

# Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board

**9 February 2022**

<b>Subject:</b>	Economy Skills Transport and Environment Work Programme 2021/22
<b>Director:</b>	Director of Law and Governance Surjit Tour
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Senior Democratic Services Officer Stephnie Hancock, <a href="mailto:Stephnie.Hancock@sandwell.gov.uk">Stephnie.Hancock@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

## 1 Recommendations





- 1.1 That the Board receives and comments upon its current work programme for 2021/22.
- 1.2 That the Board notes the direction from the Council to carry out a review of the Strategy Road Safety Plan 2017-22.
- 1.3 That the Board notes the elements of the Governance Review Improvement Plan (in response to the external auditors Value for Money Governance Review) that are relevant to its terms of reference.

## 2 Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 It is normal practice for scrutiny boards to receive and review their work programmes at each meeting. This enables boards to prioritise issues and also to respond to emerging priorities. Appendix A refers.
- 2.2 At the Council meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022, concern was expressed by several members about road safety in Sandwell. The Council therefore resolved to ask this Board to conduct a review of the current Strategic Road Safety Plan 2017-2022.

2.3 At the same meeting the Council received a report based on its external auditors Value for Money Governance Review, along with an Improvement Plan to address the findings of the review. One of the Key Lines of Enquiry in the review was the waste service, which links to the work of this Board. In addition, there are elements of the improvement plan that relate to regeneration, which also links to this Board's terms of reference. Appendix B refers.

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

	<p><b>People live well and age well</b> Road safety is considered to be of the highest importance for the health and wellbeing of residents. Reviewing and submitting recommendations to update the current Strategic Road Safety Plan will ensure that Sandwell is a safe place to live.</p>
	<p><b>Strong resilient communities</b> By scrutinising and reviewing the Strategic Road Safety Plan, it will enable the Council to assess its effectiveness currently against recent local road safety priorities to the benefit of the communities being served.</p> <p>It is vital to ensure that the Council is effective in its enforcement powers in terms of waste services and maintenance of Sandwell's street scene. The services benefit whole communities, local neighbourhoods, families and creates a cohesive borough.</p>
	<p><b>Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods</b> The scrutiny and effective oversight and management of the waste contract will ensure that residents live in clean neighbourhoods.</p>
	<p><b>A connected and accessible Sandwell</b> Despite significant progress in road safety provision, it is considered pertinent to continue to develop and consider resident views and update the Strategic Road Safety Plan to also address adaptations to public transport since the adoption of the Plan. This will ensure that transportation in Sandwell is connected and safe.</p>

## 4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 Sandwell's Strategic Road Safety Plan 2017-2022 published the findings of an in-depth road traffic casualty analysis across the borough and set out the Authority's road safety strategy for that period. Approval was received at Cabinet on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2017 (Minute No. 191/17) to implement the road safety strategy and associated policies to help inform road safety delivery within the borough until 2022.
- 4.2 This Plan complemented the Government's latest road safety statement – *Working Together to Build a Safer Road System* – and embraced their Safe Systems approach in setting out Sandwell's strategy.
- 4.3 During the full Council meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022, an approved motion was expressed by the Cabinet Member for the Environment that road safety and speed calming measures were to be implemented to ensure the health and well-being of the residents of Sandwell.

It was highlighted that approximately 800 road accidents occur in Sandwell annually which was a 55% reduction since the year 2000, during the same period, accidents resulting in people being killed or seriously injured had reduced by 52% and accidents with child casualties had reduced by 72%. The majority of causes of accidents have been identified as either speeding, congestion or poor pedestrian safety

It was also recognised that despite the work done to improve Sandwell's road safety provision, improvement was still required and it was considered pertinent to address resident concerns and growing challenges in Sandwell including an increasing number of vehicles on the road, climate change, adaptations to public transport and other such imperatives.

Consequently, the Economy Skills Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board was called upon to conduct a review into the current Strategic Road Safety Plan and to submit its recommendations to Cabinet for consideration.

4.4 As outlined in the Scrutiny Procedure Rules within the Constitution, scrutiny bodies must respond to requests from the Council and/or the Executive to review particular areas of Council activity, within three months of the request, or at the nearest available programmed meeting where the Proper Officer considers this reasonable.

The scrutiny body must report its findings and any recommendations back to the Executive and/or the Council. The Council and/or Executive must consider the report of the scrutiny body within one month of receiving it, or at the nearest available programmed meeting where the Proper Officer considers this reasonable.

4.5 Appendix B sets out the elements of the Improvement Plan (in response to the external auditors Value for Money Governance Review) that are relevant to this Board’s terms of reference. The Bard may wish to discuss how it will maintain oversight of these actions.

## 5 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	There are no resource implications associated with this report.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	Scrutiny boards are responsible for managing their own work programmes.  As outlined in the Scrutiny Procedure Rules within the Constitution, scrutiny bodies must respond to requests from the Council and/or the Executive to review particular areas of Council activity, within three months of the request, or at the nearest available programmed meeting where the Proper Officer considers this reasonable.
<b>Risk:</b>	There are no risk implications associated with this report.
<b>Equality:</b>	There are no equality implications associated with this report.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	The Strategic Road Safety Plan’s main focus is the reduction of harm and injury on the Borough’s road network with the aim to reduce casualties and improve the safety environment across the council’s asset.

	Effective and efficient waste collection services contribute to the wellbeing, cohesion and resilience of Sandwell's communities.
<b>Social Value</b>	Effective and efficient waste collection services contribute to the wellbeing, cohesion and resilience of Sandwell's communities.

## **6 Appendices**

Appendix A – Economy Skills Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board Work Programme

Appendix B - Governance Review Improvement Plan 2022 - Elements Relating to the Terms of Reference of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board

## **7. Background Papers**

Governance Review Improvement Plan