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# Customer Experience Performance Quarter 4





# Customer Experience Performance Quarter 4 and Annual – targets not met

	Q4 target	Performance	DOT	Annual target	Annual Performance	DOT
SARs compliance with timescales	95%	67%	↓	95%	67%	NA
FOI compliance with timescales	95%	87%	↑	95%	76%	

For FOI's we have seen an improvement in compliance with statutory timescales in each quarter of 2022 / 2023 from 66 % in Q1 to 87% in Q4. This is showing that the measures put in place by the Governance Team and Directorates across the Council are working. We are expecting this upward travel in performance to continue into 2023 / 2024.

To improve performance for SARs compliance, the service is looking at the allocation of case workers to directorates, how they can be better tracked by the team and refreshed training for staff.





## Customer Experience Performance - Quarter 4 and Annual – targets not met

	Q4 target	Performance	DOT
Revs and Bens Contact Centre Average Call Time	8 minutes	8m 32s	

In revenues and Benefits, calls are traditionally longer at the end of the financial year as Customers often need to make financial arrangements to clear Council Tax arrears apply for assistance they may be entitled to, to clear their outstanding Council Debts before the end of the financial year. More resource has enabled us to offer more engagement with the customer to come to an amicable arrangement





# Customer Experience Performance - Quarter 4 and Annual – targets not met

	Q4 target	Performance	DOT
Adults Contact Centre Average Wait Measure	30 seconds	1 Minute 4 Seconds (YE - 1 minute 11 seconds)	↓ ↓
Adults Contact Centre Average Call Time (per call)	540 Seconds	559 Seconds (YE - 558 Seconds)	↓ ↓

For the Adult Contact Centre Wait Measure, Internet issues affecting LAS and the Blue Badge system, in regards to the speed and when trying to key from tab to tab. This affects the agents overall time when trying to wrap up a call as they often have to restart either the application or on occasion the laptop. The postal strike led to repeat calls from customers to query if we have received their paperwork. We have had a few days in the last few months where LAS has been down for a whole day affecting this.

The Adult Contact Centre Average Call Time measure has come in just shy of the 540 target. The service has identified a number of calls/emails meant for other departments around the council (as a result of changes in customer facing services i.e. phone numbers/emails closed or directing to online services), a task is currently afoot to list to analyse these calls.





## Customer Experience Performance - Quarter 4 and Annual – targets not met

	Q4 target	Performance	DOT
Corporate Contact Centre Abandonment Rate	8%	12.39% (YE – 11.68%)	↑
Corporate Contact Centre Average Wait Measure	2m 30 s	4m 54s (YE -4m 57s)	↓ ↑

Abandonment rate targets in the CC were missed which can be attributed to vacancies, sickness, ICT issues, continuing support in the OSS and from the 21st March also providing a front facing services at West Bromwich and Blackheath Library twice a week as part of the Community Hubs Pilot. Recruitment issues continue with 2 appointments in January later withdrawing.. However, some successful appointments have been made and remaining vacancies will be advertised. Whilst interviews have been taking place we have also attempted several times to fill vacancies with temps without success. Regular ICT issues have also impacted on performance during Q4.

Call Wait times in the CC have increased in Q4, again due to staff vacancies sickness, supporting other front facing services and ICT issues. We have also experienced a huge increase in the number of calls regarding the new garden waste services during February and March compared to previous years - February 168% / March 153% which has also impacted call wait times.





## Customer Experience Performance – contact via Channel YE comparison

	YE 2021/22	YE 2022/23
Telephone	51.26%	41.86%
My Sandwell	42.53%	51.11%
Face to Face	2.09%	3.93%
Email	4.12%	3.10%

There has been a marked decrease in Telephone contact, and an increase in the use of My Sandwell.

There has also been an increase in Face to Face contact, and a reduction in Email contact.

Targets could be set for these PIs based on the strategy for Channel Shift.





# Customer Experience Performance - Quarter 4

	YE 2021/22	YE 2022/23	DOT
Numbers of complaints received	2593 Stage 1 Complaints, 135 Stage 2 Complaints	3330 Stage 1 Complaints 142 Stage 2 Complaints	Down Down
Numbers of Stage 1 and Stage 2 Complaints upheld	846 Stage 1 Upheld, 20 Stage 2 Upheld	1045 Stage 1 Upheld 22 Stage 2 Upheld	Down Down
Number of MP Enquiries received	2127	2305	Down
Numbers of compliments received	382	382	Same

There has been an increase in both Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints, the number of complaints upheld and the number of MP enquiries at the end of 2022/23 compared to 2021/22.

This increase will also have put additional pressure on services.

Consideration of targets for these indicators may help to drive improvement. Work on the Customer Transformation and new Customer Service Standards will also help to improve performance over the next year.





# Organisational Health Performance Annual







# Organisational Health - Negative Direction of Travel

Description	2020/21 Outturn	2021/22 Outturn	2022/23 Outturn	Direction of Travel	Reporting Cycle	Benchmark
The percentage of top 5% of earners that are women	53.6%	54.8%	53.2%	↓	Annual	<b>60%</b> Infinistats 2021/22 Median for West Midland MET Authorities (3 out of 7 – Dudley, Sandwell & Solihull)
The percentage of top 5% of earners who have a disability	2.2%	2.2%	1.9%	↓	Annual	<b>3.2%</b>
Average working days lost per employee due to sickness absence (FTE)	.71 (6.42 excl. coronavirus)	10.31 (8.50 excl. coronavirus)	10.81 (9.65 excl. coronavirus)	↑	Quarterly	<b>11.0 days</b> (9.95 All WM Authorities) Infinistats 2021/22 Median for West Midland MET Authorities (4 out of 7 – Dudley, Solihull, Sandwell & Wolverhampton)
The percentage Disabled employees (see note 1)	4.5%	4.7%	4.3%	↓	Annual	<b>16.6%</b> Sandwell economically active disabled and ethnic minority population (Ages 16+) ONS Annual Population Survey Jan-21 to Dec 21
Number of apprentices as at year end	71	69	47	↓	6 Monthly	<b>N/A</b>
Number of formal grievance cases	NA	17	32	↑	Annual	<b>N/A</b>





# Organisational Health - Downwards Direction of Travel

Sickness absence is increasing although it is below the benchmarking figure

There are significantly fewer apprentices than there were; however there are plans to increase the number of apprenticeships in the Council

Top earners who are female, top earners who have a disability, and the number of disabled employees has decreased

The number of formal grievance cases has increased from 17 in 2021/22 to 32 in 2022/23





# Organisational Health – Sickness Absence

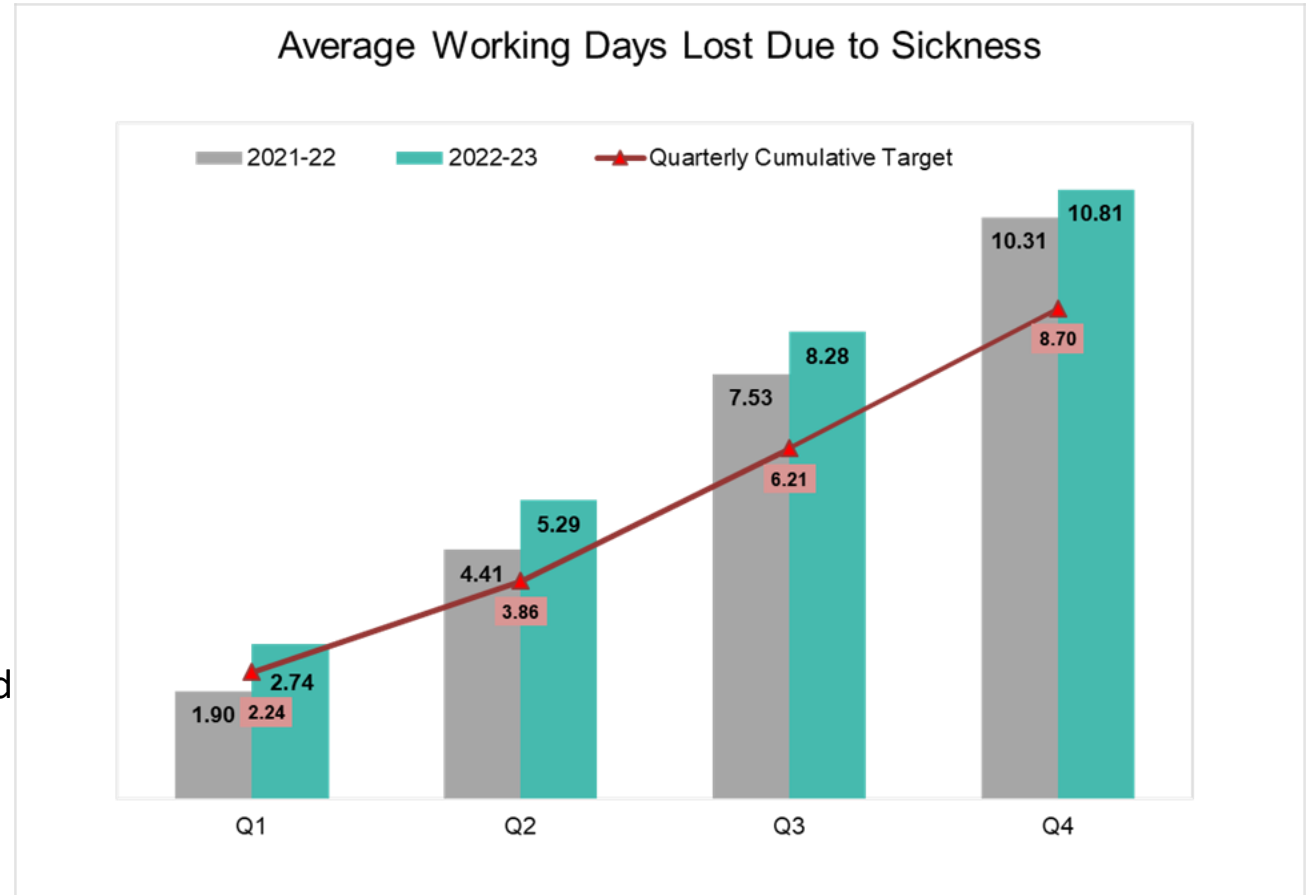
Average days lost per employee due to sickness this year was 10.81 compared to 10.31 days last year, which is an increase of 0.5 days

Sickness levels have increased for the last two consecutive years since the coronavirus pandemic began in 2020-21.

Borough Economy; Finance and Regeneration and Growth have achieved a reduction in sickness compared to last year. All other directorates have seen an increase and the highest increase was for Law and Governance.

The most significant increase is for stress related sickness and other muscular skeletal problems

Cost of sickness in 2022-23 was £4.89m compared to £4.29m in 2021-22, this is an increase of almost £600k





# Financial Health Performance Q4





# Key Contracts Summary – SCT Q4 Michael

Performance against the contract KPIs continues to be largely maintained. At the end of Q4, 11 out of the 15 KPIs were green, with three in the amber tolerance zone. There continue to be significant issues in recruiting and retaining social workers, with the Vacancy Rate indicator remaining red however performance has marginally improved.

## Key highlights:

There are less children in care at the end of Q4 (802) than at the end of Q3 (816)

The rate per 10,000 of children in care in March is 94.5. This is a significantly better position than March 2022, when the rate per 10,000 was 101.7

The number of children on a child protection plan has decreased over the last 12 months with 339 children on a plan in March 2023 compared to 408 in March 2022.

The financial position remains similar to Q3. The expectation of SCT was to achieve a surplus of £1.9m in 2022/23, however they continue to experience pressures from exceptionally high cost placements and increased costs linked to staffing. SCT are projecting a very small surplus at the end of the financial year: this will mean that the deficit from earlier years will be slightly reduced this year





# Key Contracts Summary – Q4 Serco

Key outcome targets are discussed at an operational level and at the monthly senior management meetings.

The SMBC team has well established systems in place for the monitoring of performance against the KOTs for this contract. Work is progressing to upload the Serco contract onto the Council's Intend Contract Management platform.

Validation of year-end annual KOTs is ongoing, these will be reported retrospectively in the Q1 2023/4 performance report.

Missed bins remain a challenge for the service. Continuing from quarters 2 and 3, throughout quarter 4 (and into quarter 1 2023/4) there have been periods of sustained service disruption. Serco report the cause of the missed bins as a combination of workforce unavailability and vehicle breakdowns.

In Q4, street cleansing performance is substantially improved. The Street Cleansing Improvement Plan went live in the middle of Q3 and Serco have now purchased a suite of new equipment including mini-sweepers, large mechanical sweepers and electric street vacuums, all of which should significantly improve the borough's cleansing standards.





# Key Contracts Summary – Q4 Serco

The improvement focus for Q4 was in the following 3 areas:

## **Improving service reliability**

Alongside Serco's TOM, additional focus has been placed on Serco's fleet replacement programme. Serco are about to place an order for 16 new RCVs.

## **Flats recycling**

Completing the pilot of new recycling options at Kenrick House. The pilot conducted in Q4 has yielded positive results suggesting better recycling than the borough average.

## **Charged Garden Waste**

Following agreement by Cabinet in November, the Council and Serco have worked together to design, implement and launch a subscription-based garden waste service. The subscription system went live on 1 February and the first collections for the subscription-based service were from 27 March. As at the end of Q4 just under 19,000 residents had subscribed to the service (as at 13/05/23 this has risen to 29,055 residents to a value of £1.03m).





# Key Contracts Summary – Q4 SLT

Following approval from leadership team and cabinet, officers are now seeking to extend the termination period with SLT to March 2027, due to the cost benefit in relation to utility costs.

A new suite of performance indicators has now been agreed with SLT. No set targets were agreed with SLT for the 'transition period' (i.e. the termination notice period) however, SLT do provide monthly performance updates and quarterly performance monitoring reports.

Headline figures include;

- Memberships: Increased in the quarter by 456 members (+5.2%)
- Membership comparison with March 2022: Increase of +922
- Memberships compared to pre-pandemic (December 2019): -1,615 (-14.9%)







# Key Contracts Summary – Q4 SLT

Financial performance to 31 March for the year to date is presented in figure 1 below. This indicates trading income at £189,047 modestly ahead of the £151,389 budgeted. Likewise expenditure is £10.34m, £897,826 more than the £9.4m budgeted. Overall financial performance is good and ahead of projected budget resulting in a pre-audit position of -£40,186.

The current improvement focus is across 3 key work streams

- Trading – identifying how SLT's post-Covid trading is rebounding in comparison to national and statistical comparators
- Supporting the transition to the LATC
- Supporting preparation for the public opening of Sandwell Aquatics Centre (SAC).





# Key Contracts Summary – Q4 Places Leisure

There are a number of Activity and Sports Development Programmes:

**Escape Pain** – for residents with lower joint pain; over a 12 month period we will run 6 course at site and 1 in the community.

**Drug & Alcohol Recovery Project** - Funding received for a further 100 3-month Premium memberships. All 100 prior membership were onboarded before the end of March 2023.

**NHS Rehab Bookings** – the NHS Pulmonary Rehab, Covid Rehab and Pain Managements bookings have renewed their bookings for a further 6 months. We are currently working with the Pain Management booking to look at a follow on session for their clients exiting their programme through funding from the NHS.

**Sandwell Violence Prevention** - BoxClever Mentoring ran some tasters in February and sessions throughout March. This has now funded by local Violence Prevention police funding and we are working to launch this for the next 11 months.

Whilst participation data for March 2023 is not yet available, the annual total to date is already much higher than in previous years.

Current Year to Date Participation vs FY22 and FY20			
	FY23	FY22	FY20
<b>Total</b>	364,772 (excluding March data)	280,786	445,800

The number of visits for January and February was 69,003

Memberships Year to date: Fitness Live (increase from 2019-2020 year end) Swimming lessons (down from 2019-2020 financial year end).





# Financial Performance – Q4 targets

not met Simone & Gillian

Indicator	Q4 Performance	DOT from previous quarter	Q4 Target	Q4 Commentary
Sundry Debt Collection	84.47%	↑	98%	Collection increased less than 0.5% on Feb 23. 8k more invoices this year compared to last year and some large invoices raised in March which are all due immediately as we have immediate payment terms.
Housing Benefit Overpayment	£1.353m	↑	£1.1m	Increase on previous quarter just below target
Number of days taken to process Housing Benefit Changes in Circumstances	8	↓	3	Target not met for year, but last reported DWP national figure was 9 days which we are still below
% of ASC payments made on time in accordance with contract terms	93%	↓	Revised Target 95%	Delayed payments in CCBU were due to delay prior to CCBU processing, working with ASC to resolve these issues





# Financial Performance – Q4 targets

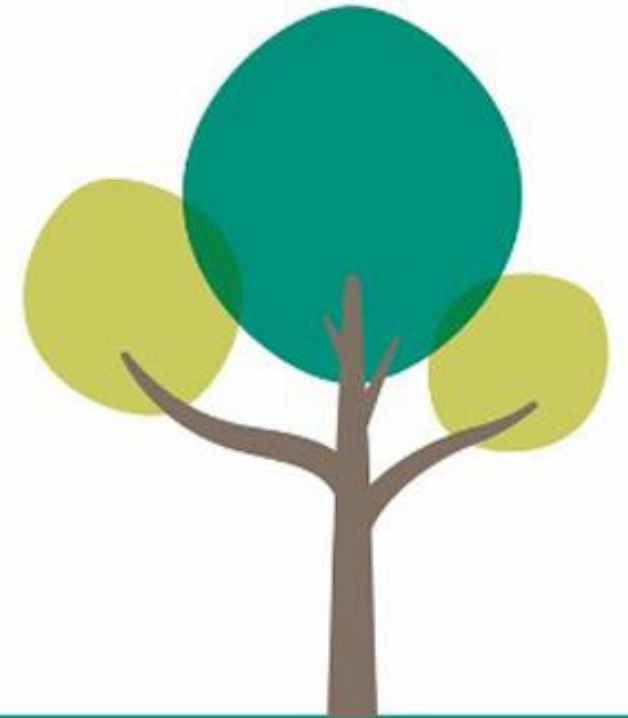
not met Simone & Gillian

Indicator	Q4 Performance	DOT from previous quarter	Q4 Target	Q4 Commentary
% of NRC Financial Assessments / re - assessments within 3 weeks (21 days) of CPLI approval	30%	↓	Revised Target 70%	Performance adversely affected in November as all staff focused on implementation of revised NRC policy, seeking additional resource to clear backlog
% of Residential Financial Assessments within 8 weeks (56 days) of CPLI approval	57%	↑	Revised Target 85%	Performance adversely affected in November as all staff focused on implementation of revised NRC policy, seeking additional resource to clear backlog
SI66a - Rent collected as a % of rent due			95.55%	Considering Sandwell is ranked as the second poorest area in the country on the new 'cost of living vulnerability index' and is listed as the eighth most deprived Borough in England, just narrowly missing the cash collection target is a good result for the service, especially as the cost of living crisis continues to impact household incomes. .





# Corporate Plan Quarter 4 Progress







# Overview

- Our Corporate Plan contains seven strategic outcomes that our nine directorates deliver on.
- This report details the progress made during quarter 4 (January to March 2023) in delivering the actions that underpin our strategic outcomes.
- Each action in directorate business plans that contributes to a corporate plan action has been RAG rated using the following categories:

On Track	Progress against the action is good and there is i) a low level of risk and/or issues; and/or ii) progress is in line with the delivery date with no/ minor slippage (e.g. less than 2 months); and/or that iii) there is no or minor concern around the measures of success being fulfilled.
Medium issues/risks/slippage	Progress on the action is being made but there is i) a medium level of risk and/or issues and/or ii) slippage (actual / projected) of less than 3 months; and/or iii) there is a medium level of concern that the measures of success will not be achieved
Significant issues/risks/slippage	There is a significant level of risk, issues and/or slippage (e.g. more than 3 months) or significant concern around the measures of success being fulfilled

# Q3>Q4 Direction of Travel

	Q3		Q4
Actions on Track	272		249
Medium issues/risks/slippage	101		69
Significant issues/risks/slippage	3		3
No update available	34		90



# Headlines – Corporate Plan Monitoring Q4



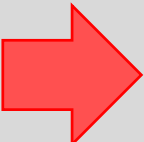
	Best Start in Life for Children & Young People	People who Live Well and Age Well	Strong Resilient Communities	Quality Homes in Thriving Neighbourhoods	A Strong and Inclusive Economy	A Connected & Accessible Sandwell	One Council One Team	Totals
No of Corporate Plan Actions	17	20	21	20	22	18	27	145
No of directorate actions contributing	46	127	63	33	41	28	72	410
On Track	42 (38)	64 (91)	52 (44)	19 (19)	19 (23)	16 (16)	41 (42)	253 (273)
Medium issues/risks/slippage	4 (5)	30 (34)	4 (11)	8 (9)	7 (7)	5 (7)	19 (28)	77 (101)
Significant issues / risks/ slippage	(0)	(0)	1 (1)	(0)	(0)	(0)	2 (2)	3 (3)
No update available	0 (3)	33 (2)	6 (7)	6 (5)	15 (11)	7 (5)	10 (0)	77 (33)

( ) represents Q3 figures





## DoT Red Actions – Corporate Plan Monitoring Q3 – Q4

Strategic Outcome	Red Action from Q3		Q4 Update
<b>Strong Resilient Communities</b>	Bring together governance arrangements and budgets to ensure VCS grants are aligned to corporate objectives		Grant reviews concluded to ensure funding is aligned to council priorities, new grant agreements in place for 2023/24. Team continues to operate at less than full capacity. Annual report being compiled for 2022/23 on impact of grant funding. Work on governance arrangements to commence in May 2023.
<b>One Council One Team</b>	Develop Corporate Data Strategy to define and deliver our approach to Business Intelligence		Corporate Performance Manager in post end February 2023 with remit to lead on development of the Data Strategy. Joint working with Public Health on workshop with Better Use of Intelligence Group in 2023/24 Q1 to share good practice and commence development of BIS. New date to be determined following workshop.
	Undertake a lean system review of the Councils payment processes improve current performance		Work has begun on this by C.Co and some communications have been circulated internally to remind people of the process that should be followed.  External comms will also be sent out soon. Changes have been made to the 'late payments report' to provide more accurate data.

# Key Messages

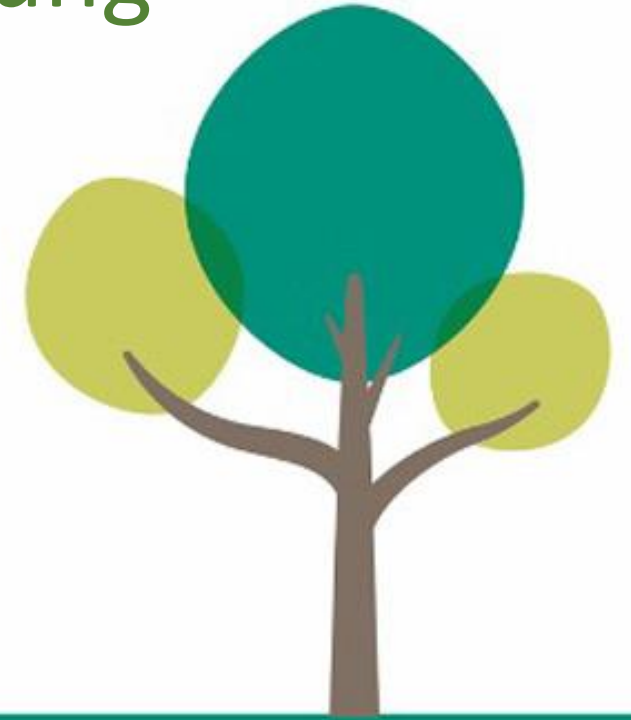
We are continuing to deliver and remain on track for a large proportion of actions.

Many of the amber rated actions relate to recruitment or capacity issues, this is across all directorates.

Three red actions have carried over from Q3, no change in status.

# Best Start in Life for Children and Young People

## Quarter 4 Progress



# Headlines and Overview: Best Start in Life

- Good progress has been made under the themes of First 1,000 days and Ready for School in respect of early years' language development.
- There have been some improvements in educational outcomes for children and young people and a refreshed work experience offer.
- Support to vulnerable children is progressing with the School Nursing Service having a designated Vulnerable Children's Team and children receiving targeted support around relationships and sex education.
- There has been some slippage in support to babies and parents, performance has declined due to staffing pressures - 26% vacancy rate for Health Visitors. This is a national issue - will be discussed as part of co-operative working.
- School Nursing Service vacancies are reducing, but the increase in referrals continues. Referrals continue to be triaged, which means that there is a longer waiting time than previously to deal with non-urgent cases.

<b>No. of Corporate Plan Actions</b>							<b>17</b>
<b>No. of directorate actions contributing</b>							<b>46</b>
On Track	42	Medium issues/risks	4	Significant issues/risks	0	No Update	0



# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

## First 1,000 days

- The Sandwell Speech, Language and Communication Pathway is now complete with an offer to parents of pre birth service and interventions, screening and support for all stages of development from 0-5 year olds.
- There is a potential for increased birth registrations on account of the future opening of the new Midland Metropolitan Hospital – recruitment to support this is on track and facilities at Sandwell Register Office have been improved to account for the increased number of appointments
- The delivery plan for the development of family hubs in all six towns has been approved by the DfE and a strategic lead appointed to oversee the implementation of these family hubs ; the reach of the children’s centres has increased (20% for young people and 24% for parents). This is across all areas with Oldbury and Wednesbury seeing the largest increase and 60 active volunteers are in place.





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

## Ready for School

- Addressing language development in partnership with other local authorities is on track with the new pathway for Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) and Inclusion Support Early Years (ISEY) enabling the council to support partnership working with families.
- **Supporting improvements in home learning environments** – maintaining a safeguarding oversight by continuing to provide support and challenge to ensure children receive a suitable education is currently on track
- **Early Years Multi-Agency Professionals Group** - the group continues to meet to discuss latest Early Years issues including the development of the Family Hubs. This is despite the ISEY manager post remaining vacant. The meeting continues to attract a multi agency membership.
- **Supporting social mobility projects that address early language** – the National Literacy Trust have donated 5 new books per baby . 405 babies received 5 new books each. Library projects in partnership with children’s centres have been delivered and are on track; training for foster carers focussing on development and speech, language communication continues.





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

## Ready for School

- **School places** - on track to maintain the pupil place planning data to inform forecasting and SCAP returns for the DfE.
- An interim AD - inclusive learning has been appointed and will develop a methodology for the projection of the expected demand for places to meet provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities – discussions on appropriate methodology are imminent
- **Improving educational outcomes for children and young people.** This work is on track Increased the proportion of school and academies rated good or better by Ofsted. The number of Primary schools rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' is now 86%; whilst this is just below regional (88%) and national comparators (90%), performance has improved throughout the year. The number of Secondary schools rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' has been maintained throughout the year at 79% (again just below regional (82%) and national comparators (81%))
- **Refreshed work experience offer.** Induction pack is currently being refreshed to ensure work experience staff have a sufficiently robust induction to enable them to get the most out of their experience.





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- **Support to vulnerable children** - the School Nursing Service includes a designated Vulnerable Children's Team that works with children outside of the mainstream school settings - including STEPS (New Arrivals), Pupil Referral Units, Children Missing Education etc.
- Vulnerable children and young people continue to receive support around relationships and sex education through targeted one-to-one provision
- **Commission bespoke community-based support for children experiencing Domestic Abuse** - no referrals for Our Futures during Q3 & 4 as programme redeveloped into Flourishing Futures. The programme was relaunched in December 2022. Total of 44 children (some data still outstanding) referred to services during 2022-23. Ongoing promotion and system review to be undertaken 2023-24.







# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- Prevention Of Violence Exploitation (PoVE) Plan and Strategy 2022-23 has been delivered. Draft update and Annual Report shared at Pove 18/4. Will be an Annual Report going to SSP in July on achievements and new refreshed PoVe Plan for 2023-24 shared.
- **Impact of adverse childhood experiences and trauma** - trusted adult training continues to be delivered as a central training offer, to all schools.
- **Corporate Parenting** - the Strategic Corporate Parenting Group continues to meet monthly, The group have reviewed the action plan for 2023, focussing on areas including getting help services (tier 2) emotional wellbeing services for children in care (CIC) and care leavers (CL), life and memory work for children in care, mentoring scheme and the 19-21 NEET data





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- Work continues with partners to provide early help to children and young people who need it. A partnership event took place this quarter to review progress made in embedding Early Help across the system since the launch of the EH strategy one year ago
- Extended the grant funding available to the community, voluntary sector that supports improvement in mental health and wellbeing
- Vulnerable children and young people continue to receive support around relationships and sex education through targeted one-to-one provision.





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- Supporting children with SEND in mainstream education settings is included in the School Nursing Service offer. The Service has established pathways in place to signpost and refer to additional support services as appropriate.
- Additional support for Looked After Children is on track.
- Child mental health funding deadline has been flagged to schools and participation promoted. Helping the schools to maximise their funding.
- Poverty proofing work is on track as is work around sexual harassment. Support continues for community mental health programmes with additional funding added in





# Performance highlight

	Sandwell	Regional	Stat Neighbour	England
Children in Care at period end (rate per 10,000)	94.5	100	97.6	70

The number of Children in Care has continued to reduce between June 2022 and March 2023. For Q4, the rate is 94.5 per 10,000 (802 children). This is now below the 2022 Statistical Neighbour average of 97.6 and a regional average of 100 (although still higher than the England average of 70). The Directorate is continuing to review a safe and robust exit strategy for children placed with parents, children on Section 20, Placement Orders (Adoption), Special Guardianship Order (SGOs) and Children in Court Proceedings.





# Performance highlight

	Sandwell	Regional	Stat Neighbour	England
Rate of Children on a Child Protection Plan per 10,000 CYP population	39.5	51.07	52.6	42.1
Children becoming subject of a CP Plan for the second or subsequent time (within 2 years)	10%	10.6%		

The rate of children on a Child Protection Plan is lower than all benchmarking comparators.

Children becoming subject of a CP Plan for the second or subsequent time (within 2 years) is 10%, lower than at any other point throughout the year and in line with regional comparison at 10.6%. This illustrates that in the majority of cases, Children are leaving the service in a safe and robust way and without further statutory intervention required.





# Performance highlight

	Performance	DOT
Early Help - Partner organisations completing Appropriate Early Help Assessments	1104	Up (bigger is better)
Early Help - Number of Allocated Lead Professionals by Organisation	1017	Up (bigger is better)
Early Help - Referrals to Social Care with no evidence of Multi-Agency Early Help in the prior 12 months	72%	Down (smaller is better)
Early Help - Number of Step Downs to Multi-Agency Early Help that do not return to Social Care within 12 months	81.3	Down (smaller is better)
Early Help - Number of Children/Young People receiving intervention	1017	Up (dependant)

There has been a reduction in referrals to Social Care with no evidence of Multi-Agency Early Help in the prior 12 months indicating that more children have been supported by other agencies before it has escalated.

There has also been a reduction in the number of Step Downs to Multi-Agency Early Help that do not return to Social Care within 12 months providing a good indication that children are being stepped down appropriately and that early help services are meeting need.





# Performance highlight

	Sandwell	Regional	Stat Neighbour	England
% of 16s and 17s not in employment, education or training (NEET)	1.2	2.9	3.3	3

The Q4 stands at 1.2%, lower than the regional (2.9%), statistical neighbour (3.3%), and England (3%) figure.





# Summary - Amber Actions – Medium issues/risks

- **Public health support to babies and parents** – there has been no change from Quarter 3 and Quarter 2 New Birth Visits: Q2 22/23/ The total was 97.6%. 63% within 14 days and 34.6% after 14 days. Performance has declined due to staffing pressures - 26% vacancy rate for Health Visitors. This is a national issue - Will be discussed as part of co-operative working.
- **Schools admissions** – schools appeals officer post which was filled has now become vacant and capacity to deliver the school appeals service has been impacted due to long and short term sickness absence. This is being mitigated by existing staff undertaking learning and development to offer support to the service alongside other colleagues with experience providing the service.
- **Working with the Sandwell Children's Trust to improve quality of children's social care** - 14 KPIs have been agreed between the Council and SCT, the final KPI is being discussed. Work is still being undertaken to finalise the tolerance and failure levels for each target. The final agreement of the KPI's will be between the Chief Executive of the Trusts and the DCS at the Council. The aim was to have these in place for the 1st April however there was a disagreement in respect of one of the proposed KPI's that went through a process of dispute resolution.







# Summary - Amber Actions – Medium issues/risks

- School nursing - School Nursing Service vacancies are reducing, but the increase in referrals continues. Referrals continue to be triaged, which means that there is a longer waiting time than previously to deal with non-urgent cases.





# Performance highlight

	Sandwell	Regional	Stat Neighbour	England
Vacancy rate of social workers	26%	16.3%	14.7%	16.7%

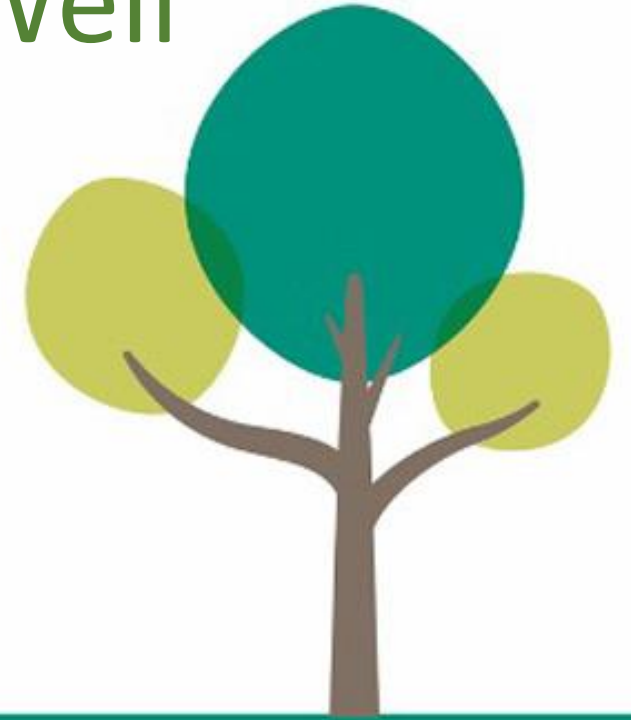
The data is based on Social Worker total vacancies, including agency workers who are covering permanent posts. We have a higher number of SW vacancies than regional, statistical neighbour and national comparators. Whilst this did reduce during the year (down to 13.4% at Q2) it increased again in Q3 (20.5%) and again in Q4.

Social Workers recruitment is a national issue with many LAs experiencing social work staffing pressures. In addition, the recruitment of agency SWs continues to be highly problematic (especially within the Child protection and Court Teams) with the project teams' model being preferred by the agencies, driving costs significantly and creating a 2 tier within agency workers groups



# People that Live Well and Age Well

## Quarter 4 Progress



# Headlines and Overview:

## Live Well & Age Well

- Progress has been made in tackling health inequalities and promoting healthy lifestyles through initiatives such as smoking cessation, weight loss management programmes, cycling and Sandwell Stride programmes, some progress in the improving air quality work.
- Work is underway with partners to reduce social isolation and there is further investment into community based mental health programmes.
- There has been slippage in some areas including physical activity in parks; establishing operating model for the intermediate community Social Work Team, staff recruitment - Knowle, site development of joint equipment stores, under occupancy at Willow Gardens.

No. of Corporate Plan Actions					20		
No. of directorate actions contributing					127		
On Track	64	Medium issues/risks	30	Significant issues/risks	0	No Update	33



# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

## Rebuilding

- Tackling health inequalities-good progress has been made vis a vis stop smoking support; engaging the faith sector in Public Health work is also going well with the appointment of a faith sector officer
- Improving air quality - Defra confirmation is expected in May 2023 regarding Sandwell's declaration of a new boroughwide Smoke Control Area. An enforcement policy is to be produced to reflect legislative changes. The initial results of the A4031 vehicle speed reduction model demonstrate a positive impact on local air quality, implementation options now require consideration.





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

## Healthy Lives

- The Covid resilience work is complete or on track; the roll out of the vaccination programme has been finished.
- There is a good number of referrals to the Health Sandwell Advice and Referral Service; there has also been investment and support of community mental health programmes
- Working with partners to reduce social isolation is on track with progress on a sustainable plan for leisure services; developing plans for the Aquatic Centre and continued a falls prevention service





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- Healthy lives – on track with healthy eating and weight management; investment in community mental health programmes; inclusive cycling and the Sandwell Stride programmes.
- Further investment into our communities has been added to continue to offer community-based mental health programmes beyond the initial funding term. We continue to utilise the Stronger Sandwell approach to deliver projects with local communities and partners.
- Supporting people through easily accessible information, advice and guidance - we have added additional funding resource to extend the mental health literacy project to support Sandwell communities to understand mental health and wellbeing, reduce stigma and support them to navigate the mental health care system.





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- The review and option appraisal of in-house day service offer is now complete - learning Disability Day opportunities are now sessional, offering a mix of universal services, community facilities or building based activities based on the identified outcomes for the individual following extended asset and strength based assessment.
- In respect of the new in-house operating model - referrals are being received from community teams into the 12 week pathway.
- Adult safeguarding – there is a continued service to support older adults aged 50+ on improving strength and balance for falls prevention for those at risk of falls or previous non-injurious falls; there has been a new 5 year Refuge contract awarded in February 2023. Q4 data from the provider is not yet available; Pove Plan 2022-23 delivered. Draft update and Annual Report shared at Pove 18/4. There will be an Annual Report going to SSP in July on achievements and new refreshed PoVe Plan for 2023-24 shared.







# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- Willow Gardens is fully operational
- Walker Grange - recommendations will be given around promoting the current offer to carers. Phase 1 - Briefing paper approved by Housing and Adult Social Care DMT in November 2022 to implement upgrade to Walker Grange.





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- In terms of support to carer - carers grants were extended in March 2023 for 1 year to 2023-24 with new outcomes to align with the Joint Carers Strategy 2022-2026.
- Review and refresh Carers Strategy - there is a planned meeting in place with the Director of Adult Social Care to present the recommendations around promoting the current offer to carers and the revised model for a Carer Support/Team/Hub that supports delivery of the carers strategy outcomes. Following approval, work will begin to implement new model. Approval will be sought from the Director of Adult Social Care to support a refreshed action plan to deliver the strategy post COVID-19. Partners who have developed the strategy will be requested to implement in their areas.

## Joined Up Health and Social Care

- An approved and resourced workforce strategy for social work and therapy is in place - The draft strategy has been shared with the group and will be ready to share with Rashpal in May 2023.





# Performance highlight

	Sandwell	
Proportion of people who use services who have control over their daily life	80.7%	In 2022-23 80.7% of service users said they have as much control over my daily life as they want or they have adequate control over their daily life, an increase from 76.3% in 2021-22. Latest benchmarking information relates to 2021/22. Sandwell score is higher than regional and England average. Higher is better.
Proportion of people who use services and carers, who reported that they had as much social contact as they would like (Service users)	51.9%	In 2022-23 51.9% of service users said they have as much social contact as they want with people they like, an increase from 46.6% in 2021-22. Latest benchmarking information for service user survey relates to 2021/22. Sandwell score is higher than regional and England average. Higher is better.
Proportion of adults with a primary support reason of learning disability support who live in their own home or with their family	86.4%	Provisional result. The majority of adults with learning disabilities are supported in the community. The Sandwell score has been consistently above the regional and national average. Benchmarking relates to 2021/22. Higher is better.
Overall satisfaction of people who use services with their care and support	71.6%	During 2022/23 71.6% of service users said they were "extremely satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their care and support. This is an increase from 63.5% during 2021/22. Latest benchmarking information relates to 2021/22. Higher is better. Sandwell score is significantly higher than the regional and England average.



# Performance highlight

	Sandwell	Regional	England
Smoking Prevalence in adults (18+) - current smokers (APS) Date of data – 2021	18.1%	13.8%	13%
Deaths from drug misuse Date of data – 2018-2020	2.2 (rate per 100,000 population)	5.3 (rate per 100,000 population)	5.0 (rate per 100,000 population)
Hospital admissions due to substance misuse (15-24 years) 2018/19 - 2019/20	51.9 (rate per 100,000 population)	66.9 (rate per 100,000 population)	81.2 (rate per 100,000 population)
Admission episodes for alcohol-specific conditions - Under 18s 2018/19 - 2020/21	18.2 (rate per 100,000 population)	24.9 (rate per 100,000 population)	29.3 (rate per 100,000 population)
Admission episodes for alcohol-related conditions Date of data 2021/22	427 (rate per 100,000 population)	564 (rate per 100,000 population)	494 (rate per 100,000 population)

Whilst smoking prevalence is higher in Sandwell than regionally and nationally, the data for deaths for drug misuse, hospital admissions for substance misuse (15-24 years), admission episodes for alcohol-specific conditions – under 18s and admission episodes for alcohol-related conditions are all lower than the regional and national position.

Please note that whilst the most recent data sources have been used, Public Health data is generally a few years out of date by the time it is made available.



# Summary - Amber Actions – Medium issues/risks

- In terms of physical activity in parks (Greenspace utilisation) - total engaged 167 (out of 500 for the year) / BAME engaged 26.95% / number of weekly sessions across 6 towns 14 (out of 18 contracted)
- Established operating model for intermediate community Social Work Team - draft operating model is in place however some further amendments are required and also need to consult the Clinical Lead in the Integrated Hub to finalise the model prior to seeking DMT approval.





# Summary - Amber Actions – Medium issues/risks

- Knowle:-- staff recruitment is ongoing for original posts and additional posts required to open second floor as residential rather than nursing led facility. Currently pending approval of Mandatory Approval Form process to get care assistant and senior care roles recruited to. Opening date of second floor will be dependent upon successful recruitment, Human Resource processes and induction. Sufficient staffing is essential to the safe operation of the service and rotas.
- Joint Equipment Stores site development and relocation of Community Alarms - Turbex washer has now been transferred to Doulton Way and needs be commissioned. UPS delivery from 3rd party supplier still outstanding and Legal are yet to resolve barrier issues with A1 Clutches. Community Alarms to relocate to Doulton Way delayed, no new date as yet.
- Options appraisal on STAR service which is due to impact of Discharge 2 Access - Updated draft of new proposal for STAR operating model presented to Director of Adult Social Care in March 2023. Further request for information to inform new model. Final proposal to be discussed at the beginning of May 2023.





# Summary - Amber Actions – Medium issues/risks

- If the in-house model is agreed, remodelling of the service would need to take place - New proposed service costings with finance to work up the model for consideration by Senior Management Team. Current users of the service are charged at half original day rate for sessional activities.
- Service and Social care operating models - rightsizing across all Adult Social Care components of Discharge 2 Access process is ongoing. Additional money/posts for the intermediate social work provision has been received. Two Cabinet Papers are being presented to Cabinet in June 2023 to seek approval to increase support for the Joint Equipment Service and Community Alarms with additional staff/ additional equipment and storage space.
- Willow Gardens continues to be fully operational, however has suffered underoccupancy which impacts housing revenue. Task and finish group allocated to expediate the processes, shortages with Willow's management team and care management continue to delay the assessment process for new tenants.
- Walker Grange - Works have commenced on site to remodel the flats, One flat has been started to model the new design, prior to commencing other flats. Phase 2 works to refurbish communal areas has not yet started, with delays in procuring a contractor for the works.





# Performance highlight

	Sandwell	
Long-term support needs met by admission to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population (Older people 65+)	672	Provisional result. There were 334 admissions to permanent residential and or nursing care during 2022-23, this is a decrease from 360 admissions during 2021-22. Latest benchmarking relates to 2021/22. Sandwell score is above the regional and national average for this measure. Lower is better. Being a deprived area Sandwell supports a higher number of social care service users during the year per 100,000 population than other LA's and consequently there are more admissions to care homes. When comparing the proportion of service users supported in placements vs community the Sandwell score is comparable with other councils in the region and England.
Proportion of older people (65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/rehabilitation services	63.7%	Provisional result. During 2022-23 63.7% of people were at home 91 days after being discharged from hospital into a reablement service. This compares to 65.6% during 2021-22. Latest benchmarking relates to 2021/22. Higher is better. The Sandwell score is below the regional and national average. Benchmarking also shows that Sandwell offers significantly more episodes of reablement that other LAs. Work is being done on the pathways that facilitate hospital discharges and the criteria of the reablement offer.





# Performance highlight

	Sandwell	Regional	England
Percentage of CQC registered locations in Sandwell rated as good/outstanding	72.4%	78.3%	83.2%

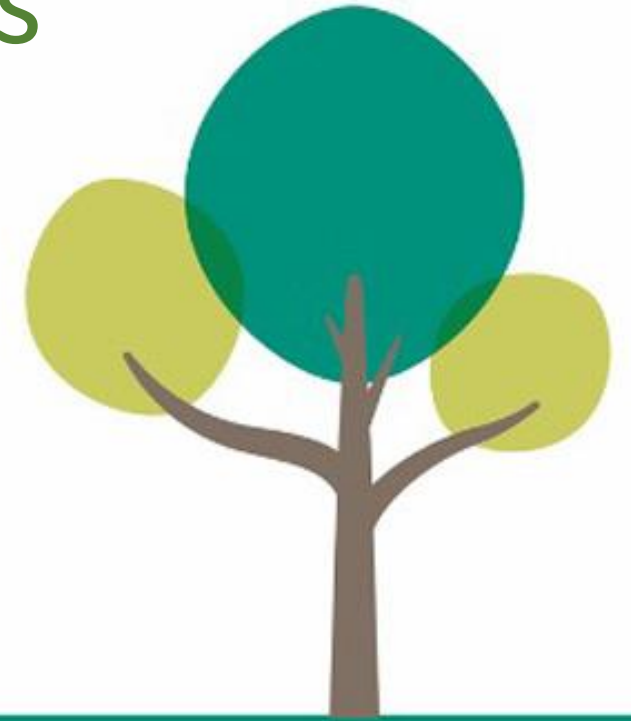
There are 152 CQC registered locations in Sandwell and of these 110 are rated as Outstanding or Good (Note 30 have no rating and are excluded from calculation).

The percentage relates to all ASC locations - residential and domiciliary. The Sandwell score is lower than the regional and England average.



# Strong Resilient Communities

## Quarter 4 Progress



# Headlines and Overview: Strong Resilient Communities

- Delivery of the Serco fleet replacement programme 2022/23 - Some delay in approval by Serco. Approval now received for increased tranche of 18 Refuse Collection Vehicles.
- Highways and road safety work have experienced some slippage in the main due to recruitment challenges.
- Pilot of recycling service for high rise residential buildings in the Borough - Pilot of 4 options underway - Initial observations encouraging. Review of pilot and recommendations scheduled for Q1 23/24.
- The Annual plans including Street Cleansing plan have been signed off by Waste Board
- The Levelling Up Fund Bid for a purpose built youth facility in West Bromwich was unsuccessful. £700k of council funding has been secured to fund the 2 new youth buses, anticipated delivery of one bus during the summer and the second bus in the autumn.
- Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 1 is underway and due to complete by 31/7/23. The outturn of properties completed is the order of 140

No. of Corporate Plan Actions							21
No. of directorate actions contributing							63
On Track	52	Medium issues/risks	4	Significant issues/risks	1	No Update	6



# Overview – key themes

- Delivery of the Serco fleet replacement programme 2022/23 - Some delay in approval by Serco. Approval now received for increased tranche of 18 Refuse Collection Vehicles.
- Highways and road safety work have experienced some slippage in the main due to recruitment challenges
- Work with partner agencies to develop and build the Anti-Social Behaviour response pilot, to develop our multi-agency response to Anti-Social Behaviour - Q4 Update - 3 cases referred during quarter. Total for year 31 (Q1 11, Q2 14, Q3 3 & Q4 3) 14 resolved through partnership approaches, 6 incidents linked to case and 5 unsubstantiated . Tasking has taken over as key arena to identify hotspots and inform patrol strategies
- The Levelling Up Fund Bid for a purpose built youth facility in West Bromwich was unsuccessful. £700k has been secured from Corporate to fund the 2 new youth buses, anticipated delivery of one bus during the summer and the second bus in the autumn.
- We continue to tackle environment crime, using an intelligence led approach.





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

## Vibrant Community

- Work with elected members to strengthen our Civic and Democratic Engagement- 1. Member/Officer relationship surveys are being rolled out across the organisation. 2. A number of events and activities have taken place across the year, including learning and development for members and officers and corporate speed dating. Further activity is planned during 2023. 3. An officer and member corporate governance learning and development programme will be finalised shortly for implementation in the 2023 municipal year 4. The service is reviewing its e-presence and will aim to identify further opportunities, including social media platforms, for Civic and democratic engagement. 5. The development of a dedicated intranet platform for Councillors (cllr.net) is underway, that will signpost Councillors to key sources of information





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- Community champions programme (engaging local people to support public health messages e.g. around climate change, healthy lifestyles, addictive behaviours) - There has been an increase in funding interest as we are marketing recovery aspects of the pandemic with special emphasis on combatting loneliness and isolation. Continuous work with SCVO to collaborate and fit community needs.
- Engagement of faith sector in Public Health work - Recruitment of faith sector Officer and board meeting continued this quarter
- Delivery of West Bromwich Quarter (Town Hall and Central Library) Project – subject to approval from DLUHC - Received confirmation of successful grant funding from DLHUC and commenced start of building work procurement

## Culture

- Delivery of Libraries and Archives Strategy including rollout of Library+ (a new model of delivery) - Library+ implementation on track. Strategy to follow.
- Finalise Common Wealth Games Physical Activity, Health & Wellbeing Legacy Plan - Funding secured in MTFS. Project now moving to implementation.





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- Implement CWG Health & Wellbeing Legacy Plan - Draft strategy and delivery plan complete for senior manager and cabinet member approval. Implementation expected to start 1st April 2023 – subject to funding
- Start to develop a draft masterplan for Sandwell Valley - Master scoping in progress

## Green

- Replace 4,000 high energy street lighting lanterns with low energy LED lighting and computer management - Cabinet approved prudential borrowing in November (spend to save through energy reduction). Programme has commenced and is on track to be completed in March 2024.
- Review the Council Fleet and develop a replacement plan for Low Carbon Vehicles by 2030 - Procurement of consultants to support Corporate Fleet Strategy underway. 2 contractor submissions currently under evaluation.
- Serco to deliver the undertaking to roll out electric street cleansing vehicles by 2030 and HGV's by 2035. Participation in pilot projects to test other green vehicles for use on refuse collection and street cleansing - Commissioning consultancy for most efficient solution to EV charging at Shidas Lane. Initially 42 light vehicles (Transits, Tippers etc).





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- Continue to develop the approach to tackle environmental crimes. Utilising an intelligence led approach to identify 'hot-spots' of environmental crime and targeting deployment of resources to increase enforcement activity to ensure the streets of Sandwell are clean and free from waste - Service incorporating some levels of activity within business as usual resources. Joint working has commenced with Waste Compliance Team / Serco to tackle historical urban 'hot-spots' problem areas.
- Upgrades to our stock including energy efficiency and alternative heating systems- Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 1 is underway and due to complete by 31/7/23. The outturn of properties completed is the order of 200 properties. For Wave 2.1 we are working through the property list and assessing VFM in order to seek Cabinet approval on acceptance of funding.

## Clean

- Serco to provide and deliver street cleansing transformation plan to improve standards of street cleansing across the Borough - Transformation plan approved - implementation being monitored.
- Serco to provide and develop recycling and behavioural change plan for 2022/23 - Communication plan approved - implementation being monitored.







# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- Develop options for the introduction of a recycling service for high rise residential buildings in the Borough - Pilot of 4 options underway - Initial observations encouraging. Review of pilot and recommendations scheduled for Q1 23/24.

## Safe

- Work with partners to support the reduction in road traffic accidents through identified highway improvements, education, campaigns and enforcement on roads throughout the Borough - Progress with safety initiatives continues- Review of the Strategic Road Safety Plan reported to leadership to be complete Autumn 2023.
- Work with partner agencies to develop and build the Anti-Social Behaviour response pilot, to develop our multi-agency response to Anti-Social Behaviour - Q4 Update - 3 cases referred during quarter. Total for year 31 (Q1 11, Q2 14, Q3 3 & Q4 3) 14 resolved through partnership approaches, 6 incidents linked to case and 5 unsubstantiated . Tasking has taken over as key arena to identify hotspots and inform patrol strategies





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- Compliance activities to monitor Taxi Licence holders and those licenced and operating in Sandwell under the Gambling Act 2005, Licensing Act 2003 and The Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 are compliant with relevant legislation, licensing objectives and conditions of licence - Taxi Licensing carried out 14 Operator base visits, 3 hackney rank visits and 1 multi agency operation. General Licensing carried our 41 Compliance visits to licenced and unlicenced premises.





# Performance highlight

	Performance (Q4)	Annual
Physical visits to library sites	156,450	531,155
Meaningful gifting of Bookstart packs to eligible children (target 95%)		96%

The number of people visiting libraries has increased over the year. In Q1 the figure was 108,603 and in Q4 the figure was 156,450. One of the reasons for this could be residents becoming more confident again to visit community spaces since the pandemic. There have also been more events scheduled in Libraries than originally planned, as demand has increased.

The service was also successful in achieving the 95% target for gifting Bookstart packs





# Performance highlight

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual
National crime data - number of incidents and feeling safe	9951	9672	9150	9604	38,377
Number of Domestic Abuse incidents reported to police	2919	2985	2865	2750	11,519
Number of high-risk MARAC cases	238	270	292	319	1,119

Overall, the number of incidents and feeling safe and the number of domestic abuse incidents reported has reduced over the year. When looking at total recorded crime, there has been an overall reduction of 1.9%. This compares to a 1.7% increase across the West Midlands as a region.

The number of high-risk MARAC cases has increased over the year.





# Summary - Amber Actions – Medium issues/risks

- Undertake a review of Town Working arrangements and governance - Following discussion with the Leader, the review of committee structures will take place during the 2023/24 municipal year
- There is also potential to further develop a current vacant area of land owned by Sandwell Council directly adjacent to Central Library with the creation of a new Archive and Story-Telling Centre - The proposals for a new Archive / Storytelling Centre is being further developed to second stage feasibility though New Burdens funding of c. £50,000 allocated to Sandwell through the National Archives programme. Consultant appointed March 23.
- **PRIORITY** Through working with the SHAPE Forum, we will make sure that our towns become welcoming places for young people and that they have youth activities and facilities to give them a part in the local community (Youth facilities Review) - Levelling Up Fund Bid for a purpose built youth facility in West Bromwich was unsuccessful. £700k secured from Corporate to fund the 2 new youth buses, anticipated delivery of one bus during the summer and the second bus in the autumn. Safer Streets project is ongoing with funding secured until end Q2 in new financial year. Successful report to Leadership Team and Cabinet workshop delivered on the refresh of the youth offer and a development plan is being formulated to address actions arising. Further proposal submitted to Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) to continue detached work in West Bromwich town centre and in Victoria Park, Smethwick in 2023/24. Successful bid made to the 'Adventures Away from Home' funding through UK Youth, securing £4,500 for Malthouse Stables to provide outdoor activity days to 50 young people from Sandwell. Successfully delivered targeted activity programme at Malthouse for young people referred via Early Help police officers in schools which was funded by the VRP. Ongoing work with the ShapeTeam, Service Improvement and young people to develop a young person's version of the Corporate Plan.





# Summary - Amber Actions – Medium issues/risks

- Delivery of the Serco fleet replacement programme 2022/23 - Some delay in approval by Serco. Approval now received for increased tranche of 18 Refuse Collection Vehicles.





# Performance highlight

	Q4	DOT
Total number of fly-tipping incidents identified or reported to the Council	3,290	Down

There were 3,290 reported fly-tipping incidents in Sandwell for Quarter 4 at an estimated cost of clearance of £170,260. In comparison, Q3 2022/23 resulted in 2,886 reported incidents at an estimated cost of clearance of £157,847.





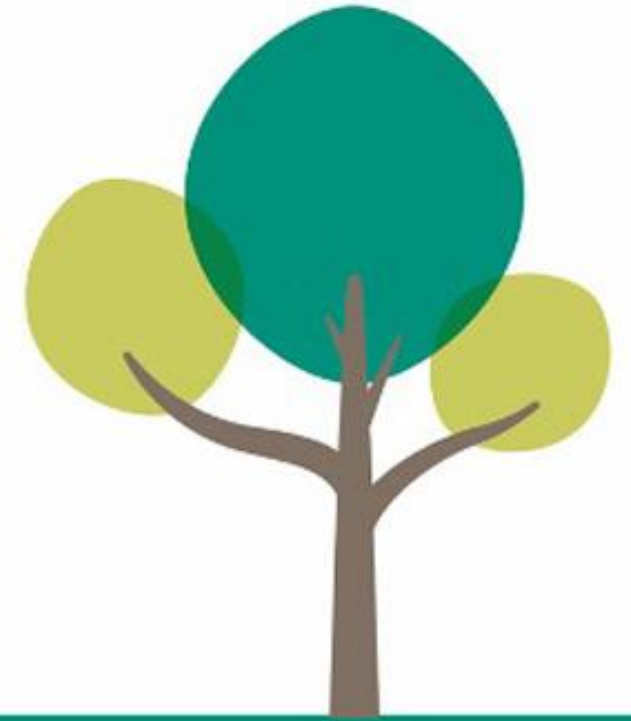
# Red Actions – Significant issues/risks

- Bring together governance arrangements and budgets to ensure VCS grants are aligned to corporate objectives - Grant reviews concluded to ensure funding is aligned to council priorities, new grant agreements in place for 2023/24. Team continues to operate at less than full capacity. Annual report being compiled for 2022/23 on impact of grant funding. Work on governance arrangements to commence in May 2023.





# Quality Homes in Thriving Neighbourhoods Quarter 4 Progress



# Headlines and Overview: Quality Homes

- The majority of actions under this theme are on track.
- Those under medium /risk of slippage include 19 new homes/unit being delivered as opposed to 24 in Quarter 3.
- Willow Gardens is experiencing some under occupancy.
- In terms of helping people stay independent we have procured new suppliers for the major adaptations and renewal framework – two suppliers were appointed and started in April this year.
- There has been some slippage in bringing empty homes back into use in terms of the restructure and recruiting to an Empty Property Officer but there has still been some success in bringing properties back into use through low level intervention, advice and assistance.

No. of Corporate Plan Actions							20
No. of directorate actions contributing							33
On Track	19	Medium issues/risks	8	Significant issues/risks	0	No Update	6



# Overview – Key Themes

- The majority of actions under this theme are on track.
- Those under medium /risk of slippage include 19 new homes/unit being delivered as opposed to 24 in Quarter 3.
- Willow Gardens is experiencing some under occupancy.
- In terms of helping people stay independent we have procured new suppliers for the major adaptations and renewal framework – two suppliers were appointed and started in April this year.
- There has been some slippage in bringing empty homes back into use in terms of the restructure and recruiting to an Empty Property Officer but there has still been some success in bringing properties back into use through low level intervention, advice and assistance.





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- **House building meeting the needs of children and young people with complex needs** - changes to Age Designations were effective from 1st April. Work started with Children's Trust to develop the "House Project" which would be an extension of provision of accommodation to young people with wrap around support.
- **Council House building to meet the needs of people with LD, MH and autism** - 24 general housing council new build units to address this performance indicator have been delivered this quarter. Work on the Housing Strategy has continued, this was meant to go in May but has been put back to June. Consultation has now been complete with 36 responses, plus an additional 11 formal responses. The consultation report and Strategy will be going to Leadership Team in the next few weeks.





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- **More renewable energy measures into the design of new build homes, including MMC and heating** - the 19 Units that were delivered in Quarter 4 achieved "B" rating.
- **Homelessness strategy** – a Homeless Partnership Event was held in March, actions agreed with partners to support implementation of the plan.
- **Anti-Social Behaviour response pilot, to develop our multi-agency response to Anti-Social Behaviour** - 3 cases were referred during quarter 4. This brings the total for the year to 31. 14 were resolved through partnership approaches, 6 incidents linked to case and 5 unsubstantiated .
- **Accessing national funding for Sandwell Tenants and those in housing need** - grant determination has been received from DLUH. Dialogue with DLUHC continues to identify any funding opportunities. Additional grant funding received in year for work in resettlement programme and asylum dispersal, Migration Co-ordinator post created to oversee the work.





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- **Modernise estate management** - new operating model went live in April ,we are onboarding new staff, projected to be at full establishment from June.
- **Implementation of Delivery Plan for New Burdens Funding for support in safe accommodation** - New 5 year Refuge contract awarded in February 2023. Q4 data from provider not yet available
- **Safer homes – social housing and PRS. Proactive advice and guidance offered to landlords and tenants** - dedicated team remains in place, there are regular reports to DMT, Cabinet Member and Building Safety Board on demand and interventions. PRS restructure, recruitment to increase capacity to drive further improvement in standard of accommodation commenced in April.
- **Upgrades to our stock including energy efficiency and alternative heating systems** - social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 1 is underway and due to complete by 31/7/23. The outturn of properties completed is not known yet but is expected to be of the order of 200 properties. For Wave 2.1 working through the property list and assessing VFM in order to seek Cabinet approval on acceptance of funding.





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- **Increase the scope and impact of tenant engagement. Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Panel fully up and running - The Community Partnerships Team continue to support tenant and resident engagement.** – good progress has been made in many areas including: home checks; positive working relationships; recently appointed new member of TSLG; training for tenant auditors, currently auditing fire safety in high rise blocks; wider tenant engagement; engagement work with many communal blocks – coffee mornings with tenants to establish their priorities and develop ideas.





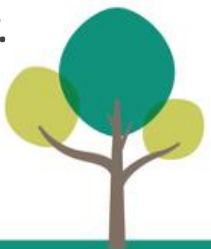
# Performance highlight

	Target	Performance
The total number of people assisted by the Welfare Rights Service to claim additional benefits	11,000	12,635
The total monetary value of benefits awarded assisted by the Welfare Rights Service	£20,000,000	£19,902,156

The unprecedented economic crisis and rising costs of living continues to put pressures on household budgets, a higher number of residents are seeking support to maximise their household incomes. The service has exceeded their profile target of assisting 11,000 residents to claim additional benefits by 1,635 residents for 2022/23

The total monetary value of benefits awarded assisted by the Welfare Rights Service was just below target (£19,902,156 against a target of £20m) but the shortfall is due to the reported nationwide delays in the DWP processing benefit claims.

The service has worked in collaboration with internal and external partners to safeguard households and support the sustainment of tenancies and home ownership both in the public and private sector.







# Performance highlight

	Target	Performance
No. of private sector properties reported to be in state of disrepair with a positive resolution.	NA	166

Performance for the number No. of private sector properties reported to be in state of disrepair with a positive resolution peaked in Q3 at 246, but has got much better again in Q4, despite there being a marked increase in disrepair complaints in this quarter as cold weather generally does cause an increase in comparison with other quarters throughout the year. The duty system continues to be a hugely important process in managing complaints and resolving large quantities to ensure that inspectors are only receiving well investigated cases with clear issues and that the 133 complaints closed with between landlords and tenants before formal intervention is needed and a further 33 after inspectors intervened at formal stage.

	Target	Performance
Percentage of homelessness cases successfully prevented (under Homelessness Reduction Act duty)	70%	72.3%

The council performs well when compared to the latest national average at 56.6%. The dip at year end was impacted by the backlog of cases due to later than usual intervention – in turn meaning fewer cases were picked up in prevention and delays in support meant more cases escalated, reducing the proportion of cases where we could successfully prevent homelessness. With the backlog now being addressed, the pressure driving this performance down will rapidly diminish over quarter one of the new year.





# Summary - Amber Actions – Medium issues/risks

- **Delivering new homes across the borough and helping keyworkers to access affordable housing** – 19 Units have been delivered in Quarter 4
- **Willow Gardens** continues to be fully operational, however has suffered underoccupancy which impacts housing revenue. Task and finish group allocated to expediate the processes, shortages with willows management team and care management continue to delay the assessment process for new tenants.
- **Walker Grange** - works have commenced on site to remodel the flats, one flat has been started to model the new design, prior to commencing other flats. Phase 2 works to refurbish communal areas has not yet started, with delays in procuring a contractor for the works.
- **Keeping people independent in their own homes for as long as possible through best use of Disabled Facilities Grant** – Public consultation on the draft private sector renewal policy is underway. Draft Policies have been placed on the council's website for comment. The Policies were discussed at SNAC during March 2023. Procurement of new suppliers for the Major Adaptations & Renewal Work Framework has been completed. Two suppliers have been appointed and the contract commenced on 1st April 2023.
- **Bring empty homes in to use and raise standards in the private rented sector** – Some slippage in implementing the restructure and recruiting to an Empty Property Officer post, temporary resources working on high profile and high risk cases. Recruitment to new posts to commenced in April. Some success in bringing properties back into use through low level intervention, advice and assistance.
- **Become an official Borough of Sanctuary**- the Borough of Sanctuary Strategy has been drafted and was developed at a workshop with partners on 28/4/23. The aim is to co-produce the final version of the strategy, reflecting the huge contributions of the voluntary and community sector and the views of refugees and asylum-seekers living in the borough.





# Performance highlight

	Target	Performance
Number of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) approved	139	132
Number of DFG's certified as complete	185	159

The target for the number of DFG's approved was narrowly missed, 5% below target.

The number of DFG' certified would have been higher if it was not for ongoing issues with suppliers earlier in the year, whereby final accounts were not agreed in a timely manner.



# A Strong and Inclusive Economy

## Quarter 4 Progress



# Headlines and Overview: Strong Inclusive Economy

- Much of this area is on track. The Commonwealth Games legacy work is moving forward as is the work on town regeneration and support to businesses and enhancing digital skills and access; reference the digital den project. Work is underway to increase the take up of apprenticeships.
- We continue to engage with the WMCA as lead agency on the LUZ/ IZ opportunities for Sandwell.
- We are in discussion with Govt officers from DLUC on the announcement of Sandwell becoming a Levelling Up Partnership Area. Tipton was announced as one of the 16 areas receiving up to £20m of regeneration funding to implement the scheme set out in the LUF Round 2 bid.
- The development of the Sandwell Plan is progressing, issues and options consultation completed. Site assessment completion is running behind programme due to staffing issues but should not impact on overall programme.

No. of Corporate Plan Actions							22
No. of directorate actions contributing							41
On Track	16	Medium issues/risks	3	Significant issues/risks	0	No Update	22



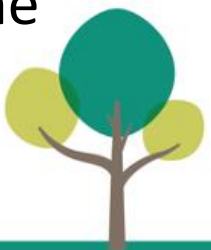
# Overview – Key Themes

Much of this area is on track. The Commonwealth Games legacy work is moving forward as is the work on town regeneration and support to businesses and enhancing digital skills and access; reference the digital den project. Work is underway to increase the take up of apprenticeships.

We continue to engage with the WMCA as lead agency on the LUZ/ IZ opportunities for Sandwell.

We are in discussion with Govt officers from DLUC on the announcement of Sandwell becoming a Levelling Up Partnership Area. Tipton was announced as one of the 16 areas receiving up to £20m of regeneration funding to implement the scheme set out in the LUF Round 2 bid.

The development of the Sandwell Plan is progressing, issues and options consultation completed. Site assessment completion is running behind programme due to staffing issues but should not impact on overall programme.





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- **Local investment** – continuing to engage and train local suppliers
- **Commonwealth Games legacy** - funding for legacy plan secured in the MTFs, project moving to implementation. Draft strategy for the Health and Wellbeing legacy gone for Cabinet approval – implementation April 2023. Sandwell now has a state-of-the-art facility creating a lasting legacy for community health and wellbeing - 50m Olympic-sized swimming pool; a 25m diving pool; community swimming pool; seats for up to 1,000 spectators. Other facilities will include three activity studios, two 4-court sports halls, a 108-station fitness suite with a 25-station ladies-only gym, dry diving facilities, an indoor cycling studio, a new football pitch, a cafe, and changing facilities including a sauna and steam room. Externally, a new urban park will feature a children’s play area
- **Town Deals** - delivery of West Bromwich Quarter (Town Hall and Central Library). Project- received confirmation of successful grant funding from DLHUC and commenced start of building work procurement.
- **Establish more business networking and support events utilising Sandwell's Business Ambassadors** - AEB providers are engaged via the Employment and Skills service to fulfil training needs for local employers. AEB providers are also invited to present to the Employment and Skills partnership.





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- **Local people filling local vacancies; working on Sandwell’s digital offer** - the digital skills needs within Sandwell are detailed within the Skills strategy. The Employment and Skills partnership cover digital activity and any gaps in the borough for delivery.
- **Developing digital skills in the community – apprenticeships and learning and development in law and governance** - apprenticeship approach has been accounted for as part of annual budget setting process for 2023/2024. Two apprentices have recently been appointed in Registration Services. Two vacancies in operational teams to be progressed. The Digital Den project refurbishment has been completed with the support of the Towns Fund grant. This now enables the project to provide access to digital online provision for children, adults and older people including support to get online and improve employment readiness and access to employment opportunities.
- **Work experience programme within the Council** - there is full leadership support for reinstating a full work experience programme with all directorates on board. A paper is being prepared alongside learning and development for leadership team to confirm progress on taking this forward.
- **Showcase apprenticeship opportunities available within the Council to residents, jobseekers and stakeholders. Engage with businesses for apprenticeship levy transfer opportunities** - events are held twice yearly with the next event due to be held in the summer.







# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- **Increasing the take-up of apprenticeships** - SME's are engaged in Sandwell to benefit from apprenticeship levy transfer. The SEND programme is expanding from DPD to the NHS with a view to also starting a programme in SMBC in the future.





# Summary - Amber Actions – Medium issues/risks

- The proposals for a new Archive / Storytelling Centre is being further developed to second stage feasibility though New Burdens funding of c. £50,000 allocated to Sandwell through the National Archives programme. Consultant appointed March 23.



# A Connected and Accessible Sandwell Quarter 4 Progress



# Headlines and Overview: Connected & Accessible

- Progress on delivering the capital programme of maintenance in relation to highways infrastructure has been constrained due to recruitment difficulties;
- Work has taken place to improve Sandwell’s cycling infrastructure across the borough.
- Defra confirmation is expected this month regarding Sandwell’s declaration of a new boroughwide Smoke Control Area and an enforcement policy is to be produced to reflect legislative changes.
- Partnership working continues with the Canals and River Trust to improve the canals and paths. On the whole the work is on track to deliver under this outcome.

<b>No. of Corporate Plan Actions</b>							<b>18</b>
No. of directorate actions contributing							28
On Track	16	Medium issues/risks	3	Significant issues/risks	0	No Update	9



# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- **Deliver the capital programme for 2022/23 of annual maintenance schemes to renew or repair highway infrastructure prioritised in red risk condition (HIA - MP) £4.741 Million capital budget** - Likely to deliver the £4.741m programme of external capital grant work. Cabinet approved additional capital funding of £3.142m in November 2022. Some carry forward of Council capital spend due to delayed approval and winter working. Delivered in the region of £4M spend against the council capital budget in 2022/23. Progress has been reported to leadership .
- **Implementation of Sandwell’s Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan - a programme of infrastructure improvements across the borough** - cycle routes delivered on A457 Tollhouse Way linking to Rolfe Street Railway Station, A4123 Tipton Road to Burnt Tree, Blackheath Ringway with links to Rowley Regis Railway Station and Bearwood High Street to Hadley Stadium. Also, the Smethwick Connected project will create cycle and pedestrian links from two railway stations to the town centre and local hospital and aims to achieve uplift in the number of people using active travel modes within Smethwick, the wider borough and region to assist in reducing congestion, poor air quality and other health inequalities
- **Air Quality (a variety of measures to improve the air quality in the borough, e.g. by encouraging use of public transport)** - Defra confirmation expected in May 2023 regarding Sandwell’s declaration of a new boroughwide Smoke Control Area and an enforcement policy is to be produced to reflect legislative changes. The initial results of the A4031 vehicle speed reduction model demonstrate a positive impact on local air quality, implementation options now require consideration





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- **Partnership working with the Canal and River Trust** - Birmingham Old Mainline Canal resurfaced from Seven Stars Road to Gower Branch canal Arm linking to Birmingham Newline Canal NCN81
- **The Committee Management System (modern.gov) to be fully implemented and utilised effectively across the organisation and accessed by services users** - activity has commenced to develop the workflows and functionality within the system. Draft workflows will be tested with a pilot group of officers before finalisation. To support the roll-out, officer learning and development will be designed, tested with the pilot group before wider roll-out across the organisation





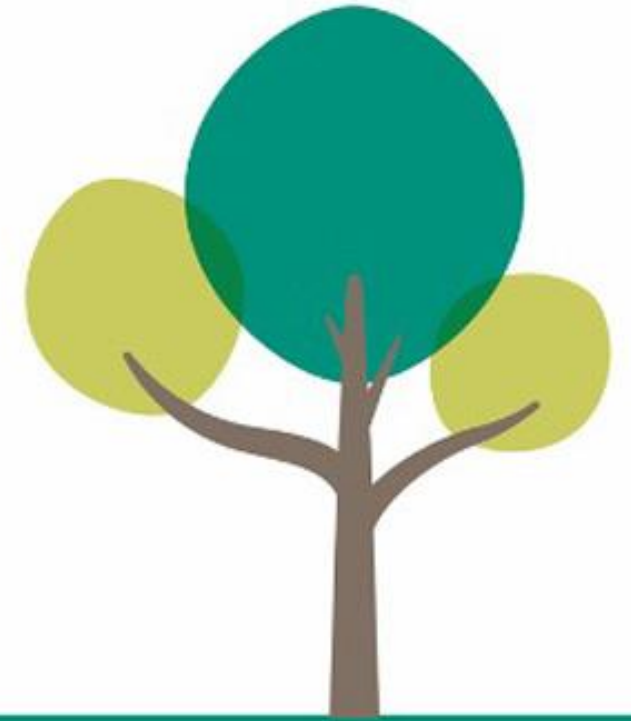
# Summary - Amber Actions – Medium issues/risks

- **Deliver the 2022/23 £16m capital programme of improvement works underway at 48 locations in the borough** - progress constrained by recruitment difficulties, delayed approval of the workforce plan. On schedule to deliver in the region of £10M works across this and HIAMP schemes in 2022/23
- **Support the delivery of the programme of works scheduled for 2022/23 of the £30m Birchley Island Major Junction Improvement** - Third party agreements must be secured through extensive approval processes with National Highways for the work to improve the motorway island and slip roads.





# One Council One Team Quarter 4 Progress





# Headlines and Overview: One Council One Team

- Large proportion of actions on track including many of the actions on systems and governance.
- Key procurement activities to deliver the Council’s consultation and engagement framework have been completed.
- We continue to develop the Sandwell offer, work has also progressed on a number of workstreams in HR, including a new graduate scheme which will be launched in 2023.
- Capacity is a key driver for a proportion of the amber actions as staff time has had to be focused on priority areas.

No. of Corporate Plan Actions							27
No. of directorate actions contributing							73
On Track	42	Medium issues/risks	19	Significant issues/risks	2	No update	10

# Red Actions

## Significant issues/risks

**Develop Corporate Data Strategy to define and deliver our approach to Business Intelligence -** Corporate Performance Manager in post end February 2023 with remit to lead on development. Joint working with Public Health on workshop with Better Use of Intelligence Group in 2023/24 Q1 to share good practice and commence development of BIS. New date to be determined following workshop.

**Lean Review of the Councils payment processes -** work has begun on this by C.Co and some communications have been circulated internally to remind people of the process that should be followed. External comms will also be sent out soon. Changes have been made to the 'late payments report' to provide more accurate data on this.



# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

## Access to Services

- Reviewing approach to the customer journey including monitoring data and roll-out self-service kiosks in more customer facilities - Live chat is now available on Revenue and Benefits web pages, further recruitment taking place for 4 Customer services providing remote support for community hubs via MS. Removal of cash being received at the council is being reviewed and ensuring residents can pay by alternative means. Promotion of paying by DD and E-bills is being done on a regular basis by R&B's. Will need to review roll out of kiosk as part of the community hub offer and removal of cash as these would then be card only
- Explore options for co-location and/or close working with key partners - This will be part of the discussion as to what services are offered in the community hubs
- Upgraded business applications for our Legal and Assurance team and management of SARs and FOIs - Project board has been set up within Legal to monitor use and effectiveness of Icasework and to ensure all aspects of the management functionalities are rolled out. The new system will enable individuals to pull information off from similar FOI's therefore saving time dealing with matters. Benchmarking also took place against other LA's. A report is being finalised re costings for upgrading the system currently used. The report will be presented to Capital and Asset Management Board on 15th May 2023.





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- Deploy new Windows10 build to all users including Always On VPN - Technical build is now in wider pilot and a project plan is near completion to deploy the new build.
- Deploy Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) to all users - this has been enabled for all accounts as of week beginning 17th April. There are still mop up activities, but this action should be ready to close within the next 1 - 2 months.

## Organisational Development

- We will invest in a range of opportunities, qualifications and experiences for our workforce through workforce development plans to ensure our workforce is an enabler for current and future service delivery - Future talent workstreams continue to be developed. A new Graduate scheme being launched in 2023. Apprenticeships are on-going at a variety of levels.
- Develop new workforce planning framework and methodology for deployment across the organisation - Review current position of workforce plans across the Council; Gain sign off from Senior Leadership Team to new approach and agree how this will be rolled out - Initial phase complete. Workforce planning to be further developed in our workforce strategy





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- Review existing wellbeing provision and look for opportunities to develop further. Create the new OH suite and accessible wellbeing areas. Support and deliver the wellbeing by establishing a Health & Wellbeing Specialist role - A calendar of wellbeing initiatives has been created. Interventions are being delivered in the My Wellbeing Hub and in locations across the Council. Currently reviewing our offer across the 4 areas of wellbeing and identifying any gaps and continuing to raise awareness.
- We will continue to develop and embed excellent people management practices, as identified by subject matter experts and leading recognised frameworks - One Team Framework agreed and soft launched. Policy reviews undertaken and underway, including Sickness Absence Management
- Deliver engagement events to showcase the Sandwell offer. Utilise social media channels to raise awareness of opportunities available - Engagement events take place throughout the borough with support from our local Voluntary and Community sector organisations. Community engagement is also a key feature of the UK Shared Prosperity Communities and Place strand.

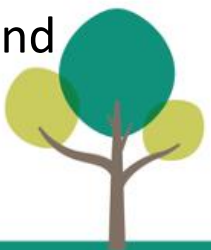




# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

## Systems and Governance

- Develop and implement corporate planning and performance management framework to ensure delivery of Corporate Plan - PMF: Q3 reporting complete; reporting approach refined following feedback from LT and Cabinet. Corporate Performance Manager in post end Feb 2023 and reviewing Corporate Plan KPIs. Schedule and arrangements in place for Q4/EoY reporting to Cabinet and Scrutiny, in line with refreshed Corporate Plan and Improvement Plan. Scheduling designed to demonstrate embedding of Improvement Plan into Corporate Plan/Business as Usual, and evolution of the Corporate Plan and KPIs to reflect corporate performance and priorities. Corporate Plan refresh commenced, with directorate business plans refined to ensure all elements of the Corporate Plan are addressed.
- Implement Oracle Fusion and achieve transformational benefits and cashable savings - Achieving project milestones. Some resource issues but these are being managed.
- Meet our specific equalities duties and drive the equalities, diversity and inclusion agenda our organisation - An EDI consultant has been engaged with a start date of 6 June 2023. Our strategic roadmap and action plan sets out key actions for the organisation to embed the LGA Equality Framework through a new EDI Strategy. The EDI consultant's key priority is to conduct an audit and assessment against the LGA Equality Framework. The audit report is due to be completed and delivered in early July.





# Summary - Green Actions – On Track

- Introduce and embed a Social Value Policy as part of the Councils Contract Procedure Rules - A SV working group has commenced with HOP, PBC ICT and the SV team. Review of procurement documents underway, training and comms being reviewed

## **Making the Most of Our Resources**

- Have in place a Corporate Commercial Strategy and deliver at least two business streams - Strategy approved in March by Cabinet Member. Business stream development being supported by Transformation Team.





# Summary - Amber Actions – Medium issues/risks

- To refresh the VMWare hosting platform - Hardware specification is complete. Once this has had internal sign off by ICT's governance framework, the purchase of the new servers will proceed. Once onsite at Oldbury and Roway Lane, migration can be undertaken.
- To refresh the Local Area Network (LAN) switches throughout Council buildings. Phase 1 and 2 - Phase 1 is complete other than upgrading the Oldbury core, delayed to May due to not being able to schedule network downtime for a complete weekend. Phase 2 is scoped and costed and needs final verification before proceeding.
- Carry out a review of the ICT Strategy and produce new for 2022-2025 - Strategy has been received from comms team. Given the recent changes and reprioritisations with key workstacks and technologies within ICT, the Strategy needs a second review within ICT.
- Digital Inclusion Strategy - Recruitment of Digital Inclusion Co-ordinator delayed due to corporate vacancy management approach, to be conducted in 2023/24 Q1. Gathering intelligence of digital inclusion offer, local needs and barriers initiated with SCVO, with feedback anticipated in early summer 2023.







# Summary - Amber Actions – Medium issues/risks

- To replace Avaya telephony system to link into Microsoft 365 technology - Approval received at CAMB on 6/2/23, Approval from Cabinet 15/3/23, Capital Appraisal Bid Approved by SIU & s151 Officer 29.03.23. Specification has been finalised.
- Undertake a comprehensive Corporate Governance Training programme for officers and members - Programme still being developed. Will require external support.
- Review the Council's approach to debt recovery and implement a Corporate Debt Recovery Strategy - C.Co are gathering the outstanding debts from services. There are still a number of gaps where services haven't provided the amount of o/s debt and they don't have any working procedures. These gaps will hopefully be closed in the next couple of months. The corporate debt policy has been approved for 23/24 but this doesn't include all council debts at the moment. As the debts are in lots of different systems there is potential to upload these into Oracle Fusion from 2024, and this could be the time to look to have a single debt recovery team/have a single view of debt
- Undertake quarterly campaigns to promote e-billing take-up for Council Tax and NNDR - Working with Comm's team to do promotion of e-billing, R&B's correspondance and My Sandwell promote this too





# Summary - Amber Actions – Medium issues/risks

- Establish Corporate Transformation Programme and PMO with corporate methodologies to realise savings and service benefits - Skills analysis complete and capacity within the team identified, further work will begin to identify future programmes and projects are aligned to corporate priorities. Engagement with the Local Partnership (LP) has commenced to develop a corporate Programme Management Office (PMO), which will further enhance the CTO function. The LP exercise will result in a PMO framework, ensuring a consistent approach to performance and risk management, governance and decision making are applied consistently across the organisation. The LP exercise will conclude in June, at which point Verto will be refined to reflect the organisational approach and the Framework will be finalised.
- Complete outstanding actions from CIPFA Financial Management Code - Review of this undertaken and a revised assessment as at March 2023. A number of actions have now been completed but there are some new actions required as a result of the GT VFM Review and delays to accounts. Work will be carried out on bringing together this action plan, the Finance Improvement Plan and the recommendations from the 2020/21 Audit Findings Report so that they are all tracked and monitored in the same way.
- Co-production Network – facilitate and grow network across the council as resource to develop co-production in Sandwell - Capacity in the team remains focused on development of Corporate Approach to Resident Engagement and Consultation (Improvement Plan priority). Have successfully procurement of Citizenspace as corporate mechanism for consultation which will encourage sharing of intelligence and development of corporate plan of engagement activities.





# Summary - Amber Actions – Medium issues/risks

- Customer Feedback Review – implement recommendations to improve customer experience - Business Case for new system has been updated and is due to be presented at CAMB on the 15/5/23. CFT are delivering training sessions and have been carrying out random sampling of complaint responses for auditing.
- Implement a Corporate Asset Management System - Property modules implemented. Finance modules due to be implemented by end of October 2023.





# Performance – Member Training

	Target	Performance
Members have a Personal Development Plan	90%	27.8%
Members to attend all designated compulsory training	95%	79.4% Code of Conduct 100% Licensing 56% Planning
Members to attend all discretionary training	60%	48.40%

With regards to discretionary training, there have been a large number of sessions and Members would not have been able to attend them all.

The Member Development Programme will continue into 2023/24.

