

Agenda

Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board

Monday, 11 March 2024 at 6.00 pm
In the Council Chamber - Sandwell Council House, Oldbury

1 Apologies for Absence

To receive any apologies for absence.

2 Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

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

3 Minutes

7 - 12

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 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 Preparation for Care Quality Commission assurance of Adult Social Care in Sandwell

13 - 22

To consider and comment upon preparation for Care Quality Commission assurance of Adult



Social Care in Sandwell.

6 **Building Wellness and Wellbeing** 23 - 34

To consider and comment upon the draft strategy plan for Building Wellness and Wellbeing.

7 **Scrutiny Review of Loneliness and Social Isolation in Sandwell** 35 - 64

To consider and comment upon and determine any recommendations in relation to the Scrutiny Review of Loneliness and Social Isolation.

8 **Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board Action Tracker** 65 - 70

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

9 **Cabinet Forward Plan and Work Programme** 71 - 82

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 E M Giles (Chair)

Councillors Tipper, M Allcock, Dunn, S Gill, Johnston, Kalebe-Nyamongo,
Millar, Muflihi, Uppal and Williams

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Minutes of Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board

22 January 2024 at 6.01pm
Council Chamber, Sandwell Council House

Present: Councillor E Giles (Chair);
Councillors M Allcock, S Gill, Johnston, Kalebe-Nyamongo,
Millar and Muflihi.

Also Present: Phil Griffin (Chair of Healthwatch Sandwell).

Also Present: Liann Brookes-Smith (Interim Director of Public Health), Lina Martino (Consultant in Public Health), Alex Goddard (Scrutiny Lead Officer) and John Swann (Democratic Services Officer).

1/24 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dunn, Tipper (Vice- Chair) and Uppal.

2/24 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

3/24 **Minutes**

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2023 are approved as a correct record.



4/24 Urgent Additional Items of Business

There were no urgent additional items of business.

5/24 WorkWell Vanguard

The Board received an overview of the bidding process for a WorkWell Vanguard scheme for the Black Country.

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) in partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) had sought to create 15 WorkWell Vanguard pilot sites nationwide. £59m had been allocated to the national scheme which represented approximately £3.9m per site.

Each Integrated Care Board (ICB) was limited to one bid per geographical area, for this reason Sandwell Council had entered into a joint bid, led by the Black Country ICB alongside the three other Black Country Local Authorities. Walsall and Dudley Councils had previously operated similar programmes which had been successful and learning from these schemes had been incorporated into the bid.

The bidding opportunity had been announced on 30 November 2023, and following this the Council had entered into talks with Job Centre Plus, primary care networks, and the voluntary and community sector.

WorkWell represented an opportunity for local system and place-based infrastructure to come together and support those with disabilities and long-term health conditions to start and stay in employment.

The WorkWell Vanguard for the Black Country had three key objectives:

- **Delivering a holistic work and health service** – via a new early intervention and support service, providing participants with a single gateway into services for their health-related barriers to employment.



- **Forming part of an integrated local work and health partnership strategy** – supporting a joined-up work and health strategy at a local level to increase the ease of access to services.
- **Being part of a national learning programme** – sharing learning across vanguard and non-vanguard areas to help areas to plan and deliver their WorkWell services.

Multi-disciplinary support provided could include employer liaison services, work and health coaching, advice on workplace adjustments and regular support on a 'Return to Work Plan' or a 'Thrive in Work Plan' with a Work and Health Coach.

All WorkWell partners could refer individuals into the service, in addition to referrals from employers and the option to self-refer.

It was envisaged that the vanguard would reduce health inequalities and promote job opportunities to those who experienced systemic barriers as a result of their disability or long-term health condition.

The bid was formally due to be submitted on the 22 January 2023 by the Black Country ICB.

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

- At present the Council offered a 'local skills support' for Sandwell residents, it was proposed that if the bid was successful this would expand and create coaching and placement resources for those with long-term health issues.
- The vanguard would ensure that supported people would retain access to benefits via Job Centre Plus.
- It was acknowledged that some benefits were specialist in nature and required repeat assessments, it was confirmed that if the health of those supported by the scheme deteriorated and they were no longer able to work that access to these benefits would not be at risk.
- Individuals would not be forced to enter into employment or voluntary roles and would be supported at their own pace.



- Each person within the scheme would receive £800 of support.
- It was proposed that if the bid was successful, 4000 individuals across the Black Country would be supported across 18 months.
- Support would remain in place for those leaving employment.
- If the Black Country was designated as a vanguard pilot area funding would be in place for a two-year period, however it was hoped that the programme would sustain itself beyond the trial period.

Resolved that if implemented an update on the WorkWell Vanguard be provided to the Board at the end of the 2024/ 25 municipal year.

6/24

National Institute for Health Research – Health Determinants Research Collaboration Sandwell

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) was the biggest private funder of health research in the UK.

Sandwell Council, in collaboration with the University of Birmingham had been successful during the second round of funding awarded to local authorities to establish Health Determinants Research Collaborations (HDRCs) in the local area.

The Council's HDRC programme had commenced on 1 January 2024 with funds of £5m. A range of partners had engaged with the Council to develop the application, including the UK Health Security Agency, Health Education England West Midlands and Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO).

As of January 2024, there were 24 HDRCs nationally, the Council intended to work with Coventry HDRC regionally and with other HDRCs nationally to share learning and maximise the associated benefits.

The Sandwell HDRC was to be based on the theme of poverty and the cost of living and would align with the Levelling Up Partnership to address the determinants of health and tackle disadvantage



within the Borough. The application had been tailored to acknowledge the high levels of deprivation within the Borough and the strong voluntary and community sector.

The HDRC would ensure the activities of the Council were robustly evaluated and reflected the needs of the Boroughs diverse communities. By using information in a strategic manner, the HDRC would lead to a higher quality of services the Council delivered and commissioned and improve outcomes for Sandwell residents.

A total of 12 staff members would be recruited to support the delivery of the HDRC from programme funding and would be monitored by an independent oversight group to provide external peer review.

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

- The £5m of funding would largely be spent on establishing and embedding infrastructure and working practices, with approximately two-thirds of the £5m to be spent on staffing costs over a five year period.
- Infrastructure to be established included data sharing agreements, governance arrangements and a code of ethics.
- A Community Participation workstream would advise on which areas of research should be prioritised and would ensure a grassroots-led and inclusive approach.
- It was envisaged that the HDRC would support the voluntary and community sector to evidence how their work had benefited residents.
- A wider analysis of what makes people ill would be possible once the HDRC systems had been established.

7/24

Scrutiny Review of Loneliness and Isolation Update

The Board received an update of the work of the Scrutiny Review of Loneliness and Isolation and the activities of the Working Group.



The review had commenced in 2022/23 and had progressed well, research undertaken by the Working Group had shown that many organisations across the public, private and voluntary and community sector were undertaking initiatives that tried to tackle loneliness and isolation.

The Chair of the Board outlined that the Working Group was due to formulate recommendations, complete the review and present its report to Cabinet this municipal year.

8/24 **Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board Action Tracker**

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

9/24 **Cabinet Forward Plan and**

The Board received the Cabinet Forward Plan and noted its work programme for 2023/24.

Meeting ended at 7.27pm

Contact: democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk



Report to Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee

11 March 2024

Subject:	Preparation for Care Quality Commission (CQC) assurance of Adult Social Care in Sandwell.
Director:	Rashpal Bishop Executive Director of Adult Social Care
Contact Officer:	Simon Galczynski, Interim Assistant Director for Transformation and CQC (Adult Social Care) Simon_Galczynski@Sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Board considers and comments upon Sandwell MBC's preparation for Care Quality Commission (CQC) assurance of its discharge of statutory adult social care responsibilities, detailed in point 4 of this report.
- 1.2 That the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board advises on how and when it would like to be updated and involved with progress with preparation.

2 Reasons for Recommendations




- 2.1 CQC is the regulatory body for providers of health and social care to adults in England. The Health Act 2022 gave CQC a new responsibility to give a meaningful and independent assessment of care in a local area. A key part of this is assessing how local authorities with adult social care responsibilities meet their duties under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014. CQC published the full guidance for local authorities in December 2023 and have commenced assurance of local authorities. A report is



published at the end of each assurance assessment, with an overall rating provided on a four-point scale from “Outstanding” to “Inadequate”.

2.2 Sandwell’s Adult Social Care Directorate are preparing for assurance, with an assurance visit from CQC expected at any point within the next 18 months.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people There is a responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to ensure effective preparation for adulthood for young people likely to need adult social care support when they turn 18. Good preparation for adulthood helps young people to realise their aspirations.</p>
	<p>People live well and age well Part 1 of the Care Act 2014 includes provisions to ensure that adults who meet eligibility criteria are appropriately supported. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing and providing appropriate support, with regards to people’s needs, wishes and protected characteristics. • Appropriately safeguarding adults at risk from abuse and neglect. • Ensuring that a good range of care and support options are available to people. <p>Our vision for adult social care in Sandwell prioritises prevention, rehabilitation, and care, so that we can support people to live as independently as possible for longer.</p>
	<p>Strong resilient communities Good adult social care builds on people’s existing support networks within the community. We are introducing this way of working in partnership with our residents and communities in Sandwell. This is often known as “strengths-based practice”.</p>



4 Context and Key Issues

CQC Assurance Approach

- 4.1 Between April and September 2023, CQC piloted its new assurance assessment approach with five local authorities. These were Birmingham City Council, North Lincolnshire Council, Lincolnshire County Council, Nottingham City Council, and Suffolk County Council. Of these, Nottingham City Council received a rating of “Requires Improvement”, whilst the remainder received an overall rating of “Good”.
- 4.2 Learning from the pilot sites led to the publication of full guidance for local authorities on the format and methodology for assurance. The full guidance is available at <https://www.cqc.org.uk/local-systems/local-authorities>. CQC will be assessing how well the local authority delivers against 4 key themes:
- Working with People
 - Providing Support
 - How the Local Authority Ensures Safety within the System
 - Leadership
- 4.3 Each Theme has two or three Quality Statements against which the local authority will be assessed. There are nine Quality Statements in total. A full list of the Quality Statements and the Themes they relate to is provided in Appendix 1.
- 4.4 CQC will use a number of methods to assess a local authority’s effectiveness against each Theme and Quality Statement. This includes information already in the public domain, performance data, feedback from partners, and talking with people who use services, their carers, staff, and elected Members.
- 4.5 A local authority will receive eight weeks’ notice of an assurance assessment. Specific information is required within three weeks of this notice. This includes:
- An Information Return, which consists of specified information on performance, policies, and procedures.
 - A list of fifty cases which represent both the diversity of the population of the local authority and the range of presenting needs



of people supported by adult social care. Permission must be sought from people to share their information with CQC and ensure that they would be happy to speak with inspectors. From this list, CQC will select six people to assess in detail, including speaking with them directly.

- A self-assessment from the local authority of how well the council believes it is doing against the Quality Statements and the evidence for this. This is not mandatory, but strongly recommended by CQC to enable it to focus its activity when on site.

4.6 CQC has now started its programme of assurance visits to local authorities, with the first authorities to be assured notified towards the end of December 2023.

Preparation for Assurance in Sandwell

4.7 Sandwell MBC started preparation in 2023 with a readiness review undertaken by West Midlands Association of Directors of Adult Social Care (WM ADASS) which took place in June 2023.

4.8 Work is in progress to ensure that Sandwell MBC is fully prepared for assurance inspection. This includes:

- A refresh of the self-assessment prepared in 2023: this is to ensure that we have an updated presentation of the position of adult social care in Sandwell, that includes the views of people who use services and frontline staff. It is important that Sandwell showcases good and innovative practice, as well as being transparent about areas of challenge, and our plans to address these.
- Identifying the fifty cases to be shared with CQC and securing permission from people and their carers for information to be shared.
- Ensuring that practical arrangements are in place to ensure that the assurance visit runs smoothly.
- Updating information that CQC will require in the Information Return.
- Engaging in regional and national learning around CQC assurance preparation. This includes learning from the pilot sites, and close links with Birmingham City Council as our neighbour to engage in learning from their experience of assurance.



- It also involves working with Children’s services to learn from their extensive experience of Ofsted inspections

Communication and Engagement

- 4.9 Staff and the Leadership team have been briefed on the requirements of CQC assurance. This activity will be extended through the development of a Communication and Engagement plan that will:
- Ensure partners in the statutory and voluntary, community and faith sectors are kept updated on activity related to CQC preparation and are advised on how they can contribute.
 - Support staff to be prepared for CQC assurance and that they feel confident in giving an authentic and informed view of how their work contributes to positive outcomes for Sandwell’s residents, as well as talking about challenges and how these are being addressed.
 - Regularly inform Leadership, Elected Members and staff working in the wider Council aware of the work that the Adult Social Care Directorate is doing to prepare for assurance.

Governance and Resourcing

- 4.10 A CQC Assurance Board, chaired by the Executive Director of Adult Services (the statutory DASS) meets fortnightly to oversee progress on this work.
- 4.11 ADASS and the Local Government Association (LGA) have strongly recommended that adequate resourcing is provided to support activity related to preparation for inspection and assurance. An Interim Assistant Director for Transformation and CQC has been appointed to provide support and assurance for this work.
- 4.12 Weekly meetings take place between the Lead Member for Adult Social Care, the Director of Adult Services, and the Interim Assistant Director for Transformation and CQC to ensure the active engagement and oversight of the portfolio holder.

Continuous Improvement

- 4.13 It is important to recognise that CQC could visit Sandwell at any point within the next eighteen months, and that the position of adult social care



will undoubtedly change within that time. This means that CQC assurance should not be viewed in isolation but is rather part of the continued improvement of adult social care as Sandwell seeks new and better ways to support our residents in the context of increasing demand and financial constraints in local government.

4.14 The regular update of preparation material for CQC assurance will remain a practical task between now and the date of the visit from CQC. However, the Adult Social Care Directorate remains focussed on how it can continue to listen to feedback from people who use services, partners, and staff, to deliver our vision of supporting people to live with independence and dignity.

5 Implications

Resources:	Additional resources have been identified to support the CQC preparation work within existing budgets as identified in point 4.11.
Legal and Governance:	No implications in relation to this report
Risk:	No implications in relation to the content of this report.
Equality:	No direct equality impacts for the content of this report, although it should be noted that local authorities are expected to demonstrate how they consider equality implications through the assurance assessment under the Quality Statement “We actively seek out and listen to information about people who are most likely to experience inequality in experience or outcomes. We tailor the care, support, and treatment in response to this”.
Health and Wellbeing:	No direct health and wellbeing implications for the content of this report, although it should be noted that local authorities are expected to demonstrate how they support health and wellbeing through the discharge of adult social care duties in the Quality Statement “We support people to manage their health and wellbeing so they can maximise their independence, choice and control. We support them to live healthier lives and where possible, reduce future needs for care and support”.
Social Value:	No implications for the content of this report.



Climate Change:	No implications for the content of this report.
Corporate Parenting:	No implications for the content of this report.

6 Appendices

Appendix 1 – CQC Themes and Quality Statements.

7. Background Papers

None.



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Appendix 1

Care Quality Commission Assessment Framework for Local Authorities

Themes and Quality Statements

The following is a summary of the Themes and associated Quality Statements against which local authorities will be assessed. The full guidance against each Quality Statement and the sources of evidence required are available in the full CQC guidance at: <https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-regulation/local-authorities>.

Theme 1: Working with People

Assessing needs - Quality statement:

We maximise the effectiveness of people's care and treatment by assessing and reviewing their health, care, wellbeing and communication needs with them.

Supporting people to live healthier lives - Quality statement

We support people to manage their health and wellbeing so they can maximise their independence, choice and control. We support them to live healthier lives and where possible, reduce future needs for care and support.

Equity in experiences and outcomes - Quality statement

We actively seek out and listen to information about people who are most likely to experience inequality in experience or outcomes. We tailor the care, support and treatment in response to this.

Theme 2: Providing support

Care provision, integration and continuity - Quality statement:

We understand the diverse health and care needs of people and our local communities, so care is joined-up, flexible and supports choice and continuity.

Partnerships and communities - Quality statement:

We understand our duty to collaborate and work in partnership, so our services work seamlessly for people. We share information and learning with partners and collaborate for improvement.

Theme 3: How the local authority ensures safety within the system

Safe systems, pathways and transitions -Quality statement:

We work with people and our partners to establish and maintain safe systems of care, in which safety is managed, monitored and assured. We ensure continuity of care, including when people move between different services.

Safeguarding - Quality statement:

We work with people to understand what being safe means to them as well as with our partners on 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 make sure we share concerns quickly and appropriately.

Theme 4: Leadership**Governance, management and sustainability - Quality statement:**

We have clear responsibilities, roles, systems of accountability and good governance. We use these to manage and deliver good quality, sustainable care, treatment and support. We act on the best information about risk, performance and outcomes, and we share this securely with others when appropriate.

Learning, improvement and innovation - Quality statement:

We focus on continuous learning, innovation and improvement across our organisation and the local system. We encourage creative ways of delivering equality of experience, outcome and quality of life for people. We actively contribute to safe, effective practice and research.

Report to Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board

11 March 2024

Subject:	Building wellness and wellbeing
Director:	Liann Brookes- Smith Interim Director Public Health
Contact Officer:	Liann_Brookesmith@sandwell.gov.uk



1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Board considers and comments upon the draft strategy plan for Building Wellness and Wellbeing

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The draft strategy plan for Building Wellness and Wellbeing (A stronger Sandwell– from the Towns to the Borough of Sandwell) will contribute to the review of health and wellbeing needs within Sandwell and will support the development of a new strategy for 2025 onwards.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	Best start in life for children and young people Embedding healthy outcomes from a young age improves health outcomes
	People live well and age well The draft strategy plan promotes healthy outcomes for people of all ages and contributes to improved health outcomes for the Boroughs residents.





Strong resilient communities

Healthier communities live more fulfilling lives.

4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 Following efforts to update the Health and Wellbeing Board strategy, the Director of Public Health report for 2024, the WorkWell Vanguard Bid and further bids for an improved community health offer. It is required to review the needs of Sandwell and start to develop the plans to create a new strategy for 2025 in collaboration with the Council's partners. This draft strategy has been designed to complement the Levelling- Up Partnership programme and the Integrated Care Partnership programme of work for each of the six towns.
- 4.2. This is an initial draft plan of the work to take forward in the next municipal year and will be used to apply for funds from the Integrated Care Partnership to increase funding to Sandwell on community health programmes.

5 Implications

Resources:	Staff will need to align workstreams, the ambition is that the draft strategy plan will draw in more external funding and operate within existing set budgets of the council.
Legal and Governance:	No legal and governance implications directly arising as a result of this report.
Risk:	No risk implications directly arising as a result of this report.
Equality:	Reducing health inequalities within our communities contribute to a more healthy Sandwell.
Health and Wellbeing:	This plan contributes to increased health outcomes for residents within Sandwell.
Social Value:	Those living and aging well improve quality of life within our communities.
Climate Change:	Air quality is a key health determinant.
Corporate Parenting:	No corporate parenting implications directly arising as a result of this report.



6 Appendices

Appendix One – Building Wellness and Wellbeing draft strategy plan.

7. Background Papers

None.



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Building Wellness and Wellbeing

A stronger Sandwell– from the Towns to the borough of Sandwell



The need

Social economic challenge of ill health

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graph TD; A[Social economic challenge of ill health] --> B[Shift the system from treatment to Prevention, Self care, condition management and independence]; B --> C[Reduce possible silos between prevention, Voluntary sector, community, primary care, MDTs, social prescribing, condition management, patient information]; C --> D[Target interventions in areas of high prevalence and/or poorest condition management];
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Shift the system from treatment to Prevention, Self care, condition management and independence

Reduce possible silos between prevention, Voluntary sector, community, primary care, MDTs, social prescribing, condition management, patient information

Target interventions in areas of high prevalence and/or poorest condition management

Where we are:

Reports of Silos

People not knowing what is available

Reports of gaps in the system

Increase in ill health and disability

Increase in waiting times

Increase in socioeconomic need

Demand on adult social care

Lack of understanding of pathways and systems

The plan

Vision

Buy in partners

Objectives, accountability and roles

Times scales

- End points
- Outcomes/ measurable impact

Reviews and deep dives of key drivers of poor health management

Vision- Building Wellness and Wellbeing.



Prevention, Integration,
Person centred.

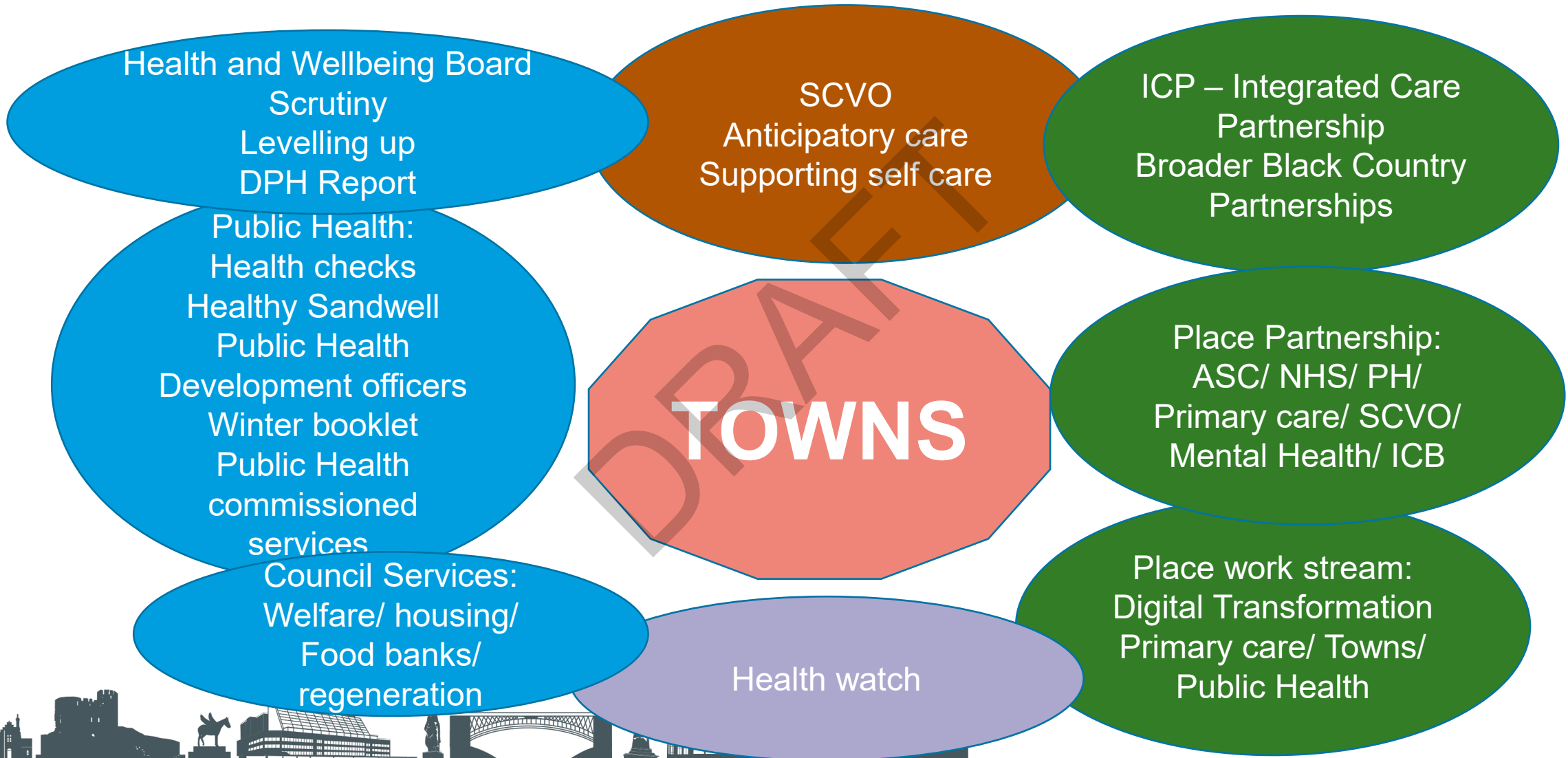


For a stronger
Sandwell, we need
the principles and
focus of:

Inequalities
Sustainability
Flexibility
outcomes

How this would work in Sandwell

Page 32



Building the strategies

Page 33

- Updated HWBB strategy for 2025
- DPH report for 2024 – Building wellness and wellbeing – a stronger Sandwell from the towns to the borough of Sandwell
- Levelling up programme plan
- Towns plans for place based work
- Scrutiny reporting
- Infant mortality
- Prevention needs assessment.
- Various strategies to include such as ASC workforce, mental health etc

LINE OF SIGHT ACROSS ALL STRATEGIES



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Report to Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board

11 March 2024

Subject:	Scrutiny Review of Loneliness and Isolation
Director:	James McLaughlin Assistant Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Alex Goddard Scrutiny Lead Officer alexander.goddard@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations







- 1.1 That the Board consider the Scrutiny Review of Loneliness and Isolation report.
- 1.2 That the Board determine any recommendations it wishes to make in relation to the Scrutiny Review of Loneliness and Isolation.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The Working Group has now concluded its consideration of the evidence gathered throughout the review. The Board is therefore requested to consider the report on the review and determine any recommendations it wishes to make.



3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	Best start in life for children and young people	Loneliness and isolation can affect people of all ages and can have a detrimental effect on health and overall quality of life. Supporting people to have meaningful social relationships is not just crucial to people's physical and mental health. It also affects their engagement in the workplace and wider community cohesion. Successfully tackling loneliness and isolation in an evidence led way, will therefore support the delivery of all of the Council's Corporate Plan objectives.
	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 Tackling loneliness and isolation is already a government priority, and the government published its strategy - *A Connected Society: A Strategy for tackling loneliness-laying the foundations for change* - in 2018. However, the problem has been exacerbated since 2020, as a result of the measures put in place to limit the spread of covid-19.
- 4.2 Research so far by the Working Group has shown that many organisations across the public, private and voluntary and community sector are undertaking initiatives that try to tackle loneliness and isolation.
- 4.3 The findings of the review are set out in the attached Scrutiny Review of Loneliness and Isolation in Sandwell report.



5 Implications

Resources:	Individual recommendations that arise from the Review may have implications, but these will be discussed and reported to Cabinet in due course.
Legal and Governance:	
Risk:	
Equality:	
Health and Wellbeing:	
Social Value:	
Climate Change:	
Corporate Parenting:	

6 Appendices

Appendix One – Scrutiny Review of Loneliness and Isolation in Sandwell
Appendix Two – Summary of Evidence Gathered

7. Background Papers

Appendix lists hyperlinks to evidence gathered to date.



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Review of Loneliness and Isolation in Sandwell

Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board
March 2024

Chair's Introduction

It is widely accepted that loneliness and isolation is associated with worse health outcomes. The covid-19 pandemic and the resultant “lockdown” resulted in more people being alone and isolated from their friends, family and their local community. Members of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board were deeply concerned about the impact on Sandwell residents and in 2022/23 decided to carry out a review.










A working group was established to take forward the review and several lines of inquiry were identified. As the review progressed, each line of enquiry generated another line of enquiry to follow and it became apparent that this piece of work could not be completed within one municipal year. The review therefore continued into 2023/24.

This report summarises a huge amount of work undertaken by the working group, with the support of a number of officers from across the Council. The working also group heard from a number of outside organisations and those people are listed later in the report. Members of the Scrutiny Board and the working group are extremely grateful for the contributions of those people and organisations.

Councillor Elaine Giles

Chair of Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board

Working Group Membership

2022/23		2023/24	
	Councillor E Giles (Chair)		Councillor E Giles (Chair)
	Councillor S Gill		Councillor Tipper
	Councillor Randhawa		Councillor Dunn
	Councillor Smith		Councillor S Gill
	(former Councillor E A Giles)		Councillor Kalebe- Nyamogo
			Councillor Millar

Links to 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

Loneliness and isolation can affect people of all ages and can have a detrimental effect on health and overall quality of life.

Supporting people to have meaningful social relationships is not just crucial to people's physical and mental health. It also affects their engagement in the workplace and wider community cohesion.

Successfully tackling loneliness and isolation in an evidence led way, will therefore support the delivery of all of the Council's Corporate Plan objectives.

Background and Context

There is an extensive evidence base about the impact of loneliness and social isolation on people's lives, their relationships and their wellbeing. Loneliness is increasingly recognised as a significant public health issue. It is known to adversely affect health, thus increasing demand on health and social care services and also leads to higher rates of premature mortality comparable to those associated with smoking and alcohol.

The covid-19 pandemic and resultant lockdown was resulted in further isolation. A report published in July 2021 by the Campaign to End Loneliness found that Covid-19/lockdown had exacerbated existing inequalities, meaning that groups already at risk of loneliness – such as those who were poorer, in worse health or from ethnic minorities or LGBTQ+ communities – were at greater risk during the pandemic. Research by the Local Government Association has also found that adults most at risk of being lonely, and increasingly so during lockdown, have/had one or more of the following characteristics: they are young, living alone, on low incomes, out of work and/or with a mental health condition.

Defining Loneliness and Isolation

Although closely related, loneliness and social isolation are different. Some people can spend lots of their time on their own and not feel lonely, while others may be surrounded by people but feel disconnected from them and therefore feel lonely.

The [Campaign to End Loneliness](#) describes **loneliness** as “...a subjective, unwelcome feeling of lack or loss of companionship. It happens when there is a mismatch between the quantity and quality of the social relationships that we have, and those that we want.” Social **isolation** is about the quality and frequency of a person's social interactions. It is defined as “having few social relationships or infrequent social contact with others”.

Impact of Loneliness and Social Isolation

Loneliness and Isolation can be detrimental to both mental and physical health, which creates an economic impact as people suffering from loneliness and isolation are less likely to engage in education or employment .

Data from the [Campaign to End Loneliness](#) indicates that:-

- Loneliness can increase the risk of early mortality by 26%.

- Loneliness can put people at greater risk of poorer mental health, including depression.
- There appears to be an association between mental wellbeing and loneliness: research estimates that 60% of people experiencing chronic loneliness also experience mental distress, compared to 15% of people who are not chronically lonely.
- 62% of lonely young people say that ‘feeling lonely makes them lose confidence in themselves’.
- Research shows that loneliness is associated with elevated blood pressure and acute stress responses.
- Loneliness is associated with ‘poorer sleep quality’ in young adults and ‘sleep inadequacy and dissatisfaction’ in the general population.

A literature review was carried out by Public Health in February 2023. This refers to a wide range of data and summarises:

“There is robust and consistent evidence of the significant health impacts of poor social health and evidence that some of these impacts are similar or greater than those associated with conventional risk factors... Many studies identified in the review raise the potential issue of the resultant pressure on health care and social care services of a failure to address loneliness and social isolation and poor social health. It is apparent from the narrative review on health impacts that the implications for services of morbidity (including cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes, mental health and wellbeing impacts, self-harm, frailty and cognitive decline) associated with poor social health are likely to be considerable... In summary therefore there is a clear and pressing need for strategies to attenuate both the individual and wider health and social care impacts associated with social isolation and loneliness. “

[Research](#) undertaken in 2017 identified a total cost of £2.5 billion per year to employers based in the UK. The four main impacting factors to those costs were:

- absence from work due to illness associated with loneliness;
- absence from work because of the need to care for someone with a loneliness related illness;
- lower productivity because of lower job satisfaction associated with loneliness and;
- staff turnover as a result of lower job satisfaction associated with loneliness.

Who is affected?

We may all feel lonely sometimes, but [research](#) shows that some groups, and some life experiences, increase the risk of a person suffering from loneliness or isolation:-

- Younger adults aged 16 to 29 years;
- Milestones like leaving or furthering education, seeking employment, moving out of the parental home, and establishing/losing long-term romantic relationships could all alter social networks;
- People living in low income households;
- Unemployed;
- Social media usage;
- Children (aged 11-15) from lower socio-economic backgrounds;
- Older people;
- LGBTQ+;
- People with existing health conditions;
- Young mothers;
- Women;
- Carers of those with additional needs;
- Those who live alone.

Methodology



Meetings of the working group throughout to guide and steer the Scrutiny Review

Desktop research to understand the context and methods of tackling isolation and loneliness



Visits to local organisations that help support people experiencing or at risk of isolation and loneliness

Discussions with internal and external stakeholders including voluntary and community sector organisations as well as the Fire Service and the Police



A summary of evidence is attached as Appendix 1.

Sandwell Context

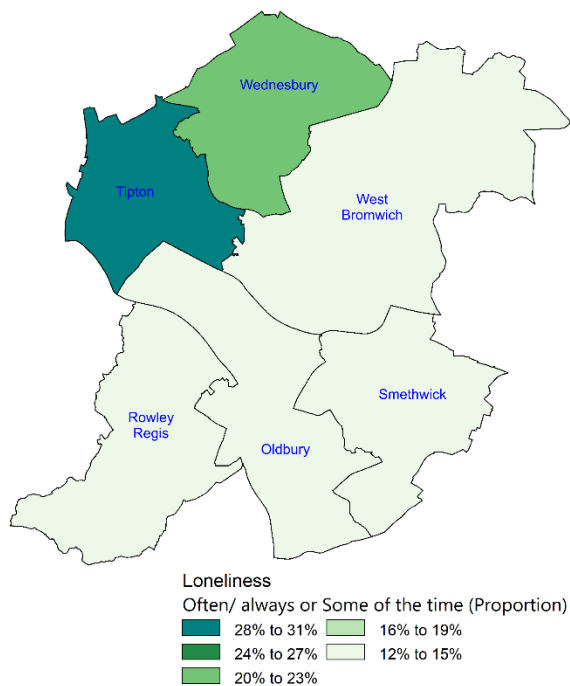
In August 2022 the Council carried out a Residents and Wellbeing Survey of residents aged 18 and over. The survey included specific questions around residents' feelings of loneliness and isolation and allowed the Council to build a picture of the towns with higher instances of loneliness and social isolation.

Resident and Wellbeing Survey: August 2022

Loneliness by Town

Question: How often do you feel lonely or isolated?

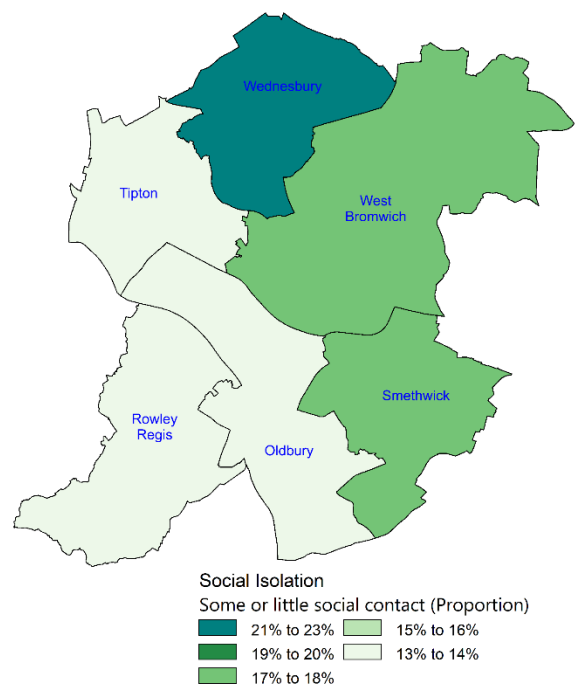
Proportion of Residents with Response: Often/ always or Some of the time



Social Isolation by Town

Question: Thinking about how much contact you've had with people you like, which of the following statements best describes your social situation?

Proportion of Residents with Response: Some or Little Social Contact



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Finding

Members felt that given the clear need demonstrated through the survey in relation to loneliness and social isolation in Tipton and Wednesbury that any pilot schemes or projects intended to tackle these issues should be considered for these towns first.

Local Provision

Throughout the review members spoke to a range of local organisations and initiatives to better understand what was available to Sandwell residents.

It was clear that there was a lot of opportunities for people to attend groups and events, these included those open to all, which includes:

- Community Transport Let's Chat project;
- Warm Spaces;
- Sandwell's libraries and museums;

As well as groups and events designed specifically to meet the needs of certain groups, such as the Sandwell Parents of Disabled Children group.

However it was recognised that there was no simple way for people to find out about the events, groups and associations that provided opportunities to socialise and reduce loneliness.

Finding

Members acknowledged the importance of providing information in as wide a range of methods as possible. This should include through the Council's website as well as on community notice boards, at libraries, at pop-up stalls (for example at markets across the borough from time to time), and via the Sandwell Herald and Public Health-related publications.

Social Prescribing

Social prescribing is a way to connect people with community-based services, groups and activities that meet practical, social, and emotional needs that affect their health and wellbeing, and increase people's active involvement with their health and their community. Social prescribing is happening across Sandwell; however, the approach varies across the eight Primary Care Networks and more information is required.

The NHS has recently published a [workforce development framework](#) to provide clear and consistent standards and improve the quality and consistency of social prescribing.

The Council is currently developing a Social Prescribing Strategy for Sandwell. As part of this work officers from Public Health have met with a number of social prescribers and obtained their feedback on how the approach can be strengthened. Strengthening the voluntary and community sector is also critical to the success of social prescribing, to ensure that there is adequate provision to refer patients into.

Finding

There was a need to ensure that Social Prescribing across Sandwell is more consistent and that the Strategy that is in development needs to address the issues of loneliness and social isolation.

Front Line Staff

Front line staff have the most contact with our residents, which puts them in a unique position to be able to identify where someone may be experiencing loneliness and isolation.

A particular example is the ongoing programme of Home Checks for our tenants. This involves officers visiting tenants in their homes and having conversations with them where needs can be discussed and observed, with referrals to appropriate agencies. Arising from the Checks undertaken so far, there were tenants who were reporting feeling lonely or isolated.

Finding

Our front line staff can be the only contact an individual may have with the Council, so it's important to make sure they are equipped with the necessary knowledge to spot signs of loneliness and isolation and help direct people to additional support or services.

Providing Opportunities


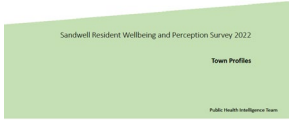
Members heard about a range of initiatives in place elsewhere to help encourage people to talk and socially engage. These included dedicated tables at cafés and restaurants, slow checkout lanes at supermarkets and benches that encourage people who are willing and want to talk to sit and socialise with other people passing by.

These kinds of initiatives encourage social interactions at a local level, which allowed them to be easy to access and low or no cost. Having them in places where people already visit makes them convenient and reduces pressure to travel to attend more formal settings or groups.


Finding

Providing our residents with an increased variety of ways that provide opportunities to talk and engage in social interaction could help reduce loneliness and isolation.

Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board - Review on Loneliness and Isolation Summary of Evidence Gathered

Evidence/Source	Findings Summary
<p>Public Health - Sandwell Residents Survey Data</p>  <p>Town Profiles</p> 	<p>12,000 people surveyed (by telephone) in August 2022. For the first time the survey included questions on loneliness and isolation.</p> <p>Further in-depth analysis of the responses is being undertaken by Public Health, but initial analysis shows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those not working/ long- term sick/ retired scored highest for both Loneliness and Isolation. • Feeling unsafe scored high. • Tipton highest of the six towns for Loneliness • Wednesbury highest of the six towns for Isolation. • Older people are more likely to feel lonely and isolated.
<p>Better Mental Health Programme..</p>	<p>Uses funding from £391,272 funding from Public Health England's (now OHID) Prevention and Promotion Fund for Better Mental Health to identify projects to complement and bolster existing support across the life course. Draws on established strong links with VCS to:-</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver interventions to improve mental wellbeing among Sandwell residents of all ages, with a particular focus on groups at increased risk of poor mental health. • Improve understanding of mental health and wellbeing among Sandwell's communities, including available support; and • Increase capacity among voluntary and community sector organisations supporting mental wellbeing.
<p>SCVO</p> <p>https://www.healthysandwell.co.uk/mental-health-wellbeing/better-mental-health/project-i/</p> <p>https://www.scvo.info/local-vcs-intelligence/community-health-portal/</p>	<p>Project I Community Mental Health Grant Programme focuses specifically on the area of promoting positive community mental health with funding being available to support early help/preventative activities; that are run BY local people FOR local people.</p> <p>Route to Wellbeing Portal allows users to set their own location and search from a wide range of services which are specifically local to them. Developed with (former) CCG funding, but not utilised as much by GPs as it is by other agencies.</p> <p>Data shows most traffic on social activities pages/links, then befriending second. The site maps Warm Spaces too.</p> <p>Reach is more with partnerships organisations, and less so with the general public. Resources limit further marketing activities.</p>
<p>Public Health - Literature Review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets out risk factors and impacts. • Refers to Office National Statistics Lifestyles Survey/Data. • Populations with higher unemployment levels are lonelier. • Risk factors are comparable to obesity.

 <p>Loneliness and Social Isolation Rapid Review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links to delayed transfers of care. • NHS several touchpoints to assess risk.
<p>Supermarket Slow Lanes</p> <p>https://www.unilad.com/news/slow-checkout-lane-netherlands-supermarket-205944-20230109</p>	<p>Offers customers that have time to chat a slower checkout lane - aim is to combat loneliness.</p> <p>Asda, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Morrison's all contacted, and none (of those who responded) have slow/chat lanes.</p> <p>Morrison's Wednesbury has calendar of community events, working closely with Public Health and Neighbourhoods Teams.</p>
<p>Chatty Cafes Scheme</p> <p>https://thechattycafescheme.co.uk/</p>	<p>Offers three services, all designed to reduce loneliness and/or social isolation:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging venues to offer 'Chatter & Natter' tables, where customers can get together and chat. We have a network of venues around the UK offering Chatter & Natter tables, many are hosted by Chatty Table Volunteers. • Virtual Chatty Cafe Sessions held on Zoom every Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 1pm – 1:30pm. Anyone over 18 can join, simply to chat to others. • Telephone Friendship Service for anyone over 18 who is experiencing loneliness and could benefit from a weekly chat on the phone. <p>From the website there is one scheme operating in Sandwell, at Dorothy Parkes Centre in Smethwick.</p> <p>Morrison's (Wednesbury) agreed to consider introducing.</p>

	Sainsbury's (Oldbury) does not have a café. No response from Asda and Tesco.
<p>"Happy to Chat" Benches</p> <p>https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/citylife-news/community/happy-chat-benches-aim-combat-loneliness-and-isolation</p> <p>https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/happy-chat-benches-around-cardiff-22102985</p> <p>https://www.sthelenswellbeing.org.uk/services/mental-wellbeing/pages/happy-to-chat-benches</p>	<p>The 'Happy to Chat' benches feature a simple sign which reads '<i>Sit here if you don't mind someone stopping to say hello</i>' and are designed to help combat loneliness and encourage community interaction.</p> <p>Assistant Director (Borough Economy) Green Spaces, Green Services, Events has indicated willingness to look at doing this this in Sandwell.</p>
<p>Community Transport Let's Chat Bus and Community Hub</p> <p>https://www.communitytransport.org/letschat</p>	<p>Year- long project started in October 2022 and funded by Department for Transport. The aim of the project is to tackle and reduce isolation and loneliness in our local communities by providing places where people can connect to others, chat to people, socialise, meet others, build new links and connections, and be signposted to other services in our local communities that might be beneficial to them.</p>

	<p>Provides mobile units (Let's Chat Bus), community hubs and passenger transport, to try to reach as many people as possible. It is about bringing people together, from all walks of life, and creating a feeling of inclusion. The project replicates a Walsall scheme that has been running much longer.</p>
Shop Mobility	<p>Provides a wheelchair and mobility scooter loan service in West Bromwich, supporting those with mobility difficulties who may otherwise be unable to go out. Wheelchair loan also available, short term (a day) and long term (6 months).</p> <p>A collaboration with Tesco (New Square) provides 4hrs free parking for blue badge holders. Previously provided a small café facility (hot drinks) but space too small to continue.</p> <p>The service currently operates 6 days a week but will be reducing to 3 days due to funding reductions.</p>
Neighbourhood Partnerships Teams	<p>Neighbourhood Partnerships Teams undertake a variety of activities across the six towns, working with partners and Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations to develop existing provision and build capacity within the community to support the creation of new activities where gaps are identified. Loneliness and isolation is a priority area.</p> <p>Some link with social prescribers but the arrangements for social prescribing differ across Sandwell by Primary Care Network.</p>
McArthur Glen Community Corner	<p>The community corner provides a safe warm space for the local community to enjoy as well as hosting a plethora of free to attend events and activities (up until 31st March.)</p>

https://www.mcarthurglen.com/en/outlets/uk/designer-outlet-west-midlands/whatson/community-corner/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Donation Station • Hot Desk Facilities • Community Library Book Swap • Chill-out lounge area • Affirmation Station • Life skills workshops such as First Aid Training and Sign Language classes • Exercise classes • An opportunity to meet and chat with your local Police, Ambulance and Fire Service • Literature Festival
Housing Home Checks	<p>All Council tenants are being visited as part of a tenancy check and also a conversation where needs can be discussed/observed, and referrals made to appropriate agencies.</p> <p>Around 2,000 Home Checks have been completed so far. 224 people have reported that they feel lonely or isolated but a breakdown of this by town is still awaited.</p>
Warm Spaces	<p>Free, safe and supportive spaces that people can visit during the colder months. People can also have a chat with staff about other support services available. Residents can get advice and information about benefits, energy support, managing bills, how local charities can help, and how to access community support to combat isolation.</p> <p>All 19 libraries as well as community centres, leisure centres and voluntary and community sector venues.</p>

	<p>The initiative has been very well received (2022). Data on attendance is still being analysed.</p>
<p>Campaign to End Loneliness</p>	<p>Works to ensure that people most at risk of loneliness are reached and supported, services and activities are more effective at addressing loneliness and a wider range of loneliness services and activities are developed.</p> <p>Also provides Training.</p>
<p>Tackling Loneliness Hub</p>	<p>An online learning and exchange space for professionals working on loneliness across the public, private, charity and academic sectors.</p> <p>Membership is open to all professionals in England who are working on loneliness.</p> <p>The Hub aims to facilitate learning and discussion to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a committed and established network of loneliness professionals across all sectors • Support loneliness professionals to work collaboratively and generate action • Increase the evidence base on loneliness • Support a national conversation on loneliness <p>The Hub is supported by DCMS and managed by a team at the Campaign to End Loneliness and the What Works Centre for Wellbeing</p>

NHS England	<p>Provides an e-learning resource, developed by Health Education England (HEE) in collaboration with Public Health England and the Campaign to End Loneliness. It provides information to help health and care learners to recognise people who may be at risk from loneliness and social isolation and understand the potential negative outcomes this may have on their health.</p> <p>West Midlands Ambulance Service has agreed to highlight NHS England training to staff (see below).</p>
West Midlands Ambulance Service	<p>Advised they are unable to offer any information or support and they do not capture data on repeat callers. However, has agreed to include NHS England's training (above) in its e-learning resources for all staff.</p>
West Midlands Fire Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe and Well checks carried out by operational firefighters, and cover a range of topics, which includes loneliness and isolation. • Targets those living alone and the elderly. • Some officers are trained in complex needs e.g. hoarding. • Established partnership referral pathways and referrals are made to partner agencies when necessary. • Two-way process needed – partnerships to drive safe and well check referrals and WMFS can identify those in need of social prescribing for example, but reports that social prescribing is disjointed across Sandwell.

<p>West Midlands Police</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surgeries and drop-in sessions across the six towns - ‘brew with the ladies in blue’, “cuppa with a copper”. • Informal get-togethers with local groups at various locations throughout the three wards where PCSOs meet with members of the community in an effort to facilitate cohesion with hard to reach parts of the community such as the elderly – “knit and natter” and similar craft groups. • Working towards integrating more with South-Asian community. • Uses SCVO Route to Wellbeing Portal to signpost people. • Engages with Let’s Chat Bus. • Engages with Neighbourhood Partnerships Team and VCS • 12 officers dedicated to schools – risk of engagement in extremism and gangs for children who are lonely or isolated – working on diversion provision. • WMNow App is an engagement tool, translating into 152 languages. Mapping function enables targeting of certain groups. • During lockdowns PCSOs supported digital outreach activities, befriending services and comfort phonecalls. • IT system in development that will capture data on individuals and referrals made and working to improve data collection overall.
<p>Social Prescribing</p> <p>https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/workforce-development-framework-social-prescribing-link-workers/</p>	<p>Social prescribing is a way to connect people with community-based services, groups and activities that meet practical, social, and emotional needs that affect their health and wellbeing, and increase people’s active involvement with their health and their community. Social prescribing is happening across Sandwell; however, the approach varies across the eight Primary Care Networks and more information is required.</p>

<p>https://www.activeblackcountry.co.uk/what-we-do/health-wellbeing/social-prescribing/</p> <p>https://www.healthexchange.org.uk/services/social-prescribing/social-prescribing-birmingham/</p>	<p>The NHS has recently published a workforce development framework to provide clear and consistent standards and improve the quality and consistency of social prescribing.</p> <p>The Council is currently developing a Social Prescribing Strategy for Sandwell. As part of this work officers from Public Health have met with a number of social prescribers and obtained their feedback on how the approach can be strengthened. Strengthening the voluntary and community sector is also critical to the success of social prescribing, to ensure that there is adequate provision to refer patients into.</p>
<p>Government</p>	<p>There is a range of resources on the government website that are still to be explored in depth to support this review.</p>
<p>Better Mental Health Programme..</p>	<p>Funding from Public Health England’s Prevention and Promotion Fund for Better Mental Health has been used to help a number of organisations, through grants, to improve mental health and wellbeing and to provide an overall strategy to ensure that residents of Sandwell are given all the support they need; especially those who were vulnerable. Uses existing community links to bolster existing support and services.</p> <p>Initial analyses show that the programme has been very successful, with a self-rated evaluation of wellbeing showing that “wellbeing” scores had increased by 17.8%.</p>

Sandwell Libraries and Museums	<p>Many arts, crafts and social groups are held across the borough in libraries and museums and in their outdoor spaces. A Friends group also exists, that helps with the running of the premises and such events.</p> <p>The libraries service leads on the Council's 19 Welcoming Spaces (formerly known as Warm Spaces - see above). In 2022 West Bromwich Library opened on Christmas day and offered hot drinks and snacks. 50 people attended at it was hoped that the library would open on Christmas day 2023 too. Other libraries would open on Christmas day, subject to staff volunteering.</p> <p>The libraries service has secured £88,000 from the "Know Your Neighbourhoods" fund, which will be used to tackle loneliness through volunteering. A volunteer co-ordinator would be recruited to lead on the project. The funding would also be used to put on additional activities. Public Health has advised that library staff and volunteers can be trained using the Make Every Contact Count (MECC) approach (see below).</p>
Making Every Contact Count	<p>The Making Every Contact Count (MECC) approach encourages health and social care staff to use the opportunities arising during their routine interactions with patients to have conversations about how they might make positive improvements to their health or wellbeing. MECC equips people with the competence and confidence to deliver health and wellbeing messages, to help encourage people to change their behaviour and to direct them to local services that can support them.</p>

<p>Friendly Benches</p>	<p>Specially designed outdoor seating spaces that act as meeting points and social hubs, hosting regular activities and events for people of all ages and abilities.</p> <p>There are 15 (nationally), the closest one to Sandwell being in Halesowen (Dudley). They are run by volunteers.</p> <p>An independent evaluation of the scheme in 2023 concluded that the initiative is having a positive impact on communities.</p> <p>The cost of a bench is £19,037, which includes full installation and ongoing support, advice and guidance from The Friendly Bench CIC team, including support with fundraising, marketing, sharing of best practice, ideas and resources as well as publicity and promotion to help keep the local community engaged and ensuring continued impact.</p>
<p>Sandwell Parents of Disabled Children</p>	<p>Members of the working group visited one of Sandwell Parents of Disabled Children's (SPDC) group session at West Bromwich Leisure Centre in November 2023. The group was started in 2003 by parents, using their own money, for play and leisure purposes. The group is now a registered charity and receives funding via SCVO. The group holds various contracts with Sandwell Children's Trust for different age-related activities and also puts on training and events across 34 weeks of the year with dedicated events for parents. Funding is on a three- year basis so there is often a lot of anxiety during the last year of the contract as worries start about whether further funding will be awarded. Having to pay for venue hire limits the funds available for activities. Demand for the service outweighs capacity, and a rota and waiting list is used to manage attendance.</p>

Members spoke with a number of parents and the following key feedback was noted:-

- they don't get the "school gate" experience, because their children are taken to school by SEND transport services;
- parents feel lonely while their child is at school;
- some children are also carers and don't get the typical childhood/teenage experience;
- grandparents can also be affected;
- some of the parents are disabled themselves, so already felt isolated before becoming a parent;
- after becoming a parent of a disabled child their friends sometimes drift away because they are unable to join in social events;
- disabled children can often display challenging behaviours, which makes people avoid them;
- the group is only funded for under 18s and upon reaching adulthood the support services that are available to them change, adjustment period can be difficult, particularly those who have been supported by the group since the age of 4;
- some school's SENDCOs hold events for parents;
- parents have to spend a lot of time "fighting" with professionals for support and/or diagnoses;
- short breaks separate the child from the family, parents don't always want this and want to see their child enjoying the activities – "how can strengthen a family by splitting it up?";

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some parents felt as if they never had the opportunity to leave the house due to their caring commitments; • parents benefitted from receiving ‘peer support’ from other parents who attended the group.
<p>The Benefits of Pets</p> <p>https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/the-importance-of-animals-tackling-loneliness-one-pet-at-a-time/#:~:text=Staying%20home%20with%20a%20cat,depression%2C%20anxiety%2C%20and%20loneliness.</p> <p>https://www.monash.edu/news/articles/using-pets-to-support-healthy-ageing-pilot-study#:~:text=Monash%20University%20researcher%20Dr%20Em,from%20migrant%20and%20refugee%20backgrounds</p>	<p>It is widely acknowledged that pets can positively benefit the well-being of owners and for many older people living on their own, their pets are their reason for living. The benefits of having a pet include relieving stress, lowering heart rates and blood pressure, plus helping us become physically active; directly reducing the risk of mortality, and even helping us cope with physical and emotional situations, including pain.</p>

Report to Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board

11 March 2024

Subject:	Tracking and Monitoring of Scrutiny Actions and Recommendations
Director:	James McLaughlin Assistant Chief Executive James_Mclaughlin@Sandwell.gov.uk
Contact Officer:	Alex Goddard Scrutiny Lead Officer Alexander_Goddard@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations







- 1.1 That the Board notes the responses from the Executive/Directors/Partners on recommendations referred since the Board's last meeting, as set out in the Appendix.
- 1.2 That the Board notes the progress on implementation of those recommendations approved by the Executive/Directors/Partners, as set out in the Appendix.
- 1.3 That the Board identifies any recommendations where progress is unsatisfactory and determines what action it wishes to take.
- 1.4 That the Board determines which 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 and progress on the implementation of recommendations made by the scrutiny function.



5 Implications

<p>Resources:</p>	<p>Any resources implications have been considered with the relevant Officer/Director/Cabinet Member/Risk Owner at the time the recommendations were referred to them by the Board.</p> <p>Any specific risks for the Board’s attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>
<p>Legal and Governance:</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>Scrutiny committees can require a response from NHS bodies within 28 days in relation to recommendations made to them.</p>
<p>Risk:</p>	<p>Any risk implications have been considered with the relevant Officer/Director/Cabinet Member/Risk Owner at the time the recommendations were referred to them by the Board.</p> <p>Any specific risks for the Board’s attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>
<p>Equality:</p>	<p>Any equality implications have been considered with the relevant Officer/Director/Cabinet Member/Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team at the time the recommendations were referred to them by the Board.</p> <p>Any specific equality implications for the Board’s attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>
<p>Health and Wellbeing:</p>	<p>Any health and wellbeing implications have been considered with the relevant Officer/Director/Cabinet</p>



	<p>Member at the time the recommendations were referred to them by the Board.</p> <p>Any specific health and wellbeing implications for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>
Social Value	<p>Any social value implications have been considered with the relevant Officer/Director/Cabinet Member/Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team at the time the recommendations were referred to them by the Board.</p>
Climate Change	<p>Any climate change implications have been considered with the relevant Officer/Director/Cabinet Member/Risk Owner at the time the recommendations were referred to them by the Board.</p> <p>Any specific risks for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>
Corporate Parenting	<p>Any Corporate Parenting implications have been considered with the relevant Officer/Director/Cabinet Member/Risk Owner at the time the recommendations were referred to them by the Board.</p> <p>Any specific risks for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>

6 Appendices

Appendix One – Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny 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
Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board				
21 November 2023	Department of Health and Social Care Consultation: Creating a Smoke-free Generation	<p>(1) that the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board:-</p> <p>(a) welcomes the Government's proposed measures to restrict access to cigarettes and address the marketing of vapes to young people;</p> <p>(b) highlights the importance of education around the harms of smoking and vaping and messaging that discourages both;</p> <p>(c) in welcoming the introduction of further regulation around the sales of vapes, highlights that sufficient resources and structures need to be in place to support enforcement activity;</p> <p>(2) that the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities includes the Board's comments in the Council's formal response to the consultation</p>	Liann Brookes Smith/ Mary Bailey	The recommendations of the board were submitted to the Department of Health and Social Care as part of the national consultation of proposals to create and smoke- free generation

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Report to Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board

11 March 2024

Subject:	Cabinet Forward Plan and Board Work Programme
Director:	James McLaughlin Assistant Chief Executive James.Mclaughlin@Sandwell.gov.uk
Contact Officer:	Alex Goddard Scrutiny Lead Officer Alexander.Goddard@sandwell.gov.uk

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

Resources:	<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>
Legal and Governance:	<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>
Risk:	<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>
Equality:	<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>
Health and Wellbeing:	<p>Any health and wellbeing implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.</p>



	Any specific health and wellbeing implications for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.
Social Value:	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.
Climate Change:	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.
Corporate Parenting:	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

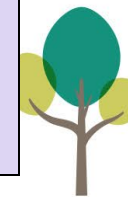
None.



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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
20	<p>Customer Service Transformation Programme – Appointment of Implementation Partner</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>Cabinet - Adults Social Care and Health (Cllr Hartwell)</p>	<p>Public</p>	<p>June 2024</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Report and Outline Business Case</p>



Scrutiny Board Work Programme 2023/24

Health and Adult Social Care



Meeting Date	Item	Presented by
17 July 2023 (Reports due 5 July 2023)	Towards Zero HIV Transmissions	Maura Flynn
	Health and Adult Social Care Work Programme and the Loneliness Scrutiny Review Working Group	Contact Officer: Alexander Goddard
	Joint Health Scrutiny Arrangements	Contact Officer: Alexander Goddard
4 September 2023 (Reports due 23 August 2023)	Draft Sandwell Winter Booklet	Liann Brookes-Smith
	Public Health Towns Plan	Liann Brookes-Smith
21 November 2023 (Reports due 8 November 2023)	Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2022/ 23	Deb Ward
	Department of Health and Social Care Consultation: Creating a Smoke-free generation	Mary Bailey
	Primary Care Update	Adele Hickman – Black Country ICB
	Patient Participation Groups	Emma Durnall – Black Country ICB
22 January 2024 (Reports due 10 January 2024)	Worklessness Programme Bid	Liann Brookes- Smith
	Health Determinants Research Collaborations Report	Lina Martino/ Liann Brookes- Smith

11 March (Reports due 28 February)	Report of the HASC Social Isolation and Loneliness Scrutiny Review	John Swann/ Alex Goddard
	Adults Social Care CQC Review Update	Rashpal Bishop
	Building Wellness and Wellbeing	Liann Brookes- Smith

Items to be scheduled in 2023/24

Poor birthing experiences and inequalities report – Liann Brookes- Smith

Provisions for Adults with Learning Disabilities in Sandwell – Rashpal Bishop

Healthcare in isolated communities -

Diagnosis in later life (Focus on Autism and ADHD) -

Arthritis service provision in Sandwell.

Briefing Notes to be circulated:

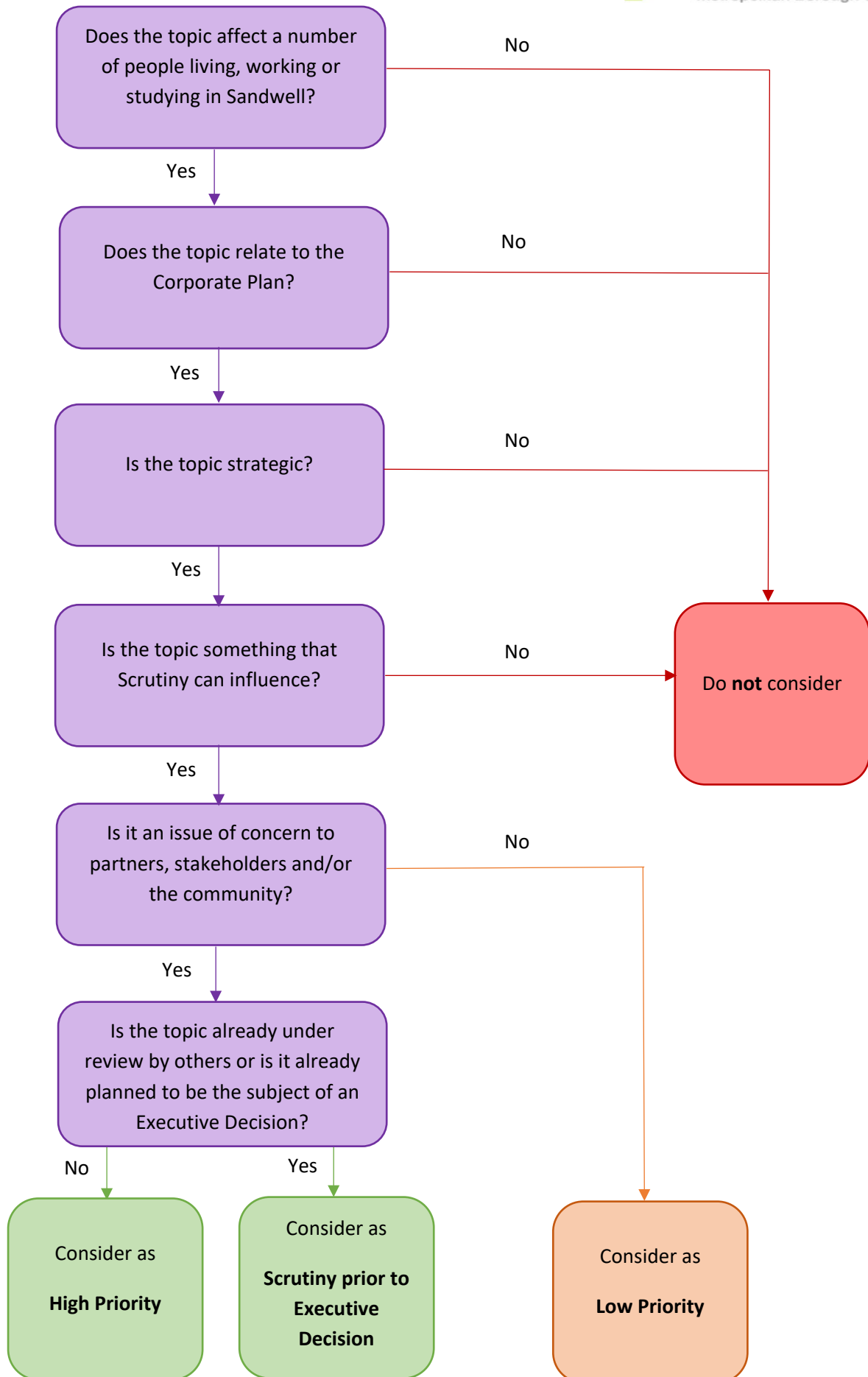
Director of Public Health Report – Liann Brookes- Smith

Social Prescribing Plan (agenda item at the Health and Wellbeing Board) – Cathren Armstrong

Scrutiny Review

Continuation of the “Social Isolation and Loneliness” Scrutiny Review.

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