

Report to Health and Wellbeing Board

15 March 2023

Proposed Refresh of Sandwell's Vision 2030

Purpose of report

- To propose a refresh of Vision 2030 this year
- To start discussion on the aspects of Vision 2030 that may need refocusing
- That Board partners are engaged in the production of a State of Sandwell report that captures where we are on the journey to delivering vision 2030

Context

Vision 2030 was adopted in 2017 with 13 years to go until 2030 at that time. We're now in 2023 with 7 years to go.

Much has changed since 2017 – the scale and impact of climate change is now more acutely felt, we've experienced the impact of a global pandemic and now face a burgeoning cost of living crisis.

Not only that but a lot of our key partners have been changing as well.

There is a need for a renewed sense of drive to achieve our ambitions for the borough.

The Leader of Sandwell Council is keen to embark on a refresh of Vision 2030 with partners in Sandwell. The time is thought to be right for a mid-term review of the progress made, to refocus partners' activity to get us to 2030 and to bring Vision 2030 to the forefront of partnership effort in Sandwell – maximising and releasing the potential in the borough and jointly addressing the things that are holding us back.

Vision 2030 – a recap

By way of a reminder, Vision 2030 is made up of 10 ambitions for Sandwell plus this overarching aim.

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.

The ambitions fall into those that related to Sandwell's **people** and those that related to the **place**.

In all the engagement activity we undertook at the time, community safety emerged as the strongest concern. There was also the acknowledgement that giving children and young people the best start in life and addressing overall inequality of opportunity were absolutely fundamental to achieving better outcomes for the borough. Health and wellbeing was also a key priority as was ensuring that young people had skills to equip them to seize the opportunities in Sandwell.

On the place side, ensuring residents and businesses had great accessibility by public transport between work and their home was felt to be critical to Sandwell's success. Our distinctive towns were felt to be one of our strongest assets that need to be enhanced as centres of the community in order to retain people here. And our ambition was to create the conditions for industries of the future here in Sandwell. We would also have a national reputation for getting things done.

Changing Context

We know that many of these ambitions for residents still hold but the context to these ambitions has shifted since 2017 quite significantly.

Climate change, although already recognised as an issue in 2017, has in recent years rocketed up the agenda. Environmental imperatives, apart from sustainable transport, do not really figure in the vision.

No one would have predicted a global pandemic back in 2017 and the deep impact felt by children and young people, our mental health and the economy. The vision does, however, recognise the importance of health and resilience.

The world has become increasingly digital. The pandemic shone a light on digital exclusion and the impact of this as a major factor in current society in driving persistent inequality.

We now have the near and present danger of the cost of living crisis for Sandwell's residents and businesses. The fundamentals of the borough having enough resilience to support each other and feed and heat their households has become a huge priority, at least for the next few years.

Questions for the refresh:

What do these contextual changes mean for the Vision?

What aspects of the vision need to change?

What aspects still hold true?

Changing partner context

Not only has the big picture changed but there have also been significant changes on the partner front. Partners that are not necessarily bought into Vision 2030.

We now have new health partnership arrangements and the Sandwell Children's Trust didn't exist when we developed the vision. We also have new partnership arrangements like Sandwell Business Ambassadors and the Inclusive Economy Board that will want to be engaged in shaping the future borough.

As we are well aware, partners in Sandwell are under immense pressure and this is a challenging context to be asking for collaboration. Through working together against a refreshed vision, we can aspire to making the best use of all our resources for the best outcomes for Sandwell.

Next Steps

Key strategic partnerships in Sandwell are being requested to endorse the start of the process for refreshing Vision 2030.

As the first step, the Council has started a State of the Borough exercise to establish where we are on the journey to 2030 and the challenges still to address.

This will be built up from all our collective intelligence, including work that has commenced on the JSNA. Board members are requested to support this

exercise and an engagement draft will be circulated in the next couple of months.

This report will provide the basis for further partner conversations to consider the scale of the refresh and the priority activity to deliver it.