue/Slippage	Re-termed 'People Strategy' , Leadership approved in principle the themes and priorities. The People Strategy is in the Cabinet forward plan for March. This links to the development of the EDI Strategy.
			ACE13	Develop new workforce planning framework and methodology for deployment across the organisation - Review current position of workforce plans across the Council. Gain sign off from Senior Leadership Team to new approach and agree how this will be rolled out.	Complete	Workforce planning was discussed with ADs as part of the business planning workshops in December 2023. The workforce action plans should be considered alongside the development of business plans. HR attended as core service to discuss key elements of workforce planning.
			ACE14	Review the existing wellbeing provision and look for opportunities to develop further. Create the new OH suite and accessible wellbeing areas. Support and deliver the wellbeing offering by establishing a Health & Wellbeing Specialist role.	Complete	



03	We will progress and drive our equality performance through the Equality Framework for Local Government and utilise Council resources to support our equalities agenda.	ACE 34	Design & Deliver a new EDI Strategy	Medium Issue/Slippage	During this quarter work has commenced on the development of the EFLG Audit Action plan which will support the development of the EDI Strategy. It should be noted that there is now some slippage in regard to the EDI Strategy, due to staffing resources.
04	We will continue to improve Officer-Member Relationships	ACE 23	Implement a Member Development Programme that accords with the needs and ambitions of Councillors	On Track	Relationships as well as other mandatory training sessions have been conducted. Officers are current redesigning the current member induction and member development offer, looking at best practice elsewhere, and factoring in comments and suggestions received from members at the Ethical Standards Workshop. Training will be offered both internally and externally and will be tailored towards recreating scenario based learning, peppered throughout the year to ensure members continue to develop and are supported in carrying out their roles effectively through the year.
		ACE 24	Embed a personal development planning process for elected members	Medium Issue/Slippage	Feedback to date from members has been that PDPs have not been effective in identifying what their learning needs are. As part of the redesign of the Member Development Plan and induction process, further work will continue to complement these plans and ensure that a process for members to identify their learning needs are created, including capturing their current skills and aligning this to suitable roles.
		ACE 25	Delivery of a programme of all Member briefings focused on priority topics	Complete	A work programme and dates for the next 6 months have been agreed.
		ACE 26	Identifying Continuous Improvement activity through conducting Member-Officer survey and using insight to develop the relationship	Complete	Work has continued to both obtain views of members and officers on working relationships and to also build upon suggestions received. CIPFA and LGA have also delivered training on effective relationships for senior officers and members which continues to strengthen member/officer relationship, work has been done to support openness and transparency of decision making and more timely responses to queries and the service will continue to obtain feedback from members following training sessions to improve experience and address any concerns raised.
		ACE 29	We will work with elected members to strengthen our Civic and Democratic Engagement	On Track	Members have identified key areas where they would like further information to promote democracy and civic engagement. We are developing a dedicated web page for members to access key information to support them as elected members. A comprehensive refresh of the Council's Constitution will enable more engagement to strengthen civic and democratic engagement with residents and promote decision making and democracy.
		ACE9	Ensure changes to services/service improvements are based on customer feedback as well as organisational drivers by engaging with our customers/residents to understand current and future needs of customers, customer groups and identify ways of meeting them.	On Track	Work continues in this area to look at all ways of capturing Customer Feedback. OSS tablets are now operational so feedback can be gained from residents accessing the OSS. Customer data continues to be collected at the Community Hubs and across the My Sandwell platform. The introduction of the new telephony system will allow further feedback capabilities for residents using this channel, although we are capturing customer feedback manually in the interim. We also have a graduate working alongside the Corporate Customer Feedback Team looking at lessons learnt from complaints.
		ACE19	Co-production Network – facilitate and grow network across the council as resource to develop co-production in Sandwell	On Track	Partnership event took place in November 2023 to further refine standards. Activity to finalise the work will take place in Q4.

05	We will ensure we are effectively communicating and engaging with our residents, internal workforce and external stakeholders	ACE20	Use Internal communications channels to inform and engage with employees about the council's corporate priorities and how this relates to our focus on delivering outstanding outcomes for residents through our Corporate Plan and Performance Management Framework	On Track	Staff briefings held in December at locations across the borough to provide an update on our improvement journey and intervention; share key updates on the next phase of our journey, and celebrate awards and other successes.
		ACE21	We will ensure we are effectively communicating and engaging with our residents and external stakeholders	On Track	Work progressed to build on our 'We are Sandwell' branding for external purposes, including development of a recruitment website. Restructure of the communications team commenced in order to set the team up to be able to deliver the refreshed communications strategy.
		ACE22	Manage the corporate approach to consultation and engagement with residents, ensuring that this activity feeds into the council's policy development and performance management framework	On Track	Resident Survey report and analysis presented to Leadership Team and Cabinet, wider circulation to Assistant Directors as part of the Business Planning process. Two follow up focus groups took place as part of the Budget Consultation and a wider public consultation on savings proposals also took place. A six month report on consultation and engagement activity was presented to Leadership Team.
06	We will embed a performance culture across the council to ensure transparency and accountability in delivering our priorities.	ACE16	Development and delivery of a Corporate Performance Management Framework to improve transparency, identify strategic priorities for the council and delivery of the key outcomes and embed a performance culture across the organisation.	On Track	Q2 Report went to Cabinet on the 17th January. Engagement with service areas about a Performance Management System complete. Following discussion with Director Finance and AD ICT, further work required to further explore Oracle Fusion as a potential solution. Cross-council stakeholder group to be established for the project to ensure needs of the organisation are understood and explored. Initial meeting with procurement has taken place and the project is in the procurement pipeline for commencement at a future date if required.
07	We will hold ourselves to account for the delivery of the improvement plan and will continuously improve	ACE3	Programme management of the <b>Improvement Plan</b> to address the requirements in the three external reviews and government's Directions, and manage the updates to ensure effective delivery of the <b>Improvement Plan</b> .	On Track	Governance of Improvement Plan remains on track. Grant Thornton 23 follow up review complete – statutory recommendations to close. Plans in place to review Improvement Plan and develop plans for post-intervention governance arrangements.
		ACE4	Develop and embed a <b>Continuous Improvement Framework</b> to enable continuous improvement across the council	Medium Issue/Slippage	Business planning workshops held in November/December - received positive feedback from attendees, and intelligence is being used to inform business planning for 2024/25. Draft Continuous Improvement Framework developed for discussion with Transformation and Learning & Development to align approach across key agendas (meeting scheduled for January 2024)

08

We will deliver the customer journey programme and improve customer experience across all of our channels

ACE 33	Identify continuous improvement activity to ensure that scrutiny and audit continue to add value	On Track	A scrutiny budget session was held on 15 January 2024 where cabinet members were held to account on their budget proposals for 2024-25. This both demonstrated openness and transparency and members adding value. Work will continue with audit and scrutiny members, ensuring they have the requisite skills to question and challenge and hold to account.
BE26	Libraries support to delivery of Community Hubs	On Track	Pilot extended to March 2024
ACE7	Develop a Customer Access Strategy that offers a range of high-quality ways to contact the council that meets the needs of all Sandwell residents. Suggested reword:	Medium Issue/Slippage	It has now been agreed that an interim 24-27 CJ strategy will be developed in-house. Discussions are on-going re: the future direction of travel and the potential procurement of a Strategic Partner to review the Customer Journey.
ACE8	Invest in our customer Contact Centre telephony systems to ensure an efficient and effective system is in place. Possibly change to: We will invest in digital platforms to enable better access for our residents and other service users and to build on the benefits of increased digitalisation of our services	Medium Issue/Slippage	A number of meetings have been held with BT/MITEL to discuss the HLD, this has taken longer than anticipated but is key to ensuring successful Implementation. HLD is currently with ICT for comment and assurance from a Governance point of view, as soon as this has been approved then work on the Low Level Design will commence. We are working towards an April implementation but due to delays with the HLD sign off this may cause some delays.
ACE10	Customer Feedback Review – implement recommendations to improve customer experience	Medium Issue/Slippage	Work is on-going to look at process mapping within the ASC Complaints Team, significant work has been undertaken in relation to backlogs. There has still been no further feedback on whether a new system can be purchased - it is felt that current systems are not fit for purpose and mean a lot of data has to be collected manually. Work with SOCITM is not being progressed and therefore SIU have been notified of this so that this can be factored in to the SIU appraisal.
LG10	New business applications for our bereavement services teams to enable better access for our residents and other service users. Building on the benefits of increased digitalisation of services.	On Track	Contract initiated 1 November 2023 - Project team working with the supplier for delivery of new case management system by July 2024.
LG11	Upgraded business applications for our Legal and Assurance team and management of SARs and FOIs.	On Track	The Governance team within Legal Services has been tasked to review existing software provision used for FOIA/DBS processing and file management to maximise potential. It is anticipated that this will require additional configuration by the system provider but any costs will reflect existing support frameworks and deliver operational benefits for Legal Services which corporately administers information governance processes and compliance frameworks.

			F1	Customer Journey Programme: Review approach to customer journey to include: Monitor data monthly on customer contact points to understand current demand and adapt services to meet this demand • Roll-out self-service kiosks in more customer facilities • Continue to promote My Sandwell to increase online transactions Supporting customer journey by providing additional staffing at OSS	On Track	For Q3 the average number of calls per month is 3273 compared to 4060 for same Q3 last year. The number of calls handled by Inform has also reduced from 10,664 per month to 9,293 and the number of emails/electronic work increased per month from an average of 507 to 1072 per month. Revenues and Benefits continue to provide a face to face presence in OCH for residents whose enquiry cannot be dealt with by the reception staff and provide remote support for the Community hubs via teams answering enquiries reception staff cannot answer. The number of enquiries from residents via Chatbot has continued to increase to 1992 and there has been a general upturn since the introduction of the navigational bot on the SMBC landing page. Live chat has also been introduced since Q3 late year and 240 chats have been answered by agents conversing directly with customers. New staff joined the team following training in December, and with December being a shorter working month and increased leave requests performance will not actively reflect the benefit of their addition to the team. We continue to promote the benefits of My Sandwell and we are seeing an increase in take up across all of Revenues and Benefits
	O9	We will refresh the organisation's digital strategy	ACE18	Develop Digital Strategy, maximising the opportunities for Sandwell from the WMCA digital roadmap.	On Track	Digital inclusion Co-ordinator is now in post and continues to work closely with the West Midlands Combined Authority. The Roadmap provides the baseline for digital inclusion work in the Borough supporting the development of existing and new projects. Negotiations are currently on-going with the Combine Authority to access new resources to develop the local digital learning journey.
Governance and Decision Making	O10	We will ensure that our refreshed governance arrangements are embedded	ACE 30	The holistic review of democratic governance will be completed	Complete	
			ACE 31	The Committee Management System (modern.gov) will be fully implemented and utilised effectively across the organisation and accessed by services users.	On Track	Report workflows for each committee have been built and a sample of report authors have been identified to pilot the new system. A more structured process to writing reports will be promoted through comms with officers in readiness of launching the report workflow function.
			F17	Embed a comprehensive Corporate Governance Training programme for officers and members		No update available
O11	We will set a sustainable and balanced budget each year and ensure the Medium Term Financial Strategy is underpinned by realistic savings plans	F8	Develop and maintain a 12 month rolling cash flow	On Track	Cash-flow for 2024/25 currently under development and on target for completion before financial year end.	
		F9	Review investment strategy and counterparty options	Complete	Treasury Management Strategy including investment strategy presented to Cabinet 7th Feb and due to be approved by Council on 20th Feb 2024	
		F14	Delivery of the Transformation Savings Programme	On Track	Work continues with the identification of transformational activity. This is being enabled by the introduction of the CAF and the ongoing governance arrangements provided at the CTB	
	O12	We will update the Medium Term Financial Strategy at least annually	F4	Medium Term Financial Strategy - Review as part of 2024/25 budget process	Complete	MTFS for 2024/25 complete and forms part of the Budget Report to be approved by Council on 20/02/24
O13	We will embed a strong financial management approach.	F10	Reduction of financial transactional activity through a series of end to end process reviews (bank reconciliations, recharges, debtors and creditors)	On Track	Recharges review complete. Bank reconciliation and debtors and creditors processes to be reviewed as part of transition to Oracle Fusion.	
		F11	Implement Workforce Development Plan for financial services section	Medium Issue/Slippage	C. Co review complete and findings to be taken account of following redesign of Finance structure	
		F12	Develop core finance competencies to support Budget Holder Role Profiles	Medium Issue/Slippage	Will complement Oracle Fusion work currently going on creating future budget monitoring process	
		F13	Repeat Budget Holder Survey	Medium Issue/Slippage	Suggested time for carrying this out again is after the Oracle Fusion budget monitoring process has been implemented	

		F19	Procurement Pipeline	On Track	As part of the AD Business Plans a pipeline spreadsheet has to be completed by all services by the end of February 24.
O14	We will embed our approach to social value to get maximum benefits for Sandwell	F3	Undertake analysis on the Councils spend to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baseline the amount the Council spends locally</li> <li>• Define local and regional spend</li> <li>• % of council spend spent locally - include InTend information leaflet with Business Rates bills</li> </ul>	On Track	38% Local spend. £45,033,525 money spent directly with suppliers in Sandwell.
		F15	Carry out regular engagement and training events for local suppliers	On Track	Internet and Intranet pages have been updated. The new Procurement Act 2024 is due to come in to force in Oct 24. Training and development for staff will commence Mar/Apr 24
		F16	Introduce and embed a Social Value Policy as part of the Councils Contract Procedure Rules	On Track	New SV policy to be actioned. SV is currently a part of the evaluation criteria within contracts.
		O15	We will deliver the Oracle transformation programme by July 2024	F2	Implement Oracle Fusion and achieve transformational benefits and cashable savings
O16	We will embed an evidence-based continuous improvement approach to ensure we are directing our resources to meet our priorities	ACE17	Development of a corporate-wide Data Strategy for the council to improve all of the ways we acquire, store, manage, share and use data to help us make more informed business decisions	Medium Issue/Slippage	Meeting with Microsoft has taken place and there have been further discussions with ICT about future data infrastructure. Acknowledgement that this is a large piece of work that the team is trying to deliver at the same time as a Performance Management System. Exploring options for a consultancy to help us deliver this strategy.
		F20	Agree a procurement strategy, policy and set of standard contracts	Medium Issue/Slippage	The draft Procurement Strategy is currently being reviewed and will go through governance in Q4

		F21	Develop and embed a contract assurance approach	On Track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contract management training has been rolled out across the Council. Contract Management training (this refers to the training provided by GBS Procure for good practice contract management) was delivered between March to August 2023. The training was targeted at contract managers and officers across the business. Over 185 people attended the training sessions. Staff needing further training need to contact the Procurement Team.</li> <li>Establishment of consistent contract management for both significant capital and service contracts across the Council. The contract management resources online provide templates for consistent contract management, and also the introduction of the contract management module on Oracle will also contribute towards effective contract and performance management (given that it captures information around KPI's, Risks etc).</li> </ul>
O17	We will establish a Corporate Transformation Programme and governance structures.	F18	Establish Corporate Transformation Programme and PMO with corporate methodologies to realise savings and service benefits	On Track	Corporate Transformation Programme currently in development. PMO framework and associated tools agreed at LT in Aug 2023.
O18	We will develop our commercial approach including our approach to contract management and monitoring and deliver our first commercial business streams.	BE44	Achieve full cost recovery for Sandwell Valley Visitor Centre, Forge Mill Farm, Lightwoods House and Park (Visitor Services).	Significant issues/risks/slippage	Income targets not met due to weather and lack of current offer at Sandwell Valley Visitor Centre. To be addressed through Masterplan and setting of targets for 24/25.
		BE45	Scope additional commercial opportunities for green services.	On Track	Report completed; currently being considered by officers and Cabinet.
		F22	Implement the Commercial Strategy		No update available
O19	We will implement a new Corporate Asset Management system to ensure the Council has sufficient, comprehensive information to make best use of its assets and assist with timely and accurate completion of annual accounts.	BE33	Undertake assets and efficiency review of built facilities and land within green spaces, visitor services, and events.	Complete	Presented to Leadership and Cabinet on 10th Jan.
		R20	We will identify Council assets that are surplus and can re-purposed or disposed of to Council expenditure on maintenance of buildings and sites	Medium Issue/Slippage	Report was not taken forward to Cabinet in Q3. Cabinet member reviewing the report, will hopefully take forward in Q4.

# Strategic Risk Register @ December 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

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1	<p><b>Children's Social Care</b></p> <p>If the council does not put in place robust arrangements and receive appropriate assurances to ensure that the Sandwell Children's Trust (SCT) addresses the areas of poor or inconsistent performance, as outlined by Ofsted (and as required by the Statutory Direction served on the council on 6 October 2016), with rigour and pace, then the council will fail in its responsibilities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguard vulnerable children</li> <li>Promote and improve the outcomes of children in its care</li> <li>Manage any adverse financial consequences arising from the failure to create favourable outcomes for children within the resources available to it</li> <li>Continue on its progress to date and direction of travel to further improve the council's reputation for children's social care as currently demonstrated by the ILACS inspection.</li> </ul> <p>Risk Area – Children's Services Risk Owner – Michael Jarrett, Director of Children and Education <b>Objectives impacted: 1</b></p>	8 (amber)		8 (amber)	4 (green) Good Outcome of ILACS inspection by May 2025	<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance and contract management against KPIs and the improvement plan. The KPIs have been reviewed (to take effect from spring 2024) as part of the contract review process and have taken into account the Ofsted findings, as well as any findings from the recent national Care Review commissioned by the DfE around early help, children's social care and partner collaboration ahead of the issue of new statutory guidance contained in Working Together 2023.</li> <li>The Ofsted inspection of adoption services commissioned through the RAA and delivered by the Trust rated all areas as 'Good'</li> <li>The most recent Ofsted inspection of the Fostering service rated all areas as 'Good'.</li> <li>Completion of case file audits and learning from the audit is used to ensure practice improvement.</li> <li>Ongoing measures to improve staffing levels and recruitment via the development of a workforce strategy and market supplements.</li> <li>The Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) took place in <a href="#">May 2022</a> and reported a judgement of 'Requires Improvement to be Good' and continues to inform the risk score.</li> <li><a href="#">Contract review</a> commenced in April 2022 resulting in a recommendation being made to the Secretary of State not to invoke the break clause within the Service Delivery Contract.</li> </ul> <p><b>Further actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embedment of the multi agency early help strategy which was launched in March 2022 (ongoing).</li> <li>Consideration of the impact of the government's full response to the <a href="#">Josh McAllister Care Review</a> Stable Homes Built on Love.</li> </ul> <p>The ongoing shortage of social care workers (which is the position locally and nationally) continues to impact this risk alongside care challenges in relation to sufficiency of placements against a demise in foster carers locally despite actions being taken.</p>	<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b></p> <p>Key Performance Indicators (including social worker vacancy rates and placements) Operational Partnership and Strategic Partnership Boards</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b></p> <p>Sandwell Local Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report Reports to Scrutiny Rolling programme of audits of case files as part of the quality assurance framework Performance Management framework and Service Delivery Contract SCT business plan Corporate Parenting Board Early Help Strategy.</p> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> line</b></p> <p>Ofsted monitoring and focussed visits DfE improvement Board (independently chaired by a DfE consultant) <a href="#">Grant Thornton – Value for Money Governance Review 2021</a> ILACS Ofsted inspection July 2022 Independent Reviewing Officer function SCT external audit report LG Futures benchmarking exercise Grant Thornton Value for Money Governance Review - <a href="#">Follow Up- December 2022 and September 2023</a> (report to follow)</p>
2	<p><b>Business Continuity Management</b></p> <p>If the council does not develop, review, monitor and test plans and capabilities that seek to maintain the continuity of key functions in the event of an unplanned disruptive incident, then it will be unable to perform critical business functions which will impact the provision of council services and result in potential financial loss and loss of public confidence in the council.</p> <p>Risk Area – All Council services Risk owner – Alice Davey, Director of Borough Economy <b>Objectives impacted: All</b></p>	8 (amber)		8 (amber)	8 (amber) Achieved	<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business continuity plans are in place to mitigate the denial of staff (e.g. illness, industrial action), ICT (e.g. software failure, cyber-attack), facilities (e.g. building closure), stakeholders (e.g. suppliers, partners). These plans identify the criticality of each council service and the arrangements in place to restore services in the event of an unplanned incident.</li> <li>The pandemic has provided some assurance around the robustness and effectiveness of the continuity of key functions over the last few years, through a shift to working remotely.</li> <li>Following the incident in the ICT suite in May 2022 the council continues to revisit its resilience arrangements- in particular in relation to its Oracle business system, to ensure robust measures are in place to reduce both the likelihood and impact of a similar risk materialising in the future. Details in respect of the actions taken were presented to the Committee in November 2022.</li> <li>All directorates have now reviewed the BCP to incorporate any learning from the ICT incident noted above.</li> <li>Further workshops are scheduled in early 2024 with the emergency Planning Team being supported by ICT in delivering these.</li> </ul> <p><b>Further actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support from the cyber team to work with the resilience team to further improve all service area business continuity plans (ongoing). This is in progress and a workshop was held with Housing in July 2023 which focussed on resilience planning in relation to cyber security.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b></p> <p><a href="#">Emergency Committee</a> Post incident reports Test exercises including cyber exercise</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b></p> <p>Resilience team reports to Leadership Team</p> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> line</b></p> <p>Computer room incident report to <a href="#">ARAC Nov 2022</a></p>
3	<p><b>Compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018), the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)</b></p> <p>If the council does not ensure it has a robust framework in place to comply with the DPA 2018 (which includes GDPR) or FOIA then it faces significant external action from the Information Commissioner's Office for failing to undertake its statutory duty. Further, failing to comply could result in negative public reaction and reputational damage, significant monetary penalties, loss of confidential data and potentially legal action.</p> <p>Risk Area – Legal &amp; Governance</p>	12 (red)		12 (red)	8 (amber) March 2024 (officers)  March 2024 (members)	<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Information Governance Board which is chaired by the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) or Data Protection Officer (DPO) meets monthly to monitor progress of the information governance (IG) workplan.</li> <li>IG framework sets out the council's policies, requirements, standards and best practice that apply to the handling of information.</li> <li>Information Asset Registers capture the information held by the council service areas.</li> <li>Information champions disseminate, feedback, facilitate and co-ordinate IG activity.</li> <li>Monthly review of ICO updates, guidance and sector practice.</li> <li>Annual completion of and compliance with the NHS self- assessment toolkit -NHS Digital which demonstrates the council processes in place to meet the requirements of the NHS's data protection standards and sharing arrangements.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b></p> <p>Information Champions Data Protection Officer Information asset registers Information incident log</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b></p> <p>Information Governance Board Performance data on compliance with FOI and SAR responses to Leadership Team and directors FOIA disclosure log</p>





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Page 425	<p>Risk Owner- Mike Jones, Assistant Director – Legal and Assurance</p> <p><b>Objectives impacted: 3</b></p>					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual mandatory data protection and cyber security training is entrained for all staff.</li> <li>Compliance with the Council's data retention policy, which is reviewed regularly.</li> <li>Improved performance and monitoring arrangements for compliance with FOI and SAR responses.</li> <li>Improved performance and monitoring arrangements for compliance with FOI and SAR responses. The Governance team report on performance to the IG Board and to Leadership Team on a quarterly basis. The latest statistics show that compliance continues to improve. The measures put in place in by the Council's Information Governance Team are working and need to continue and be built upon.</li> </ul> <p><b>Further actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A further programme of work to ensure compliance by elected members commenced during Autumn/Winter 2023. This will be completed by April 2024.</li> <li>The procurement and embedment of a new case management system for FOIs and SARs. Proposals assessed and agreed in principle by the Capital and Asset Management Board in May 2023. However, a review as to whether a joint procurement of both a new corporate Customer Relationship Management System in support of the customer journey and new FOI/SAR case management system is now to be considered. Strategic Finance to then assess the business case and funding options.</li> <li>New Council Monitoring Officer appointed who has initiated a review of all practices, procedures and policies to ensure best practice is embedded to underpin assurance of compliance frameworks for IG.</li> <li>Further improvement is still necessary in response times of FOI requests, with a target of 95% compliance which continues to impact on the current risk rating.</li> <li>Further improvement required in corporate compliance with disclosure requests and SARs. Refresh of existing training and guidance materials in progress, updates cascaded through IGB.</li> <li>Review of existing internal and public facing policy suite and IG framework. Report submitted to LT December 2023, new policies to go forward to Cabinet early 2024 for approval.</li> <li>Updates to Council website and guidance on routes to access information and personal data.</li> <li>Development of pro-active publication website to expand beyond disclosure log for FOIA to pre-emptively publish information of public interest prior to request, to improve transparency and reduce volumes of FOIA requests.</li> </ul>	<p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> line</b></p> <p>Information Commissioner's Office Internal Audit reviews First Tier Tribunal decisions</p>
	4	<p><b>Cyber Security</b></p> <p>The public sector continues to be the target of significant, sophisticated and increasingly frequent cyber-attack with these intent on causing service disruption or disclosure of sensitive data. If the council does not invest additional and sufficient financial resources into a cyber security resilience programme, then it will remain at significant exposure of receiving a successful cyber-attack. The consequences will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The inability of the council and SCT to deliver some or all services, particularly critical services for a significant period of time, ranging from days to months</li> <li>The loss of corporate and sensitive personal data (including bank details)</li> <li>Enforcement action</li> <li>Significant financial loss</li> <li>Employee stress; and</li> <li>Reputational damage</li> </ul> <p>Additionally, the council will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unable to meet sector defined standards and compliance for cyber resilience e.g. PSN</li> <li>Unable to share and collaborate with partner organisations in a joined-up manner as the council will not be viewed as a trusted partner</li> </ul> <p>Risk Area – Information Governance and ICT Risk Owner – Brendan Arnold, Interim Director of Finance</p> <p><b>Objectives impacted: All</b></p>	12 (red)		12 (red)	8 (amber) Sept 2024	<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in national cyber resilience programmes run by organisations such as DLUHC, LGA and the NCSC</li> <li>Close collaboration between the ICT Service and the council's Information Governance Team to develop a holistic approach to information protection</li> <li>Appropriate technical controls to protect the council's network perimeter and information assets</li> <li>Updates and progress reports as requested to the Leadership Team and Corporate Scrutiny Board.</li> <li>Training for all staff through the implementation of the annual online training.</li> <li>Regular communications continue to be sent to employees pertaining to protecting themselves and the council from emerging and new cyber security threats.</li> <li>Attendance at national C-TAG forum, DLUHC cyber clinics and West Midlands Warning, Advice and Reporting Point (WARP) where members can receive and share up-to-date advice on information security threats, incidents and solutions.</li> <li>Subscription to relevant cyber intelligence threat reports providing early warning of emerging threats, vulnerabilities and trends.</li> <li>Use of the Active Cyber Defence and Early Warning tools provided by the National Cyber Security Centre.</li> <li>An ongoing programme addressing the retirement and upgrade of obsolete and unsupported technology platforms</li> <li>Annual ICT Health Check and Network Penetration Test</li> <li>Implementation of a 3<sup>rd</sup> party managed Security Operations Centre to detect potential threats within the council's ICT environment providing timely alerts 24 hours a day</li> <li>Establishment of a Cyber Resilience Governance Board as part of revised ICT governance arrangements</li> </ul> <p><b>Further actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reprofile remaining cyber budget following one-off saving due to identified budget pressure</li> <li>Adopt the NCSC Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) as a methodology across the public sector for demonstrating adequate and consistent cyber hygiene (April 2024 – timeline determined externally by DLUHC)</li> <li>Develop a PCI-DSS improvement programme to identify the gaps in compliance across all council credit and debit card payment channels April 2024</li> <li>Redefined governance structure to provide oversight of ongoing improvement programme following allocation of additional cyber funding (May 2023)</li> <li>Development and maintenance of incident playbooks to activate in response to adverse cyber activity (March 2024)</li> <li>LGA Cyber 360 review to be scheduled and reprofile Cyber Resilience Improvement Programme (Dec 2023)</li> <li>Undertake a Business Continuity Reaction Exercise in conjunction with LGA service offer (January 2024)</li> <li>Technology Modernisation Programme to ensure all ICT assets are up to date, in support and patchable – includes storage, server and end points i.e. laptops (April 2025)</li> <li>Council endorsement of a corporate cyber resilience strategy (April 2024)</li> <li>Appointment of a cyber lead to assist with the development of the cyber resilience strategy and overall improvement plan (April 2024)</li> <li>Uplift of Microsoft Enterprise Agreement Licensing to Enterprise 5 (E5) at anniversary date which includes a full suite of security and compliance tools (April 2024)</li> </ul>



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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of new E5 security tools (September 2024)</li> <li>Evaluation of vulnerability monitoring options and subsequent implementation (March 2023)</li> </ul>	
5	<p><b>Regeneration Fund Programmes</b></p> <p>If the council does not manage the programmes to ensure that all projects are delivered to scope, time and budget, then this could result in financial implications, the inability to regenerate our town centres, create sustainable economic growth and create long term economic prosperity, and also reputational harm to the council.</p> <p>Risk area- Regeneration and Growth Risk owner – Tony McGovern, Director of Regeneration and Growth <b>Objectives impacted – 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6</b></p>	6 (green)		6 (green)	4 (green)  Programme completion of all projects and delivery of intended outcomes	<p>This risk sets out the next phase of the Regeneration Fund Programmes.</p> <p>Towns Fund (approval received by the council for all 16 business cases that were submitted as part of the approved TIPs).</p> <p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robust governance in place to oversee the programme throughout the delivery phase including three Town Deal Boards (one per Town Deal Area), that have inherited Superboard roles and responsibilities. Revised governance arrangements for Delivery Phase were reviewed and approved by Cabinet in May 2022.</li> <li>The council is the Accountable Body for the Town Deal funding. The Director of Regeneration and Growth chairs a Towns Fund Programme Board (which is also attended by the Director of Finance/ representative and officers from procurement and legal as well as all project leads) to review risks and provide a forum for resolution of issues, as well as seeking assurances on the management of risk.</li> <li>Fortnightly engagement with advisors from DLUHC</li> <li>Programme management arrangements in place including appointment of a permanent programme manager, programme support officer, dedicated monitoring officer resource, programme risk register and project risk registers for agreed business cases, which are updated quarterly.</li> </ul> <p><b>Further actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement delivery phase of projects and programme plan.</li> <li>Ongoing reviews of financial profiles to manage supply chain issues and implications of cost inflation.</li> </ul> <p>Levelling Up Partnership</p> <p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robust governance in place to oversee the LUP programme via the Wednesbury LUP Board. Governance arrangements agreed by Cabinet in September 2023.</li> <li>The council is the Accountable Body for the LUP funding. The Director of Regeneration and Growth chairs a LUP Programme Board (which is also attended by representatives from Finance, procurement, and legal as well as all project leads) to review risks and provide a forum for resolution of issues, as well as seeking assurances on the management of risk.</li> <li>Monthly engagement with advisors from DLUHC with regional representatives attending the LUP Board.</li> <li>Programme management arrangements in place including appointment of a temporary programme manager to oversee the delivery phase and a programme support officer. Programme and project risk registers are in place.</li> <li>Reporting to Leadership Team Quarterly.</li> </ul> <p><b>Further actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement delivery phase of projects and programme plan.</li> <li>Agree approach to mitigation of programme overrun risks with DLUHC.</li> <li>Ongoing reviews of financial profiles to manage supply chain issues and implications of cost inflation.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b> Town Deal Boards</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b> Scrutiny Reviews Monitoring and reporting of outcome indicators, with processes in place to manage changes and risks during delivery stage.</p> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> line</b> Department Of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Deep Dive Jan 2022</p>
6	<p><b>Customer Journey</b></p> <p>The delivery of Council Services, including through the One Stop Shop, must meet the demand and needs of Customers, in order to avoid reputational damage to the Council.</p> <p>Risk area- Corporate Customer Risk owner – James McLaughlin, Assistant Chief Executive <b>Objectives impacted - All</b></p>	12 (red)		12 (red)	8 (amber) Oct 2024	<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New operating model for council employees is well embedded across all service areas.</li> <li>Customer journey is one of the key priorities of the corporate transformation programme.</li> <li>Regular discussions and focus sessions have taken place at Leadership Team to address concerns and issues.</li> <li>Customer Journey Priority Focus Sessions are also being delivered to Cabinet.</li> <li>A new telephony system will be implemented in spring 2024</li> <li>The MySandwell offer is continuously being developed.</li> <li>Collection of Customer Satisfaction data is continuously being looked at and new methods trialled.</li> <li>Customer Journey (CJ) is one of the key priorities of the corporate transformation programme.</li> <li>The four main CJ Workstreams are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of a Customer Experience Strategy</li> <li>Review of Contact centres</li> <li>Review of the One Stop Shop and exploration of a Community Hubs offer for face to face services in each Town.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Technology – review of all Customer related technology &amp; identification of any gaps: procure delivery partner to replace the Council's telephony system (achieved).</li> </ul> <p><b>Further actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued stakeholder engagement, in particular within the One Stop Shop (Ongoing).</li> <li>Additional capacity and resources to be identified to meet current demand for face to face services.</li> <li>Pilot local hub concept in two areas of the Borough (March 2024) - in progress   West Brom and Blackheath</li> <li>Ensure consistency of customer experience across the council and not just in some areas, as is currently the case (October 24).</li> <li>Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Board is looking at the customer journey as part of its current work programme (23/24).</li> </ul>	<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b> Incorporate recent recommendations from Budget and Corporate Scrutiny into the Customer Journey Action Plan</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b> Customer satisfaction survey Customer compliments and complaints system Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Board Review Monitoring, reporting &amp; governance through the Customer Journey Programme Board which will report in to the Corporate Transformation Office and to the Cabinet Member Weekly reports to Leadership team on Member Portal performance.</p> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> line</b> <a href="#">Local Government Ombudsman report</a></p>

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7	<p><b>Equalities</b></p> <p>If the council fails to meet its legal obligations in respect of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty ensuring fairness is adhered to and is unable to demonstrate and evidence compliance with its obligations, then this will result in potential legal consequences for non compliance, reputational harm to the council as well as potential impact on recruitment and retention.</p> <p>Risk area- Legal</p> <p>Risk owner – James McLaughlin, Assistant Chief Executive</p> <p><b>Objectives impacted - 5</b></p>	8 (amber)		8 (amber)	6 (green) July 2024 When EDI strategy complete	<p><b>Current, Ongoing Controls and Further actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An Equality Diversity and Inclusion Commission has been set up with agreed Terms of Reference and is chaired by the Leader of the council.</li> <li>Six staff networks (Age Smart, Disability, Ethnic Minority, Frontline Workers, LGBTQ+ and Women) have been established and LT has agreed to protected time for Co-Chairs to develop the networks</li> <li>Funding has been secured and posts recruited to.</li> <li>Additional EDI consultant support has been secured to help drive the EDI agenda further.</li> <li>A review of the Equality policy has been completed and was launched in December 2022, following Cabinet approval.</li> <li>New equality impact assessment toolkit and guidance has been issued and launched in December 2022 and drop-in clinics taking place to ensure the council's consultations and decision making will withstand scrutiny.</li> <li>An action plan has been developed based on feedback provided by employees across the council along with gaps identified in the workforce diversity data as well as best practice put forward by other public-sector organisations.</li> <li>A robust governance framework to help monitor and review the objectives and actions in the plan is also in place.</li> <li>An Equalities Calendar has been developed and implemented that details many EDI events to raise awareness of the agenda.</li> <li>Various events such as Black History Month, LGBTQ+ History Month have been successfully delivered leading to improved awareness and understanding.</li> <li>The council continues to engage with WMCA in relation to its Race Equalities taskforce.</li> <li>The LGA Equality Framework has been approved for use by Cabinet will be used to develop the council's first EDI Single Framework Strategy. (July 24)</li> <li>Refresh of the council's Equality Objective was published in March 2023</li> <li>An EDI Audit based on the LGA Equality Framework has been undertaken. An EDI action plan is being developed to enable the Council to respond to the findings of the audit.</li> <li>We have prepared a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) service user report</li> </ul>	<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b> Employee Engagement Survey 2022</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b> <a href="#">Sandwell Equalities Commission</a></p> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> line</b> LGA Peer Review</p>
8	<p><b>Council's Improvement Plan</b></p> <p>If the council does not put in place and successfully implement an improvement plan to address the concerns raised by the Secretary of State in respect of the council's best value duty and the recommendations made by the recent external reviews carried out by the council's external auditors, Grant Thornton, CIPFA and the LGA Peer Review then this may result in a loss of confidence in the council's corporate governance arrangements, government intervention, future audits providing a qualified opinion, a lack of trust in the council's ability to deliver its corporate priorities and reputational harm to the council.</p> <p>Risk area- All services</p> <p>Risk owner – James McLaughlin, Assistant Chief Executive</p> <p><b>Objectives impacted – All</b></p>	8 (amber)		4 (green)	4 (green) in line with report to SoS	<p><b>Current Controls</b></p> <p>This risk reflects and consolidates the government intervention as well as the findings and recommendations arising from previous reviews including the Grant Thornton – Audit Findings Report 2019/20, Grant Thornton - Value for Money Governance Review 2021, CIPFA Financial Management review and the LGA Peer review along with their follow up reviews conducted in 2022.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two Commissioners have been appointed to oversee the improvement journey</li> <li>A performance management framework was approved by the council in April 2022 to help monitor performance and track progress on the delivery of the strategic outcomes in the Corporate Plan.</li> <li>Constitutional review completed in December 2022</li> <li>The appointment of a permanent Chief Executive has been completed.</li> <li>An improvement action plan and governance arrangements are in place. Funding to implement the actions and deliver the improvement plan has been set aside.</li> <li>Activity from the Improvement Plan embedded within the Council's Corporate Plan and Business Plans from June 2023</li> <li>Improvement Plan is regularly updated to incorporate recommendations from follow up reviews by external organisations</li> <li>6 monthly reporting from the Commissioners and from the Council to the Secretary of State is in place. The third Commissioners report was made in June 2023 and published in July 2023. In their report, Commissioners noted the significant hard work and considerable progress made, with next steps to further embed improvement and to demonstrate that this is sustainable, They commented that they consider that the Council continues to make progress on the right path. Council's letter to Secretary of State in December 2023 included evidence of the sustained and embedded improvements made.</li> <li>Grant Thornton VfM Governance Review follow up review in December 2023 highlighted the continued progress of the council on its improvement journey and lifted the three statutory recommendations from their 2021 review.</li> </ul> <p><b>Further actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing implementation and monitoring of the progress made against the plans.</li> <li>Demonstrating evidence of sustainable and continuous improvement</li> <li>Review of Improvement Plan to address key and improvement recommendations from Grant Thornton's 2023 follow up review.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b> Improvement Plan</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b> Improvement Plan monitoring</p> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> line</b> Grant Thornton- Audit Findings Report 2019/20 Grant Thornton – Value for Money <a href="#">Governance Review 2021</a> CIPFA Financial Management and Governance Review 2021 and follow up review 2022 LGA Peer Review 2022 and follow up review 2022 Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Government appointed Commissioners Six monthly reports by the Commissioners to the Secretary of State Grant Thornton Value for Money Governance Review - Follow Up- <a href="#">December 2022</a></p>
9	<p><b>Climate Change</b></p> <p>Failure to achieve the council's commitments in relation to Climate Change, including the pledge to make council activities, buildings, housing, fleet, schools and street lighting net-zero carbon by 2030 may result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reputational damage</li> <li>financial impact</li> <li>increased demand for council resources (in the event of extreme weather) and</li> <li>a loss in public confidence.</li> </ul>	12 (red)		12 (red)	8 (amber) 2030	<p><b>Current Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate Change strategy 2020- 2041 in place which sets out the 2030 target for the council.</li> <li>Member steering group to oversee implementation of the climate change action plan.</li> <li>Climate change champions in place (officer level) and a Cabinet Member and member advisor champions in place.</li> <li>An action plan for implementing the strategy was approved by Cabinet in March 2022.</li> <li>Establishment of programme governance arrangements, including the Cabinet approval to the appointment of cross party membership to the Climate Change Committee to monitor the implementation of the action plan, A Climate Change Programme Board (represented by service managers from across the council) is leading on measures within the action plan.</li> <li>Draft action plan monitoring tool has now been established following an internal audit report. This document is owned by the Climate Change Team and is currently being populated in conjunction with the relevant owners of each action across the various Council service areas. The monitoring tool will form the basis of future Climate Change Programme Boards and Member Steering Groups to appropriately track delivery of the Climate Change Strategy Actions and to</li> </ul>	<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b> Climate Change Strategy 2020-2042 Climate Change Improvement Plan</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b> Climate Change Programme Board Member Steering Group</p> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> line</b> 2023 Internal Audit Report – Limited Assurance</p>



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Page 528	In addition, managing the effects of climate change will also have significant financial impact which the council will need to address.  Risk Area – All Services Risk Owner – Tony McGovern, Director of Regeneration and Growth <b>Objectives impacted: All</b>					allow costs (where applicable) to be provided for their implementation. This will also be presented annually to Cabinet for information <b>Further Actions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gap analysis to be conducted to assess the councils' ability to implement the action plan, followed by a report on available options which will be addressed in 2024/25.</li> <li>To undertake stock condition surveys to enhance our understanding of investment needs and costs to achieve net-zero targets in our social housing stock and to inform future revisions of the HRA business plan and opportunities to draw in external investment</li> <li>Consideration of adapting works and activities to ensure that contractor selection, works methods and materials used are aligned and contribute to the climate change strategy.</li> <li>Explore funding models for retrofit of Council and other homes in the Borough e.g. attend MIPIM investors conference / WMCA Devolution Deal with Government in negotiation.</li> <li>To implement the Asset Management Strategy approved by Cabinet in November 2022 which seeks to significantly rationalise the Councils buildings and assets</li> <li>To establish EV charging infrastructure via ULEV programme (on street) and Council operational locations so that relevant Council fleet can transition to EV over the next 3 years– in progress.</li> <li>To develop a policy on Single Use Plastics that is consistent with the national emerging policy. This has been presented to Leadership Team and Cabinet Member and is due to be presented at Cabinet in January 2024.</li> <li>Roll out Carbon Literacy Training to all elected Members, relevant officers and Climate Change Champions. A number of sessions have been undertaken in 2023 with final sessions to be conducted for all outstanding persons in early 2024</li> <li>The delivery of the action plan is the key measure that determines the current risk assessment. The deliverability of the Plan is heavily dependent upon future government initiatives and the availability of financial resources which will be the key driver in achieving the Council's 2030 target.</li> </ul>	
	10	<b>Workforce Recruitment and Retention</b> The council is required to recruit and retain a skilled, qualified and experienced workforce in order to provide and deliver services to Sandwell residents. If the council is unable to recruit and retain its workforce and deliver its statutory obligations to meet the needs of the community this could result in loss of reputation, penalties, litigation and in some cases imprisonment.  Risk area – All council services Risk owner – James McLaughlin, Assistant Chief Executive <b>Objectives impacted: All</b>	9 (amber)		9 (amber)	6 (green) March 2024	The risk concerns issues are largely a reflection of the regional and national position also and not unique to the council, as supported by the LGA workforce survey completed in 2022. The target risk score was initially to be reached by March 2023. However, this has been put back in order to allow the recruitment strategy to be agreed and fully embedded, and until results over the mid-term are known. <b>Current and ongoing controls:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Directorates to continue to undertake comprehensive workforce planning at least annually, as part of business planning processes, with a focus on creating and nurturing talent pipelines.</li> <li>Cabinet workshop planned for development of a workforce strategy.</li> <li>Recruitment and selection refresher training for hiring managers in order to share best practice in recruiting qualified and skilled employees.</li> <li>Pre-employment checks are carried out in line with requirements for the job role including any statutory requirements.</li> <li>Regular 121 meetings (supervision) and annual appraisal process is in place to ensure employees are engaged and can raise any concerns.</li> <li>Regular employment engagement (full) and pulse surveys are undertaken, and plans are developed and implemented to address any areas requiring further action.</li> <li>Pay benchmarking to ensure the council is competitive relative to the relevant job market in sectors where there are specific and critical challenges to recruitment and retention.</li> <li>Future Talent Strategy to be developed as part of the Organisational Development strategy – to build on current Apprenticeships and Graduates strategy and incorporate succession planning and talent development framework for all employees. We have recruited 6 graduates via the National Graduate Development Programme to start October 2023.</li> <li>The Resourcing Team alongside other teams across the council have attended a number of local job fairs either hosted by Sandwell Council or local colleges/universities to promote job opportunities. The Resourcing Team will continue to identify and attend local and regional job fairs to raise our profile and job opportunities.</li> </ul> <b>Further actions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce and extend talent pools and open-ended recruitment campaigns to high turnover areas - this will form part of the recruitment strategy which is underway.</li> <li>Review our recruitment branding and content to maximise the impact on candidate attraction - this will also form part of the recruitment strategy.</li> <li>Review and extend advertising, to include focus on attraction of diverse applicants – again this will form part of the recruitment strategy.</li> <li>Review of our long-term use of a neutral vendor agency provision where we are unable to fill roles to deliver a service to our residents</li> </ul>
11	<b>Borough Archives</b> Failure to achieve the National Archives Accreditation could lead to withdrawal of 'Place of Deposit Status'. This will cause reputational damage and incur costs as public records will be stored in another location, which accrues a cost to the council and creates difficulties around access to the records. Accreditation cannot be achieved without alternative accommodation that meets the required British Standard.  Risk area – All council services	12 (red)		9 (amber)	8 (amber)	<b>Current and ongoing controls</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public records are stored at Dudley archives which meets the required standard (BS EN 16893). However, this can only be a temporary measure, as Dudley's own archives increase, and they will require the space currently occupied by Sandwell.</li> <li>A feasibility study has been completed and a replacement archive solution for Sandwell's archives has been identified and was approved by <a href="#">Cabinet</a> in November 2022.</li> <li>A New Qualified Archivist is now appointed and in place. The Business Manager – Museums and Archives is also a qualified archivist.</li> <li>Previous discussions with The National Archives (TNA) around delaying an application for accreditation as it would fail have moved on and we have now been encouraged to apply. We could only expect to achieve partial accreditation though, due to the accommodation.</li> </ul>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b> Feasibility Study  <b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b> Cabinet approval of replacement archive solution  <b>3<sup>rd</sup> line</b> The National Archives Archive Service accreditation

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Page 529	Risk owner – Alice Davey, Director of Borough Economy <b>Objectives impacted: All</b>					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Second stage of feasibility that includes design, specification, and costs now complete. Due for cabinet agreement January 2024. The development of a funding strategy supported by an archives funding specialist will follow. This will enable submissions to be made to external funders.</li> </ul> <b>Further Actions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding sources for cost of capital to build the archives needs to be identified and agreed.</li> <li>Some corporate capital will also need to be identified as part of the funding strategy.</li> <li>A bid to Arts Council England and others to be considered for contribution to the cost of capital, once the funding strategy has been agreed.</li> <li></li> </ul>	
	<b>Elections Act</b> The initial roll-out of voter identification was successful, following policy and secondary legislation confirmation and the implementation of the controls identified to mitigate risk, however it has not yet been stress-tested. It is anticipated that the 2024 elections which are expected to include a general election will provide a broader assessment of the mechanisms in place. Implementation of the next phase of the elections act is due shortly, to include the ability for voters to apply for absent votes on-line. There remain a series of technical and operational issues that are being explored nationally, with there being a concern over the readiness of new systems in line with the projected timeframe. Whilst the application portal will be nationally hosted, the Returning Officer will remain locally responsible for the processing and issuing of postal votes. Compounded by the multiple elections in 2024 and the potential for a snap general election, there are risks around the successful implementation of all of the Election Act requirements. Should the Returning Officer be unable to implement the Elections Act 2022, this could result in low voter confidence and some voters may be dis-enfranchised leading to a lack of confidence in election results.  Risk area – All council services Risk owner – Mike Jones, Assistant Director – Legal and Assurance <b>Objectives impacted: All</b>	8 (amber)		8 (amber)	4 (green) May 2024	<b>Current and ongoing controls</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There will be extra money from the Government for implementation, but this will not be ring fenced and will only cover costs associated with Voter ID not additional election costs.</li> <li>A One Council approach is being taken in order that the wider council can provide necessary support.</li> <li>The Electoral Commission will undertake much of the communication, but the Returning Officer needs to consider the demographics and harder to reach parts of the electorate and the support that they will require.</li> <li>There is a review of polling stations to see which ones are suitable and unsuitable.</li> <li>Robust and updated training programme will be in place for all polling inspectors and presiding officers.</li> <li>Job roles for election staff are being updated to provide clarification on what is required and to assist in arriving at the correct fee.</li> <li>The Electoral Services Manager is part of the Business Change Network facilitated by the Cabinet Office and consequently is very well informed.</li> <li>Privacy ID booths will be provided to every station to reduce the need for a specific place. This will be private but still in the "voting room"</li> <li>Awareness Campaign and media campaigns to promote Voter ID have begun to compliment the national campaign by the Electoral Commission (which includes use of the Herald, website, etc)</li> <li>Regular briefings with members have commenced.</li> <li>Regular networking meetings taking place by Director and Manager.</li> <li>Capacity and resourcing options are being explored.</li> </ul>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b> Elections Returning Officer Elections Service Manager  <b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b> Polling station inspectors  <b>3<sup>rd</sup> line</b> Electoral Commission
13	<b>Sandwell Local Plan</b> Failure to prepare and adopt a Local Plan within the timescales required could result in Government intervention in the operation of the planning service and in the decision-making process for planning applications resulting in a loss of local democratic oversight.  Risk area - Regeneration Risk Owner – Tony McGovern, Director of Regeneration and Growth <b>Objectives impacted: All</b>	8 (amber)		8 (amber)	4 (green) 2025	Having an up-to-date Local Plan is a statutory requirement. Following the halting of the Black Country Plan, Cabinet approved the preparation of the Sandwell local Plan on 16 November 2022. The timetable envisages adoption in late 2025. The process to adoption involves several rounds of public consultation and political approvals as well as an independent Examination in Public. Conformity with an up-to-date Local Plan is often a prerequisite for Government regeneration funding. <b>Current and ongoing controls</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members regularly briefed on key and up to date issues. Informing of facts and evidence based.</li> <li>Project Manager recruited to lead on the delivery of the Sandwell Plan (fixed term post to Dec 2026).</li> <li>Additional revenue budget secured to deliver the Sandwell Plan (Cabinet Report Dec 2022).</li> <li>Activities monitored against agreed programme and reported to Leadership Team quarterly - consultation on draft Sandwell Local Plan completed in line with programme.</li> </ul> <b>Further actions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of salaries allocated to technical disciplines within the organisation – Use of consultants if necessary.</li> <li>Quarterly update reports to Leadership Team</li> </ul>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b> Appointment of dedicated project manager  <b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b> Regular updates to Leadership Team, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Cabinet as appropriate.
14	<b>Adult Social Care Market Sustainability</b> The Fair Cost of Care requirement for domiciliary care and older peoples residential and nursing home care & further requirement to produce a market sustainability plan will result in a significant financial pressure for the council in the region of 15 million pounds, although government funding is available for a 3-year period, it is not expected to cover these increased costs. There is then a further risk that the remaining elements of the care and support market currently excluded from the Fair Cost of Care exercise will not be sustainable without further significant investment, so a further internal cost of care exercise will need to be completed.	9 (amber)		9 (amber)	9 (amber) Update MSP May 2024	<b>Current and ongoing controls</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with ARCC Ltd to complete the Fair Cost of Care exercise and Market Sustainability Plan. Draft document completed and submitted in October 2022.</li> <li>Report presented to the Leader of the in October 2022 outlining the impact of the cost of care exercise and the options of how to support the market with the government allocations that have been made to date.</li> <li>Ongoing dialogue with legal to ensure compliance with statutory Care Act duties and consideration of affordability.</li> <li>Working with neighbouring authorities in the Black Country and the Integrated Care Board to agree a system response to provider demands.</li> <li>Negotiating with individual providers regarding fee uplifts.</li> <li>Commissioned independent provider to undertake reviews of individuals.</li> <li>Final Market Sustainability Plan submitted (March 23)</li> <li>Report to Cabinet for Fair Cost of Care approved for plans on how to sustain the market (February 23).</li> <li>ARCC scrutinised the data presented by the care homes regarding the validity of the data provided.</li> </ul>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b> Fair Cost of Care exercise  <b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b> Integrated Care Board  <b>3<sup>rd</sup> line</b> ARCC Ltd

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Page 520 15	A number of providers are approaching the council with requests for significant uplifts in their fees and notice to withdraw care and support to individuals. Should this not be addressed the capacity in the market will be unable to meet the demand and the recommissioned costs will be significantly higher adding to the budget pressures.  Risk Area – Social Care Risk Owner – Rashpal Bishop, Director of Adult Social Care <b>Objectives impacted: 2</b>					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ARCC supported additional market engagement to scrutinise the data presented.</li> <li>Plan towards meeting cost of care once government allocations for 2023/24 and 2024/25 have been confirmed.</li> <li>Annex B published 1st February 2023 and the final Market Sustainability Plan published 31 March 2023.</li> <li>Updated the Market Sustainability Plan and complete Annexe A in May 2023.</li> <li>Complete Market Capacity Submission in June 2023</li> </ul> <b>Further Actions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update the Market Sustainability Plan and complete Annexe A in May 2024.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Organisational culture</b> If the council does not have an effective organisational culture, then this could result in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor officer and member relationships</li> <li>Negative impact on employee engagement</li> <li>Inability to demonstrate effective people management,</li> <li>Weak diversity and inclusion practices</li> <li>Recruitment and retention issues</li> <li>Negative impact on the delivery of the improvement plan and</li> <li>Potential for extended government intervention</li> <li>Failure to deliver the corporate plan</li> <li>Reputational damage</li> <li>Missed opportunities for continuous improvement</li> </ul> Risk area – All council services Risk owner – James McLaughlin, Assistant Chief Executive <b>Objectives impacted: All</b>	8 (amber)		8 (amber)	4 (green)  March 2024	<b>Current and ongoing controls</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular meetings in place between senior members and officers to develop positive working relationships and information sharing.</li> <li>LGA training on officer/member relationships delivered in September 2022</li> <li>Launch of One Team Framework (values and behaviours) including Staff Conference and Managers workshops</li> <li>Employee Engagement Survey 2022 results disseminated and discussed at Directorate Management Teams and team meetings - action plans developed and monitored at Leadership Team.</li> <li>Employee Engagement Survey 2023 results disseminated and discussed at Directorate Management Teams – actions to address themes incorporated into People Strategy and service business plans</li> </ul> <b>Further Actions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embedding One Team Framework Approval of Workforce Strategy.</li> <li>Mechanisms to be identified for ongoing insight and assurance around health of Officer and Member Relationship (December 2023).</li> <li>Management Development Programme Agreed (2023).</li> </ul>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b> One Team Framework  <b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b> Employee Engagement Survey  <b>3<sup>rd</sup> line</b> External Reviews (Grant Thornton and LGA) providing assurance that organisational culture change has started to occur.
	<b>Strategic Workforce Development for Adult Social Care Recruitment, Retention and Sickness Absence</b>  A workforce strategy is in place and links directly with workforce planning and training. This offers existing staff training opportunities to ensure that they are qualified and competent to face service needs. If recruitment and retention are not prioritised within the service and amongst service providers, then there will not be the skilled staff to deliver appropriate social care.  Risk Area – Social Care Risk Owner – Rashpal Bishop, Director of Adult Social Care <b>Objectives impacted: 2</b>	12 (red)		12 (red)	8 (amber)  April 2024	<b>Current and ongoing controls</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implemented Adult Social Care restructure for social work and therapy to deliver a career development pathway which will support retention, career development and succession planning within social work.</li> <li>A student programme and the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment for Social Workers is in place.</li> <li>An Occupational Therapist student programme with Worcestershire University is in place and works to secure university placements including access to Practice Educator training for SMBC Occupational Therapist 's to retain their skills and expertise.</li> <li>Apprenticeships within the Directorate utilising the Apprenticeship Levy to access accredited qualifications.</li> <li>An apprenticeship programme for social work is in place with Warwickshire University, a similar programme for Occupational Therapy is being developed with Wolverhampton University.</li> <li>Qualification Sponsorship scheme to support employees to obtain recognised qualifications to enhance their work performance and skills.</li> <li>Work around maintaining recruitment and retention: Phase 1 - A) Pay benchmarking B) Golden Hello C) Market Supplement completed.</li> <li>Recruitment Events (exploring opportunity for joint partnership recruitment with health colleagues).</li> <li>Regular 121 meetings (supervision) and annual appraisal process is in place to ensure employees are engaged and can raise any concerns.</li> <li>Plans are developed and implemented to address any areas requiring further action from the employee engagement survey.</li> <li>Sickness Absence Monitoring.</li> </ul> <b>Further Actions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Draft Workforce Strategy to be finalised and approved.</li> <li>Draft Workforce Strategy action plans to be finalised and approved.</li> <li>Work around maintaining recruitment and retention: Phase 2 - A) Review of Job Descriptions and Person Specifications B) Further benchmarking C) Work with Children's Trust around these areas D) International recruitment.</li> </ul>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b> HR related KPIs and data Appraisal process  <b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b> Employee Engagement Survey National Minimum Data Set for social care Benchmarking analysis



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17	<p><b>Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), Central Government Funding and Resource Allocation</b></p> <p>Local Government continues to operate in an uncertain financial environment arising from reducing central government funding, increasing demand for services, and more recently the impact of the high levels of inflation being experienced. The most eminent expenditure issue for the Council at present is SEND transport, where demand for home to school transport provision is growing exponentially, forcing the cost of the services to increase beyond all previous reasonable expectation.</p> <p>If the government does not provide local authorities with clarity over the future plans for health and social care reforms, the Public Health grant, the Better Care Fund, the package of one-off social care grants, business rates reset and retention, and future years funding, and it continues with one year funding settlements then this inhibits local authorities' ability to effectively manage medium term/ three year plans and put in place the necessary processes and actions to manage funding pressures.</p> <p>If the council is unable to plan effectively as a result of funding uncertainty, and is unable to identify sufficient savings and put in place the necessary policies, processes and actions to manage budget pressures, pay and price inflation and manage its spending plans, then this will impact on the council's financial resilience and its ability to effectively discharge its statutory responsibilities including the setting of a balanced budget for future years. This will impact on the council's ability to deliver sustainable services to the people of Sandwell.</p> <p>Risk Area – All Council Services Risk owner – Brendan Arnold, Interim Director of Finance <b>Objectives impacted: All</b></p>	*	*	*	*	<p>* There are a number of factors that underpin the wider risk score for this risk, and the score will continue to remain fluid throughout each 12-month cycle as the council develops its MTFS, generally in-line with the below pattern. However, overall the council is confident that it has processes in place in order to be able to adequately mitigate these risks, and that it will remain able to effectively discharge its statutory responsibilities, including the setting of a balanced budget for future years.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2023/24</th> <th>2024/25</th> <th>2025/26 Onwards</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Delivery of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)</td> <td style="background-color: #90EE90;"></td> <td style="background-color: #FFD700;"></td> <td style="background-color: #FF0000;"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The review by CIPFA on the council's financial management and governance arrangements, noted that the council was initially a progressive two-star (out of five) authority. The follow up review subsequently undertaken by CIPFA progressed this to a three-star. The review also looked at financial resilience and concluded that the council is financially stable and in recent years has been able to contribute towards reserves through achieving a balanced budget or an underspend. An underspend was delivered in 2022/23.</li> <li>A fundamental review of the MTFS (in line with the CIPFA recommendations) has been completed, to ensure that the council understands the challenges ahead and to ensure that the MTFP matches the ambitions of the corporate plan and regeneration plans for Sandwell.</li> <li>A balanced budget for 2023/24 was approved by Council on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023 and includes savings totalling £21.4m.</li> <li>Monthly monitoring of savings is carried out by Finance Business Partners in year. Savings are RAG rated and reported to Directors monthly through DMT meetings and to LT budget meetings. Budget surgery meetings are held mid-year to review savings rated 'red', with a view to understanding any issues hampering delivery and to unblocking those issues. Budget surgery meetings are attended by the Director of Finance, appropriate Directors and a range of officers from across the organisation. Monitoring of savings includes any savings carried forward from previous years that were not delivered in those years.</li> <li>Star Chambers continue to be used to support budget setting. During August and September 2023, a Star Chamber meeting was held in relation to each Council directorate, focusing on the directorate's financial position, savings delivery within 2023/24, ongoing budget pressures and savings to be delivered in 2024/25. Star Chamber meetings include the Chief Executive and Portfolio Holders as well as the appropriate Director and Finance Business Partners.</li> <li>Star Chamber meetings are used as the initiation process to generate further savings proposals for the following financial year and to test those proposals with elected members. This is the first step in the process towards balancing the budget for the following year.</li> <li>Directorate budget pressures and growth are calculated annually by Finance Business Partners, and for Adult Social Care includes a growth model that extrapolates client numbers and average placement costs forward, building in assumed increases in market rates.</li> <li>A Strategic Finance Manager post has been created, with a view to having a dedicated resource to creating and updating the MTFS model and to ensuring assumptions, eg, pay inflation assumptions, are calculated with consideration and in accordance with wider local authority group assumptions.</li> <li>LG Futures have been commissioned to provide financial benchmarking data, including assumptions on grant income in future years,</li> <li>Regular discussions take place with WMCA over the likelihood of when the business rates reset might transpire, and Sandwell's assumptions in this regard are aligned to the rest of the WMCA group of local authorities.</li> <li>The MTFS position has been reported to Leadership Team on several occasions during the Autumn of 2023, and Directors have been fully engaged in the process of generating savings proposals to balance the budget gap in 2024/25.</li> <li>The MTFS as at 15<sup>th</sup> November reported a deficit (prior to savings) of £13m for 2024/25. Savings proposals have been developed to balance the budget, supported by a business case document for each saving. Cabinet workshops have been held on 19<sup>th</sup> September, 25<sup>th</sup> October, 24<sup>th</sup> November and 13<sup>th</sup> December to engage Cabinet in the MTFS process and to ensure that elected members are willing to take each of the proposed savings forward for public consultation.</li> <li>A further iteration of the MTFS will be produced following the final settlement, during January 2024.</li> <li>In relation to SEND transport specifically, a Corporate Transformation project is being set up including specific seven workstreams, one of which is budget management and forecasting, which will produce enhanced quality forecasts to enable improved financial planning. Policy changes are proposed which, if approved, would be implemented in time for September 2024. The position for SEND will be reported to Leadership Team on a monthly basis from November 2023 onwards, including data on the number of children accessing services, and how the monthly cost has increased or reduced, tracking the result of policy changes, work to step down children into lower cost provision, and other cost reduction measures that are actioned.</li> </ul> <p><b>Further actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued implementation of the action plan developed following the CIPFA review (as per the improvement plan timetable).</li> <li>Use of benchmarking data to help identify opportunities for efficiencies, savings and service improvements.</li> <li>The council continues to horizon scan and consider the impacts of potential government initiatives and policies on future funding sources and demand for council services.</li> </ul>		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 Onwards	Delivery of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)				<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b> Business case templates – Savings Proposals</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b> <a href="#">Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Board</a> Star Chambers</p> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> line</b> External Audit CIPFA financial management review LGA Corporate Peer Review Grant Thornton Value for Money Governance Review - <a href="#">Follow Up- December 2022</a> LG Futures benchmarking data</p>
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18	<p><b>Budget Monitoring and Management 2023/24</b></p> <p>If the council does not put in place effective arrangements to monitor and manage the current year's budget to ensure that planned savings are achieved and efficiencies realised, then it will result in overspends and impact the resilience of the council's finances.</p> <p>Therefore, timely and accurate monthly monitoring of the budget forecast outturn is required to ensure that the revenue and capital expenditure stay within the agreed budget. This applies to the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).</p> <p>Risk Area – Finance and Resources Risk owner- Brendan Arnold, Interim Director of Finance <b>Objectives impacted: All</b></p>	*	*	*	*	<p>* The score will continue to remain fluid throughout each 12-month monitoring cycle, however, overall the council is confident that it has processes in place to be able to forecast the outturn position within a reasonable degree of certainty, and confident that it has the resources in place to be able to mitigate a forecast overspend position in the current year, up to a degree of tolerance of approximately 0.5% of the gross budget.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th colspan="12">2023/24</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Monitoring Period</th> <th>Apr</th> <th>May</th> <th>Jun</th> <th>Jul</th> <th>Aug</th> <th>Sep</th> <th>Oct</th> <th>Nov</th> <th>Dec</th> <th>Jan</th> <th>Feb</th> <th>Mar</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Revenue Budget Monitoring Position</td> <td style="background-color: #90EE90;"></td> <td style="background-color: #FFD700;"></td> <td style="background-color: #FFD700;"></td> <td style="background-color: #FFD700;"></td> <td style="background-color: #FFD700;"></td> <td style="background-color: #FFD700;"></td> <td style="background-color: #FFD700;"></td> <td style="background-color: #FFD700;"></td> <td style="background-color: #FFD700;"></td> <td style="background-color: #FFD700;"></td> <td style="background-color: #FFD700;"></td> <td style="background-color: #FFD700;"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A budget monitoring timetable is created annually and circulated to all in Finance, so that monthly monitoring deadlines are clearly understood and adhered to. Elements of the monitoring timetable relevant to budget holder involvement are circulated to budget holders.</li> <li>Directors and ADs are asked to sign budget accountability letters at the start of the financial year, which set out the budgets available to each senior officer and provide assurance that the budgets are understood and will be adhered to as far as possible</li> <li>As part of the budget monitoring process, year to date expenditure figures are compared with profiled budgets, and variances to date are used to calculate forecast outturn information, in conjunction with information from budget managers, historic data, trend data and any other relevant information</li> <li>Salaries monitoring is carried out at individual post level, using year to date cost information and information from budget managers on any changes in staffing that will take place in year</li> <li>All budget holders are sent their budget monitoring report monthly, and regular meetings are held between budget holders and Finance Business Partners. Budget holders are asked to provide forecast outturn information monthly.</li> <li>Heads of Finance Business Partnering collate information for all directorates, challenging and checking assumptions with Finance Business Partners</li> <li>Directors take ownership of their directorate's monitoring position, signing off the position for their directorate each month as a true reflection of the position</li> <li>Finance Business Partners attend DMT meetings monthly to present each directorate's monitoring position, to ensure that the position is understood by all ADs and that mitigating actions are proposed to deal with overspends as necessary</li> <li>The monitoring position is presented monthly to Leadership Team, quarterly to Cabinet and quarterly to Budget Management and Corporate Scrutiny Board</li> <li>Monitoring of current year savings (as per the MTFS) is carried out monthly by Finance Business Partners and present to DMT meetings monthly and Leadership Team meetings monthly, so that the impact of any non-delivery or slippage of savings on the Council's outturn position is understood</li> <li>If at any point, management action (for example an in-year spending freeze or recruitment freeze) or corporate action (for example use of reserves) is required in order to improve the forecast outturn position, Leadership Team is made known of this as soon as possible and provided with a list of actions that could be taken to address the forecast position. A menu of spending control options was presented to Leadership Team in August 2023, and spending controls were put in place following the Leadership Team meeting</li> <li>The council reported its Quarter 2 2023/24 <a href="#">budgetary position</a> which showed a forecast outturn position for 2023/24 of:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>£1.222m projected overspend for the General Fund revenue</li> <li>£nil variance for the HRA revenue</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Further actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction of Oracle Fusion during 2024, which will provide each budget manager with 'real time' access to their areas' budget and spend data.</li> <li>Involving budget managers in the budget setting process will ensure that they understand their budget figures and how they have been developed</li> <li>Introduction of Oracle Fusion will lead to budget managers taking ownership of the budget monitoring process for their areas, actively reviewing data and ensuring that outturn projections are completed. Finance Business Partners will be able to ensure that monthly challenge meetings are taking place with ADs and that mitigating actions are proposed and put in place to address overspends</li> </ul>		2023/24												Monitoring Period	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Revenue Budget Monitoring Position													<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b> Assigned budget holders</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b> Leadership Team Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Board</p> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> line</b> External Audit Annual Internal Audit review- budgetary control</p>
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19	<p><b>Statement of Accounts</b></p> <p>Failure of the Council to produce its outstanding Statements of Accounts for 2021/22 and 2022/23 and/or failure to produce a Statement of Accounts for 2023/24 within the required statutory deadline could result in reputational damage to the council and may impact on the council's ability to come out of intervention.</p> <p>Risk Area – Finance and Resources Risk owner – Brendan Arnold, Interim Director of Finance <b>Objectives impacted: All</b></p>	8 (amber)		8 (amber)	4 (green) March 2024	<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A team of interim specialist contractors has been put in place to produce the outstanding Statements of Accounts and to address resulting audit queries</li> <li>The audit of the 2020/21 Statement of Accounts was completed during Summer 2023, and final accounts have now been published.</li> <li>A Statement of Accounts for 2021/22 is due to be provided to Grant Thornton in early December 2023, and the resulting audit is due to be completed by the end of March 2024. A resource plan will be put in place by the Head of Technical Accounting to deal with audit queries during the three/four month audit period, to ensure that officers are available to respond to queries and that there are no delays to the audit timetable.</li> <li>The Statement of Accounts for 2022/23 must be produced by end of March 2024, and further external resources will be procured as required to ensure that this deadline is met. A closedown timetable for outstanding 2022/23 tasks is in place to help to manage this work.</li> <li>A closedown timetable for 2023/24 will be produced by the Head of Technical Accounting by the end of February 2024, and officer training will be delivered as required in advance of the closure period.</li> <li>A plan will be put in place for knowledge and skill transfer between the interim specialist contractors and the council's permanent Technical Finance team to ensure that permanent staff are able to produce Statements of Accounts in the future in-house.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b> Head of Technical Accounting</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b> National guidance/regular updates across the sector</p> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> line</b> External Audit Audit and Risk Assurance Committee</p>
20	<p><b>Oracle Fusion Implementation</b></p> <p>The Oracle Fusion Programme is working to a July Go-Live date for all modules.</p> <p>The HR and Payroll workstreams remain the area with the most risk to meet the target go-live date. This is due to the scale of change (number of modules being delivered), the length of time it has taken to complete design activity and complexity, (data governance in current system and how to transfer effectively to the new system).</p> <p>For Finance the new management team have undertaken a review of the design of the Chart of Accounts and approved an updated design that is planned to be implemented within the updated timeline. Potential further changes to the Enterprise Performance Management Budget Monitoring and Setting modules present a further timeline risk which is being managed.</p> <p>Risk Area – Finance and Resources Risk Owners – Brendan Arnold, Interim Director of Finance <b>Objectives impacted: All</b></p>	9 (amber)		9 (amber)	4 (green) April 2024	<p>The risk score has remained the same.</p> <p><b>Mitigations:</b></p> <p><b>For HR and Payroll</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subject matter expertise engagement activities to resources to take on programme role</li> <li>Continuous resource management and repeated realignment of relevant resources</li> <li>Additional line manager representation</li> <li>Direct progress reports to relevant Board member</li> <li>Detailed level of governance, and controls, and task prioritisation</li> <li>Updated Programme plan moving all modules go-live to July</li> <li>Additional resources identified</li> <li>Complex tasks descoped to post go-live</li> <li>Data migration process reviews to streamline and reduce critical tasks</li> <li>Further analysis taking place on other critical activities</li> </ul> <p><b>For Finance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreed new Chart of Accounts design to achieve best practice with minimised impact</li> <li>Exploring rapid implementation of an interface from the existing HR and Payroll system to Oracle Fusion general ledger and budget monitoring</li> <li>All identified changes will be assessed through the Programme change control and governance process</li> <li>Timeline set out for finalising any changes to the Enterprise Performance Management module</li> <li>Added the production of accounting procedure guides to the task list</li> </ul>	<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b> SOCITM</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b> SRO updates to Leadership Team Project Board</p> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> line</b> Grant Thornton – <a href="#">Value for Money Governance Review 2021</a> Grant Thornton Value for Money Governance Review - Follow Up- <a href="#">December 2022</a> Grant Thornton review of Oracle Implementation</p>
21	<p><b>Partner Organisations/Contractors Service Delivery</b></p> <p>The council works closely with partners and contractors to provide services to its residents and businesses.</p> <p>In the event Partner organisations or contractors do not provide the required level of service to the public this may result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Efficient / good value for money / high quality services not being delivered</li> <li>Enforcement action</li> <li>Significant financial loss and</li> <li>Reputational damage</li> </ul> <p>Risk Area – All Services Risk Owner – Alice Davey, Director of Borough Economy <b>Objectives impacted: All</b></p>	9 (amber)		6 (green)	4 (green) March 2024	<p><b>Current Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership Team has established a reporting structure for the council's key contracts and partnership arrangements.</li> <li>Arrangements for scrutiny consideration of the council's key contracts is in progress.</li> <li>A deed of variation and extension period has been agreed and signed with SLT to deliver services up to end March 2027.</li> <li>Contract management training has been rolled out across the Council.</li> <li>A lessons learnt session led by key stakeholders in WM police has been completed during September 2023 to ensure that the recent service disruption due to illegal blockading during the period of industrial action is analysed appropriately to inform future incidents.</li> <li>Follow up report to Cabinet has been provided in October 2023 for Sandwell Leisure Trust to confirm the position to end March 2027</li> <li>Intend system holds details of all contracts that were procured through this system. All contracts procured through the Intend system are added to the Contracts Register by the procurement team.</li> <li>Establishment of consistent contract management for both significant capital and service contracts across the Council. The contract management resources online (Council intranet site) provide templates for a consistent approach to contract management. In addition, the introduction of the contract management module on Oracle Fusion will contribute towards effective contract and performance management (it can capture information around KPIs and risks etc)</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the current arrangements in place for each key contractor to ensure they remain fit for purpose and that the partnership objectives are aligned to the refreshed corporate plan.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> line</b> Contract management</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> line</b> Economy, Skills, Transport And Environment Scrutiny Board review of the performance and management of the waste partnership contract Reports to the Improvement Board Leadership Team – quarterly monitoring</p> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> line</b> Grant Thornton – Value for Money <a href="#">Governance Review 2021</a> CIPFA Financial Management and Governance Review 2021 LGA Peer Review 2022 Grant Thornton Value for Money Governance Review - Follow Up- <a href="#">December 2022</a></p>



## Appendix 4

### PIs to be Removed or Amended

- 1.1 Subject to Cabinet approval, the following indicators have been removed from the Corporate Performance Report because they are in development and not expected to produce an outturn until 2024/25. These will be considered for inclusion as part of the refresh of our Key Performance Indicators for 2024/25.

PI	Strategic Outcome and Directorate
Healthy pregnancy programme	People Live Well and Age Well Public Health
Universal Healthy Start Vitamins	
The % of places filled on community mental health programmes being delivered	
Development of further metrics as part of corporate governance plan	One Council One Team Assistant Chief Executive (formerly Law and Governance)

- 1.2 Subject to Cabinet approval, it is proposed that the targets for 1 PI is amended this quarter and 3 PIs are amended to annual indicators. They are set out below, with a justification for the changes.



PI	Strategic Outcome and Directorate	Justification
Number of sites that are non-compliant with the national NO2 air quality objective (40 ug/m3 per annum)	People Live Well and Age Well Public Health	Information is only available annually and so will be included in the annual performance report
Children in Care – Health assessments	Best Start in Life for Children and Young People Children and Education	Information is only available annually and so will be included in the annual performance report
Visitor Services and Events Mystery Shopper Scores	Strong Resilient Communities Borough Economy	This indicator will be changed to an annual indicator as there is a cost associated with the mystery shopper. It will take place in Q4 and be reported in the Q4 report.
Members to undertake a minimum of 10 hours of development annually	One Council One Team Assistant Chief Executive	The target has been revised for Q4 from 70% to 65%. A data quality issue has been identified for this PI, which means historic data and the target of 70% is inaccurate. An agreed process is now in place and has been recorded for the data collection.



## Report to Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board

20 March 2024

<b>Subject:</b>	Improvement Plan Progress
<b>Director:</b>	Chief Executive Shokat Lal
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Strategic Lead – Service Improvement Kate Ashley <a href="mailto:Kate1_ashley@sandwell.gov.uk">Kate1_ashley@sandwell.gov.uk</a>  Lead Officer – Service Improvement Dawn Webster <a href="mailto:dawn_webster@sandwell.gov.uk">dawn_webster@sandwell.gov.uk</a>  Democratic and Member Services Manager Suky Suthi-Nagra <a href="mailto:Suky_Suthinagra@sandwell.gov.uk">Suky_Suthinagra@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

### 1. Recommendations

- 1.1. That the Board considers and comments upon the progress of the Improvement Plan up to January 2024.
- 1.2. That any recommendations or comments in relation to 1.1 above are reported to Cabinet.
- 1.3. That the Board considers any additional areas of focus for its work plan.



## 2. Reasons for Recommendations







- 2.1 This report provides a quarterly update on progress against the Improvement Plan agreed by Council on 7 June 2022. The Improvement Plan incorporates all recommendations from the Grant Thornton Governance Review, the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge and the CIPFA Financial Management Review, as well as the Statutory Directions from the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- 2.2 On 22 September 2022, Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board received the Improvement Plan and requested regular updates on progress. This report is the seventh quarterly progress report to Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 Both Committees are due to consider progress at their meetings with Audit and Risk Assurance Committee due 22 February 2024 and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board on the 20 March 2024 any recommendations or comments will be presented for Cabinet's consideration.
- 1.1 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.
- 2.5 The findings from the follow-up visits from Grant Thornton, LGA and CIPFA are incorporated into a refresh of the Improvement Plan which has been managed through the established change control process.
- 2.6 Scrutiny's consideration of progress of the Improvement Plan and scrutiny of specific areas within the plan contributes to creating an effective scrutiny function.





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

3.1 Sandwell Council’s Improvement Plan focuses on the governance arrangements of the council and areas of improvement across the organisation. The underpinning objective of the Improvement Plan is to ensure that the council can deliver on the aims and priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan. The deliverables set out in this Improvement Plan will achieve long-term sustainable improvements in how the council operates and is able to make effective decisions focused on improving outcomes for residents and experiences of service users. Therefore, this impacts on the council’s ability to deliver all the objectives in the Corporate Plan.

	Best start in life for children and young people
	People live well and age well
	Strong resilient communities
	Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods
	A strong and inclusive economy
	A connected and accessible Sandwell

## 4 Context and Key Issues

### 4.1 Background

4.1.1 A single Improvement Plan was agreed by Council on 7 June 2022 to address recommendations from a Value for Money Review into the council’s governance arrangements, a CIPFA financial management review, an LGA Corporate Peer Challenge, and Statutory Directions from the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. The single Improvement Plan replaced the Governance Review Improvement Plan which was approved in January 2022.



4.1.2 To ensure that senior officers and members have oversight of delivery against the Improvement Plan, Council approved that progress will be monitored by Leadership Team monthly and reported to Cabinet quarterly. This will continue until all actions have been completed, or changes have been embedded into business-as-usual management mechanisms.

4.1.3 This report is the seventh quarterly update to Scrutiny on progress of the Improvement Plan.

## 4.2 Improvement Plan Progress

4.2.1 Over the three months to 31 January, we have continued to deliver at pace and embed changes. With our progress being most notably recognised following the Grant Thornton review, that was carried out October 2023, where the three Statutory Recommendations were lifted due to the significant progress that has been made by the council over the last two years

4.2.2 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.

4.2.3 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.

## 4.3 Organisational Culture Theme

4.3.1 Achievements this quarter:

- Annual refresher of Corporate Governance Training delivered to members
- Mechanisms identified for ongoing insight and assurance around the Officer and Member relationships





#### 4.3.2 Organisational Culture Progress Issues:

- **Workforce Strategy approved-**
  - Decision to obtain Cabinet approval Scheduled 13 March 2024 pushing back due date.
  - On Forward plan and with Directors for Final consultation/ comments.
- **Compile insight into the Member-Officer Relationship in preparation for Autumn sessions with LGA (Local Government Association) around the Member-Officer Relationship.**
  - Member dynamics- all member survey and focus group (to understand case working and working relationships) this is intended to provide an evidence base for LG BCE boundary review but is also being used to provide a snapshot of members interactions with the council and its officer base and to identify areas of focus for improvement.
  - Pre-council workshops showcasing a range of service areas - will complement this work by raising awareness for both members and officers and supporting the development of positive relationships. Survey will take place end of January and beginning February.
  - Out turn report will go to full council and will support a wider range of work e.g.: customer. Will also look to align with member development programme and proposed member induction
- **Formal Employee Recognition Scheme - approach and resources identified-** Red rated due to time slippage- date to be changed at change control
  - Values & behaviours Task & Finish Group on employee recognition gave positive feedback on proposed formal recognition scheme, based on celebrating examples of the council's Values & Behaviours in action.
  - Next step is to take proposal to Leadership team for approval/adoption.
  - Anticipated launch date is March 2024.



- **Governance Training and Development**
  - Assistant Director Legal and Assurance and Assistant Chief Executive are working on a programme of training materials and supporting road show workshops for Officers on decision making requirements with a focus on improvement to report quality and content to support improvement to decision making. Materials have been prepped and scope for the exercise has been extended for the executive and scrutiny function.

#### 4.4 Corporate Oversight Theme

##### 4.4.1 Achievements this quarter

- Appraisal process agreed and ready for launch from April 2024
- Ward Co-ordinator roles have been instrumental in supporting Members to tackle local Ward based issues and initial anecdotal feedback is that these roles are making a real difference.

##### 4.4.2 Corporate Oversight Progress Issues:

- **Develop a Continuous Improvement Framework**
  - Draft Continuous Improvement Framework developed based on best practice and aligned with transformation approach.
  - Next step is to align with Leadership & Management development programme and develop proposal for 'good ideas' process for capturing staff ideas
- **Programme of end-to-end process reviews**
  - This exercise remains paused pending review of the report and update to leadership. Meeting required with ACE and Director of Finance.
- **Develop Business case for Transactional Finance Unit**
  - This exercise remains paused pending review of the report and update to leadership. This action can be close from IP and managed under Customer Journey Programme.



## 4.5 Strategic Direction Theme

### 4.5.1 Achievements this quarter

- Communications and Corporate Affairs Strategy delivered as part of Business as Usual.

### 4.5.2 Strategic Direction Progress Issues

- **Complete Full Business Cases for identified Business Steams in line with Commercial Project Plan approved by Leadership Team**
  - **Health and Safety** – Skills gap analysis is complete. Next steps to be agreed at a workshop WC 5th Feb
  - **Neutral Vendor** Phase approach agreed, reflective of new timeline and capacity in HR.
  - **Educational Services** – Resource pressures easing with a new SIA post agreed. Further discussion required regarding ‘status’ of project i.e. transformational or service improvement. Meeting to be arranged in Feb to be discussed.
  - **Social Letting** - Due to the announcement made by the Chancellor in the Autumn budget – an increase in LHA rate to the 2024 rates from April the project team must review the financial offer, margins and understand how this may influence landlords' decision making in respect of the proposed model.
  - **Cashless** – Activities agreed to inform next steps - recommendations provided by consultants were not sufficient so have not been implemented. New proposals have been requested and should be received in the next few weeks.
  - **Educational Psychology** – Finance partners updated and provided good insight. Next step to de-segregate statutory from opportunity but also consider the dependencies on the wider school's piece.
- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Assessment**
  - Work is currently underway to develop the EFLG (Equality Framework for Local Government) Audit Action plan, which will be presented to Leadership Team during March 2024.



- The team have also developed the 2nd PSED Service User Report for 2023-24 which will be published by March 2024 and ensure that the council is compliant and meeting its legal duties.
- Further work is being undertaken to support the 4 interim EDI (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion) Objectives and it proposed that updates will be presented to LT during Q1 (2024/25).
- The development of the EDI Strategy has slipped due to resources within the team.

## 4.6 Decision Making Theme

### 4.6.1 Achievements this quarter

- All deliverables have been achieved in this theme and assurance actions continue to be monitored

### 4.6.2 Decision Making Progress Issues

- No issues in this theme

## 4.7 Procurement and Commercial Theme

### 4.7.1 Achievements this quarter

- New Fleet vehicles have arrived as part of Serco Fleet replacement and are into service

### 4.7.2 Procurement and Commercial Progress Issues:

- **Performance Management System: Options Appraisal**
  - Engagement with service areas complete.
  - Following discussion with Director Finance and AD ICT, further work required to further explore Oracle Fusion as a potential solution.
  - Cross-council stakeholder group to be established for the project to ensure needs of the organisation are understood and explored.
  - Initial meeting with procurement has taken place and the project is in the procurement pipeline for commencement at a future date if required.



## 4.8 Partnerships and Relationships Theme

### 4.8.1 Achievements this quarter

- SCT KPIS approved by DfE, SMBC and SCT, and will be reported through PMF (Performance Management Framework) effective Q1 2024/25

### 4.8.2 Partnerships and Relationships Progress Issues

- **Consultation on VCS (Voluntary and Community Sector) Draft Strategy- On hold**
  - Further work in progress to develop approach for wider VCS engagement and funding.

## 5 Statutory Recommendations

5.1 The Grant Thornton Value for Money Governance Review 2021 included three statutory recommendations (Appendix 3) 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.

5.2 In their follow up review 2022, Grant Thornton recognised progress against all three statutory recommendations.

5.3 **Statutory Recommendation 1** - It is imperative that senior officers and senior members take effective corporate grip of long-standing service issues highlighted by the findings in this report (including SLT, SCT, the waste service, the ERP system, and Lion Farm) and prioritise corporate effort in managing the issues identified and embed the solutions into the Council.

### ***Progress update:***

- Continuing to implement strategies to address the service issues highlighted in the Grant Thornton report.
- 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. Monitoring provided to Cabinet in November 2022 and July 2023.

5.4 **Statutory Recommendation 2** - The Council must ensure that the learning in relation to commercial decisions, procurement and contract management highlighted in this report are understood through the organisation.

*Progress Update*

- The 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.
- SEND Transport lessons learnt completed and shared with Wider Leadership Team

5.5 **Statutory Recommendation 3** - Senior leadership, both officers and members, must demonstrate that they can continue to work together effectively, that they operate in line with the Council’s values, codes, policies and procedures, and that there is zero tolerance to inappropriate behaviours. This includes changing the organisational culture in relation to complaints so that they restore balance and proportionality.





### *Progress Update*

- Member Development – New Member induction 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.

## **6 Specific Recommendations from External Reviews relating to Scrutiny**

- 6.1 The Statutory Directions set out that the Council must secure improvement in relation to the proper functioning of the scrutiny and associated audit functions.
- 6.2 In the original Value for Money Governance Review (2021) Grant Thornton set out 3 recommendations that relate to scrutiny. In their follow up review in Autumn 2022, Grant Thornton commented that *‘positive progress has been made to improve the culture and professionalism of key Council committees, with the scrutiny function making particular progress.’* The LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Follow up review also found that scrutiny is *‘going from strength to strength’*.
- 6.3 No further improvement recommendations relating to the role and function of scrutiny were made by CIPFA, Grant Thornton or the LGA in their follow-up reviews of Autumn 2022.



- 6.4 When considering the relationships between officers and members Grant Thornton stated in their follow up review in October 2023 that there “continues to be a more mature engagement between the Leader. Cabinet, Committee Chairs and senior officers, supporting good planning and work programming across different Council committees and a greater level of professionalism in how business is conducted by these committees.”
- 6.5 Appendix 4 provides an overview of progress against the original recommendations relating to scrutiny, along with related findings from the Grant Thornton and LGA follow-up visits.

## 7 Scrutiny Work Programme

- 7.1 Budget & Corporate Scrutiny Management Board have included regular reports on overall progress of the Improvement Plan on their work programme.
- 7.2 Scrutiny’s consideration of overall progress of the Improvement Plan and of specific areas within the plan contributes to creating an effective scrutiny function. This will also assist Scrutiny to identify any additional work planning items linked to the Improvement Plan. An update on the work programme is provided below.

Work Programme Item Requested	Update
Combined Authority	The WMCA Chief Executive attended the scrutiny meeting in November 23 and 1 February 24 to discuss the devolution deal and opportunities for funding for Sandwell to ensure there are stronger links between Sandwell and the WMCA and transparency of decisions that impact on Sandwell. This can now be closed with close working relationship continuing.





## 8 External Reviews - Follow up reports

- 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. Scrutiny received the follow up reports in March 2023.
- 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 Grant Thornton returned to Sandwell in October 2023 to conduct a further follow up review and monitoring the council's further progress in addressing the Statutory Recommendations made in 2021 and the additional key and improvement recommendations made in 2022.
- 8.4 Following the receipt of the second follow-up report, the Improvement Plan will be reviewed to ensure the council is addressing any further recommendations at either corporate level or within 'business as usual' mechanisms. Changes to the Improvement Plan will be reported to members through the normal quarterly reporting schedule.



## 9 Risk Management

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 The current risk register is attached as Appendix 6. The main risks are associated with:
- **Resources** – for delivery of key components of the plan including the 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 Changes to the Improvement Plan

- 10.1 The Improvement Plan is intended to be a live document updated to take account of progress and relevant changes.



- 10.2 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.
- 10.3 The list of all changes is provided in Appendix 5. Where new actions have been added to the Improvement Plan, these are displayed within the monitoring tool with red font colour.
- 10.4 The changes made are summarised below.
- 14 changes made to action delivery timescales (with 9 being more than three months)
  - 1 assurance action has been added
  - 2 sub-actions have been added (marked in red within IP).
  - 2 main actions are to be closed
  - 2 Assurance actions are to close
  - 2 changes to delivery lead
  - 2 changes to action description

## 11 Reporting Framework and Governance

- 11.1 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 7 sets out the governance framework.
- 11.2 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. Reports were submitted in December 2022 and June 2023. The next report is due December 2023
- 11.3 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.



- 11.4 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.
- 11.5 Audit & Risk Assurance Committee receive quarterly updates on the Improvement Plan and the Improvement Plan Risk Register.
- 11.6 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.
- 11.7 Any recommendations or comments from Audit & Risk Assurance Committee and Budget & Corporate Scrutiny Management Board will be reported to Cabinet.

## 12 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	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.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	<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</p>



	<p>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><b>Risk:</b></p>	<p>If the Council fails to take appropriate action to meet the requirements set out in the government Direction, or the Commissioners appointed by the Secretary of State do not have sufficient confidence that appropriate actions are being taken to implement and sustain the required improvements, then the council risks not having appropriate arrangements in place to comply with its best value duty under Part 1 of the 1999 Act. This could lead to further government intervention, increased costs and damage to reputation.</p> <p>A risk register 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><b>Equality:</b></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><b>Health and Wellbeing:</b></p>	<p>The underpinning objective of the Improvement Plan is to ensure the council is able to achieve the strategic priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan. These priorities focus on improving the health and wellbeing of our residents and tackling health inequalities in a multi-faceted way. Therefore, any improvements to the council’s governance structures will strengthen the council’s ability to deliver services that will improve the health and wellbeing of Sandwell.</p>
<p><b>Social Value</b></p>	<p>Within the Improvement Plan, the council is committed to developing the Social Value Policy in conjunction with the refresh of the Procurement &amp; Contract Procedure Rules. Through strengthening our asks of contractors through this Social Value Policy and linking them to the Corporate Plan objectives, the council will be able to maximise its social value return.</p>
<p><b>Climate Change</b></p>	<p>The underpinning objective of the Improvement Plan is to ensure the council is able to achieve the strategic priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan. 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.</p>
<p><b>Corporate Parenting:</b></p>	<p>The underpinning objective of the Improvement Plan is to ensure the council is able to achieve the strategic priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan. These priorities 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.</p>





## 13 Appendices

1. Improvement Plan Monitoring Tool January 2024
2. Improvement Plan Theme Summary January 2024
3. Statutory Recommendations Reporting January 2024
4. Scrutiny and Audit Recommendations Reporting January 2024
5. Changes to the Improvement Plan January 2024
6. Improvement Plan Risk Register January 2024
7. Improvement Plan Governance Diagram

## 14 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 2023](#)
    - [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:



- [12 December 2023](#)
- [13 June 2023](#)
- [13 December 2022](#)
  
- To Cabinet:
  - [February 2024](#)
  - [December 2023](#)
  - [September 2023](#)
  - [June 2023](#)
  - [March 2023](#)
  - [December 2022](#) including LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Review Report Nov 2022
  - [September 2022](#)
  
- To Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
  - [November 2023](#)
  - [September 2023](#)
  - [June 2023](#)
  - [March 2023](#)
  - [January 2023 \(External Review Reports\)](#)
  - [November 2022](#)
  - [September 2022](#)
  - [June 2022](#)
  
- To Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board
  - [November 2023](#)
  - [September 2023](#)
  - [June 2023](#)
  - [March 2023](#)
  - [November 2022](#)
  - [September 2022](#)
  
- External Review Reports
  - [Grant Thornton Value for Money Governance Review Follow-up-Report 2023](#)
  - [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)	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

January Update Due													
Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(December 2023)	Status (January 2024)	Update (Initial and Date) (January 2024)
Establishing Organisational Culture	OC.A2.0	Create the right environment for that organisational culture to thrive	Chief Executive	Deputy Leader					Focus 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Establishing Organisational Culture	OC.A2.1	Workforce Strategy approved	Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		Head of HR	Dec-22	Mar-24	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Discussions about whether the People Strategy should go to Cabinet. Entered onto Forward plan - possible March date TBC for strategy to become effective in April 2024. (Ds 18.12.23)	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Decision to obtain Cabinet approval.Scheduled 13 March 2024. On Forward plan and with Directors for Final consultation/comments. DS. 11.01.24
Establishing Organisational Culture	OC.A2.3	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	Update to be provided to IPRM in February 2024.	Complete	Update to IPRM 1 Feb. DS 1.01.24
Establishing Organisational Culture	OC.A2.4	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	Paper taken to JCP 18.12.23. TUs agreed to new approach. Supportive learning under development. (18.23.23 DS)	On Track- little or no slippage	Updates processes to be communication later in January/early Feb. DS 11.01.24
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B2.0	Develop a clear programme of management development	Chief Executive	Deputy Leader	Director- Law & Governance				Focus 2	N/A	N/a	N/A	N/a
Officer Learning and Development	OC.B2.5	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	N/A	Senior Leadership Development remains hold pending restructure of senior levels. The business as usual management development L&D offer continues for existing and new people managers. 18.12.23 D.5	N/A	No change - remains on hold pending restructure of senior levels.
Officer and Member Relationship	OC.C4.0	Assurance Activity to sustain positive Officer and Member Relationship	Director - Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Jan-23		Focus 2	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	Dec-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	December update- as last month- feedback from committees that we continue to review. Need to identify a focus group before the end of the year.	Complete	Member dynamics- all member survey and focus group to be carried out (to understand case working and working relationships) this is intended to provide an evidence base for LG BCE boundary review but is also being used to provide a snapshot of members interactions with the council and its officer base and to identify areas of focus for improvement. Brg council workshop
Officer and Member Relationship	OC.C4.2	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	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Looking at alternative engagement methods with members to improve response rate and widen breadth of data collection. To consider facilitated workshops for all members based on thematic areas of council activity to enhance member participation and feedback.	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	see above. Will also look to align with member development programme and proposed member induction
Officer and Member Relationship	OC.C4.4	New action added: Mechanisms for ongoing insight and assurance around the Officer and Member relationship: 1. Survey Complete 2. Areas of concerns identified 3. Action plan to address identified area of concern.	Director - Law & Governance	Leader of the Council					N/A	New Action Added	N/A	New Action Added	new action added January 24

Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	January Update Due		
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating
											Update (Initial and Date)(December 2023)	Status (January 2024)	Update (Initial and Date) (January 2024)
Member Learning and Development	OC.D3.0	Continue forward plan for all Member briefings based on themes of work / areas for development	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	Complete	complete	Complete	complete
Member Learning and Development	OC.D5.0	Member development programme	Director - Law & Governance						Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Member Learning and Development	OC.D5.3	Review of Member Development Programme	Director - Law & Governance	Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee			Nov-23	Feb-24	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	December update- as last month Discussions have been had with the Committee. New appointment made to lead on this work. MDP for the following year will be completed by feb- including all dates of training. (to allow members time to diarise appointments)	On Track- little or no slippage	Induction arrangement for may 24 currently in development and will be followed by refreshed mdp programme for 24-25. council has recently appointed a new lead officer for member development which will increase capacity and focus.
Member Learning and Development	OC.D5.4	Agreement of revised MDP	Director - Law & Governance	Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee			Jan-24	Feb-24	N/A	Not due to start	due Jan 24	Not due to start	date change required.
Internal Communications	OC.E2.0	Deliver the communications strategy to assist with more effective internal communications	Chief Executive	Leader of the Council			Feb-22	Ongoing	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
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	Significant issues / actual/projected slippage- more than 2 months	Staff recognition built into the in-person All Staff Briefings in December 2023. Approach developed for formal recognition scheme, to be further developed/tested with Task & Finish Group from January before bringing proposal to Leadership Team for approval. (Original date for Task & Finish Group rescheduled due to availability of T&F Group members)	Significant issues / actual/projected slippage- more than 2 months	Values & behaviours Task & Finish Group on employee recognition gave positive feedback on proposed formal recognition scheme, based on celebrating examples of the council's Values & Behaviours in action. Next step is to take proposal to Leadership team for approval/adoption. Anticipated launch date is May 2024
Internal Communications	OC.E2.8	Protocol For working with MPs	Chief Executive	Leader of the Council		Comms		May-24	N/A	New Action Added	This action will be wrapped up in the new communications strategy	On Track- little or no slippage	Outline communications strategy has been drafted - work has progressed on component parts, such as the branding guidelines. The MP protocol will be one component part of the new strategy.
Embedding Constitutional Changes	OC.G1.0	Governance review training Phase 2	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	Director - Law & Governance	Leader of the Council	Director-Finance		Jan-23	May-24	N/A	Medium Progress	Capacity for delivery of training has been limited by corporate priority work on oracle fusions allied with changes to statutory officer designations in recent months which provide opportunity for refresh of current training materials pending the MOs wider review of Decision Making Framework and the Constitution.	Medium Progress- actual/ projected	AD L&G and ACE are working on a programme of training materials and supporting road show workshops for officer on decision making requirements with a focus on improvement to report quality and content to support improvement to decision making.
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	as last month- Scheduled to the end of Dec with CIPFa to carry out the Code of corporate governance training.	Complete	The training session took place on 9 January 2024 and was delivered by CIPFA. This will need to be picked up each year as annual training as part of BAU.

Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	January Update Due		
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating
											Update (Initial and Date)(December 2023)	Status (January 2024)	Update (Initial and Date) (January 2024)
Embedding Constitutional Changes	OC.G1.5	Delivery of Directorships and Trusteeships Training	Director - Law & Governance	Deputy Leader			Jan-23	Jul-23	N/A	Complete	complete	Complete	complete

Theme 2- Corporate Oversight

Theme 2- Corporate Oversight														
Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating		January Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)/(December 2023)	Status (January 2024)	Update (Initial and Date) (January 2024)	
ERP	CO.A1.0	Implement Oracle Fusion	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	Sep-23	N/A	Complete	complete	Complete	complete	
ERP	CO.A1.10	Go live	Director-Finance	Deputy Leader		PMO Lead	Jul-24	Jul-24	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Due to CoA changes required by Finance and approved by Programme Board, the Programme "Go-Live" for Finance, Procurement and EPM is moved to Jul -24 in line with HCM and Payroll. Hence, planned for a "Big Bang" Go-Live in Jul-24 for all modules	On Track- little or no slippage	On Plan to "Go-Live" July 24	
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	Benefit rationalisation taking place across the Programme workstreams following completion of Design Phase. Benefit profiles will be developed and baselined ahead of Go-Live. Working group established with HoS to progress financial benefits.	On Track- little or no slippage	Benefit rationalisation taking place across the Programme workstreams following completion of Design Phase. Benefit profiles will be developed and baselined ahead of Go-Live. Working group established with HoS to progress financial benefits.	
ERP	CO.A1.12	<b>New action:</b> Completion of realisation phase/SIT Stage	Director-Finance	Deputy Leader			Sep-23		N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Status for Dec. - Finance delivered CoA values and mapping on 15/12/23 as planned. CoA impact analysis in progress. Key User Trianing started for some moudes, SIT for Finance/ Proc/ EPM complete, HCM SIT will Complete by end year, DM3 exit critria agreed, DM4 entry criteria to start DM4 on 02/01/24	On Track- little or no slippage	Status for Jan'24. - System configuration due to new CoA extended through Jan. DM3 will complete on 26/01/24. DM4 Cycle started on 2 Jan, SIT for HCM will complete on 19/01/24. Gateway 4 Criteria to Exit Realisation Phase/ SIT Stage and Entry to Realisation Phase/ UAT Stage agreed at 18/01/24. Programme Board.Gateway 4 approval with Programme Board planned for 01/02/24	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B1.0	Single Improvement Plan Phase 1	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	Report taken to Scrutiny 22 Nov, ARAC 23 Nov and due to Cabinet 6 Dec, and Council 12 Dec.	On Track- little or no slippage	Monthly monitoring to IPRM, and Leaders, Quarterly reporting due March 2024 to Cabinet, Scrutiny and ARAC>	
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	Report to SoS approved by Council 12 December 2023 and subsequently issued.	On Track- little or no slippage	December SoS letter sent, awaiting response.	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B1.6	Employee Engagement Survey Action Plan monitored and reviewed by Leadership Team	Chief Executive	Deputy Leader			Jan-23	Jan July each year	Focus 2	Complete	complete	Complete	complete	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B1.7	Conduct Employee Engagement Survey for 2023 and consider actions required in response to the findings	Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		AD - HR Strategic Lead Service Improvement	Jul-23	early 2024	Focus 2	On Track- little or no slippage	Wider Leadership Team have been presented with the results at Organisational level. Directorate level results are being presented to DMTs between late Nov and early January. This will include the call for ADs to include the issues identified via the survey into their Business	On Track- little or no slippage	Service level reports in production. Analysis of results by protected groups has been completed Directorate level results discussed at DMTs - meeting 22/01 to discuss progress and key themes arising from discussions	
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B3.0	Continuous Improvement	Chief Executive	Leader of the Council			Autumn 2022	Oct-23	Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	

Static data				Owners			Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating		January Update Due
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(December 2023)	Status (January 2024)	Update (Initial and Date) (January 2024)
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B3.1	Develop a Continuous Improvement framework	Chief Executive	Leader of the Council		Strategic Lead - Service Improvement	Autumn 2022	Oct-23	N/A	Significant issues / actual/projected slippage more than 2 months	Business planning workshops held in November/December - received positive feedback from attendees, and intelligence is being used to inform business planning for 2024/25.  Draft Continuous Improvement Framework developed for discussion with Transformation and Learning & Development to align approach across key agendas (meeting scheduled for January 2024)	Significant issues / actual/projected slippage more than 2 months	Draft Continuous Improvement Framework developed based on best practice and aligned with transformation approach. Next step is to align with Leadership & Management development programme and develop 'good ideas' process for capturing staff ideas.
Improvement Planning, Monitoring and Learning	CO.B3.2	Develop a lessons learnt framework	Chief executive	Leader of the Council		Strategic Lead - Service Improvement	23-Jan	Oct-23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	December update- as last month	complete	With Comms to be uploaded onto Intranet. Will be integrated as part of the Continuous Improvement framework
Performance Management	CO.C1.0	Performance Management Framework (PMF)	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	December update- as last month	On Track- little or no slippage	Q2 Report went to Budget and Corporate Scrutiny MB on 4th January, due to go to Cabinet on 17th January. Data for Q3 report is being collated.
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	Complete	complete	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	Complete	Senior Lead Officer in place since February. 2 x G Grade officers in place. Additional F Grade post to be recruited to following decision on performance management system.	Complete	Complete
Performance Management	CO.C1.9	Consider integrating revenue, Capital and Performance reporting	Director-Finance	Deputy Leader		Strategic Lead: Service Improvement	Mar-24	Aug-24	N/a	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start	Not due to start
Performance Management	CO.C2.0	Budget Monitoring	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	due december 23	Assurance Action	reports are being made and are programmed in
Performance Management	CO.C2.5	Assurance action: Where budget pressures identified, assurance provided that action has/is being taken (monthly summary comment from Finance \$151 Officer / raise issues)	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Ongoing action	Monthly monitoring	N/A	Assurance Action		Assurance Action	VFM Panels have been implemented for all spend over £1000
Performance Management	CO.C2.6	Embed financial benchmarking in budget planning	Director-Finance	Deputy Leader			Apr-23	Jan-24	N/A				
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

January Update Due														
Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(December 2023)	Status (January 2024)	Update (Initial and Date) (January 2024)	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D1.1	Directorate Level restructuring	Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		Head of HR	TBC	TBC	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	December update- as last month	On Track- little or no slippage	Directorate restructuring – final assessment stage is underway. Final panel interviews scheduled w/c 29 January	
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	On Track- little or no slippage	December update- as last month	On Track- little or no slippage	*Organisation layers and spans – contribution to outcomes tool completed by C.Co and ready for handover to HR Services. HRBPs will work with Directorates in utilising the tool to inform service redesign	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D2.0	Embedding Finance Business Partner 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		Jul-23	N/A	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
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	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	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	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Jun-23	Mar-24	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	December update- as last month	On Track- little or no slippage	3 month review meeting taking place on 22.2.24	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D3.4	Programme of end to end process reviews	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader		Transformation Programme Manager	May-22	Nov-23	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Remains on pause	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Remains on pause- meeting to held with ACE and Director of Finance	
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	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D3.7	Develop Business case for Transactional Finance Unit	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader		Transformation Programme Manager		TBC	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Remains on pause	Complete	Close on IP to be monitored on Customer Journey Programme	
Organisational Structure and Enabling Corporate Core	CO.D4.0	Resolve issues relating to the completion and sign off of final accounts.	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Jan-22	AA- ongoing	Focus 1	N/A	N/A	N/A		
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)	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Monthly monitoring	Monthly monitoring	N/A	Assurance Action	The 2021/22 accounts are drafted. Grant Thornton have allocated resources for the 2021/22 audit which has commenced in November 2023.	Assurance Action	The 2021/22 accounts are drafted. Grant Thornton have allocated resources for the 2021/22 audit which commenced in November 2023.	

Static data							Owners			Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating		January Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(December 2023)	Status (January 2024)	Update (Initial and Date) (January 2024)				
Corporate Transformation	CO.E1.0	Corporate Transformation programme	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	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader		AD- Transformation		Nov-23	N/A	Complete	complete	Complete	complete				
Corporate Transformation	CO.E1.4	Programme and Project Management System Implementation	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader		AD- Transformation		TBC following 08/08/2023 meeting	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	CTO moving to live site mid Jan, R&G live in Feb. Work with comm's is currently underway re soft launch comm's	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	CTO will go live 01.02.24. work is underway with R&G for a live date late Feb				
Customer Journey	CO.F5.0	Customer Journey Programme	Assistant Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		Transformation Programme Manager	22-Sep	TBC	Focus 1	N/A		N/A					
Customer Journey	CO.F5.4	Ward and Casework Management - Member Engagement held	Assistant Chief Executive			Strategic Lead - Customer	TBC	TBC	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	Attendance at Town Members Board Meetings are taking place throughout December & January to feedback the work that has been completed on resolving Member portal issues. A further Pre Full Council Member event is planned in January 2024 following the positive feedback received from October's event. Ward Co-ordinators are continuing to work closely with Ward Members to tackle issues at a local level.	Complete	Meetings are continuing to be attended to feedback on the Clr Portal. Further session will take place pre Full Council on the 30 January 2024, whereby Members can come along and discuss any cases/concerns with key service areas. Feedback from this session will be used to inform future sessions.				
Customer Journey	CO.F5.5	Ward and Casework Management - Action plan in place Plan for Responsiveness re: Ward & Casework Management 2023/24.	Assistant Chief Executive			Strategic Lead - Customer	TBC	TBC	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	See above update. LT are also continuing to receive weekly updates on Clr portal enquiries, the Customer Team are emailing Officers with long standing enquiries to ask them to address these as a matter of urgency. Ward Co-ordinators are working on developing good working relationships with Member's, in order to be able to tackle concerns at a local level.	Complete	The introduction of the Ward Co-ordinator roles have been instrumental in supporting Members to tackle local Ward based issues and initial anecdotal feedback is that these roles are making a real difference. Members of the Customer team are continuing to chase for feedback on over due Clr Portal cases.				



Static data				Owners			Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating		January Update Due	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(December 2023)	Status (January 2024)	Update (Initial and Date) (January 2024)		
Strategic Planning framework	CO.G1.0	Strategic Planning framework	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	Chief Executive			Strategic Lead - Service Improvement		early 2024	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	December update- as last month	On Track- little or no slippage	Consultation and engagement intelligence being gathered into discussion paper for sharing with partners. Options paper on partnership arrangements also in progress again for discussing with partners		
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	December update- as last month	Complete	Process agreed and ready for launch from April 2024		
Strategic Planning framework	CO.G1.4	Pilot an approach to service planning	Chief Executive			Strategic Lead - Service Improvement		TBC	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	December update- as last month	On Track- little or no slippage	AD Business Plans in progress - deadline for draft business plans is 3 February 2024. Quality assurance assessment to be undertaken once drafts submitted.		

Theme 3 -Strategic Direction

Static data							Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(December 2023)	Status (January 2024)	Update (Initial and Date) (January 2024)				
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A3.0	Communications and Corporate Affairs Strategy Development and Delivery	Chief Executive	Leader of the Council		Strategic Lead - Communications	Autumn 2021	Ongoing	Focus 2	On Track- little or no slippage	December update- as last month	Complete	Internal comms strategy in place and being delivered as part of Business as usual				
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A4.0	Refresh and embed the Corporate Procurement Strategy	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader		Interim Procurement Strategy Manager	Autumn 2021	Jul-23	Focus 2		update required- new action required- when is procurement strategy to be signed off.						
		New action required	Director- Finance														
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A5.0	Develop and Implement the Commercial Strategy	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Autumn 2021	Ocr 23	Focus 2	N/a		N/a					

January Update Due

Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(December 2023)	Status (January 2024)	Update (Initial and Date) (January 2024)
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	Education commercial services OBC- delay with development due to capacity within the team, workstreams have been refined. Planning workshop to be held New Year H&S – Data gathering underway, report to be produced Jan 2024, current H&S training contracts been reviewed. All of which will contribute to OBC Neutral vendor – working group established, analysis underway. Project Lead maternity cover successfully recruited. Timeline extended to 2025 due to Oracle fusion implementation. Pest control alternative not yet identified. The progress of these workstreams are monitored at CTB	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Health and Safety – Skills gap analysis is complete. Next steps to be agreed at a workshop WC 5th Feb Neutral Vendor Phase approach agreed, reflective of new timeline and capacity in HR. Educational Services – Resource pressures easing with a new SIA post agreed. Further discussion required regarding 'status' of project i.e. transformational or service improvement. Meeting to be arranged in Feb to be discussed. Social Letting - Due to the announcement made by the Chancellor in the Autumn budget – an increase in LHA rate to the 2024 rates from April the project team must review the financial offer, margins and understand how this may influence landlords decision making in respect of the proposed model. Cashless – Activities agreed to
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A6.0	HRA 30 year Business Plan	Director- Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing	Assistant Directors - Housing Management and Asset Management		Autumn 2021	Jun-23	Focus 2				
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A6.5	Stock Condition Surveys Undertaken to inform HRA business plan	Director- Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing			Sep-23	Sep-24	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	December update- as last month- The work is underway and on track.	On Track- little or no slippage	As last month- The work is underway and on track.
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A6.6	Refresh of HRA Business plan	Director- Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing			TBC	TBC	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	December update- as last month There is a review currently being undertaken on the early years of the business plan as part of the MTFS process. The plan will be further reviewed in Q1 Apr 2024 as the regulatory requirements are confirmed and the initial results of the stock condition surveys are available.	On Track- little or no slippage	As last month There is a review currently being undertaken on the early years of the business plan as part of the MTFS process. The plan will be further reviewed in Q1 Apr 2024 as the regulatory requirements are confirmed and the initial results of the stock condition surveys are available.

January Update Due

Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(December 2023)	Status (January 2024)	Update (Initial and Date) (January 2024)
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A6.7	Procurement of second tranche of Stock condition Surveys	Director- Housing	Director- Housing			TBC	TBC	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	December update- as last month The ongoing operational delivery of stock condition surveys have been built into the plans for next year so will commence April 2024 and be ongoing for two further years.	On Track- little or no slippage	As last month The ongoing operational delivery of stock condition surveys have been built into the plans for next year so will commence April 2024 and be ongoing for two further years.
Strategy development and refresh	SD.A8.0	Refresh Corporate Parenting Strategy	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 sept 2024	Assurance Action	due sept 2024
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	SD.B1.0	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Director- Law & Governance	Leader of the Council			Autumn 2021	Ongoing	Focus 2	N/A	Business planning workshops held in November/December - received positive feedback from attendees, and intelligence is being used to inform business planning for	N/A	
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	December update- as last month-Update report went to leadership. 4 equality objectives approved. New approach to staff networks and updated public sector equality duty compliance. Review being undertaken in regards to the additional resources needed in the EDI to implement the Equalities framework	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Work is currently underway to develop the EFLG Audit Action plan, which will be presented to LT during March 2024. The team have also developed the 2nd PSED Service User Report for 2023-24 which will be published by March 2024 and ensure that the council is compliant and meeting is legal duties. Further work is been undertaken to support the 4 interim EDI Objectives and it proposed that updates will be presented to LT during Q1. The development of the EDI Strategy has slipped due to resources within the team.
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	Director- Finance	Deputy Leader			Jan-22	Ongoing	Focus 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
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 2024	Assurance Action	due October 2024

January Update Due

Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(December 2023)	Status (January 2024)	Update (Initial and Date) (January 2024)
Consultation and Engagement	SD.E2.0	Incorporate Public Consultation Results into Performance Management Framework	Chief Executive	Leader of the Council			Autumn 2022		Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Customer Journey	SD.F1.0	Customer Journey Strategy	Assistant Chief Executive	Deputy Leader	Director Business Strate	Strategic Lead - Customer	Oct-22	Mar-24	Focus 2	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Interim Strategy to be developed In-house for 2024-27, work has commenced on this. Discussions are on-going re: future direction of travel and the procurement of a Strategic Partner to review the Customer Journey.	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	Information is being pulled together to start to draft the CJ strategy including work on Customer Standards.

January Update Due

Theme 4 - Decision Making

Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	January Update Due	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(December 2023)	Status (January 2024)	Update (Initial and Date) (January 2024)	
Role and Function of Scrutiny and Audit	DM.C3.0	Manage position on historic issues through work with ARAC chair	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader			Dec-21	Ongoing	Focus 2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Role and Function of Scrutiny and Audit	DM.C3.1	Assurance action: Watching brief to ensure that historic matters do not re-surface	Director- Law & Governance	Deputy Leader			Quarterly	Sep Dec Mar June	N/A	Assurance Action	due january	Assurance Action	Continued monitoring of issues by new monitoring officer. No evidence of attempts to revisit historic matters and monitoring officer is sighted on all previous areas of concern.	

Theme 5- Procurement & Commercial

Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	January Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(December 2023)	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating
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 Nov	N/A	Assurance Action	due Feb	Assurance Action	due Feb
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	due Nov 24	Assurance Action	due Nov 24
Waste Contract	PC.A1.5	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	December update- as last month	On Track- little or no slippage	January update - as previous- Waste contract now on Intend and go-live December '23. Subject to testing of waste contract, next step will be SLT Leisure Contract.
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	January Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(December 2023)	Status (January 2024)	Update (Initial and Date) (January 2024)
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.A4.3	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	Assurance Action	due Feb	Assurance Action	due Feb
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	End 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				End 2023	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	December update- as last month	On Track- little or no slippage	New vehicles arrived and into service.
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	Assurance Action	Due feb	Assurance Action	Due feb



Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	January Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(December 2023)	Status (January 2024)	Update (Initial and Date) (January 2024)
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	Complete	Business planning workshops held in November/December - received positive feedback from attendees, and intelligence is being used to inform business planning for 2024/25.  Draft Continuous Improvement Framework developed for discussion with Transformation and Learning & Development to align approach across key agendas (meeting scheduled for January 2024)	Complete	Complete
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	Jan-24	Sep 23	N/A	On Track- little or no slippage	December update- as last month	Complete	On track- working with Legal on a flexible purchasing system. The framework will be in place July/August 24 to run all the new contract through. It will support and encourage SME operators to join the framework which will provide much needed competition and challenge.(SM 16/01/24-dw)
SEND Transport	PC.B3.4	Working with contract management consultant to introduce and embed robust contract management arrangements	Director-Finance	Dept Leader / Cabinet Member for Children and Education	Director – Children & Education		Jan-23	Ongoing	N/A			Complete	work was done on existing contracts, no changes could be made at the time. The lessons learnt from this will be used on the new contract management arrangements in the future. (SM 16/01/24-dw)
SEND Transport	PC.B3.5	NEW action- Assurance: SEND Procurement	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			February		N/A	New Action Added	assurance action added	New Action Added	assurance action added
New System Procurement	PC.C1.0	Explore implementation of a corporate performance management system	Assistant Chief Executive	Dept Leader			Jun-21		Focus 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Static data							Owners			Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	January Update Due	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(December 2023)	Status (January 2024)	Update (Initial and Date) (January 2024)			
New System Procurement	PC.C1.1	Options Appraisal	Assistant Chief Executive	Deputy Leader		Strategic Lead - Service Improvement		Oct-23	N/A	Significant issues / actual/projected slippage- more than 2 months	RAG rating changed from AMBER to RED as have missed the timescales we set ourselves, this is due to conducting further engagement with services to ensure requirements are captured from across the council prior to discussion of Options Appraisal and Business Case at ICT Approval Panel and Corporate Transformation Board in New Year.	Significant issues / actual/projected slippage- more than 2 months	Engagement with service areas complete. Following discussion with Director Finance and AD ICT, further work required to further explore Oracle Fusion as a potential solution. Cross-council stakeholder group to be established for the project to ensure needs of the organisation are understood and explored. Initial meeting with procurement has taken place and the project is in the procurement pipeline for commencement at a future date if required.			
New System Procurement	PC.C1.2	Business Case and Implementation Plan Considered	Assistant 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			

Theme 6-Partnerships & Relationships

														January Update Due	
Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating	
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(December 2023)	Status (January 2024)	Update (Initial and Date) (January 2024)		
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A1.0	Continue with robust governance arrangements in place ensuring the accountability of SCT to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people in Sandwell in line with the contract	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Autumn 2021	Ongoing	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	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	SCT KPIs have been agreed across SCT and the DFE following the review by the DFE appointed Improvement Board Chair. The review has not just looked at the KPIs but the operating tolerances too.	On Track- little or no slippage	The new approved contract KPIs will be reported through PMF effective Q1 2024/25		
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			Sep-23	Dec-23	N/A	Medium Progress- actual/ projected slippage of 1-2 months	As above commentary	On Track- little or no slippage	As above commentary		
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A2.0	Establish and maintain positive relationship between SMBC and SCT at senior officer and member level	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	due January 24	Assurance Action	Scrutiny Meeting Date Feb 2024 (Jacquie Smith & Emma Taylor to attend)		
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A3.0	Establish corporate approach to working with SCT on shared issues, such as corporate parenting and delivery of Early Help service	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education			Autumn 2021	Ongoing	Focus 2		Updates provided and there is also the SCT governance structures inc OPB, SPB and Improvement Board supported by a range of senior meetings inc the Cabinet Member, DCS, Chair of the SCT Board, CEO of SCT. N/A		Updates provided and there is also the SCT governance structures inc OPB, SPB and Improvement Board supported by a range of senior meetings inc the Cabinet Member, DCS, Chair of the SCT Board, CEO of SCT. N/A		
Sandwell Children's Trust	PR.A3.4	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	On Track- little or no slippage	December update- as last month	On Track- little or no slippage	Scheduled throughout 2024		
Effective Local Structures	PR.C1.0	Review partnership structures within the 'People's sphere'	Director - Children and Education	Cabinet Member for Children and Education / Cabinet Member for Adults, Social Care and Health	Director-Adult Social Care Director- Public Health				Focus 2		Action completed since the formation of the overarching 5 Boards.- assurance action to monitor		Action completed since the formation of the overarching 5 Boards.- assurance action to monitor		
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	December update- as last month	Complete	The PFA Project Board meeting scheduled for November 2023 was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 29th January 2024.  Project activity continues in the Stage one / Prepare phase. Following submission of the PFA preparatory findings report in 2023, further analysis has been completed to fulfil next steps/actions in relation to case file audits and post age 17 referral analysis. These reports have now been submitted for review and comment. We continue to bring together and liaise with internal and external partners to identify project dependencies and required future collaborative working.  Action is monitored through MTFs, adults and Transformation Board this action will be removed from IP.		

Static data													January Update Due	
Static data			Owners				Dates		Focus	Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating		Progress against plan	Evidence of status rating
Workstream	Ref	Action	Director Lead	Cabinet Member	Other Leads	Update Owner (if different)	Start date	Due date	Main Action Risk	Status (December 2023)	Update (Initial and Date)(December 2023)	Status (January 2024)	Update (Initial and Date) (January 2024)	
Effective Local Structures	PR.C1.6	Assurance action- Receive a 6 monthly 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		6 monthly	April 24 October 24	Focus 2	Assurance Action	Interview for Project Manager post conducted on 4th October but candidate unsuccessful. 07/12/23 A new consultant in Public Health is due to start on 12/02/23 who will lead on this area. A Long term conditions needs assessment and infant mortality needs assessment has been commissioned by ICB to look at needs in Sandwell.	Assurance Action	Programmes of work are progressing jointly and funded by ICB. Winter booklet (december) Infant mortality needs assessment (Dec) Long term conditions deep dive (Dec) Work well bid (19th January) Ongoing Discussions around MMUH (new hospital) and Adult social care cost disparities	
VCS Relationships	PR.D1.0	Relationship with Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) and Funding to Voluntary & Community Sector.	Leadership Team	Cabinet Member for Communities			Mar-22	Jul-23	Focus 2	N/A	Regular contact has been maintained with CM and CW to continue discussions regarding links between the PFA Project and the SEND Eco-System Programme. PFA board due to take place in Nov to discuss potential links/activities with a range of other projects currently underway.	N/A		
VCS Relationships	PR.D1.3	Consultation on VCS Draft Strategy	Assistant Chief Executive			Director - Housing	Jan-23	TBC	N/A	Action on Hold	Business planning workshops held in November/December - received positive feedback from attendees, and intelligence is being used to inform business planning for 2024/25.  Draft Continuous Improvement Framework developed for discussion with Transformation and Learning & Development to align approach across key agendas (meeting scheduled for January 2024)	Action on Hold	Further work in progress to develop approach for wider VCS engagement and funding.	
VCS Relationships	PR.D1.4	Approval of VCS Strategy	Leadership Team			Director - Housing	TBC	TBC		Not due to start	Project activity continues to be in Stage On / Prepare / Phase Two (follow on actions).	Not due to start	Project activity continues to be in Stage On / Prepare / Phase Two (follow on actions).	

## Improvement Plan Theme Progress Summary January 2024

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
<b>Organisational Culture</b>	<p><b><u>Establishing Organisational Culture</u></b></p> <p><b>Summary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One Team Framework was agreed and is being implemented across the Council. Launch and Share events with managers have now concluded. Framework was introduced at all staff briefing in July 2023.</li> <li>• Organisational Health indicators have been reported for 2022-23 and the trends were used to inform the People Strategy and roll out of the One Team Framework. The People Strategy was presented to Leadership Team in October 2023 and priorities were agreed.</li> <li>• Employee Engagement Survey conducted in September 2023 to provide a temperature check on culture, with results received in early November 2023 with a plan to disseminate to directorates in place.</li> <li>• 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 was collated in Autumn 2023 through the Employee Engagement Survey and semi-structured interviews with a sample of Members and Officers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>January</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual refresher of Corporate Governance Training delivered to members</li> <li>• Mechanisms identified for ongoing insight and assurance around the Officer and Member relationships</li> </ul> <p><b>November</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directorships and Trusteeship training delivered.</li> </ul> <p><b>October</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal of new approach to Employee performance review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase 2 Engagement: Determining Desired Culture - March 2023. <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Approval of document setting out the desired organisational culture - March 2023. <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Workforce Strategy approved- <b>Due March Cabinet</b></li> <li>• Management Development Programme Agreed- <b>Pilot held in April 23</b></li> <li>• Corporate Induction Revised. <b>Complete</b></li> </ul>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration around future workshops for all members based on thematic areas of council activity to enhance member participation and feedback.</li> <li>• Values and Behaviours Task and Finish Groups began w/c 21<sup>st</sup> November and is on track for update to Leadership team in February 2024</li> </ul> <p><b>Progress this month:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce strategy decision made to obtain Cabinet approval which is scheduled 13 March 2024. It is on the Forward Plan and currently with Directors for final consultation/comments.</li> <li>• Regular Values and Behaviours messaging shared through weekly communications with staff. Update on embedding Values &amp; Behaviours to be brought to IPRM 1 February.</li> <li>• Employee performance review (appraisal) updated processes to be communicated later in January and early February 2024. The new approach is based around coaching conversations so there will be classroom-based training available to book from 11th March – 3rd April. Ready for the full launch from April 1st - the annual review cycle. All associated documentation will be on the intranet ready to use.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next steps:</b></p>	<p>presented to Trade Unions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People Strategy Presented to Leadership Team</li> </ul> <p><b>September</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forward plan of all Member Briefings in place for next 3 sessions</li> <li>• Project plan for launch of One Team Framework- Update of programme containing all workstreams presented to Leadership team</li> </ul> <p><b>August</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership Team review of All Member briefings - <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Processes relating to employment of Chief Officers included in induction programme for committees at start of Municipal Year- <b>Included in MDP</b></li> <li>• Approval of refreshed Member Development Programme for start of Municipal Year. <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Employee Recognition Scheme launched- <b>Date tbc</b></li> <li>• Guidance in place for effective working with MPs- <b>May 2024</b></li> <li>• Social Media policy reviewed- August 2023 <b>Complete</b></li> </ul>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce Strategy to go to Cabinet in March</li> <li>• One Team Framework update to be provided to IPRM in February 2024</li> <li>• Learning and Development offer soft launch will be shared in Directorate Live Events starting 25 January. Face to Face and Online sessions will be arranged to provide ongoing support.</li> </ul> <p><b>Issues raised:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OC.A2.1- Workforce Strategy amber rated due to slippage on due date. Date to be amended at change control. Strategy on forward plan for March Cabinet with the aim for the Strategy to become effective April 2024</li> </ul> <p><b>Focus 2 Exceptions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OC.A2.1 <b>Workforce Strategy approved- Amber rated due to slippage due decision to obtain Cabinet approval. date to be amended on Change control</b>  <b>Progress commentary:</b> Decision to obtain Cabinet approval Scheduled 13 March 2024. On Forward plan and with Directors for Final consultation/comments.</li> <li>• OC.C4.2 <b>Compile insight into the Member-Officer Relationship in preparation for Autumn sessions with LGA (Local Government Association) around the Member-Officer Relationship Due</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal for Employee Performance Review created with Values embedded</li> <li>• Feedback from launch and Share sessions fed back to leadership</li> <li>• Social Media Policy review complete</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Governance Development Programme Agreed – <b>in Progress</b></li> <li>• Delivery of Corporate Governance Programme commences- <b>Commenced</b></li> </ul>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<p><b>November, Amber relating to slippage- date to be amended on Change control.</b></p> <p><b>Progress commentary:</b> Member dynamics- all member survey and focus group (to understand case working and working relationships) this is intended to provide an evidence base for LGBCE boundary review but is also being used to provide a snapshot of members interactions with the council and its officer base and to identify areas of focus for improvement. Pre-council workshops showcasing a range of service areas - will complement this work by raising awareness for both members and officers and supporting the development of positive relationships. Survey will take place end of January and beginning February. Out turn report will go to full council and will support a wider range of work e.g.: customer. Will also look to align with member development programme and proposed member induction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>OC.E2.4 Formal Employee Recognition Scheme - approach and resources identified- Red rated- date to be changed at change control</b>  <b>Progress commentary:</b> Values &amp; behaviours Task &amp; Finish Group on employee recognition gave positive feedback on proposed formal recognition scheme, based on celebrating examples of the council's Values &amp; Behaviours in action. Next step is to take proposal to Leadership team for approval/adoption. Anticipated launch date is May 2024.</li> <li>• <b>OC.G1.3 Governance Training and Development- Amber rated</b> Due May 2024</li> </ul>		



Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<p><b>Progress commentary:</b> Assistant Director Legal and Assurance and Assistant Chief Executive are working on a programme of training materials and supporting road show workshops for Officers on decision making requirements with a focus on improvement to report quality and content to support improvement to decision making.</p>		
<p><b>Corporate Oversight</b></p>	<p><b>Focus 1</b></p> <p><b><u>Customer Journey Programme</u></b></p> <p><b>Summary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme governance remains in place. Housing Solutions have carried out a number of process mapping workshops covering the areas highlighted- Adult Social Care, Borough Economy, Housing Options and Revenues and Benefits. A sharing event was carried out 23 August 2023.</li> <li>• Internal meetings have taken place led by CTO to agree and address the `quick wins` identified. These were presented to Customer Journey Board in November 2023. The methodology, resource, and timescales for Phase 2 of the process mapping, following the learning from the Phase 1 work, is being drafted by the CTO and is scheduled for approval at CJ (Customer Journey) Board in January.</li> </ul>	<p><b>January</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appraisal process agreed and ready for launch from April 2024</li> <li>• Ward Co-ordinator roles have been instrumental in supporting Members to tackle local Ward based issues and initial anecdotal feedback is that these roles are making a real difference.</li> </ul> <p><b>November</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oracle- Discovery phase complete- Feb 23. <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Oracle- Modelling phase complete- June 23. <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Oracle Fusion implemented- July 24. <b>On track</b></li> <li>• Corporate debt recovery processes reviewed- <b>Complete April 23</b></li> <li>• Sign off of 2020/21 accounts <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Sign off of 2021/22 accounts <b>On track to submit to GT in January 24</b></li> </ul>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The council has collectively (including Housing, Regeneration, Borough Economy) been working to improve the response to cases on the member portal.</li> </ul> <p><b>Progress this month:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meetings are continuing to be attended to feedback on the Cllr Portal.</li> <li>Further session will take place pre Full Council on the 30 January 2024, whereby Members can come along and discuss any cases/concerns with key service areas. Feedback from this session will be used to inform future sessions.</li> <li>Attendance at Town Members Board Meetings continued to take place throughout December &amp; January to feed back the work that has been completed on resolving Member portal issues.</li> <li>The introduction of the Ward Co-ordinator roles has been instrumental in supporting Members to tackle local Ward based issues and initial anecdotal feedback is that these roles are making a real difference.</li> <li>Members of the Customer team are continuing to chase for feedback on overdue Cllr Portal cases.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next steps:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q2 reporting to leadership 28<sup>th</sup> November</li> </ul> <p><b>October</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VERTO user acceptance testing complete</li> </ul> <p><b>September</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skills gap analysis complete for financial services and a training programme is now complete and in place- delivery will take place over the next 6 months</li> </ul> <p><b>August</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft State of Borough report received from</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transformation PMO in place – <b>Complete November 2023</b></li> <li>Corporate PMO in place – <b>Complete November 2023</b></li> <li>Verto system implemented – <b>Commenced</b></li> <li>Corporate Transformation Board operational- ToR and Membership to be re-set following Local Partnerships Review - <b>Complete</b></li> </ul>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback in January 2024 Pre-Full Council Member event</li> </ul> <p><b>Issues raised: SD.F1.0</b> - Customer Strategy development showing as Amber due to Risk relating to the action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussions are ongoing around the wider piece of work that will run concurrently to procure a Strategic Partner/Provider to undertake a more in-depth Strategy across Customer taking into account co dependencies with ICT/Digital Strategies.</li> <li>The approach was taken to Customer Journey Board on the 30th of November and a deadline given of April 2024 for the 3-year strategy to be launch was agreed.</li> <li>Information is being pulled together to start to draft the Customer Journey strategy including work on Customer Standards.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Resolve Issues relating to the completion and sign-off of final accounts</u></b></p> <p><b>Summary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2020/21 accounts have been signed off by the auditor with no qualifications.</li> <li>21/22 accounts – agreed with Grant Thornton that audit dates will be moved to early 2024 to allow more internal quality assurance process before external audit takes place</li> </ul>	<p>Economic Intelligence Unit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business Planning Framework drafted</li> </ul>	

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government is looking at the approach for 2022/2023 accounts due to the national context of delays in local government audit.</li> </ul> <p><b>Progress this month:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 2021/22 accounts are drafted. Grant Thornton have allocated resources for the 2021/22 audit to be submitted January 2024</li> </ul> <p><b>Next steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Await audit completion</li> </ul> <p><b>Issues raised:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No issues raised</li> </ul> <p><b><u>MTFP</u></b></p> <p><b>Summary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MTFP projects are being managed within the Corporate Transformation Programme and project management methodology and transformation design principles are being applied.</li> <li>Work to develop and review MTFS (Medium Term Financial Strategy) and MTFP for 2024/25 with members conducted</li> </ul>		

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<p>over Summer and Autumn 2023, to develop achievable/deliverable savings and a balanced Budget for 2024/25.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of benchmarking information to inform services to include in future transformation activities.</li> <li>• MTFS Autumn Update approved by Cabinet on 15 November 2023 consultation carried out on savings options in train to feed into development of draft budget for 2024/25. Focus groups conducted with residents, VCS (Voluntary and Community Sector) organisations and SHAPE Forum, and online survey was open until 2 January 2024.</li> </ul> <p><b>Progress this month:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Budget taken to the Scrutiny session on 15 January 2024.</li> <li>• The Draft Budget will go for consideration at Cabinet in February 2024 before decision by Full Council on the 20 February 2024.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Budget taken to Cabinet and Council in February 2024</li> </ul> <p><b>Issues raised:</b></p>		

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No Issues raised</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Corporate Transformation</u></b></p> <p><b>Summary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transformation Design Principles agreed.</li> <li>Review was held with Local Partnerships and the report has informed the establishment of Corporate PMO (Project Management Office).</li> <li>The Corporate Transformation Board's terms of reference have been revised and regular meetings scheduled.</li> <li>User acceptance of VERTO has been completed and the launch started.</li> </ul> <p><b>Progress this month:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Soft launch of VERTO in Corporate Transformation Office in December. Corporate Transformation Office will be moving to live site mid-January, R&amp;G live in Feb. Work with Communications is currently underway regarding the soft launch communication.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roll out of VERTO across other directorates</li> </ul>		

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<p><b>Issues raised:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No issues raised</li> </ul> <p><b>Focus 2 Exceptions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CO.B3.1 Develop a Continuous Improvement Framework –Red rated- revise delivery date at change control</b>  <b>Progress commentary:</b> Draft Continuous Improvement Framework developed based on best practice and aligned with transformation approach.  Next step is to align with Leadership &amp; Management development programme and develop proposal for 'good ideas' process for capturing staff ideas</li> <li>• <b>CO.D3.4 Programme of end-to-end process reviews- Amber rated</b>  <b>Progress commentary:</b> This exercise remains paused pending review of the report and update to leadership</li> <li>• <b>CO.D3.7 Develop Business case for Transactional Finance Unit - Amber rated-</b>  <b>Progress commentary:</b> This exercise remains paused pending review of the report and update to leadership</li> </ul>		

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
<b>Strategic Direction</b>	<p><b>Focus 1- no focus 1 in this theme</b></p> <p><b>Focus 2 Exceptions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>SD.A5.3 Complete Full Business Cases for identified Business Steams in line with Commercial Project Plan approved by Leadership Team- Amber Rated</b>  <b>Due October 23</b>  <b>Progress Commentary: Health and Safety</b> – Skills gap analysis is complete. Next steps to be agreed at a workshop WC 5th Feb  <b>Neutral Vendor</b> Phase approach agreed, reflective of new timeline and capacity in HR.  <b>Educational Services</b> – Resource pressures easing with a new SIA post agreed. Further discussion required regarding ‘status’ of project i.e. transformational or service improvement. Meeting to be arranged in Feb to be discussed.  <b>Social Letting</b> - Due to the announcement made by the Chancellor in the Autumn budget – an increase in LHA rate to the 2024 rates from April the project team must review the financial offer, margins and understand how this may influence landlords decision making in respect of the proposed model. </li> </ul>	<p><b>January</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Corporate Affairs Strategy delivered as part of BAU</li> </ul> <p><b>November</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EDI (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion) update report went to leadership- 4 equality objectives approved</li> </ul> <p><b>October</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrative workshops to conclude this month</li> <li>Commercial Project Officer recruited</li> </ul>	<p>Commercial Strategy Approved-<b>Commercial Workstream included in 2023/24 Budget March 23</b></p> <p>Regeneration Pipeline: Strategic delivery partner in place- <b>Cabinet report approved July 23</b></p> <p>Approval of Communications and Corporate Affairs Strategy- <b>Complete</b></p> <p>ED&amp;I Strategy Approved- September 2024. <b>On track</b></p> <p>Regular Residents' Survey &amp; Budget Consultation in Place – <b>Complete.</b></p>



Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<p><b>Cashless</b> – Activities agreed to inform next steps</p> <p><b>Educational Psychology</b> – Finance partners updated and provided good insight. Next step to de-segregate statutory from opportunity but also consider the dependencies on the wider schools piece.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SB.B1.14 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Assessment- Amber Rated</b>  <b>Due July 2024</b>  <b>Progress Commentary:</b> Work is currently underway to develop the EFLG (Equality Framework for Local Government) Audit Action plan, which will be presented to Leadership Team during March 2024. The team have also developed the 2nd PSED Service User Report for 2023-24 which will be published by March 2024 and ensure that the council is compliant and meeting its legal duties. Further work is being undertaken to support the 4 interim EDI (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion) Objectives and it proposed that updates will be presented to LT during Q1 (2024/25). The development of the EDI Strategy has slipped due to resources within the team.</li> </ul>	<p><b>September</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrative workshops held with LGA to inform communications approach</li> <li>• Corporate Procurement Strategy Action plan finalised</li> </ul> <p><b>August</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrative workshops held with LGA to inform communications approach</li> <li>• Corporate Procurement Strategy Action plan finalised</li> </ul>	<p>Customer Journey Strategy Approved- <b>On track for draft by March 2024</b></p> <p>Approval of Medium-Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy- <b>2023/24 MTFP Approved February 2023; 2024/25 MTFP on track for approval February 2024</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HRA 30-year Business Plan approved- <b>Approved February 2023. Stock condition surveys being undertaken.</b></li> </ul>
<b>Decision Making</b>	<p><b>Focus 1- no focus 1 in this theme</b></p> <p><b>Focus 2- no exceptions to report</b></p>	<p><b>October</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutiny committee produced annual</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader to confirm Executive's position on any further review</li> </ul>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
		report- due at October council	relating to the Wragge and Cox reports – <b>Complete-</b>
<b>Procurement &amp; Commercial</b>	<p><b>Focus 1- no focus 1 in this theme</b></p> <p><b>Focus 2 Exceptions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>PC.C1.1- Performance Management System- Options appraisal- Red rated Due Oct 23 – Date change at change control</b>  <b>Progress commentary:</b> Engagement with service areas complete. Following discussion with Director Finance and AD ICT, further work required to further explore Oracle Fusion as a potential solution. Cross-council stakeholder group to be established for the project to ensure needs of the organisation are understood and explored. Initial meeting with procurement has taken place and the project is in the procurement pipeline for commencement at a future date if required.</li> </ul>	<p><b>January</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Fleet vehicles have arrived as part of Serco Fleet replacement and are into service</li> </ul> <p><b>November</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waste contract now on Intend- Go Live December</li> </ul> <p><b>October</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEND3- Project team identified, launch meeting diarised and ToR agreed.</li> </ul> <p><b>September</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of Phase 2 Tech forge complete</li> </ul> <p><b>August</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waste and Leisure Contracts added to In-tend contract management module- <b>Steady progress. Waste contract on Intend.</b></li> <li>• Street Cleansing Recovery Plan implemented- Ongoing delivery Fleet replacement complete- <b>Expected end 2023</b></li> <li>• SEND Transport Contract Monitoring arrangements in place- <b>On track</b></li> <li>• SEND3 procurement commences – <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Corporate Performance Management System in place-</li> </ul>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery of recommendations for Waste contract complete- lessons learnt booked in following industrial action in June/July 2023</li> </ul>	<p><b>Options appraisal due October</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lion Farm - Report to Cabinet on determination of position of developer- <b>Transferred to 'business as usual' management</b></li> <li>Arrangement in place for future delivery of leisure services- <b>Complete</b></li> <li>Phase 2 Tech Forge implemented- <b>Complete</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Partnerships &amp; Relationships</b></p>	<p><b>Focus 1- no Focus 1 in this theme</b></p> <p><b>Focus 2 Exceptions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>PR.C1.1- Initiation of Project to review and remodel the pathway between children's and adults' services (preparing for adulthood project) Amber Rated.</b>  <b>Progress commentary:</b> The PfA (Preparing for Adulthood) Project Board meeting scheduled for November 2023 was cancelled due to</li> </ul>	<p><b>January</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCT KPIS approved by DfE, SMBC and SCT, and will be reported through PMF (Performance Management Framework) effective Q1 2024/25</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of SCT (Sandwell Children's Trust) Contract concludes- - <b>complete.</b></li> <li>Transitions Project Commences- <b>Project commenced</b></li> </ul>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
	<p>unforeseen circumstances. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 29th January 2024.</p> <p>Project activity continues in the Stage one / Prepare phase. Following submission of the PfA preparatory findings report in 2023, further analysis has been completed to fulfil next steps/actions in relation to case file audits and post age 17 referral analysis. These reports have now been submitted for review and comment. We continue to bring together and liaise with internal and external partners to identify project dependencies and required future collaborative working.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>PR.D1.3- Consultation on VCS (Voluntary and Community Sector) Draft Strategy- On hold</b>  <b>Progress commentary:</b> Further work in progress to develop approach for wider VCS engagement and funding. </li> </ul>	<p><b>November</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transitions Projects: Benchmarking findings report complete for the project to review and remodel the pathway between children's and adult's.</li> </ul> <p><b>October</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benchmarking findings report complete for the project to review and remodel the pathway between children's and adult's</li> </ul> <p><b>September</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preparing for Adulthood Project- Benchmarking meetings completed with</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transitions Project incorporated within Corporate Transformation Programme- <b>date tbc</b></li> <li>VCS Strategy approved- <b>On hold</b></li> </ul>

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
		<p>Dudley MBC and Birmingham City Council</p> <p><b>August</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Initial findings report for Preparing for Adulthood Project shared with the Preparing For Adulthood Project Board in July</li></ul>	

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## Appendix 3 – Statutory Recommendation Status Summary January 2024

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><b><u>Organisational Culture</u></b>  <b>Assurance Activity to ensure effective contributions of Scrutiny and Audit and to sustain positive Officer and Member Relationship.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from committees is collected and reviewed regularly.</li> <li>• All member survey and focus group to be carried out, to understand case working and working relationships. This is intended to provide an evidence base for LGBCE boundary review but is also being used to provide a snapshot of members interactions with the council and its officer base. Identifying areas of focus for improvement.</li> <li>• Pre council workshops showcasing a range of service areas - will complement this work by raising awareness for both members and officers and supporting the development of positive relationships. Survey will take place end of January and beginning February. Outturn report will go to full council and will support a wider range of work e.g.: customer.</li> <li>• LGA (Local Government Association) sessions planned post elections</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Corporate Oversight</u></b>  <b>ERP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance and Procurement, HR &amp; Payroll will all go-live in July 2024.</li> <li>• Benefit rationalisation taking place across the Programme workstreams following completion of Design Phase.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oracle Fusion Implemented- Modelling phase complete. Next phase to focus on realisation phase/development stage. Go live date July 2024.</li> <li>• Regeneration pipeline: strategic delivery partner in place – Cabinet approval to procure July 2023</li> </ul> <p>Completed milestones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of SCT Contract concludes- Complete</li> <li>• Review of scrutiny arrangements- Complete</li> <li>• Approval of any changes to scrutiny (if required following review)- Complete</li> <li>• Termination notice for SLT contract approved by Cabinet- complete</li> <li>• Revised contract governance arrangements in place for Serco contract- complete</li> </ul>

Statutory Recommendation	Summary	Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefit rationalisation taking place across the Programme workstreams following completion of Design Phase. Benefit profiles will be developed and baselined ahead of Go-Live.</li> <li>• Working group established with Heads of Services to progress financial benefits.</li> <li>• System configuration due to new CoA (Chart of Accounts) extended through Jan.</li> <li>• Data Migration 3 will complete on 26/01/24.</li> <li>• Data Migration 4 Cycle started on 2 Jan,</li> <li>• Systems Integration Testing (SIT) for HCM (Human Capital Management) will complete on 19/01/24.</li> <li>• Gateway 4 Criteria to Exit Realisation Phase/ SIT Stage and Entry to Realisation Phase/ UAT Stage agreed at 18/01/24 Programme Board.</li> <li>• Gateway 4 approval with Programme Board planned for 01/02/24</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Strategic Direction</u></b>  <b>Strategy Development and Refresh</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Regen Strategy and Pipeline:</b> Pipeline 6 monthly update presented to Cabinet July 23.</li> <li>• Regeneration pipeline- approval to procure a strategic delivery partner was agreed at Cabinet in July 23. Report will return to Cabinet once procurement has been successful.</li> <li>• VERTO- Soft launch of VERTO in Corporate Transformation Office in December. Corporate Transformation Office will be moving to live</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waste and Recycling Recovery Plan Implementation - <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Street Cleansing Recovery Plan approval – Resubmission to Waste Management Board in - <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• SERCO contract performance reporting embedded in Performance Management Framework - <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Option appraisal for future leisure management options – <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Scrutiny work Planning event - <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Procure new support provider to deliver Oracle Fusion-<b>complete</b></li> <li>• Approval of Regeneration Strategy and Pipeline- <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Early Help Strategy approved and launched- <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Corporate Parenting Strategy Refresh Approved- <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• SEND Transport procurement published- <b>complete</b></li> <li>• SMBC/SCT Leadership meetings - <b>Complete</b></li> </ul>



Statutory Recommendation	Summary	Milestones
	<p>site mid-January, R&amp;G live in Feb. Work with Comm's is currently underway regarding the soft launch communication.</p> <p><b><u>Decision Making</u></b> No actions in this theme</p> <p><b><u>Procurement &amp; Commercial</u></b> <b>Waste Contract:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuation of quarterly corporate monitoring through PMF.</li> <li>• Report provided to Officer Leadership Will slip to December / January to allow the settlement of the industrial action to be included in the report (key contract action in quarter).</li> <li>• Annual reports prepared; will be presented to Cabinet Member for Leisure &amp; Tourism 13/12/23 and Cabinet Member for Environment 13/12/23</li> <li>• Waste contract now on Intend and go-live December '23</li> <li>• Senior Management Meetings and Partnership Board meetings proceeding as scheduled. Service Delivery Plans approved by Partnership Board.</li> <li>• Monthly Fleet steering groups taking place</li> <li>• Fleet vehicles received and in service.</li> </ul> <p><b>SEND Transport:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership Team agreement, directorate reps have been confirmed, the terms of reference are being finalised and the first meeting will take place at the end of Q3.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SCT Contract performance reporting embedded within Council PMF-Complete</li> </ul>

Statutory Recommendation	Summary	Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme board reps confirmed across council directorates. AD Education Support Services coordinating the board meeting and Terms of Reference.</li> <li>• SEND 3 to be a strand of the overall transformation plan. Task &amp; Finish Group to drive delivery.</li> <li>• Working with Legal on a flexible purchasing system. The framework will be in place July/August 24 to run all the new contract through. It will support and encourage SME operators to join the framework which will provide much needed competition and challenge</li> </ul> <p><b>New System Procurement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Performance Management System-</b> Systems demos have taken place. Options appraisal and business case being finalised, further engagement with service areas being conducted to refine requirements.</li> <li>• <b>Asset Management</b> - The phase two for Techforge implementation has now been completed. The team have undertaken a project closedown exercise detailing everything that has been completed across both phases along with any workstreams/actions that will now become business as usual.</li> </ul> <p><b>Lion Farm:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expert Determination process has been completed and removed from the Improvement plan to be managed as Business as Usual.</li> </ul> <p><b>Leisure Contract:</b></p>	

Statutory Recommendation	Summary	Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supplementary agreement with SLT agreed 13.07.23 to extend SLT's operation of leisure centres (including SAC) to 31.03.27.</li> <li>• Enhanced contract management regime and framework in place.</li> <li>• Aquatic Centre Handover to operator (Sandwell Leisure Trust) took place as scheduled on 13 July, open to the public 24 July</li> <li>• Continuation of quarterly corporate reporting through PMF.</li> <li>• Contract to be put on to Intend</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Partnerships &amp; Relationships</u></b></p> <p><b>Sandwell Children's Trust</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SCT KPIs have been agreed across SCT and the DfE (Department for Education) following the review by the DfE appointed Improvement Board Chair.</li> <li>• The review has not just looked at the KPIs but the operating tolerances too.</li> <li>• Outcomes around early help and corporate parent reporting through PMF</li> <li>• The new approved contract KPIs will be reported through PMF effective Q1 2024/25</li> </ul>	
S2 - The Council must ensure that the learning in relation to commercial decisions, procurement and contract management	<p><b><u>Organisational Culture</u></b></p> <p><b>Officer Learning and Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Leadership Development on hold pending restructure of senior levels.</li> </ul> <p><b>Embedding Constitutional Changes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Governance Training Delivery –Commenced and approach to next phase agreed</li> </ul> <p>Completed milestones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular Resident Survey in place – 2023 surveys in place</li> </ul>

Statutory Recommendation	Summary	Milestones
<p>highlighted in this report are understood through the organisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broader scenario-based learning, Officers involved in pulling training across finance, procurement and governance have undergone significant changes of personnel.</li> <li>• Next step is bringing a new project team together to agree training detail and to diarise. Assistant Director of Legal and Assurance and ACE are working on a programme of training materials and supporting road show workshops for officer on decision making requirements with a focus on improvement to report quality and content to support improvement to decision making.</li> <li>• Delivery of Directorships and Trusteeships Training –Carried out with the offer extended to Officers with council appointments to boards etc and will be carried out on an annual basis</li> <li>• CIPfA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) carried out the Annual refresher of Corporate Governance Training scheduled to the end of December.</li> </ul> <p><b>Member Learning and Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from committees that we continue to review.</li> <li>• Induction arrangement for May 24 currently in development and will be followed by refreshed MDP (Member Development Programme) programme for 24-25.</li> <li>• Council has recently appointed a new lead officer for member development which will increase capacity and focus.</li> </ul> <p><b>Corporate Oversight</b> <b>Performance Management</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial Strategy approved – <b>approved</b></li> <li>• HRA 30 Year Business Plan approved</li> <li>• Revised Financial Regs - approved</li> <li>• Implementation of Asset Management System -phase 1 complete</li> <li>• Revised Scheme of Delegation – <b>approved</b></li> <li>• Corporate Asset Management Strategy Approved- <b>Approved</b></li> <li>• Budget Holder Role Profile agreed - <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Establish Performance Management Framework – <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• First Performance Management Report - - <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Revised PCR, and Sale of Land and Buildings Protocol – <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• New Member Induction- <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Member Development Programme - <b>Complete and BAU</b></li> <li>• Asset Management System Procured- <b>complete</b></li> </ul>

Statutory Recommendation	Summary	Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly reporting of corporate performance management framework in place to senior officers and members via Cabinet and Budget &amp; Corporate Scrutiny Management Board.</li> <li>• Q2 Performance Report went to Budget and Corporate Scrutiny MB on 4th January, due to go to Cabinet on 17th January. Data for Q3 report is being collated. Corporate Performance Management resources in place from February 2023.</li> <li>• Budget pressures and mitigations are discussed at LT each month</li> <li>• Benchmarking used in budget planning up to date and used as part of refresh of MTFS (Medium Term Financial Strategy) and planning for 2024/25 budget onwards.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Strategic Direction</u></b></p> <p><b>Strategy Development and Refresh</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Health and Safety</b> – Skills gap analysis is complete. Next steps to be agreed at a workshop WC 5th Feb</li> <li>• <b>Neutral Vendor-</b> Phase approach agreed, reflective of new timeline and capacity in HR.</li> <li>• <b>Educational Services</b> – Resource pressures easing with a new SIA post agreed. Further discussion required regarding ‘status’ of project i.e. transformational or service improvement. Meeting to be arranged in Feb to be discussed.</li> <li>• <b>Social Letting</b> - Due to the announcement made by the Chancellor in the Autumn budget – an increase in LHA rate to the 2024 rates from April the project team must review the financial offer, margins and understand how this may influence landlords' decision making in respect of the proposed model.</li> </ul>	

Statutory Recommendation	Summary	Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cashless</b> – Activities agreed to inform next steps</li> <li>• <b>Educational Psychology</b> – Finance partners updated and provided good insight. Next step to de-segregate statutory from opportunity but also consider the dependencies on the wider school's piece.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Procurement &amp; Commercial</u></b>  <b>Corporate Asset Management:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase 1 implemented.</li> <li>• Phase 2 commenced. The integration of data into the system complete</li> <li>• Phase 2 Configuration and organisation of data completed September</li> <li>• Project closedown exercise complete detailing everything that has been completed across both phases along with any workstreams/actions that will now become BAU (business as usual).</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Partnerships &amp; Relationships</u></b>  No actions in this theme</p>	
S3 - Senior leadership, both officers and members, must demonstrate that they can continue to work together effectively, that they	<p><b><u>Organisational Culture</u></b>  <b>Establishing Organisational Culture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce Strategy to go to Cabinet for approval 13 March 2024. On Forward plan and with Directors for Final consultation/ comments</li> <li>• Comms strategy is being delivered regularly.</li> <li>• Task and finish groups commenced week beginning 21st November with update to Leadership team in February 2024</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce Strategy – Due to be agreed at Cabinet March 2024</li> </ul> <p>Completed milestones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisational Culture – Part 2 Engagement – determining the desired culture – complete</li> </ul>

Statutory Recommendation	Summary	Milestones
<p>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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal for appraisals drafted and consultation commenced on 10th October with recognised TU's - accepted in principle.</li> <li>• Paper taken to JCP (Joint Consultative Panel) on the 18th of December. Updated processes to be communicated later in January and early February.</li> </ul> <p><b>Officer Learning and Development -</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Leadership Development on hold pending restructure of senior levels.</li> </ul> <p><b>Officer and Member Relationship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ongoing mechanisms for insight and assurance around the Officer Member Relationship includes views from external reviews, standards cases, feedback from Directors, Group Leaders, and Chief Whips.</li> <li>• Semi-structured interviews with Members early October are being conducted to capture insight into relationship.</li> <li>• All member survey and focus group to be carried out, to understand case working and working relationships. This is intended to provide an evidence base for LG BCE boundary review but is also being used to provide a snapshot of members interactions with the council and its officer base. Identifying areas of focus for improvement.</li> <li>• Pre council workshops showcasing a range of service areas - will complement this work by raising awareness for both members and officers and supporting the development of positive relationships. Survey will take place end of January and beginning February. Outturn report will go to full council and will support a wider range of work e.g.: customer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval of document / statement setting out desired organisational culture – ‘Our Values: Our Behaviours’- <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Organisational Culture - Part 1 Engagement – Starting the Conversation- <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• New Member Induction - <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Meeting structures to support Senior Leadership (Officer and Member) – <b>Complete</b></li> <li>• Member Development Programme approved- <b>Complete</b></li> </ul>

Statutory Recommendation	Summary	Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGA sessions planned post elections</li> <li>•</li> </ul> <p><b>Member Learning and Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from committees that we continue to review.</li> <li>• Induction arrangement for May 24 currently in development and will be followed by refreshed MDP (Member Development Programme) programme for 24-25.</li> <li>• Council has recently appointed a new lead officer for member development which will increase capacity and focus.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Corporate Oversight</u></b> No Actions in Theme</p> <p><b><u>Strategic Direction</u></b> No actions in Theme</p> <p><b><u>Decision Making</u></b> No actions in Theme</p> <p><b><u>Procurement &amp; Commercial</u></b> No actions in Theme</p> <p><b><u>Partnerships &amp; Relationships</u></b> No actions in Theme</p>	



## Appendix – Scrutiny & Audit Recommendation Status Summary January 24

<b>Grant Thornton Key Recommendation 7 (2021):</b> Members in key statutory roles, in particular in relation to Cabinet, scrutiny, standards and audit, need to be provided with effective development training and support. The Member Development Programme should be reviewed to ensure corporate governance forms part of the training for members with governance roles	
<b>External Follow-up Reviews 2022 Findings</b>	<p>Grant Thornton acknowledged the progress of the Member Development Programme and noted that it has been augmented with additional training sessions delivered by the LGA (Local Government Association) focusing on the Member and Officer Relationships, and in delivering a development programme for Cabinet.</p> <p>In their follow-up review, Grant Thornton made a further recommendation in relation to the Member Development Programme as a whole but did not make any points around learning and development in relation to scrutiny specifically, as they acknowledged the improvements made.</p> <p>The recommendation made by Grant Thornton relating to the MDP (Member Development Programme) was:  <b>Improvement Rec 19 (2022):</b> The Council needs to build on the progress being made on member development and conclude the 2022/23 programme including the review of member PDPs and take further steps to finalise arrangements on succession planning for members in SRA roles.</p> <p>The LGA commented on the council's commitment to review the member development programme at regular intervals and set out that it is important to ensure that the pace of delivery is made to feel sustainable. The LGA follow-up review acknowledged that the improvements to scrutiny have been supplemented with a range of training and additional training sessions on member and officer relations is due to be facilitated by the LGA on 27 February 2024.</p>
<b>Summary of activity and next steps</b>	<p>The current MDP has been updated to reflect the review of Member PDPs and updated arrangements for new Member Induction following the number of new Members elected in May. A new Member survey is being conducted, however, there has been a low return rate as yet. Members have been completing analysis after each training session. Further analysis of these will be undertaken and this, along with findings from face-to-face Member sessions on the Member-Officer relationship and engagement with LGA will be used to inform the review of MDP and inform new Member induction for 2024-2025.</p>

	<p>Scrutiny Members’ and ARAC Committee Members’ learning needs remain under review by the Chairs together with supporting Officers. Scrutiny Chairs are also receiving coaching and mentoring training from external providers. A learning and development plan for audit members is currently being drafted to ensure that key skills needed for the role is clear. This is linked in with CIPFA’s ‘Audit committees: practical guidance for local authorities and the police’ guidance.</p> <p>Further training with external providers is being explored including with neighbouring authorities to ensure shared learning and the opportunity to engage with peers to discuss new ways of working.</p>
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<b>Grant Thornton Improvement Recommendation I4 (2021): Officer and Member Relationships – the forward plan of the Cabinet should be shared with the Audit Committee and Scrutiny Board to help structure their agenda planning</b>	
<b>External Follow-up Reviews 2022 Findings</b>	<p>Grant Thornton acknowledged that the ‘forward plan of Cabinet business has been made available to all members to improve awareness and transparency.</p>
<b>Summary of activity and next steps</b>	<p>The forward plan is shared with all scrutiny boards (in so far as it relates to that respective scrutiny board) to help identify areas for pre-decision scrutiny activity and to ARAC at every meeting to assist with the Committee’s work planning. This will continue.</p>

<b>Grant Thornton Improvement Recommendation 12 (2021): Officer and Member Relationships – There is a need to ensure that members of scrutiny and audit committees are aware of their governance roles including how to interrogate reports and ask the right questions</b>	
<b>External Follow-up Reviews 2022 Findings</b>	<p>Positive feedback was received about scrutiny and audit in the follow up reviews.</p> <p>In their follow up review Autumn 2022, Grant Thornton set out that ‘There is a more mature engagement between the Leader, Cabinet, Committee Chairs and senior officers, supporting good planning and work</p>

	<p>programming across the different committees across different Council committees and a greater level of professionalism in how business is conducted by these committees.’... and ‘Overall, positive progress has been made to improve the culture and professionalism of key Council committees, with the scrutiny function making particular progress.’</p> <p>The LGA commented that ‘it is clear from the people we spoke to that this key strand of the council’s governance arrangements [scrutiny] is going from strength to strength’. And commented on scrutiny’s ‘renewed sense of energy and drive’.</p> <p>Grant Thornton did not make any further recommendations around the role of scrutiny or audit.</p>
<p><b>Summary of activity and next steps</b></p>	<p>Ongoing activity is in place to ensure that scrutiny and audit continue to make an effective contribution to the Council’s governance arrangements.</p> <p>This includes the regular meetings to develop and nurture strong, healthy working relationships with members and officers. Chairs of scrutiny boards have regular agenda setting meetings with Directors and officers to ensure that the content of reports enables a rich discussion and debate at Scrutiny and not just information sharing. Scrutiny Board chairs collectively are meeting regularly, whether it is a pre-meeting or prior to Cabinet to agree lines of questioning in advance as well monitoring performance of Boards, attendance, engagement, etc. Audit are having pre meetings and work is ongoing to ensure shared learning and cross cutting areas are discussed at regular meetings between the overarching Chair of Scrutiny and the Audit Chair as well as regular meetings with the Chair of Audit and the Section 151 Officer.</p> <p>Job roles, scrutiny protocols and a framework have been developed and embedded to guide the way scrutiny is conducted, details how Cabinet members and officers interact with scrutiny and also helps to support and drive a change in culture and mindset of both members and officers to ensure that Sandwell has an effective overview and scrutiny function.</p> <p>A learning and development plan for audit members is currently being drafted to ensure that key skills needed for the role is clear and members of ARAC can work towards the skills identified as part of their PDP.</p>

	These arrangements will continue over Municipal Year 2024-2025.
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<b>Grant Thornton Improvement Recommendation 34 (2022): Audit Committee – now that the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee has agreed the action to bring this long-standing matter to resolution [review into the Cox and Wragge Report], it will be important that – as the Audit and Governance Panel recognised – the Council manages its position so that the matter does not resurface, so that it can move on and focus on its corporate objectives</b>	
<b>External Follow-up Reviews 2022 Findings</b>	<p>In their follow up review, Grant Thornton outlined that: ‘The Audit Committee has continued to operate throughout the year in a manner focussing on significant governance matters’ and that ‘Overall, we found no evidence of any significant weaknesses in the Council’s arrangements for ensuring that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks’. Grant Thornton noted that the Council Leader is due to confirm the Executive’s position on any further review and made an additional improvement recommendation as follows:</p> <p>Grant Thornton Improvement Recommendation 22 (2022): A final decision on the Cox report needs to be made by the Leader before this matter can be considered formally closed.</p>
<b>Summary of activity and next steps</b>	<p>A report was received by ARAC on 5 June which set out the Executive’s position and the matter has been concluded. The ARAC minutes were reported to Council in July 2023.</p>

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		
336	Organisational Culture	OC.A2.1	Workforce Strategy approved	Chief executive	22/01/2024	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Nov-23	Mar-24	Change of date to allow approval to be obtained at Cabinet.	
337	Organisational Culture	OC.C4.2	Compile insight into the Member-Officer Relationship in preparation for Autumn sessions with LGA around the Member-Officer Relationship	Director-Law & Governance	22/01/2024	Change to action description	n/a	nh/a	Compile insight into the Member-Officer Relationship in preparation for Spring sessions with LGA around the Member-Officer Relationship in preparation for post-election change in political composition	
338	Organisational Culture	OC.C4.2	Compile insight into the Member-Officer Relationship in preparation for Autumn sessions with LGA around the Member-Officer Relationship	Director-Law & Governance	22/01/2024	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Nov-23	Jun-24	Change of date for completion to include new members following elections.	
339	Organisational Culture	OC.C.4.4	New action added: Mechanisms for ongoing insight and assurance around the Officer and Member relationship: 1. Survey Complete 2. Areas of concerns identified 3. Action plan to address identified area of concern.	Director-Law & Governance	22/01/2024	Add - New Sub Actions	n/a	n/a	new action added to follow on from identification of mechanisms for ongoing insight and assurance.	
340	Organisational Culture	OC.D5.3	Review of Member Development Programme	Director-Law & Governance	22/01/2024	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Feb-24	Mar-24		
341	Organisational Culture	OC.D5.4	Agreement of revised MDP	Director-Law & Governance	22/01/2024	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Feb-24	Mar-24		
342	Organisational Culture	OC.E2.4	Formal Employee Recognition Scheme - approach and resources identified	Chief executive	22/01/2024	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Oct-23	May-24	Change of due date so that Task and Finish groups could be included in the discussions and development of the approach	
343	Corporate Oversight	CO.A1.12	New action: Completion of realisation phase/SIT Stage	Director-Finance	22/01/2024	Add - New Sub Actions	n/a	n/a	new action added	
344	Corporate Oversight	CO.B3.1	Develop a Continuous Improvement Framework	Chief executive	22/01/2024	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Oct-23	TBC	new date to be determined following meeting with Transformation and L&D	
345	Corporate Oversight	CO.C1.9	Consider integrating revenue, Capital and Performance reporting	Director-Finance	22/01/2024	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Mar-24	Jul-24	start date will need to flex to July 2024 as this was linked to launch of Oracle Fusion (launch date changed from April 2024 to July 2024)	
346	Corporate Oversight	CO.F5.0	Customer Journey Programme	Director-Regeneration & Growth	22/01/2024	Closure of Main action resulting in closure of workstream	n/a	n/a	Closure of main action resulting in closure of workstream- all actions complete at this time	
347	Corporate Oversight	CO.G1.4	Pilot an approach to service planning	Chief executive	22/01/2024	Change to action description	n/a	Start date: Sept 23, End Date: June 2024	Action to be revised to 'Implement service planning framework'	
348	Strategic Decision	SD.B1.14	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Assessment - appointment of consultant for data analysis - appointment of consultant for strategy development	Director-Law & Governance	22/01/2024	Change of Delivery Lead(s)	n/a	n/a	Change from L&G to ACE	
349	Procurement & Commercial	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	22/01/2024	Closure of Main Action	n/a	n/a	The ongoing management of the Serco contract is now effectively BAu remove January	
350	Procurement & Commercial	PC.D3.5	NEW action- Assurance: SEND Procurement	Director-Children & Education	22/01/2024	Add- New Assurance Action	n/a	n/a	New assurance action added to monitor the SEND 24 procurement	
351	Procurement & Commercial	PCC1.1	Options Appraisal (Performance Management system)	ACE	22/01/2024	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Oct-23	Mar-24		
352	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A1.7	New KPIs reported through PMF	Director-Children & Education	22/01/2024	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Sep-23	July 24	change to include Q1 reporting complete	
353	Partnership & Relationships	PR.A1.8	KPI's (along with accompanying tolerances) implemented in Q2	Director-Children & Education	22/01/2024	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Dec-23	Jul-24	change to include Q1 reporting complete	
354	Corporate Oversight	CO.C2.4	Assurance action: Quarterly Budget Monitoring Reports made to Leadership Team, Cabinet and Scrutiny	Director-Finance	26/01/2024	Closure of Assurance Action	n/a	n/a	Closure of assurance action- regular reports are made and are programmed in for future delivery	

355	Corporate Oversight	CO.E1.0	Corporate Transformation programme	Director-Finance	26/01/2024	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	TBC	Jun-24	Due date set
356	Corporate Oversight	CO.E1.4	Programme and Project Management System Implementation	Director-Finance	26/01/2024	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	TBC	Apr-24	Due date set
357	Strategic Decision	SD.A3.0	Communications and Corporate Affairs Strategy Development and Delivery	Chief executive	26/01/2024	Closure of Main Action	n/a	n/a	Internal comms strategy in place and being delivered as part of Business as usual
358	Strategic Decision	SD.A5.0	Develop and implement the Commercial Strategy	Director-Finance	26/01/2024	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Oct-23	Oct-24	change to due date
359	Strategic Decision	SD.A5.3	Complete Full Business Cases for identified Business Steams in line with Commercial Project Plan approved by Leadership Team	Director-Finance	26/01/2024	Change to delivery timescales (actions and milestones)	Oct-23	Jun-24	Change to due date
360	Corporate Oversight	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	26/01/2024	Closure of Assurance Action	n/a	n/a	Closure of assurance action as VFM panels have now been implemented for all spends over £1000

# Improvement Plan Risk Register

January 2024



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 (Oct 23)	Current Risk Score (Jan 24)	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><b>Improvement Plan objectives and member / officer engagement in those objectives</b></p> <p>If programme objectives are not clearly defined to ensure they are within scope, deliverable, understood and agreed and/or that there is unclear ownership of actions and workstreams, then the programme will proceed with no clear direction, may become unmanageable (incl. scope creep ), and/or missed opportunities resulting in slower progress than planned, failure to meet external review recommendations and a prolonged Government intervention</p>	6 (Green)	6 (Green)	3 (Green)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement as part of the development of the Improvement Plan - sharing themes and workstreams with staff and members</li> <li>Communications Plan implemented for governance review, CPC and Statutory Notice</li> <li>Objectives for each Theme within the Improvement Plan identified</li> <li>Regular reporting to Cabinet, ARAC and Scrutiny in place. Council approval of Improvement Plan and reports to SoS.</li> <li>Regular Staff communications on progress of Improvement Plan in place</li> <li>Improvement Plan Actions embedded into Corporate Plan and Business Plans to provide assurance of sustainable improvement</li> <li>Key components of Finance Improvement Plan embedded in IP and Corporate Plan</li> <li>All Improvement Plan actions have an identified Responsible Officer and Cabinet Member</li> <li>Arrangements in place to provide business continuity following SH &amp; GD departure</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications Plan delivered including all staff briefings including key messages around Improvement Plan</li> <li>Staff and member engagement through Organisational Culture change programme</li> <li>Ensure Executive Directors are aware of Improvement Plan governance and responsibilities and develop ownership of the plan as part of induction</li> </ul>
IP3	<p><b>Allocation of sufficient resources to project management and project delivery/ maintaining Business as Usual while delivering the Improvement plan</b></p>	8 (Amber)	8 (Amber)	4 (green)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Terms of Reference for internal Improvement Plan Review Meeting updated to reflect government intervention, single Improvement Plan and assurance framework</li> </ul>






Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (Oct 23)	Current Risk Score (Jan 24)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)
	<p>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.</p>					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PMO support being provided by existing experienced resources within Service Improvement</li> <li>• Resource gaps / pressures associated with actions within the Improvement Plan have been identified</li> <li>• Council on 07/06/22 approved Use of Improvement &amp; Capacity Reserve and 2021/22 underspend allocated to Improvement Plan actions</li> <li>• Resource issues and risks associated with the Improvement Plan reviewed monthly by Leadership Team and Register maintained</li> <li>• Appointment of interim corporate transformation capacity to establish programme and project management governance arrangements, as well as moving forward key transformational activity</li> <li>• Improvement Plan Actions embedded into Corporate Plan and Business Plans to provide assurance of sustainable improvement</li> <li>• Local Partnerships Review of PMO concluded</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Establishment of resourced Corporate PMO</li> <li>• National Graduate Development Scheme - placements to be focused on IP priorities</li> <li>• <b>Ensure Executive Directors are aware of Improvement Plan governance and responsibilities and develop ownership of the plan as part of induction</b></li> </ul>

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (Oct 23)	Current Risk Score (Jan 24)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)
IP4	<p><b>Project and risk governance assurance arrangements</b></p> <p>If a robust assurance framework is not put in place to in respect of project assurance, including detailing roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders (eg Cabinet, Scrutiny, ARAC, partners, IB, etc) then the council may be unable to effectively monitor and evidence the improvement required.</p>	6 Green	3 Green	3 (green)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of additional capacity to support delivery and implementation of key projects taken place in Asset Management, Finance, Service Improvement and Legal Services</li> <li>• Terms of Reference for Improvement Plan Review Meeting in place</li> <li>• Governance approach included within Council report 07/06/22</li> <li>• Risk identification has taken place</li> <li>• Agreement for Grant Thornton, LGA and CIPFA to review progress regularly</li> <li>• Improvement Plan Risk Register in place</li> <li>• Terms of Reference for internal Improvement Plan Review Meeting updated to reflect government intervention, single Improvement Plan and assurance framework including role of Scrutiny and Audit Committees.</li> <li>• Roles of Cabinet, Scrutiny and Audit agreed with Chairs</li> <li>• Quarterly reports to Cabinet, Audit and Scrutiny well-established and on forward plan for 2023-24</li> <li>• Scrutiny consideration of culture theme progress in Dec 22</li> <li>• Consideration of external review reports by Scrutiny and Audit</li> <li>• Update to Improvement Plan to reflect findings from GT, LGA and CIPFA follow-up reviews</li> <li>• <b>Grant Thornton follow up review 2023 lifted Statutory Recommendations and found "no evidence of any significant weaknesses for ensuring that the Council makes informed decisions and properly manages risk"</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutiny regular review on Culture Theme progress</li> <li>• Agreement for ongoing external assurance activity</li> <li>• <b>Consider additional action to address further recommendations from Grant Thornton follow up review Autumn 2023</b></li> </ul>
IP5	<p><b>Communication Strategy</b>-If a robust communications strategy is not put in place detailing how, when and what information is</p>	8 (Amber)	8 (Amber)	4 (green)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review visits from GT, LGA and CIPFA held Autumn 2022. Reports received from GT and LGA and presented to Cabinet. Review report</li> </ul>

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (Oct 23)	Current Risk Score (Jan 24)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)
	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>from CIPFA received Jan 23 and presented to ARAC. Due to be presented to Cabinet and Scrutiny in March</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications Approach set out in Improvement Plan approved by Council 07/06/22</li> <li>• Key messages document for stakeholders in place</li> <li>• Regular PMO/Communications meetings to ensure key messages are embedded within internal and external communications</li> <li>• Communication with stakeholders to share details of transition between KBD and SL.</li> <li>• Communication with stakeholders to share progress update and annual report June 2023.</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication with stakeholders to share details of Improvement Plan</li> <li>• Recruitment to vacancy within comms structure</li> <li>• <b>Development of post-intervention communications strategy</b></li> </ul>
IP6	<p><b>Investment and Financial Resources</b></p> <p>If sufficient/ additional financial resources are not made available, and the IP is expected to be delivered from existing budgets then the IP may not be delivered within the necessary timescales or to scope.</p>	8 (Amber)	8 (Amber)	8 (Amber)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular comms with stakeholders taking place as per comms plan including incorporation in all staff briefings</li> <li>• Resource gaps / pressures associated with actions within the Improvement Plan identified</li> <li>• Council on 07/06/22 approved use of Improvement &amp; Capacity Reserve and 2021/22 underspend allocated to Improvement Plan actions</li> <li>• Resource issues and risks associated with the Improvement Plan reviewed monthly by Leadership Team</li> <li>• Appointment of interim corporate transformation capacity to establish programme and project management governance arrangements, as well as moving forward key transformational activity</li> <li>• Regular monitoring of improvement plan is in place and key milestones are being delivered</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p>

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (Oct 23)	Current Risk Score (Jan 24)	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"> <li>Review resource allocation to deliver the Improvement Plan and determine if there are any gaps</li> <li>Identify additional resources or reprioritise activity following identification of resource gaps</li> <li>Graduate recruitment to focus on IP priority projects</li> </ul>
IP10	<p><b>Performance Management Framework (PMF) and Data Quality</b></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 in a failure to achieve the Council's objectives.</p> <p>Closed as programme risk, moved to Service Improvement Risk Register to be managed within Business-as-usual arrangements.</p>	4 (Green)	4 (Green)	4 (Green)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance Management Framework approved in April 2022</li> <li>Evidence of success outlined within each of the Improvement Plan themes focusing on outcomes for each theme</li> <li>Improvement Plan Monitoring approach approved by Council and regular monitoring in place</li> <li>Resources approved by Council to address staffing resources required to sustain PMF</li> <li>2022/23 Quarterly Corporate Performance Report presented to Cabinet and Scrutiny (Q1 Sept/Oct 22, Q2 Dec 22/Jan 23)</li> <li>Residents Survey and Budget Consultation exercise conducted in Summer 2022 to feed into PMF and 2023/24 service and financial planning</li> <li>Process in place for monthly and quarterly monitoring at corporate level</li> <li>Corporate approach to consultation and engagement with residents, including regular residents survey agreed by Leadership Team.</li> <li>Member Officer Survey conducted to provide a temperature check on the relationship</li> <li>Improvement Plan activity embedded in Corporate Plan and Business Plans</li> <li>Refreshed KPIs included in Corporate Plan refresh and streamlined reporting to Leadership Team (from Q1 report)</li> <li>Development of Customer Experience metrics as part of Corporate Plan refresh</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence collation to be produced to support IP</li> <li>Recruitment to additional corporate performance team posts</li> </ul>

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (Oct 23)	Current Risk Score (Jan 24)	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"> <li>Performance Management System options appraisal and procurement to provide capability for performance management</li> <li>Refresh of Member Officer Survey / alternative mechanism conducted to provide a temperature check on the relationship</li> </ul>
IP11	<p><b>Continued focus and resources allocated to historic issues</b></p> <p>If the council does not focus on the Improvement plan and corporate plan priorities and continues to focus and allocate resources on historic issues, then this will impact the timely delivery of both the Improvement Plan and Corporate Plan.</p>	4 (Green)	4 (Green)	4 (green)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assurance from LGA CPC Follow up Review around development of PMF</li> <li>Improvement Plan contains activity to be concluded, and lessons learnt embedding from historic issues</li> <li>Cabinet and Leadership Team approach to historic issues</li> <li>Regular monitoring of improvement plan is in place</li> <li>Progress on GT recommendations specifically related to the proper functioning of Scrutiny and Audit Committees.</li> <li>Lessons learnt captured in relation to SEND transport</li> <li>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</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lessons learnt framework to be introduced as part of continuous improvement plan. Lessons learnt to be collated relating to historic issues and shared across organisation</li> <li>Maintain watching brief of council activity to ensure resources are not diverted to historical issues</li> </ul>
IP12	<p><b>Risk approach and progress monitoring (optimism bias)</b></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</p>	6 (Green)	3 (Green)	6 (Green)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grant Thornton follow up review of progress against historical issues</li> <li>Corporate risk scoring definitions applied</li> <li>Definition in place for progress monitoring Red/Amber/Green progress monitoring for Improvement Plan</li> <li>Roles of Scrutiny and Audit confirmed</li> </ul>

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (Oct 23)	Current Risk Score (Jan 24)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)
	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.					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports to Scrutiny and Audit Committees presented in September 2022</li> <li>• PMO reviewed use of RAG ratings for consistency and to ensure that progress monitoring is presenting a realistic view and reflecting risk associated with actions as well as progress against plans (September 2022).</li> <li>• Grant Thornton follow up review 2023 lifted Statutory Recommendations and found "no evidence of any significant weaknesses for ensuring that the Council makes informed decisions and properly manages risk"</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular reporting to Cabinet, Scrutiny and ARAC and Commissioners' views</li> </ul>
IP13	<p><b>Constitutional Changes</b></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-compliance with council processes.</p>	9 (Amber)	9 (Amber)	6 (Green)		<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GT, LGA, and CIPFA follow up reviews provide assurance</li> <li>• Alignment of workstream with organisational culture theme through Officer participation in Culture Working Group</li> <li>• Revised set of guidance and templates in place to support the changes made around key decisions</li> <li>• First round of training delivered to budget holders and procurement card holders in relation to spend thresholds and procurements processes.</li> <li>• New Scrutiny Handbook launched</li> <li>• New EIA guidance issued for decision-making</li> <li>• Sub-delegation schemes developed with Directors</li> <li>• Member Development Plan Refreshed</li> <li>• Decision-making arrangements (forward plan, report sign off etc.) reviewed.</li> <li>• Governance Review Phase 2 project plan in place to embed the constitutional changes (Corporate Governance Development Programme)</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement Phase 2 of Mod.Gov</li> </ul>

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (Oct 23)	Current Risk Score (Jan 24)	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"> <li>Implement a programme of learning for Officers around effective decision making</li> <li>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.</li> <li>MDP Delivery</li> <li>Monitoring of local KPIs (once introduced)</li> </ul>						
IP14 SRR 27a 06/09	<p><b>Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), Central Government Funding and Resource Allocation</b></p> <p>Local Government continues to operate in an uncertain financial environment arising from reducing central government funding, increasing demand for services, and more recently the impact of the high levels of inflation being experienced.</p> <p>If the government does not provide local authorities with clarity over the future plans for health and social care reforms, the Public Health grant, the Better Care Fund, the package of one-off social care grants, business rates reset and retention, and future years funding, and it continues with one year funding settlements then this inhibits local authorities' ability to effectively manage medium term/ three year plans and put in place the necessary processes and</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>23/ 24</td> <td>24/ 25</td> <td>25/ 26</td> </tr> <tr> <td>*</td> <td>*</td> <td>*</td> </tr> </table> <p><i>* There are a number of factors that underpin the wider risk score for this risk, and the score will continue to remain fluid throughout each 12-month cycle as the council develops its MTFS, generally in-line with the below pattern. However, overall the council is confident that it has processes in place in order to be able to adequately mitigate these risks, and that it will remain able to effectively discharge its statutory responsibilities, including the setting of a balanced</i></p>	23/ 24	24/ 25	25/ 26	*	*	*				<p><b>Current and Ongoing Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current and ongoing measures in place to Manage Risk as set out in the Strategic Risk Register</li> <li>The review by CIPFA on the council's financial management and governance arrangements, noted that the council was initially a progressive two-star (out of five) authority. The follow up review subsequently undertaken by CIPFA progressed this to a three-star. The review also looked at financial resilience and concluded that the council is financially stable and in recent years has been able to contribute towards reserves through achieving a balanced budget or an underspend. An underspend was delivered in 2022/23.</li> <li>A fundamental review of the MTFS (in line with the CIPFA recommendations) has been completed, to ensure that the council understands the challenges ahead and to ensure that the MTFP matches the ambitions of the corporate plan and regeneration plans for Sandwell.</li> <li>A balanced budget for 2023/24 was approved by Council on 21st February 2023 and includes savings totalling £21.4m.</li> <li>Monthly monitoring of savings is carried out by Finance Business Partners in year. Savings are RAG rated and reported to Directors monthly through DMT meetings and to LT budget meetings. Budget surgery meetings are held mid-year to review savings rated 'red', with a view to understanding any issues hampering delivery and to unblocking those issues. Budget surgery meetings are attended by the Director of Finance, appropriate Directors and a range of officers from across the organisation. Monitoring of savings includes any savings carried forward from previous years that were not delivered in those years.</li> </ul>
23/ 24	24/ 25	25/ 26										
*	*	*										



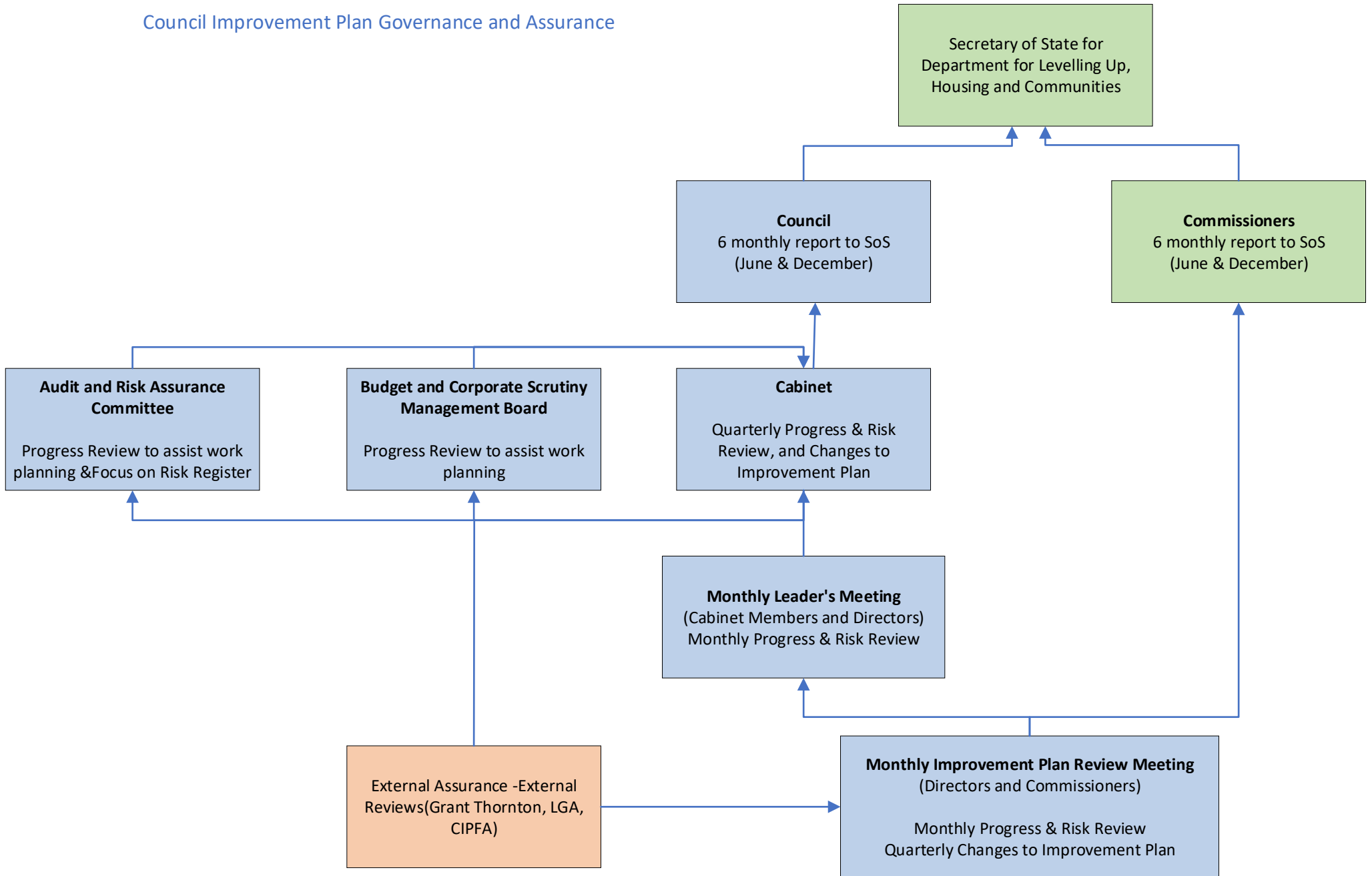
Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (Oct 23)	Current Risk Score (Jan 24)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)
	<p>actions to manage funding pressures.</p> <p>If the council is unable to plan effectively as a result of funding uncertainty, and is unable to identify sufficient savings and put in place the necessary policies, processes and actions to manage pressures, pay and price inflation and manage its spending plans, then this will impact on the council's financial resilience and its ability to effectively discharge its statutory responsibilities including the setting of a balanced budget for future years. This will impact on the council's ability to deliver sustainable services to the people of Sandwell.</p>	<i>budget for future years.</i>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Star Chambers continue to be used to support budget setting. During August and September 2023, a Star Chamber meeting was held in relation to each Council directorate, focusing on the directorate's financial position, savings delivery within 2023/24, ongoing budget pressures and savings to be delivered in 2024/25. Star Chamber meetings include the Chief Executive and Portfolio Holders as well as the appropriate Director and Finance Business Partners.</li> <li>• Star Chamber meetings are used as the initiation process to generate further savings proposals for the following financial year and to test those proposals with elected members. This is the first step in the process towards balancing the budget for the following year.</li> <li>• Directorate budget pressures and growth are calculated annually by Finance Business Partners, and for Adult Social Care includes a growth model that extrapolates client numbers and average placement costs forward, building in assumed increases in market rates.</li> <li>• A Strategic Finance Manager post has been created, with a view to having a dedicated resource to creating and updating the MTFS model and to ensuring assumptions, eg, pay inflation assumptions, are calculated with consideration and in accordance with wider local authority group assumptions.</li> <li>• LG Futures have been commissioned to provide financial benchmarking data, including assumptions on grant income in future years,</li> <li>• Regular discussions take place with WMCA over the likelihood of when the business rates reset might transpire, and Sandwell's assumptions in this regard are aligned to the rest of the WMCA group of local authorities.</li> <li>• The MTFS position has been reported to Leadership Team on several occasions during the Autumn of 2023, and Directors have been fully engaged in the process of generating savings proposals to balance the budget gap in 2024/25.</li> <li>• The draft MTFS for 24/25 reports a deficit (prior to savings) of £13m. Savings proposals have been developed to balance the budget, supported by a business case document for each saving. The draft MTFS will be presented to Cabinet on 15th November. Cabinet</li> </ul>



Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous Risk Score (Oct 23)	Current Risk Score (Jan 24)	Target Risk Score	Direction of Travel	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk)
						<p>workshops were held on 19th September and 25th October to engage Cabinet in the MTFS process and to ensure that elected members are willing to adopt each of the proposed savings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further iterations of the MTFS will be produced following the provisional and final settlement during Winter 2023/24.</li> </ul> <p><b>Further Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued implementation of the action plan developed following the CIPFA review (as per the improvement plan timetable).</li> <li>• Cabinet workshops scheduled to continued development of MTFS and consider implications of Autumn Statement (November 2023) and outcome of consultation on savings proposals to inform Budget setting for 2024/25</li> <li>• Use of benchmarking data to help identify opportunities for efficiencies, savings and service improvements.</li> <li>• The council continues to horizon scan and consider the impacts of potential government initiatives and policies on future funding sources and demand for council services.</li> </ul>

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Council Improvement Plan Governance and Assurance



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## Report to Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board

20 March 2024

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Q3 Budget Monitoring 2023/24</b>
<b>Director:</b>	Brendan Arnold, Interim Section 151 Officer
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Claire Spencer – Acting Assistant Director Finance <a href="mailto:Claire_Spencer@sandwell.gov.uk">Claire_Spencer@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

### 1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board considers the Q3 Budget Monitoring 2023/24 report and identifies any recommendations that it wishes to make to Cabinet.







### 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.



	Best start in life for children and young people
	People live well and age well
	Strong resilient communities
	Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods
	A strong and inclusive economy
	A connected and accessible Sandwell

#### 4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 Budget monitoring reports are produced quarterly for Cabinet and the budget position is reported monthly to Leadership Team, highlighting the anticipated year end projection.
- 4.2 The monitoring reports track progress against agreed budget decisions, consider any budget changes (including re-profiling of Capital), forecast any significant variances to the budget, and enable corrective action to be taken as necessary to ensure a balanced budget at year end.
- 4.3 Regular financial reporting is part of the governance and risk management approach within the Council, ensuring that it delivers sustainable and value for money services as required under statute.
- 4.4 The Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board has been asked to consider the Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring Report 2023/24, in the context of paragraphs 2.1 and 4.1-4.3 above, providing comment and recommendations to Cabinet as it sees fit.



## 5 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	Further details on the financial implications will be presented to the meeting.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	The Local Government Act 2003 places a requirement on local authorities to provide Members with regular financial monitoring.
<b>Risk:</b>	This information is contained within the main body of this report.
<b>Equality:</b>	No direct implications arising from the recommendations.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	The financial prosperity of the Council provides a foundation for health and wellbeing across the remit of the Council.
<b>Social Value:</b>	No direct implications arising from the recommendations.
<b>Climate Change:</b>	No direct implications arising from the recommendations.
<b>Corporate Parenting:</b>	No direct implications arising from the recommendations.

## 6 Appendices

Appendix 1 Outturn Summary for Directorates

Appendix 2 General Fund Capital Budget Monitoring

Appendix 3 Housing Revenue Account Capital Summary

Appendix 4 S106 and CIL Monitoring

Appendix 5 Treasury Management Update Q3

Appendix 6 Cabinet Report – Q3 Budget Monitoring 2023/24

## 7. Background Papers

Cabinet Report – Q1 Budget Monitoring 2023/24

Cabinet Report – Q2 Budget Monitoring 2023/24



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Service Area	APPX	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Outturn Variance Before Transfers to/from Reserves	(Use of)/ Contribution to Reserves	Projected Outturn Following Use of Reserves	Projected Outturn Variance
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Corporate Management	1A	(183)	97	280	(280)	(183)	0
Borough Economy	1B	69,875	72,305	2,430	(1,898)	70,407	532
Adult Social Care	1C	85,831	85,106	(725)	(4,690)	80,416	(5,415)
Regeneration & Growth	1D	11,389	13,664	2,276	(2,412)	11,252	(137)
Housing	1E	2,302	2,095	(207)	373	2,468	166
Children's Services	1F	91,455	102,002	10,547	(5,692)	96,310	4,855
Assistant Chief Executive	1G	7,550	7,369	(181)	20	7,389	(161)
Finance	1H	19,500	19,373	(127)	162	19,535	35
Law & Governance	1I	7,303	7,219	(84)	46	7,265	(38)
Public Health	1J	64	1,947	1,883	(1,883)	64	0
<b>Net Service Expenditure</b>		<b>295,087</b>	<b>311,178</b>	<b>16,091</b>	<b>(16,254)</b>	<b>294,924</b>	<b>(163)</b>
Capital Charge Adjustment		(26,461)	(26,461)	0		(26,461)	0
External Interest Payments		15,000	15,000	0		15,000	0
Interest/Dividend Receipts		(7,500)	(9,000)	(1,500)		(9,000)	(1,500)
Corporate Items		41,497	40,984	(513)	(646)	40,338	(1,159)
<b>Net Service Expenditure, Treasury Management Budgets and Corporate Items</b>		<b>317,623</b>	<b>331,701</b>	<b>14,078</b>	<b>(16,900)</b>	<b>314,801</b>	<b>(2,822)</b>
Collection Fund Surplus		(102)	(102)	0		(102)	0
Council Tax		(127,008)	(127,008)	0		(127,008)	0
Business Rates		(109,560)	(109,560)	0		(109,560)	0
Business Rates Top-Up		(38,701)	(38,701)	0		(38,701)	0
Section 31 Grants		(38,188)	(38,188)	0		(38,188)	0
New Homes Bonus		(111)	(111)	0		(111)	0
Services Grant		(3,953)	(4,116)	(163)		(4,116)	(163)
<b>Net Service Expenditure, Treasury Management Budgets, Corporate Items and Sources of Funding</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>13,915</b>	<b>13,915</b>	<b>(16,900)</b>	<b>(2,985)</b>	<b>(2,985)</b>
<b>Quarter 2 Projected Outturn Variance</b>							<b>1,222</b>
<b>Movement from Quarter 1 to Quarter 2</b>							<b>(4,207)</b>

Corporate Management

APPENDIX 1A

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
Chief Executive	397	677	280	(280)	0		0
Corporate Management	(580)	(580)	0	0	0		0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(183)</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>(280)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Borough Economy

APPENDIX 1B

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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
Contracts, Projects, Strategy & Policy	39,779	40,251	472	(706)	(234)		(234)
Highways Services	19,775	19,775	(0)	0	(0)		(0)
Green Spaces, Visitor Services & Events	1,166	2,935	1,769	(357)	1,412		1,412
Public Protection and Community Safety	3,794	4,101	307	(582)	(276)		(276)
Libraries, Archives and Heritage	4,933	5,061	128	(253)	(125)		(125)
Directorate Management	427	182	(245)	0	(245)		(245)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>69,875</b>	<b>72,305</b>	<b>2,430</b>	<b>(1,898)</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>532</b>

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	1,764	3,102	1,338	(1,455)	(117)		(117)
Social Work & Therapy	5,684	4,552	(1,132)	0	(1,132)		(1,132)
External Placements	67,987	66,222	(1,765)	(1,000)	(2,765)		(2,765)
Direct Services	7,329	6,242	(1,087)	(75)	(1,162)		(1,162)
Commissioning	3,067	2,828	(239)	0	(239)		(239)
Better Care Fund	0	2,160	2,160	(2,160)	0		0
			0	0	0		0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>85,831</b>	<b>85,106</b>	<b>(725)</b>	<b>(4,690)</b>	<b>(5,415)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(5,415)</b>

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	2,743	3,093	350	(613)	(263)	0	(263)
Development Planning and Building Control Service	744	1,007	263	(14)	249	0	249
Strategic Assets and Land Service	7,283	9,433	2,150	(1,596)	554	0	554
Management	619	131	(488)	(189)	(677)	0	(677)
			0	0	0		0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11,389</b>	<b>13,664</b>	<b>2,275</b>	<b>(2,412)</b>	<b>(137)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(137)</b>

Housing

APPENDIX

Service Area	Total Budget	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	(Use of) Reserves/ Corporate Resources/ RCCO	Projected Outturn Variance (£000)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Community Partnerships and Support Services	1,153	1,284	131	0	131
Housing Solutions	1,478	1,032	(446)	446	0
Income Management and Money Advice	333	504	171	(73)	98
Tenancy & Estate Management	(828)	(653)	175	0	175
Management	167	(72)	(239)	0	(239)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,303</b>	<b>2,095</b>	<b>(208)</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>165</b>

Children's Services

APPENDIX 1F

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	7,259	(1,284)	0	(1,284)		(1,284)
Education Services	760	674	(86)	(217)	(303)		(303)
Inclusive Learning	2,592	2,422	(169)	0	(169)		(169)
Children & Education Support Services	8,869	18,703	9,835	0	9,835	(2,439)	7,396
Commissioning, Partnerships & Improvement	10,496	12,747	2,251	(3,036)	(785)		(785)
Children's Social Care	59,796	59,796	0	0	0	0	0
Central Items	400	400	0	0	0		0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>91,455</b>	<b>102,002</b>	<b>10,547</b>	<b>(3,253)</b>	<b>7,294</b>	<b>(2,439)</b>	<b>4,855</b>

Assistant Chief Executive

APPENDIX 1G

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
Assistant Chief Executive	188	(497)	(685)	0	(685)		(685)
Human Resources	3,604	4,262	658	0	658		658
Strategy and Performance	1,380	1,106	(274)	20	(254)		(254)
Corporate Customer Communications	1,605 774	1,849 650	244 (124)	0 0	244 (124)		244 (124)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,550</b>	<b>7,369</b>	<b>(181)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>(161)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(161)</b>



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
Director	126	(623)	(749)	0	(749)		(749)
Oracle	711	(1,174)	(1,885)	1,781	(104)		(104)
Financial Management	2,790	4,488	1,698	(953)	745		745
Procurement	620	777	157	(50)	107		107
Revenues and Benefits	3,901	4,957	1,056	(47)	1,009		1,009
Business Management	3,222	3,240	18	0	18		18
ICT	7,594	6,942	(652)	(569)	(1,221)		(1,221)
Corporate Transformation	537	767	230	0	230		230
			0	0	0		0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19,500</b>	<b>19,373</b>	<b>(127)</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>35</b>

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	436	83	(353)	0	(353)		(353)
Democracy	3,642	3,405	(237)	0	(237)		(237)
Registration Services	(691)	(572)	119	0	119		119
Legal and Assurance	2,839	3,447	608	46	654		654
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	515	452	(63)	0	(63)		(63)
Leaders Office	562	404	(158)	0	(158)		(158)
			0	0	0		0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,303</b>	<b>7,219</b>	<b>(84)</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>(38)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(38)</b>

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	2,866	(371)	0	(371)		(371)
Long Term Conditions	3,476	2,491	(986)	0	(986)		(986)
Childrens	11,530	11,335	(195)	0	(195)		(195)
Substance Misuse & Smoking	4,240	4,068	(172)	0	(172)		(172)
Wider Determinants	5,353	5,111	(242)	(12)	(255)		(255)
Public Health Management	2,932	2,735	(198)	(76)	(273)		(273)
Public Health Grant	(26,658)	(26,658)	0	0	0		0
Public Health Savings / Reserve	(4,048)	0	4,048	(1,795)	2,253		2,253
			0	0	0		0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>1,947</b>	<b>1,883</b>	<b>(1,883)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

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
Repairs and Maintenance	38,444	37,117	(1,327)	(174)	(1,501)	1,501	0
Building Safety and Compliance	3,857	4,214	357	0	357	(357)	0
Business Excellence	1,947	1,564	(383)	0	(383)	383	0
Services in Borough Economy	4,152	4,740	588	(900)	(312)	312	0
Corporate HRA	48,193	47,687	(506)	0	(506)	506	0
Housing Management	16,454	15,751	(703)	(46)	(749)	749	0
PFI	(659)	241	900	0	900	(900)	0
Rents & Other Charges	(122,732)	(120,404)	2,328	0	2,328	(2,328)	0
SLA's	10,044	9,910	(134)	0	(134)	134	0
			0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(300)</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>1,120</b>	<b>(1,120)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Individual Schools Budget

APPENDIX 1L

L

Service Area	Total Budget £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Variance £'000	(Use of)/ Contribution to Reserves & RCCO for specific £'000	Projected Outturn Variance following use of reserves for £'000	Use of reserves to offset pressures £'000	Projected Outturn Variance £'000
Individual Schools Budget	0	(1,069)	(1,069)	1,069	0		0
			0	0	0		0
			0	0	0		0
			0	0	0		0
			0	0	0		0
			0	0	0		0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(1,069)</b>	<b>(1,069)</b>	<b>1,069</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

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Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy (OSCA)	-	401	401	401	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	401
Priory Primary Expansion	-	15	15	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15
Q3 Langley Phase 3	-	4	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
School Condition - LifeCycle property maintenance	-	1,877	1,877	1,877	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,877
School Kitchen Repairs	-	3	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Shenstone (Evolve)	-	200	200	200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	200
West Bromwich Collegiate Academy - Phase 2	-	100	100	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100
<b>Children's Services Total</b>	<b>10,091</b>	<b>(59)</b>	<b>10,032</b>	<b>7,732</b>	<b>(2,300)</b>	<b>2,300</b>	-	<b>10,000</b>	<b>2,300</b>	<b>12,300</b>	<b>10,000</b>	-	<b>10,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>50,032</b>
<b>Finance</b>															
ICT - End User Computing	2,000	823	2,823	1,619	(1,204)	1,204	-	1,200	1,204	2,404	1,200	-	1,200	1,200	7,623
Oracle Fusion ERP System	6,013	469	6,482	6,482	-	-	-	1,195	-	1,195	-	-	-	-	7,677
<b>Finance Total</b>	<b>8,013</b>	<b>1,292</b>	<b>9,305</b>	<b>8,101</b>	<b>(1,204)</b>	<b>1,204</b>	-	<b>2,395</b>	<b>1,204</b>	<b>3,599</b>	<b>1,200</b>	-	<b>1,200</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>15,300</b>
<b>Housing &amp; Assets</b>															
Charlemont Community Centre	37	-	37	37	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37
DFG	11,882	579	12,461	4,500	(7,961)	7,961	-	4,800	7,961	12,761	4,800	-	4,800	4,800	31,661
Empty Properties	677	8	685	100	(585)	585	-	-	585	585	-	-	-	-	685
HMRA Ringfenced Receipts - Vulnerable Homeowners	373	-	373	-	(373)	373	-	-	373	373	-	-	-	-	373
Housing Stock Condition Survey	29	-	29	-	(29)	29	-	-	29	29	-	-	-	-	29
Self Service Customer Portal	91	24	115	115	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	115
The Public	341	-	341	-	(341)	341	-	-	341	341	-	-	-	-	341
Vulnerable Homeowners Improvements (Kick Start)	386	-	386	-	(386)	386	-	-	386	386	-	-	-	-	386
Warm Homes Healthy People	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
<b>Housing &amp; Assets Total</b>	<b>13,816</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>14,428</b>	<b>4,753</b>	<b>(9,675)</b>	<b>9,675</b>	-	<b>4,800</b>	<b>9,675</b>	<b>14,475</b>	<b>4,800</b>	-	<b>4,800</b>	<b>4,800</b>	<b>33,628</b>
<b>Law &amp; Governance</b>															
New Cemetery - West Bromwich	3,671	(91)	3,580	20	(3,560)	3,560	-	-	3,560	3,560	-	-	-	-	3,580
Case Management System	-	100	100	50	(50)	50	-	-	50	50	-	-	-	-	100
Rowley Cemetery	-	127	127	127	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	127
<b>Law &amp; Governance Total</b>	<b>3,671</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>3,807</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>(3,610)</b>	<b>3,610</b>	-	-	<b>3,610</b>	<b>3,610</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>3,807</b>
<b>Regeneration &amp; Growth</b>															
Access Fund	300	34	334	334	-	-	-	300	-	300	300	-	300	300	1,534
Blackheath Library - Fit Out Costs	-	56	56	56	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	56
Brindley II	21	-	21	-	(21)	21	-	-	21	21	-	-	-	-	21
BSF - Schools for the Future	-	73	73	-	(73)	73	-	-	73	73	-	-	-	-	73
Childrens Trust Accommodation Works	145	-	145	-	(145)	145	-	-	145	145	-	-	-	-	145
Coroners Court Refurbishment - Jack Judge House	-	434	434	434	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	434
King Street, Wednesbury Health Centre	-	2,200	2,200	2,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,200
Mobile Working	-	41	41	-	(41)	41	-	-	41	41	-	-	-	-	41
PMA - The Central Sixth Form Building Works	-	500	500	500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	500
PMA Capitalisation	800	55	855	855	-	-	-	800	-	800	800	-	800	800	4,055
Property Refurbishment	695	216	911	200	(711)	711	-	1,000	711	1,711	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	4,911
Property Refurbishment	1,017	-	1,017	-	(1,017)	1,017	-	-	1,017	1,017	-	-	-	-	1,017
PSDS Heat Pump Technology	1,000	(753)	247	100	(147)	147	-	-	147	147	-	-	-	-	247
Regeneration Reserve	1,100	9	1,109	109	(1,000)	1,000	-	-	1,000	1,000	-	-	-	-	1,109
Sandwell Aquatics Centre	2,640	2,342	4,982	4,514	(468)	468	-	-	468	468	-	-	-	-	4,982
Section 106 Schemes	2,578	241	2,819	204	(2,615)	2,615	-	-	2,615	2,615	-	-	-	-	2,819
UK Shared Property Fund	-	582	582	582	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	582
LUP - ASB & Crime in Wednesbury	-	250	250	250	-	-	-	400	250	150	-	-	-	-	400
LUP - Friar Park Urban Village	-	100	100	100	-	-	-	11,500	5,100	6,400	-	5,000	5,000	-	11,500
LUP - Greenspace Improvements	-	425	425	425	-	-	-	1,600	425	1,175	-	-	-	-	1,600
LUP - Millennium Centre	-	75	75	75	-	-	-	2,000	75	1,925	-	-	-	-	2,000
LUP - Public Realm Wednesbury Town Centre	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,500	-	4,500	-	-	-	-	4,500
Towns Fund:															
Kings Square	5,000	(5,000)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rowley Regis - Blackheath Bus Exchange	2,720	(5)	2,715	42	(2,673)	2,673	-	-	1,000	1,000	1,020	1,673	2,693	-	3,735
Rowley Regis - Britannia Park Community Hub	1,574	-	1,574	269	(1,305)	1,305	-	422	1,305	1,727	-	-	-	-	1,996
Rowley Regis - Canal and River Trust	673	(349)	324	353	29	(29)	-	188	29	159	-	-	-	-	512
Rowley Regis - Connected	718	-	718	19	(699)	699	-	276	296	572	494	403	897	-	1,488
Rowley Regis - Satellite Education Hub	8,074	-	8,074	66	(8,008)	8,008	-	-	3,869	3,869	458	4,139	4,597	-	8,532
Smethwick - Connected	2,172	70	2,242	1,746	(496)	496	-	1,000	496	1,496	-	-	-	-	3,242
Smethwick - Midlands Met Learning Campus	8,550	-	8,550	1,483	(7,067)	7,067	-	2,761	7,067	9,828	-	-	-	-	11,311



<i>Smethwick - Rolfe Street Regeneration</i>	537	325	862	273	(589)	589	-	818	445	1,263	255	144	399	-	-	1,935
<i>Smethwick - Grove Lane Regeneration</i>	-	35	35	35	-	-	-	2,611	-	2,611	1,698	-	1,698	-	-	4,344
<i>Smethwick - Ron Davis Centre Expansion</i>	-	15	15	4	(11)	11	-	-	11	11	-	-	-	-	15	
<i>West Brom - Connected</i>	292	(1)	291	313	22	(22)	-	421	126	547	314	148	166	-	-	1,026
<i>West Brom - Retail Diversification Programme</i>	6,729	-	6,729	1,844	(4,885)	4,885	-	-	4,795	4,795	1,062	90	1,152	-	-	7,791
<i>West Brom - Sandwell MEC</i>	-	2,005	2,005	2,005	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,005
<i>West Brom - Town Hall Quarter</i>	6,217	-	6,217	1,917	(4,300)	4,300	-	31	4,300	4,331	-	-	-	-	-	6,248
<i>West Brom - Urban Greening</i>	270	83	353	362	9	(9)	-	20	9	11	-	-	-	-	-	373
<b>Regeneration &amp; Growth Total</b>	<b>53,822</b>	<b>4,058</b>	<b>57,880</b>	<b>21,669</b>	<b>(36,211)</b>	<b>36,211</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>30,648</b>	<b>24,060</b>	<b>54,708</b>	<b>7,401</b>	<b>11,301</b>	<b>18,702</b>	<b>2,100</b>	<b>2,100</b>	<b>99,279</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>92,363</b>	<b>37,123</b>	<b>129,486</b>	<b>61,354</b>	<b>(68,132)</b>	<b>68,132</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>60,447</b>	<b>55,981</b>	<b>116,428</b>	<b>49,685</b>	<b>11,301</b>	<b>60,986</b>	<b>26,434</b>	<b>26,434</b>	<b>291,636</b>

**Capital Monitoring 2023-24 - General Fund (Quarter 3)**

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Service / Scheme	Base Budget	Additional Approvals (incl' prior year slippage not incl' in Base)	Current Budget	Predicted Spend	Variance	Predicted Rephasing to Future Years	Final Variance
<b>Adult Social Care Total</b>	763	329	1,092	129	-963	963	0
<b>Borough Economy Total</b>	2,154	30,755	32,909	18,773	-14,136	14,136	0
<b>Assistant Chief Executive Total</b>	33	0	33	0	-33	33	0
<b>Childrens Total</b>	10,091	-59	10,032	7,732	-2,300	2,300	0
<b>Finance Total</b>	8,013	1,292	9,305	8,101	-1,204	1,204	0
<b>Housing &amp; Assets Total</b>	13,816	612	14,428	4,753	-9,675	9,675	0
<b>Law &amp; Governance Total</b>	3,671	136	3,807	197	-3,610	3,610	0
<b>Regeneration &amp; Growth Total</b>	53,822	4,058	57,880	21,669	-36,211	36,211	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>92,363</b>	<b>37,123</b>	<b>129,486</b>	<b>61,354</b>	<b>-68,132</b>	<b>68,132</b>	<b>0</b>

Housing Revenue Account Capital	Budget & Forecast 2023/24				
	Original Budget	Revised Budget (incl' prior year slippage & Adjustments)	Spend to Date Period 9	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
<b>Council New Build Housing</b>	<b>50,829</b>	<b>36,708</b>	<b>6,520</b>	<b>19,749</b>	<b>(16,958)</b>
Adaptations for Disabled	3,000	3,040	4,626	6,200	3,160
Major Project	8,851	15,664	14,866	22,856	7,191
Minor Works	6,340	6,136	0	200	(5,936)
Building Safety	4,200	5,043	238	2,049	(2,994)
Housing Improvements	16,529	24,025	11,189	19,628	(4,397)
Estate & Environmental Improvements	1,450	1,471	699	1,434	(37)
Other Housing Schemes	750	750	0	0	(750)
<b>Housing Investment &amp; Improvement Total</b>	<b>41,120</b>	<b>56,129</b>	<b>31,619</b>	<b>52,367</b>	<b>(3,763)</b>
<b>Total Housing Revenue Account Capital</b>	<b>91,949</b>	<b>92,837</b>	<b>38,139</b>	<b>72,116</b>	<b>(20,721)</b>
<b>Financing</b>					
Grant	2,190	9,530	6,446	9,701	171
RTB 1-4-1 Receipt	6,000	1,310	3,110	3,115	1,805
Major Repair Reserve	17,489	17,490	17,490	18,972	1,482
Reserve	4,200	4,200	0	0	(4,200)
Capital Receipt		0	0	9,059	9,059
Revenue Contributions	5,875	5,875	0	0	(5,875)
Borrowing (subject to affordability)	56,195	54,432	10,055	31,270	(23,162)
<b>Funding Total</b>	<b>91,949</b>	<b>92,837</b>	<b>37,101</b>	<b>72,116</b>	<b>(20,721)</b>

Significant HRA Capital Schemes Variance 2023-24

Overspend/Underspend(+/-)

Schemes	2023/24 Variance to Budget £000	Comments
<b><u>New Build and Acquisition</u></b>		
Unallocated	(20,515)	The under utilisation of this budget (£29,388k) was as a result of fewer new schemes coming into the capital programme stream. The underspend have been factored into subsequent years budget
West Road	8	Some delays in procuring materials that then had increased in cost
Brittania	66	Additional works to boundary treatment, A safeguarding issue to ensure that boundaries were sufficient
Harvest Road	4	Initial cost higher than anticipated.
King Street	132	There were some cost overruns and additional works to be done
Langley Baths	924	Was not included in the initial pipeline the demolition needed to be undertaken which was set in report by Regeneration and Planning
LAHF Acquisitions	4,000	The slippage is due to on-site contractor programme delays in delivery, and contractor capacity to enable prompt commencement of programmes. This budget will be reprofiled into future years to reflect the current delivery expectation
Friardale/Carrington	7	Initial cost higher than anticipated.
Church Hill St	3	Not significant
1-4-1 Property Purchases	(2,000)	The underspend against the property acquisition allocation of £3m reflecting a saving in borrowing requirement for the HRA.
Tipton Town	413	The original budget assumed that construction will commence in 2024/45 financial year. However, acquisition, design works and other activities have now begun resulting in a partial reprofiling of the 2024/25 budget into 2023/24.
<b>New Build Total Variance</b>	<b>(16,958)</b>	
<b><u>Housing Services</u></b>		
Adaptations for Disabled	3,160	The overspend is accounted for by the service being oversubscribed and previous strategic guidance to satisfy demand. This is being reviewed as part of the A&A service review.
Major Works	7,191	Delays in starting projects once contracts have been let, building cost inflation and a high number of variations accounts for the overspend. Existing projects are being supported by two Interim Project Managers in Asset Management, to ensure control is introduced into each project. Asset Management are working with Urban Design on an SLA which will ensure new projects are administered with greater rigour and oversight. A cabinet report will be presented to cabinet to update on each major project.
Minor Works	(5,936)	Minor capital projects have been largely put on hold, in order to ensure delivery of grant funded Social Housing Decarbonisation Funds, and the doors programme. The budget will be allocated and spent in subsequent years on the Housing Improvement Programme and specific other specific capital projects.
Building Safety	(2,994)	There have been delays in specifying th criteris for the sprinkler programme, which is now underway. The budget will be allocated to futire financial years to enable sprinklers to be installed.
Housing Improvements	(4,397)	A desire to avail ourselves of the maximum grant funding allocation available through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, and delivery of the external doors programme in line with previous promises made to residents, has led to an overspend.
Estate & Environmental Improvements	(37)	CCTV and general communal improvements have been undertaken, with a modest overspend.
Oracle Fusion (Replaced Workplace Vision)	(750)	The original budget assumed in investing in this scheme, this is HRA share of the cost, no spend have been charged to this cost centre for this financial year.
<b>Major Work and Improvement Total Variance</b>	<b>(3,763)</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>(20,721)</b>	

Section 106 - Capital								
Section 106 Scheme (Target Site)	Town	Development Agreement Number	Service Area	Description of Project	Opening Balance 01/04/23	New Contributions 2023/24	Forecast Expenditure for 2023/24	Balance Remaining @ 31/03/24
					£	£	£	£
Wednesbury Town centre	Wednesbury	DC/04/42399	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	C.C.T.V.	96,294.71	-	-	96,294.71
Wednesbury North ward (Wednesbury Memorial and Brunswick Park)	Wednesbury	DC/06/45826	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure and Public realm.	3,947.23	-	3,947.23	-
Wednesbury South ward	Wednesbury	DC/12/55176	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Maintenance, improvement or enhancement of open space.	47,434.63	-	27,121.42	20,313.21
Willingsworth linear park/Hydes Road Pool, Hill Top park	Wednesbury	DC/07/48874 & DC/05/45542	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Maintenance, improvement or enhancement of open space.	3,237.83	-	-	3,237.83
River Tame corridor north (Wednesbury)	Wednesbury	DC/10/52930	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Improvements to Public Open Space area.	16,417.73	-	-	16,417.73
Princes End ward	Tipton	DC/06/46907	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - For the provision of offsite public open space and play area.	2,083.87	-	-	2,083.87
Victoria Park	Tipton	DC/11/53708	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - For the provision of offsite public open space and play area.	4,743.45	-	-	4,743.45
Jubilee Park	Tipton	DC/11/53027	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Provision of offsite public open space and play area.	29,632.19	-	-	29,632.19
Jubilee Park	Tipton	DC/13/55690	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Improvement of open space and play areas.	2,664.39	-	-	2,664.39
Jubilee Park	Tipton	DC/13/55690	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Improvement of open space and play areas.	21,377.35	-	-	21,377.35
Great Bridge Ward	Tipton	DC/13/55558	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Maintenance, improvement or enhancement of open space.	15,733.66	-	-	15,733.66
Wednesbury Oak Road, Tipton	Tipton	DC/14/57003	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - enhancement and maintenance of the Public Open Space	10,000.00	-	-	10,000.00
Wednesbury Oak Road, Tipton	Tipton	DC/14/57003	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - enhancement and maintenance of the Public Open Space	10,000.00	-	-	10,000.00
Wednesbury Oak Road, Tipton	Tipton	DC/14/57003	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - enhancement and maintenance of the Public Open Space	18,764.76	-	-	18,764.76
Borough wide	Tipton	DC/15/58921	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	97,664.74	-	-	97,664.74
Borough wide	Tipton	DC/15/58921	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	122,851.20	-	-	122,851.20
Borough wide	Tipton	DC/10/52848	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	-	-	-	-
Borough wide	Tipton	DC/10/52848	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	-	-	-	-
Borough wide	Tipton	DC/10/52848	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	210,179.04	-	-	210,179.04
Alexandra Rd/Upper Church Lane (On application site)	Tipton	DC/09/50926	Planning (Alex Oxley)	Planning - Maintenance of new open space	32,229.45	-	-	32,229.45
Doorstep Green & Marsh Lane open space (as plan)	West Bromwich	DC/04/43353	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - For the provision of offsite public open space and play area.	54,762.40	-	-	54,762.40
Greets Green & Lyng ward	West Bromwich	DC/05/45555	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Provision, maintenance, enhancement of public open space.	14,516.72	-	14,516.72	-
100 Birmingham Road (Vicinity of site)	West Bromwich	DC/05/45586	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Towards the maintenance, improvement or enhancement of open space and play areas (vicinity of the site)	17,170.96	-	-	17,170.96
Yew Tree scheme	West Bromwich	DC/11/54129	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Offsite provision and maintenance of public open space/play space.	6,626.88	-	-	6,626.88
Kendrick Park	West Bromwich	DC/13/56603	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - on the provision and improvement an maintenance of open space.	104,398.00	-	-	104,398.00
Charlemont playing fields	West Bromwich	DC/14/56717	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Remodelling or extension of sports and leisure provision.	99,202.95	-	-	99,202.95
Greenside Way (Vicinity of site)	West Bromwich	DC/14/56717	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Open space contribution.	132,760.80	-	-	132,760.80
Borough Wide	West Bromwich	DC/05/44045	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	-	-	-	-
Air Quality consultant	West Bromwich	DC/10/52747	Public Health (Andy Thorpe)	Environmental health - Towards the creation of a project consultant post to review and assess air quality.	130.73	-	-	130.73
Grace Mary Estate Open Space	Rowley Regis	DC/09/51300	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Provision of offsite public open space and play area	22,393.42	-	-	22,393.42
Bury Hill Park	Rowley Regis	DC/09/51606 & DC/10/52460	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Provision of offsite public open space in respect of the enhancement of Youth facilities	5,666.90	-	5,666.90	-
Mary Macarthur Gardens	Rowley Regis	DC/10/51793	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Provision, enhancement and maintenance of offsite public open space and play area	4,117.32	-	-	4,117.32
Tivdale Ward	Rowley Regis	DC/12/55027	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Provision of offsite public open space and play area	16,477.62	-	-	16,477.62
Blackheath Ward	Rowley Regis	DC/06/45692	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Open space	16,988.00	-	-	16,988.00
Blackheath Ward	Rowley Regis	DC/09/51104	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Maintenance, improvement or enhancement of open space	28,153.64	-	-	28,153.64
Borough Wide	Rowley Regis	DC/15/58342	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	596,295.00	-	-	596,295.00
	Rowley Regis	DC/18/62111	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	-	-	-	-
Brades Green Open Space	Oldbury	DC/05/43995	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Enhancement to open space (as plan)	4,750.75	-	-	4,750.75
Norman Road Dams	Oldbury	DC/05/45598	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Off-site public open space & play area	2,976.64	-	-	2,976.64
Langley Ward	Oldbury	DC/09/51660	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Off-site public open space & play area	46,106.45	-	-	46,106.45
Broadwell Park & Ward	Oldbury	DC/13/56684	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Open space	32,835.00	-	-	32,835.00
Borough Wide	Oldbury	DC/08/49007	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	-	-	-	-
Borough Wide	Oldbury	DC/14/57470	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	-	-	-	-
Borough Wide	Oldbury	DC/14/57737	Housing & Partnership (Warren Williams)	Affordable Housing	210,000.00	-	-	210,000.00
Air Quality Consultant	Oldbury	DC/10/52897	Public Health (Andy Thorpe)	Environmental Health - Towards the creation of a project consultant post to review and assess air quality.	23,642.44	-	18,667.97	4,974.47
Victoria Park	Smethwick	DC/04/42703	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Towards improvement & enhancement	21,631.23	-	19,193.44	2,437.79
War Memorial - Cape Hill site	Smethwick	DC/04/42703	Highways (Simon Chadwick)	Highways - Maintenance contribution	7,261.16	-	-	7,261.16
War Memorial - Cape Hill site	Smethwick	DC/15/58384	Highways (Simon Chadwick)	Highways (Simon Chadwick)	277,580.90	-	-	277,580.90
St Pauls Ward	Smethwick	DC/12/55069	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Improvement or enhancement of open space	38,308.03	-	25,629.16	12,678.87
West Smethwick Park	Smethwick	DC/08/49405	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Open space and play space	112,451.31	-	88,606.31	23,845.00
Smethwick Hall Park	Smethwick	DC/09/51635	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Offsite public open space and play space	45,148.75	-	-	45,148.75
Smethwick Ward	Smethwick	DC/12/54411	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - Provision of open space.	8,763.50	-	-	8,763.50
	Smethwick	DC/15/58384	Leisure - Parks (Matthew Huggins)	Leisure - to carry out the Canal Enhancement Works in accordance with the Canal Improvement Works Brief	122,380.59	-	-	122,380.59
<b>Total Section 106</b>					<b>2,818,754.32</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>203,349.15</b>	<b>2,615,405.17</b>

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - Capital Element (80%)								
CIL Scheme	Town	Development Agreement Number	Service Area	Description of Project	Opening Balance 01/04/23	New Contributions 2023/24	Forecast Expenditure for 2023/24	Balance Remaining @ 31/03/24
					£	£	£	£
Balance in CIL fund to date - not allocated to individual projects					3,051,638.45	£194,333.80	-	3,245,972.25
<b>Total Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - Capital Element</b>					<b>3,051,638.45</b>	<b>194,333.80</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,245,972.25</b>

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - Revenue Element (15%)									
CIL Scheme			Service Area	Description of Project	Opening Balance 01/04/23	New Contributions 2023/24	Forecast Expenditure for 2023/24	Balance Remaining @ 31/03/24	
					£		£	£	£
Oldbury			Regeneration & Growth	Various Schemes	89,488.20	28,436.41	-41,411.68	76,512.93	
Smethwick			Regeneration & Growth	Various Schemes	65,173.42	43,962.53	-50,749.63	58,386.32	
Tipton			Regeneration & Growth	Various Schemes	26,036.51	28,636.74	-34,630.95	20,042.30	
Rowley			Regeneration & Growth	Various Schemes	79,257.39	7,245.76	-26,575.51	59,927.64	
Wednesbury			Regeneration & Growth	Various Schemes	54,340.35	32,631.38	-46,721.20	40,250.53	
West Bromwich			Regeneration & Growth	Various Schemes	103,809.36	49,601.88	-51,627.27	101,783.97	
<b>Total Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - Revenue Element</b>					<b>418,105.23</b>	<b>190,514.70</b>	<b>- 251,716.24</b>	<b>356,903.69</b>	

Note : 5% of CIL relates to Revenue Administration which is not reflected on this Appendix

## Treasury Management Monitoring Q3 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	31 Dec 23
	£m	£m
<b>Debt Portfolio</b>		
General Fund	143.007	121.170
HRA	327.801	314.850
<b>Total</b>	<b>470.808</b>	<b>436.020</b>
<b>Investments</b>	<b>30.454</b>	<b>91.173</b>
<b>Net Debt (Treasury)</b>	<b>440.354</b>	<b>344.847</b>

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 at end December 2023 were £91.1m, a reduction of £24.5m compared to end of previous quarter. This movement is as anticipated from cash flow forecasts and is predicted to reduce further to approximately £35m at the financial year end. This compares to investment balances of £87.4m at the same period last year.

1.2. A summary of the treasury activity and portfolio by investment type as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 is summarised in the tables below:

Investment Portfolio Movements	Cash Manager (Bank)	Money Market Funds	Other Variable Rate Deposits	Fixed Interest	Total Invested	Portfolio Yield at Qtr End
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	%
31 Mar 2023	0.620	19.834	-	10.000	30.454	4.15%
<b>Q1 Activity</b>						
Withdrawals/ Maturities	(4.623)	(156.912)		(10.000)		
New Deposits	4.707	215.186	-	5.000		
30 Jun 2023	0.704	78.108	-	5.000	83.812	4.36%
<b>Q2 Activity</b>						
Withdrawals/ Maturities	(6.317)	(181.489)		-		
New Deposits	6.195	213.549	-	-		
30 Sep 2023	0.582	110.168	-	5.000	115.750	5.26%
<b>Q3 Activity</b>						
Withdrawals/ Maturities	(12.493)	(219.825)		(5.000)		
New Deposits	27.582	180.159	-	5.000		
31 Dec 2023	15.671	70.502	-	5.000	91.173	5.00%

Portfolio as at	31 December 2023		Average year to date	
	Investment £m	Yield %	Average Investment £m	Average Yield %
MMFs	70.502	5.34%	86.915	5.09%
Cash Mgr	15.671	3.25%	0.924	1.91%
Fixed Interest (Short [365 days or less])	5.000	5.62%	5.127	5.08%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>91.173</b>	<b>5.00%</b>	<b>92.966</b>	<b>5.05%</b>

1.3. The third quarter of the financial year did not see any changes to the fixed term deposits held with all investment movements being managed within the Money Market Funds and general bank account.

1.4. The cash manager balance (the Council's bank account) was £15.7m as at end of December compared to £0.5m the previous quarter. This is higher than previous quarters and is due to the council offices being closed during the Christmas period and therefore any credits received in this period were held in the Council's bank account until staff returned in January. The balances held were within approved limits and the council does receive a yield on this cash at 3.25%.

1.5. Due to the amount of cash held in cash manager at a yield lower than money market funds at the end of December this did have a negative impact on yield at quarter end with the portfolio only yielding 5.00% compared to 5.25% the previous quarter end. However, this reduced yield would only have been for the latter period of December due to the inability to place treasury investment deals referred to above.

1.6. The comparable benchmark (overnight SONIA) was 4.89% as at end December 2023 and therefore the performance achieved by the Treasury Services team are above benchmark with returns being 5.05% for the first 9 months of the year on average investment balances of £93m.



- 1.7. Due to interest rates remaining higher than originally budgeted for (4.4% yield budgeted for 2023/24), and are expected to remain elevated for some time, this is generating a surplus of investment income compared to the budget. This is reflected in the monitoring report and mitigates some of the general fund overspend.
- 1.8. 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.
- 1.9. 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 three quarters of the year:

	General Fund			HRA		Grand Total £m
	Fixed Rate	Variable Rate	Total GF	Fixed Rate	Total HRA	
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	
<b>31 Mar 23</b>	<b>103.074</b>	<b>39.933</b>	<b>143.007</b>	<b>327.801</b>	<b>327.801</b>	<b>470.808</b>
<b>Q1 Activity</b>						
Fixed Rate Maturities	(35.297)			-		
New Fixed Rate Loans	25.000			-		
Net Movement in Variable Rate Loans		2.978				
<b>30 Jun 23</b>	<b>92.777</b>	<b>42.911</b>	<b>135.688</b>	<b>327.801</b>	<b>327.801</b>	<b>463.489</b>
<b>Q2 Activity</b>						
Fixed Rate Maturities	(6.500)			(4.067)		
New Fixed Rate Loans	-			-		
Net Movement in Variable Rate Loans		22.094				
<b>30 Sep 23</b>	<b>86.277</b>	<b>65.005</b>	<b>151.282</b>	<b>323.734</b>	<b>323.734</b>	<b>475.016</b>
<b>Q3 Activity</b>						
Fixed Rate Maturities	(6.413)			(8.884)		
New Fixed Rate Loans	-			-		
Net Movement in Variable Rate Loans		(23.699)				
<b>31 Dec 23</b>	<b>79.864</b>	<b>41.306</b>	<b>121.170</b>	<b>314.850</b>	<b>314.850</b>	<b>436.020</b>

2.4. The detail of the fixed rate maturities totalling £15.3m in Q3 is listed below:

- £5m short term loan (6 month) from West Yorkshire CA at 4.65%
- £10m long term Lenders Option Borrowers Option loan (LOBO) from Commerzbank at 4.60% (original maturity date October 2042)
  - This long term LOBO loan included a clause where every 6 months the lender could indicate that they wished to increase the interest rate. (Lenders Option)
  - The Lenders Option was called early October 2023 stating they wished to increase the rate on the loan from 4.60% to 5.93%.
  - Consequently this initiated the Borrowers Option clause of the arrangement where SMBC, as the borrower, could accept the revised terms or reject and repay the loan without penalty.
  - Due to the unfavourable terms offered it was decided to repay the loan and remove the liability from the loan portfolio.
- £0.3m scheduled repayments of interest free loans and other local authority debt.

2.5. The large decrease in variable debt holdings relate to the cash we hold on behalf of the Fire Authority, Sandwell Leisure Trust and Sandwell Children's Trust. This movement is in line with expected cash flows.

2.6. 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		31 Dec 23	
	Principal £m	Avg Rate	Principal £m	Avg Rate
<b>Fixed Rate Debt</b>				
General Fund	103.074	3.83%	79.863	4.61%
HRA	327.801	4.91%	314.851	4.87%
<b>Total</b>	<b>430.875</b>	<b>4.65%</b>	<b>394.714</b>	<b>4.81%</b>

2.7. 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.

2.8. 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)	830.696
Operational Boundary (Debt)	512.310
Maximum Treasury Debt to 31 Dec 23	493.019
Average Treasury Debt to 31 Dec 23	460.302

*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.

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# Report to Cabinet

7<sup>th</sup> February 2023

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Q3 Budget Monitoring 2023/24</b>
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Bob Piper, Finance & Resources
<b>Director:</b>	Brendan Arnold, Director of Finance
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Claire Spencer – Acting Assistant Director Finance <a href="mailto:Claire_spencer@sandwell.gov.uk">Claire_spencer@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

## 1 Recommendations

*That Cabinet:*

- 1.1 Notes the financial monitoring position as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 (Quarter 3) and refers the report to the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board for consideration and comment.
- 1.2 Approves 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
Directorate Budgets	Transfer of pay award allocation from Contingency	6,539	
Contingency	Transfer of pay award allocation to directorates		6,539
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>6,539</b>	<b>6,539</b>

## 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.

- 2.2 £6.539m is currently being held corporately within a contingency budget to be used to part fund the cost of the 2023/34 NJC pay award. Allocations to directorates of this centrally held contingency budget have now been calculated and it is necessary to distribute these allocations across the Council.

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

- 3.1 The Council's financial status helps to underpin the Council's Corporate Plan and the associated aspirations.

### 4 Context and Key Issues

#### *General Fund Outturn*

- 4.1 The overall projected outturn position for the General Fund is an underspend of (£2.985m). This is an underspend of 0.9% when compared with the Council's net budget of £317.623m.
- 4.2 The overall projected net directorate outturn variance, excluding the HRA, is an underspend of (£0.163m) 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 Outturn Variance Before Transfers to/from Reserves	(Use of)/ Contribution to Reserves	Projected Outturn Following Use of Reserves	Projected Outturn Variance
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Corporate Management	1A	(183)	97	280	(280)	(183)	0
Borough Economy	1B	69,875	72,305	2,430	(1,898)	70,407	532
Adult Social Care	1C	85,831	85,106	(725)	(4,690)	80,416	(5,415)
Regeneration & Growth	1D	11,389	13,664	2,276	(2,412)	11,252	(137)
Housing	1E	2,302	2,095	(207)	373	2,468	166
Children's Services	1F	91,455	102,002	10,547	(5,692)	96,310	4,855
Assistant Chief Executive	1G	7,550	7,369	(181)	20	7,389	(161)
Finance	1H	19,500	19,373	(127)	162	19,535	35
Law & Governance	1I	7,303	7,219	(84)	46	7,265	(38)
Public Health	1J	64	1,947	1,883	(1,883)	64	0
<b>Net Service Expenditure</b>		<b>295,087</b>	<b>311,178</b>	<b>16,091</b>	<b>(16,254)</b>	<b>294,924</b>	<b>(163)</b>
Capital Charge Adjustment		(26,461)	(26,461)	0		(26,461)	0
External Interest Payments		15,000	15,000	0		15,000	0
Interest/Dividend Receipts		(7,500)	(9,000)	(1,500)		(9,000)	(1,500)
Corporate Items		41,497	40,984	(513)	(646)	40,338	(1,159)
<b>Net Service Expenditure, Treasury Management Budgets and Corporate Items</b>		<b>317,623</b>	<b>331,701</b>	<b>14,078</b>	<b>(16,900)</b>	<b>314,801</b>	<b>(2,822)</b>
Collection Fund Surplus		(102)	(102)	0		(102)	0
Council Tax		(127,008)	(127,008)	0		(127,008)	0
Business Rates		(109,560)	(109,560)	0		(109,560)	0
Business Rates Top-Up		(38,701)	(38,701)	0		(38,701)	0
Section 31 Grants		(38,188)	(38,188)	0		(38,188)	0
New Homes Bonus		(111)	(111)	0		(111)	0
Services Grant		(3,953)	(4,116)	(163)		(4,116)	(163)
<b>Net Service Expenditure, Treasury Management Budgets, Corporate Items and Sources of Funding</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>13,915</b>	<b>13,915</b>	<b>(16,900)</b>	<b>(2,985)</b>	<b>(2,985)</b>
<b>Quarter 2 Projected Outturn Variance</b>							<b>1,222</b>
<b>Movement from Quarter 1 to Quarter 2</b>							<b>(4,207)</b>

4.3 The forecast underspend of (£2.985m) at Quarter 3 represents an improved position of (£4.207m) when compared with the Quarter 2 forecast overspend of £1.222m.

4.4 The forecast outturn position at Quarter 3 is explained in further detail within the following paragraphs.

4.5 The cost of the 2023/24 NJC pay award is approximately £9.1m and £6.5m is available to part fund this budget pressure, as described in 2.2 above. Therefore, there is a residual budget pressure of £2.6m across the service directorates. The residual budget pressure relating to each directorate is highlighted within the corresponding explanation of forecast outturn position below.





### *Corporate Management (1A)*

4.6 The projected outturn for Corporate Management is nil variance from budget.

### *Borough Economy (1B)*

4.7 The projected outturn for Borough Economy is an overspend of £0.532m. The main reasons for this forecast overspend are as follows:

- £1.682m Income budget pressures relating to Visitor Services and Events, Green Services and Libraries.
- £0.433m overspend relating to the pay award and increased rate of pension contributions.
- £0.360m unachieved savings relating to Visitor Services and Events  
Offset by:
  - (£0.819m) net in year savings on supplies and services budgets.
  - (£0.691m) in year vacancy management savings.

### *Adult Social Care (1C)*

4.8 The forecast variance to budget for Adult Social Care is an underspend of (£5.415m). The main reasons for this forecast underspend are as follows:

- Vacancy management savings of (£3.148m) as a result of significant recruitment challenges in the sector and slippage in the start of social workers recruitment campaign
- Additional free nursing care income of (£1.600m)
- Additional Better Care Fund funding of (£0.806m)
- A variance on external placement costs of (£0.648m). This is 0.35% of the annual budget.
- Offset in part by £0.697m overspend relating to the pay award and increased rate of pension contributions and £0.090m other minor budget pressures.

### *Regeneration & Growth (1D)*

4.9 The projected outturn for Regeneration and Growth is an underspend of (£0.137m). The main reasons for this forecast underspend are as follows:

- £0.500m reduced income from rechargeable jobs, as a result of staff vacancies
- £0.350m reduced income from planning application fees and building regulation fees, due to the economic downturn
- £0.403m loss of income due to building closures and tenant vacancies
- £0.239m overspend relating to the pay award and increased rate of pension contributions.
- Offset by (£1.629m) in year vacancy management savings and other minor budget savings





### *Housing (1E)*

- 4.10 The projected outturn for Housing is an overspend of £0.166m. The main reasons for this forecast overspend are as follows:
- £0.174m income budget pressure relating to garage rental
  - £0.263m other income budget pressures
  - £0.169m unachieved savings
  - £0.114m delayed savings
  - £0.134m overspend relating to the pay award and increased rate of pension contributions.
  - Offset by (£0.688m) in year vacancy management savings and other minor budget savings

### *Children's Services (1F)*

- 4.11 The forecast variance against budget for Children's Services is an overspend of £4.855m, largely due to budget pressures relating to SEND transport. The gross overspend relating to SEND transport is forecast to be £9.867m. This is partly offset by the use of reserves (£2.439m), resulting in a net budget pressure of £7.428m.
- 4.12 In addition to the above, the overspend relating to the pay award and increased rate of pension contributions is forecast to be £0.329m and there is also a forecast budget pressure in relation to Sandwell Residential Education Services of £0.255m.
- 4.13 Partly offsetting the budget pressures described in 4.10 and 4.11 are vacancy management savings of (£1.730m), additional income (partly grant income) of (£0.855m) and supplies and services and contract savings of (£0.572m).
- 4.14 The forecast overspend in the SEND transport service is due to a significant increase in demand over recent years, particularly for complex and out of borough placements, which have the highest cost.

### *Assistant Chief Executive (1G)*

- 4.15 The projected outturn for Assistant Chief Executive is an underspend of (£0.161m). The main reasons for this forecast underspend is as follows.
- £0.216m overspend relating to the pay award and an increased rate of pension contributions
  - £0.194m overspend relating to additional supplies and services costs (security and IT costs)
  - £0.099m of unachieved savings



- Offset by (£0.670m) in year vacancy management savings and other minor budget savings

### *Finance (1H)*

4.16 The projected outturn for Finance is an overspend of £0.035m. The main reasons for this forecast overspend are as follows:

- £0.914m budget pressure relating to the loss of Housing Benefits subsidy due to increased demand for temporary accommodation
- £0.394m overspend relating to the pay award and an increased rate of pension contributions
- £0.396m unachieved and delayed savings relating to redesign of Business Support functions and the hybrid print and mail project.
- Offset by (£1.669m) in year vacancy management savings, rephasing of the implementation of cyber security and other minor overspends.

### *Law & Governance (1I)*

4.17 The projected outturn for Law and Governance is an underspend of (£0.038m).

- £0.191m overspend due to the pay award and an increased rate of pension contributions
- £0.439m overspend on external legal advice on corporate projects and social care
- offset by (£0.668m) underspend in in year vacancy management savings and other minor budget savings.

### *Public Health (1J)*

4.18 Public Health is funded by a ringfenced grant and therefore any underspend at year-end is transferred into a specific Public Health grant reserve, and any overspend at year-end is funded from the reserve. The projected outturn variance is currently an overspend of £1.883m. This will be entirely funded from the Public Health grant reserve. There is a 3-year programme in place to bring down the reserve balance, which built up over the Covid-19 period.

### *Corporate Items*

4.19 The council has several centrally held budgets. At Quarter 3 an underspend of (£1.159m) is forecast against Corporate Items. The main reasons for this forecast underspend are additional audit fees, additional bank charges and additional contributions to the West Midlands Combined Authority, offset by remaining contingency budgets.



### *Housing Revenue Account (1K)*

4.20 The overall forecast variance against budget for the HRA (which sits outside the General Fund) is nil, as any surplus or deficit at year-end is offset by a corresponding transfer to/from HRA reserves. Prior to the use of reserves, the forecast variance against budget for the HRA is an overspend of £1.120m. The main reasons for this forecast overspend are as follows:

- Rents & Other Charges – £2.328m pressure relating to loss of rental income from voids and council tax charges on void properties
- PFI – £0.9m pressure due to increased unitary charge which is partly offset by one-off management fee income received. This pressure will be funded from the PFI sinking fund.
- Asset Management and Maintenance:
  - (i) Repairs & Maintenance – (£1.329m) net underspend mainly due to staff vacancies.
  - (ii) Building Safety & Compliance - £0.357m net pressure relating to Highrise safety and compliance costs.
- Housing Management – (£0.703m) net underspend related to staff savings.
- Other HRA Services – (£0.435m) underspend. Although there is an overspend due to increase in staff pension costs, project feasibility costs, tree works and increase in central support charges, this has been more than mitigated by staffing savings.

### *Dedicated Schools Grant – DSG (1L)*

4.21 The overall forecast variance against budget for the DSG – which also sits outside the General Fund - is nil, as any surplus or deficit at year-end is offset by a corresponding transfer to/from the DSG reserve. Prior to transfers to reserves, the forecast outturn is an underspend of (£1.069m). The main reasons for this forecast underspend are as follows:

- High Needs Block underspend of (£0.949m) arising from out of borough placements, staffing vacancies and SEN development.
- Early Year's Block underspend of (£0.120m) from funding for 2-year olds and disability access fund.

### Capital

4.22 Expenditure on the Council's capital programme is forecast to be £61.354m within the General Fund and £72.116m within the Housing Revenue Account



for the financial year 2023/24. Appendix 2 provides a detailed breakdown of the programme for the General Fund and appendix 3 provides a breakdown for the Housing Revenue Account.

### *General Fund*

- 4.23 The Quarter 3 Capital monitoring has been updated to include rephasing from previous years, reprofiling and additional approvals. The main changes that have taken place since Quarter 2 are listed as follows:
- 4.24 There has been additional rephasing into 2024/25 within the Borough Economy directorate in relation to the Birchley Island scheme of £1.5m and within the Total Main Programme Block of £3.2m.
- 4.25 Within the Finance directorate, £1.2m in relation to the ICT – End User Computer scheme has been rephased into 2024/25.
- 4.26 Additional rephasing within the Regeneration & Growth directorate of around £3.3m into future years has been reflected in relation to the Towns Fund budgets and there has been rephasing on the Property Refurbishment budget of £1.7m into 2024/25. The Sandwell LUP budgets have been reprofiled to reflect the latest expenditure forecasts with a total of £0.850m being moved into 2023/24.

### *Housing Revenue Account*

#### *Progress Against the New Council House Build Programme*

- 4.27 The Council new build housing programme was approved at Cabinet in February 2023. The existing programme that completes in 2026/27 includes a total of 715 new homes.
- 4.28 Of the above programme, 47 units have been delivered in 2022/23 and an estimated 15 new Council house builds are anticipated to be completed by 31 March 2024. These are part-funded through Housing Revenue Account borrowing with grant provided by Homes England.
- 4.29 120 new homes will be progressed on site during the current financial year. Spend of £19.749m against the budget of £36.708m (including prior year carry forwards) is currently projected against the new build programme. This gives an underspend against the 2023/24 programme of (£16.958m) because of delays. However, the increased starts on site during 2023/24 will reduce the current forecast underspend towards the end of the financial year.



4.30 The delivery of the new build programme is delayed because of several reasons. The construction industry in both the West Midlands and at a national level continues to experience the impact of economic volatility. This is causing longer lead-in times and higher prices due to inflationary increases. The instability of the current economic climate is demonstrated by a reduction in tender returns for some projects and higher than estimated prices on returned tenders coupled with increased specification due to changes in building regulations. Ultimately, the higher costs affect the financial viability of these schemes. There have also been delays to physical starts on site, many of which are beyond the council's control, such as ground conditions, wayleaves, easements, section agreements and licences.

#### *Progress Against the Housing Improvements Programme*

4.31 At present there is an anticipated underspend of (£3.763m) on current year projects. The delivery of capital investment contracts has been impacted by challenges similar to the new build programme. This is particularly apparent for price volatility on tender returns and inflationary pressures on committed contracts.

#### *Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)*

4.32 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 3 £0.203m of these balances have been utilised leaving a remaining balance of £2.615m.

4.33 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. As at Quarter 3 the Council is currently holding capital balances of £3.246m in relation to this Levy and is not forecasting any expenditure against this for the remainder of 2023/24. Further detail on Section 106 and CIL balances is provided in appendix 4.

#### *Treasury Management Outturn*

4.34 Appendix 5 provides the Quarter 3 Treasury Management update.

## 5 Alternative Options

5.1 There are no alternative options to the position presented in this report.





## 6 Implications

Resources:	Resource implications are contained within the main body of the report.
Legal and Governance:	No direct implications arising from the recommendations.
Risk:	In order to manage the risk of overspends, which impact on the resilience of the Council's financial position, arrangements are put in place to monitor and manage the current year's budget to ensure that planned savings are achieved and efficiencies realised. Timely and accurate monitoring of the forecast outturn against budget is required to ensure that revenue and capital expenditure stay within the agreed budgets.
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.

## 7 Appendices

- App 1 Outturn Summary for Directorates
- App 2 General Fund Capital
- App 3 Housing Revenue Account Capital
- App 4 CIL and S106 Funding
- App 5 Q3 Treasury Management Update

## 8 Background Papers

- Q1 Budget Monitoring 2023/24
- Q2 Budget Monitoring 2023/24



## Report to Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board

**20 March 2024**

<b>Subject:</b>	Tracking and Monitoring of Scrutiny Recommendations
<b>Director:</b>	Assistant Chief Executive James McLaughlin
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Scrutiny Lead Officer, Alex Goddard alexander_goddard@sandwell.gov.uk

### 1 Recommendations







- 1.1 That the Board considers the responses on recommendations referred since the Board's last meeting.
- 1.2 That the Board considers the progress on implementation of recommendations made.
- 1.3 That the Board determines what action it wishes to take where progress is unsatisfactory.
- 1.4 That the Board determines which actions/recommendations no longer require monitoring.



## 2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 To facilitate the effective monitoring of progress on responses to and press with implementation of recommendations made by the Board and identify where further action is required.
- 2.2 Effective monitoring of recommendations facilitates the evaluation of the impact of the scrutiny function overall.

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

	Best start in life for children and young people	<p>The scrutiny function supports all of the objectives of the Corporate Plan by seeking to improve services for the people of Sandwell. It does this by influencing the policies and decisions made by the Council and other organisations involved in delivering public services.</p> <p>Effective monitoring of recommendations made supports this and allows scrutiny to evaluate its impact.</p>
	People live well and age well	
	Strong resilient communities	
	Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods	
	A strong and inclusive economy	
	A connected and accessible Sandwell	

## 4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 The attached Appendix details the responses to actions identified and/or recommendations made by the scrutiny function and progress on the implementation of those previously approved.





## 5 Implications

<p><b>Resources:</b></p>	<p>Any resources implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.</p> <p>Any specific resources implications for the Board’s attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>
<p><b>Legal and Governance:</b></p>	<p>The duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is set out in Part 1A Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2000.</p> <p>The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 places a duty on the Executive to respond to Scrutiny recommendations within two months of receiving them.</p> <p>NHS service commissioners and providers have a duty to respond in writing to a report or recommendation where health scrutiny requests this, within 28 days of the request. This applies to requests from individual health scrutiny committees or sub-committees, from local authorities and from joint health scrutiny committees or sub-committees.</p>
<p><b>Risk:</b></p>	<p>Any risk implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.</p> <p>Any specific risk implications for the Board’s attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>
<p><b>Equality:</b></p>	<p>Any equality implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.</p> <p>Any specific equality implications for the Board’s attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>



<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	Any health and wellbeing implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.  Any specific health and wellbeing implications for the Board’s attention are detailed in the Appendix.
<b>Social Value:</b>	Any social value implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.  Any specific social value implications for the Board’s attention are detailed in the Appendix.
<b>Climate Change:</b>	Any climate change implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.  Any specific climate change implications for the Board’s attention are detailed in the Appendix.
<b>Corporate Parenting</b>	Any corporate parenting implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.  Any specific corporate parenting implications for the Board’s attention are detailed in the Appendix.

## 6 Appendices

Appendix 1– Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board Action Tracker

## 7. Background Papers

None.



## Tracking and Monitoring of Actions and Recommendations of Scrutiny Boards

Scrutiny Board Date	Agenda Item Title	Action/Recommendation	Responsible Director /Body	Activity Log
<b>Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board</b>				
1 March 2023	Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring	Submit a report to Cabinet recommending:	Surjit Tour	Approved at Cabinet on 12 July 2023
		1.1 that Directors review and update any pages they hold on the Council's website, in particular, the webpage where the Council have facilities/offices to rent.	All Directors	
		1.2 the introduction of additional financial controls on general spend, in particular, matters relating to recruitment and day	Simone Hines Cllr Piper	

		to day spend where necessary.		
		1.3 to explore the feasibility of providing in house care for young people in care, SEND placements and adult social care placements.	Simone Hines, Michael Jarrett, Rashpal Bishop Cabinet Members	
29 March 2023	Improvement Plan	1) A summary and chronology of events explaining where the Council is currently with regards to the proposed development on Lion Farm, and how it reached the Expert Determination process, be circulated to the Board.	Tony McGovern	A written response in relation to the Expert Determination Process will be circulated once the ED process has been fully concluded.

		<p>2) That a further report in relation to recruitment of the Children to Adults Transition Project Officer role be submitted to a future meeting of the Board.</p>	<p>Michael Jarrett/Rashpal Bishop</p>	<p><i>Previous update</i>  <i>Initial meeting went ahead in December. PID reviewed and amendments being captured. Agreement reached to engage with key external stakeholders. The Trust's sign-off process incorporated into the Project Governance Structure. The project manager appointment was delayed and the post re-advertised. Closing date 6 Jan.</i></p> <p><b>Current position</b>  The re-advertisement of the project manager post was unsuccessful, the post is due to be advertised again shortly. To ensure no further delays, resource from within the business has been identified to progress actions identified in the PID.</p>
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				Regular monthly meetings have been diarised with key stakeholders, PID and TOR have been revised and signed off. Remit of the first stage business mapping has been agreed, draft scope and comm's will be presented at the April meeting with the aim to undertake first stage business mapping in May.
29 June 2023	Customer Journey Review	(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		Commitments remain in draft form whilst engagement is ongoing as these may be updated further following feedback from residents. Delays in engagement as

		<p>Adult Social Care, be authorised to agree a customer care standards/charter, and staff responsibilities in relation to those standards to ensure;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) that “back-office” staff take ownership and accountability of customer requests received via Contact Centre Agents;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>c) a standard approach to the</li> </ul>		<p>outlined in AP Point 3. Further work ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Key Service area links are in place for all calls taken by the contact centre. Ongoing development continues and proposed training will feature heavily on this areas.</li> <li>b) Email issued to all ADs and Directors instructing a reminder be sent to all Officers..</li> <li>c) Complaints process is in place and detailed on the Council Website. Ongoing monitoring of the Complaints SLA target is in place. Complaints Training is currently being rolled out and will include a reminder of all</li> </ul>
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		<p>complaints process and deadlines for responding to complaints are clear and accessible across all Council services;</p> <p>d) that key contacts are identified within each service area to aid Customer Service Agents in their enquiries;</p> <p>e) that residents are regularly updated and informed about the current process of their request/query.</p>		<p>processes and timescales</p> <p>d) Named Officers in each Service Area are identified and meetings are taking place on a regular basis.</p> <p>e) Work is ongoing within the Technology Workstream of the CJ Board to provide automated updates where possible</p>
		<p>(2) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth/Assistant Chief Executive be authorised to</p>		<p>Research undertaken and discussions held. Awaiting feedback on potential costs prior to discussions taking place with procurement. Specification to be drafted. Response letters are also</p>



		<p>commission/develop a customer training package that incorporates the following topics:-</p> <p>a) The completeness of response letters  b) Methods to manage customer expectations and awareness around the Council's remit and responsibilities.</p>		<p>covered in Complaints training as per 1.1c. Identified individuals in each Directorate to input into specification and agree requirements.</p>
		<p>(3) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth/Assistant Chief Executive ensure that all members of staff undertake training around customer care standards as</p>		<p>As per 1.2 above. Training being considered will also look at including a coaching programme for supervisors/management staff. Discussions will be undertaken with HR re inclusion in Appraisal process</p>

		<p>identified in (2) and that staff performance against these standards be incorporated within the appraisal process;</p>		
		<p>(4) that mandatory corporate customer service training be included as part of the induction process for all staff;</p>		<p>As above. As part of the proposed training an online offer will also be procured which all staff will be expected to complete, and which will be included in inductions.</p>
		<p>(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</p>		<p>SOCITM currently engaged to undertake independent options appraisal on existing and potential CRM systems, reporting back to CJ Board. There are linked dependencies within this action which will impact timescales.</p>

		<p>Relations System across the Council;</p>		
		<p>(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;</p>		<p>Automated feedback surveys are already in use across various service areas. Procurement of the new Telephony system will allow greater opportunities for this. CJ Board have also identified gaps and have provided approval and funding for new technology, eg tablets within the OSS</p>
		<p>(7) That the Director for Director of Regeneration and Growth/Assistant Chief Executive introduces corporate</p>		<p>Initial reminder to all staff as per 1.1b.</p>

		<p>guidelines in relation to the use of Council contact numbers to ensure that all officers are contactable and that contact details are updated regularly;</p>		
		<p>(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</p>		<p>Initial Options appraisal undertaken and report presented to CJ Board and Leadership Team. Agreement to pause the work to allow for the detailed process mapping to take place to better inform the decision. Work is ongoing to look at the single number and will be further considered with the implementation of the new telephony system.</p>

		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;		Work ongoing within the Digital Workstream of the CJ Board to ensure promotion of all digital channels. OSS and Community Hubs are supporting people to set up My Sandwell accounts if desired. Financial year 22/23 and current stats for this year show that digital is now the main contact channel. This will continue to be monitored.
		(10) that as part of the customer journey review being undertaken, the Director of Regeneration and		This recommendation was NOT approved by Cabinet on 12 July 2023. A lack of resources meant that the request could not be feasibly met. However, officers would

		<p>Growth/Assistant Chief Executive reviews current timescales for responding to enquiries and consider a reduction, wherever possible, including member enquiries being reduced from 10 working days to 3-5 days.</p>		<p>review the request at a later date:</p> <p>An existing wider piece of work is on-going with Members around the Councillor Portal. This work will look at the response time and any agreed standards, and ensure that this is considered as part of the wider remit of that work.</p>
27 July 2023	Sickness Absence Outturn 2022-23	<p>Make a recommendation to Cabinet:</p> <p>That the Head of Human Resources, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and resources, provide a further report to the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board considering the feasibility of introducing</p>		<p>Recommendation to be received by Cabinet in October 2023.</p>

		bonuses and/or incentives to improve staff attendance.		
		That a briefing note, in relation to the impact of long-COVID on the Council's workforce, be circulated to the Board.	Victoria Lee	Briefing note requested. Note will be circulated once ready.
Customer Journey Progress update		That, in relation to customer service training, extra attention be given to the intricacies of cultural differences, especially regarding body language.		This will be included with any Customer Service training moving forward – officers will ensure that it is included in the Spec. At the moment, officers are exploring what training options are out there. A procurement exercise will then be required to appoint an organisation to deliver the training.
Centre for Governance and Scrutiny – The use of call-in: guidance for English Authorities		That the Governance and Constitution Review Committee be recommended to consider and recommend to Council the expansion of the use of call-in to all executive decisions.		Governance and Constitution Committee meeting arranged to consider the request on 21 September 2023.

28 September 2023	Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring 2023/ 24	That, the Interim Section 151 Officer outline to the Board why the Directorate of Public Health had an outturn variance of a £3.219m overspend in Quarter 1 Municipal Year of 2023/ 24.	Brendan Arnold	A briefing note has been circulated to the board.
		That, a working group be established to review all areas of income, expenditure and staffing levels, particularly focusing on parks, green spaces, museums, tendered contracts and concessions within the Directorate of Borough Economy, with the membership and scope of the working group to be determined by the Chair of the Board.	Matthew Huggins Alice Davey	The working group has been established and the membership and scope for the group has been determined.
5 October 2023	Corporate Performance Management Framework	That the Director of Regeneration and Growth be recommended to monitor usage of the cycling network via a	Tony McGovern Andy Miller	



		representative sample to inform the Active Travel Policy.		
22 November 2023	Improvement Plan Quarterly Progress Report	That a 'Members Digest' be developed to provide Members with regular briefings on policy and strategy updates.	James McLaughlin	
		That a variety of methods to consult members are utilised, which should include face- to- face interviews, attending ward and town meetings and online consultations and surveys.	Member Development	
4 January 2024	Performance Management Framework – Q2 Monitoring	Additional information and clarification on a number of topics to be provided to the Board.	Various	Requested information has been circulated to the Board.
1 February 2024	Draft Budget 2024/25 – Recommendations to the Cabinet	(1) that the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board is assured that there is a clear plan, underpinned by		At its meeting on 7 February 2024 the Cabinet considered the recommendations and made the following resolution:  (1) that Cabinet and the

		<p>data, for the Council's Budget 2024/25;</p> <p>(2) that the Cabinet and the Executive team review the proposals for Borough Economy again to ensure the assumptions upon which they are based are robust and take account of the missed income targets from 2023/24;</p> <p>(3) that the Cabinet and Executive team review:-</p> <p>(a) Council, the Housing Revenue Account, Capital Programme, Public Health and Sandwell Children's Trust contracts and agreements to ensure they are fit for purpose, take a whole-council approach to meeting the Council's strategic objectives and represent value for money;</p>		<p>Executive team review the proposals for Borough Economy again to ensure the assumptions upon which they are based are robust and take account of the missed income targets from 2023/24;</p> <p>(2) that a review of the following be undertaken:-</p> <p>(a) Council, the Housing Revenue Account, Capital Programme, Public Health and Sandwell Children's Trust contracts and agreements to ensure they are fit for purpose, take a whole-council approach to meeting the Council's strategic objectives and represent value for money;</p> <p>(b) contract monitoring management processes to ensure they are robust and ensure value for money.</p>
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		<p>(b) contract monitoring management processes to ensure they are robust and ensure value for money;</p> <p>(4) that the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board consider reports within the next three months on detailed proposals to achieve savings in:-</p> <p>(a) Children’s External Educational and Care Placements; and</p> <p>(b) Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transport;</p> <p>(5) that the following topics be included on the work programme of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board:-</p>		<p>(3) that, in connection with (1) and (2) above, a further report be submitted to the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board, within 2 months’ time, on the decision of Cabinet.</p> <p>All matters for inclusion on the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board work programme will be included in the annual scrutiny work programming process for 2024/25.</p>
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		(a) the customer journey; (b) the effect on performance and sickness levels of reduced budgets; (c) funding for the Voluntary and Community Sector.		
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## Report to Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board

20 March 2024

<b>Subject:</b>	Cabinet Forward Plan and Board Work Programme
<b>Director:</b>	Assistant Chief Executive James McLaughlin
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Scrutiny Lead Officer, Alex Goddard <a href="mailto:alexander_goddard@sandwell.gov.uk">alexander_goddard@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

### 1 Recommendations







- 1.1 That the Board notes the Cabinet Forward Plan (Appendix 1), which sets out the matters programmed to be considered by the Cabinet;
- 1.2 that the Board notes its work programme (Appendix 2), which sets out matters to be considered by the Board in 2023/24;
- 1.3 that, the Board considers whether any changes or additions are required to its work programme and in doing so, has regard to the Prioritisation Tool (Appendix 3).



## 2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 A strong and effective work programme underpins the work and approach of Scrutiny.
- 2.2 It is good practice for work programmes to remain fluid, to allow for scrutiny of new and emerging issues in a timely manner.

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

	Best start in life for children and young people	The scrutiny function supports all of the objectives of the Corporate Plan by seeking to improve services for the people of Sandwell. It does this by influencing the policies and decisions made by the Council and other organisations involved in delivering public services.
	People live well and age well	
	Strong resilient communities	
	Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods	
	A strong and inclusive economy	
	A connected and accessible Sandwell	

## 4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 Scrutiny is a member led and driven function, driven by members' commitment to improve services and thereby people's lives.
- 4.2 An annual work programming event, involving chief officers, executive members and key partners, was held in June 2023 and all boards approved their work programmes for 2023/24 at their first meeting of the municipal year.



- 4.3 Boards have responsibility for their own work programmes, and it is good practice to keep them under review, to allow for new and emerging issues to be scrutinised in a timely manner.
- 4.4 Scrutiny Procedure Rules allow any member of the Council to request that an item is added to a scrutiny board’s work programme, subject to certain provisions.
- 4.5 Before including an item on its work programme the Board must have regard to the Prioritisation Tool attached at Appendix 3, to ensure that the scrutiny activity will add value and work programmes are manageable.

## 5 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	<p>Any resources implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.</p> <p>Any specific resource implications for the Board’s attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	<p>The duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is set out in Part 1A Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2000.</p> <p>The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 places a duty on the Executive to respond to Scrutiny recommendations within two months of receiving them.</p> <p>NHS service commissioners and providers have a duty to respond in writing to a report or recommendation where health scrutiny requests this, within 28 days of the request. This applies to requests from individual health scrutiny committees or sub-committees, from local authorities and from joint health scrutiny committees or sub-committees.</p>
<b>Risk:</b>	<p>Any risk implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.</p>



	Any specific risk implications for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.
<b>Equality:</b>	Any equality implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.  Any specific equality implications for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	Any health and wellbeing implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.  Any specific health and wellbeing implications for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.
<b>Social Value:</b>	Any social value implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.  Any specific social value implications for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.
<b>Climate Change:</b>	Any climate change implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.  Any specific climate change implications for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.
<b>Corporate Parenting:</b>	Any corporate parenting implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.  Any specific corporate parenting implications for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.

## 6 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Cabinet Forward Plan

Appendix 2 – Board Work Programme

Appendix 3 – Prioritisation Tool





## 7. Background Papers

None.



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

	Title/Subject	Decision Maker	Public or exempt report? If exempt – state reason for exemption	Decision Date	Pre or post decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
4	<p><b>Corporate Plan Delivery</b></p> <p>Contact Officer: Kate Ashley, Sarah Sprung</p> <p>Director: James McLaughlin</p>	<p><b>Cabinet – Finance &amp; Resources (Cllr Piper)</b></p>	<p>Public</p>	<p>June 2024</p>		<p>Report and appendix detailing how the Corporate Plan will be delivered through the Assistant Director Business Plans</p>



**Title/Subject**

**Decision Maker**

**Public or exempt report? If exempt – state reason for exemption**

**Decision Date**

**Pre or post decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)**

**List of documents to be considered**

5	<p><b>Customer Service Transformation Programme – Appointment of Implementation Partner</b></p> <p>To appoint an implementation partner to undertake an organisational wide major programme of transformational change for customer service.</p> <p>James McLaughlin: Assistant Chief Executive</p>	<p><b>Cabinet - Adults Social Care and Health (Cllr Hartwell)</b></p>	<p>Public</p>	<p>June 2024</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Report and Outline Business Case</p>
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	Title/Subject	Decision Maker	Public or exempt report? If exempt – state reason for exemption	Decision Date	Pre or post decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
16	<p><b>Ideal for All – Asset Transfers of Malthouse Garden, Salop Drive Market Garden and Barlow Road Community Garden</b></p> <p>Contact Officers: Stefan Hemming Heather Chinner</p> <p>Assistant Director: Luke Dove</p>	<p><b>Cabinet - Regeneration &amp; WMCA</b> (Cllr Hughes)</p>		June 2024		



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# Scrutiny Board Work Programme 2023/24

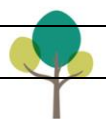
## Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board

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### Standing Items:-

- Tracking and Monitoring of Recommendations to the Executive
- Work Programme (including Cabinet Forward Plan)

Meeting Date	Item	Presented by
11 July 2023	Customer journey Review Report	Suky Suthi- Nagra
	Oracle Fusion Report	Simone Hines
	Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board Work Programme 23/ 24	Suky Suthi- Nagra
	Financial Outturn 2023	Simone Hines
27 July 2023	Customer Journey Progress Update	Helen Green
	Managing Attendance and Sickness Absence	Victoria Lee
	CfGS Call- in Guidance	Elaine Newsome
	Approval of 2023/ 24 Municipal Year Work Programme	Democratic Services
28 September 2023	Q1 Budget Monitoring	Brendan Arnold
	Improvement Plan - Quarterly Progress Report	Kate Ashley/ Rebecca Jenkins
	Section 106 Spotlight Session Outcome	Democratic Services
5 October 2023	Q1 Corporate Plan – Progress Report and Corporate Performance Report	Sarah Sprung/ Kayleigh Walker
	Scrutiny Annual Report	Alex Goddard/ Democratic Services



	Lion Farm Update (Private Item)	Tony McGovern/ Surjit Tour
2 November 2023 (meeting cancelled)	Oracle Fusion Update	Brendan Arnold Victoria Lee/ Laura Maitland (laura.maitland@socitmadvorsory.co.uk)
22 November 2023	Improvement Plan Quarterly Progress Report	Kate Ashley/ Rebecca Jenkins
	Medium Term Financial Strategy – Autumn 2023 Update	Kate Ashley/ Brendan Arnold
	WMCA Devolution Deal – Impact upon Sandwell	Laura Shoaf/ Ed Cox (WMCA)
4 January 2024	Q2 Budget Monitoring	Brendan Arnold
	Q2 Corporate Performance Report	Sarah Sprung/ Kayleigh Walker
15 January 2024	Budget 2024/25	Brendan Arnold/ Kate Ashley
1 February 2024	WMCA Scrutiny Annual Report	James Hughes WMCA
	WMCA work in Sandwell	James Hughes WMCA
20 March 2024	Improvement Plan – Quarterly Progress Report	Kate Ashley
	Midland Metro Hospital Update (Registrar Officer Demand)	Mark Satchwell
	Q3 Budget Monitoring	Brendan Arnold





**To be Scheduled**

Development of Transformation Strategy – Director of Finance/ Ass. CEO

Council’s approach to Debt Collection and Management

Digital Transformation (Customer Journey/ Accessibility for residents) – Helen Green (Routine Updates)

Sandwell’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Programme

Levelling Up Partnership Update – Rebecca Jenkins

Transition: Child to Adult Services – Rashpal Bishop/Sally Giles

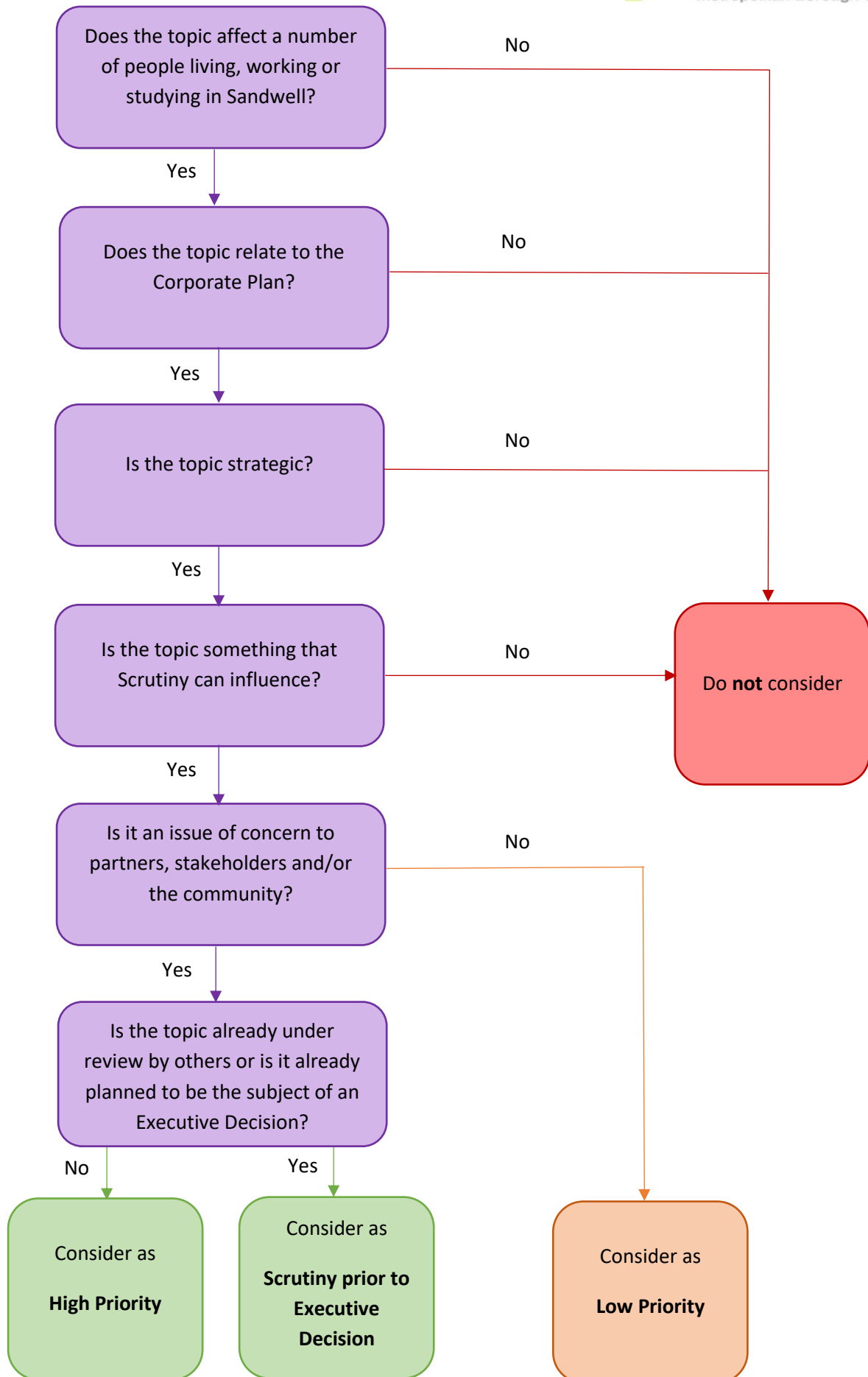
ORACLE Update

**Scrutiny Review:**

- Voluntary Sector Support and Grant Funding



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