

Agenda

Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board

Thursday, 14 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 15 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 Implementation of Sandwell Community Safety Strategy 2022- 26

13 - 90

To consider and comment upon the Safer



Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board's
Community Safety Strategy 2022- 26.

- 6 **Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy on Adaptations for Disabled Tenants in Council Housing** 91 - 100

To consider and comment upon the Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy on Adaptations for Disabled Tenants in Council Housing.

- 7 **Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Action Tracker** 101 - 106

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

- 8 **Cabinet Forward Plan and Work Programme** 107 - 126

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

Shokat Lal
Chief Executive
Sandwell Council House
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West Midlands

Distribution

Councillor Fenton (Chair)
Councillors Lewis (Vice- Chair), K Allcock, Davies, Dhatt, Fisher, Khan,
Maycock, Shaeen, Webb, Younis and Ms Brown (Co- opted Member.

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Minutes of Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board

Thursday 15 February 2024 at 6.05pm
In the Council Chamber - Sandwell Council House, Oldbury

Present: Councillor Fenton (Chair);
Councillors K Allcock, Lewis, Maycock, Shaeen and Webb.

In Attendance: Councillor Padda (Cabinet Member for Leisure and Tourism) and Sue Smith (Tenants and Leaseholders Scrutiny Group).

Officers: Matthew Huggins (Assistant Director – Green Spaces, Green Services, Events), Stephnie Hancock (Deputy Democratic Services Manager) and John Swann (Democratic Services Officer).

15/24 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Davies, Dhatt, Fisher and Younis.

16/24 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

17/24 **Minutes**

Resolved that the minutes of the meetings held on 17 and 29 January are confirmed as a correct record.

18/24 **Additional Items of Business**

There were no urgent additional items of business to consider.

19/24 **Fishing Policy (*Sandwell Angling Code of Conduct*)**

The Board received an overview of the proposed Fishing Policy for Sandwell's waterbodies - *Sandwell Angling Code of Conduct* - which was due to be considered by the Cabinet in June 2024. The draft Code of Conduct was due to be introduced alongside online payment options for Sandwell Angling Permits.

The draft Code set out the expectations of individuals angling on Sandwell's waterbodies and detailed those waterbodies that permitted angling. The Code sought to enforce good Angling practices, which would ensure no detrimental impact to fish or waterfowl.

Whilst developing the Code a six- week public consultation had taken place which had been promoted online and via the Council's social media channels. The Council had also consulted the Angling Trust, which was the national governing body for angling in England.

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

- A fishing stock mapping exercise was due to commence from April 2024, to better inform efforts to protect fish and ensure sustainable fishing practices.
- Abandoned tents at waterbodies had contributed to increased fly- tipping in the Borough.
- Clarification in the draft Code with regards to the permittance of shelters and umbrellas would be of benefit.
- The Code defined day fishing as angling between dawn- and- dusk. Set times for fishing could make the draft Code easier to understand.
- Enforcement efforts were to be conducted via spot- checks.
- Sandwell Angling Permits would be for sale at three locations within Council owned green spaces, including

Sandwell Valley Visitor Centre, however it was anticipated that the majority of anglers would purchase permits online.

- Fishing Rod Licences issued by the Environment Agency were required in addition to Angling Permits.
- The final Code would be communicated via updated signage across the Borough at waterbodies, within the Sandwell Herald and via correspondence sent to Angling Trust.
- The Assistant Director - Green Spaces, Green Services, Events, undertook to support Angling clubs' efforts to book waterbodies for events.
- The price of Sandwell Angling Permits had been compared against comparable local authorities to ensure value for money.
- Members supported Angling at Swan Pool on Saturday and Sunday.
- The Board re- affirmed its recommendation made at its meeting on 17 January 2024 in relation to the feasibility of providing fixed and fire-safe designated BBQ areas in Sandwell's green spaces (Minute No 6/24 (Implementation of 3 Boroughwide Public Space
- Protection Orders relating to Alcohol Consumption, Dog Fouling and BBQs/Fires) refers).
- The Council would respond to intelligence in relation to poaching in collaboration with the Wildlife Crime Officers at West Midlands Police.
- Animal feed for waterfowl and other aquatic wildlife was sold within Sandwell Valley, animal feed sold at other waterbodies may promote ecology aims.
- Messaging promoting approved fishing practices cascaded via schools in the locality of Council waterbodies may better educate residents.
- The use of drones to monitor angling practices at waterbodies may support enforcement activities.
- Individuals with mobility and access needs needed to be supported be able to fish at the Borough's waterbodies.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the Assistant Director Borough Economy (Green Spaces, Green Services, Events) considers the following amendments to the draft

Sandwell Angling Code of Conduct, to provide clarity:-

- a. detailing set times for fishing to take place at waterbodies;
 - b. allowing angling at Swan Pool on Saturdays and Sundays;
- (2) that the Assistant Director Borough Economy (Green Spaces, Green Services, Events) considers the following in relation to the draft Sandwell Angling Code of Conduct:-
- a. explores options to sell animal feed at sites where angling is permitted;
 - b. works with schools in the locality of Council waterbodies to inform residents of approved angling practices;
 - c. undertakes to improve access to waterbodies for those with mobility and access issues;

20/24

Housing Regulatory Framework

Resolved that consideration of the Housing Regulatory Framework is deferred to a future meeting of the Board.

21/24

Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Action Tracker

The Board noted the status of actions and recommendations it had made.

22/24

Cabinet Forward Plan and Work Programme

The Board noted its Work Programme for 2023 - 24 and received the Cabinet Forward Plan.

The Vice- Chair reported that Leadership Meetings of the Board had taken place in conjunction with Cabinet Members and Chief Officers to promote the scrutiny function in Sandwell.

Meeting ended at 6.51pm

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Report to Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board

14 March 2024

Subject:	Implementation of Sandwell Community Safety Strategy 2022-26
Safer Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board Chair:	Chief Superintendent - Kim Madill West Midlands Police
Director:	Alice Davey Director of Borough Economy
Contact Officer:	Tessa Mitchell Business Manager Community Safety & Resilience tessa_mitchell@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendation

- 1.1 To consider and comments upon the work undertaken to deliver on the Safer Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board's Community Safety Strategy 2022-26 which outlines the partnerships key priorities and direction of travel over these 5 years.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Sandwell's Community Safety Strategy is overseen by the multi-agency Safer Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board (SSPPCB) who oversee the Boroughs approach to community safety. The Board adopted a new partnership strategy in 2022, which built upon the work of



the previous strategy, reinforced by feedback from residents obtained over the previous three years and Sandwell's annual strategic assessments.

2.2 The key priorities within the strategy are:

- The prevention of violence and exploitation
- Reducing offending, reoffending and serious organised crime
- Preventing crime & antisocial behaviour in our Neighbourhoods

2.3 The strategy also encompasses two other significant cross cutting themes: **tackling substance misuse to save lives and reduce crime**, aligned with the Government's new Drugs Strategy and **delivering on the new Serious Violence Duty**. The Duty is a key part of the Government's programme of work to prevent and reduce serious violence; taking a multi-agency approach to understand the causes and consequences of serious violence, focused on prevention and early intervention, and informed by evidence which requires a joined up holistic approach.





2.4 The golden thread running through all these priorities is our commitment to protecting and supporting vulnerable victims. We will deliver these priorities through adopting a public health approach, understanding that violence is preventable and identifying the reasons why people get drawn into crime. We will also support organisations to become trauma aware and embed such approaches into their practice and tackle these issues through the adoption of a 4 P Plan which aims to: prevent violence, abuse and exploitation; protect those affected; reduce harm and pursue those who perpetrate.

2.5 The strategy is driven through the work of the Boards 3 subgroups who oversee annual work plans which are regularly reviewed throughout the year and updated annually. This ensures the flexibility to predict and respond to any emerging trends in the fast paced and ever-changing arena that is community safety.



3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

The Sandwell Community Safety Strategy is a partnership approach developed through the SSPPCB so that all statutory partners were content that the contents aligned to their own individual agency strategies and plans. Please see how this aligns with the Sandwell LA corporate plan as below.

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on prevention of violence and exploitation • Reducing opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour • Multi-Agency support for children and families • Delivery of awareness and resilience building work in our schools.
	<p>People live well and age well</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on tackling substance misuse • Community Engagement
	<p>Strong resilient communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place based tasking processes using evidence to focus on specific issues across each town • Community awareness work through our ASB, Community Safety and Prevent Teams • Tackling perpetrators • Building community capacity and resilience
	<p>Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of our CCTV stock to support community safety across our estates and towns

4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 To ensure that the communities of Sandwell, feel safe, protected, and confident in their homes and neighbourhoods, it is important to take a comprehensive approach to community safety. This means working with a range of stakeholders, including residents, community groups, law enforcement agencies and all of the statutory partners listed in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to develop and implement effective strategies that



address crime and ASB across the Borough. Year to date (26/2/24), there has been a 5.52% decrease in total recorded crime in Sandwell, equivalent to 1,925 offences.

4.2 One important element of a comprehensive community safety strategy is community engagement. This involves listening to the concerns and priorities of residents and working together to develop solutions that address their needs. In developing the strategy, a range of engagement opportunities were undertaken which are referenced on p14 of the strategy including a resident survey. A further community safety survey was undertaken at the end of 2023 and results are currently being compiled. Residents were given a number of options and an opportunity to make comments. The initial comparisons between the two surveys are outlined below.

4.3 Respondents Top 5 Priorities were:

2021	2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug dealing (10.7%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Littering/fly tipping (38%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth disorder (9.3%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug Dealing (37%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burglary (7.4%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuisance Bikes (33%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violent crime (7.2%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise Nuisance (32%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Littering/fly tipping (5.8%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of drugs in public places (27%)

4.4 Respondents thoughts on improving safety:

2021	2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased police presence 91% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased police presence 95%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More CCTV (69.5%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More CCTV (73%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well maintained estates & streets (59.9%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well maintained estates and streets (61%).



4.5 Residents top 5 Concerns

2021	2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ineffective response by authorities (23%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knife crime (70%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth crime and intimidation (15%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti-social behaviour (67%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drug dealing and use (10%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth violence involving under 25s (67%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No deterrence for crime (10%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nuisance bikes (57%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crime and ASB getting worse (6%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public place violence (57%)

Sections 5, 6 and 7 of this report show the work being done through the priority leads which aligns with the concerns highlighted in the most recent survey.

4.6 SHAPE Survey Results 2022: Sandwell's annual young person's survey revealed that their perception of Sandwell is adversely affected by high levels of crime and deprivation and that they were particularly concerned regarding gangs, youth violence, knife crime, drug and substance abuse, and bullying. The influence of social media and concerns about online safety were also notable points.

As a result of the above, a group of children who took part in the survey will be taking over a police meeting in March 2024 to discuss their concerns with the local police senior team and seek reassurance as to what is being done about their safety from a police perspective. Any learning will be shared with the wider partnership for any appropriate supportive or additional action by the partnership.

4.7 As well as formal surveys ongoing engagement takes place during the year through walkabouts, pop up events, feedback from partners via tasking and throughout the annual Safer 6 community safety campaign.

5.0 Priority 1: The Prevention of Violence and Exploitation (PoVE)

5.1 Tackling the significant challenges posed by violence and exploitation in



in Sandwell’s communities needs a multifaceted approach encompassing early intervention, robust response mechanisms and sustained prevention efforts. Integrated data-driven insights, community feedback and expert knowledge inform actions. This report outlines the key initiatives undertaken, the progress made, and the challenges encountered over the past year and the collaborative efforts undertaken with various partners, including law enforcement, health services, community organisations, and educational institutions, which are pivotal in creating safer, more resilient communities.

5.2 The following outlines the work undertaken demonstrating our commitment to safeguarding citizens and the ongoing adaptation to effectively address the dynamic landscape of violence and exploitation.

5.3 We Said, We Did

What we said	What we did
<p>Ensure robust, effective victims’ pathways, support and responses are in place</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rolled out Domestic Abuse and Modern Slavery strategies to strengthen victim support alongside the Child Exploitation Strategy focusing on early intervention. 2. Initiated Sexual Assault and Abuse Subgroup and integrated targeted responses for public place violence to provide comprehensive care. 3. Focused on disrupting County Lines and tackling exploitation through Organised Crime Group efforts and a collaborative approach to modern slavery. 4. Informed Serious Violence Strategy with insights from the Strategic Needs Assessment and Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) mock audit to enhance system-wide violence prevention. 5. Addressed safeguarding in out-of-school settings to reinforce the protection of young people from violence, abuse, and exploitation.



<p>Use data and analysis to develop an understanding of each type of violence, abuse and exploitation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Established enhanced data collection processes to capture a comprehensive understanding of violence, abuse, and exploitation patterns. 2. Developed new dashboards to effectively monitor and analyse trends in public place violence and school-reported incidents. 3. Launched specialised data tracking for domestic abuse and modern slavery, integrating insights into strategic planning. 4. Advanced the use of data visualisation tools to support the proactive identification and response to child exploitation cases. 5. Utilised data-driven insights from JTAI mock audits to refine strategies and bolster violence prevention initiatives.
<p>Understand and further embed a trauma informed approach</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Embedded trauma-informed care principles in responses to public place violence incidents 2. Prioritised a trauma-informed approach in domestic abuse and sexual assault cases for improved victim recovery 3. Working on adopting a regional public health approach to modern slavery and domestic abuse 4. Implemented trauma-informed and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) training, enhancing professional understanding and response.
<p>Ensure effective training is in place to continue to educate and raise awareness of violence, abuse and exploitation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Launched a comprehensive modern slavery training program and delivered diverse training sessions on child exploitation, domestic abuse, and sexual assault. 2. Executed the Safer 6 campaign to amplify public awareness of community safety issues. 3. Developed an annual communications plan to ensure consistent messaging on violence and exploitation prevention. 4. Issued regular newsletters focusing on community safety, Prevent, modern slavery, and domestic abuse.



5. Introduced a modern slavery blog to educate and update stakeholders on ongoing initiatives and best practices.

5.4 Violence Against the Person

The evidence shows that after declining for around a decade, homicide, knife crime and gun crime started rising again in 2014 across most police force areas in England and Wales. Some of this increase can be attributed to improved police recording of crime but some of the increases are thought to reflect a rise in offences involving knives and firearms. These increases have been accompanied by a slight shift towards younger victims and perpetrators, which highlights the importance of understanding potential indicators of serious violence learnt behaviours (SVLBs) especially at younger ages.

5.5 Key observations

- Year-to-date (to end of Q3) figures show a 2.4% overall reduction in violence with injury offences in Sandwell compared to the previous year.
- West Bromwich is registering the largest reduction in both volume and percentage violence with injury.
- Year to date (to end of Q3) knife crime incidents involving victims aged 10 to 17 decreased by 14.8%
- Year to date (up to end Q3) shows that knife crime involving victims and offenders aged 18 plus increased by 41 (21.5%) compared to last performance year (22/23)
- Year to date there has been an increase of 3 firearms offences (4.2%).
- Year to date there has been a decrease of 111 alcohol related violent offences (5.1%) compared to 2022/23
- Year to date 2043 young people have benefited from violence prevention activities through the VRP delivery grant

5.6 The Prevention of Violence and Exploitation (PoVE) plan in Sandwell has included several key initiatives focused on early intervention and prevention of knife and gun crime, as well as public place violence including:



- Collaboration with the Violence Reduction Partnership, including deploying a Community Navigator in Sandwell and allocation of significant funding for activities including Step Together Routes, Mentors in Violence Prevention, trauma-informed practice training and school holiday programs.
- Introduction of the 'Around Midnight' virtual training package in schools to tackle violence-related issues.
- Utilisation of OPCC Community Safety Funding for initiatives supporting young people at risk of offending including: specialist/tailored support with individuals who have previously offended; workshops with local schools highlighting the dangers and consequences of anti-social behaviour and knife crime; a multi-media programme which focuses on engaging and re-engaging disadvantaged and vulnerable young people from Sandwell Community Schools and a preventative mentoring programme for children who are showing signs of disengaging from education during Year 6 or are deemed at risk being exploited and/or drawn into violent acts or gang affiliation.
- Enhanced targeted youth services to more effectively meet the needs of young people.
- Implementation of the St Giles Violence Intervention Project in local A&E departments to connect with violence victims at crucial moments.
- Development and launch of Sandwell's Serious Violence Needs Assessment to guide strategic approaches to violence prevention. Sandwell's approach and assessment has been recognised as one of the best SNAs across the whole West Midlands area
- Improved presentation and utilisation of data and analysis for a detailed understanding of various forms of violence, abuse, and exploitation.
- Development and implementation of violence prevention plans specifically tailored for school environments.



- Public Health funded project work with boys with Afro-Caribbean heritage at risk of school exclusion, who are disproportionality represented in Sandwell’s Youth Justice Service.
- A new schools and violence dashboard created to track violence reported by schools.

5.7 These initiatives will take time to embed and impact to reverse recent trends in relation to serious youth violence. However, the 2.4% reduction in violence with injury recorded so far this year and the 14.8% reduction in knife crime involving those under 17 are promising initial signs. Sandwell’s Serious Violence Needs Assessment recognises that this focus must continue given the context in Sandwell and the prevalence of known drivers for violence across our communities including deprivation, homelessness, mental health, low educational attainment and substance misuse. Without this there is a risk that violence may increase for young people and wider society.

5.8 Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is a devastating crime that can have serious and long-lasting impacts on victims and their families. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 has provided a new statutory definition of domestic abuse that includes a range of behaviours beyond physical violence. In Sandwell domestic abuse is a significant issue that affects a large number of people each year. According to recent statistics, around one-third of violence against the person offences and one-fifth of all homicides in the area are domestic abuse-related.

5.9 Key observations

- Year to date (23/24) has recorded a decrease of 547 reported DA offences (9.1%) compared to last year (22/23)
- Year to date to the end of Q3 877 cases have been referred to MARAC for high-risk multi-agency discussions
- 88 people have been supported so far this year through the sanctuary scheme
- There has been an increase in those supported year to date in refuge accommodation with such accommodation - 87 adults & 112 children ytd.



5.10 Tackling Domestic Abuse in Sandwell

Work to address domestic abuse across the Borough over the past year has included:

- Development and Implementation of Strategic Plans to address various aspects of domestic abuse within the community.
- Development of multi-agency implementation groups to oversee and review the effectiveness of actions being progressed aided by new data dashboards
- Incorporating domestic abuse concerns into the broader strategy for preventing serious violence in the community.
- Restructuring processes to enhance governance and coordination, such as the integration of the West Midlands Ending Male Violence Against Women (EMVAWG) Alliance into the West Midlands Community Safety Partnership.
- Aligning plans and strategies with a regional public health approach to comprehensively address domestic abuse from a public health perspective including building strong foundations through robust data, prevention and intervention, care and support, enforcement and criminal justice and establishing best practices.
- OPCC Community Safety Funding supports provision of A&E IDVA
- Significant progress in implementing the Delivery Plan for New Burdens Funding. This funding ensures that Sandwell MBC fulfils its statutory duty defined within Domestic Abuse 2021, ensuring that victims of domestic abuse have access to safe accommodation. Over the past year work has been undertaken to increase the availability and accessibility of safe housing options, providing survivors with a secure and supportive environment to rebuild their lives. This has been significantly supported through the implementation of the new 5-year refuge contract which came into place in February 2023. Occupancy rates are averaging 98%.
- In alignment with the Domestic Abuse Strategy and Implementation Plan, the partnership has commissioned community-based support services tailored to the specific needs of children who are victims of domestic abuse. These services are designed to provide specialised care and assistance, focusing on the safety, well-being, and recovery of these children. April 2023 saw the introduction of Flourishing Futures, which is the refreshed framework for children's services



commissioned to Black Country Women's Aid. To date 62 children have been referred to the services and have received a range of therapeutic and practical recovery interventions and support. Four families have completed the first 10-week Domestic Abuse Recovery Together (DART) programme, which is a nationally evaluated NSPCC programme of recovery.

- Coordination of the partnership response to Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs), which were established on a statutory basis under the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004.
- During 23/24 3 DHR's have been progressing, each with an Independent Chair, commissioned via the LA. In addition, a joint learning panel and review is progressing for a fourth case, which is highlighting learning opportunities for working with and safeguarding adults with care and support needs, who are living with domestic abuse. Ensuring DHRs are undertaken is a statutory duty on the Local Authority and partners.
- The partnership remains committed to learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) and using the insights gained to adapt policies and practices. This commitment aligns with legislative frameworks and best practices, ensuring continuous improvement in responding to domestic abuse cases and enhancing the protection and support offered to victims. The OPCC provides some funding for DHRs but following a change in guidelines bringing more tragic deaths into scope, the amount required is increasing and is currently presenting a pressure on the partnership and in particular the local authority. This is being followed up by DASP and the SSPPCB.
- Ongoing work regionally with the OPCC to revise the current MARAC processes and ensure that this provides a timely and holistic service to high-risk victims. MARAC demand has increased and waiting times had become an area of concern. A co-ordinated and robust partnership response has supported wait times to come down to no longer than 3 weeks to be heard, which is within expected guidelines.
- DA Perpetrator Needs Assessment completed and Sandwell chosen as pilot area for the Pathways to Change custody suite project focusing on support to change behaviour.
- Building a great awareness and understanding of child to parent abuse and suicides related to abuse.



- Ongoing partnership training provision regarding domestic abuse with 408 individuals' year to date accessing the wide range of training available from specialist providers.
- Ongoing awareness raising through regular publicity campaigns, Safer 6 and 16 Days of Action which included the Borough tour of the Quilt of Hope. The team are also exploring media via a local radio station following a recent DHR learning discussion.

5.11 Sexual Assault and Abuse

Sexual assault and abuse in Sandwell is a significant concern with local and national research indicating that the problem is increasing. The threat of child sexual abuse continues to rise, with two-thirds of cases occurring in family environments and only one in eight coming to the attention of authorities. The internet is a major contributor to the problem as it allows offenders to groom multiple victims simultaneously and can lead to contact abuse, the production of indecent images and extortion. Sexual offences are defined under the law of England and Wales and are a significant form of serious violence in a local area.

5.12 Key observations

- Year to date there has been a 9% increase in sexual offences reported

5.13 Tackling Sexual Abuse and Assault in Sandwell

Work to address sexual abuse and assault across the Borough over the past year has included:

- Implementation of Sexual Assault and Abuse Implementation Plan by a multi-agency group ensuring that objectives are met, barriers understood and adjustments made as needed
- The SAA are aligning the SAA plan with the regional public health approach, which focuses on building strong foundations, prevention & intervention, care & support, enforcement & criminal justice and establishing best practices.
- Sexual abuse and assault has been incorporated into the Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) and the overall strategy for preventing



serious violence. Recognising gendered violence as a key driver of violence in communities, the strategy aims to address sexual abuse and assault as part of a comprehensive approach to reducing violence and ensuring individual safety.

- Respondents to Sandwell's Sexual Abuse and Assault Survey in 2021 said that they would feel safer through awareness raising & education, safe spaces and more visible security/police presence. Safer Streets 4 Funding has enabled new CCTV in Bearwood and the roll out of a Safe Spaces Scheme with businesses.
- BCWA provides the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) service, which is dual funded by SMBC & OPCC. This service has seen a 38% increase in referrals year-to-date compared to the previous year, indicating a growing need for support for sexual assault survivors.
- Sandwell are currently the only West Midlands LA to fund ISVA services and this is something others are seeking to replicate. Feedback from the ICB & PCC colleagues highlights Sandwell as ahead of other LA's.

5.14 Modern Slavery

Modern slavery is a heinous crime that involves the exploitation of individuals through the use of force, fraud or coercion. Millions of people, including children and adults, fall victim to this global issue, which takes on various forms such as forced labour in agriculture, construction, manufacturing, commercial sectors, sexual exploitation and domestic servitude. In Sandwell, victims of modern slavery are often lured into situations of exploitation with false promises of good jobs or better lives, only to find themselves in conditions of debt bondage, unable to escape because they are made to believe that they owe their exploiters money. Other victims are forcibly taken or abducted and subjected to physical and emotional abuse.

5.15 Key observations

- In 2023, there were 205 modern slavery concerns reported, representing a 26% increase on the previous year.
- 277 potential victims were assessed and safeguarded
- 128 multi-agency visits were undertaken.
- 107 locations linked to modern slavery activities were disrupted.



- 63 individuals were referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for ongoing support.

5.16 Tackling Modern Slavery in Sandwell

Work to tackle modern slavery across the Borough over the past year has included:

- Operational work co-ordinated through Slavery and Human Trafficking Operational Partnership (SHOP) recognised regionally and nationally as a best practice exemplar.
- Improved training and capacity-building for frontline staff to identify and support victims effectively, Year to date, 38 training sessions delivered to 1254 individuals.
- Delivery of a wide range of modern slavery training programs to various stakeholders including Domiciliary care agencies, Housing, income management, safeguarding adult team, welfare rights, LGA, Human trafficking foundation.
- Collaboration across council departments involved in commissioning, procurement and contract management to ensure awareness and consistent approaches.
- Identification of significant concerns within the care sector and delivery of co-ordinated initiative to bring multiple agencies together to support exploited care workers and raise the profile of this sector nationally.
- Ongoing engagement with local communities, businesses and stakeholders in the fight against modern slavery. Examples include training domiciliary care workers to recognise and respond to modern slavery. Working with 'It's a Penalty' to develop a toolkit for universities to recognise and respond to modern slavery and delivered a workshop to faith leaders on modern slavery.
- Victim pathway and safeguarding responses for modern slavery reviewed and refreshed.
- Collaboration with the regional Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Board to adopt a public health approach.
- Strengthened and enhanced communication channels to raise awareness of modern slavery including the launch of a modern slavery newsletter and blog, which has already had over 1000 views.



- Development of resettlement pathways for survivors of modern slavery, working towards Trusted Assessor status with the Salvation Army.

5.17 Child Exploitation

Sandwell has taken a proactive approach to addressing child exploitation, particularly through its Horizons team, which is dedicated to working with young people who are at risk of or who have experienced exploitation.

5.18 Key observations

- Year-to-date Police figures indicate a 25% drop in CSE offences compared to the previous year.

5.19 Tackling Child Exploitation in Sandwell

- Ongoing work to increase professionals' confidence and competence in identifying and responding to child exploitation, abuse, and violence.
- Focus on early implementation of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for improved quality of referrals in potential exploitation cases.
- Agencies encouraged to collaborate and share information to better understand the scale and nature of criminal exploitation in Sandwell and the wider region.
- Successful embedding of an effective response around Operation Aidant and County Lines Intensification Weeks, involving regional and local coordination. Sandwell's work on this has been commended by WMP.
- Sandwell's partnership approach to County Lines recognised nationally for best practice award and partners have been to Westminster to be part of a panel around polices regarding exploitation, trafficking and county lines.
- Production of an outcome summary report showcasing efforts to address child exploitation and county lines issues.
- Collaboration with Border Force to enhance screening measures for new arrivals on care work visas.
- Support to services to recognise and respond to risks and vulnerabilities faced by young people at key transition points in their lives.
- Delivered an Exploitation Summit in October focusing on exploitation and transitions.



- Development and implementation of the Police Serious and Organised Crime Exchange (SOCEX) model, ensuring effective integration within Sandwell's exploitation hub.

6.0 Priority 2: Reducing Offending, Reoffending and Serious Organised Crime

6.1 Year to date (26/2/24) recorded crime in Sandwell is down by 5.2% equivalent

1925 offences. This section provides an overview of the work of the Boards subgroup to mitigate the impact of crime in Sandwell particularly focusing on the critical areas of offender management, reducing reoffending and disruption of serious organised criminal activities. These complex challenges are tackled through strategic interventions, innovative practices, and collaborative partnerships. It also provides insight into the successes achieved, the obstacles encountered and the lessons learned, providing a transparent overview of the partnerships ongoing commitment to reduce crime and enhance community resilience.

6.2 Multifaceted strategies are in place to support offenders on their path to rehabilitation, with an emphasis on preventing reoffending and providing sustainable solutions for integration back into society. Proactive measures are also in place to target and disrupt serious organised crime which are essential in ensuring public safety and community well-being.

6.3 The following outlines the work undertaken to create a safer environment for all those who live, work and visit Sandwell.

6.4 **We Said, We Did**

We said	We did
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Support offending pathways	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhanced inter-agency cooperation to streamline support services for offenders, ensuring cohesive rehabilitation pathways. 2. Implemented offender management programs with a focus on risk assessment and personalised intervention strategies. 3. Expanded access to education and employment opportunities as part of reintegration efforts for offenders. 4. Strengthened monitoring and support systems post-release to reduce recidivism and aid community re-entry.
Management of high-risk offenders and targeting of key cohorts to reduce rates and seriousness of offences committed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identified and managed high-risk offenders through specialised interventions, reducing the rate and severity of offences. 2. Employed data-driven strategies to target key cohorts, using predictive analytics to prevent serious offences before they occur.
Continue to strengthen and develop partnership approaches around tackling serious organised crime	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthened partnerships with law enforcement, community organisations, and other agencies to combat serious organised crime more effectively. 2. Developed joint operational strategies and shared intelligence systems for a more cohesive and proactive approach to organised crime.
Confirming and being able to clearly articulate the Boroughs approach to prevention and diversion as it relates to youth crime	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Established a clear and articulated strategy for youth crime prevention, focusing on diversionary tactics and early intervention. 2. Implemented community-based programs and educational initiatives aimed at preventing youth engagement in criminal activities, promoting positive alternatives.

6.5 Reducing Adult Reoffending



Reducing reoffending sits at the heart of HM Prison and Probation Services work. Around 80% of people who receive cautions or convictions have offended before, so to cut crime, make communities safer and prevent people from becoming victims of crime, the focus needs to be on reducing reoffending.

6.6 The latest data from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) website, updated in October 2023 for the period January to December 2021, shows a decrease in the proportion of Sandwell offenders who reoffend with a 1.3 percentage point reduction compared to the previous year. Notably, the most significant reductions in reoffending rates were observed in the 45-49 years age group, which dropped from 15.9% to 7.7%, and in the 50+ age group, which decreased from 15.7% to 8.9%. This trend suggests effective measures in reducing reoffending, especially among older offenders.

6.7 **Table: Reoffending Rates Adults 18+**

Reduce re-offending of adults 18+	April to March		Jul to Jun		Oct to Sep		Jan to Dec	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
	23.6	18.1	22.5	17.3	20.8	17.5	19.3	18.0

6.8 **Tackling Adult Offending / Reoffending in Sandwell**

- It has been a difficult year for the Probation Service locally and nationally with significant resourcing issues, meaning the management of offenders has needed to be carefully prioritised according to risk through the implementation of a National Probation Prioritisation Framework. Positively there has been increased resourcing and a move to a full application of National Standards. With increasing numbers of Probation Officers being trained it is expected that the service will be fully staffed by December 2024
- Six large commissioned rehabilitative service contracts are available to support offenders accessing tailored interventions to address factors contributing to their offending, commonly known as pathways. These are: Accommodation; Women’s Services; Well-Being; Neurodiversity; Dependency & Recovery; Finance, Benefit & Debt. Each sees a



dedicated service offering intervention and support to reduce the associated offending risks.

- Successful launch of the Community Accommodation Service Tier 3 (CAS3) to provide paid accommodation for a set period, reducing homelessness and associated risks of crime, with an 85% success rate at 3 months. 11 bed spaces available, all of which are utilised.
- Accommodation at 3 months is over target at 81% compared to the 80% target, however there remain significant issues in housing offenders with a lack of suitable accommodation and this needs further focus and multi-agency cooperation to minimise the impact.
- Strong referrals to Substance Misuse providers, with ongoing work to strengthen referral processes for opiate users on probation.
- Collaboration with CF3 providers and the DWP to ensure offenders receive appropriate and targeted support as Education, Training, and Employment contracts wind down. Employment at 6 months 38% exceeding the national 30% target.
- Upcoming launch of the Reconnect Service to assist individuals leaving custody in accessing health services.
- New multi-agency Black Country Community Sentence Treatment Requirement Board established, chaired by the Head of Probation, focusing on increasing the numbers of offenders with alcohol, drug or mental health needs accessing appropriate treatment more quickly.
- Introduction of new Transitions Team with Probation focusing on 18–25-year-olds. This specialist young adult team continues to strengthen with focused interventions and positive processes in place to manage this cohort in line with evidenced best practice. A robust transitions process is in place from youth offending to adults and Probation Officer seconded support has been strengthened to provide further resilience.
- Community Payback continues to provide offenders who undertake community based projects.
- The supervised Probation caseload in Sandwell is 1001 and 807 in the community.
 - Of those, 359 are eligible for the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)
 - 87 are jointly managed through the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) program.
 - There are also 409 individuals identified as domestic abuse perpetrators.



- Specialist Women’s Team created delivering services on a co-located basis with providers at Lanchard House. Women make up 12% of the statutory caseload.
- The government have announced a number of measures designed to ease the pressure on prison capacity and Probation locally are fully involved in helping to carefully manage this. More recently a scheme enabling some offenders to be released up to 18 days early has been extended to local prisons, so this will increase the number of Sandwell offenders who will be included in the cohorts.
- The Integrated Offender Management (IOM) system has been successfully implemented, providing targeted support to offenders at risk of reoffending. Fixed, Free and Flexible cohorts have clear definitions, ensuring tailored support for different groups. In January 24 210 individuals managed through IOM. 233 male and 23 females. The highest category were 57 DA perpetrators. The reoffending rate for those subject to IOM in Sandwell is 7%.
- Collaboration between the Police and Probation to establish a performance framework for IOM, measuring the cost of crime, reductions in offending rates, sentence compliance, and impact on reducing neighbourhood crime captured through annual updates.
- Successful commissioning of a Mental Health Nurse to work across IOM, starting in November 2023, with initial referrals and support provided.
- Acknowledgment of the strength of partnerships across Sandwell and ongoing exploration of opportunities for co-location
- Suite of nationally approved Structured Interventions and Toolkits have been implemented to address offending behaviour with offenders, to supplement Accredited Programmes
- Systems implemented to ensure speedy and effective information in relation to Domestic Abuse and Child Safeguarding checks between key partners.
- Implementation of new electronic monitoring scheme for offenders successfully launched in Sandwell. This incorporates a range of requirements including: Alcohol Monitoring on licence; Alcohol Abstinence Orders for Community Orders; GPS tags for Domestic Abuse perpetrators and licence conditions can now be varied to add GPS monitoring if needed to manage specific or increasing risks. The Acquisitive Crime Tag pilot continues and there are currently 21 individuals subject to this in Sandwell with mandated monitoring on release from prison for specific offences. The governmental appetite for



expanding the use of electronic monitoring is likely to increase especially with the pressures on prison capacity.

- Regular production of a comprehensive performance data set demonstrating Sandwell's strong performance compared to other West Midlands areas.

6.9 Reducing Youth Offending & Reoffending

6.10 The Sandwell Youth Justice Plan overseen by the Youth Justice Partnership Board focuses on early intervention and prevention for children and young people who are at risk of or who have already engaged in offending behaviour. This plan includes working with partners to identify and support vulnerable children, providing diversionary activities and restorative justice approaches, as well as providing targeted interventions for those who have already offended. The plan focuses on ensuring that the needs of children and young people are met, such as their educational and mental health needs, in order to reduce the likelihood of reoffending. Overall, the aim is to support children and young people to turn their lives around and to prevent them from becoming involved in the criminal justice system.

6.11 An analysis of the top ten young repeat offenders in Sandwell between April and June 2022 highlighted some important trends and issues related to serious violence and the need to support young people to reduce their offending. This included a recognition of the need for a comprehensive and coordinated approach by agencies. Young people are often involved with several agencies including criminal justice, education, social care and health and agencies need to work together to address the underlying causes of offending behaviour and provide tailored and holistic support, to help young people turn their lives around and build positive futures.

6.12 Key Findings

- Offending profile: A high number of previous sentences and interventions, a prevalence of aggravated vehicle taking and knife possession are indicators of persistent and serious criminal behaviour among these young people. Criminal justice responses



alone may not be effective; a personalised, holistic approach is needed.

- Education profile: Low attendance and high exclusion rates suggest academic and behavioural challenges, increasing the risk of disengagement and further offending. Support to stay in education or training and to address underlying causes can reduce risks of offending and improve life outcomes.
- Social care profile: High referrals to social care, with child protection, children in care and exploitation indicating complex needs and vulnerability. Coordinated support should address physical, emotional and social needs as well as offending behaviour.
- Family life profile: High house moves, homelessness applications and anti-social behaviour reports, along with domestic abuse, suggest significant instability and trauma. Support to strengthen family relationships and address housing, anti-social behaviour and domestic abuse can reduce the risk of further offending and improve well-being.
- Police profile: High intelligence, custody and crime logs, prevalence of weapons, knives, county lines and gang activity all indicate serious and violent criminal activity. Interventions should address not only offending behaviour but also broader social and environmental factors contributing to involvement in such activities.
- Violence profile: High prevalence of weapons, knives and violent offences including attempted murder and sexual offences indicate serious offending behaviour. Support should address underlying factors such as trauma, poverty and social exclusion and promote positive alternatives to violence and crime.

6.13 The latest figures from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) website, reflecting data up to December 2021, show a significant decrease in youth reoffending rates. The overall reduction was 9.2 percentage points compared to the previous year. Notably, the 10-14-year-old cohort saw a decrease from 8.3% to 4.3%, and the 15-17-year-old group experienced a reduction from 29.5% to 20.3%. This data suggests effective progress in addressing youth reoffending, with both age groups showing notable improvements.

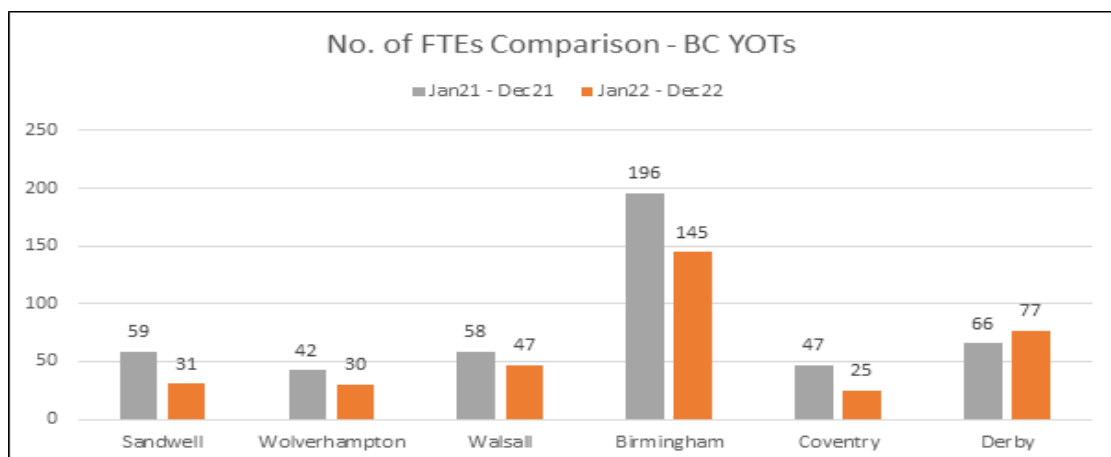


6.14 Table: Youth Reoffending Rates (10-17)

Reduce re-offending of youths aged 10-17yrs	April to March		Jul to Jun		Oct to Sep		Jan to Dec	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
	33.3	24.2	34.3	20.0	20.8	17.5	25.7	16.5

6.15 2022 has demonstrated a 51% reduction in first time entrants compared to 2021 – this is the largest reduction regionally. Sandwell is now lower than both the regional and national average – which is positive. The work of police colleagues in early help space and that of the Strengthening Families teams are all contributors toward this.

6.16 Table – Youth Justice First Time Entrants



6.17 While the number of young people involved with the Youth Justice Service is reducing (187 to 130) over the past two years the number of these that are then committing further offences is increasing. This has been recognised by the Youth Justice Partnership board that we now have a smaller number of more complex children within the Youth Justice space.



6.18 Tackling Youth Offending / Reoffending in Sandwell

- Ongoing review and development of Sandwell's Youth Justice Partnership Board Plan and alignment with new national KPIs introduced in April 2023
- Sandwell Youth Justice Team underwent a significant restructure to better meet the needs of young people.
- Launch of the Turnaround Prevention programme in Sandwell, an early intervention model to prevent youth offending through coordinated multi-agency work.
- Expansion and enhancement of mentoring programs to provide guidance and personalised support to individuals involved in offending.
- Ongoing research and analysis to identify root causes of upward trends in youth offending including exclusions and mental health with strategies being developed to address these.
- Increased referral rates to support services for individuals at risk of reoffending, streamlining access to critical support.
- Development and implementation of regional cross-agency opportunities to use a whole-system approach in working with girls / women and other priority groups.
- Ongoing work to tackle and address disproportionality in relation to young people sentenced to custody in Sandwell.

6.19 Serious Organised Crime

6.20 Serious organised crime is a complex and constantly evolving issue, making it difficult to provide a comprehensive overview of trends. Serious organised crime groups are involved in a range of criminal activities, including drug trafficking, firearms offences, fraud, money laundering, and human trafficking. As of January 2024, Sandwell had 7 mapped organised crime groups. West Midlands Police produce a Top 25 SOCEX Threat Grid. Within the top 25 threats Sandwell mapped OCG's occupy position 4 & 5, these OCG's are linked to Drugs, exploitation and firearms linked. Two unmapped OCG's which are linked to force operations occupy position 10 linked to organised immigration



crime and forced labour and position 17 Sexual exploitation and modern slavery and human trafficking.

6.21 Tackling Serious Organised Crime in Sandwell

A range of work has been undertaken by the partnership to tackle organised crime effectively over the past year including:

- Ensuring the consistent delivery of Consequence Management Meetings (CMM) across the region involving all relevant partnership agencies.
- Enhanced regular meetings between local police, local authorities, third sector organisations and community groups for intelligence sharing and coordinated responses. This partnership OCG meeting supported by the strategic RRSOC meeting supports the partnership working around this agenda. There is also child exploitation meeting structure which supports this workstream.
- Joint training and awareness-raising activities undertaken with wider partner agencies to increase knowledge of serious organised crime.
- Joint approaches developed and implemented to prevent and disrupt serious organised crime, including specific targeting and diversionary interventions to disrupt and dismantle serious organised crime networks using intelligence-led approaches.
- The operational activity focus remains a priority around Firearms enabled OCG's. There has been an increase for this period around intelligence linked to organised immigration crime and partners work together to ensure plans around safeguarding and suppression are put in place.
- Sandwell Partnership work around County Lines Intensification Weeks continues to be strong. During 2023 there were two Partnership driven County Line Intensification Weeks in Sandwell (March & October). The outcomes from the police were:-
 - Warrants x 16
 - Arrests x 28 (including work at out of force county line locations)
 - Cannabis plants/ and cannabis recovered - £592,200
 - Class A recovered- £20,610 plus (and 2 blocks of Class A, unknown value at this time)
 - Weapon Recovery: 1 x taser; 14 x combat knives; 1 x sword; 9 x large Machetes; 1 x knuckle duster; 1 x small knife & 1 x baseball bat
 - OM OCG Prison visit x 3



- Safer travel op x1
- Cranstoun referrals x 5
- School and adult input- 3,244 Total Adults and Pupils presented to around county lines risks
- ANPR Ops x 4
- Burner phones seized x 5
- Car seized x 1
- Stop Search - 17
- Offending Management visits - 14
- Offender Management visits to potential Cuckoo address x 19
- Research and analysis undertaken to better understand the nature and scope of serious organised crime, including root causes, key players, tactics and emerging trends.
- Effective victim support and recovery services established, including physical and emotional support, legal advice and practical assistance.
- Partnerships with local businesses and communities strengthened to reduce demand for organised crime, raise awareness of its harm and promote legitimate economic activity.
- Evidence-based best practices in tackling serious organised crime researched and shared through the development and implementation of training programs for partners on prevention and response.
- Established evaluation frameworks put in place to measure intervention effectiveness.
- Since the setting up of the WMP SOCEX team at end of 2020, this team alone (which started small but is now approx. 1 Sgt and 6 officers) have been directly responsible for improved performance and intelligence and over 100 arrests of people linked to OCG. Executed 45 warrants relating to drugs, firearms and evidential searches and recovered 7 viable firearms more than 100 rounds of ammunition. Officers have also seized significant amounts of cash and drugs.

RRSOC will continue to drive and develop all this work over the forthcoming year.

7.0 **Priority 3: Preventing Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour in our Neighbourhoods**

7.1 The strategic approach to addressing and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour within Sandwell's communities is driven through Borough Tasking and supported through Town Tasking.



7.2 Various initiatives and measures that have been put into place to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour during the year include community policing strategies, engagement activities, educational programs, and partnership work with local organisations and residents. This approach is not only reactive but also proactive, aiming to address the root causes of crime and anti-social behaviour and to create an environment where such activities are less likely to occur. Place based initiatives bring together other work from both PoVE and RRSOC and ensure that across Sandwell there is an holistic and joined up approach to tackling crime and anti-social behaviour, fostering a sense of shared responsibility and cooperation to make our neighbourhoods safer and more enjoyable places to live.

7.3 Some of the highlights and achievements in this area of work, detailing ongoing efforts to improve community safety are outlined below:

7.4 **We Said, We Did**

What we said	What we did
<p>Increase community awareness of how to prevent crime and maintain and/or improve safety</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Successful hybrid partnership Safer 6 campaign with some 220 events across the 6 towns and a digital reach of 176,117 2. Successful delivery of Safer Streets Round 4 project which included significant engagement with the community and businesses to raise awareness and build resilience. Some 708 people engaged with between July 22 and Sept 23 including a partnership week of action in July and regular 'Cuppa with a Coppa' events now in place. 3. Introduction of a Safe Spaces Scheme in Bearwood High Street with local businesses 4. Safer Streets newsletter to inform residents of the improvements in Bearwood through the Safer Streets project



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Sandwell Council's website has been updated along with the community safety web pages 6. Regular articles in The Sandwell Herald newspaper 7. Regular CS Newsletter sent digitally to 15231 individuals 8. Creating Safe Community events with the Voluntary sector – last event 9th November focus on child exploitation/county lines and serious organised crime 9. Distribute community safety and crime prevention materials and resources on priority issues identified
<p>Strengthen our approaches to tackling ASB</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delivery of Borough-wide plan to address nuisance bikes including joint visits, tenancy action and seizures, awareness raising, launch of new leaflets to promote quality reporting and introduction of target hardening measures in Tipton and Wednesbury. 2. 363 cases ytd managed by SMBCs ASB Team with significant enforcement actions undertaken including 3 evictions. 3. New CCTV installed in Bearwood as part of Safer Streets 4 project. 91 incidents captured ytd with 81 proactively captured by operators. 4. Operation Eternity implemented in Great Bridge introducing regular high visibility patrols by WMP and the LA to tackle crime and ASB in the area. 5. £500,000 Levelling Up Funding allocated to enhance tackle ASB in Wednesbury Town Centre and Friar Park including CCTV, nuisance bike inhibitors
<p>Embed and build upon our approaches to tackling hate crime</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1576 SMBC employees have completed hate crime training ytd 2. Increased awareness during National Hate Crime week through events and social media information



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1100 pupils attended hate crime awareness talks during National Hate Crime week 36 TPRC have undertaken refresher training and there are currently 42 up to date centres across Sandwell 14 reports of hate crime made to TRRC so far this year Renewed Sandwell Hate Crime Pledge signed by Council Leader and CEO
Better informed tasking and resource deployment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> New Bi Monthly reports provided by PILT analyst to inform tasking introduced in September. This enables the prioritisation and deployment of resources based on improved data and intelligence Daily plans implemented in Sandwell's impact areas, overlaying with violence hotspots, using a range of tactics, such as ANPR operations, drone deployments, BDO, passive drugs dogs, and warrants targeting OCGs and related violence
Enhance the community safety of our high-rise estates	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> CCTV systems upgrade Phases 1 & 2 completed. Phase 3 expansion to bring CCTV and Concierge services to all SMBCs high rise estate currently being tendered and expansion ongoing with intention to expand CCTV and concierge services to all blocks

7.5 Preventing and reducing crime and ASB cannot be tackled by one single agency but needs a multi-disciplined approach to provide a holistic response. By bringing partners together both strategically and operationally, there is a focus on problem solving and bringing together resources to prevent and tackle the issues at a local and boroughwide level.

7.6 This is achieved in Sandwell by partners coming together monthly through Borough Tasking and Town Tasking meetings where there is the



opportunity for partnership data and intelligence to be shared so that an appropriate and proportionate response can be coordinated.

7.7 The meetings are used to discuss community and place-based concerns, taking a partnership approach at an operational level to prevent or resolve issues. There is also a closed element to the meetings to discuss individual cases that may involve vulnerable victims or perpetrators. At the Borough Tasking meetings, the membership focuses on the impact areas and look at issues such as hate crime, community tensions, domestic abuse and the causes of crime in more detail.

7.8 Overall, the year-to-date figures indicate a significant increase of 29.7% in ASB incidents reported to WMP. The incidents were categorised as environmental, nuisance, and personal. Notably, five towns in Sandwell experienced an increase in ASB incidents, with Rowley Regis being the only town to record a decrease. Specific locations within towns like Wednesbury, Tipton, Smethwick, West Bromwich, Oldbury, and Rowley Regis were identified as top repeat locations for ASB incidents, involving various issues such as youth disturbances, aggressive behaviour, and neighbourhood disputes. Sandwell's ASB team have dealt with 363 new cases year to date and 2060 new incidents.

7.9 Tackling Crime and ASB in Sandwell

Some of the key achievements over the past year have included:

- 72 Town Tasking Meetings held and 12 Borough Taskings
- Delivery of Borough Hate Crime Plan including:
 - Development and ongoing support to 42 Third Party Reporting Centres across Sandwell
 - 11000 pupils attending Hate Crime Awareness sessions during National Hate Crime Week
 - 14 reports of Hate Crime made through TPRCs
 - Sandwell Hate Crime Pledge renewed and signed off by Council Leader and Chief Executive Officer
- Delivery of Boroughwide Nuisance Bikes Plan including:
 - All out days in hotspot areas including seizure of bikes and tenancy warnings to those living in Council Properties



- Engagement with associated businesses including petrol stations and garages
- Introduction of new Force wide Bikes Team
- Use of CCTV in strategic locations to try and identify offenders
- Increased community awareness in relation to what to report and how
- Successful delivery of annual partnership Safer 6 Community Safety campaign including:
 - 220 events across Sandwell's 6 towns – double the number in 2022
 - Litter picks and ASB walkabouts in hotspots
 - Launch of Prevent Community Toolkit and National Referral Form
 - Fire Safety checks
 - Illegal Trading operations
 - Drug and Alcohols Service Awareness and engagement
 - Quilt of Hope tour of Borough to raise awareness of DA and services available
 - Crime Prevention Awareness
- Successful delivery of Safer Streets Round 4 Project in Bearwood incorporating:
 - CCTV installation on Bearwood High Street
 - Community and Business Engagement Officer to work with local residents and businesses on resilience and target hardening
 - Introduction of radio link and safe spaces schemes on Bearwood High Street
 - Transitions work in 2 primary schools
 - Targeted youth work in Lightwoods Park and Warley Woods
- Evidence based deployment of Sandwell's deployable camera stock
- Successful bid for £500,000 from Levelling Up in Wednesbury focused on community safety including:
 - New and expanded CCTV coverage in the town centre and Friar Park
 - Community and Business Engagement Officer to work with local residents and businesses on resilience and target hardening
 - Nuisance bike inhibitors and disruptors to be installed in Friar Park
- 24 /7 CCTV Control Room and Concierge Service
- Focus on Sandwell's 3 impact areas and partnership interventions
- Delivery of new 5 year Refuge contract which commenced in February 2023
- Q1-3 – 363 new ASB Cases dealt with in 2023-24 with outcomes including:



63 verbal / informal discussions; 94 Warning letters; 19 CPN Warnings & 6 CPNs; 3 Evictions; 11 Demotions and 11 NOSPs.

As can be seen there is a considerable focus on locality-based community safety and ensuring resources are deployed to maximise effectiveness using the available evidence.

8 Conclusion & Moving Forward

8.1 Safer Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board has a statutory requirement under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, and subsequent legislative amendments, to develop and deliver a Partnership Plan which contains community safety priorities based on the current evidence base across the Borough of Sandwell. This strategy brings together this evidence base and sets the strategic direction for community safety across the Borough for 5 years subject to annual review

8.2 Community safety is an always evolving, complex huge multifaceted area. As can be seen significant partnership work has been undertaken across the partnership to deliver on the Sandwell's identified priorities as outlined in the Community Safety Strategy. An Annual Report will be provided to the Safer Sandwell Partnership and Police Board and updated 2024-25 PoVE / RRSOC and Tasking Plans have been developed with partners to build on the work outlined above and continue to progress work in relation to enhancing and strengthening community safety across Sandwell.

8.3 This will include:

- Embedding the new Serious Violence Strategy and local Delivery Plan
- Ongoing improvements to data provision and analysis to support the work of the partnership
- Delivery of the CS element of the Levelling Up Fund
- Delivery of Operation Eternity
- Working with the OPCC and other partners on the planned review of DHRs and MARAC
- Work with the Home Office and partners on the transition arrangements for Sandwell to no longer be a funded authority for Prevent from April 2026



- Support any planned changes coming from the national review of Community Safety Partnerships

8.4 As can be seen community safety requires effective partnerships with all partners accountable in supporting delivery to achieve Sandwell’s community safety vision of: **ensuring that the communities of Sandwell feel safe, protected and confident in their homes and neighbourhoods.**

9. Implications

Resources:	The Community Safety Strategy is a partnership plan utilising existing resources deployed in accordance with the priorities identified. When available partners will tap into additional funding streams to enhance capacity and provision.
Legal and Governance:	Safer Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board has a statutory requirement under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, and subsequent legislative amendments, to develop and deliver a Partnership Plan which contains community safety priorities based on the current evidence base across the Borough of Sandwell.
Risk:	Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour through partnership working is central to the delivery of the Community Safety Strategy 2022-26 and Strategic Assessment 2020. This is business as usual and adheres to all individual partner required risk assessments and mitigations.
Equality:	An Equality Impact Assessment was completed as part of the strategy process with no negative implications recorded for protected groups. Tackling crime and disorder and enhancing community safety helps address disadvantage and disproportionality ensuring that the vulnerable are safeguarded and community resilience increased.
Health and Wellbeing:	Reducing and managing crime and anti-social behaviour, and protecting its victims has a positive impact on health and wellbeing.



	Engaging with and supporting people in relation to community safety and building resilience to prevent the most vulnerable becoming victims of crime and exploitation will also have a positive longer-term impact on their health and wellbeing.
Social Value	Engagement with local residents and strengthening civic pride. Provision of opportunities for involvement through volunteering, engagement and positive activities.
Climate Change:	Reducing neighbourhood crime and ASB can have a positive impact on local environments encouraging ownership, use and protection of green spaces.
Corporate Parenting:	The Community Safety Strategy includes a priority in relation to preventing exploitation and has a focus on preventing youth offending. Bringing partners together can provide additional support for children in care to reduce potential disadvantages and help strengthen Corporate Parenting.

6 Appendices

Appendix One – Sandwell Community Safety Strategy 2022-26

7 Background Papers

None.



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Sandwell Community Safety Strategy 2022-2026



'ensuring that the communities of Sandwell feel safe, protected and confident in their homes and neighbourhoods'



Introduction

The Sandwell Community Safety Strategy outlines our plans for 2022 – 2026, working as a partnership to ensure that the communities of Sandwell feel safe, protected and confident in their homes and neighbourhoods.

The Plan is introduced by Chief Superintendent Ian Green who is the Chair of the Safer Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board and Councillor Bob Piper the cabinet lead for Community Safety, who help set the context for the strategy, outline key progress, challenges and ambitions for the next 5 years.

The Community Safety Partnership in Sandwell have been working hard to get a consistent, co-ordinated approach to violence, abuse, exploitation, crime and anti-social behaviour, focusing on prevention and where needed reducing offending and serious organised crime.

Throughout the strategy, you will see some of the examples of current approaches, projects and initiatives that have been implemented during the last 3 years and areas of strengths and good practice.

You will also see some of the data and figures for crime in the region. Nationally there has been a 12% increase in total recorded crime and Sandwell has followed similar trends, with some areas being higher or lower than national averages.

What is important is context, behind every figure is a story, and an individual,. We want every person in Sandwell to feel safe, protected and confident in their own homes and their neighbourhoods and some of the work we have undertaken over the last 3 years to support this ambition includes:

- Raising awareness of crime, violence and exploitation in our communities, so our communities know how to recognise such offending, can respond and seek support as required.
- Training and educating young people in schools in protective behaviours, to understand signs of abuse, violence and exploitation.
- Equipping professionals to recognise and respond to a wide range of violence, abuse, exploitation crime and anti-social behaviour,.
- Encouraging a trauma informed approach, helping individuals to recognise the impact of trauma and respond in sensitive ways
- Targeted interventions to respond to a range of forms of violence, abuse, exploitation, crime and anti-social behaviour

The plan sets out clearly our main priorities for the next five years and some key objectives to work towards, which can be summarised as:

Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
Prevent Violence and Exploitation	Reduce Offending, Reoffending and Serious Organised Crime	Prevent and Reduce Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour
<p>Priority areas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of Public Place Violence • Under 25 violence • Domestic Abuse • Sexual Assault and Abuse • Modern Slavery • Child Exploitation 	<p>Main priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing Adult Reoffending • Reducing Youth Reoffending • Serious Organised Crime • County Lines 	<p>Main priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing Hate Crime Reducing Crime Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour
<p>Cross Cutting Priority 1: Protect and Support Vulnerable Victims Cross Cutting Priority 2 Tackling Substance Misuse – saving lives and reducing crime Cross Cutting Priority 3: Serious Violence Duty</p>		

Community Safety Vision

To ensure that the communities of Sandwell feel safe, protected and confident in their homes and neighbourhoods



I am pleased to be able to update you on Sandwell's new Community Safety Strategy 2022-26. The multi-agency Safer Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board understands that issues of crime and community safety are very complex and require an integrated partnership response. Over the past 3 years we have developed our approach around these three key themes:

- The prevention of violence and exploitation
- Reducing offending, reoffending and serious organised crime
- Preventing crime & antisocial behaviour in our Neighbourhoods

While considerable work and progress has been made across these areas there is still always more to be done and these will remain our key priorities for the next 5 year.

There are also three cross cutting priorities, which are integral to the delivery of all of these areas: our commitment to protecting and supporting vulnerable victims; tackling substance misuse to save lives and reduce crime, aligned with the Governments new Drugs Strategy and delivering on the new Serious Violence Duty, which promotes a multi-agency approach to understanding the causes and consequences of serious violence, focused on prevention and early intervention.

Over recent years we have seen the significant challenges that youth violence and exploitation in particular, are having on our communities. These issues have also been exacerbated by COVID and its restrictions on all of our lives. Despite these extraordinary challenges, the partnership has remained robust and focused on delivering activities to enhance community safety across the Borough.

We will continue to deliver these priorities by adopting a place based, public health approach, understanding that violence is preventable and identifying the reasons why people get drawn into crime. We will also support organisations to become trauma aware, to embed such approaches into their practice and to tackle these issues through the adoption of 4P Plans, which aim to: prevent violence, abuse and exploitation; protect those affected; reduce harm and pursue those who perpetrate these offences.

Delivery of these priorities will be led by the Community Safety Partnership through a number of work streams involving the right partners (including community leads and third sector organisations) to influence service delivery and improvements. This 5-year plan is focused on current and future threats and will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains fit for purpose as we tackle new emerging threat areas and complex vulnerabilities across our communities. This approach ensures the flexibility to predict and respond to any emerging trends in the fast paced and ever changing arena that is community safety.



Chief
Superintendent
Ian Green

Chair of the Safer Sandwell
Partnership Police Crime Board

Community safety is a key priority for Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council; tackling crime, ASB and exploitation to ensure our communities are and feel safe in their homes and neighbourhoods. As such it underpins much of our Corporate Plan; Big Plans for a Great Place. This Strategy builds on the work undertaken over the past 3 years and provides a direction of travel for the next 5 years

Community safety is not something that can be tackled by any single agency; it requires good and effective partnership work. In Sandwell this work is led by our Safer Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board, working collaboratively with Sandwell's 4 other strategic boards. Much of this work is cross cutting and we have proactive and innovative partners across all sectors who are committed to reducing opportunities for crime to get a foothold in the Borough.

Involving those who live here, or come into the Borough for work or education, to help us develop our approaches has been central to developing this strategy and we have conducted a range of surveys and other interactions to understand what makes people feel safe and how we can build awareness and resilience to help achieve this.

We have good links with regional partners including the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, The Violence Reduction Unit and the West Midlands Community Safety Partnership. Our strategy recognises that crime often extends beyond geographic boundaries and through ensuring alignment with that of these regional partners we can ensure that we maximise the resources available to tackle these issues.

Over the past three years we have strengthened our approaches to Community Safety, working with partners to tackle violence and exploitation, to better support those experiencing domestic abuse, hate crime and ASB and have become a national exemplar of good practice for our modern day slavery work. These achievements are celebrated in this strategy, however there is a recognition and strong commitment to continue to address crime and disorder across the Borough.

The ambition going forward is for swifter information flow, earlier identification and support for those at risk, increased involvement and co-production with communities and a reduction in the risk of residents being victimised. The Safer Sandwell Partnership also recognises the unprecedented and significant impact across all our communities, businesses and partnerships brought about by Covid19. The impact of this will continue to impact upon us for the foreseeable future but despite the pandemic the partnership has continued to meet and progress its many and varied workstream to ensure that we continue to address these issues and work collectively to support all our residents including some who are amongst the most vulnerable in society.



**Councillor
Bob Piper**

Cabinet Member for Community
Safety, Sandwell Metropolitan
Borough Council

Community Safety Strategy - Plan on a Page

	Priority 1: Prevent Violence and Exploitation	Priority 2: Reduce Offending, Reoffending and Serious Organised Crime	Priority 3: Prevent and Reduce Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour
Priority areas include Page 54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Prevention of Public Place Violence ✓ Domestic Abuse/ Sexual Assault and Abuse ✓ Violence where victims and offenders under 25 ✓ Child Exploitation ✓ Modern Slavery ✓ Preventing Extremism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reducing Adult Reoffending ✓ Reducing Youth Reoffending ✓ Serious Organised Crime ✓ County Lines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reducing Hate Crime ✓ Reducing Crime ✓ Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure robust, effective victims pathways, support and responses are in place ✓ Use data and analysis to develop an understanding of each type of violence, abuse and exploitation ✓ Understand and further embed a trauma informed approach ✓ Ensure effective training is in place to continue to educate and raise awareness of violence, abuse and exploitation ✓ Equip our young people / future adults to stay safe and make positive choices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Support offending pathways ✓ Management of high-risk offenders and targeting of key cohorts to reduce rates and seriousness of offences committed ✓ Continue to strengthen and develop partnership approaches around tackling serious organised crime ✓ Confirming and being able to clearly articulate the Boroughs approach to prevention and diversion as it relates to youth crime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increase community awareness of how to prevent crime and maintain and/or improve safety ✓ Strengthen our approaches to tackling ASB ✓ Embed and build upon our approaches to tackling hate crime ✓ Better informed tasking and resource deployment ✓ Enhance community safety on our high rise estates ✓ Engage with our communities to help us work together in partnership to tackle crime and ASB
Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ As part of the 'Protect' strand of the PoVE Plan ensure current victim pathways are reviewed and are working ✓ Ensure victim pathways are incorporated into training plans ✓ Ensure regional approaches in place through close working relationships with the OPCC and WMVRU. ✓ Ensure a robust dialogue and support from the data and analysis sub group from the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) ✓ Enhance data sets to measure, monitor and review all priority areas of violence, exploitation and abuse ✓ Review how effective trauma informed training has been ✓ Develop resources to support trauma informed practice in relation to violence, abuse and exploitation ✓ Develop a Prevention of Violence, Exploitation and Abuse Training Plan ✓ Develop a training data set including evaluation data ✓ Encourage and support funding bids to support priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Strengthen pathways to prevent the cycle of reoffending ✓ Embedding new commissioned services to support offenders ✓ Embed new Integrated Offender Management ✓ Review ways of working with domestic abuse perpetrators/sexual violence/abuse ✓ Strengthen and develop the organised crime response through the OCG partnership ✓ Raise awareness of serious organised crime and organised criminal gangs with partners ✓ Development of a model which will provide early identification and interventions preventing offending and reoffending – with a particular emphasis on youth offending ✓ Specific focus on understanding data in relation to over-represented children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Enhance and promote community safety and crime prevention information on the Council website ✓ Distribute community safety and crime prevention materials and resources on priority issues identified ✓ Development of a new council wide ASB Policy and new ways of working ✓ Co-produced Service Standards for anti-social behaviour ✓ Review and update the partnership Hate Crime Plan ✓ Strengthen engagement with communities ✓ Review and develop data sets and a new dash board ✓ Improve intelligence gathering ✓ We will work in partnership with Housing colleagues to deliver the CCTV / Concierge Services upgrade and expansion programme across our high-rise estate

Cross cutting priority 1: Protect and support vulnerable victims of abuse, violence, exploitation, crime and anti-social behaviour

Cross cutting priority 2: Tackling Substance Misuse – saving lives and reducing crime

Cross cutting priority 3: Serious Violence Duty

Priority 1: Prevent Violence and Exploitation

Over the past three years, we have worked to develop a holistic response to preventing, violence, abuse and exploitation which includes:

- Developing comprehensive training programmes to educate professionals on how to identify and respond to a range of violence, abuse and exploitation, including domestic abuse, modern slavery, and child exploitation
- We have developed and strengthened early interventions including a new Child Exploitation Hub who are leading the way in responding to child exploitation, with a 50% reduction in such offences reported to the police over the past 3 years
- We have undertaken targeted initiatives to address incidents of knife crime, training and educating young people, using proactive stop and searches and other knife crime initiatives. This proactive work means we have seen an increase in recorded knife crime and weapons seizures but we have intervened at the earliest juncture
- We have continued to deliver interventions throughout the pandemic and national lock downs. This included being proactive in responding to national increases in domestic abuse, ensuring effective interventions remained in place locally
- Proactive work around modern slavery, educating communities to recognise and respond to signs and concerns.
- Targeted communications to our communities to raise awareness around reporting

What are residents telling us?

143 people responded to our Sexual Abuse and Assault Survey carried out in 2021

- 1 in 3 said they had experienced sexual abuse or assault
- 51.2% said the abuse or assault took place in West Bromwich
- When asked what would make them feel safer, respondents told us – awareness raising & education, safe spaces, visible security/police presence

How will we respond?

We have worked to increase reporting for a number of types of violence and exploitation, and need to continue with raising awareness of these crimes and training and educating professionals and our communities.

The PoVE Strategy and Plan will be completed to ensure effective plans are in place to prevent violence and exploitation occurring, protect victims and pursue offenders.

From the Sexual Abuse and Assault Survey, 51.2% said the incidents took place in West Bromwich. We have been successful in obtaining Safer Streets funding to tackle violence against women and girls and are delivering a place based project in West Bromwich..

Objectives	Strategy
Ensure robust, effective victims pathways, support and responses are in place	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As part of the 'Protect' strand of the PoVE Plan ensure current victim pathways are reviewed and are working 2. Ensure victim pathways are incorporated into training plans
Use data and analysis to develop an understanding of each type of violence, abuse and exploitation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure a robust dialogue and support from the Data and Analysis Sub Group from the VRU 2. Enhance data sets to measure, monitor and review all priority areas of violence, exploitation and abuse
Understand and further embed a trauma informed approach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review how effective trauma informed training has been 2. Develop resources to support trauma informed practice in relation to violence, abuse and exploitation
Ensure effective training is in place to continue to educate and raise awareness of violence, abuse and exploitation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a Prevention of Violence, Exploitation and Abuse Training Plan 2. Develop a training data set including evaluation data

Priority 2: Reduce Offending, Reoffending and Serious Organised Crime

Reducing Offending, Reoffending and Serious Organised Crime was a new priority set in the 2019 strategy. Over the last 3 years we have worked to develop the new Board Sub group who oversee and develop this area of work. Some of the main highlights include:

- Development of the Black Country Reducing Reoffending Strategy. The strategy outlines the strengthened commitment of partners to work jointly, to unblock barriers and to reduce reoffending
- Further development of the 7 pathways out of offending, ensuring robust support is in place for offenders.
- Working to reduce reoffending rates for young people, which in Sandwell have reduced from 47.55% to 42.64%
- While we have seen an increase in under the influence violence crimes, our award winning Blue Light project has worked with treatment resistant drinkers and has demonstrated a 74% reduction in reoffending and 82% reduction in the cost of crime
- We have worked to get upstream in addressing organised crime groups and now have 8 mapped groups in Sandwell where the partnership is proactively intervening and disrupting their activities.
- We recognise the importance of listening to the voice of our communities and have carried out a number of consultations over the last 3 years which have all provided valuable input into this new strategy

What are residents telling us?

It is important that we listen to the voice of the community, we carried out a community safety survey in 2021, we had 177 residents responded who told us that their top concerns in relation to violence, abuse and crime are:

- Drug Dealing
- Youth Disorder
- Burglary
- Violent Crime

How will we respond?

We will continue to take a robust partnership approach and encourage communities to get involved in helping to tackle these issues.

We will also seek to increase understanding of serious organised crime across the region.

Half of acquisitive crime, burglary and robbery are caused by substance misuse. We will be ensuring our strategies are aligned to the Government’s Drug Strategy

Objectives	Strategy
Support offending pathways	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthening pathways to prevent the cycle of reoffending 2. Embedding new commissioned services to support offenders
Management of high-risk offenders and targeting of key cohorts to reduce rates and seriousness of offences committed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Embed new Integrated Offender Management 2. Review ways of working with domestic abuse perpetrators/sexual violence/abuse
Continue to strengthen and develop partnership approaches around tackling serious organised crime	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen and develop the organised crime response through the Organised Criminal Gangs (OCG) partnership 2. Raise awareness of serious organised crime and organised criminal gangs with partners
Confirming and being able to clearly articulate the Boroughs approach to prevention and diversion as it relates to youth crime	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of a model which will provide early identification and interventions preventing offending and reoffending – with a particular emphasis on youth offending 2. Specific focus on understanding data in relation to over-represented children

Priority 3: Prevent and Reduce Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

Throughout the last three years we have really focused our efforts to adopt a consistent approach to prevent and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. Some of our key achievements have included:

- Successful reintroduction of Town/Borough Tasking to bring partners together to problem solve and tackle crime and anti-social behaviour
- Ongoing service delivery throughout the Covid pandemic including increased enforcement in relation to Covid breaches
- The introduction of a dedicated ASB reporting portal to ensure reported ASB reaches the correct agency first time wherever possible
- Enhanced Reporting Metrics covering Domestic Abuse and Hate Crime enabling better drilldown in relation to figures, areas, trends and responses
- In 2019/20, Sandwell Council's ASB Team became the first Local Authority team in the country to meet the PLEDGE Standard for it's policy, practice and use of the ASB Community Trigger
- 2020/21 also saw the development of a new Noise Nuisance Triage Pilot, which made the ASB Team's 'Noise App' tool, available to selected Sandwell Locals staff to enable more timely interventions
- Boroughwide PSPOs covering Dog Fouling and Alcohol were renewed for a further 3 years along with the West Bromwich Town Centre one.

What are People telling us?

- 177 residents responded to the 2021 Community Safety Survey. We asked about personal experiences of anti-social behaviour and crime in Sandwell
- 77.4% (137) stated that they either been the victim or witness of this
 - 60 respondents had reported to the police
 - 71 of respondents said they had reported to Sandwell Council
 - 78% (43) were not satisfied with how their reports were dealt with

How will we respond?

- More than half of the people who have witnessed or experienced crime or ASB had not reported to the police. We need to continue to raise awareness of how to prevent crime and improve safety.
- It is difficult to measure data and get a true reflection on reductions in total recorded crime due to the national lock downs.
- With 78% of respondents stating they are not satisfied with how their reports were dealt with, we need to strengthen our approaches tackling these issues and engaging with our communities to develop trust and ensure positive outcomes are shared.

Objectives	Strategy
Increase community awareness of how to prevent crime and maintain and/or improve safety	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance and promote community safety and crime prevention information on the Council website 2. Distribute community safety and crime prevention materials and resources on priority issues identified
Strengthen our approaches to tackling ASB	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of a new council wide ASB Policy and new ways of working 2. Co-produced Service Standards
Embed and build upon our approaches to tackling hate crime	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and update the partnership Hate Crime Plan 2. Strengthen engagement with communities
Better informed tasking and resource deployment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and develop data sets and a new dash board 2. Improve intelligence gathering
Enhance the community safety of our high rise estates	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will work in partnership with Housing colleagues to deliver the CCTV / Concierge Services upgrade and expansion programme across our high-rise estate

Cross Cutting Priority 1: Protect and Support vulnerable victims of abuse, violence, exploitation, crime and anti-social behaviour

The main vision behind the Community Safety Strategy is to ensure that the communities of Sandwell feel safe, protected and confident in their homes and neighbourhoods.

Sandwell Council has a clear vision for what the Borough should look and feel like by 2030:

In 2030, Sandwell is a thriving, optimistic and resilient community. It's where we call home and where we're proud to belong - where we choose to bring up our families, where we feel safe and cared for, enjoying good health, rewarding work, feeling connected and valued in our neighbourhoods and communities, confident in the future, and benefiting fully from a revitalised West Midlands.

Safe and Protected in your Home

In the 2021 Community Safety Survey we asked about feelings of safety in relation to anti-social behaviour and crime, 34.4% of individuals reported feeling unsafe in their own homes, this is important as we know that abuse, violence, crime and anti-social behaviour can happen in places where we live.

Feeling safe at home and in your community is fundamental to living well and to strong community relationships. Although Sandwell's violent crime and anti-social behaviour levels are similar to the national average, residents are concerned and tell us that feeling safe is the most important thing for them and their families.

- Our focus throughout this strategy will be to continue to:
- Drive home key messages of safety and support into the homes of our residents. The Sandwell Herald, Community Safety Bulletin and our website / social media feeds provide a range of safety messages and support options available for victims.
 - We will promote awareness raising messages to enable people to report violence, abuse, exploitation, crime and anti-social behaviour.
 - We will continue to shine a light on abuse, violence and exploitation that is hidden behind closed doors.
 - We will continue to take action where concerns are reported; over the last three years the Anti-Social Behaviour team has responded to 29,638 incidents to reduce or manage ASB.
 - We will continue to disrupt locations where modern slavery and exploitation occur, raising awareness and enabling communities to report any possible concerns.
 - We will increase community awareness of how to prevent crime and maintain and/or improve safety

Safe and Protected in your Community

In the 2021 Community Safety Survey we asked about feelings of safety from anti-social behaviour and crime, 44.8% of people reported feeling fairly unsafe in public spaces in Sandwell such as in towns and parks

One of the ways people said that they would feel more safe would be to have a physical police presence on the streets. The Police and Crime Commissioner Simon Foster's top priority is to rebuild community policing in the West Midlands. Pledging 450 officers across the region of which 177 have already been recruited.

- In addition to make our streets safer we will continue to:
- Work with the Violence Reduction Unit to increase funding into detached youth work with young people.
 - Work with the Violence Reduction Unit to pilot a programme called Stepping Together that increases safety for young people on their journey to and from school
 - Implement Safer Streets funding to target safety concerns in West Bromwich
 - Use our PSPOs (Public Space Protection Orders) covering Dog Fouling, Alcohol, Nitrous Oxide and West Bromwich Town Centre to engage with those involved in anti social behaviour
 - Expand our CCTV and concierge service across our remaining high rise estate
 - Work closely with WMP on providing CCTV imaging and professional witnessing to secure convictions
 - Develop our restorative justice options

Cross Cutting Priority 2: Tackling Substance Misuse – saving lives and reducing crime

The chart below, outlines the governments plan on a page to implement the strategy

What is the data telling us?

- Drug Related Deaths: Sandwell has significantly lower number of drug related deaths than the regional and national average
- Continuity of Care rates (ensuring prompt access to treatment on release from prison): remains above the national average
- Successful Completion rates across all substance types are currently lower than the national average (16.3% v 21.1%), whilst representations (indicative of relapse) are better than the national average.
- Complexity levels of clients accessing treatment is higher than the national average: 63% of presentations to service have high/very high levels of complexity compared with 51% nationally
- A high level of need and unmet need exists locally: Sandwell has a higher estimated rate of drug and alcohol users than national levels; 85% of alcohol dependent individuals and 58% of opiate/crack users are not known to treatment services (both roughly in line with national levels)
- Sandwell remains statistically significantly worse than the national average for both alcohol specific and related mortality (now ranked second worst in the country for alcohol related mortality)

Drug Strategy

The Government has launched a ten-year plan, to combat illegal drugs with ambitions across 3 key areas:

- Breaking drug supply chains
- Delivering a world class treatment & recovery service
- Achieving a generational shift in demand for drugs

How will we respond

This strategy is an ambitious strategy which sits across all areas of preventing and reducing violence, abuse, exploitation, crime and anti-social behaviour.

To ensure this has the right attention, this area of work has been set as a cross cutting priority across all community safety priorities.

We have the Sandwell Drug and Alcohol Partnership (SDAP) with multiple workstreams already in place to address many of these concerns.

We will develop a task and finish group to review the partnership approach and develop an implementation plan for the strategy as a starting point linking this into our new PoVE / RRSOC and place based work streams.

Priority	Why?	How?	Who?	What?
 Break drug supply chains	Drug supply chains are violent and exploitative, degrading neighbourhoods across the country and internationally	We will continue to roll up county lines and strengthen our response across the drug supply chain, making the UK a significantly harder place for organised crime groups to operate	Home Office and MoJ, working with international and intelligence partners, NCA, Border Force, police, courts, prison and probation	Within three years: close 2,000 more county lines, disrupt 6,400 OCG activities and deny more criminal assets
 Deliver a world-class treatment and recovery system	Drug addiction harms individuals and society: deaths have risen to record levels and almost half of acquisitive crime is linked to addiction	We will invest a further £780 million to rebuild drug treatment and recovery services, including for young people and offenders, with new commissioning standards to drive transparency and consistency	DHSC, DLLHC, DWP and MoJ working with NHSE, local authorities, treatment providers and people with lived experience	Within three years: prevent nearly 1,000 deaths, deliver 54,500 new high-quality treatment places and prevent a quarter of a million crimes
 Achieve a shift in the demand for recreational drugs	Use of recreational drugs has grown over a decade, particularly among young people, risking individual harm and fuelling dangerous markets	We will strengthen the evidence for how best to deter use of recreational drugs, ensuring that adults change their behaviour or face tough consequences, and with universal and targeted activity to prevent young people from starting to take drugs	DfE, DHSC, Home Office and MoJ, working with local authorities, police, education providers, secure facilities and youth services	Reduce overall drug use to a new historic 30-year low over the next decade

Cross Cutting Priority 3: Implementing the Serious Violence Duty

There are several asks of Community Safety Partnerships in responding to the Serious Violence Duty

What is the Serious Violence Duty?

- The Duty is a key part of the Government's programme of work to prevent and reduce serious violence; taking a multi-agency approach to understand the causes and consequences of serious violence, focused on prevention and early intervention, and informed by evidence
- This was introduced as part of the Police Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill on 9 March 2021 alongside Serious Violence Reduction Orders (SVROs) and Homicide Reviews
- It is a key part of the Government's wider programme of work to prevent and reduce serious violence; taking a whole-system approach to understand causes and consequences and focus on prevention and early intervention
- The Duty requires organisations to work together to: plan; share data, intelligence and knowledge; generate evidence-based analysis of the problem and solutions to prevent and reduce serious violence in local areas
- There is sufficient flexibility for relevant organisations to work together in the most effective local partnership for any given area

How will we respond

The Serious Violence Duty will help to provide targeted responses to serious violence in Sandwell. Through initial discussions, there have already been some broad principles adopted to take this work forward, which include:

- Rather than build an additional forum, we will use existing local structures including POVE/RRSOC/ Borough Tasking / SSPPCB and build the Serious Violence Duty into these new plans
- We will adopt the World Health Organisation's definition of a public health approach, which can be summarised as follows:
 - Focussed on a defined population;
 - With and for communities
 - Not constrained by organisational or professional boundaries
 - Focussed on generating long term as well as short term solutions
 - Based on data and intelligence to identify the burden on the population, including any inequalities
 - Rooted in evidence of effectiveness to tackle the problem
 - Develop a small working group to start taking this work forward
 - Build in the three key success measures:
 - homicide rates
 - hospital admissions for knife/sharp object assault,
 - Police recorded knife crime

Objectives	
Understanding local issues:	To identify the kinds of serious violence that occur in our area and so far as it is possible to do so, the causes of that serious violence, the partnership will work together to establish a local 'strategic needs assessment' – identifying the drivers of serious violence in the local area and the cohorts of people most affected or at risk. This will require the sharing of relevant data and intelligence held by the individual organisations subject to the duty.
Understanding local issues: Preparation and implementation of a strategy:	In order to prepare and implement a strategy to prevent and reduce serious violence, the partnership must collectively develop a strategy which should outline the multi-agency response that the partnership will take to address the drivers identified in the strategic needs assessment and the work planned to prevent and reduce serious violence in the specified local area. The strategy should set out how the proposed actions will enhance and complement existing local arrangements responding to serious violence.
Review:	The duty requires that once a strategy has been prepared it must be kept under review. The partnership should review the strategy on an annual basis. A review should specifically consider how the interventions and solutions have impacted on serious violence within their area – considering for example crime statistics and accident and emergency data. The review may highlight the need for a refreshed strategic needs assessment and strategy, for example where new and emerging crime types are identified.

The Approach

Sandwell Community Safety Strategy for 2022 - 2026 sets out the approach we are taking to prevent and reduce, violence, abuse, exploitation, crime and anti-social behaviour

Public Health approach

This Means

Understanding that violence is preventable and the reasons why people get drawn into crime

We will do this by:

- ✓ Focusing on understanding the causes of violence,
- ✓ Understanding the reasons why people get drawn into a life of crime.
- ✓ Using data and evidence
- ✓ Asking the people involved "what has happened to you, to get to this point?"

Trauma Informed approach

This Means

Supporting organisations in becoming trauma aware and helping them to begin embedding trauma informed approaches into their practice

We will do this by:

- ✓ Ensuring robust training plans are in place to raise awareness of adverse childhood experiences
- ✓ Embedding trauma informed practice to reinforce the strengths and relationship-based practice many professionals already engage in.
- ✓ Supporting organisations to be trauma informed organisations
- ✓ Continuing our journey to establish consistency in the use of a trauma-informed approach

Four P approach

This Means

We will prevent violence, abuse and exploitation, protect those affected, reduce harm and pursue those who perpetrate

We will do this by:

- ✓ Maximising prevention opportunities and targeting resources to be effective
- ✓ Ensure robust, effective victims pathways, support and responses are in place
- ✓ Maximising opportunities to disrupt locations where there is violence, abuse and exploitation and use joint enforcement opportunities
- ✓ Reducing the harms caused by violence, abuse and exploitation through improved victim identification and support

Our engagement with local people and partners in developing this Community Safety Strategy has been invaluable in helping the partnership to shape our responses to ensure communities of Sandwell “feel safe, protected and confident in their homes and neighbourhoods”

Consultations carried out included:

- Annual WMP Community Safety Partnership Survey
- SSP Community Safety Survey (2021)
- Shape Survey (2020)
- Young Peoples Hate Crime Survey (2020)
- Sexual Abuse and Assault Survey (2021)
- Thank you to everyone who contributed

In the 2021 Community Safety Survey we asked about personal experiences of anti-social behaviour and crime in Sandwell

- 77.4% stated that they either been the victim or witness of this
- 60 respondents had reported to the police
- 71 of respondents said they had reported to Sandwell Council
- 78% were not satisfied with how their reports were dealt with

Review of Young People’s Experience of Hate Crime

- 73 young people responded
- 1 in 4 respondents told us that they had either been a victim or witnessed hate
- 44% told us they had not received any education on hate crime
- 38% told us they had been impacted by online hate

Sexual Abuse & Assault Survey

- 143 people responded
- 1 in 3 said they had experienced sexual abuse or assault
- 51.2% said the abuse or assault took place in West Bromwich
- When asked what would make them feel safer, respondents told us – awareness raising & education, safe spaces, visible security/police presence

In the 2021 Community Safety Survey we asked about feelings of safety from anti-social behaviour and crime

- 28.7% of people felt fairly unsafe and 5.7% very unsafe at home
- 44.8% of people reported feeling fairly unsafe in public spaces in Sandwell such as in towns and parks
- 40.3% of individuals expressed feeling very worried about becoming the victim of a crime in Sandwell
- 40% felt worried about organised crime and exploitation in Sandwell
- 24% of individuals perceived there to be an ineffective response to anti-social behaviour and crime by authorities

In the 2021 Community Safety Survey we asked about what would help you feel safer from anti-social behaviour and/or crime in Sandwell,

- 91.5% respondents asked for an increased police presence
- More CCTV (69.5%) was the second most common solution
- Well maintained estates & streets (59.9%) were third

In the Community Safety Survey we asked about priorities for the new Sandwell Community Safety Strategy

The top 5 issues highlighted were:

- Drug dealing (10.7%)
- Youth disorder (9.3%)
- Burglary (7.4%)
- Violent crime (7.2%)
- Littering/fly tipping (5.8%)

“Frankly the most violent and serious of the crimes above should always be top of the list but if you address the social issues also as a priority I'd hope that the number of serious crimes decreases”

“Difficult to pick top 5 as some of these such as DA, stalking and harassment and rape or sexual assault, forced marriage, slavery and hate crime should all be priorities but not necessarily a safety priority for the general vote as there is a smaller percentage that would experience these types of behaviours and therefore require those specific services”

Place Based Responses to Community Safety

Tipton

- ✓ 35% of children live in poverty
- ✓ Tipton is young with a higher than average proportion of young residents and lower than average proportion of older residents
- ✓ In 2020-21 overall total recorded crime increased in Tipton Town with an additional 246 offences.
- ✓ 106.6 crimes per 1000 people
- ✓ Stalking and Harassment had the highest increase with 200, (63.2%), additional offences
- ✓ Over the last 3 years, of 31 modern slavery concerns reported 61% were labour exploitation and 30% criminal exploitation with 24% of victims are Polish

Oldbury

- ✓ 26% of children live in poverty
- ✓ In 2020-21 overall total recorded crime decreased with a reduction of 311 offences.
- ✓ 80.9 crimes per 1000 people
- ✓ Over the last 3 years, of 41 modern slavery concerns reported 72% were labour exploitation and 19% criminal exploitation. 69% of victims are Romanian

Rowley Regis

- ✓ 28% of children live in poverty
- ✓ In 2020-21 overall total recorded crime has decreased with 8 less offences.
- ✓ 80.4 crimes per 1000 people
- ✓ Over the last 3 years of 26 modern slavery concerns reported 63% were labour exploitation and 24% criminal exploitation

Wednesbury

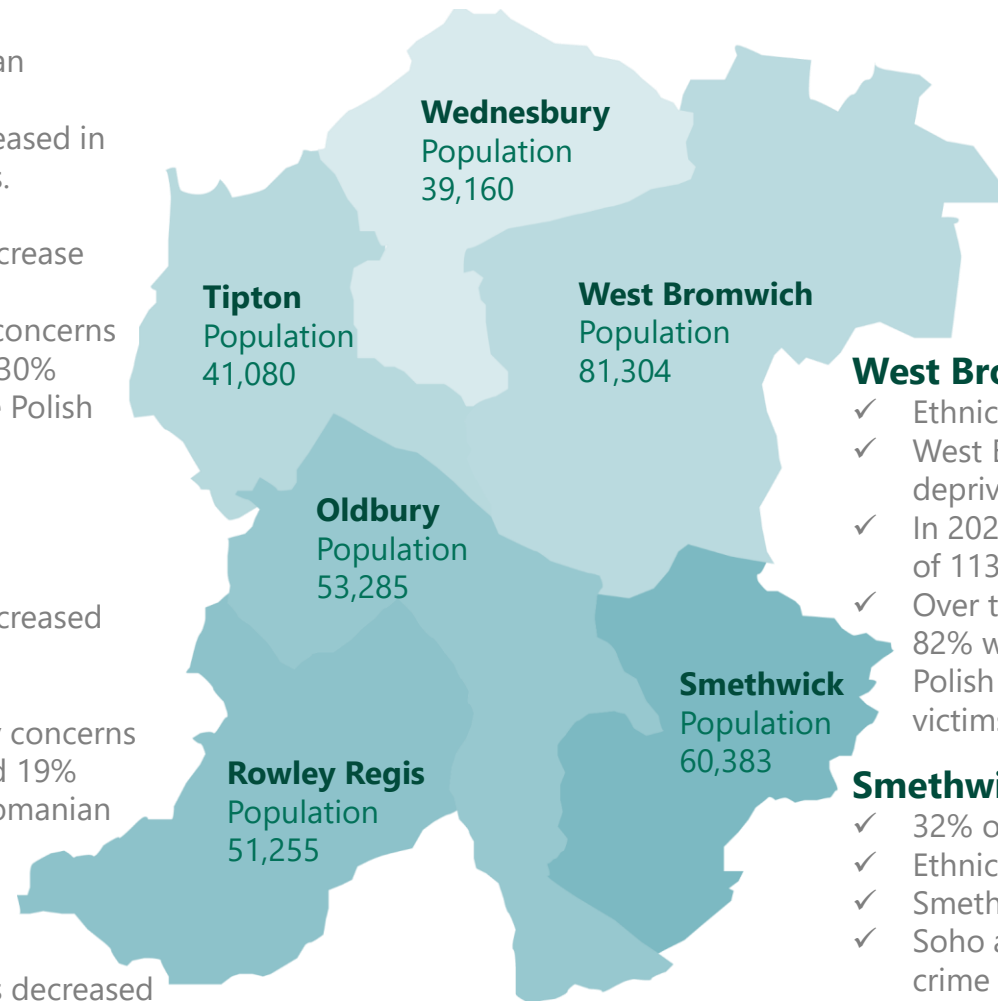
- ✓ 32% of children live in poverty
- ✓ The population is slightly older than the Sandwell average
- ✓ In 2020-21 overall total recorded crime has increased with 188 additional offences
- ✓ 92.5 crimes per 1000 people
- ✓ Over the last 3 years, of 24 modern slavery concerns reported, 62% were labour exploitation and 32% criminal exploitation. 50% of all victims were Albanians

West Bromwich

- ✓ Ethnic Minorities account for 35.5% of the population
- ✓ West Bromwich's deprivation score puts it in the 20% most deprived areas of England
- ✓ In 2020-21 there was an overall increase in total recorded crime of 113 offences.
- ✓ Over the last three years, of 98 modern slavery concerns reported 82% were labour exploitation and 10% criminal exploitation. Polish and Romanian communities had the highest incidences of victims with 27% each respectively

Smethwick

- ✓ 32% of children live in poverty
- ✓ Ethnic minorities account for 55.9% of the population.
- ✓ Smethwick has the highest proportion of young people
- ✓ Soho and Victoria had just under 50% more than the average crime levels
- ✓ In 2020-21 overall total recorded crime decreased in Smethwick with a reduction of 305 offences
- ✓ Over the last 3 years, of 101 modern slavery concerns reported 63% were labour exploitation and 28% criminal exploitation. 49% of all sexual exploitation also occurred in Smethwick. 45% of modern slavery victims are from the Indian population



Priority 1

**PREVENT
VIOLENCE
and EXPLOITATION**



PoVE

(Prevention of Violence and Exploitation)

The PoVE Sub Group is a strategic Sub Group of the Safer Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board. It is responsible for co-ordination of the work of partners to ensure that the Safer Sandwell Partnership Community Safety Strategy and Action Plan for Prevention of Violence and Exploitation (PoVE) is effectively delivered in close co-operation with Sandwell's Health and Wellbeing, Adult Safeguarding, Children's Safeguarding and Domestic Abuse Boards.

The partnership group is responsible for directing activities and resources aimed at prevention and early help to address violence and exploitation and overseeing performance against a series of objectives, targets and performance indicators laid out in the Prevention and Violence and Exploitation Strategy & Delivery Plans.

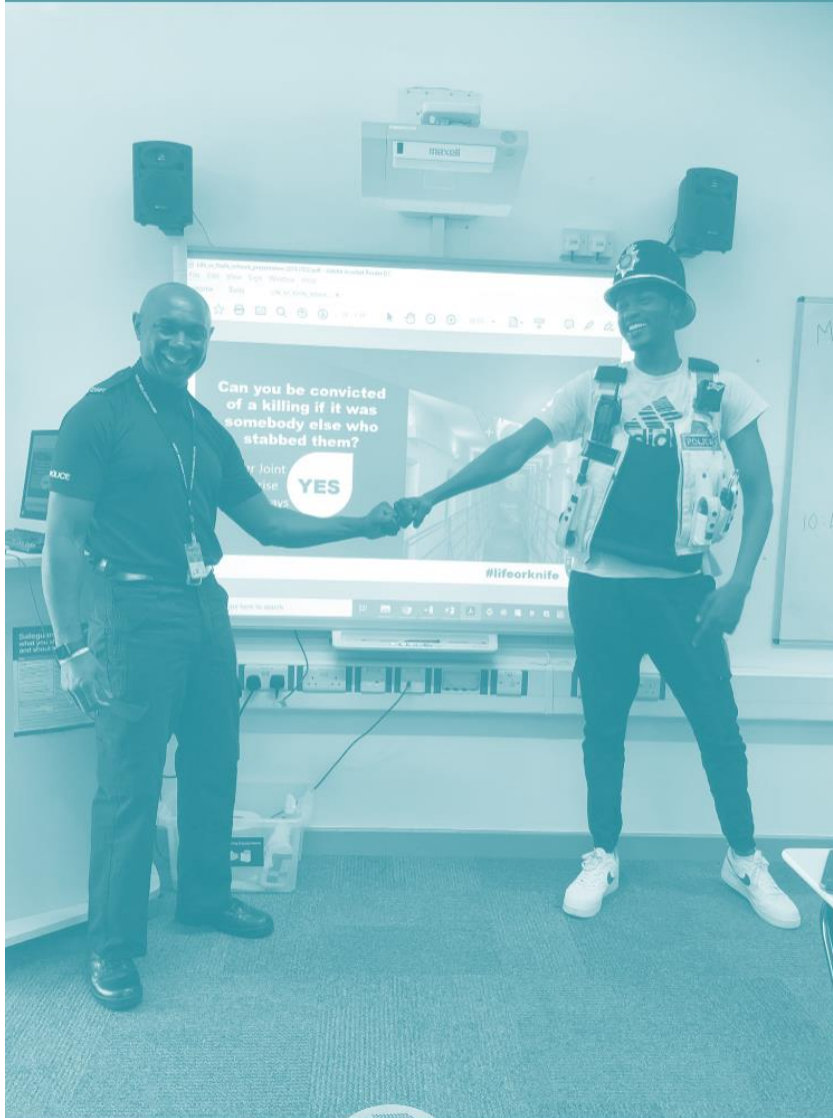
Key Prevention Priorities for PoVE include:

- Prevention of Public Place Violence
- Domestic Abuse
- Knife Crime
- Violence where victims and offenders under 25.
- Child Exploitation
- Modern Slavery

There are several cross-cutting priorities which have an additional focus including

- Addictive Behaviours
- Trauma informed practice
- Preventing radicalisation

We will prevent violence, abuse and exploitation, protect those affected, reduce harm and pursue those who perpetrate abuse, violence and exploitation



Progress

The PoVE Plan was developed with partners and is regularly reviewed at each PoVE meeting. Key achievements over the past 12 months have included:

Developing a regional approach to preventing violence, abuse and exploitation

- Embedded the VRU governance structures locally across all 4 Boards
- Agreed effective information exchange between the regional Boards and the LA / Partnership Boards.
- Aligned a range of joint priorities across the 4 regional Boards

Developing a Sandwell Prevention of Violence, Abuse and Exploitation Strategy and Plan

- The strategy and plan were both launched in April 2020 and underpin Sandwell's partnership approach to preventing and reducing violence, abuse and exploitation

Understanding the strategic landscape

- We worked with the Violence and Vulnerability Unit to undertake a Locality Review to help develop the response to violence, abuse and exploitation.
- VRU Regional Exploitation Framework – this was sent for consultation; the final framework is being pulled together and will need to be embedded across Sandwell

Other developments during the year have seen the VRU establish their 4 Boards: Domestic Abuse; Rape & Serious Sexual Offences, Human Trafficking & Modern Slavery and Criminal Exploitation & Missing. Sandwell is represented on all 4 which feed into our Prevention of Violence and Exploitation Work.

In October 2020 the VRU appointed a Community Navigator role to Sandwell to better link the VRU into local areas. The Navigator sits within the VRU and the Community Safety Team and one of her key tasks has been to co-ordinate a pilot project to reduce opportunities for violence and exploitation in one of Sandwell's Impact Areas. This developed into the Smethwick Against Violence Initiative (SAVI) which brought together a range of partners, including new groups, to develop resources and information to reduce opportunities for violence and exploitation and hate crime in this area

Local Picture

Between 2017 – 2020 Sandwell has seen a :

- 63% increase in domestic abuse reported to the police
- 55% increase in high risk domestic abuse

April 2018 - March 2021 data

- Sandwell MARAC offered support to 1973 high risk domestic abuse victims
- Black Country Women’s Aid were funded to provide specialist support to at least 5466 victims of domestic abuse and their families
- 422 victims supported through the A&E IDVA service funded through the OPCC
- Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG have now fully trained a total of 46 GP practices
- 505 victims of sexual violence and abuse supported by BCWA
- 24,118 children have been referred to MASH due to domestic abuse
- Women and girls in our community are at disproportionate risk of a wide range of crimes

Domestic Abuse

In the year ending March 2019, an estimated 2.4 million people aged 16 to 74 years reported experiencing domestic abuse. The true figure is much higher. Domestic abuse can happen to anyone but is disproportionately perpetrated by men towards women and children.

According to the ONS, figures indicate that the number of domestic abuse-related crimes in England rose by 6% in the year ending March 2021. In Sandwell we have seen a 30% increase in Domestic Abuse reports compared to data last year and a 10% increase in high risk MARAC cases. Due to the volume of referrals, an extra MARAC was held in February 2021 to deal effectively with the volume of cases being referred.

Nationally, there has been a 22% increase in calls to the National Domestic Abuse Helpline in England. We have also seen this demand locally with a 52% increase in contact with domestic abuse support services compared to last year and a 4% increase in referrals to Sandwell Children’s Trust.

Domestic abuse continues to be a priority for the Partnership and the work we have undertaken this year demonstrates how the partnership has managed increased demands, continued service delivery despite the he impact of Covid and responded to national policy changes.

In the 2019-21 strategy the following objectives in relation to domestic abuse were agreed

What We Said	What we Did
We will build on the success of the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership (DASP), giving more focus to several ‘hidden’ types of violence and exploitation	Domestic abuse continues to be a high priority, DASP is now a statutory board and leads the way in the response to DA in Sandwell.
Establish the DRIVE programme to change the behaviour of perpetrators	The DRIVE programme, funded by the OPCC was delivered in Sandwell with 53 perpetrators completing work in 2020-21.
Review arrangements for MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference)	A regional review and relaunch of MARAC took place in 2019. There has been a 10% increase in high risk cases, with extra MARAC meetings held to meet the demand

2018 – 2021 Achievements

- Completion and publication of 3 Domestic Homicide Reviews and delivery of Learning Events
- Several new groups established to tackle specific abuse including Child to Parent Abuse and Sexual Assault & Abuse.
- FGM multi-agency procedures agreed and published and promoted through a community launch event
- 2410 professionals attended domestic abuse training
- £841,000 of New Burdens Funding secured

2022 – 2026 priorities

- Production of new Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Needs Assessment and summary
- Development of new DA Strategy 2021-24
- Implementation of Delivery Plan for support in safe accommodation
- 3-year DA/SAA training programme to be commissioned 2022-25
- Commission bespoke community-based support for children experiencing DA

Learning

★ Coercive and controlling behaviour is a key factor in domestic abuse

★ Abusers often use counter-allegations, including allegations of child abuse/neglect, to divert attention from their own abusive behaviour

★ Children lived in family where 20 years of DA wasn't reported or disclosed

★ Importance of encouraging adult victims to report / seek help

★ Looking for potential signs of DA in both adults and children



What we have done following these cases?

- We have actively promoted domestic abuse awareness via the annual '16 Days of Action Against Domestic Abuse' campaign, sharing regular messages on social media about different types of abuse and how to seek support, Safer 6 campaigns; Adult Safeguarding weeks as well as regular messages throughout the year
- We have developed a Learning from DHRs training module and multi-agency domestic abuse training sessions
- We have produced a domestic abuse information leaflet for friends, family and work colleagues
- We have produced information on domestic abuse victim support services in various languages
- We produced and launched 'Tina's Story' a video to promote awareness of domestic abuse and prevent further domestic homicides

Learning from Domestic Abuse Homicides

A Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) is a multi-agency review of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by a person to whom they were related or with whom they were, or had been, in an intimate personal relationship, or a member of the same household as themselves. Since 13 April 2011 there has been a statutory requirement for local areas to conduct a DHR following a domestic homicide that meets the criteria.

Over the last three years, 3 Domestic Abuse Homicides Reports have been published in Sandwell:

Miriam

- 'Miriam was a 26-year-old mother of three children who was killed by her ex-partner in 2015. The relationship began when she was 14 and he was 50. A key theme of the DHR was how professionals did not recognise how the relationship began, including potential CSE, and the impact of this on the family dynamics.

Eve.

- 'Eve' was a 54-year-old woman who was murdered by her long-term partner. He was jailed for a minimum of 24 years for her murder. She was a mother and grandmother who had struggled to provide a loving home to her children and step-children despite her partner's abusive and controlling behaviour. During their twenty year relationship, she experienced repeated physical, emotional and psychological abuse but did not report him to the Police for fear of his retribution on her and their family. Read her story [here](#)

AB

- AB was murdered by her partner in 2017 who then committed suicide. The review highlighted the importance of professionals and others being able to recognise coercive and controlling behaviour and know what to do and where support can be accessed for victims-survivors

Integrated management of domestic abuse serial perpetrators in Sandwell is working well, data submitted to the Home Office demonstrates a 87% reduction in repeat domestic abuse incidents and an 86% reduction in the cost of domestic abuse crime for those subject to management.

The DRIVE perpetrator programme reported a 96% reduction in repeat domestic abuse incidents and a 94% reduction in the cost of crime.

Since 2015 there have been 3384 recordable offences relating to sexual assault and abuse in Sandwell. (Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) data).

This includes adult and child victims, with the majority of victims being female. Black Country Women's Aid's (BCWA) quarterly reports indicate that after a spike in 2019/20 to 197 referrals, there has been a noticeable decrease to 153 referrals in 2020/21 which could be attributed to the COVID lockdown and victims feeling unable to report. This is backed up by the fact that the majority of referrals (41%) were self-referrals in 2018/19. This decreased dramatically to 29% in 2019/20 and reduced again to 25% in 2020/21.

Sexual Assault (88%) and Rape (56%) continues to be the primary reason for referral into BCWA's Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) service.

The Children's and Young People's Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) supported 46 victims of SAA in the last year specifically in Sandwell, 70% of which were young women and girls. Of all the referrals, 29% were from a minority background. 4% were from LGBTQ community.

The Adult SARC were only able to provide West Midlands wide data. They have supported 272 adult victims of SAA from April 20 to Mar 21. 92% of those supported were female. 45% of those were from a minority background. (significantly higher than the percentage of ethnic minority across the West Midlands of 16.5%)

Sexual Assault and Abuse

Sexual Assault and Abuse are hidden crimes that often go unreported so it is sometimes misleading to rely on police data to estimate the prevalence of the issue. It is estimated that 773,000 adults aged 16-73 experienced Sexual Assault and Abuse in the year ending March 2020.(Crime Survey England and Wales)

Nationally sexual assault and abuse disproportionately affects women and girls, with 1 in 5 females estimated to experience sexual assault and abuse from the age of 16 years old and 1 in 25 males estimated to experience sexual assault and abuse within the same age bracket (CSEW, 2018). The prevalence of sexual assault and abuse experienced by children under 16 years is estimated to encompass 7.5% of the current adult population (CSEW, 2020). To caveat this, it is important to recognise that under-reporting means the true prevalence of sexual assault, abuse and exploitation is not fully understood.

Currently only 1.4 percent of reported rape offences are prosecuted in England and Wales (Home Office 2020). The difficulties that the criminal justice process faces are starkly seen by the calls for reform and the work ongoing within government.

SAA Aims for 2022 -25

Victim Pathways - We will provide an appropriate pathway for victims to access support that is effective, robust and follows best practice. We will use victims' feedback to improve services and outcomes.

Tackling Attitudes -We will implement robust preventative measures from early childhood to adulthood

Raising Awareness - We will raise awareness of SAA across all partners and ensure that all organisations fulfil their responsibilities to address SAA and provide appropriate responses to victims

Challenging Perpetrators - We want perpetrators of sexual assault and abuse to be held accountable for their actions and supported to change their behaviours

2018-21 Achievements

- Multi-agency Sexual Assault & Abuse group established in late 2020 which reports to DASP
- SAA needs assessment produced and presented to DASP in Dec 2021
- 2022-25 Strategy drafted – key priorities
- Workshop with partners January 2022 to develop implementation plan
- FGM Clinic established

2022 - 25 priorities

- Strategy presented to DASP in March 2022 for approval
- Implementation plan 2022-25 developed by SAA group and approved by DASP
- Check With Me First campaign rolled out across frontline health professionals
- Improved training for professionals around SAA
- Work to improve referral pathways between grassroot organisations and specialist agencies

Local Picture

The Sandwell Anti-slavery Strategic Partnership continue to lead the way in responding effectively to modern slavery

SHOP (Slavery and Human Trafficking Operational Partnership) continues to lead the operational response around modern slavery

The year has seen a continued uplift in operational activity, particularly amongst those who are homeless and destitute. 20 partners are consistently at SHOP, sharing intelligence and data to effectively detect, prevent and disrupt modern slavery

Since April 2019 there have been 450 reports of modern slavery in Sandwell

- 1017 potential victims screened
- 306 safeguarding visits completed
- 149 victims referred into the National Referral Mechanism (NRM)
- 247 locations disrupted
- 56 perpetrators arrested
- Sandwell has identified more male victims of modern slavery across the West Midlands region

Modern Slavery

Sandwell’s response to modern slavery has continued to develop over the last 12 months and our four main objectives are to:

1. Ensure victim pathways are robust, effective and aligned to best practice
2. Further understand threats, risk and harm modern slavery and human trafficking poses
3. Raise awareness across agencies, businesses and communities, to address modern slavery
4. Disrupt incidents of modern slavery in Sandwell, working collaboratively to target perpetrators

Sandwell’s commitment to having designated roles focused on modern slavery and exploitation are really helping to lead the way in this work nationally as reflected in two recent reports: The Anti-Slavery Commissioner’s Annual Report and a report on modern slavery partnerships.

[It still happens here: Fighting Slavery in the 2020s Independent anti-slavery commissioner annual report 2019-2020](#)

In June 2019 leaders of the council signed a Modern Slavery Pledge, making a firm commitment to doing everything in our power to make our Borough slavery free.

In the 2019-21 strategy the following objectives in relation to exploitation and abuse were agreed

What we Said	What we Did
We will work closely with Children and Adults Safeguarding Boards and Health and Wellbeing Board to deliver a series of actions to prevent exploitation and abuse	The new Horizons Hub was developed to lead on exploitation for children. A new Exploitation Strategy was developed for children and a regional exploitation framework developed
New co-coordinator will strengthen and join up work to prevent and tackle slavery and human trafficking	The Modern Slavery Programme Manager came into post in December 2018 and developed a plan of work to tackle modern slavery
PoVE Action Plan to be strengthened around child exploitation.	PoVE Action Plans and score cards were further developed, there has been a 50% reduction in child exploitation reports to police

2018 – 2021 Achievements

- Development of Modern Slavery Delivery Plan
- Development of an effective data set to understand the modern slavery landscape across Sandwell enabling development of Town Profiles Council leaders signed a pledge to make Sandwell a Slavery Free Borough
- Embedded a new Slavery Adult Safeguarding Case Conference (SASCC)
- National Modern Slavery Conference on sexual exploitation reached over 1000 delegates
- 241 First Responders trained
- 950 have attended safeguarding briefings on modern slavery

2022 – 2026 priorities

- Review and refresh victim pathway and safeguarding responses for victims of modern slavery
- Review modern slavery training in line with Modern Slavery Training Standards Framework and refresh Modern Slavery Training Plan
- Embed a regional modern slavery dash board and implement locally
- Develop a new Modern Slavery Delivery Plan

Local Picture

Between April 2017 – March 2020 there have been:

- 90056 incidents of public safety or welfare
- 1393 incidents of violence with injury
- 105 gang related non-crimes
- A 9% increase in reported knife crime
- 764 incidents of knife crime with victims over 18
- 184 incidents of knife crime where the victim is aged 10 – 17 years
- 11 incidents of knife crime where the offender is aged 10 – 17
- 234 incidents of gun crime
- 55 markers for gangs related crimes
- A 21% increase in sexual offences
- A 98% increase in stalking and harassment
- A 42% increase in violence against the person

Prevention of Public Place Violence

Ensuring our communities feel safe, protected and confident in their neighbourhoods is a key part of our vision, and we all need to work together to achieve this.

We have launched three specific place based approaches to help respond to violence, including:

- **SAVI** (Smethwick Anti-Violence Initiative) was set up as part of a place-based pilot to prevent violence in Smethwick funded by the West Midlands Violence Reduction Unit (WMVRU). SAVI is a unique alliance of organisations, each with a commitment to serving disadvantaged, excluded and isolated communities
- **West Bromwich Place Based Pilot**, funded by the VRU, is running with local providers offered the opportunity to attend a training course and engage with the train the trainer programme as part of an accredited mentoring framework. Detached youth work and intensive support to Sandwell College also funded alongside capacity for specialist mentoring and family support, including work with primary schools.
- **Safer Streets Funding Round 3 (focusing on VAWG)**
Home Office Safer Streets funding secured in October 2021 to deliver a place based project in West Bromwich focussing on the prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). The project consists of delivering messages through education working with boys to tackle attitudes and prevent perpetration, one to one mentoring for young people who are displaying sexualised behaviour, interactive theatre productions in schools, bystander training delivered to Sandwell College and some of the businesses in West Bromwich and piloting a safe space scheme in West Bromwich town centre.

Impact Areas are a focus of Tasking and plans were put in place to reduce violence using Project Guardian resources when the team arrived in Sandwell in July 2021 focusing resources in two of Sandwell's impact areas was very successful in a short space of time.

Weekly partnership risk and threat meetings were developed as an opportunity to share intelligence and respond in real time to emerging threats or risk.

2018 – 2021 Achievements

- Full dedication of the Op Guardian Task Force for 10 weeks in 2021
- Knife Arch initiatives introduced across Borough
- Partnership meetings set up to tackle breaches of Covid legislation have helped develop and strengthen working relationships across this area
- Developed and launched Community Safety Licensed Premises Safeguarding Risk Assessment
- Adopted the West Midlands Vulnerable Adults Risk Management procedures

2022 – 2026 priorities

- Delivery of the Safer Streets project
- Support the West Bromwich Town Centre PSPO to engage and work with vulnerable individuals.
- Learn from Operation Guardian and continue to work with the Guardian Task Force
- Develop approaches to public place violence as part of the serious violence duty
- Operational delivery of the stepping together programme

Local Picture

From April 2017 – March 2020

- 184 incidents of knife crime where the victim is aged 10 – 17 years
- 17 incidents of knife crime where the offender is aged 10 – 17
- During Operation Aident County Lines Intensification Week 2021 14 young people were safeguarded
- 73% of people linked to county lines activity between April 2018 and November 2020 were young people aged 25 or under
- 15 to 24 year olds attend A&E following an assault at a rate of 53 per 10,000 of the population, which is higher than any other age group
- 15 to 24 year olds also have the highest rate of inpatient hospital admissions for assault (an indicator of more serious injuries having occurred)

U25 violence

The [VRU Strategic needs assessment](#), analysed a range of different data sources for under 25 violence. One of the recommendations they will be taking forward is to explore opportunities to reduce risks linked to children in care, missing, school exclusion and county lines. Based on the evidence of risk from this assessment and outlined below, the recommendation is to work with Sandwell Local Authority.

- Smethwick and East Sandwell have high rates of hospital admissions for assault with a sharp object
- Police recorded involvement in County Lines from Smethwick and East Sandwell
- Increase in the rate of Children in Care from 70 per 100,000 in 2016 to 109 per 100,000 in 2019
- Much of the Local Authority area showing relatively high in the Risk Index
- Schools with high three-year permanent exclusion rates

In the space of five years, knife crime has more than doubled in the West Midlands, from 1,558 incidents in the year to March 2015, to more than 3,400 in the year to March 2020, according to the Office for National Statistics. The West Midlands has the third highest rate of Knife Crime in England and Wales, with 108 reports per 100,000 population. Sandwell has more incidents in the East of the Borough (especially Smethwick) but also stands out as having above median levels of Violence Against the Person offences in most of the local authority area

Over the last 12 months, there have been a number of initiatives to prevent and reduce under 25 violence, and knife crime which include:

- Working with the Op Guardian Task Force to reduce knife crime
- Supporting Families Against Youth Crime universal support to reduce knife crime
- Community safety funded projects focused on raising awareness in schools
- Universal protective behaviours projects working with 3 local primary schools
- A project run by young volunteers for children aged 12-18 in the Polish community educating them on issues related to hate crime, discrimination, racism, xenophobia
- Funding for projects that support prevention and disruption interventions with young people who have been identified as on the cusp of being exploited and/or entering gang activity
- The Early Intervention Youth Fund project taking a tiered approach through disruption; engagement; diversion and prevention. The providers worked with Youth Offending Service, the Horizons Team, Sandwell Community school and schools across the borough

2018 – 2021 Achievements

- Created a consistent approach for reporting weapons and violent offences
- 5 year reduction plan in place to reduce children taking weapons into schools
- 3 School Liaison Officers allocated to all high schools within the 3 impact areas; overall objective to reduce under 25 violence
- NPU worked closely with the Op Guardian Task Force
- Supporting Families Against Youth Crime universal support to reduce knife crime
- Section 60 Implemented in West Bromwich Town Centre.
- Over 200 young people benefited from the EIFY funding

2022 – 2026 priorities

- Continued schools inputs around knife crime/county lines
- Continued hi-vis patrols in towns with partners
- Develop a five-year strategy to reduce children taking weapons into schools.
- Further embed the weapons and violence pathways in schools
- Delivery of the Step Together pilot in Sandwell focusing on Smethwick and Oldbury

Local Picture

During the last 3 years:

- Sandwell has seen a 50% reduction in reports to the police for child exploitation,
- 1,489 professionals completed training on child sexual exploitation
- 789 practitioners attended exploitation training
- Supporting Families Against Youth Crime programme supported young people in years 6 and 7 in transition from primary to secondary school in two of our impact areas West Bromwich and Smethwick
- Nearly 600 one to one mentoring sessions were delivered to over 120 young people
- 3,000 young people and their carers benefited from universal sessions delivered via assemblies
- 73% of all the people linked to county lines activity between April 2018 and November 2020 were young people aged 25 or under
- In the first year of the launch of the Exploitation Hub,
 - 130 young people were discussed and supported
 - 114 high risk victims received targeted support

Child Exploitation

In response to child exploitation, The West Midlands Criminal Exploitation Board has begun to coordinate partners' responses and approaches to child exploitation and developed a regional exploitation framework to support statutory safeguarding partners in developing and embedding a robust local response to exploitation.

Sandwell Children's Trust has established The Horizons Team to focus on exploitation. It operates a 'Co-Working Plus Model' to help improve practice across the Trust.

This assists with:

- Mapping locations of concern and ensuring information analysis will be more meaningful
- Young people receiving a consistent response from a centralised team that will co-work alongside social workers.
- Manages those at high risk of exploitation and MACE processes for partnership working around vulnerable young people

In the 2019-21 strategy the following objectives in relation to child exploitation were agreed

What we Said	What we Did
We will improve the response to young people at risk of gangs or exploitation	We established a working group to respond to gangs and exploitation, this was a successful piece of work and helped us to adopt early intervention approaches for young people at risk of joining gangs
Develop our approach to children who have experienced ACES	A lot of work has been completed around the trauma informed approach, robust training and now working with the VRU on this area of work
We will explore the concept of a complex safeguarding hub with partners	This work resulted in the development of the Child Exploitation Hub which brings partners together to reduce the impact of exploitation and provide targeted support

2018 – 2021 Achievements

- Early Help Exploitation Champions Group launched
- Successful Hub step downs have increased with young peoples risk levels being reduced
- Multi-agency approaches to Operation Aidant intensification weeks
- Development of Horizons Team to respond to child exploitation
- Launch of an Exploitation Strategy
- 15 schools enrolled in Sandwell Safeguarding Champions programme
- Updating of Project 12, Sandwell's PSHE programme

2022 – 2026 priorities

- Continued Schools inputs around knife crime/county lines
- Continued hi-vis patrols in towns with partners
- Develop a five-year strategy to reduce children taking weapons into schools
- Further embed the weapons and violence pathways in schools
- Continue to improve our response to knife crime
- Embed roll out of Sandwell's PSHE programme Project 12

Local Picture

- 61 individuals vulnerable to Extremism have been supported by Prevent over the last 3 years
- 7036 young people have engaged with Prevent through schools work led by the Prevent Education Officer
- Monthly Prevent Newsletter for partners distributed
- Developed Twitter page – tweeting weekly messages to the wider community
- Delivery of focussed project work to over 2000 children during 2020-21
- Pro-active Safer 6 involvement, delivering a mixture of face to face 'pop up' events with partners/communities and online awareness sessions
- Focussed work in Tipton (an area of risk) with partners
- Delivery of training sessions to foster carers and increased staff sessions for Sandwell Childrens Trust
- Effective adaptation to online delivery during COVID including adapted REWIND resources for schools
- Partner working with West Midlands VRU/SAVI including Prevent delivery during 2021 'exploitation week'

Preventing Terrorism

As a partnership we are all under the statutory Prevent Duty (2015) to work together to prevent terrorism. The Local Authority has strengthened our Prevent Team in the areas of education, community engagement and in developing an improved awareness across the Local Authority and partners through an excellent training and resource offer.

Strengthening our Prevent Offer

- Sandwell Safeguarding Champions (peer mentor scheme) launched in primary schools, secondary schools and Sandwell College
- Developed partnership work and awareness raising to support people with learning difficulties/autism where there have been concerns regarding Extremism/Radicalisation
- Prevent (online safety) information booklet created for Parents, Teachers and implemented for use in the wider community
- Completion and distribution of a Prevent 'Teachers Booklet' providing information, practices and processes to Designated Safeguarding Leads and teachers
- 'Building Resilience Against the Far-Right' pilot programme undertaken in Sandwell
- Development of Artemis, a Prevent on-line training package for professionals
- Pilot of Community 'Understanding Extremism' training launched with initial sessions delivered
- Delivery of annual CTLP briefing event for partners and seniors at Oldbury Council House and developed a series of sanitised CTLP sharing webinars for DSLs



2018 – 2021 Achievements

- In 2020 we launched a new Artemis Prevent training module. 880 professionals have completed this training
- 3844 people have attended WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) training over the last 3 years
- 712 professionals have attended 'Understanding Extremism' training
- 950 professionals have attended safeguarding briefings on hate crime
- 89 parents / individuals attended our new online safety community training briefings
- Home Office funding secured to recruit a Prevent Community Engagement Officer in 2021-22

2022 – 2026 priorities

- Deliver Prevent Delivery Plan through Prevent Delivery Group
- HO benchmarks and tool kit fully achieved
- Develop PCEO role and engage hard to reach communities to improve awareness of Prevent
- Continue with high standard of Prevent support to schools via PEO
- Continue to develop VRU partnership working
- Regular updates to training and projects.

Priority 2

**REDUCE
OFFENDING,
REOFFENDING**



& SERIOUS



ORGANISED CRIME

RRSOC

(Reducing Offending, Re-offending and Serious Organised Crime)

The Reducing Offending, Reoffending and Serious Organised Crime Strategic Sub Group is responsible for co-ordination of the work of partners to ensure that the Safer Sandwell Partnership Community Safety Strategy and Action Plan for reducing offending, reoffending and serious organised crime is effectively delivered in Sandwell.

Key Priorities include

- Repeat Offending
- Serious Organised Crime
- County Lines

Statistics show that almost half of all crime is committed by individuals with previous convictions. Police and Probation Services use statistical and clinical risk assessments to focus resources on those most likely to reoffend. The introduction of the Reducing Offending, Reoffending and Serious Organised Crime subgroup to the SSPPCB in 2019 has strengthened partnership approaches across this area and supported the delivery of the 7 pathways out of offending.

Significant work has been taken across all these areas over the past 3 years including;

- Working to introduce creative arts into work with young people engaged with the Youth Offending Service.
- Development of an online space for Sandwell YJS called The Sandwell Hub to provide key information about services, private space for young people and their families and a media gallery to promote work
- Getting to Know' booklet has now been fully integrated into the service, allowing a creative method to be applied to those fundamental pieces of work at the start of an order
- Introduction of the Homelessness Prevention Taskforce during lockdown ensured all offenders could secure temporary accommodation and avoid homelessness. This was exceptionally successful locally whilst more stable accommodation was sought.
- Joint working with the Local Authority and Probation re co-located post to help support offenders in securing and maintaining stable tenancies.
- National review and update in relation to Integrated Offender Management, we have now identified three cohorts of offenders causing the most crime and having the most impact across Sandwell who will be jointly managed and supported away from criminal behaviour using a partnership approach. This is in line with the newly refreshed national IOM strategy.
- In June 2021 the newly formed Probation Service contracted Maximus to provide a holistic approach to supporting ETE opportunities, with a particular focus on employment. Referrals have been much higher than expected and some very positive outcomes achieved so far.

Highlights

Creative Service

First YJS in the country to achieve a Silver Arts Mark Award from the Arts Council in recognition of work undertaken by Youth Justice Partnership to make the YJS more creative. Summer Arts Programme awarded a second Platinum Award through Koestlerin for two years running

HMIP Inspection

HMIP Inspection Rating of Good for Sandwell Youth Justice Service.

Mental Health & Wellbeing

The Probation Service's Personality Disorder Team have expanded and every offender is screened. Where needs are identified offenders receive enhanced, dedicated psychology and probation intervention and support.

PCC funded posts have been established in Black Country Courts to identify and support increased numbers of referrals to receive this specialist intervention which addresses mental health issues linked to substance abuse and offending.

The Sandwell Afro-Caribbean Mental Health Foundation, have been commissioned to provide dedicated intervention and support to suitable offenders from BAME backgrounds

Black Country Reducing Reoffending Strategy

The strategy was developed 2019 – 2022 and helps to develop a model which will provide early identification and interventions with emphasis on preventing and reducing offending and reoffending, and reducing risk of harm (See Below)

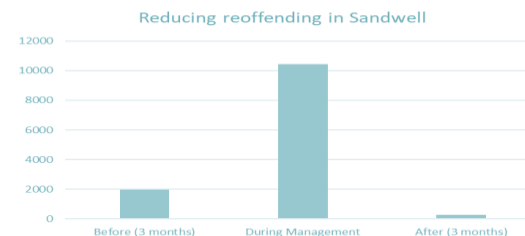
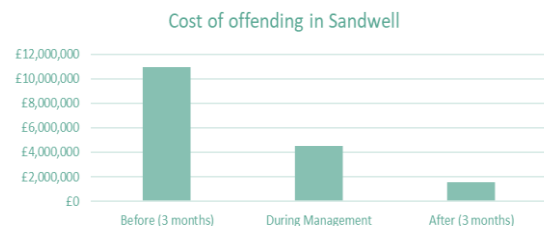


Local Picture

- Sandwell average adult reoffending rate is 29.5%
- Sandwell average youth reoffending rates is 42.64% which has reduced from 47.15%
- Sandwell has higher rates of reoffending than the Black Country trend for 18-21
- Home Office data shows there are 1165 offenders (1089 males, 68 females) committing 1978 offences between them

Repeat offending

Sandwell has the second highest volume of offenders in the West Midlands with 1165 offenders (rolling Home Office data). There have been some key indicators to show that integrated offender management is working with an 86% reduction in both offences and costs.



Significant work has been undertaken in developing the 7 pathways out of offending including accommodation, employment and training and mental health and wellbeing work. Over the next five years we will work to further embed the pathways and priority areas which are included in the chart opposite.

In the 2019-21 strategy the following objectives in relation to repeat offending were agreed

What we Said	What we Did
We will track reoffending rates for those released from custody to establish whether we are more effective in helping to transition young people from custody to the community	Reoffending rates have reduced since 2017 with adult offending dropping to 29.52% and young people to 42.64%
We will improve engagement with our young black offender cohort through bespoke mentoring support.	Task and Finish groups have been convened to understand disproportionality and this work will be taken forward into the new plan
We will evaluate the impact of the Kitchen Table Talks to establish whether there has been improved engagement with, and information to, parents	Kitchen Table Talks, piloted in Sandwell were evaluated and are now supported by the Violence Reduction Unit to be embedded across the region

Pathways and priority areas of delivery



Accommodation and support

- Stable accommodation can reduce the likelihood of reoffending by more than a fifth
- It provides building blocks to gain employment and access support services



Education, Training and Employment

- Employment reduces the risk of reoffending between a third and a half
- There is a correlation between offending and low achievement, poor literacy, numeracy and language skills



Health

- Adult offenders are disproportionately more likely to suffer from mental and physical health problems.
- 31% of adult prisoners have been found to have emotional wellbeing issues linked to their offending behaviours.



Substance Misuse

- Two thirds of adult prisoners use illegal drugs in the year prior to imprisonment
- Intoxication by alcohol is linked to 30% of sexual offences, 33% of burglaries, 50% of street and violent crimes



Finance, benefits and debt

- Having a lawful income is vital to offenders' rehabilitation
- Approximately 81% of offenders claim benefits on release from prison



Children and Families

- Maintaining a strong relationship with families and children strongly assists in helping adult offenders sustain changes and avoid reoffending
- Custody can place added strain on family relationships



Attitudes, thinking and behaviour

- Offenders are more likely to have negative social attitudes and poor self-control
- Addressing attitudes and thinking behaviour during custody can reduce reoffending by up to 14%

2018 – 2021 Achievements

- Refresh of the Black Country Reducing Offending Strategy and development of new NPS Strategy
- National and regional structural realignment of NPS
- Commissioning of services to support offending pathways undertaken
- Moved from a YOS Management Board to a Youth Justice Partnership and Youth Justice Service.
- Clear focus of becoming a more creative service
- First YJS in the country to achieve a Silver Arts Mark Award from the Arts Council

Summer Arts Programme

★ Summer Arts college in both 2019 and 2020 won platinum Koestler awards (for creative work in a criminal justice setting)

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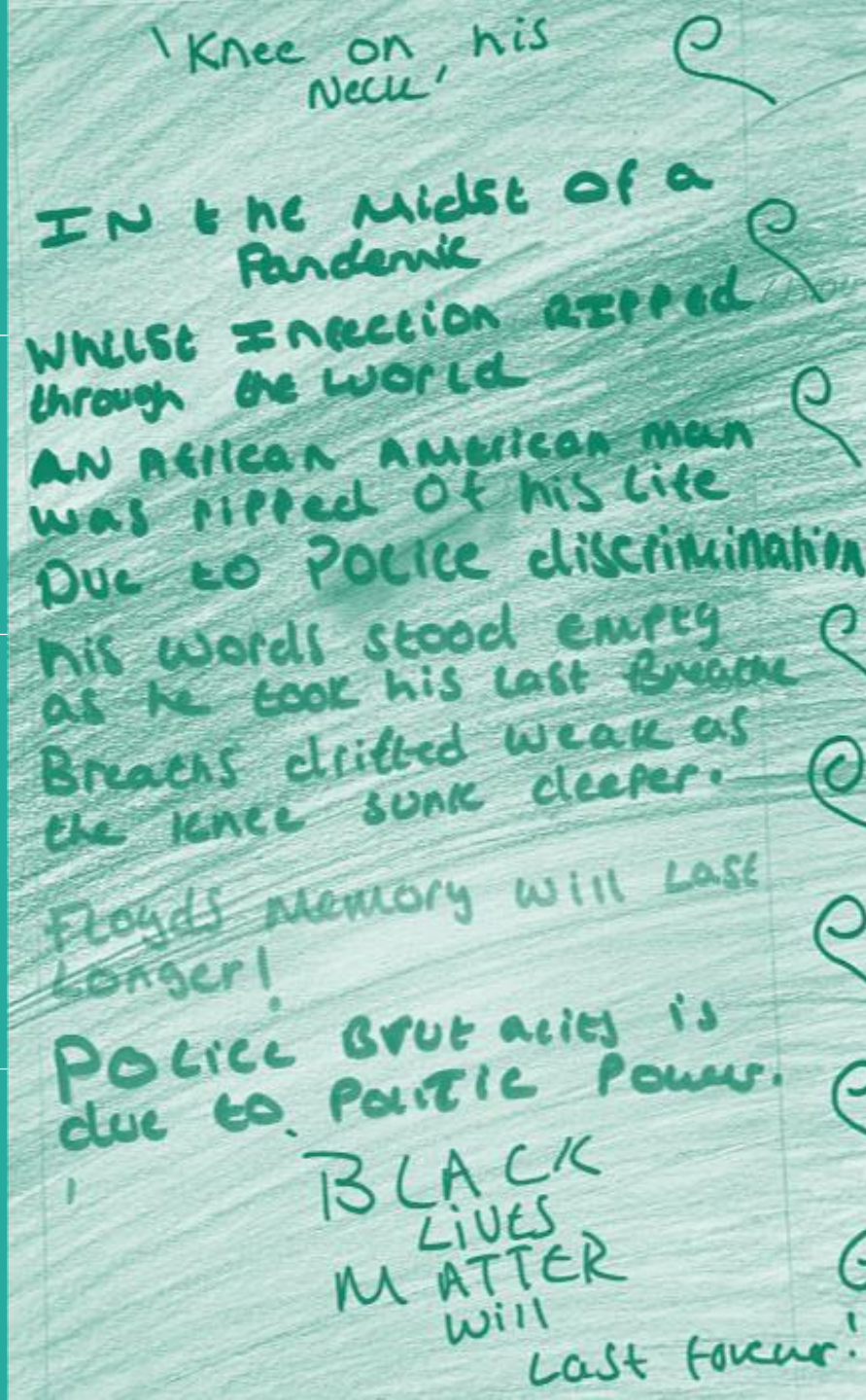
Ongoing funding

★ second year running the Summer Arts College funded by Unites

★ Special under 25's award for a portrait created by a young person, also chosen and featured in Koestler's annual art exhibition at the Southbank Centre, London

National Award

★ Bronze award for VR County Lines video



A MORE CREATIVE SERVICE

One of the priority areas of work for the Youth Justice Service was to work towards making services more creative for young people.

For the second year running they ran a summer arts college funded by Unitas. Virtual creative sessions, were run in partnership with Gazebo Theatre. The content of the sessions was planned alongside the artists who provided a list of materials that the young people would need to participate in the sessions. Alongside the technology, each young person was also provided with an arts kit containing these materials

Young people participated in several virtual workshops including: Creative Writing, Podcasts, Magic, Balloon modelling, poetry, digital illustrations, film making, music and watched a specially adapted live theatre performance.

Given that this was the first time a piece of work on this scale was being completed using a virtual approach, the success of the project could not be anticipated. However this proved to be extremely positive with 8 young people achieving at least 1 arts award with 7 young people gaining 3 arts awards each.

Given the success of the Summer Arts College, Sandwell YJS were invited by Unitas to apply for additional funding to deliver a Silver Arts award aimed at young people who had previously achieved the Bronze Arts Award.

Giving young people a safe space to explore feelings around the murder of George Floyd

Local Picture

From April 2018 – March 2021 there have been

- 8 Organised Crime gangs mapped in Sandwell
- 1393 incidents of violence with injury
- 764 incidents of knife crime with victims over 18
- 184 incidents of knife crime where the victim is aged 10 – 17 years
- 68 incidents of knife crime where offender is over 18
- 11 incidents of knife crime where the offender is aged 10 – 17
- 234 incidents of gun crime
- 55 markers for gangs related crimes
- 105 gang related non-crimes

Serious Organised Crime

Serious violence has a devastating impact on victims and their families, instils fear within communities and is extremely costly to society. Preventing and reducing organised crime has been introduced as a Sandwell priority because of the increased threat posed by organised crime and the pressure on vulnerable people who are often exploited.

Our focus in Sandwell is to enable more joined up working around protecting local people and businesses by making it hard for SOC gangs to operate effectively in Sandwell. We are doing this through ensuring enhanced collaborative working in relation to known locations of organised crime, sharing intelligence to strengthen procurement across Sandwell and strengthening partnership approaches to preventing sale of illegal counterfeit goods. All of which requires a strong partnership approach.

The government have carried out several consultations and are introducing the Serious Violence Duty. This is a key part of the Government's programme of work to prevent and reduce serious violence; taking a multi-agency approach to understand the causes and consequences of serious violence and focus on prevention and early intervention, informed by evidence. In addition to tough law enforcement we need to understand and address the causal factors that cause someone to commit violent crime in the first place. The Duty aims to ensure that agencies are focussed on their activity to reduce serious violence whilst also providing sufficient flexibility so that relevant organisations will engage and work together in effective local partnerships.

In the 2019-21 strategy the following objectives in relation to organised crime were agreed:

What we Said	What we Did
We will use tactical and operational groups to manage and monitor offenders	A new organised crime group meeting was formed to provide a multi-agency response to serious organised crime
We will use existing MAPPA, GODOC, ODOC, Deter and other mechanisms to manage offenders	These structures continue to operate and we will use data more effectively going forward

2018 – 2021 Achievements

- Funding from Home Office for SW NPU around SOC Violence
- Development of partnership Organised Crime Group to share intelligence and tackle and disrupt organised crime in Sandwell.
- Development of offender employment pathways with DWP including Community Youth Hub
- Homelessness and Complex Case Referral Pathway into accommodation services through the Local Authority

2022 – 2026 priorities

- Raise awareness of serious organised crime and organised criminal gangs with partners through the OCG
- Protect local people and businesses by making it hard for SOC gangs to operate effectively in Sandwell
- Share intelligence to strengthen procurement across Sandwell,
- Strengthen partnership approaches to preventing sale of illegal counterfeit goods

- For the past three years we have worked to embed a partnership approach to the County Lines intensification weeks
- In October 2021 County Lines week work included:
 - 32 people arrested
 - 11 warrants executed
 - 77 Wraps of Heroin recovered
 - 396 wraps of Crack confiscated
 - £237,000 worth of cannabis found
 - £8305 cash seized
 - 19 weapons recovered
- 73% of people linked to county lines activity between April 2018 and November 2020 were young people aged 25 or under
- The overwhelming conclusion is that young males with Black ethnicity, most often from the most deprived parts of the West Midlands, are hugely over-represented in police information about County Lines activity

County Lines

West Midlands Police data includes markers for people involved in County Lines as victims, perpetrators or suspects. This includes information on where individuals reside and a significant proportion are from inner-city Birmingham and Smethwick. 41% of people identified in this data as involved in County Lines activity – as a victim, perpetrator or suspect – were recorded as being of black ethnicity. This is significantly higher than the data for the wider West Midlands population, which has a 6% black population.

Multi-agency practitioners have also identified concerns that there are low levels of recognition and identification across the sector regarding the ways in which women and girls are exploited through County Lines drugs distribution.

Sandwell continues to work with the **Regional Strategic Criminal Exploitation and Missing Board** which through good multi-agency representation and attendance is facilitating and enabling the development of new and innovative policy and practice to improve our single and joint responses to criminal exploitation and missing including County Lines.

A regional Child Exploitation Data Framework has been created by the WM VRU analysts who have produced an interactive dashboard which sets out the various types of data collected from the Police, Local Authority Children's Services, Education and Health to start to understand what exploitation looks like across the region.

County Lines Intensification Weeks are run on an annual basis and serve as an opportunity to focus on the 4 P approach to tackling, disrupting and preventing criminal exploitation.

County Lines Rescue and Recovery project Launched in September 2021, this is funded until March 2022 and supports young people involved in County Lines and gangs across all local authority areas in the region. Through the provision of flexible support from case workers with "lived experience", young people can exit County Lines drug networks, reconnect with families and begin to build positive lifestyles away from crime.

- County Lines Intensification Week; October's enrichment activity was focused on the 4 P approach to tackling, disrupting and preventing criminal exploitation of C/YP and vulnerable adults. 800 people across the region attended training sessions over the one week,
- During Operation Aident County Lines intensification week 2021 14 young people were safeguarded

2022 – 2026 priorities

- Strengthen and develop the organised crime response through the OCG partnership
- Raise awareness of serious organised crime and organised criminal gangs with partners
- Learn from the evaluation of the County Lines Rescue and Recovery Project



National award

Royal Society for Public Health: Health and Wellbeing Awards 2019



Ongoing funding

The team have secured funding through the Better Care Fund to expand this programme



Evaluation

Evaluation of this project shows this approach reduces offending and acute health service demand

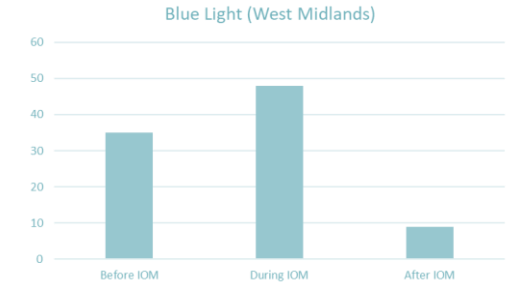
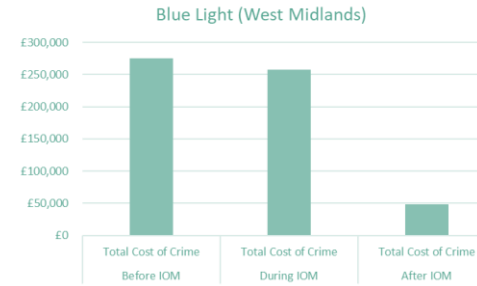


National Award

Blue Light won the Guardian Public Service Awards

Blue Light Project

We are starting to understand the landscape and now have a clear local picture to respond to treatment resistant drinkers. Data shows a 74% reduction in reoffending and 82% reduction in the cost of crime.



As a response the partnership adopted a multi-agency **'Blue Light' approach to supporting high impact, change-resistant problem drinkers** with a view to prevent and reduce alcohol dependency and transform the lives of some of the Borough's most disadvantaged and vulnerable people.

The multidisciplinary team incorporates public health, ambulance, police, probation, fire, local GP services, mental health professionals, the alcohol treatment provider and NHS professionals. These liaise together for monthly reviews to assess the progress of these clients through their interactions with them.

Feedback from the judging panel

" Focus is client centred and supports harm reduction and the social return on investment is considerable. The programme is an exemplar of integrated public health interventions to address critical public health problems and the learning is transferrable to other sectors and issues."

Feedback from a service user who was supported through Blue Light

"The Blue Light project helped me in a very big way and saved me daily physical and psychological abuse . They supported me to address my alcohol misuse, took me to my medical appointments to address my physical and mental health as well as stopped me from experiencing further abuse. I am grateful for all they have done for me. Thank you very much."

Priority 3

PREVENT and REDUCE

**CRIME and
ANTI-SOCIAL
BEHAVIOUR**

IN OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS

Intro

Preventing and reducing crime and ASB cannot be tackled by one single agency, but needs a multi-disciplined approach to provide a holistic response. By bringing partners together both strategically and operationally, there is a focus on problem solving and bringing together resources to prevent and tackle the issues at a local and boroughwide level.

This is achieved in Sandwell by partners coming together monthly through Borough Tasking and Town Tasking meetings where there is the opportunity for partnership data and intelligence to be shared so that an appropriate and proportionate response can be coordinated.

The meetings are used to discuss community and place based concerns as well as a closed element to the meetings to discuss individual cases that may involve vulnerable victims or perpetrators. At the Borough Tasking meetings, the membership focuses on the impact areas and look at issues such as Hate crime, community tensions, domestic abuse and the causes of crime in more detail.

The OPCC currently funds a number of Community Safety Analysts to provide data to inform the 7 partnerships across the West Midlands. The provision of this data is currently being reviewed as changes such as the introduction of the VRU and adoption of public health approaches to violence have come into place.

The development of new and more consistent data provision will support tasking and ensure that actions are demand led and evidence based ensuring proportionality and more appropriate use of resources.



Highlights

Hate Crime

Over the last 3 years Sandwell's response to hate crime has been strengthened by the development and delivery of the Partnership Hate Crime Plan which is monitored at Borough Tasking.

Keeping our residents safe and secure

Streamlined, evidence based, accountable and efficient deployment process for the deployment of mobile CCTV camera's managed through Town Tasking

Place Based Approaches

Joint partnership approaches involving police, CCTV team, SMBC Environmental Protection Officers (EPOs), Youth Services, SMBC ASB team, DECCA and the voluntary sector in tackling emerging ASB issues such as nuisance bikes; youth ASB and knife crime; nitrous oxide canisters and covid breaches.

Strengthening our ASB Responses and Capacity

SMBC appointed a dedicated ASB Manager in December 2018. During the last 3 years we have moved to end to end case management, significantly invested in training staff and increased our use of the 2014 ASB Powers. We also reintroduced Town Tasking Meetings, each Chaired by Town ASB Leads and local Police Sergeants.

Borough Tasking

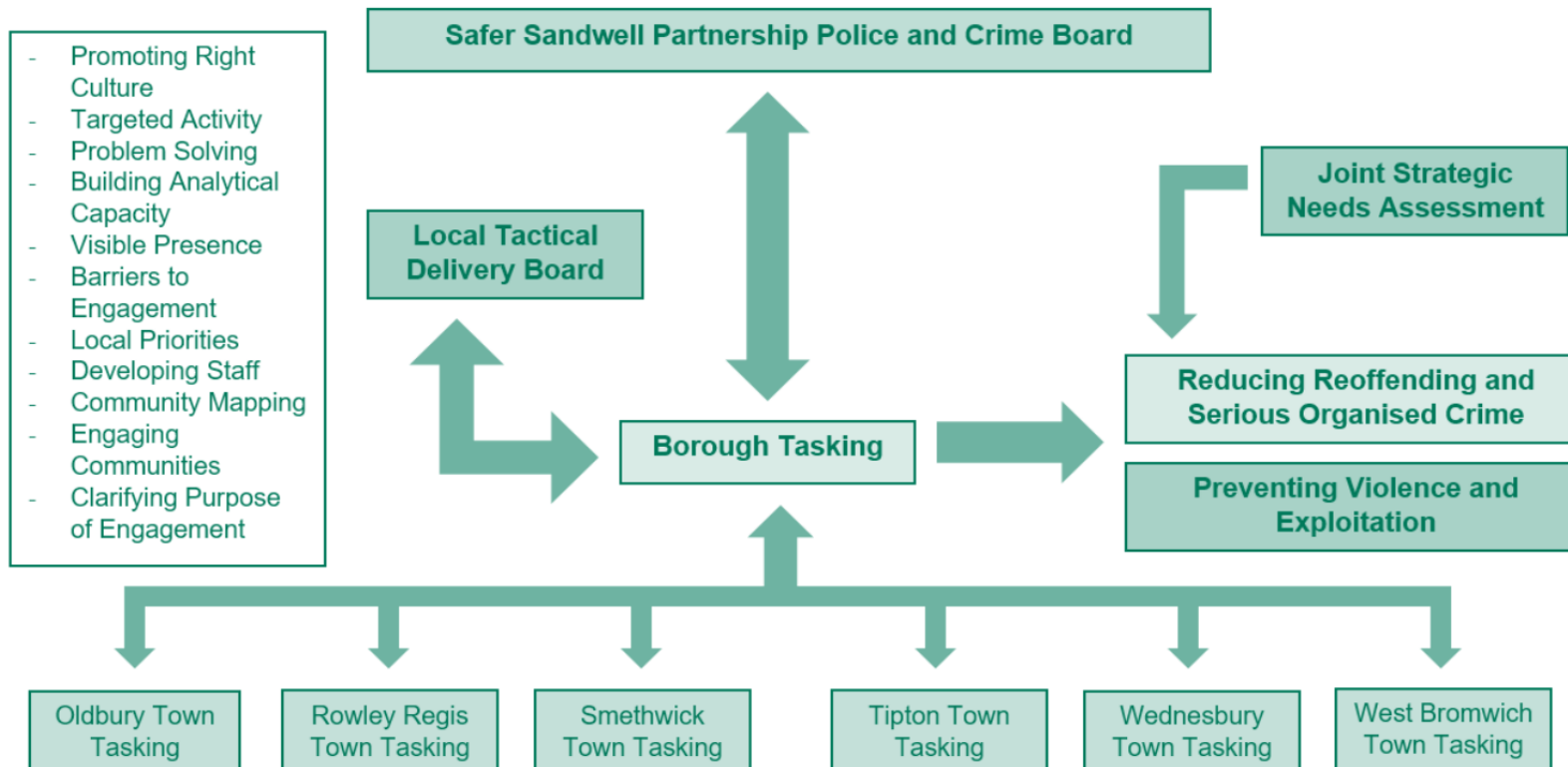
Borough Tasking is one of the Safer Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board's (SSPPCB) sub groups connecting Town Tasking with borough wide strategic issues and decision makers. It is a single forum where partners come together and have an overview across the borough of Tasking to reduce crime, ASB and protect vulnerable communities.

This is achieved by looking through various lenses to identify new and emerging trends including exploitation, crime, ASB and community tensions. The group work together to look at root causes and problem solving, focusing on high impact areas and bringing resources together to prevent, tackle, and manage these issues.

Town Tasking

Town Tasking is the key mechanism in Sandwell by which partners work together to tackle incidents, identify trends in relation to crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) and facilitate inter-agency collaboration at a local level.

It also enables preventative and responsive actions to be taken to protect vulnerable people from threats to their safety and wellbeing. This is particularly important with emerging and increasingly sophisticated types of criminality including exploitation and organised crime. This localised approach to problem solving in Sandwell involves a multi-agency process designed to find the most effective and efficient solution for any identified problem.



The agenda focuses on (but not exclusively):

- ✓ Police Demand Impact Areas
- ✓ ASB demand areas
- ✓ Hate crime, community tensions and extremism (including overseeing the Hate Crime Plan and scorecard)
- ✓ Overview of the monthly Town Tasking meetings identifying trends and understanding the town nuances
- ✓ Spotlight on Tasking on a town basis
- ✓ CCTV deployable cameras
- ✓ Emerging trends across the borough identified by feedback from partner agencies, intelligence and shared analysis
- ✓ Deep dives into new and emerging boroughwide issues
- ✓ Identify ways of preventing, disrupting and deterring crime, ASB and exploitation by using partner powers and maximising resources
- ✓ Share best practice and successful outcomes as part of continuous improvement
- ✓ Discuss community issues escalated where a resolution has not been effective or found at Town Tasking
- ✓ Closed meeting to discuss individual cases that are escalated from Town tasking meetings where a resolution has not been found or a case has been stuck

Local Picture

- 144 Town Tasking Meetings and 36 Borough Tasking Meetings held during the last 3 years
- A robust town tasking process where local and relevant issues can be referred for discussion and action
- 110 individual cases discussed through tasking and agreed partnership approaches instigated with positive outcomes
- Remedi is funded by OPCC to provide support to all victims of hate crime
- Launch of 46 Third Party Reporting Centres across Sandwell representative of all the hate crime strands
- Article to raise awareness of hate crime included in the Sandwell Talking News, a weekly audio newspaper for visually impaired people
- A robust partnership approach to tackling Nitrous Oxide Gas Canisters issues that led to the implementation of a Boroughwide PSPO
- Focus on tackling local issues at a town level drawing on local resources including the voluntary sector

Reducing Crime and Anti-Social behaviour

Reducing Crime and Anti-Social behaviour remains a priority and we recognise that one single agency cannot tackle this alone.

We have strengthened this by making the Chairs of our Town Tasking meetings the local ASB Town Leads and the Borough Tasking meetings are chaired by the police. Our Borough Tasking group oversee and scrutinise our partnership work across the borough

Safer 6

Sandwell's annual autumn Safer 6 campaign celebrated its 12th anniversary in 2021. Safer 6 promotes a wide range of community safety initiatives and awareness raising across the six towns of Sandwell,. This is delivered by partners through a range of medias, training and events. Themed weeks included – Hate Crime; Violence against Women and Girls; Anti-Social Behaviour and Crime; Substance Misuse; Under 25 Violence and County Lines, Exploitation as well as various activities carried out in the six towns.



Support for victims of crime in Sandwell is provided by Victim Support which is a national independent charity. During 20/21 there were 6068 referrals for support and 3105 referrals so far 21/22

In the 2019-21 strategy the following objectives in relation to reducing crime and ASB were agreed:

What we Said	What we Did
We will use current intelligence and knowledge of partners and communities to identify and take prompt actions needed to keep communities safe from crime and ASB	Tasking was reviewed and strengthened to enable effective information sharing and data capture to enable place based effective interventions
We will fully embed the new tactical assessment and borough tasking model and create strong connections with town tasking and COGS	Tasking is now firmly embedded across each of Sandwell's 6 towns with a monthly Borough Tasking also established. These have run throughout the pandemic ensuring a strong local problem solving focus. .
We will renew and strengthen the contribution of partners to Tasking	Achieved through consistent agendas and enhanced data

2018 – 2021 Achievements

- Joint partnership approaches tackling emerging ASB issues such as nuisance bikes; youth ASB and knife crime; nitrous oxide canisters and covid-19 breaches
- Streamlined, evidence based, accountable and efficient deployment process for the deployment of mobile CCTV camera's
- Development of the Sandwell Commercial Centres Group tackling street dinking and street homelessness
- Developed work on hate crime
- Operation Hercules and ongoing work around car cruising

2022 – 2026 priorities

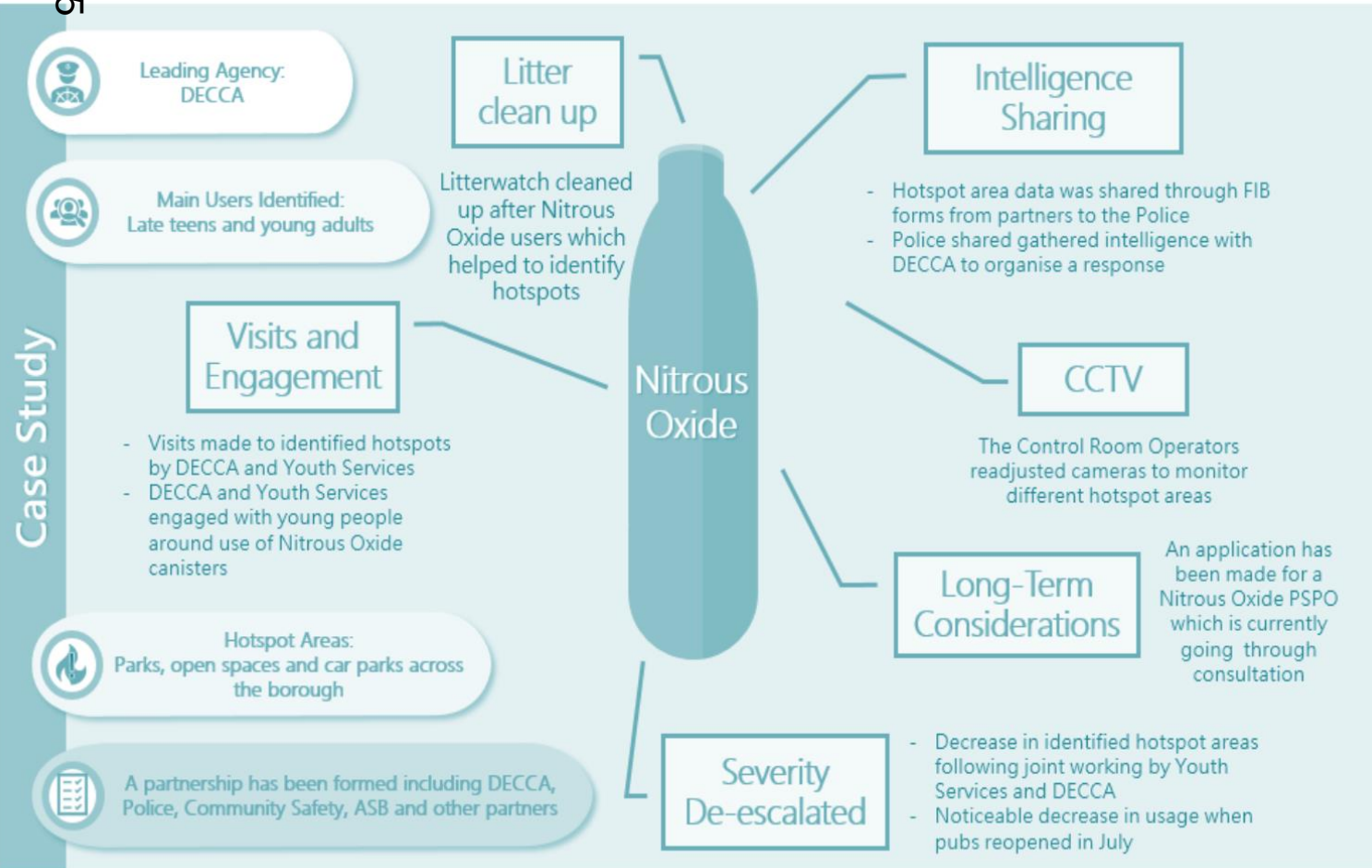
- Develop our partnership data to enable us to focus on the most pressing issues
- Review and further develop our approach to hate crime
- Strengthen our engagement with communities to encourage reporting, provide intelligence and develop solutions
- Target partnership resources at a local level to tackle emerging issues that is impacting on individuals and whole communities

CASE STUDY

Borough Wide Partnership Approach to Nitrous Oxide Gas Canisters

Borough Wide Partnership Example of Successful Partnership Working

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The litter and the associated ASB of nitrous oxide gas canisters was recognised as a borough wide issue.

- Concerns of health impact on young people
- The number of canisters discarded in public places and impact on environment
- The associated ASB – people congregating in groups and causing nuisance.

Approach

Discussed at Borough and Town Tasking meetings and agreed a Boroughwide partnership approach to tackle the issue.

Feedback from public consultation regarding proposed PSPO

Feedback from 95% of respondents demonstrated support for the proposed PSPO

The littering of discarded canisters was most commonly pointed out as the reason for why individuals were in favour of the proposed PSPO (68%). This was followed by the anti-social behaviour that was believed to be linked to the inhalation of Nitrous Oxide (22%) and worries around children coming across discarded canisters (18%)

The Community Safety Team administers and manages the annual CSF grant allocated by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPPC). Last year Sandwell was awarded £165k which was used to fund 10 projects that contribute to the Community Safety Partnerships priorities

Project 12

Project 12 (P12) is delivered in universal and targeted settings to build resilience and minimise harm. It can be used as part of PHSE lessons and all resources are online, so it can be easily accessed by anyone, and updated centrally to ensure its relevance. Grant funding was allocated to develop resources for Key Stages 2 and 3

Black Country Women's Aid – Domestic Abuse Advocates (DAA)

The grant provides one fifth of the specialist support to victims of domestic violence and abuse (DVA), categorised as medium and standard risk. The last 12 months has seen an increase in Domestic Abuse nationally during lockdown, and 402 victims have been supported by this service during this period.

TSA

Delivery of one to one mentoring sessions with young people identified by the Children's Trust Horizons Team who are at high risk of exploitation. TSA have worked successfully with 13 young people over the last 12 months using innovative ways of engaging in one to one interactions during lockdown

CSKN

Delivery of one to one mentoring and skills development to gang-entrenched young people identified by the Youth Justice Team. Two 12-week sessions were delivered to 10 young people.

A&E Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate (IDVA)

Two IDVAs working at Sandwell and City Hospital A&E departments respectively, and an Information Officer capturing data across both sites as well as contributing to MARAC research in; 241 victims have been identified and referred to the IDVA over the last 12 months

Creative Academies

Funding for a multi-media programme which focuses on engaging and re-engaging disadvantaged and vulnerable young people from Sandwell Community Schools depicting their stories and helping to divert them away from negative behaviour.

Krunch

Funded to deliver one to one mentoring sessions to 9-13 year olds who have family or peers involved in violent acts or gang affiliation, successfully delivered mentoring to 13 children this year.

Rewind

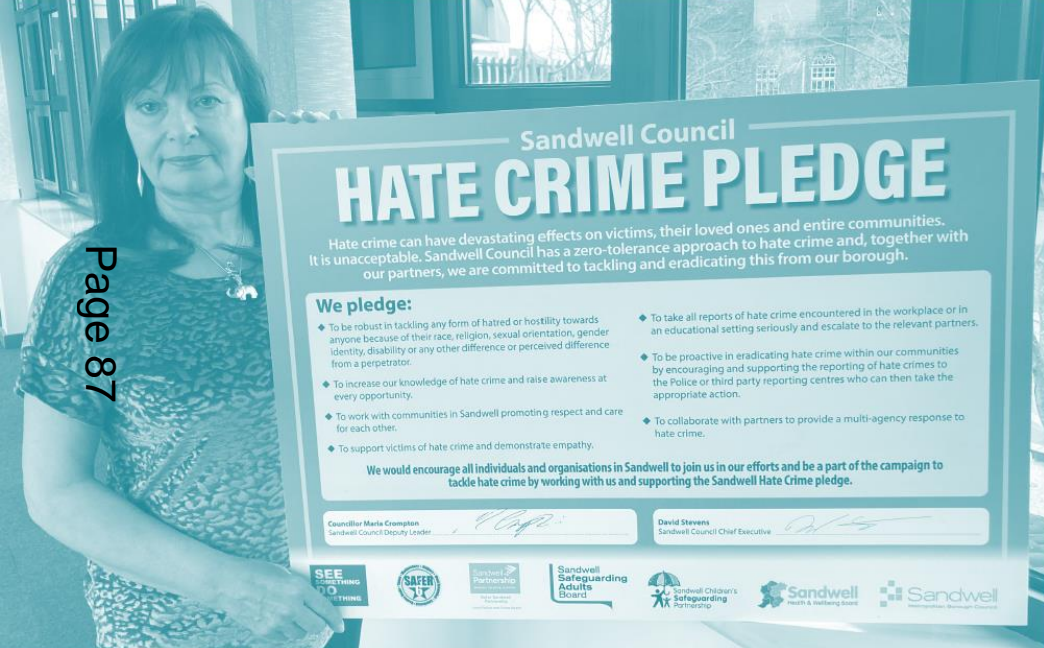
Grant funded to provide In-depth training to support practitioners in understanding all forms of extremism, including Al Qaida and Daesh inspired ideology and Far Right ideology. 9 sessions were delivered to a total of 139 delegates.

Modern Slavery

Grant funding to support Slavery Free Communities. A range of materials were sourced from the Modern Slavery Helpline in different languages, which consisted of posters, pens and keyrings. The partnership delivered a conference regarding sexual exploitation to raise awareness of sexual exploitation, over 1000 delegates attended

Albion Foundation

Delivery of positive activities to young people within the Sandwell area while working in partnership with West Midlands Police to deliver a group mentoring programme through sport..



Hate Crime

Over the last three years we have developed and delivered a Sandwell partnership Hate Crime Plan, our achievements include:

Increase awareness of hate crime and the impact that it has amongst the Sandwell workforce and communities

- Developed and launched online hate crime training
- Developed and launched a 7-minute briefing which has been shared with organisations to brief their employees and volunteers
- Developed and delivered awareness training for Sandwell MBC employees
- Delivered Hate Crime Awareness to elected members
- Delivered Hate Crime Awareness to the third sector
- Delivered various activities during hate crime week to raise awareness

Engage and raise hate crime awareness amongst young people.

- Conducted a Hate Crime Youth Survey with young people in schools,. The findings led to hate crime education being incorporated into the new RSHE school curriculum and lesson plans
- Just Youth Webpage Updated to Include Hate
- Hate Crime Awareness Training has been delivered to over 50 youth workers in Sandwell
- Delivered a Hate Crime Awareness session for SHAPE Youth Forum

Building confidence in local communities to report instances of hate crime/ incidents.

- Conducted a review of Third Party Reporting Centres (TPRCs)
- Launched 46 new TPRCs across Sandwell, representative of all strands of hate crime to increase ways to report and support for victims
- Developed a communications plan to promote messages throughout the year via social media
- Article included in the Sandwell Talking News, a weekly audio newspaper for visually impaired people, to raise awareness of hate crime, Third Party Reporting Centres and to encourage reporting

Victims supported

- Standby Me Bystander training delivered to 23 active citizens
- Victims supported through Victim Support and more recently REMEDI

[Further information on hate crime can be found here](#)

National Recognition

The programme won national recognition in 2021, winning the APSE Annual Service Award for Best Community and Neighbourhood Initiative



Supporting Families Against Youth Crime iTrust

Amazing Reach

3,000 young people and their carers benefited from universal sessions delivered via assemblies, transition evenings, events and group sessions.

Early Interventions

The programme provided early help and interventions with the aim of having a longer-term impact on the prevention of youth crime

The Supporting Families Against Youth Crime (SFAYC) programme, rebranded as iTrust was launched in April 2019, following a successful bid for funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

Some of the funding paid for a small dedicated team who worked with young people, parents/carers, schools and voluntary sector organisations to deliver a menu of prevention interventions to young people in years 6 & 7 transitioning from primary to secondary school. Working in two of our police impact areas West Bromwich and Smethwick, this early help approach equipped our young people to make positive choices at this key transition period with the focus on reducing future youth crime and violence

Mentoring

Over 600 one to one mentoring sessions were delivered to over 120 young people by 12 voluntary sector organisations.

Feedback from the MCHLG included "it was particularly refreshing to see such an innovative 'home grown' approach to serious youth violence"

[Read evaluation here](#)



Links to other reports used

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[Strategic Needs Assessment - West Midlands Violence Reduction Unit \(westmidlands-vru.org\)](https://www.westmidlands-vru.org/)

[Home | data.police.uk](https://data.police.uk/)

[2020 UK annual report on modern slavery \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1027878/Draft_Guidance_-_Serious_Violence_Duty.pdf)

[Police & Crime Plan - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner \(westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/)

<https://www.westmidlands-vru.org/app/uploads/2021/06/WM-REGIONAL-STRATEGIC-EXPLOITATION-FRAMEWORK.pdf>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1027878/Draft Guidance -
_Serious Violence Duty.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1027878/Draft_Guidance_-_Serious_Violence_Duty.pdf)

[Corporate Plan | Sandwell Council](#)

**PREVENT
VIOLENCE
and
EXPLOITATION**



**REDUCE
OFFENDING,
REOFFENDING**



& SERIOUS



ORGANISED CRIME

PREVENT and REDUCE

**CRIME and
ANTI-SOCIAL
BEHAVIOUR**

IN OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS

**PROTECT and
SUPPORT**

**VULNERABLE
VICTIMS**



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Report to Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board

14 March 2024

Subject:	Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy Policy on Adaptations for Disabled Tenants in Council Housing
Director:	Director of Housing Dean Epton
Contact Officer:	Nigel Collumbell - Assistant Director Housing Management Nigel_collumbell@sandwell.gov.uk Manny Sehmbi - Head of Community Partnership and Support Services Manny_sehmbi@sandwell.gov.uk Stuart Hall – Home Improvement Manager Stuart_hall@sandwell.gov.uk Jim Brennan – Head of Tenancy and Estate Management Jim_brennan@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 Consider the update on the implementation of the Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy
- 1.2 Consider the update on the implementation of the Adaptations for Disabled Tenants in Council Housing






2 Reasons for Recommendations

2.1 The policy was revised to achieve the following objectives:

- a) To continue to provide adaptations and housing improvements to disabled residents, offering the most cost effective and best value solutions, targeted at those with the greatest need.
- b) To expand and maximise opportunities for improving the homes of disabled people. These changes are designed to promote independence and reduce/prevent demand on health and social care services and fundamentally improve quality of life.
- c) Introduce a more customer centred approach by offering residents more bespoke and easily accessible service irrespective of tenure
- d) Align the policy with objectives of the Better Care Fund (BCF) to assist with the prevention of admissions to hospital and social care, support hospital discharge and reduce social care interventions
- e) To reflect good practice as set out in the Adult Social Care Reform White Paper 2021 and the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Delivery: Guidance for Local Authorities in England (2022).
- f) To remove the need for council tenants to apply for grant funding to adapt their homes and allow the council to deliver adaptations to directly to its own tenants when it is appropriate to do so or offer alternatives when it is not.



3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting children and young people to live independently in their home • Supporting to improve quality of life • Both policies apply to adaptations for disabled children and young people as well as adults
	<p>People live well and age well</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support more people of all ages to live in suitable housing so they can stay independent for longer and • Potentially prevent the need for care and support and help maximise independence. It can also prevent the need for additional support in the future by: • Supporting disabled residents to remain living independently in their own homes • Reduce the number of home accidents • Reduce the number of avoidable hospital admissions and readmissions
	<p>Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods</p> <p>Sandwell needs new areas of quality housing in places where people want to live and bring up their families and can easily get to jobs across the region by public transport. Residents of all tenure including Council tenants are supported to remain independent and safe in their own home.</p>

4 Background

- 4.1 The Housing Assistance Policy June 2012 was updated to be aligned to objectives discussed above in 2.1
- 4.2 The revised policies provide a fresh approach that creates a home environment enabling disabled people to live a full life and reinforces a person-centred approach and a focus on prevention. The Council's Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy be accessed – [Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy | Sandwell Council](#)



The Policy on Adaptations for Disabled Tenants in Council Housing can be accessed - [Adaptations for Disabled Tenants in Council Housing Policy | Sandwell Council](#)

- 4.3 Since 2003 the Council has the discretion to develop and maintain its own housing financial assistance policy in compliance with the Regulatory Reform Order (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002. Every Housing Authority in England must publish and maintain a policy to allow them to provide assistance.
- 4.4 Government funding for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) changed significantly in 2015/16 when it became part of the Better Care Fund (BCF), a single pooled budget to support health and social care services to work more closely in local areas. The aim of the fund is to provide more joined-up and customer focused services to reduce hospital and care admissions and enable people to return home more quickly. Hence, the new policy is better aligned with the objectives of the BCF.
- 4.5 The home environment plays a major role in a person's health and wellbeing and Sandwell Council can contribute to the BCF's objectives by providing assistance to adapt, repair or modify the homes of its residents. The policy supports a timely and streamlined service which aims to prevent, reduce or delay the need for interventions by health and social care services, and support vulnerable individuals to remain safe and well in their own homes.
- 4.6 Guidance from Foundations (the National Body for Home Improvement Agencies) encourages Local Authorities to adopt policies to reduce the bureaucracy around the DFG process. Foundations report 'The Disabled Facilities Grant: Before and After the Introduction of the Better Care Fund' (June 2016) stresses the need to have a fast and nimble service to match the aims of the BCF plan to have services assembled around the individual, regardless of provider and funding source.



5 Current Position:

- 5.1 The HIA and Asset Management & Maintenance (AMM) Teams work together, with AMM supporting contract management and co-ordination and management of building works including major adaptations. The HIA Team continue to offer housing assistance to residents living in the private sector housing, and administrating applications for assistance under the council's policy. Also providing advice and information on the extent of assistance available
- 5.2 Adaptations are funded through two separate funding streams; owner occupiers, private tenants and housing associations through a DFG and local authority tenants through the housing revenue account (HRA).
- The government provides Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) capital funding to local authorities, and currently this is approximately £4.75m per annum.
 - Currently there is a reserve of £12.4m which has developed through the impact of covid, however a key focus of the policy is to enable further spend, approximately £4.5m is forecast in 23/24 against this reserve.

6 Activity Since New Policy Implementation June 2023:

- 6.1 The following activities have been applied for adaptations to both Council and private Sector Housing
- 6.2 Review and refresh of the Adaptations Panel, which will work across all tenures using the new Aids and Adaptations Guidance. The Terms of Reference and Membership which reflects services from across Housing and Adult Social Care and have been agreed.
- 6.3 The Aids and Adaptations Guidance, which is the framework for the provision of equipment and adaptations to disabled residents has been adopted by Housing Management and Adult Social Care.



- 6.4 Moving towards a paperless approach, reducing the team's reliance on paper and agreeing a protocol for saving documents electronically. Closed cases have been archived electronically.
- 6.5 Pathways have been reviewed, refined and streamlined. Including new forms created to support the processes, along with fact sheets.
- 6.6 A new Agency Agreement and a new Private Agent's Protocol have been prepared and checked with colleagues in Legal Services.
- 6.7 A formalised Customer Managed Pathway has been developed and customer facing forms and guidance are being drafted. This supports improved communication across relevant services, particularly with Occupational Therapists by creating a new Recommendation for Adaptations Form (Form A) with greater detail included, reducing the possibility of errors and delays due to lack of information.
- 6.8 The new Appeals procedure has been formalised and implemented.
- 6.9 New Fact sheets for Caseworkers have been developed, which are to be provided to customers. In addition, an overall Customer Booklet for all tenures to explain the processes is being developed.
- 6.10 Work continues to create a dedicated intranet page to enable approved documents to be uploaded and to be accessible for all relevant teams.
- 6.11 The updated Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy has enabled programmes to be developed which are targeting vulnerable households, to support resident's health and wellbeing, improve quality of life and helping residents to remain in their homes safely as follows:
- Supporting sustainable warmth - An initial tranche of £250,000 of capital funding has been allocated to expand existing programmes delivered via the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) that are focused on improving the energy efficiency of private sector housing and reducing levels of dual poverty in Sandwell, focusing on vulnerable residents



- Supporting assisted technology - £960,000 of capital funding has been allocated to Adult Social Care to allow the transformation of the Community Alarms Service from an analogue to a digital platform. Other assistive technology projects are also under consideration including fall sensors that can trigger an alarm in a nominated mobile phone and 'Alexa' type technology specifically designed to assist residents live independently and prevent access to critical services.
- Assisting people getting home from hospital quicker - Discussions between Adult Social Care and Housing are taking place to determine if specific financial assistance would enable disabled and vulnerable residents to return home following admission to hospitals and other care facilities.
- Increasing the funding to the minor adaptations service available to private tenants and homeowners from £350,000 to £550,000 to address inflationary pressures as well as improve and expand the universally available minor adaptations offer
- A faster process for the delivery of hoists and lifting equipment has been introduced since the new policy removed the grant repayment conditions attached to grants awarded for the provision of lifts and hoists.
- Increase the availability of Disabled Facilities Grants to residents by introducing a £15,000 means test disregard. This result is more applicants being eligible for grant assistance.
- Hazard Removal – Discussions are taking place with Private Rented Sector Housing Team regarding support to vulnerable households that are experiencing severe disrepair and cannot afford the repair, with a view to preventing vulnerable homeowner occupiers requiring rehousing. Currently intervention only happens once the property has deteriorated to



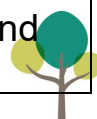
the point that prohibition is required, resulting in the owner being rehoused into rented accommodation and the property being left empty and often unmanaged. In addition, some vulnerable residents are unable to return to their homes from short-term care because of disrepairs at their homes, resulting in delayed transfers of care or longer than necessary periods in residential care accommodation. Hence supporting objectives as part of the Better Care Fund (BCF) and as discussed above in section 4, this approach reinforces the fact that the home environment plays a major role in a person's health and wellbeing and Sandwell Council can contribute to the BCF's objectives by providing assistance to adapt, repair or modify the homes of its residents. The policy aims to prevent, reduce or delay the need for interventions by health and social care services, and support vulnerable individuals to remain safe and well in their own homes.

7 Alternative Options

7.1 We could focus on just delivery of DFG, the statutory function and no other aspect of the policy. However, there is a need to balance the preventative role of the DFG in keeping people living safely and independently with the need for the grant to be used in a more flexible and responsive ways to help reduce pressures on health and social care and improve quality of life.

8 Implications

<p>Resources:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds to support these services and works are delivered from the HRA and DFG allocated to the Council. • The HRA is an allocation of funds to the Council to fund the management, maintenance and major improvements of council housing. The HRA funds the provision of Major Adaptation / Improved Works and Bath Out Shower In (BOSI)/ Level Access Shower (LAS) works to Council owned properties. • The DFG is an allocation to the Council to fund the provision of adaptations to disabled resident's homes that are privately-owned and non-council rented housing.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To date in 23/24 DFG actual spend is in the region of £3.5M, which is moving towards the forecast of £4.5m.
Legal and Governance:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council is required by the Housing Grants and Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 to approve a valid application for Disabled Facilities Grant and to pay the grant. The Council operates an agency service to facilitate the grant aided works and the administration of the grant. The Council is under a duty under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 and the Children Act 1989 (in respect of children) and the Care Act 2014 (in respect of adults who may be in need of care and support) to provide support where it has assessed that such support is needed, this includes practical assistance in the home and adaptations to the home
Risk:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no specific resource implications arising from this report.
Equality:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When deciding as to changes in service provision the local authority must comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and in particular section 149 (the public-sector equality duty). The protected characteristics to which the duty applies includes age as well as disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief and sex. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed. It concluded that the policies would not adversely affect equality on the basis of any of the protected characteristics. Any unforeseen adverse impacts will be identified through monitoring processes and statistical/other data analysis. Increased efficiency in service delivery will provide a far more effective service to all vulnerable households and improve quality of life.
Health and Wellbeing:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The investment of housing adaptations and improvements significantly improves the quality of life of disabled people by preventing



	avoidable accidents such as falls that may result in potential hospital admissions and the prevention of social care and support that may result in potential residential placement. The investment also has the added value of improving the quality of life for carers and other family members.
Social Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no specific social value implications arising from this report

9. Appendices

None

10. Background Papers

The Disabled Facilities Grant: Before and After the Introduction of the Better Care Fund - Foundations, June 2016

Adult Social Care Reform White Paper December 2021 -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/people-at-the-heart-of-care-adult-social-care-reform-white-paper>

Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Delivery: Guidance for Local Authorities in England (2022) -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disabled-facilities-grant-dfg-delivery-guidance-for-local-authorities-in-england>



Report to Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board

14 March 2024

Subject:	Tracking and Monitoring of Scrutiny Recommendations
Director:	Assistant Chief Executive James McLaughlin 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 on recommendations referred since the Board's last meeting.
- 1.2 That the Board notes the progress on implementation 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>Resources:</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>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>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>Risk:</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>Equality:</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>



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> <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 arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.</p> <p>Any specific social value implications for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>
Climate Change:	<p>Any climate change implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.</p> <p>Any specific climate change implications for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>
Corporate Parenting	<p>Any corporate parenting implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.</p> <p>Any specific corporate parenting implications for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>

6 Appendices

Appendix 1– Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board Action Tracker

7. Background Papers

None.



Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities 22/23

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Date	Item	Recommendation/ Action	Responsible Person	Notes
23 FEB 23	Tree Strategy and Implementation Plan 2023- 2028	Checkpoint reports throughout the first 18 months of the Tree Strategy and Implementation Plan 2023- 2028 are provided to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board	Matt Huggins	Briefing note to be circulated September 2023
		Feedback from the survey of trees, to include impact on light to habitable rooms is provided to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board	Matt Huggins	Briefing note to be circulated September 2023
18 DEC 23	Sandwell Valley Master Plan and 10-Year Business Plan	That the Director of Borough Economy considers the expansion of the existing sailing club building, located in Sandwell Valley, into a multi-use facility to accommodate all users.	Alice Davey Matt Huggins	Noted to feed into the Sandwell Valley consultation.
		That the Director of Borough Economy considers the provision of additional seating areas throughout Sandwell Valley, especially in the proximity of play areas.	Alice Davey Matt Huggins	Noted for consideration as part of the service planning 2024/ 25 and Sandwell Valley master planning.
17 JAN 24	Heritage Strategy Update	That the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board endorse the proposals for the development of a Cultural Strategy.	Alice Davey Dawn Winter	Noted – the cultural strategy will move into the development stage now
		That the Director of Borough Economy work in partnership with the Community and Voluntary Sector and other Council services including the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team and Communities Team when developing the Cultural Strategy.	Alice Davey Dawn Winter	Noted this engagement will form a part of the development of the cultural strategy along with other partners and stakeholders
		That the Director of Borough Economy ensure that the development of a Cultural Strategy is aligned with the Sandwell Valley Masterplan to further develop the Cultural portfolio of Sandwell.	Alice Davey Dawn Winter	Noted this alignment will be considered within the scope of the cultural strategy development
	Implementation of 3 Boroughwide Public Space Protection Orders	That the Director of Borough Economy considers the feasibility of providing, fixed and fire-safe designated BBQ areas in Sandwell’s green spaces and that the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board is consulted as part of the consideration.	Alice Davey Matt Huggins	

	relating to Alcohol Consumption, Dog Fouling and BBQs/ Fires			
29 JAN 24	Tenant Satisfaction Survey Outcomes	That the Director of Housing ensure that when reviewing and procuring an Asset Management System it links with other systems including procurement and operational systems to help build intelligence.	Dean Epton	
		That the Director of Housing provide an update on stock condition surveys and any issues experienced around them to the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board.	Dean Epton	
15 FEB 24	Fishing Policy	That the Assistant Director Borough Economy (Green Spaces, Green Services, Events) considers the following amendments to the draft Sandwell Angling Code of Conduct, to provide clarity:- a. detailing set times for fishing to take place at waterbodies; b. allowing angling at Swan Pool on Saturdays and Sundays;	Matt Huggins	
		That the Assistant Director Borough Economy (Green Spaces, Green Services, Events) considers the following in relation to the draft Sandwell Angling Code of Conduct:- a. explores options to sell animal feed at sites where angling is permitted; b. works with schools in the locality of Council waterbodies to inform residents of approved angling practices; c. undertakes to improve access to waterbodies for those with mobility and access issues;	Matt Huggins	

Report to Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board

14 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>
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Social Value:	<p>Any social value implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.</p> <p>Any specific social value implications for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>
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6 Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Cabinet Forward Plan
- Appendix 2 – Board Work Programme
- Appendix 3 – Prioritisation Tool

7. Background Papers

None.



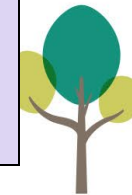
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The following items set out key decisions to be taken by the Executive:-

	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
7	<p>Camera Enforcement of Endorsable Traffic Offences – West Midlands Regional Working Agreement'</p> <p>Contact Officer: Mervyn Bartlett</p> <p>Director: Alice Davey – Director of Borough Economy</p>	<p>Cabinet - Environment & Highways (Cllr Millard)</p>		<p>13 March 2024</p>		

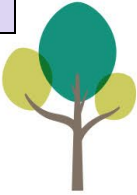
	Title/Subject	Decision Maker	Public or exempt report? If exempt – state reason for exemption	Decision Date	Pre or post decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
8	<p>Supported Accommodation Tender 2024</p> <p>Approval to go out to tender for Supported Accommodation provision from 1 August 2024</p> <p>Contact Officer: Karl Robinson</p> <p>Director: Dean Epton</p>	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Councillor Rollins (Housing and Built Environment)</p>	Exempt	13 March 2024	Post	Cabinet Report



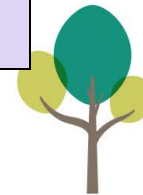
ONE COUNCIL
ONE TEAM



	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
10	<p>Sandwell Valley Master Plan and 10 Year Business Plan</p> <p>Contact Officer: Matthew Huggins</p> <p>Director: Alice Davey – Director of Borough Economy</p>	<p>Cabinet - Leisure and Tourism (Cllr Padda)</p>		<p>13 March 2024</p>		



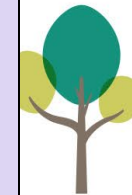
	Title/Subject	Decision Maker	Public or exempt report? If exempt – state reason for exemption	Decision Date	Pre or post decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
22	<p>Funding for Major Capital Projects</p> <p>Brief description: Request for capital budget for Darley House and The Lakes refurbishment projects</p> <p>Contact Officer: Sarah Ager</p> <p>Director: Dean Epton</p>	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Councillor Rollins (Housing and Built Environment)</p>	Exempt	June 2024	No	Cabinet Report



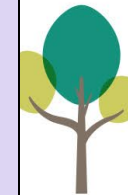
	Title/Subject	Decision Maker	Public or exempt report? If exempt – state reason for exemption	Decision Date	Pre or post decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
24	<p>Bid to Arts Council England – Libraries Improvement Fund Round 3 (depending on amount)</p> <p>Contact Officer: Dawn Winter</p> <p>Director: Alice Davey – Director of Borough Economy</p>	<p>Cabinet - Leisure and Tourism (Cllr Padda)</p>		June 2024		



	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
25	Sandwell Cultural Compact Contact Officer: Dawn Winter Director: Alice Davey – Director of Borough Economy	Cabinet - Leisure and Tourism (Cllr Padda)		June 2024		
26	Cultural Development Fund Bid Contact Officer: Dawn Winter Director: Alice Davey – Director of Borough Economy	Cabinet - Leisure and Tourism (Cllr Padda)		June 2024		



	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
27	Allotments Review and Strategy Contact Officer: Matthew Huggins Director: Alice Davey – Director of Borough Economy	Cabinet - Leisure and Tourism (Cllr Padda)		June 2024		
28	Funding for Heritage – Oak House Contact Officer: Dawn Winter Director: Alice Davey – Director of Borough Economy	Cabinet – Leisure and Tourism (Cllr Padda)		June 2024		



	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
29	<p>Fishing Policy</p> <p>Contact Officer: Matthew Huggins</p> <p>Director: Alice Davey – Director of Borough Economy</p>	<p>Cabinet - Leisure and Tourism (Cllr Padda)</p>		June 2024		



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
<p>Events Governance and Safety Advisory Group Terms of Reference</p> <p>Contact Officer: Matthew Huggins</p> <p>Director: Alice Davey – Director of Borough Economy</p>	<p>Cabinet - Leisure and Tourism (Cllr Padda)</p>		<p>June 2024</p>		



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Scrutiny Board Work Programme 2023/24



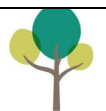
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Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities

Standing Items:-

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

Meeting Date	Item	Presented by
11 July 2023	Borough of Sanctuary	Louis Bebb/ Jennifer Collins
	Approval of 2023/24 Municipal Year Work Programme	Alex Goddard/ John Swann
31 August 2023	HMOs – Additional Licensing and Article 4 Direction	John Baker/ Alison Bishop/ Carl Mercer
12 September 2023	Neighbourhood Partnerships Team Update	Manny Sehmbi/ Marcia Sandel-Massey
	Future Provision of Leisure Services Update	Ben Percival
	Haden Hill Leisure Centre Rebuild	Ben Percival
26 September 2023	Asset Management Strategy	Sarah Ager
12 October 2023	Programme of Works 22/23 Annual Review	Matt Huggins
	Playing Pitch Strategy Actions and Implementation – Establishment of Working Group	Democratic Services/Rob Marlow



27 November 2023 - Cancelled		
7 December 2023 - Cancelled		
18 December 2023	Sandwell Valley Masterplan	Matt Huggins
	SLT Fees & Charges for January 2024 Implementation	Ben Percival
17 January 2024	Heritage Strategy Journey Update	Dawn Winter
	Boroughwide Public Spaces Protection Order	Tessa Mitchell
29 January 2024	Tenant Satisfaction Survey Outcomes	Nigel Collumbell
15 February 2024	Safer Green Spaces Strategy	Matt Huggins
	Housing Regulation Changes	Phil Deary
14 March 2024	Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy and Adaptations for Disabled Tenants in Council Housing	Nigel Collumbell
	Safer Sandwell Partnership	Chief Supt. Kim Maddil/Tessa Mitchell



To be Scheduled

Reports of the Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Group on:- (Nigel Collumbell/ Marianne Munro) – (Dependent upon T+LSG Work Programming – timescales TBC)

- Building Safety Review
- Responsive Repairs & Customer Satisfaction Review

Housing Hub Review (Report of the Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Group) - Implementation of Recommendations Update. – Nigel Collumbell

Green Spaces Strategy 2024/25 and Programme of Works 2024/25 – Matt Huggins

Working Group:

- Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy on Adaptations for Disabled Tenants in Council Housing.

Article 4 and Additional Licensing consultation outcomes to be brought before the Board when available

Housing Repairs Update – Sarah Ager

Leisure Service Provision Update – 2026 – Ben Percival

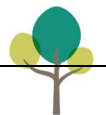
Haden Hill Project Update - TBC – Ben Percival

Rewilding Strategy – to be added to the work programme for the 2024/2025 municipal year.

Allotments Review and Strategy – to be added to the work programme for the 2024/2025 municipal year.

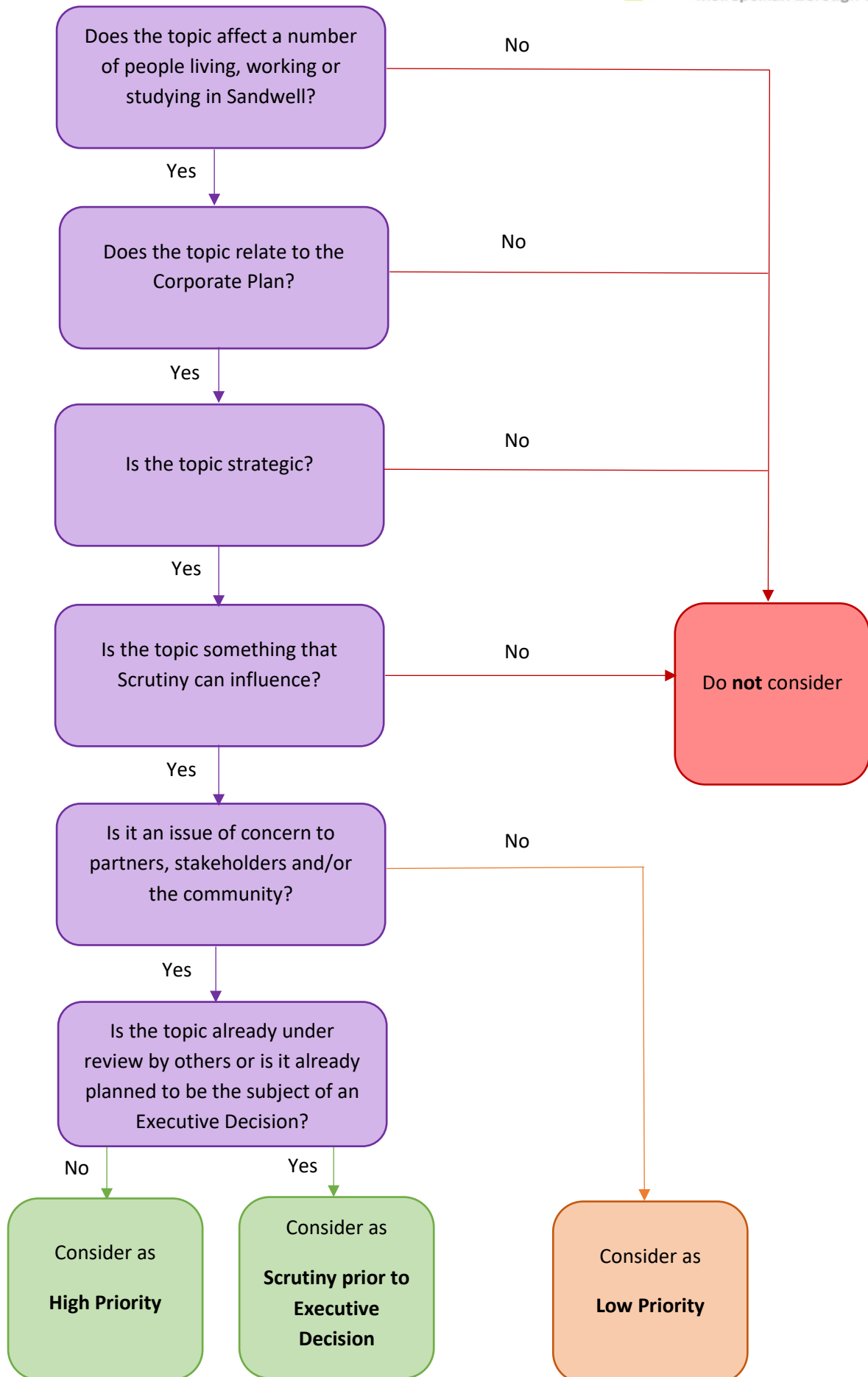
Utilisation of confectionary stands in Sandwell Parks including associated revenues

Heritage Strategy Update - Dawn Winter



Home Improvement Programme – Dean Epton/ Phil Deery
Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) – Dean Epton/ Phil Deery
Response plan to the Tenant Satisfaction Survey - Tom Hogan/ Nigel Collumbell
Transformational Plan for Housing - Tom Hogan/ Nigel Collumbell
The differences between performance and satisfaction in different towns - Tom Hogan/ Nigel Collumbell
The Housing Hub - Tom Hogan/ Nigel Collumbell





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