

Council Meeting

6 April 2022

Time 6.00 pm **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Full Council

Venue Council Chamber - Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1SH

Membership (Quorum for this meeting is 15 Councillors)

Mayor Cllr Greg Brackenridge (Lab)
Deputy Mayor Cllr Sandra Samuels OBE (Lab)

Labour

Cllr Obaida Ahmed	Cllr Val Evans	Cllr Lynne Moran
Cllr Qaiser Azeem	Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal	Cllr Anwen Muston
Cllr Mary Bateman	Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre	Cllr Phil Page
Cllr Philip Bateman MBE	Cllr Celia Hibbert	Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr Olivia Birch	Cllr Keith Inston	Cllr John Reynolds
Cllr Dr Paul John Birch J.P.	Cllr Jasbir Jaspal	Cllr Susan Roberts MBE
Cllr Ian Brookfield	Cllr Jaspreet Jaspal	Cllr Zee Russell
Cllr Paula Brookfield	Cllr Milkinderpal Jaspal	Cllr Stephen Simkins
Cllr Chris Burden	Cllr Rashpal Kaur	Cllr Clare Simm
Cllr Alan Butt	Cllr Rupinderjit Kaur	Cllr Tersaim Singh
Cllr Craig Collingswood	Cllr Linda Leach	Cllr Paul Sweet
Cllr Claire Darke	Cllr Asha Mattu	Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman
Cllr Jasbinder Dehar	Cllr Barbara McGarrity QN	Cllr Gillian Wildman
Cllr Steve Evans	Cllr Beverley Momenabadi	

Conservative

Cllr Paul Appleby
Cllr Simon Bennett
Cllr Adam Collinge
Cllr Jonathan Crofts
Cllr Wendy Dalton
Cllr Christopher Haynes
Cllr Stephanie Haynes
Cllr Sohail Khan
Cllr Andrew McNeil
Cllr Andrew Randle
Cllr Mak Singh
Cllr Paul Singh
Cllr Udey Singh
Cllr Wendy Thompson
Cllr Ellis Turrell
Cllr Jonathan Yardley

Information for the Public

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the Democratic Services team:

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Agenda

Item No. *Title*

PART 1 – ITEMS OPEN TO THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
- 2 **Declarations of interest**
- 3 **Minutes of previous meeting** (Pages 5 - 22)
[To receive minutes of the previous meeting held on 02 March 2022]
- 4 **Communications**
[To receive the Mayor's announcements]

DECISION ITEMS

- 5 **Report of Leader of the Council**
[To receive a report from the Leader of the Council]
- 6 **City Learning Quarter Delivery** (Pages 23 - 40)
[To provide an update on the funding status and strategy for the City Learning Quarter and seek approval to take the required steps to allow commencement of procurement and delivery works for Phase 2]
- 7 **Wolverhampton Homes Delivery Plan 2022-2023** (Pages 41 - 110)
[To approve the Wolverhampton Homes Delivery Plan 2022-2023]
- 8 **Oxley Health and Wellbeing Facility and Residential Accommodation** (Pages 111 - 130)
[To approve a development proposal for the creation of a Health and Social Care Hub on the former Oxley Day Training Centre site]
- 9 **Youth Offending Team Inspection Outcome** (Pages 131 - 202)
[To present the outcome of the Youth Offending Team Inspection]
- 10 **SEND Local Area Inspection and Written Statement of Action**
[To receive a report on SEND Local Area Inspection and Written Statement of Action – **To Follow**]
- 11 **Statement of Gambling Policy** (Pages 203 - 230)
[To approve the Statement of Gambling Policy]
- 12 **Auditor's Annual Report, on City of Wolverhampton Council 2020-2021**
(Pages 231 - 264)
[To receive the auditor's annual report]

- 13 **Annual Scrutiny Review 2020-2021** (Pages 265 - 318)
[To approve the Annual Scrutiny Review 2020-2021]
- 14 **Municipal Calendar of Meetings 2022-2023** (Pages 319 - 328)
[To approve the Municipal Calendar of Meetings 2022-2023]
- 15 **Motion on Notice** (Pages 329 - 330)
[That Council consider the motion received by Councillor Ellis Turrell]
- 16 **Written Questions by Councillors** (Pages 331 - 334)
[That the Cabinet Members respond to questions received]
- 17 **Exclusion of press and public**
[To pass the following resolution: That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information on the grounds shown below]

PART 2 - EXEMPT ITEMS, CLOSED TO PRESS AND PUBLIC

- 18 **City Learning Quarter Delivery** (Pages 335 - 352) (3)

[To provide an update on the funding status and strategy for the City Learning Quarter and seek approval to take the required steps to allow commencement of procurement and delivery works for Phase 2]
- 19 **Oxley Health and Wellbeing facility and Residential Accommodation** (Pages 353 - 390) (3)

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

[To approve a development proposal for the creation of a Health and Social Care Hub on the former Oxley Day Training Centre site]

Attendance

Mayor Cllr Greg Brackenridge (Lab)
Deputy Mayor Cllr Sandra Samuels OBE (Lab)

Labour

Cllr Obaida Ahmed	Cllr Steve Evans	Cllr Beverley Momenabadi
Cllr Qaiser Azeem	Cllr Val Evans	Cllr Lynne Moran
Cllr Mary Bateman	Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal	Cllr Anwen Muston
Cllr Philip Bateman MBE	Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre	Cllr Phil Page
Cllr Olivia Birch	Cllr Celia Hibbert	Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr Dr Paul John Birch J.P.	Cllr Keith Inston	Cllr John Reynolds
Cllr Ian Brookfield	Cllr Jasbir Jaspal	Cllr Susan Roberts MBE
Cllr Paula Brookfield	Cllr Jaspreet Jaspal	Cllr Zee Russell
Cllr Chris Burden	Cllr Milkinderpal Jaspal	Cllr Stephen Simkins
Cllr Alan Butt	Cllr Rashpal Kaur	Cllr Clare Simm
Cllr Craig Collingswood	Cllr Linda Leach	Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman
Cllr Claire Darke (V)	Cllr Asha Mattu	Cllr Gillian Wildman
Cllr Jasbinder Dehar	Cllr Barbara McGarrity QN	

Conservative

Cllr Paul Appleby	Cllr Andrew McNeil
Cllr Simon Bennett	Cllr Andrew Randle (V)
Cllr Adam Collinge	Cllr Mak Singh
Cllr Jonathan Crofts	Cllr Paul Singh
Cllr Wendy Dalton	Cllr Udey Singh
Cllr Christopher Haynes	Cllr Wendy Thompson
Cllr Stephanie Haynes	Cllr Ellis Turrell
Cllr Sohail Khan	Cllr Jonathan Yardley

Employees

Tim Johnson	Chief Executive
Mark Taylor	Deputy Chief Executive
David Pattison	Chief Operating Officer
Emma Bennett	Executive Director of Families
John Denley	Director of Public Health
Ian Fegan	Director of Communications and External Relations
Charlotte Johns	Director of Strategy
Richard Lawrence	Director of Regeneration
Claire Nye	Director of Finance
Laura Phillips	Deputy Director of People and Change
John Roseblade	Director of City Housing and Environment
Becky Wilkinson	Director of Adult Social Services

The proceedings opened with Prayers

Item No. *Title*

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Paul Sweet.

2 Declarations of interest

Councillor Philip Bateman and Councillor Mary Bateman declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 7 – 2022 – 2023 Final Budget Report as members of the Board of Governors for Ashmore Primary School.

3 Minutes of previous meeting

The Mayor proposed, the Deputy Mayor seconded, and it was resolved:

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 26 January 2022, be agreed as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Mayor.

4 Communications

1. Honorary Alderman Patricia Patten

The Mayor was saddened to announce the death of Honorary Alderman Pat Patten, who passed away on 5 February 2022. She served two terms as a Councillor, 1992-1996 representing the Oxley Ward and 2002-2018 representing the Penn Ward and was appointed an Honorary Alderman in 2018.

The Mayor passed on condolences to her family and friends.

2. Nick Edwards

The Mayor was saddened to announce the death of former Service Director Nick Edwards. Nick had joined the Council in December 1986 and had left the Council in May 2016.

The Mayor passed on condolences to his family and friends.

The Council stood in silent tribute to the late Pat Patten and Nick Edwards.

3. Her Majesty's Accession to the Throne

The Mayor reported that Sunday 6th February marked 70 years since Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II ascended to the throne, upon the death of her father King George VI. The Mayor had recorded and published a video message to mark the occasion.

4. British Art Show 9

The Mayor reported the British Art Show 9 (BAS9) a contemporary touring art show was a real coup for the City and would undoubtedly bring visitors to the City centre and the newly refurbished Art Gallery, along with other venues. He encouraged everyone to visit this exhibition to help make it a great success.

5. Literature Festival

The Mayor reported the annual Literature Festival was once again a great success, attracting both star performers and more locally focused contributors. The Mayor was able to attend a lovely event on 3rd February where our existing Poet Laureate for the City of Wolverhampton, Emma Purshouse, handed over the reins to her successor, Kuli Kohli.

The Mayor thanked Emma for representing the City so well for the last 3 years and wished Kuli every success as our new Poet Laureate.

6. Krazy Karts Soapbox Races

The Mayor reported he attended the launch event for a new outdoor event for the City in the Mander Centre last week. On Sunday 21st August, Queen Square would be filled with families to watch loads of courageous competitors race down the hilly course in home-made carts.

7. Fair Trade

The Mayor reported that Fair Trade Fortnight was upon us, and he would be hosting a civic reception in the City Suite this Friday to mark the occasion. Wolverhampton City Fairtrade Partnership would also be presenting prizes to local school pupils to winners of the Fairtrade Art Competition.

8. Quiz Night in aid of the Mayoral Charity Trust

The Mayor reported that the Charity Quiz night was scheduled to take place the day after this day.

5 Urgent Motion on Notice

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield moved the following motion:

“The City of Wolverhampton Council stands with and expresses its support for the people of Ukraine and the Ukrainian community in our City following the illegal invasion by the Russian State of the independent democratically elected sovereign Ukrainian nation state.”

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield outlined the rationale for the motion. Leader of the Opposition Group, Councillor Wendy Thompson seconded the motion and outlined the rationale for supporting the motion.

Resolved:

That the motion on support for Ukraine be agreed.

6 Report of Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield provided Council with an update on Wolves at Work and the cost of living.

The update was debated by Council.

7 **Our City: Our Plan**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield presented the report on Our City: Our Plan for approval. The refreshed council plan, Our City: Our Plan was detailed in appendix 1 to this report. This report also provided an update on the new council performance framework and how the council would monitor progress towards delivering the councils priorities.

The plan sets out an ambition that 'Wulfrunians will live longer, healthier lives'. Delivery of this ambition would be supported by six overarching priorities: strong families where children grow up well and achieve their full potential; fulfilled lives for all with quality care for those that need it; healthy, inclusive communities; good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods; more local people into good jobs and training and thriving economy in all parts of the city. Supporting these six overarching priorities were three cross cutting principles: climate conscious; driven by digital and fair and equal.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield proposed the recommendations and the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Stephen Simkins seconded the recommendations.

The report was debated by Council.

Resolved:

1. That the Our City: Our Plan, the City of Wolverhampton Council Plan be approved.
2. That cross party engagement be sought to deliver the priorities set out in Our City: Our Plan the strategic framework to level up our city.
3. That it be noted, the priorities of Our City: Our Plan have been developed through a continuous conversation with our communities and partners with over 3,000 people engaged building on the Relighting Our City recovery commitment.
4. That it be noted, a presentation and draft strategy of Our City: Our Plan was received by Scrutiny Board on the 8 February 2022.

8 **2022-2023 Final Budget Report**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield presented the report on 2022-2023 Final Budget Report for approval. The report encompassed the Capital Programme 2021-2022 to 2025-2026 quarter three review and 2022- 2023 to 2026-2027 budget strategy, the Treasury Management Strategy 2022-2023, the Final Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2022-2023 to 2025-2026 and Council Tax Formal Resolutions.

The Council were advised that the Final Budget Report was underpinned by the Our City: Our Plan to ensure that resources were aligned with the priorities of the Council.

The Capital Programme 2021-2022 to 2025-2026 quarter three review and 2022-2023 to 2026-2027 budget strategy provided Council with an update on the 2021-2022 financial performance of the General Revenue Account and Housing Revenue

Account (HRA) capital programmes, whilst also providing a revised forecast for 2021-2022 to 2025-2026 as at quarter three 2021-2022. The report also recommended revisions to the current approved capital programme covering the period 2021-2022 to 2026-2027.

The Treasury Management Strategy 2022-2023 report sets out the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2022-2023 for approval by Council. The report incorporates six elements, which were detailed in separate documents, appended to this report.

The Final Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2022-2023 to 2025-2026 report presented a balanced budget for 2022-2023 aligned to the Council Plan priorities and an update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2022-2023 to 2025-2026.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield proposed the recommendations and the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Stephen Simkins seconded the recommendations.

Councillor Paul Appleby provided the principal speech in response to the budget report and moved the report Conservative Group Alternative Budget and outlined the rationale to the amendment to the budget. Councillor Udey Singh seconded the amendment to the budget and outlined the rationale for supporting the amendment.

The Conservative Group Alternative Budget was debated by Council.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 the votes were recorded as follows for the amended motion:

Conservative Group Alternative Budget	
Councillor Greg Brackenridge	Against
Councillor Sandra Samuels OBE	Against
Councillor Obaida Ahmed	Against
Councillor Qaiser Azeem	Against
Councillor Mary Bateman	Against
Councillor Philip Bateman MBE	Against
Councillor Simon Bennett	For
Councillor Olivia Birch	Against
Councillor Dr Paul John Birch J.P.	Against
Councillor Ian Brookfield	Against
Councillor Paula Brookfield	Against
Councillor Christopher Burden	Against
Councillor Alan Butt	Against
Councillor Adam Collinge	For
Councillor Craig Collingswood	Against
Councillor Jonathan Crofts	For
Councillor Wendy Dalton	For
Councillor Jasbinder Dehar	Against
Councillor Steve Evans	Against
Councillor Val Evans	Against

Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal	Against
Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre	Against
Councillor Christopher Haynes	For
Councillor Stephanie Haynes	For
Councillor Celia Hibbert	Against
Councillor Keith Inston	Against
Councillor Jasbir Jaspal	Against
Councillor Rashpal Kaur	Against
Councillor Sohail Khan	For
Councillor Linda Leach	Against
Councillor Asha Mattu	Against
Councillor Barbara McGarrity QN	Against
Councillor Andrew McNeil	For
Councillor Beverley Momenabadi	Against
Councillor Lynne Moran	Against
Councillor Anwen Muston	Against
Councillor Phil Page	Against
Councillor Rita Potter	Against
Councillor John Reynolds	Against
Councillor Susan Roberts MBE	Against
Councillor Zee Russell	Against
Councillor Stephen Simkins	Against
Councillor Clare Simm	Against
Councillor Gurmukh (Mak) Singh	For
Councillor Paul Singh	For
Councillor Udey Singh	For
Councillor Jacqui Sweetman	Against
Councillor Wendy Thompson	For
Councillor Ellis Turrell	For
Councillor Gillian Wildman	Against
Councillor Jonathan Yardley	For
Lost	

The amended motion was LOST by 37 votes. There were 14 votes for.

Councillor Paul Singh moved the following amendment to the budget:

“Trial extension of HWRC operating hours

Background

The Conservative Group have long campaigned for increased opening hours at the Council’s two Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs). As a result of this campaigning the HWRCs are now open seven days a week.

Currently both Anchor Lane and Shaw Road HWRCs are open 8am – 4pm meaning that those working a standard 9-5 work pattern are unable to access the tips around 75% of the time.

Proposal

The Conservative Group propose a trial extension to the operating hours of the HWRCs to 6pm on both Saturdays and Sundays for the majority of British Summer Time (02/04/2022 – 31/10/2022).

The cost of this is £100,000, composed of:

- *Additional staffing costs of £87,000*
- *Additional Supplies and Services of £13,000 – these estimated costs are linked to increase in energy costs, operation of plant and equipment. These costs are unknown and will be monitored and updates reported during the year.*

As a trial scheme this will be funded from the Budget Contingency Reserve

This proposal does not impact on the tables detailed in the 2022-2023 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-2023 to 2025-2026 Report. These changes will however, impact on the Budget Book – page 62. Gross expenditure will increase by £100,000 with a contribution from reserves. ”

Councillor Paul Singh outlined the rationale to the amendment to the budget.
Councillor Udey Singh seconded the amendment to the budget.

The amended motion was debated by Council.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 the votes were recorded as follows for the amended motion:

<i>Trial extension of HWRC operating hours Amendment</i>	
Councillor Greg Brackenridge	Against
Councillor Sandra Samuels OBE	Against
Councillor Obaida Ahmed	Against
Councillor Qaiser Azeem	Against
Councillor Mary Bateman	Against
Councillor Philip Bateman MBE	Against
Councillor Simon Bennett	For
Councillor Olivia Birch	Against
Councillor Dr Paul John Birch J.P.	Against
Councillor Ian Brookfield	Against
Councillor Paula Brookfield	Against
Councillor Christopher Burden	Against
Councillor Alan Butt	Against
Councillor Adam Collinge	For
Councillor Craig Collingswood	Against
Councillor Jonathan Crofts	For
Councillor Wendy Dalton	For
Councillor Jasbinder Dehar	Against
Councillor Steve Evans	Against
Councillor Val Evans	Against

Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal	Against
Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre	Against
Councillor Christopher Haynes	For
Councillor Stephanie Haynes	For
Councillor Celia Hibbert	Against
Councillor Keith Inston	Against
Councillor Jasbir Jaspal	Against
Councillor Rashpal Kaur	Against
Councillor Sohail Khan	For
Councillor Linda Leach	Against
Councillor Asha Mattu	Against
Councillor Barbara McGarrity QN	Against
Councillor Andrew McNeil	For
Councillor Beverley Momenabadi	Against
Councillor Lynne Moran	Against
Councillor Anwen Muston	Against
Councillor Phil Page	Against
Councillor Rita Potter	Against
Councillor John Reynolds	Against
Councillor Susan Roberts MBE	Against
Councillor Zee Russell	Against
Councillor Stephen Simkins	Against
Councillor Clare Simm	Against
Councillor Gurmukh (Mak) Singh	For
Councillor Paul Singh	For
Councillor Udey Singh	For
Councillor Jacqui Sweetman	Against
Councillor Wendy Thompson	For
Councillor Ellis Turrell	For
Councillor Gillian Wildman	Against
Councillor Jonathan Yardley	For
Lost	

The amended motion was LOST by 37 votes. There were 14 votes for.

Councillor Ellis Turrell moved the following amendment to the budget:

“One year city centre parking boost

Background

In recent years Wolverhampton city centre has seen a decline in economic activity with stores such as Beatties and Debenhams closing and future projects such as West Side stalled.

Proposal

The Conservative Group proposes a one-year scheme of free parking in council owned car parks in the city centre at weekends in a bid to entice shoppers back and support the local economy.

The one-year scheme is anticipated to cost £410,000 due to lost income. This loss of income to parking services may be somewhat off set through increased weekday parking when the Civic Halls finally re-opens.

Whilst there is a direct cost to the Council it is expected to deliver a boost to local businesses and cultural offers such as the Grand Theatre and Art Gallery.

This will be funded from the general reserve. ”

Councillor Ellis Turrell outlined the rationale to the amendment to the budget.
Councillor Chris Haynes seconded the amendment to the budget.

The amended motion was debated by Council.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 the votes were recorded as follows for the amended motion:

One year city centre parking boost Amendment	
Councillor Greg Brackenridge	Against
Councillor Sandra Samuels OBE	Against
Councillor Obaida Ahmed	Against
Councillor Qaiser Azeem	Against
Councillor Mary Bateman	Against
Councillor Philip Bateman MBE	Against
Councillor Simon Bennett	For
Councillor Olivia Birch	Against
Councillor Dr Paul John Birch J.P.	Against
Councillor Ian Brookfield	Against
Councillor Paula Brookfield	Against
Councillor Christopher Burden	Against
Councillor Alan Butt	Against
Councillor Adam Collinge	For
Councillor Craig Collingswood	Against
Councillor Jonathan Crofts	For
Councillor Wendy Dalton	For
Councillor Jasbinder Dehar	Against
Councillor Steve Evans	Against
Councillor Val Evans	Against
Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal	Against
Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre	Against
Councillor Christopher Haynes	For
Councillor Stephanie Haynes	For
Councillor Celia Hibbert	Against
Councillor Keith Inston	Against
Councillor Jasbir Jaspal	Against
Councillor Rashpal Kaur	Against
Councillor Sohail Khan	For
Councillor Linda Leach	Against
Councillor Asha Mattu	Against

Councillor Barbara McGarrity QN	Against
Councillor Andrew McNeil	For
Councillor Beverley Momenabadi	Against
Councillor Lynne Moran	Against
Councillor Anwen Muston	Against
Councillor Phil Page	Against
Councillor Rita Potter	Against
Councillor John Reynolds	Against
Councillor Susan Roberts MBE	Against
Councillor Zee Russell	Against
Councillor Stephen Simkins	Against
Councillor Clare Simm	Against
Councillor Gurmukh (Mak) Singh	For
Councillor Paul Singh	For
Councillor Udey Singh	For
Councillor Jacqui Sweetman	Against
Councillor Wendy Thompson	For
Councillor Ellis Turrell	For
Councillor Gillian Wildman	Against
Councillor Jonathan Yardley	For
Lost	

The amended motion was LOST by 37 votes. There were 14 votes for.

Councillor Adam Collinge moved the following amendment to the budget:

“SEND Employment Support Scheme Pilot

Background

In September 2021 Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission conducted a joint inspection of a joint inspection of the local area of Wolverhampton to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the disability and special educational needs (SEND) reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014.

As part of this inspection the report found that “Transitions at crucial points in a child’s or young person’s life are frequently not well planned, nor considered.” Amongst other things the inspection raised significant concerns about the effectiveness of “weaknesses in the planning and support of transitions both within statutory school age and from statutory school age to post-19 and post-25”.

Together with partners the Council has prepared a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) as requested by Ofsted. Development five of the WSoA is “To improve the planning and support of transitions both within statutory school age and from statutory school age to post-19 and post-25.”

The WSoA is now under consideration by Ofsted.

Proposal

The Conservative Group proposes to begin tackling this issue through a two-year pilot scheme to both support young people into employment and support employers in taking on young people with SEND.

The pilot scheme will consist of two SEND (Business and Employment) Support Workers at grade 7 and 0.5 FTE Admin assistant at grade 4.

The scheme will cost in the region of £140,000 per annum, total cost of around £280,000 over the two year pilot.

- *£114,000 for two SEND (Business and Employment) Support Workers at grade 7*
- *£15,000 for 0.5 FTE Admin at grade 4*
- *£5,000 for Supplies and Services*
- *£5,000 for Transport*

This will be funded from the Transformation Reserve.

This proposal does not impact on the tables detailed in the 2022-2023 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-2023 to 2025-2026 Report. These changes will however, impact on the Budget Book – page 77. Gross expenditure will increase by £139,000 with a contribution from reserves.”

Councillor Adam Collinge outlined the rationale to the amendment to the budget. Councillor Wendy Dalton seconded the amendment to the budget.

The amended motion was debated by Council.

Councillor Adam Collinge moved a further amendment to the motion and the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Work, Councillor Dr. Mike Hardacre seconded the revision to the motion:

“That this Council proposes to begin tackling this issue through a scheme to both support both young people into employment and support employers in taking on young people with SEND through the existing wolves at work budget via a dedicated ringfenced resource within that budget of not less than £100,000 per annum. This would be added to the Written Statement of Action.”

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 the votes were recorded as follows for the amended motion:

SEND Employment Support Scheme Pilot Amendment	
Councillor Greg Brackenridge	For
Councillor Sandra Samuels OBE	For
Councillor Obaida Ahmed	For
Councillor Qaiser Azeem	For
Councillor Mary Bateman	For
Councillor Philip Bateman MBE	For

Councillor Simon Bennett	For
Councillor Olivia Birch	For
Councillor Dr Paul John Birch J.P.	For
Councillor Ian Brookfield	For
Councillor Paula Brookfield	For
Councillor Christopher Burden	For
Councillor Alan Butt	For
Councillor Adam Collinge	For
Councillor Craig Collingswood	For
Councillor Jonathan Crofts	For
Councillor Wendy Dalton	For
Councillor Jasbinder Dehar	For
Councillor Steve Evans	For
Councillor Val Evans	For
Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal	For
Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre	For
Councillor Christopher Haynes	For
Councillor Stephanie Haynes	For
Councillor Celia Hibbert	For
Councillor Keith Inston	For
Councillor Jasbir Jaspal	For
Councillor Rashpal Kaur	For
Councillor Sohail Khan	For
Councillor Linda Leach	For
Councillor Asha Mattu	For
Councillor Barbara McGarrity QN	For
Councillor Andrew McNeil	For
Councillor Beverley Momenabadi	For
Councillor Lynne Moran	For
Councillor Anwen Muston	For
Councillor Phil Page	For
Councillor Rita Potter	For
Councillor John Reynolds	For
Councillor Susan Roberts MBE	For
Councillor Zee Russell	For
Councillor Stephen Simkins	For
Councillor Clare Simm	For
Councillor Gurmukh (Mak) Singh	For
Councillor Paul Singh	For
Councillor Udey Singh	For
Councillor Jacqui Sweetman	For
Councillor Wendy Thompson	For
Councillor Ellis Turrell	For
Councillor Gillian Wildman	For
Councillor Jonathan Yardley	For
Carried	

The amended motion was carried by 51 votes.

Resolved:

That this Council proposes to begin tackling this issue through a scheme to both support both young people into employment and support employers in taking on young people with SEND through the existing wolves at work budget via a dedicated ringfenced resource within that budget of not less than £100,000 per annum. This would be added to the Written Statement of Action.

The substantive motion on 2022-2023 Final Budget Report was put before Council.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 the votes were recorded as follows for the substantive motion originally moved:

2022-2023 Final Budget Report	
Councillor Greg Brackenridge	For
Councillor Sandra Samuels OBE	For
Councillor Obaida Ahmed	For
Councillor Qaiser Azeem	For
Councillor Mary Bateman	For
Councillor Philip Bateman MBE	For
Councillor Simon Bennett	Abstain
Councillor Olivia Birch	For
Councillor Dr Paul John Birch J.P.	For
Councillor Ian Brookfield	For
Councillor Paula Brookfield	For
Councillor Christopher Burden	For
Councillor Alan Butt	For
Councillor Adam Collinge	Abstain
Councillor Craig Collingswood	For
Councillor Jonathan Crofts	Abstain
Councillor Wendy Dalton	Abstain
Councillor Jasbinder Dehar	For
Councillor Steve Evans	For
Councillor Val Evans	For
Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal	For
Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre	For
Councillor Christopher Haynes	Abstain
Councillor Stephanie Haynes	Abstain
Councillor Celia Hibbert	For
Councillor Keith Inston	For
Councillor Jasbir Jaspal	For
Councillor Rashpal Kaur	For
Councillor Sohail Khan	Abstain
Councillor Linda Leach	For
Councillor Asha Mattu	For
Councillor Barbara McGarrity QN	For
Councillor Andrew McNeil	Abstain
Councillor Beverley Momenabadi	For
Councillor Lynne Moran	For

Councillor Anwen Muston	For
Councillor Phil Page	For
Councillor Rita Potter	For
Councillor John Reynolds	For
Councillor Susan Roberts MBE	For
Councillor Zee Russell	For
Councillor Stephen Simkins	For
Councillor Clare Simm	For
Councillor Gurmukh (Mak) Singh	Abstain
Councillor Paul Singh	Abstain
Councillor Udey Singh	Abstain
Councillor Jacqui Sweetman	For
Councillor Wendy Thompson	Abstain
Councillor Ellis Turrell	Abstain
Councillor Gillian Wildman	For
Councillor Jonathan Yardley	Abstain
Carried	

The substantive motion was carried by 37 votes. There were 14 abstentions.

Resolved:

1. That the revised City of Wolverhampton Capital Strategy be approved.
2. That the revised, medium term General Revenue Account capital programme of £346.1 million, an increase of £47.7 million from the previously approved programme, and the change in associated resources be approved.
3. That the authorised borrowing limit for 2022-2023 to support the capital strategy as required under Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 to be set at £1,163.3 million (PI3, Appendix 3 of the Cabinet report). The authorised borrowing limit includes a forecast provision for potential business cases that may be brought forward during the year, additional borrowing will only be authorised if the business case proves to be affordable over the medium term. The forecast borrowing was below the authorised borrowing limit.
4. That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2022-2023 as set out in Appendix 1 of the Cabinet report be approved.
5. That the Annual Investment Strategy 2022-2023 as set out in Appendix 2 of the Cabinet report be approved.
6. That the Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators as set out in Appendix 3 of the Cabinet report be approved .
7. That the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement setting out the method used to calculate MRP for 2022-2023 as set out in Appendix 4 of the Cabinet report be approved.
8. That the Treasury Management Policy Statement and Treasury Management Practices as set out in Appendix 6 of the Cabinet report be approved.
9. That authority be delegated to Cabinet to approve updates to the Treasury Management Strategy and corresponding practices during 2022-2023 to reflect the additional reporting requirements detailed in the most recent publication of the revised Treasury Management and Prudential Codes. It is important to note that, the Council complies with the principles of the codes

however due to the timing of the release of the new Codes, CIPFA has allowed reporting on the Codes to be deferred until 2023-2024.

10. That authority be continued to be delegated to the Director of Finance to amend the Treasury Management Policy and Practices and any corresponding changes required to the Treasury Management Strategy, the Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators, the Investment Strategy and the Annual MRP Statement to ensure they remain aligned. Any amendments will be reported to the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Cabinet (Resources) Panel as appropriate.
11. That authority be continued to be delegated to the Director of Finance to lower the minimum sovereign rating in the Annual Investment Strategy, in the event of the UK's credit rating being downgraded by the third credit rating agency, due to the current economic climate.
12. That authority be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, in consultation with the Director of Finance, to amend the MRP statement should this be required following the outcome of the consultation.
13. That the net budget requirement for 2022-2023 of £267.2 million for General Fund services be approved.
14. That the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2022-2023 to 2025-2026 as detailed in Table 5 and the key assumptions underpinning the MTFS as detailed in Appendix 1 of the Cabinet report be approved.
15. That a Council Tax for Council services in 2022-2023 of £1,818.27 for a Band D property, being an increase of 2.99% on 2021-2022 levels, which incorporates the 1% in relation to Adult Social Care be approved.
16. That it be noted that the Council Tax base for the year 2022-2023 is calculated at 64,936.94 (Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act"), as reported to Cabinet on 8 December 2021.
17. Calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2022-2023 is £118,072,000.
18. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2022-2023 in accordance with Sections 30 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended:
 - (a) £669,030,000 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act.
 - (b) £550,958,000 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
 - (c) £118,072,000 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).
 - (d) £1,818.27 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (section 1 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
 - (e) £0 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
 - (f) £1,818.27 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its

Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates.

19. To note that West Midlands Police and Fire Authorities have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as detailed in the report.
20. That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the tables as the amounts of Council Tax for 2022-2023 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings as detailed in the report.
21. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (3) (f) and (4) above, the City Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of the Council Tax for the year 2022-2023 for each of the categories of dwellings as detailed in the report.
22. That a notice of the amounts payable in respect of chargeable dwellings in each valuation band for the year commencing on 1 April 2022 be published in at least one local newspaper and that in accordance with Section 3(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, this notice shall also make reference to the National Non-Domestic Rating Multiplier set by the Secretary of State, and specify that the Council Tax and the non-domestic rate demands are annual demands which cover the full financial year.
23. The Council has determined that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2022-2023 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992.
24. As the billing authority, the Council has not been notified by a major precepting authority that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2022-2023 is excessive and that the billing authority is not required to hold a referendum in accordance with Section 52ZK Local Government Finance Act 1992.
25. That it be noted, the MRP charge for the financial year 2022-2023 will be £19.8 million; it is forecast to increase to £21.1 million in 2023-2024 (paragraph 2.20 of the Cabinet report).
26. That it be noted, that Cabinet or Cabinet (Resources) Panel and Council will receive regular Treasury Management reports during 2022-2023 on performance against the key targets and Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators in the Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Strategy, as set out in the paragraph 2.18 and Appendices 2 and 3 of the Cabinet report.
27. That it be noted, that the new Treasury Management and Prudential Codes have been published and are effective immediately. However, due to the date of their release some elements, mainly changes to the capital strategy, prudential indicators and investment reporting can be deferred until 2023-2024.
28. That it be noted, the documents covered in this report have been updated where possible to reflect the new Codes, any changes not reflected due to the timescales will be implemented and approval sought during 2022-2023. 4. That the documents covered in this report have been updated to reflect the latest interest rate forecasts available, however, due to uncertainties with the economy, should interest rates increase quicker than forecast, this may create a budget pressure on the treasury management budget. In the event that this were to occur, approval would be sought to accommodate the budget

pressure by making a call on the Budget Contingency Reserve. This will continue to be monitored and reviewed in light of the changing economic environment, with updates provided to Councillors throughout 2022-2023 as part of the quarterly update reports.

10 **Pay Policy Statement 2022 -2023**

The Cabinet Member for Governance and Equalities, Councillor Paula Brookfield presented the report: Pay Policy Statement 2022-2023 for approval. She advised that the national pay award for National Joint Council (NJC) and Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) Chief Officers and Chief Executives had now been agreed and relevant pay scales would be amended to reflect the pay agreement.

On Monday (28 February) the NJC pay agreement was confirmed which increased pay point 1 by 2.75% and pay point 2 and above by 1.75%. In early February a pay agreement was reached for Chief Executives and Chief Officers of 1.5%.

As a consequence of the national pay agreements being reached the pay ratio's detailed within the report had been reduced and should be amended as follows; the pay ratio between the highest and the lowest paid employees was now 9.28:1 (reducing from 9.39:1 within the report) and the pay ratio between the highest and the median pay was 6.19:1 (reducing from 6.20:1 within the report).

The Cabinet Member for Governance and Equalities, Councillor Paula Brookfield proposed the recommendations and requested that the third and fourth noting recommendations to be deleted and replaced with 'The national pay award for National Joint Council (NJC) and Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) Chief Officers and Chief Executives had now been agreed and the relevant pay scales would be amended to reflect the pay agreements.'" The Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Stephen Simkins seconded the recommendations.

Resolved:

1. That the Pay Policy Statement for 2022 – 2023 be approved.
2. That the publication of the Pay Policy Statement in line with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 be approved.
3. That it be noted, the national pay award for National Joint Council (NJC) and Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) Chief Officers and Chief Executives had now been agreed and the relevant pay scales would be amended to reflect the pay agreements.

11 **Adoption of South Staffordshire District Council's delegated licensing function**

The Cabinet Member for City Environment and Climate Change, Councillor Steve Evans presented the report Adoption of South Staffordshire District Council's delegated licensing function for approval. The report detailed the progress made transferring the licensing function from South Staffordshire District Council (SSDC) to City of Wolverhampton (CWC) and for the Council to formally accept the delegated licensing functions subject to the signing of the finalised agreement.

The Cabinet Member for City Environment and Climate Change, Councillor Steve Evans proposed the recommendations and the Chair of Regulatory Committee, Councillor Phil Page seconded the recommendations.

Resolved:

1. That the adoption of the executive licensing functions, as delegated, by South Staffordshire Council be approved subject to the signing of the finalised agreement.
2. That the adoption of the non-executive licensing functions, as delegated, by South Staffordshire Council be approved subject to the signing of the finalised agreement.
3. That authority be delegate to the Chief Operating Officer in consultation with the Director of City Housing and Environment for the signing of the final agreement.

12 **Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel**

The Chair of Governance and Ethics Committee, Councillor John Reynolds presented the report from the Independent Remuneration Panel which detailed a review of Councillor's Allowances for approval. The recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

The Chair of Governance and Ethics Committee, Councillor John Reynolds, thanked all members of the Independent Remuneration Panel for undertaking a comprehensive review of councillor allowances.

The Chair of Governance and Ethics Committee, Councillor John Reynolds proposed the recommendations and the Leader of the Opposition Group, Councillor Wendy Thompson seconded the recommendations and also placed on record her thanks to the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Resolved:

1. That the recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel as detailed in Appendix 1 for the Municipal years 2022- 2023 – 2025-2026 be approved.
2. That authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer to amend the Scheme of Councillor Allowances according to the decisions taken by Council for inclusion in the Council's Constitution.

CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Meeting of the City Council 6 April 2022
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Report title	City Learning Quarter Delivery	
Referring body	Cabinet (Resources) Panel – 19 January 2022	
Councillor to present report	Councillor Stephen Simkins, Deputy Leader: Inclusive City Economy	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Cabinet Member with lead responsibility	Councillor Stephen Simkins, Deputy Leader: Inclusive City Economy	
Accountable director	Richard Lawrence, Director of Regeneration	
Originating service	City Development	
Accountable employee	Zareena Ahmed-Shere	Regeneration Manager
	Tel	07890397677
	Email	Zareena.ahmed-shere@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report has been considered by	Cabinet (Resources) Panel	19 January 2022

Recommendations for decision:

The Council is recommended to approve:

1. That if the Council receives confirmation of the remaining funding from Government, temporary borrowing would be provided in order to cash flow the project until grants are received.
2. That as a funder of last resort, the Council provide up to £x million of budget, funded by borrowing, to provide additional contingency for the project. This recognises the cost increases being seen in the construction sector and that the current project estimates are subject to tender prices. Further approve the delegation of authority to the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader: Inclusive City Economy in consultation with the Directors for Regeneration and Finance to build in the supplementary budget up to the approved amount at such a time as required.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the overall financial status of the City Learning Quarter (CLQ) following the conclusion of various funding applications that were submitted during 2021. This report seeks approvals to enable the project to proceed whilst final confirmation of funding is secured.
- 1.2 The report also considers the procurement options available and notes the intention to transfer freehold of the College building on completion.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 On 19 January 2022 Cabinet (Resources) Panel considered a report on City Learning Quarter Delivery.
- 2.2 Copies of the report have been supplied to Councillors and can also be accessed online on the Council's website [here](#).
- 2.3 Cabinet (Resources) Panel recommended to Council that it approves:
 1. That if the Council receives confirmation of the remaining funding from Government, temporary borrowing would be provided in order to cash flow the project until grants are received.
 2. That as a funder of last resort, the Council provide up to £x million of budget, funded by borrowing, to provide additional contingency for the project. This recognises the cost increases being seen in the construction sector and that the current project estimates are subject to tender prices. Further approve the delegation of authority to the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader: Inclusive City Economy in consultation with the Directors for Regeneration and Finance to build in the supplementary budget up to the approved amount at such a time as required.

3.0 Financial implications

- 3.1 The financial implications are detailed in the Cabinet (Resources) Panel report of 19 January 2022.

4.0 Legal implications

- 4.1 The legal implications are detailed in the Cabinet (Resources) Panel report of 19 January 2022.

5.0 Equalities implications

- 5.1 The equalities implications are detailed in the Cabinet (Resources) Panel report of 19 January 2022.

6.0 All other implications

6.1 All other implications are detailed in the Cabinet (Resources) Panel report of 19 January 2022.

7.0 Schedule of background papers

7.1 Cabinet (Resources) Panel report of 19 January 2022 - [City Learning Quarter Delivery](#)

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Report title	City Learning Quarter Delivery	
Decision designation	RED	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Stephen Simkins Deputy Leader: Inclusive City Economy	
Key decision	Yes	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Accountable Director	Richard Lawrence, Director of Regeneration	
Originating service	City Development	
Accountable employee	Zareena Ahmed-Shere Tel Email	Regeneration Manager 07890397677 Zareena.ahmed- shere@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Regeneration Leadership Team Strategic Executive Board	21 December 2021 6 January 2022

Recommendations for decision:

That Cabinet (Resources) Panel recommends that Council:

1. Approves, that if the Council receives confirmation of the remaining funding from Government, temporary borrowing would be provided in order to cash flow the project until grants are received.
2. Approves that as a funder of last resort, the Council provide up to £x of budget, funded by borrowing, to provide additional contingency for the project. This recognises the cost increases being seen in the construction sector and that the current project estimates are subject to tender prices. Further approve the delegation of authority to the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader: Inclusive City Economy in consultation with the Directors for Regeneration and Finance to build in the supplementary budget up to the approved amount at such a time as required.

That Cabinet (Resources) Panel approves:

1. That the procurement of the construction contract is progressed in line with the procurement strategy outlined in the report, but that a contract is only awarded when all funding is secured.
2. The delegation of authority to the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader: Inclusive City Economy in consultation with the Directors for Regeneration and Finance to award contracts for the delivery of Phase 2 of the City Learning Quarter to the successful tenderers following the procurement processes outlined in this report.
3. The delegation of authority to the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader: Inclusive City Economy in consultation with the Chief Operating Officer and Director of Finance to enter into any necessary agreements, contracts or arrangements for the delivery of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the City Learning Quarter Scheme.

Recommendation for noting:

That Cabinet (Resources) Panel is asked to note:

1. That the Council intends to transfer the freehold of the College building land on completion of the works, and notes that this will be the subject of a further report.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the overall financial status of the City Learning Quarter (CLQ) following the conclusion of various funding applications that were submitted during 2021. This report seeks approvals to enable the project to proceed whilst final confirmation of funding is secured.
- 1.2 The report also considers the procurement options available and notes the intention to transfer freehold of the College building on completion.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 CLQ is a two phased programme with a vision to bring together and combine the City's key learning services (College, Library and Adult Education) in two centrally accessible locations. The Phase 1 project is underway to establish a City of Wolverhampton College Technical Centre (CoWTechC) at the Wellington Road, Bilston campus to with a focus on Advanced Engineering, Motor Vehicle and Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) study. The Phase 2 project will create a vibrant lifelong education hub in the heart of the City Centre by a remodelling, refurbishment and extension of the College's Metro One building and provision of a modernised and integrated Central Library and Adult Education facilities. This project has been designed to Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Stage 3, with the site fully assembled and cleared and planning consent in place it is ready for a start on site following funding confirmation.
- 2.2 The programme makes a significant contribution to local, regional, and national policies by stimulating learning and economic activity. The scheme will make a visible and tangible impact to the lives of local residents and business communities through direct investment in skills and education in economic growth areas, which will play a vital role in closing the productivity gap. CLQ will contribute to the wider programme of placemaking and economic regeneration already underway in the City as part of its Relight Recovery commitment. In addition, the scheme will support city centre revitalisation / repurposing / vibrancy and footfall / evening economy in response to the changing retail landscape. It will contribute to the green / carbon zero agendas through the provision of outstanding new and refurbished energy efficient buildings on two centrally located brownfield sites (connected by bus and tram) that will more promote greener and sustainable transport options. For these reasons CLQ continues to be the Council's top regeneration priority as it is fundamental to helping address local challenges (that have been compounded since the pandemic) so that the City is able to level up and flourish.
- 2.3 The current College estate contain buildings that are in variable states of repair requiring high levels of maintenance. They are increasingly unsuitable for modern learning environments with the main 1950's Paget Road campus being particularly difficult to access by public transport. These factors are contributing to a steady decline in student intakes in recent years. The City's Adult Education offer is also spread across several buildings around the city and in variable state of repair. The Central Library is a Grade II listed building in urgent need of renovation and modernisation to meet existing and future

user needs. CLQ will address these challenges by creating inspirational, modern, high quality, sustainable, accessible, and flexible teaching and learning spaces which will through service integration and colocation promote lifelong learning and civic participation for people of all ages and backgrounds and ensure future vitality of the College, Library and Adult Education services.

3.0 Project Status and Progress

- 3.1 The Council is leading on the ambitious CLQ programme in partnership with City of Wolverhampton College supported by external consultants.
- 3.2 On 20 October 2021 Cabinet (Resources) Panel was updated on the status of the Phase 1 CoWTEchC Project and the Phase 2 CLQ Central Project including the funding applications to the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) and Further Education Capital Transformation Fund submitted during 2021 to support these schemes. The report also approved the capital budget of £8.1 million to implement the Phase 1 project. In respect of Phase 1 final grant terms are now being agreed with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and the procurement process to secure a suitable building contractor started in December 2021. The programme is on track to facilitate the contractor appointment in late Spring 2022 and for construction to commence during Summer 2022 to enable opening for the academic year starting in 2023.
- 3.3 On 27 October 2021 it was announced that the Council was successful in securing the full requested amount of £20 million from the £4.8 billion national LUF pot. The final terms of the grant funding agreement are expected to be with the Council shortly. Authority to enter into the final agreement will be finalised through an Individual Executive Decision Notice (IEDN) in line with the delegated authority provided in the report dated 20 October.
- 3.4 CLQ has also benefited from an allocation of £5 million from the Towns Fund towards the funding of the programme and a Business Case to the Town Fund Board has been submitted to specifically earmark these monies to support the implementation of CLQ Phase 2.
- 3.5 The success of the LUF bid and the allocation from the Towns Fund have both provided major funding components towards the overall CLQ Phase 2 scheme, which together with Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (BCLEP) and Council contributions have resulted in a total secured funding pot of £31.1 million. The table below demonstrates the revised funding structure, currently there is total secured funding of £39.22 million.

CLQ Programme	Funding Source	Amount £ million	Status
Phase 1 CoWTEchC	BCLEP	0.35	Secured
	WMCA	7.75	Secured
	Total Phase 1	8.10	
Phase 2	BCLEP	0.12	Secured

CLQ Central	Council Contribution	6.0	Secured
	LUF	20.0	Secured
	Towns Fund	5.0	Secured
	Unsecured Funds	20.44	Unsecured
	Total Phase 2	51.56	
Total		59.66	

3.6 Phase 1 CoWTEchC scheme is fully funded through external grants and in delivery phase. Pre tender cost estimates indicate that Phase 2 requires an investment of £51.56 million, currently circa £31 million is secured leaving a funding shortfall of approximately £20.44 million. Due to increasing inflationary pressure on construction costs this report also requests approval of up to £x , as funding of last resort, to provide additional contingency for the project.

3.7 The Council and College are continuing to actively engage with Government departments including Government's Department for Education, Education and Skills Funding Agency and the Treasury to explore funding options to bridge the current funding gap. This may include a resubmission of the College's application to the Further Education Capital Transformation Fund during 2022.

3.8 It has been indicated that there is a requirement for the LUF grant to be spent by the longstop date of March 2025 and in order to meet this date, it is necessary to commence delivery of the project early in 2022. If delivery commences in early 2022, the secured funding pot to date of circa £31 million will enable the delivery of project until Summer 2023. Whilst this provides a final date for the securing further funds, the full funding strategy for the project must be secured prior to the awarding of a contract.

4.0 CLQ Phase 2 Delivery Programme

4.1 The table below shows the scope of works which includes the removal of redundant buildings, refurbishment, remodelling and extending the College Metro One building, reconfiguring the Adult Education centre, essential repairs to the Library and public realm to link the landscape.

CLQ Site	Work Scope
College	Demolition of Faces building (completed) New build to either side of existing Metro 1 Site Refurbish Metro 1
Library	Repair roof and façade (Grade II* listed building) currently in poor condition and a risk to others New toilets New rear entrance New reception desk and shelving on 1st floor for space efficiency

Adult Education	Vacating the Malting's building Create a new learning resource centre Link Adult Education and part of the existing 1930's Library building Refurbish part of the Central Library to accommodate four new classrooms and associated office spaces
Due to the requirement to keep the College, Adult Education and Library operational throughout, phased building works will enable multiple moves to occur.	

- 4.2 The programme and procurement strategy are driven by the requirement for the project to be procured within the pre-tender estimated budget of £51.56 million and to enable the opening of the new College facilities in September 2024.
- 4.3 The design has been completed to RIBA Stage 3 with planning consent approved. The site has been cleared, redundant buildings removed, archaeological works completed and surveys carried out. External consultants will be retained for project management, cost management and health and safety advice and to oversee the construction and fit out contracts through to completion.
- 4.4 The above actions have allowed risks to be minimised and the formulation of procurement documents to sufficient detail to establish a quick start to the tender process if the recommendations of this report are approved.
- 4.5 CLQ Phase 2 will enable the following benefits to be realised 10 years post completion. The Council and College will record and report on the progress of outputs and outcomes at specific dates to meet the requirements of the LUF and Towns Fund grant agreements.

Scheme Outputs		Benefit Reporter
Jobs created at the College	51	College
Jobs safeguarded in the College	366	College
Jobs created and safeguarded in the economy	745	College
Learner Assists by Year 10	44,961	College
Apprenticeships Started by Year 10	7,539	College
Business Assists by Year 10	115	College
New Build Learning Floorspace	7,503sqm	Council
Refurbished Learning Floorspace	3,339 sqm	Council
Floorspace Rationalised	5,633 sqm	Council
Brownfield Land Regenerated	1 hectares	Council
Gross Value Added	£233 million	Council

5.0 Procurement Strategy

- 5.1 The main college building will be procured using a two stage contracting process to enable early appointment of a contractor, whereby the preliminaries, profit and overheads are competed to select a contractor who will be employed initially under a preconstruction services agreement to enable the work packages to be established and tendered by the contractor during the first stage to establish the final construction cost. The final contract will be an NEC Design and Build Option A Contract.
- 5.2 The Council's appointed Cost Management team will witness and monitor the cost development to ensure it complies with the rules set out in the framework and offers value for money.
- 5.3 On completion of stage one, if the Council is not satisfied with the construction price it is not obliged to continue with the construction contract but will be able to take the developed design back to the market.
- 5.4 A single stage competitive tender was considered, however following market engagement it became clear that no construction companies were prepared to tender for the works due to the extensive bid costs, the risks relating to current market inflation and risk from material and staff shortages. A two stage process allows the contractor to develop the construction design to minimise the impact of these risks and limits abortive tendering costs.
- 5.5 Utilising a framework as opposed to directly approaching the market reduces the legal costs and allows a shorter route to contractor appointment.
- 5.6 It is intended that the works to the library will be procured separately due to the heritage requirements of the building and the delegations above enable this to be carefully considered in the light of expert advice and the most suitable procurement route to be taken.
- 5.7 Appointment of the Project Management team and the Cost Management team for the construction to completion stage of the project will be undertaken using the previously used Crown Commercial Services Project Management and Full Design Team Services framework RM3741 and will be a direct award to maintain the existing management team. Maintaining this team ensures the earliest start of the construction stage of the project, retaining the knowledge and experience of the exiting team. Changing the team would introduce significant delay and risk.
- 5.8 The design responsibility will pass from the Council's current designers to the construction contractor on their appointment. The Council will retain provision from the existing designers to monitor the contractors design, advise the Council on the compliance of the design and act on behalf of the Council in relation to the contractual role of NEC Supervisor, a role required by the construction contract. This appointment will be a direct below threshold appointment. Previous appointments have utilised a

Scape framework as a second-tier supplier. A direct award will avoid the first-tier markup.

- 5.9 The Council will be procure all Construction Works and will enter into all necessary legal agreements (including Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment and Information Communication and Technology) with the College to enable delivery of the programme as indicated below:

Key Activity	Duration months
Contractor Procurement / Contract Award	8 months
Contractor Site Mobilisation	2 months
Construction Period	24 months
Building Fit Out / Information Communication Technology	3 months

6.0 Asset ownership

- 6.1 The Council has taken the lead on site assembly and clearance. The Council has freehold ownership of all of the site with the exception of the Metro One Building which is in College Ownership.
- 6.2 As outlined in the report it is anticipated that the Department of Education will provide the remaining funding required. This will facilitate the refurbishment of College Metro One Building and College New Build Extension. On completion of the work, it is a requirement that the freehold of the College facilities is transferred to the College. The Council will ensure that upon completion the Metro One Building and the New Build will be used by the college for education purposes. The Council intends to transfer the Freehold Land to the College ensuring that it will be used for the purposes outlined providing the transfer of land is justified.

7.0 Evaluation of alternative options

- 7.1 The Council has an option to pause the Phase 2 project until the remaining funds from external sources are secured. As detailed in the report, the LUF and Towns Fund grant awards are time limited and require delivery commencement upon funding confirmation and delivery completion within the funding programme back stop deadlines of 31st March 2025 and 31st April 2026, respectively. The CLQ programme relies on proceeding in early 2022 to allow the above funding conditions to be met. Therefore, if this option is taken there is a risk that the Council would lose all or part of the £25 million already secured from these funding streams.
- 7.2 There is also a risk that delay may increase costs overtime resulting in the scheme becoming financially unviable.
- 7.3 Expenditure to date on the project is circa £7.7 million, which has been invested to bring forward the site for development and includes fees and design costs. There is a risk that if the project cannot progress a small element of the costs incurred to date may need to be charged to revenue.

- 7.4 If further external funding does not come forth, the College will continue to operate from its outdated and hard to reach Paget Road facilities. The College is likely to face an uncertain future with continued erosion of student numbers, crumbling estate, crippling running costs, reduced revenue that will undermine its financial viability, possibly resulting closure and job losses.
- 7.5 The Council has an option through continued dialogue to seek a legally binding confirmation from Government providing assurance that additional funding to support CLQ Phase 2 will be made available. The College and the Council have continued to actively lobby Central Government for the remaining funds. There have been very positive discussions recently between the Mayor of the West Midlands and the Secretary of State for Education which indicates that the funding shortfall will be made available. Building on this positive dialogue, the Council can seek a legally binding document from Government to formalise this commitment and give assurance that additional funding to support the scheme will be provided. If this is achieved the Council will be able to proceed with confidence, cash flowing the project initially by utilising the secured external funding streams, followed by additional Government funds to enable completion of the CLQ programme.

8.0 Reasons for decisions

- 8.1 The report recommends that procurement of the construction contract is progressed but that a contract is only awarded when all funding is secured. This recommendation is made to ensure that progress can be maintained but recognises that the Council cannot underwrite the risk of letting the construction contract until such time as the funding is secured.
- 8.2 It is, however recognised that, should the Government provide sufficient confirmation of the remaining funding, then the Council could cash flow the project utilising the existing grants secured and temporary borrowing until the final grants are received. The report seeks Full Council approval to this approach.
- 8.3 The current estimates are based on pre-tender costings. Contingencies have been built into the forecasts however, given the current cost pressures that are being experienced in the construction market it is felt prudent to seek Council approval to a further borrowing allocation of up to £x. This would be an increase in the capital budget, however it would be a fund of last resort and will be treated as project contingency.
- 8.4 The delivery of the Phase 2 project with the commencement of the contractor procurement process in early 2022 will facilitate the main college campus opening in September 2024.
- 8.5 CLQ will refresh and enhance the City's education facilities, provide a more sustainable future for the Library, College and Adult Education Centre as well as freeing up capacity in other areas of the City for redevelopment to take place. The benefits and outputs from

delivery of the new college are detailed in the report. The indirect outputs and outcomes will flow in the medium and long term following completion of the programme.

9.0 Financial implications

- 9.1 A full review of the estimated costs to deliver the overall CLQ programme (Phases 1 and 2) has been undertaken in November 2021 by the retained external Project and Cost Management Consultants. High level pre-tender estimates indicate that the CLQ programme will require a total revised forecast investment of £59.66 million. It should be noted that this is pre tender pricing.
- 9.2 In view of the total funding of £39.22 million fully committed and sponsored, the funding strategy has moved forward as illustrated in the table below.

Funding Source	£ Million	Status
Council Contribution	6.0	Confirmed
BCLEP	0.47	Confirmed
WMCA	7.75	Confirmed
Towns Fund	5.0	Confirmed
Levelling Up Fund	20.0	Confirmed
Possible - Further Education Capital Transformation Fund / Department of Education Funding	20.44	Unsecured / Ongoing dialogue with various Government Departments
Total	59.66	

- 9.3 While the Phase 1 CoWTechC is fully funded and in the delivery phase, a shortfall of £20.44 million remains to fund the remaining estimated expenditure to deliver the CLQ Phase 2 project.
- 9.4 The Phase 2 project has to date successfully attracted significant amount of funds totalling £31.1 million from the BCLEP, Towns Fund, LUF and the Council's own contribution. The completion of the CLQ programme now relies on securing further funds of £20.44 million, as detailed in the table above. Phase 2 CLQ could be at risk if further Government funding is not realised and furthermore there is a risk that the opportunity to access the LUF and Towns Fund monies already secured may be lost if the project is not able to commence in early 2022 to meet funders requirements.
- 9.5 This report recommends an approach to allow progression of the project whilst remaining funding is secured.
- 9.6 High level pre-tender estimates by the Council's appointed cost consultants have informed that the total costs for delivering the Phase 2 project is £51.56 million. All costs have been re-baselined at the end of 2021 and include adjustments for inflation and procurement, contingency within the respective cost items and exclude VAT. However, it

should be noted that these costs are likely to increase if further delays are experienced in commencing procurement and delivery of the project.

- 9.7 Based on a delivery programme commencing late January 2022, the total estimated expenditure for CLQ Phase 2 is profiled over financial years 2021-2022 to 2024-2025 as shown in the table below which also shows the total projected project expenditure over the project's financial lifetime.

	Amount (£ million)				Total
	Pre 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024	2024 – 2025	
Total	8.01	8.86	25.23	9.46	51.56

- 9.8 As previously noted, the current estimates are based on pre-tender costings. Project contingencies of £x have been built into the forecasts across both phases of the project however, given the current cost pressures that are being experienced in the construction market it is felt prudent to seek Council approval to a further borrowing allocation of up to £x. This would be an increase in the capital budget; however, it would be a fund of last resort and will be treated as project contingency.
- 9.9 The approved capital programme includes a council contribution of £6 million, however, on 31st July 2019, Cabinet approved that a further allocation of £4 million could be expended to continue the project, on the understanding this amount would be recovered from secured external grants wherever possible.
- 9.10 A total expenditure of £7.7 million has been defrayed which has enabled design work, site surveys, ground investigations, site acquisition and clearance to be completed.
[HM/14012022/K]

10.0 Legal implications

- 10.1 In line with the delegated authority given by Cabinet Resources Panel on 20 October 2021, the Council will upon agreement of terms enter into multiple funding arrangements with various external funding bodies. The Council must comply with the terms of the funding, failing to comply may result in claw back of all or part of the funding.
- 10.2 The Council will need to ensure that through this project its potential liabilities under the existing guarantees are minimised and where possible extinguished. As detailed in the body of the report, separate authority will be required to dispose of the Council's freehold parts of the land to the College. In relation to such disposal, the Council must comply with its Constitution and also Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 10.3 Due to the complex nature of the project and to mitigate risk, the Council will appoint an external legal provider to provide dedicate expert support in respect of this project which will include preparation and negotiation of legal documents.

- 10.4 The Council must conduct the procurement process in accordance with its own Contract Procedure Rules and in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015. The Council must ensure that following procurement the building contract mirrors the obligations it has agreed to deliver to the College.
[SZ/14012022/P]

11.0 Equalities implications

- 11.1 This report principally asks for delegations of authority; for an increase in budget and has other recommendations for noting. The equality implications of these are minimal, Equality Analysis is an ongoing requirement under Section 149 of the Equality Act and future iterations of the analysis will be developed in a timely fashion to support those decisions yet to be made
- 11.2 Moving forward and in terms of the wider equalities implications of the project itself; the Council will ensure that the CLQ programme will comply with the Equality Act 2010, ensuring that the buildings have the appropriate facilities and equipment to enable equality of access and provision of training that addresses the needs of different groups in the local community and enables all to benefit from employment opportunities in key economic growth sectors.

12.0 All Other Implications

- 12.1 The challenge of low skills, achievement, high unemployment, and productivity gap that Wolverhampton faces have been further exacerbated by Covid 19. CLQ will help alleviate these challenges through skills improvement, enhancing people's employment prospects so that they are able to secure high skilled and high paid jobs in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) sectors (where skill deficits are reported by employers) and in the Electronic Vehicle / green technologies growth industries.
- 12.2 Covid 19 implications on the building supplies and labour for the construction element of the project and potential price increases have been considered and reflected in the updated programme and built in project contingencies.
- 12.3 Learners and local employers will have an opportunity to benefit from the Kick Start scheme for young people and Apprenticeship Grant that was announced by Government on 4 October 2021 as part of the ongoing Covid 19 support package to help individuals, including the long-term unemployed and those made redundant after the end of furlough.
- 12.4 There is a risk that Covid-19 / other external factors may change type of courses demanded and as a result pupil enrolment is lower than expected so the College benefits not delivered. However, the College remain in tune with current market requirements, continually reviewing curriculum so are able to adapt to change. The new building design will allow maximum flexibility to deliver various curriculum. The CLQ facilities, with its flexible teaching and learning spaces will allow the College to adapt the new learning and teaching spaces accordingly to deliver both face to face and virtual learning in response

to Government's changing / new Covid guidelines relating to social distancing and workplace practices so that the College's curriculum may be provided in a healthy and safe environment that impacts positively on physical and mental well-being.

- 12.5 A comprehensive risk assessment has been undertaken as part of the preparation of the Business Case submission to the BCLEP / WMCA / LUF / Towns Fund and recorded in a risk register. The detailed risk registers for each CLQ project components will be monitored and updated as the programme progresses.
- 12.6 The most significant risk to the Council is the failure to secure further funding of £20.44 million from Government sources by the target deadline of Summer 2023 to close the gap. If this happens the Council may revisit its funding strategy which may negatively impact project progress and the programme. Uncertainties and delay are likely to escalate the College's financial problems that may result job losses, potential closure which will affect local education provision and compromise business needs.

13.0 Schedule of background papers

- 13.1 Full Council - 20 September 2017 – [City of Wolverhampton City College](#)
- 13.2 Cabinet – 31 July 2019 – [City Learning Quarter](#)
- 13.3 Cabinet (Resources Panel) – 20 October 2021 - [Progressing the City Learning Quarter](#)

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CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Meeting of the City Council 6 April 2022
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Report title	Wolverhampton Homes Delivery Plan 2022-2023	
Referring body	Cabinet – 23 March 2022	
Councillor to present report	Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Cabinet Member with lead responsibility	Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal, City Assets and Housing	
Accountable director	John Roseblade, Director of City Housing and Environment	
Originating service	City Housing	
Accountable employee	Lynda Eyton Tel Email	Client Relationship Manager 01902 555706 Lynda.eyton@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report has been considered by	Cabinet	23 March 2022

Recommendations for decision:

The Council is recommended to approve:

1. The Wolverhampton Homes Delivery Plan 2022-2023.
2. The arrangements for monitoring the delivery of the Wolverhampton Homes Delivery Plan to be reported to Cabinet.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval of the Wolverhampton Homes Annual Delivery Plan 2022-2023 and its monitoring arrangements.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 On 23 March 2022 Cabinet considered a report on Wolverhampton Homes Delivery Plan 2022-2023.
- 2.2 Copies of the report have been supplied to Councillors and can also be accessed online on the Council's website [here](#).
- 2.3 Cabinet recommended to Council that it approves:
1. The Wolverhampton Homes Delivery Plan 2022-2023.
 2. The arrangements for monitoring the delivery of the Wolverhampton Homes Delivery Plan to be reported to Cabinet.

3.0 Financial implications

- 3.1 The financial implications are detailed in the Cabinet report of 23 March 2022.

4.0 Legal implications

- 4.1 The legal implications are detailed in the Cabinet report of 23 March 2022.

5.0 Equalities implications

- 5.1 The equalities implications are detailed in the Cabinet report of 23 March 2022.

6.0 All other implications

- 6.1 All other implications are detailed in the Cabinet report of 23 March 2022.

7.0 Schedule of background papers

- 7.1 Cabinet report of 23 March - [Wolverhampton Homes Delivery Plan 2022-2023](#)

CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Cabinet 23 March 2022
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Report title	Wolverhampton Homes Delivery Plan 2022-2023	
Decision designation	RED	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal City Assents and Housing	
Key decision	Yes	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Accountable Director	John Roseblade Director of City Housing and Environment	
Originating service	City Housing	
Accountable employee	Lynda Eyton	Client Relationship Manager
	Tel	01902 555706
	Email	Lynda.eyton@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	City Housing and Environment Leadership Team	1 February 2022
	Strategic Executive Board	3 March 2022
	Cabinet Member Briefing	9 March 2022

Recommendations for decision:

The Cabinet recommends that Council approves:

1. The Wolverhampton Homes Delivery Plan 2022-2023.
2. The arrangements for monitoring the delivery of the Wolverhampton Homes Delivery Plan to be reported to Cabinet.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet acceptance of the Wolverhampton Homes Annual Delivery Plan 2022-2023 and its monitoring arrangements and to recommend approval of the plan by full Council.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Under the terms of the management agreement between the City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC) and its arms length management organisation (ALMO), Wolverhampton Homes (WH), the Council is required to adopt an annual Delivery Plan. The schedules to the management agreement were revised and adopted by Cabinet on 12 September 2018, with 'Schedule 3 - Annual Delivery Planning Process Timetable' amended in support of WH developing an overarching business plan allowing for longer term service and financial planning.
- 2.2 Full Council adopted WH's four-year Business Plan in April 2019, which ends in 2023, aligned to the next break clause in the management agreement.
- 2.3 To set out how this longer-term vision will be achieved, working with CWC, WH are required to provide an annual update by way of an annual Delivery Plan, which sets out how these strategic priorities will be operationalised over the coming year.

3.0 Update on 2021-2022 Business

- 3.1 Whilst remaining aligned to the overarching four-year Business Plan, the annual delivery plan has been developed in the context of the Charter for Social Housing Residents and the changing operating environment, particularly in relation to regulatory requirements. Following the publication of the charter, WH recognises the new regulatory changes alongside increased expectations from the Regulator of Social Housing and the importance of the customer voice. WH have embraced the requirements of the charter in relation to customer expectations with the annual delivery plan focused on the key core priorities for WH.
- 3.2 The impact of the pandemic has brought significant challenges to all sectors but in particular to housing providers, with increased demands upon its services. The changing landscape for housing providers and landlords alongside the pandemic, has meant WH has had to adapt quickly and deliver differently taking into account not only the impact and expectations of its customers but ensuring continued support for its stakeholder the City of Wolverhampton Council.
- 3.3 There has been increased focus on support services and compliance, whilst WH took the opportunity to curb expenditure to maximise efficiencies to ensure services were delivered against a balanced budget. This had to be done in a way that continued to support the business while meeting the changing needs and expectations of its customers.

- 3.4 The forecast outturn position for Q2 2021 - 2022 has been produced following a review of pay and non-pay budgets, to identify efficiencies to support the Medium Term Financial Planning for the future.
- 3.5 Current year 2021–2022 forecasts show a predicted underspend against the budget. Despite operational challenges, there have been some key improvement areas which impact as follows:
- 3.6 The People Deal: A review of terms and conditions across the company was undertaken following staff feedback with Phase 2 being completed in April 2021. This has provided the opportunity to review pay budgets in line with the required efficiencies as part of the Our Future redesign plans which are underway, although there have been significant issues with recruitment and retention, both locally and nationally, particularly in relation to specialist posts.
- 3.7 Repairs & Maintenance: WH has maintained their focus on repairs and compliance, despite the challenges of Covid-19. Work continued post lockdown to address the pandemic backlog created due to a reduction of productivity throughout the periods of lockdown. The increase in costs seen the first year of the pandemic of around £300,000 have continued in relation to the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) which is required to ensure the safety of staff and customers, in line with government guidance.
- 3.8 Office Accommodation: The changes in ways of working have been fully supported by the approach WH took pre pandemic, towards equipping the workforce to have the ability to work from anywhere. Where possible, staff have continued to work from home, with services provided in new and innovative ways. Due to the change in demand, WH are currently working with the City of Wolverhampton Council to review existing accommodation to reflect the requirements and rationalisation of space across the city going forward.
- 3.9 Acquisitions: During the financial year 2020-2021, WH supported the city's housing strategy with the purchase of 19 properties from WV Living, with the use of its reserves. The rental incomes generate an annual rental surplus which is currently put back into company reserves. The company will continue to explore the opportunity to maximise its income, with invest to save opportunities, and expansion of its commercial activity where this aligns to the core offer of WH.
- 3.10 One City: WH supported the City Council in providing volunteers, and also contributed to the Council's fund-raising initiatives during the period of the pandemic. Work is now being undertaken to support the Relight our City priorities particularly in relation to 18-24 youth employment across the city which will continue throughout the next financial year for the benefit of the city's residents.

4.0 Annual Delivery Plan 2022-2023

- 4.1 Wolverhampton Homes Delivery Plan 2022–2023 at appendix 1 has been developed with the City of Wolverhampton’s Housing Strategy Team, WH Senior Management Team and WH Senior Leadership Team
- 4.2 The Delivery Plan ensures Wolverhampton Homes deliver services on behalf of the Council to support the Council’s vision and priorities as set out in the Council Plan 2019-2024. Within the Council Plan one of the six key priorities is to deliver **Good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods**, with four key outcomes:
1. Work together to deliver more homes
 2. Safe and healthy homes for all
 3. Access to a secure home
 4. Clean, green neighbourhoods and public space
- 4.3 In line with the key outcomes listed in 4.2, the services to be delivered by Wolverhampton Homes as shown in appendix 1, will contribute to these outcomes and include activities such as the continuation of the supply of new builds on infill sites, the development of new single/couples accommodation for former rough sleepers, providing safe and secure homes and environments, supporting residents to live independently in their own home and maintaining housing stock and asset standards.
- 4.4 The Delivery Plan also aligns to the seven pillars of the Charter for Social Housing Residents and the Council’s Relight our City priorities and aims to contribute to improving housing across the City by offering better quality housing choices and safe and secure housing for all.
- 4.5 The delivery plan 2022–2023 is themed by WH service areas: Housing Management, Housing Options, Property and Corporate Services. There is a focus on WH’s core service offering and in line with the Our Future service redesign to ensure the company continues to:
- Enhance community and customer focus
 - Provide safe and secure homes
 - Support people to sustain their tenancies and homes
- 4.6 WH remain committed to responding proactively to the Charter for Social Housing Residents and to deliver the requirements of the national Building Safety Programme, Fire Safety requirements and remains resolute in achieving the highest standards of governance.
- 4.7 The Delivery Plan includes some detail on how the plan will be achieved within the financial and human resources available.
- 4.8 WH draft budget for 2022–2023 is being prepared for presentation to WH Board in March 2022 and will make some assumptions about achievable efficiencies to deliver against a

balanced budget during 2022–2023. Value for Money initiatives are continually sought in line with the Value for Money strategy which was launched in 2021. This will aim to provide contributions to the efficiencies, in particular in reviewing ways of working, service delivery, IT and digital, all of which have seen new opportunities during the pandemic.

5.0 Monitoring

- 5.1 These monitoring arrangements have been in place for a number of years and in light of improvements the Council is making to customer insight and tenant scrutiny, following the findings of the Social Housing White paper, 'The Charter for Social Housing Residents' and the requirements of the Social Housing Regulators Consumer Standards, progress made against the annual delivery is reported to Cabinet.
- 5.2 CWC Housing Strategy have conducted a review of tenant engagement and a new contract has been tendered for the delivery of this function. This will bolster the role of tenant scrutiny of WH in the delivery of housing management services.
- 5.3 Housing Strategy and Policy will continue to monitor WH's performance against agreed key performance indicators, at appendix 2, which are reviewed and updated on an annual basis and in line with recommendations from the Regulator.

6.0 Evaluation of alternative options

- 6.1 The Council entered into a 15-year management agreement with WH in 2013 to continue to deliver housing management services on behalf of the Council. It is a requirement of this management agreement that the Council and WH work to develop and adopt a delivery plan which sets out how WH will deliver the services delegated to them and help to deliver the Stock Maintenance and Improvement Programme. In so doing WH in conjunction with CWC aim to contribute to improving housing across the City by offering better quality housing choices and safe and secure housing for all.
- 6.2 The alternative option would be not to adopt an annual delivery plan. Where a delivery plan cannot be agreed, the management agreement sets out that it will be determined in accordance with its dispute resolution process.

7.0 Reasons for decision

- 7.1 It is recommended that the WH Delivery Plan at appendix 1 is adopted. It is accompanied by draft performance indicators to be finalised between the Council and WH for 2022-2023, at Appendix 2, both of which have been developed in conjunction with the Council. Appendix 3 sets out WH's procurement plan for 2022-2023 as required by the management agreement.
- 7.2 Additionally, the Council continues to monitor and review WH to ensure that the organisation remains high-performing, well-governed and delivering a housing service in line with the council's strategic objectives.

8.0 Financial implications

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications from this action plan. Wolverhampton Homes receive an annual management fee from the Housing Revenue Account as approved by Cabinet in the 'Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2022-2023 including Rents and Service Charges', to deliver services as contracted in the Management Agreement and receive additional income from trading activities. A balanced budget to deliver the annual delivery plan is approved by the Wolverhampton Homes Board on an annual basis.
[JM/21012022/D]

9.0 Legal implications

- 9.1 In accordance with the management agreement the Council's in-house Legal Services has provided legal support to Wolverhampton Homes with efficiencies for a considerable number of years. The arrangements for monitoring the delivery of the Wolverhampton Homes Delivery Plan should be robust and ensure that there are good governance arrangements in place.
[JA/25012022/C]

10.0 Equalities implications

- 10.1 WH annual delivery plan has equalities implications in terms of the workstreams that the plan describes. Where appropriate any equalities implications have been or will be the subject of equality analysis within WH. This is governed through a schedule of equality analysis which is presented to WH Equality Circle Forum to inform the equality agenda, providing a platform to assess the impact of planned service delivery. As a result of these considerations and analyses Councillors can be assured that Wolverhampton Homes is fully committed to meeting the requirements of the General Equality Duty as created by Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

11.0 All other implications

- 11.1 There are no direct climate change or environmental implications for this report, however, the delivery of estate and property based programmes will contribute to the improvement of living conditions and enhance the visual appearance of neighbourhoods. WH will develop plans throughout the year to develop a strategic asset investment proposal for Housing in relation to achieving Affordable Warmth and Carbon neutrality, which will contribute towards reducing carbon emissions over the course of the Business Plan.
- 11.2 There are no direct health and wellbeing implications for the report, however WH account for and work to improve the health and wellbeing of the tenants whose homes they manage, as part of their day-to-day delivery of housing management services and their interactions with the Council and other statutory organisations with whom they may work in partnership, make referrals to and sign post tenants to.

12.0 Schedule of background papers

- 12.1 27 March 2019, [Wolverhampton Homes Business Plan 2019-2023](#), Cabinet
- 12.2 12 September 2018, [Wolverhampton Homes Management Agreement Update](#), Cabinet
- 12.3 19 January 2022, [Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2022-2023 including Rents and Service Charges](#), Cabinet

13.0 Appendices

- 13.1 Appendix 1 – Wolverhampton Homes Delivery Plan 2022-2023
- 13.2 Appendix 2 – Wolverhampton Homes Suite of Key Performance Indicators 2022-2023
- 13.3 Appendix 3 – Wolverhampton Homes Procurement Plan 2022-2023
- 13.4 Appendix 4 – Wolverhampton Homes Contracts Let 2021-2022
- 13.5 Appendix 5 – Wolverhampton Homes Capital Programme 2022-2023

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Appendix 1

Annual Delivery Plan – 2022 – 2023

Wolverhampton Homes will in the delivery of its business priorities be aligned to the City of Wolverhampton Council's Relight our City priorities:

- a. Support people who need us most
- b. Create more opportunities for young people
- c. Create more jobs and learning opportunities
- d. Grow our vital local businesses
- e. Stimulate vibrant high streets and communities

The seven pillars of the Charter for Social Housing Residents (CSHR) sets out what our customers can expect from Wolverhampton Homes:

1. To be safe in your home. The government will work with industry and landlords to ensure every home is safe and secure.
2. To know how your landlord is performing including on repairs, complaints and safety, and how it spends its money, so you can hold it to account.
3. To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly, with access to a strong Ombudsman.
4. To be treated with respect, backed by a strong consumer regulator and improved consumer standards for tenants.
5. To have your voice heard by your landlord, for example through regular meetings, scrutiny panels or being on its Board.
6. To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in, with your landlord keeping your home in good repair.
7. To be supported to take your first step to ownership, so it is a ladder to other opportunities, should your circumstances allow.

Housing – Darren Baggs, Assistant Director

Service Area: Tenancies and Communities							
Ref.	No.	Action	Outcome	What is required	Link to KPI	Link to CSHR	Responsible Officer
	1.	Sustaining tenancies	<p>Identify and respond to customers in need of support to look after themselves or their home.</p> <p>Promotion of sustainable tenancies through early intervention and support.</p> <p>Prevent failure of tenancies and potential impact upon homelessness</p> <p>Reduce the cost to the public purse associated with tenancies ending (the cost of supporting a household to find new housing,</p>	<p>Company-wide approach to 'see it, report it' with every tenancy visited, at least once every 12 months by a WH officer or contractor.</p> <p>Wider integration within WH teams to enable swift and early intervention to provide support and stop a tenancy from failing.</p> <p>Further and sustained company-wide working to be undertaken to recover tenancies at risk of failure. Development of the Tenancy Sustainment Strategy</p> <p>Build capacity of staff to meet the demands of a customer base with ever increasingly complex lives and housing circumstances</p>	H-TM8 % of Tenancies where no contact has been made within 12 months	4 & 6	Heads of Service – Tenancies and Communities, Housing Operations, Income Sustainment

		offering temporary accommodation and costs associated with repairs/rent loss)				
2.	Provide safe and secure homes and neighbourhoods that are well managed and maintained.	<p>Enhance or maintain clean, safe and secure environments for all customers.</p> <p>Delivery of an effective tenure blind anti-social behaviour service across Wolverhampton</p> <p>Visually attractive and safe communal open spaces through the delivery of an effective ground's maintenance services</p>	<p>Improved local awareness and communication around estate issues, ownership and swift actions to resolve issues, publicise success stories.</p> <p>Redefine the 'Estate Custodian' model bringing forward a whole company approach in identifying and responding to issues affecting customers and communities.</p> <p>Embed CWC's vision of 'Restorative Practice' and support customers to enhance their resilience to low level matters.</p> <p>Serious incidents of ASB to be responded to by a specialist ASB team, together with building trust in communities to address perceived under reported incidents in priority areas, in conjunction with partner agencies.</p> <p>Build and monitor the level of resilience within communities and as far as is reasonably practical ensure customer expectations are managed effectively.</p> <p>Reports of low-level ASB/nuisance are dealt with and resolved quickly before they escalate.</p>	H-ASB1 % of Customers satisfied with the way their ASB complaint was dealt with	1,3,4,5 & 6	<p>Heads of Service – Tenancies and Communities, Housing Operations</p> <p>Senior Leadership Team</p>

			<p>Increase community safety and public reassurance.</p> <p>Increase partnership working with all stakeholders, WH Teams and communities, enhancing the appearance and safety in our neighbourhoods through redesign or minor alterations, whilst addressing localised issues.</p> <p>Be a key partner of CWC in the delivery of targeted estate based projects, informed by local knowledge and metrics.</p>			
Page 54	Effective management of none HRA Assets	<p>Management of a portfolio of community-based shops</p> <p>Review the Private Sector Leasing offer</p>	<p>To monitor and audit the portfolio of businesses are acting in line with lease agreement.</p> <p>To maximise income collection levels from commercial businesses.</p> <p>Joint review of the purpose, aims and objectives including financial viability of a PSL offer.</p>		2,4, 5, & 6	<p>Head of Tenancies and Communities</p> <p>CWC Housing Strategy</p>
4.	Income Management	<p>Deliver an efficient and effective service that maximises all Income streams for CWC and WH</p> <p>Managing and support the impact</p>	<p>Robust collection of all income streams - rent, recharges, court costs, insurance, former tenant arrears, Leaseholder service charges, leaseholder ground rents, Shop rents.</p> <p>Support all tenancies faced with financial challenges via Money Smart or Income Officers, and other support agencies at all times.</p>	<p>H-HSL1 % of Service charges collected from Leaseholders</p> <p>H-IM5 % of Current Tenant Rent Arrears</p>	2 & 4,5,7	Head of Tenancies and Communities

		of Universal Credit on our customers.	<p>Money Smart team – early intervention offering advice on budgeting, advance payments, debt management, income maximisation.</p> <p>Minimise evictions, maintaining our focus upon sustaining tenancies.</p> <p>Promotion of rent in advance, campaigns run throughout the year and aligned to the council's tenancy agreement. This will be linked to supporting debt reduction / prevention.</p> <p>All customers to be 'tenant ready' by sign up to ensure payment in advance from start of tenancy.</p> <p>Delivery of strategies to target customers who are vulnerable or identified as high risk i.e. Housing First, Unit at Tapworks, new tenancies for single males etc.</p> <p>Ensure full costs are retrieved from leaseholders to eliminate the HRA subsidising leaseholders.</p>			
5.	To administer the Right to Buy process	<p>To ensure compliance with RTB legislation.</p> <p>Capital receipt following the RTB process are received by CWC and are</p>	To meet statutory time limits with regards to the serving of Notices and the processing of Right to Buy applications.		2, 4 & 7	Head of Tenancies and Communities

		subsequently available for new build project across the City.				
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Housing Options – Angela Barnes, Assistant Director

Ref.	Service Area: Housing Solutions					
No.	Action	Outcome	What is required	Link to KPI	Link to CSHR	Responsible Officer
7.	Ensure there is a portfolio of property available to use for the purpose of temporary accommodation	<p>All TA is suitable under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996</p> <p>There is sufficient, suitable accommodation to meet the needs of households likely to require TA</p> <p>That B&B and hotel accommodation is used only in an emergency</p>	<p>Focus will be put on accommodation that is affordable for the customer and value for money for the City of Wolverhampton Council.</p> <p>Service Level Agreement with PSL who provide spot purchase TA</p> <p>Void Standard for TA</p> <p>Clear strategic vision for temporary accommodation, including the potential to maximise use of CWC stock and emerging opportunities in the PRS</p>	<p>HO-HS1 Temporary Accommodation spend against budget</p> <p>HO-HS2 Average time spent in Temporary Accommodation</p>	1 & 6	Head of Housing Solutions
8.	Assist CWC with the delivery of the service in line with the Housing Allocations Policy	Provide advice, guidance and support to CWC to assist them to delivery of the service.	<p>A legal and effective Allocations Policy that enables WH to house those in the greatest housing need while offering choice to applicants.</p> <p>An Allocations Policy that enables WH to allocate homes quickly and contributes to creating sustainable tenancies.</p>	CI-LT5 - Average days taken to relet empty properties	1, 4, 5 & 6	Head of Housing Solutions

			Northgate System rebuild with consideration of longer-term objectives around an Accessible Homes Solution (including full stock survey information).			
9.	Charging policies related to temporary accommodation	<p>To mitigate the risk of a household not being able to access temporary accommodation on the basis that it is unaffordable</p> <p>To mitigate the risk of a household experiencing DA not being able to access temporary accommodation and a place of safety on the basis that it is unaffordable</p>	Charging arrangements that are fair, equitable and consistently applied across all service users regardless of access into temporary accommodation.		2, 4 & 5	Head of Housing Solutions
Page 57						
Ref.	Service Area: Homelessness Team					
No.	Action	Outcome	What is required	Link to KPI	Link to CSHR	Responsible Officer
10.	Contribute to the development	Provision of a multi-agency service access point,	Working in partnership with CWC, P3 and other agencies to determine exact service offer from WH		1, 4, 5 & 6	

	and delivery of new service specifically for singles/couples with complex needs who are homeless	assessment centre and accommodation for the most complex single/couple homeless households	Adequate resources to ensure co-location of appropriate staff at location (dependent on continuation of HF funding or mainstreaming)			Head of Homelessness Head of Sustainment & Support
11. Page 58	Internal and External monitoring	Housing management system able to collect household case level data which will provide detailed information on the causes and impacts of homelessness, long term outcomes and what works to prevent it. Is compliant with HCLIC requirements	Development of NEC housing options module that is able to hold the required information and that can be extracted to enable upload to HCLIC For the module to be developed sufficiently to reduce (as far as possible) the need for manual intervention to enable upload to HCLIC		2, 3 & 5	Head of Homeless Services
12.	Homeless prevention activity	Reduce the risk of homelessness among the general population	Homelessness Strategy – including new communities and general housing needs		1, 4, & 6	Head of Homeless Services

		<p>Prevent future homelessness from occurring – focused on those at high potential risk of homelessness due to (e.g. institutional care background, eviction, DA)</p> <p>Targeted prevention at people who have already been effected by homelessness / repeat homelessness and rough sleeping</p>	<p>Development of WH Tenancy Sustainment Strategy</p> <p>Further collaboration with education, health, social care and criminal justice sectors to embed duty to refer and look to mitigate the risk of homelessness as an earlier point</p> <p>Continuation of Housing First programme/funding</p> <p>Development of 'Housing First' model suitable for households living with domestic abuse</p> <p>Closer working with landlords in the PRS – development of Call Before You Serve, landlords initiatives /Rent with Confidence</p> <p>16/17 year old homeless protocol</p> <p>Commitment to the provision of floating support to assist households with housing issues/options</p> <p>Access to specialist support for those households with higher risk of homelessness – poor mental health, DA, care leavers</p>			
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13.	Joint Protocol – Meeting the needs of Homeless 16/17 year olds	<p>Promotes cooperation between all partners</p> <p>Keeps families together</p> <p>Ensuring those at risk get the right assistance as soon as they need it;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a trusting relationship to allow the young people to explore their housing options and make informed decisions. • Giving young people good, clear information about what help is out there and how to access it; • Support to access safe, stable and affordable accommodation; • Support to maintain connection to family; 	<p>16/17 year old pathway which is clearly defined and embedded in all relevant agencies and ensures a partnership approach</p> <p>Continual improvement in the relationship with CSC</p>		1, 4, 5 & 6	Head of Homelessness
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to stay connected with their communities and support networks <p>Pathway is compliant with Southwark judgement and good practice guidelines</p>				
Ref:	Service Area: Sustainment & Support					
No.	Action	Outcome	What is required	Link to KPI	Link to CSHR	Responsible Officer
Page 61	Review and refresh all safeguarding and domestic violence pathways and accompanying training packages	<p>WH has robust safeguarding and domestic violence pathways that support victims and their family to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce risk • Support safety planning • Sustain their tenancy • (where required) access a place of safety • (where required) support access 	<p>Domestic Abuse policies and procedures for both customers and tenants</p> <p>Completion of the DAHA accreditation programme</p> <p>Awareness of services that can be accessed and pathway to other specialist services via WH</p> <p>Training for staff at level appropriate to their job role including general training on homelessness, new communities.</p> <p>Continued engagement in the multi-agency response to DA</p> <p>Working with agencies such as the police to promote the policy of safety planning to enable the</p>		1, 4 & 5	Head of Sustainment & Support

		<p>to alternative accommodation</p> <p>Homeless prevention</p> <p>Reduce crisis intervention and burden on statutory services</p> <p>Reduce housing management costs</p> <p>Reduce impact on other households and communities in terms of anti-social behaviour</p>	<p>victim to remain safely in their homes and to use (where appropriate) Sanctuary Scheme</p> <p>Resources to deliver specialist support (including IDVA) with the opportunity to access funding where appropriate to support service delivery</p>			
15.	<p>Review and implement a fit for purpose Home Improvement Agency that supports residents to live independently in their own home</p>	<p>Increasing the number of people who are able to remain at home and prevent inappropriate admission to hospital, residential and care homes</p> <p>Preventing delayed release from</p>	<p>Strategic approach to ensuring the housing stock meets the immediate and long term needs of the population</p> <p>Embedding of early intervention - housing options is most effective discussed at an early stage in the process</p> <p>Efficiency in terms of processes and practices—better use of technology can reduce time on visits, speeds up the process and is more customer friendly.</p>		1, 4, 5 & 6	Head of Sustainment & Support

		<p>hospital or other types of care</p> <p>Reducing the number of persons and particularly vulnerable persons living in homes that have category 1 and serious category 2 hazards (as set out within the Housing Act 2004)</p> <p>Improving the health of customers by reducing the number of households in fuel poverty</p> <p>Facilitating a range of housing options to help people move at an earlier stage to avoid unnecessary DFG spend and care/support costs.</p> <p>It will be available to all at the point of need</p>	<p>Integration across and between agencies involved will present a unified message to the customer</p> <p>Effective joint working across housing, social care and health</p> <p>Adequate staffing resources across the partnership</p> <p>Earliest possible identification of budget available (including for staffing)</p> <p>Continued awareness raising with partners (especially children's services) to allow greater access to grants</p> <p>Effective procurement strategies that support contractors who wish to deliver specialist adaptation works, including procurement of local SME businesses where possible.</p> <p>Responsibility for it is shared by the whole system- shared accountability through shared budget</p> <p>Promotion of independent living solutions by development of HIA/Telecare hub which is joint funded</p>			
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<p>Continue to deliver the lifeline element of the Telecare service</p> <p>In collaboration with CWC work up an options appraisal to review Telecare services</p>	<p>Provide access to households who require telecare services that will enable them to live independently</p> <p>Reduce the risk of hospital admission</p> <p>Reduce the risk of bed blocking by allowing hospital discharge</p> <p>It will be available to all at the point of need</p> <p>Understanding of WH's future role in terms of the delivery of Telecare service</p> <p>Support for CWC in evaluating different models of delivery including the provision of data in relation to current service delivery</p>	<p>Adequate staffing resources</p> <p>Effective joint working across housing, social care and health</p> <p>Responsibility for it is shared by the whole system- shared accountability through shared budget</p> <p>Embed a 'technology first' approach so that using telecare and telehealth technology is considered at the very least as a supplement to more traditional care and support,</p> <p>Understanding of the strategic vision for telecare services</p> <p>Capacity to support the options appraisal project</p>		<p>1, 4, 5 & 6</p>	<p>Head of Sustainment & Support</p>
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Property – Ian Gardner, Assistant Director

Service Area: Construction and Compliance						
Ref.	Action	Outcome	What is required	Link to KPI	Link to CSHR	Responsible Officer
16.	Regulatory Health and Safety Compliance	<p>Ensure that WH complies with all relevant Health & Safety property related compliance requirements.</p> <p>To ensure that all mandatory and legislative requirements covering all compliance activities are enforced and evidenced, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gas Safety - Electrical Safety - Water Safety - Asbestos - Fire - Lifts - Facilities Management 	<p>A range of legal duties and guidance exists to ensure WH effectively delivers its range of services to protect its customers, colleagues and the public.</p> <p>WH will demonstrate ensure compliance with all prescribed mandatory regulations, legislation, codes of practice etc through effective performance management and audits.</p> <p>WH internally reviews and audits its policies and procedures.</p> <p>KPI's are used to manage and report on health, safety, environmental and compliance related activities and are reported to Board and/or, relevant committees and other stakeholders.</p> <p>Health & safety forums and the Fire Safety Group provide oversight and ensure a cohesive corporate approach to deliver the Golden Thread</p>	<p>COM1 - Gas Safety</p> <p>COM2 – EICR Checks</p> <p>COM3 – Passenger Lift Safety</p> <p>COM4 – Legionella water checks</p> <p>COM5 – High Risk Fire Assessments</p> <p>COM6 – Duty to manage Asbestos</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6	<p>Head of Compliance</p> <p>Head of Assets & Stock Investment</p> <p>Head of Repairs & Maintenance</p> <p>Head of Building Solutions</p> <p>Head of Capital Works</p>

		- Control of Contractors Building Safety team develops, implements and monitors compliance				
17.	To contribute to the CWC's housing new build agenda	Continue to enhance the supply of housing through the innovative use of infill sites new build programme.	To support CWC on the delivery of new build units and support the Council in the delivery of its strategic housing plans.		1, 6, 7	Head of Capital Works
18.	Delivery of the Housing Capital Programme	Delivery of a range of large estate regeneration, refurbishment and Building Safety projects and estate remodelling.	Key delivery outcomes are reported to CWC/WH Asset Management Group meetings and associated capital programme finance meetings in line with the: - Annual Capital Programme - 5 Year Asset Management Plan - Medium Term - 30 Year Business Plan - Long Term		1, 2, 5 & 6	Head of Assets and Stock Investment
19.	To develop, review and	Cleanse and repopulate the	To have robust information to support the ongoing development of the asset management strategy and to support effective investment planning.		1, 2, 5 & 6	Head of Assets and Stock Investment
Service Area: Stock Investment						
Ref.	Action	Outcome	What is required	Link to KPI	Link to CSHR	Responsible Officer

	update stock condition data	<p>Asset Management database.</p> <p>Improve the efficacy of our Asbestos Management System.</p> <p>Support CWC in the development of the Affordable Housing Conversion Policy strategic and regeneration plans.</p>	<p>To provide stock condition data to inform the 30-year business plan and component accounting.</p> <p>To review opportunities for disinvestment for example, non-traditional housing linked to the Asset Management Group.</p>			
20. page 67	To develop in conjunction with CWC an active Asset management / company-wide strategy that supports carbon reduction.	To contribute to CWCs Strategic Climate Change and Sustainability Agenda and support the 2050 target.	<p>To review energy efficiency and carbon reduction programmes of work.</p> <p>Develop a Carbon Reduction Strategy</p>		1, 2, 4 5 & 6	<p>Head of Assets and Stock Investment</p> <p>Senior Management Team</p>
21.	Respond to Grenfell investigation recommendations in terms of Building Safety management	<p>Develop work programmes to ensure that national recommendations are implemented.</p> <p>Building Safety team develops,</p>	<p>Key delivery outcomes are reported to CWC/WH Asset Management Group meetings and associated capital programme finance meetings in line with the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual Capital Programme - 5 Year Asset Management Plan - Medium Term - 30 Year Business Plan – Long Term 		1, 2, 4 5 & 6	Head of Assets and Stock Investment

		implements and monitors compliance	Fire Safety Group provide oversight and ensure a cohesive corporate approach to deliver the Golden Thread			
Ref.	Repairs and Maintenance / Operations (Building Solutions; Response Repairs)					
No.	Action	Outcome	What is required	Link to KPI	Link to CSHR	Responsible Officer
22.	<p>Maintaining housing stock standards</p> <p>Delivery of a robust and responsive 24/7 repairs service</p> <p>Refurbish/repair voids swiftly to make best use of stock and reduce void rent loss</p>	Delivery of MAGNUS transformation programme	<p>Delivery of a high standard service to our customers.</p> <p>Review Value for Money in terms of cost, quality and performance.</p> <p>Increase performance and the collection and use of analytical data.</p> <p>Delivery of an efficient and swift Voids Management Service.</p> <p>Develop services based on customer feedback.</p> <p>Improve efficiency and flexible deployment of colleagues.</p> <p>Improve customer satisfaction.</p>	<p>P-R4 % of Tenants Satisfied with the response repairs service</p> <p>P-R5 Repairs completed right first time</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6	<p>Head of Repairs & Maintenance</p> <p>Head of Building Solutions</p> <p>Head of Capital Works</p>
23.	Commercial Agenda	To develop and maximise commercial opportunities	Review productivity, trading and external market opportunities.		1, 2, 6	Head of Repairs & Maintenance

			Review call-down contracts to explore commercial opportunities for bringing specific services in-house subject to VFM and capacity			Head of Building Solutions
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Corporate Services – Julie Haydon, Assistant Director

Ref. Service Area: Business Services

No.	Action	Outcome	What is required	Link to KPI	Link to CSHR	Responsible Officer
24.	Embed the company- wide project management approach for all areas of change	A robust project and change management approach across the company will oversee the implementation of the Business Plan with particular focus around culture change and continuous improvement.	A robust change management is put in place with relevant training for SMT, SLT and managers across the business to support and challenge priority areas of work. Ownership and understanding for managers and staff.		1, 2 & 5	Head of Business Services Head of People Head of OD&EE
	A full review of existing company-wide processes in line with regulatory, statutory, operational compliance		To identify issues that could lead to non-compliance or identify efficiencies along with the required remedial action.			
25.	A full review of business wide systems and system development opportunities	Existing IT systems are fit for purpose. Automated processes and high digital update.	A full review of business productivity linked to system options appraisals. Cross service joined-up approach, supporting the customer experience.		1, 2, 3, 4 & 5	Head of Business Services

						Head of Customer Experience
26.	Delivery of robust governance arrangements	<p>A robust performance management framework support the delivery of shared services with City of Wolverhampton Council.</p> <p>Key business assurance processes in place.</p> <p>To improve the availability and use of performance data to inform service delivery.</p>	<p>A review of current performance management framework across this business to provide a gap analysis and action plan.</p> <p>Review of arrangements to support the delivery of shared services with City of Wolverhampton Council.</p> <p>Risk management framework, internal audit and quality assurance programmes to be embedded.</p> <p>System Dashboards to be introduced as part of our performance framework.</p> <p>Implement system changes to improve our approach to collating and analysing data performance.</p>		1, 2, 3, 4 & 5	<p>Head of Business Services</p> <p>Head of People</p> <p>Head of Customer Experience</p>
27.	To ensure WH is resilient to periods of disruptive challenge and is able to respond to major emergencies.	Up to date Risk Registers, BCP and WH emergency response arrangements that are understood and fit for purpose.	<p>Continuation of an effective relationship with CWC Housing Strategy Team and the Resilience Team.</p> <p>Compliance with the Consumer Standards.</p> <p>Bi-annual review of the BCP Strategic Plan.</p>		1, 2, 3, 4 & 5	<p>Head of Business Services</p> <p>Head of Customer Experience</p>

	To demonstrate compliance with regulatory standards.	Compliance is monitored effectively with CWC where necessary. Compliance of the Consumer Standards.	<p>Regular monitoring and review of the Corporate Risk Register.</p> <p>Maintaining the provision of a Disaster Emergency Centre (DEC).</p> <p>Provision of a central co-ordination function in the event of an emergency – including the timely provision of situation reports / debrief / lessons learnt information.</p> <p>To improve the quality of performance data to interpret and enable the company to identify and manage risk, and to implement opportunities for improvements.</p>			
Page 71	Ensure that WH complies with and delivers on relevant Health and Safety requirements.	Mandatory and legislative requirements are evidenced and enforced.	<p>Continued development of Health and Safety function and collaborative working with CWC.</p> <p>Implement and embed the Health and Safety action plan.</p>		1, 2, 3, 4 & 5	Head of Business Services
29.	Full review of accommodation and WH facilities.	Fit for purpose working environment and customer offer.	<p>To undertake site based accommodation reviews.</p> <p>To realign facilities activity across the business.</p> <p>To work collaboratively with CWC to align the delivery of our customer offer.</p>		2, 4 & 5	<p>Head of Business Services</p> <p>Head of Customer Experience</p>

Ref.	Service Area: Customer Experience					
No.	Action	Outcome	What is required	Link to KPI	Link to CSHR	Responsible Officer
30.	Increase the use of the digital offer to support the customer journey.	<p>Effective and efficient website for customer access including automated processes.</p> <p>Customers are empowered to access digital services. To continue to meet accessibility compliance requirements.</p>	<p>To develop the website, driven from a marketing and engagement perspective including the review of content.</p> <p>Profile customers and their usage to be able to deliver automated processes.</p> <p>Promote the use of current self-service on-line services.</p>		1, 3, 4 & 5	Head of Customer Experience
31.	Support the delivery of the overarching customer experience strategy and action plans	WH meets and exceeds where possible the changing regulations, in particular the Charter for Social Housing Residents.	<p>Launch the Customer Experience Strategy and action plan.</p> <p>Gather direct customer feedback including comprehensive data about our customers' circumstances, preferences and aspirations.</p>	<p>BS-CF1 Percentage of complaints handled within target time</p> <p>H-HD4 Percentage of</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7	<p>Head of Customer Experience</p> <p>Head of OD & EE</p>

		<p>WH staff are committed to delivery of great services to every single customer, every single time.</p> <p>Low-effort, high quality methods which maximise accessibility for all customer groups.</p> <p>New and more effective ways to capture and respond to the customer voice.</p>	<p>Use this intelligence to deliver personalised services which reflect individual needs.</p> <p>Provide our customers with a choice of how and when they access our services.</p> <p>Analyse reasons for customer repeat contacts.</p> <p>Enhance online offer will enable more customers to develop their digital skills.</p> <p>Delivery of a 'right time, first time' approach to repairs.</p> <p>To provide a seamless service in the reporting of repairs at the first point of contact.</p> <p>Work with CWC to develop customer insight and scrutiny.</p> <p>A review of the themes from customer feedback to recognise and support staff to understand and respond to customer needs.</p> <p>Integration of solution focussed outcomes into business delivery – by ensuring learning from complaints is identified and addressed across the company.</p>	<p>Tenants satisfied with Homes Direct Call Handling</p> <p>BS-SAT1 Percentage of tenants satisfied with the overall service the landlord provides</p>		
32.	Consistent advice & service	Identify barriers to delivering excellent front-line services.	Aim to reduce customer contact for basic enquiries that can be answered online by promoting self-serve options.	H-HD1 Calls answered	2, 3, 4 & 5	Head of Business Services

	at all front-line touchpoints	<p>To enable the customer to receive the same level of service no matter what the enquiry is relating to, when accessing services</p> <p>Embed excellent customer service into our behaviours, processes and transactions.</p>	<p>Focus on those customers requiring more intensive support and those who present as homeless.</p> <p>Take services out into the community, supporting customers to access services, support etc.</p> <p>A satisfied and committed workforce that delivers excellent service creating an innovative and learning culture to implement service improvements.</p> <p>Use learning from customer feedback, insight and data to inform the customer offer. Improve call waiting times for customers.</p> <p>Introduction of community based hubs.</p> <p>Streamline the routes have available to contact WH.</p> <p>Improve the self-service offer and continually review with customers, benchmarking against other housing providers.</p>			<p>Heads of Service – Tenancies and Communities, Housing Operations</p> <p>Head of Repairs and Maintenance</p> <p>Head of Customer Experience Head of Organisational Development and Employee Engagement</p> <p>Head of Homelessness</p>
Ref.	Service Area: People and Organisational Development					
No.	Action	Outcomes	What's required	Link to KPI	Link to CSHR	Responsible Officer
33.	Embed a range of people strategies.	WH is an employer of choice, with the ability to attract and retain the right	<p>Overall responsibility for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EDI Strategy and action plans (including BLM) 		2, 3, 4 & 5	<p>Head of People</p> <p>Head of OD & EE</p>

	Develop a modern workforce to recognise the diverse needs of all customers.	<p>people to enable the delivery of high quality services.</p> <p>WH is a diverse and values driven company.</p> <p>To ensure that the individual efforts of all staff align with our strategy and priorities removing barriers to productivity and having future focused resourcing plans that identify the type of roles and skills required to deliver the outcomes of the Business Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employee Health & Wellbeing Strategy - Organisational Development Strategy - Applicant tracking system - a range of policies and processes to affect the culture and environment ensuring the wellbeing, happiness and safety of staff - bespoke and targeted recruitment campaigns or internal development programmes which are designed to recruit to our workforce plans - knowledge and understanding of unconscious bias from our recruitment process, including blind shortlisting and diverse recruitment panels. - recruitment to support the local economy and young people in line with CWC priorities - Development of a work force plan that is reviewed annually - Create the business wide Learning Needs Analysis to provide the skills required and skills gaps. - Ensuring that all staff know and exude the company values; they know and understand the organisation KPIs and how they contribute to achieving them. - Increase the profiles of women and Black and Minority Ethnic staff in senior posts. 			
34.	Ensure effective leadership and management	WH has a community of supportive, empathetic leaders	Implement the talent management model, development and succession planning including the Board Development Programme.		2, 3, 4 & 5	Head of OD & EE Head of People

	<p>across the company</p> <p>Develop Wolverhampton Homes staff and Board members so that they positively contribute to the success of the organisation</p>	<p>and managers who ensure an inclusive environment. WH leaders will constantly epitomise our values and have the capability and confidence to engage, develop, challenge, and reward our staff, with kind leadership while taking measured risks and deliver excellence.</p>	<p>Implementation of Strategic Leadership Programme and Accredited Management Development Programme.</p> <p>Deliver effective talent management and succession planning to align individual development and career aspirations.</p> <p>Develop our people leaders to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - continue to champion a positive inclusive and innovative culture. - listen to and respond to our staff. - have the skills and confidence to successfully challenge the status quo, management change, and tackle unfairness in workload, contribution, inequality and inappropriate behaviour. - Be a part an active part of leadership action teams, with cross-directorate leaders who will flexibly and agilely to problem solve and to coach, mentor and support staff and new leaders. - be strong dynamic and inspirational leaders with clear direction across the business. 			
35.	<p>Create a thriving environment where all where staff feel they belong</p>	<p>WH is an inclusive, diverse and people-orientated organisation where all staff are appropriately and</p>	<p>Implementation of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employee Health & Wellbeing strategy and action plan. - work/life balance through agile working and the use of technology as an enabler. 	<p>H-HR1 Average number of working days lost through sickness</p>	<p>2, 3, 4 & 5</p>	<p>Head of People</p>

		constructively challenged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - people and performance policies that are socially progressive, and people orientated to support our elite workforce. - Equality Forum to support the delivery of the EDI Strategy and to implement a best in class Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion action plan. 			
36.	Maximise employee engagement for all staff	<p>WH staff are fully engaged and feel safe and secure in speaking up.</p> <p>Conduct regular employee surveys to highlight themes for development.</p>	<p>Review and development our staff engagement forum.</p> <p>Conduct a full employee engagement survey to develop our engagement strategy and provide themed areas of work that our staff groups wish to drive forward.</p> <p>Link to the development of the change management process from a people perspective.</p>		2, 3, 4 & 5	Head of OD & EE

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Wolverhampton Homes Suite of Key Performance Indicators

Appendix 2

Department	Housemark	White Paper	Consumer Standard	PI Code	Compliance Indicators - Infographic
Contracts & Compliance	✓	✓	Home	COM1	% of valid Landlord Gas Safety Records for tenanted properties
	✓	✓	Home	COM2	% of domestic properties with EICR certificates up to five years old.
				COM3a	% of Passenger lifts serviced within timescale
		✓	Home	COM3b	% of Passenger lifts availability
		✓		COM4	% of Sites where a risk assessment has been carried out for control of Legionella Bacteria in domestic water systems within a 2 year period

		✓		COM5	The management of fire risk assessments; the percentage re-inspected within timescale (Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005)
		✓		COM6	The Duty to Manage Asbestos – the percentage re-inspected within timescales (Regulation 4 - Non Domestic Premises - Control of Asbestos Regulations (CAR) 2012)

Department	HM	WP	CS	PI Code	Key Performance Indicators - Infographic
Homes Direct				H-HD1	Homes Direct: % of Customers calls answered within 80 seconds
Human Resources	✓			BS-HR1	Average number of working days lost through sickness
Customer Experience	✓	✓	Involvement and Empowerment	BS-CF1	% of complaints enquiries responded to within timescales
Tenancy Management			Tenancy	H-TM8	No contact in 12 months
Home Sales & Leases				H-HSL1	% of Service Charges inc Ground Rent collected from Leaseholders
Income Management				H-IM2	% rent arrears of current tenants as a proportion of rent roll (GNPI 29) (WH only)

ASB			Neighbourhood	H-ASB1	% satisfied with the way their ASB complaint was dealt with
Homelessness			Tenancy	HO-HS2	Average time spent in temp - no of days (across all forms)
Repairs	✓		Home	P-R1	% Responsive repairs during period for which an appointment was made/kept
	✓		Home	P-R3	% Total response repairs completed within target
	✓		Home	P-R4	Satisfaction with repairs completed right first time (To replace P-R1 once available)
	✓		Home	P-R5	Satisfaction with response repairs (To replace P-R3 when available)
Voids			Tenancy	P-V3	Void Key to Key Performance (from Void Start Date to Tenancy Start Date)

Department	HM	WP	CS	PI Code	Performance Indicators
Homes Direct				H-HD2	Homes Direct - % of Customer calls answered
				H-HD3	Homes Direct: % of calls abandoned
Communications	✓			BS-SAT1	% of tenants satisfied with the overall service their landlord provides
Income Management				H-IM1a	% of rent collected (City Wide)
				H-IM3	% rent arrears of former tenants as a proportion of rent roll
	✓			STATISTIC	Tenants Evicted for Rent Arrears
Neighbourhood Services			Home & Neighbourhood	H-NS1	% of Fire Safety Checks completed

			Involvement and Empowerment	H-NS3	% of Telecare calls answered within 60 Seconds (SLA)
				H-NS5	Out of hours calls answered
Housing Solutions			Tenancy	CI-LT1	Average time taken to relet properties (ready to let to new Tenancy Start)
			Tenancy	CI-LT3	% rent lost from empty properties
Repairs			Home	P-R2	% of Planned repairs completed within timescales
Voids				P-V1	Average time taken to repair voids: In House - Standard (Minor) voids
				P-V2	Average time taken to repair voids: In House - Major Voids

Key

	HM	Indicators with a tick against them are shared with Housemark Benchmarking
	WP	Indicators with a tick against them are linked to Housing White Paper
	CS	Indicators in this column are linked to RSH Consumer Standards. The initial in the box identify which standard the indicator supports:

H	H = Home Standard
T	T = Tenancy Standard
I	I = Tenancy Involvement and Empowerment Standard
N	N = Neighbourhood Standard

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Appendix 3: Procurement Plan 2022 - 2023 – Approval to Tender

Contract Title	Empty Property Care (Void Properties)
Contract Description	Wolverhampton Homes requires a suitably qualified contractor to provide house clearance, garden clearance, garage and shed clearance, vermin control, removal of sharps/needles, boarding up properties in order to make them secure until they become fit for tenancy again.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Orbis
Proposed Contract Term	5 years with a break clause at year 2
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£1,300,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner
Procurement Route	Open FTS / OJEU Tender
Status	To be re-tendered as existing financial budget advertised in the previous tender has been exceeded. Preparation of tender documents with officers to review.

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Contract Title	Asbestos Removal
Contract Description	Asbestos removal services to support the inhouse team in peak times and to also provide an out of hours service
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Axiom Building Solutions Limited
Proposed Contract Term	4 years with a break clause at year 2
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£400,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner
Procurement Route	Open FTS / OJEU Tender
Status	To be re-tendered as existing financial budget advertised in the previous tender has been exceeded. Preparation of tender documents complete, awaiting publication on Due North.

Contract Title	Wolverhampton Homes Asbestos Surveying, Air Monitoring, Bulk Analysis & Consultancy
Contract Description	<p>To provide specialist technical services relating to asbestos surveys, air clearance testing and materials sampling works on a responsive basis as and when required. To support the activities of the in-house team by providing a fully integrated and flexible service that is seamless from the customer's perspective and that ensures that value for money is achieved.</p> <p>To include all technical asbestos related works including surveys, air clearance testing and materials sampling works for Responsive Repairs and Building Solutions.</p>
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Lucion
Proposed Contract Term	4 years with a break clause at year 2
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£2,300,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner
Procurement Route	Open FTS / OJEU Tender
Status	Current contract end date 31/03/2023. Preparation of tender documentation including establishing contract value required Autumn 2022.

Contract Title	Biomass Heath Town Fuel / Repairs & Maintenance
Contract Description	Fuel, repairs and maintenance to the Heath Town Energy Centre Boiler System
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	AMP Clean Energy
Proposed Contract Term	4 years with a break clause at year 2
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£500,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner
Procurement Route	YPO Framework
Status	Awaiting preparation of tender documentation – CWC to lead.
Contract Title	Damp Condensation and Structural Surveys

Contract Description	A qualified Chartered Surveyor is required to support the in-house team by undertaking damp, condensation, and structural surveys where it is deemed the damp conditions are serious enough to potentially affect the structural integrity of parts of the building. An independent Chartered Surveyor is required to provide an unbiased report of any potential remedial works required and to represent Wolverhampton Homes in court as an expert witness when required to do so.
Existing Contractor / Supplier /Service Provider	PPC Ltd
Proposed Contract Term	6 years with a break clause at year 2 and 4
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£300,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner
Procurement Route	Open FTS / OJEU Tender
Status	Finalising preparation of tender documentation to enable tender submission.
Contract Title	Floor Finishing Services
Contract Description	The scope of works for the Responsive Repairs, Building Solutions and Voids teams covers the repairs and replacement of flexible floor finishes such as thermoplastic floor tiles and vinyl sheet flooring, including associated works such as nosing, trims and the like and occasional soft flooring. Scope of works specifically covers the installation and repairs of flexible proprietary vinyl safety flooring to bathrooms and kitchens of dwellings occupied by disabled persons
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Multifloor (Walsall) Limited
Proposed Contract Term	6 years with a break clause at year 2 and 4
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£900,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner
Procurement Route	Non – FTS / OJEU Open Tender
Status	Awaiting confirmation that contract can be delivered as part of the General Builder contract (Morgan & Bond). If this service proves not to be satisfactory will reconsider tendering as a separate contractor arrangement.

Contract Title**Gas Supply Contract**

Contract Description	Contract for the supply of Gas. This contract does not expire until 31 March 2023, however, with energy contracts, it is required to sign up to a deal at least 12 months before expiry date.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Total Gas & Power
Proposed Contract Term	4 years
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£1,600,000
Directorate	Asset Management
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner
Procurement Route	ESPO Framework
Status	Awaiting information from City Council around new tariff rate. Electricity tariff rates showing unprecedented increases which will impact should it be the same for the gas rates.

Contract Title	Void Management Scheme
Contract Description	The Void Management Scheme ensures timely turnaround of the metering arrangements for void properties by the appointed energy provider offering free void period energy to WH for repairs and maintenance and instant access to gas and electricity for residents.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Energy Angels
Proposed Contract Term	4 years with a break clause at year 2
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£0 cost to WH. Despite there being nil cost to the company the services to be procured are defined as a concession contract, due to the company receiving a benefit, i.e. it will receive an indirect financial benefit to a limited value of 'free energy' during the void period. Based on approximately 1,500 voids per year, the annual benefit could be up to £45,000 or up to £180,000 over a 4-year period.
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner
Procurement Route	Non – FTS / OJEU – Open Tender (Concession Contract)
Status	Awaiting preparation of tender documentation and review needed of current performance to ensure this contract provides a robust service to Wolverhampton Homes.

Contract Title	Drainage
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Contract Description	To provide a specialist drainage CCTV surveys, jetting, and other related works service during normal working hours, on occasions the contractor will be expected to provide an immediate emergency service outside of normal working hours including evenings, weekends and Bank Holidays.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Metro Rod Limited
Proposed Contract Term	4 years with optional break clause at year 2
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£1,200,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner
Procurement Route	Open Tender
Status	Current contract extended to 31/03/22. Needs to be re-tendered as existing financial budget advertised in the previous tender has been exceeded. Preparation of tender documents commenced and awaiting team input to then be uploaded on Due North.

Contract Title	Gas Servicing
Contract Description	To provide gas servicing services
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Dodds Group via Solihull Framework
Proposed Contract Term	5 years with break clause at year 3
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£5,000,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner
Procurement Route	Framework
Status	Contract expires March 2023 – need to commence ITT strategy summer 2022.

Contract Title	Domestic Periodic Testing
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Contract Description	To provide an electrical testing and inspection programme plus category 1 output repairs to tenanted properties
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Dodds Group
Proposed Contract Term	5 years with break clause at year 3
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	4,200,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner
Procurement Route	Open FTS / OJEU tender
Status	Contract Expires 30/06/22 – ITT needs to be commenced January 2022.

Contract Title	Painting & Decorating
Contract Description	To provide external redecoration to houses, low rise flats and garages to include elements such as rendered wall areas, doors, gates, canopies, fascia's, fencing and other external elements. Internal redecoration of communal areas to low-rise, medium-rise and high-rise blocks will also form part of the planned painting programme. Internal redecoration to domestic houses and flats both tenanted and void, will be requested on a response basis.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Tony Davies & Partners Limited
Proposed Contract Term	5 years with a break clause at year 2
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£3,000,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner
Procurement Route	Open Market Competitive Tender
Status	To be re-tendered as existing financial budget advertised in the previous tender has been exceeded. Preparation of tender documents needs to be commenced by WH officers ASAP.

Contract Title	Structural surveys of system-built properties.
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Contract Description	Periodic surveys of non-traditionally constructed system-built properties, incorporating visual and intrusive surveys of each archetype. This includes houses, low rise flats and tower blocks.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Michael Dyson & Associates
Proposed Contract Term	5 years
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£1,000,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner / Simon Bamfield
Procurement Route	Framework
Status	Existing contract expires December 2022

Contract Title	Design services of system-built properties.
Contract Description	Design of projects to refurbish system-built properties e.g. Cornish, BISF. To undertake any necessary structural repairs and improvements to safeguard the fabric and enhance thermal properties to meet net zero carbon objectives.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	New contract
Proposed Contract Term	5 years
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£1,250,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner / Simon Bamfield
Procurement Route	Framework
Status	New contract

Contract Title	Building / Stock condition surveys.
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Contract Description	Provision of dilapidation, party wall, stock condition and other specialist surveys (boundary disputes) to support the strategic asset management of the stock portfolio.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	New contract
Proposed Contract Term	3 years
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£1,000,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner / Simon Bamfield
Procurement Route	Framework
Status	Provide interim support as a result of recruitment issues within Stock Investment Team.

Contract Title	Passive Fire Protection.
Contract Description	Provision of specialist repairs to passive fire protection e.g. fire doors and fire stopping measures, using third party accredited contractor who will also provide training and support for Wolverhampton Homes inhouse workforce
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Wolverhampton Homes/Strategic Construction Partnership
Proposed Contract Term	1 year contract with option to extend
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£600,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner / Simon Bamfield
Procurement Route	Framework
Status	Current delivery model is through the Strategic Construction Partnership due to workload pressures of inhouse team.

Contract Title	Roofing repair and maintenance
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Contract Description	To provide a roofing repairs and maintenance services. All works will be required to be completed in accordance with the applicable performance targets and customer service and ICT systems.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Roof Style
Proposed Contract Term	4 Years with break clause at year 2
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£800,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner
Procurement Route	Open Market sub FTS / OJEU Tender
Status	To be re-tendered as existing financial budget advertised in the previous tender has been exceeded. Preparation of tender documents with officers to prepare.

Contract Title	Telecare
Contract Description	To provide Telecare equipment - the use of technologies such as remote monitoring and emergency alarms to enable the unwell, disabled, or elderly to receive care at home so that they can live independently. e.g. fall detectors, linked smoke alarms, epilepsy sensors as well as monitoring equipment such as canary care that gives social care and Carers an idea of movement around the house so that appropriate support can be put in place.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	No current contract in place
Proposed Contract Term	4 year
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£800,000
Directorate	Housing Options
WH Lead Officer	Angela Barnes / Lisa Morgan
Procurement Route	Either Open Market or via an Existing Framework
Status	This requirement was handed over to WH from WCC in early November 2021, so Officers are currently assessing the requirements to establish a strategy.

Contract Title	Fire risk assessment software solution
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Contract Description	Web-based software solution to support the fire safety risk management regime, enabling fire risk assessments to be produced in a digital format and to ensure fire safety remedial actions are effectively controlled
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	New contract
Proposed Contract Term	Up to 3 years
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£30,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Simon Bamfield / Stuart Bourne
Procurement Route	Framework (Crown Commercial Services – G-cloud framework)
Status	This is an interim solution as we are at least 18-months away from NEC Housing being in a position to provide this aspect of the service (due to the need to migrate to a more recent software release of NEC Housing, plus there is a need for further development of the software).

Contract Title	HIA Hoist / Supply / Installation and Maintenance
Contract Description	To provide various Lift Installation and Maintenance Services for WH HIA. These contracts will be let with the following lots: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lot 1: Straight and Curved Stairlift - Lot 2: Through Floor Lifts - Lot 3: Powered Lifting Platform / Step Lift - Lot 4: Ceiling Track / Hoist
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Lot 1 – Existing contractor Stannah Stairlift Lots 2, 3, and 4 – New Contract Requirement
Proposed Contract Term	4 years with option to extend for 24 months
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£6,100,000 combined
Directorate	Housing Options
WH Lead Officer	Angela Barnes / Lisa Morgan
Procurement Route	OJEU Open Tender
Update 1697	Currently awaiting WCC legal to execute contracts but letters of award sent as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lot 1: Straight and Curved Stairlift – Stannah Stair Lifts - Lot 2: Through Floor Lifts – Dolphin Lifts Midlands Limited - Lot 3: Powered Lifting Platform / Step Lift – Dolphin Lifts Midlands Limited - Lot 4: Ceiling Track / Hoist – Premier (Mobility) UK Limited

Contract Title	General Builder
Contract Description	A contract with a general building contractor is required to support the in-house teams at peak times of demand. The requirement is to provide general building and associated mechanical and electrical works (excluding scaffolding and asbestos works) for the Responsive Repairs, Building

	Solutions and Voids teams and including works carried out by Contracts and Compliance. The works have been divided into 3 Lots Repairs, Voids Planned (to include Fire Damage, Asset Maintenance, Non-Domestic Assets & Capital Schemes)
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Hindley
Proposed Contract Term	6 years with a break clause at year 2 and 4
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£10,200,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner
Procurement Route	OJEU Open Tender
Update	Currently awaiting WCC legal to execute contracts but letter of award sent to Morgan & Bond Limited for all 3 Lots.
Contract Title	HIA Glazing
Contract Description	To provide a suitably qualified contractor(s) to undertake the following elements of work within a vulnerable environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UPVC Window / Doors repairs • UPVC window / door locking mechanism change. • Replace / repair existing eaves level fascias. • Replace / repair existing guttering.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	New Tender
Proposed Contract Term	4 years with option to extend further 24 months
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£900,000
Directorate	Housing Options
WH Lead Officer	Angela Barnes / Lisa Morgan
Procurement Route	Open Tender Competition
Update	Currently awaiting WCC legal to execute contracts but letter of award sent to Ashmore Glass & Mirrors Limited.

Contract Title	Access Control Door and CCTV Installation / Repair and Maintenance Services
Contract Description	To provide a 24/7 responsive repairs and maintenance service to ensure CCTV and door access control systems are fully maintained and operate as detailed within the contract specification.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	OpenView Security Solutions

Proposed Contract Term	2 years direct award
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£1,600,000
Directorate	Housing / Asset Management
WH Lead Officer	Darren Baggs / Roy Parlor
Procurement Route	Direct award through CHIC framework
Status	City Council to register Wolverhampton Homes on the framework to enable the direct award.

Contract Title	Provision of Digital TV Maintenance Services
Contract Description	To provide an established, competent, resource to provide the following 3 services to recently installed IRS Digital Systems to various High, Medium, and Low-Rise blocks of flats throughout the City: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Servicing, Repair & Maintenance • Response Breakdown call out • Installation of new internal face plates
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	SCS Technologies Ltd
Proposed Contract Term	4 years with optional
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£660,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner
Procurement Route	Open Market Tender FTS / OJEU Tender
Status	Currently awaiting WCC legal to execute contracts but letter of award sent to MRM Electrical Solutions Ltd. Existing arrangements with SCS extended to 31/01/22 to provide a reliable service over the Christmas period and to avoid any potential handover issues.

Contract Title	Maintenance of Roof Mounted Ventilation
Contract Description	To provide a full annual electrical and mechanical inspection servicing regime and the repair of all mechanical roof extractor units (182 roof mounted centralised ventilation units within 49 blocks of flats throughout the City) fitted on each of the locations.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Moss Vale Maintenance & Sealing Services Limited (no longer trading)
Proposed Contract Term	4 years plus optional 1 year extension
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£400,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner

Procurement Route	Open FTS / OJEU Tender
Status	Currently awaiting WCC legal to execute contracts but letter of award sent to Midwest Electrical Services Ltd.

Contracts Expiring But have Options To Extend

- **Scaffolding** – Expires 31 March 2023 but has option to extend 3 years.
- **Maintenance of Passenger Lifts** – Expires on 31 March 2022 to extend by a further 3 years.
- **District Heating (Heath Town) Metering and Pre-Payment Billing Services** – Expires 31 March 2023 but option to extend 3 years.
- **Maintenance of Domestic Lifts** – Expires 31 May 2022 but option to extend by 2 years.

Appendix 4

Wolverhampton Homes Procurement contracts let to date 2021 - 2022

Contract Title	Energy Performance Certificates
Contract Description	It is a legislative requirement that Energy Performance Certificates should be provided prior to letting or selling a property Wolverhampton Homes requires a comprehensive service for the completion and provision of energy performance certificates.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Compliance 365
Proposed Contract Term	3 years with potential to extend by 12 further months
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£120,000
Directorate	Property
WH Lead Officer	Simon Bamfield
Procurement Route	Open Tender / Non-OJEU
Status AWARDED	ECT Ltd t/a Compliance 365

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Contract Title	Non-Domestic Periodic Electrical Testing to Communal Areas and Offices
Contract Description	Wolverhampton Homes manage various assets throughout the City, including offices, tenant meeting rooms, communal areas etc. There is a statutory duty to ensure that as far as is reasonably practical the electrical services are safe. This entails testing fixed wiring and portable and fixed appliances.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Midwest Electrical Services Ltd
Proposed Contract Term	4 years plus potential to extend by 12 further months
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£710,000
Directorate	Property
WH Lead Officer	Roy Parlor
Procurement Route	Open Tender / OJEU
Status AWARDED	Midwest Electrical Services Ltd

Contract Title	External Works including Underground Pipeline Services
Contract Description	The scope of works would cover external works to include tarmacking & hard landscaping for the repairs service, works carried out by the projects team and voids repairs. Works to also include for the maintenance and repair where necessary of the underground pipeline services.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	OnSite Ltd
Proposed Contract Term	4 Years plus potential to extend by 12 further months
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£300,000
Directorate	Property
WH Lead Officer	Shaun Mulloy
Procurement Route	Open Tender/ Non-OJEU
Status AWARDED	To be awarded to OnSite Ltd

Contract Title	Installation of Modular Access Platforms and Ramps
Contract Description	Installation of external modular ramps to domestic property, both privately owned, and property managed by Wolverhampton Homes (including EMB and TMO property)
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	New tender undertaken
Proposed Contract Term	4 years plus potential for 1 year extension
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£750,000
Directorate	Housing Options
WH Lead Officer	Angela Barnes – Lisa Morgan
Procurement Route	Open tender / Non-OJEU
Status AWARDED	Eclipse Access Solutions Ltd

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Contract Title	UPVC doors, windows, glazing units, single pane reglaze, Fascia, Guttering, UPVC locking mechanism change
Contract Description	<p>Wolverhampton Homes requires a suitably qualified contractor(s) to undertake the following elements of work within a vulnerable environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UPVC window / doors repairs or replacement including more specific “safer” by design when relating to Safe Homes Scheme which aims to address safety issues for vulnerable clients and those at risk through domestic violence • UPVC window / door locking mechanism change • Replace / repair existing eaves level fascia’s • Replace / repair existing guttering
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	New tender undertaken
Proposed Contract Term	4 years plus potential for 2 year extension
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£900,000
Directorate	Housing Options
WH Lead Officer	Angela Barnes – Lisa Morgan
Procurement Route	Open tender / Non-OJEU
Status AWARDED	Ashmore Glass Ltd

Contract Title	General Builder – Wolverhampton Home Improvement Agency
Contract Description	To support the activities of the Home Improvement Agency and in house teams by providing a fully integrated, flexible and cost effective service to offer high quality and effective adaptations. The requirement is for Contractors working in properties where there is an elderly or less able resident and must be prepared to take account of the particular needs of individual clients.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	New Tender
Proposed Contract Term	Up to a 5 Year contract(s) with appropriate break clauses
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£26,000,000
Directorate	Housing Options
WH Lead Officer	Angela Barnes / Lisa Morgan
Procurement Route	The final procurement strategy is being determined with Legal advice, i.e. the Open Tender (Above the Finder Tender Service (FTS) Threshold for High Value Works) versus Framework versus Dynamic Purchasing System route
Status AWARDED	Dynamic Purchasing System route

Contract Title	HIA Hoist / Supply / Installation and Maintenance
Contract Description	To provide various Lift Installation and Maintenance Services for WH HIA. These contracts will be let with the following lots: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lot 1: Straight and Curved Stairlift - Lot 2: Through Floor Lifts - Lot 3: Powered Lifting Platform / Step Lift - Lot 4: Ceiling Track / Hoist
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Lot 1 – Existing contractor Stannah Stairlift Lots 2, 3, and 4 – New Contract Requirement
Proposed Contract Term	4 years with option to extend for 24 months
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£6,100,000 combined
Directorate	Housing Options
WH Lead Officer	Angela Barnes / Lisa Morgan
Procurement Route	OJEU Open Tender
Update AWARDED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lot 1: Straight and Curved Stairlift – Stannah Stair Lifts - Lot 2: Through Floor Lifts – Dolphin Lifts Midlands Limited - Lot 3: Powered Lifting Platform / Step Lift – Dolphin Lifts Midlands Limited - Lot 4: Ceiling Track / Hoist – Premier (Mobility) UK Limited

Contract Title	General Builder
Contract Description	A contract with a general building contractor is required to support the in-house teams at peak times of demand. The requirement is to provide general building and associated mechanical and electrical works (excluding scaffolding and asbestos works) for the Responsive Repairs, Building Solutions and Voids teams and including works carried out by Contracts and Compliance. The works have been divided into 3 Lots Repairs, Voids Planned (to include Fire Damage, Asset Maintenance, Non-Domestic Assets & Capital Schemes)
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Hindley
Proposed Contract Term	6 years with a break clause at year 2 and 4
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£10,200,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner
Procurement Route	OJEU Open Tender
Update AWARDED	Morgan & Bond Limited for all 3 Lots.

Contract Title	HIA Glazing
Contract Description	To provide a suitably qualified contractor(s) to undertake the following elements of work within a vulnerable environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UPVC Window / Doors repairs • UPVC window / door locking mechanism change. • Replace / repair existing eaves level fascias. • Replace / repair existing guttering.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	New Tender
Proposed Contract Term	4 years with option to extend further 24 months
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£900,000
Directorate	Housing Options
WH Lead Officer	Angela Barnes / Lisa Morgan
Procurement Route	Open Tender Competition
Update AWARDED	Ashmore Glass & Mirrors Limited.

Contract Title	Provision of Digital TV Maintenance Services
Contract Description	To provide an established, competent, resource to provide the following 3 services to recently installed IRS Digital Systems to various High, Medium, and Low-Rise blocks of flats throughout the City: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Servicing, Repair & Maintenance • Response Breakdown call out • Installation of new internal face plates
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	SCS Technologies Ltd
Proposed Contract Term	4 years with optional
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£660,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner
Procurement Route	Open Market Tender FTS / OJEU Tender
Status AWARDED	MRM Electrical Solutions Ltd.

Contract Title	Maintenance of Roof Mounted Ventilation
Contract Description	To provide a full annual electrical and mechanical inspection servicing regime and the repair of all mechanical roof extractor units (182 roof mounted centralised ventilation units within 49 blocks of flats throughout the City) fitted on each of the locations.
Existing Contractor / Supplier / Service Provider	Moss Vale Maintenance & Sealing Services Limited (no longer trading)
Proposed Contract Term	4 years plus optional 1 year extension
Total Value of Contract (approx.)	£400,000
Directorate	Property Services
WH Lead Officer	Ian Gardner
Procurement Route	Open FTS / OJEU Tender
Status AWARDED	Midwest Electrical Services Ltd.

Name of Project	Budget for	Budget for	Budget for	Budget for	Budget for	Budget for	Total 2021-2022 to 2026-2027 £000
	current year	Year-1	Year-2	Year-3	Year-4	Year-5	
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Internal Improvements							
Refurbishment of voids	6,075	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	31,075
Boiler Replacement Programme	803	680	680	680	680	680	4,203
Internal Decency Works	2,930	4,900	5,800	6,000	4,300	3,800	27,730
Refurbishment Works							
Heath Town Estate Refurbishment							
Heath Town Estate: refurbishment of the retained blocks	11,100	11,200	12,400	10,600	3,600	1,500	50,400
High-rise estate improvements							
High Rise External Façade Works Programme; incorporating window replacement, roof replacement, external wall insulation and associated work.	0	0	2,400	7,000	6,200	6,300	21,900
Renewal of High-Rise Infrastructure (City-wide); incorporating retro-fitting sprinklers and fire safety improvements	4,500	10,300	15,000	11,700	8,600	7,800	57,900
Medium-rise estate improvements							
Holistic programme to deliver improvements to the building envelope, fire safety features, infrastructure and landscaping	0	0	0	0	4,000	10,500	14,500
Refurbishment of system-built housing							
Surveys of non-traditional housing (including high-rise)	50	150	200	500	50	50	1,000
Remedial works to system-built properties	0	0	650	3,000	4,200	8,500	16,350

Name of Project	Budget for current year	Budget for Year-1	Budget for Year-2	Budget for Year-3	Budget for Year-4	Budget for Year-5	Total 2021-2022 to 2026-2027
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	
Other							
Lift & DDA Improvements	710	400	400	400	400	400	2,710
Door Entry / CCTV Security Programme	270	470	370	370	370	370	2,220
Fire Safety Improvements - Medium and Low rise	2,250	2,250	1,250	1,250	0	0	7,000
Sustainable Estates Programme:	270	1,000	600	600	600	600	3,670
External Improvement Programme	600	0	0	0	0	0	0
Roof Replacement Programme (City-wide)	2,750	1,600	4,200	4,200	4,000	4,000	20,750
Structural Repair Works (ad-hoc, City-wide)	1,100	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	6,100
Pathway improvement and safety programme	209	200	200	200	200	200	1,209
Miscellaneous Items							
Capital Programme Management (Wolverhampton Homes salaries)	1,650	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	10,650
Sale of Council Houses Administration (RTB)	60	60	60	60	60	60	360
Internal Works							
Disabled Adaptations	1,500	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	7,500
Bushbury Hill EMB Improvement Programme	900	220	0	0	0	0	1,120
Refurbishment Works							
External improvements to Jericho House	250	0	0	0	0	0	250
Commercial to residential conversions: Bond House	700	3,500	0	0	0	0	4,200
Other Projects							
Infill sites - small sites programme	2,000	3,412	3,000	3,000	0	0	11,412
Total Value of Approved budgets*	40,677	49,342	56,210	58,560	46,260	53,760	304,209

* HRA Business Plan, Rents and Service Charges 2022-2023 Cabinet Report 19th Jan 2022

Name of Project	Budget for current year	Budget for Year-1	Budget for Year-2	Budget for Year-3	Budget for Year-4	Budget for Year-5	Total 2021-2022 to 2026-2027
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	

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CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Meeting of the City Council 6 April 2022
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Report title	Oxley Health and Wellbeing facility Residential Accommodation	
Referring body	Cabinet – 23 March 2022	
Councillor to present report	Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal	
Wards affected	Oxley	
Cabinet Member with lead responsibility	Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal, City Assets and Housing	
Accountable director	Mark Taylor, Deputy Chief Executive	
Originating service	City Assets	
Accountable employee	Julia Nock Tel Email	Deputy Director Assets 01902 550316 Julia.Nock@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to has been considered by	Cabinet	23 March 2022

Recommendation for decision:

The Council is recommended to approve:

1. The project and appropriate capital budgets funded through grant and prudential borrowing as detailed within the report, subject to confirmation of successful grant bids.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The report discusses the need and provision of a modern health and wellbeing facility in Oxley and the ongoing demand for key worker and affordable housing. The Council owns the former Oxley Day Training Centre and is currently a vacant asset. It is subject to ongoing anti-social behaviour and holding costs, with these issues and opportunities a decision is required to determine the future of the site.
- 1.2 With the support of the Wolverhampton Clinical Commission Group (CCG) a proposal has been prepared to consider the site for much needed Council family services and a community health and wellbeing facility. The need of a health facility coupled with the City's housing requirements has resulted in a more wider study, and this report identifies the findings and seeks approval to develop the site for a mixed-use modern health and wellbeing facility with housing.
- 1.3 The paper seeks approval to progress the capital project but not until obtaining outline planning consent, securing grant funding, achieving cost certainty from market tenders, securing leases with health care tenants and a pre-sale agreement with a Registered Provider for the new homes. These conditions will protect the Council by reducing the financial exposure until cost certainty, rental income and grant funding are secured.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 On 23 March 2022 Cabinet considered a report on Oxley Health and Wellbeing facility and Residential Accommodation.
- 2.2 Copies of the report have been supplied to Councillors and can also be accessed online on the Council's website [here](#).
- 2.3 Cabinet recommended to Council that it approves:
 1. The project and appropriate capital budgets funded through grant and prudential borrowing as detailed within the report, subject to confirmation of successful grant bids.

3.0 Financial implications

- 3.1 The financial implications are detailed in the Cabinet report of 23 March 2022.

4.0 Legal implications

- 4.1 The legal implications are detailed in the Cabinet report of 23 March 2022.

5.0 Equalities implications

- 5.1 The equalities implications are detailed in the Cabinet report of 23 March 2022.

6.0 All other implications

6.1 All other implications are detailed in the Cabinet report of 23 March 2022.

7.0 Schedule of background papers

7.1 Cabinet report of 23 March - [Oxley Health and Wellbeing facility and Residential Accommodation](#)

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CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Cabinet 23 March 2022
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Report title	Oxley Health and Wellbeing facility and Residential Accommodation	
Decision designation	RED	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Bhupinder Gakhai City Assets and Housing	
Key decision	Yes	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	Oxley	
Accountable Director	Mark Taylor, Deputy Chief Executive	
Originating service	City Assets	
Accountable employee	Julia Nock Tel Email	Deputy Director Assets 01902 550316 Julia.nock@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	City Assets Leadership Team Strategic Executive Board Full Council	9 February 2022 24 February 2022 6 April 2022

Recommendations for decision:

The Cabinet recommends that Council approves:

1. The project and appropriate capital budgets funded through grant and prudential borrowing as detailed within the report, subject to confirmation of successful grant bids.

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve the development by the Council of a modern health, wellbeing facility and residential accommodation on the Council owned former Oxley Day Training Centre site.
2. Delegate authority to the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance to agree and enter into the required funding agreements, Heads of Terms, Lease agreements with the health facility occupiers and Heads of Terms and Lease agreement with the Registered Provider upon selection together with any ancillary agreements.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The report discusses the need and provision of a modern health and wellbeing facility in Oxley and the ongoing demand for key worker and affordable housing. The Council owns the former Oxley Day Training Centre and is currently a vacant asset. It is subject to ongoing anti-social behaviour and holding costs, with these issues and opportunities a decision is required to determine the future of the site.
- 1.2 With the support of the Wolverhampton Clinical Commission Group (CCG) a proposal has been prepared to consider the site for much needed Council family services and a community health and wellbeing facility. The need of a health facility coupled with the City's housing requirements has resulted in a more wider study, and this report identifies the findings and seeks approval to develop the site for a mixed-use modern health and wellbeing facility with housing.
- 1.3 The paper seeks approval to progress the capital project but not until obtaining outline planning consent, securing grant funding, achieving cost certainty from market tenders, securing leases with health care tenants and a pre-sale agreement with a Registered Provider for the new homes. These conditions will protect the Council by reducing the financial exposure until cost certainty, rental income and grant funding are secured.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The former Oxley Day Training Centre is being held subject to re-development or disposal (Appendix 1 - site location plan), the existing structure is programmed for demolition.
- 2.2 Public sector stakeholders have a shared interest to work together with the Council to re-develop the site for a health and wellbeing facility and/or housing. Given the priority status of a new health and wellbeing facility in the Oxley area of North Wolverhampton, a feasibility exercise has been undertaken. It was agreed that the Council and Wolverhampton CCG (and subsequently the NHS Black Country and West Birmingham CCG) would jointly provide initial project resource to complete a feasibility study and work with interested parties to undertake early design work and a development appraisal. This work more recently brought forward the opportunity to add residential accommodation to the site which would provide additional outputs, offering much needed new affordable homes and attract grant funding for abnormal costs.

The project proposals have been developed considering two key requirements for the City and both rely upon each other for their successful delivery and achievement of the necessary outputs and outcomes.

A Modern and integrated project with Council Services and Health and Wellbeing Facility

- 2.3 The City of Wolverhampton has high levels of poverty and deprivation with a much higher proportion of the population (55%) living within the poorest 20 percentile range as nationally defined. In addition, significant health inequalities exist across the city. There is

a considerable gap in life expectancy across different ward areas of the city for both males and females.

- 2.4 The Wolverhampton health and social care economy faces significant challenges to service a population of 280,000 with relatively high levels of deprivation and growing numbers of people living with multiple Long Term Conditions putting additional strain on primary care. The local NHS and City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC) are addressing these challenges through a partnership approach with health and social care partners across the Black Country.
- 2.5 There is a requirement for a new health, wellbeing facility and this is entirely consistent with the key themes of the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) Estates Strategy, the 'One Public Estate' initiative and the latest published 'Commissioning Intentions' report of both the CCG and CWC. The need for a premises solution for the Oxley area was clearly identified in the Estates Strategy, specifically committing to assessing the feasibility of a new facility in the Oxley area of North Wolverhampton. This requirement with the need to relocate other Council health related services and surrender leases offering savings, created an opportunity for integrated services.
- 2.6 The local Oxley Surgeries are rated 'Red' in the CCG's most recent assessment of building condition, quality and capacity. The Red rating is indicative of facilities which are operating with significant shortfalls in two or more of (i) lack of capacity and/ or (ii) poor quality and/or (iii) poor security of tenure.
- 2.7 In addition to the need identified by the Wolverhampton CCG, during 2020/2021 the NHS made a commitment to become carbon net zero, setting ambitious targets to achieve this by 2040 for emissions under NHS direct control and 2045 for the "Carbon Footprint Plus" measure which includes the wider supply chain. This supports the Council's intentions and development of its assets to also become net carbon zero.

Key worker housing and affordable living

- 2.8 Around 12,600 people live in the Oxley ward of Wolverhampton. The City as a whole has the need to increase housing supply and has an ambition to make way for key worker housing and affordable living. There are a number of brownfield and redundant sites whose undeveloped nature damages perception of the City but, represent an opportunity to deliver housing.
- 2.9 Through the Strategic Economic Plan (2016), Housing Deal (2018), the emerging West Midlands Industrial Strategy (2019), the Housing and Land Portfolio Business Plan (2020-2021) and the Recharge for the West Midlands (2020), there is great commitment to delivering new homes by 2031 and taking a brownfield first approach.
- 2.10 The Wolverhampton Housing Strategy 2019-2024 seeks to deliver more and better homes, safe and healthy and access to secure homes. In doing so it aligns with the Economic Growth Strategy and seeks to retain and attract economically active people to live and work in our city. The strategy has identified groups to ensure good quality homes in the city at a price they can afford for; first time buyers and second stage movers,

households who want to rent, people who need affordable homes, homes for new communities and housing for graduates.

- 2.11 It is imperative that brownfield site clearance and unlocking of sites is a key focus and the importance of vibrancy is considered in residential deliverability. This will help appeal to a broad range of occupiers considering a future in the city, coupled with the increasing flight to quality demanded of both public and private open space. This would enable delivery of attractive and joined up placemaking opportunities and ultimately encourage a substantial increase in transactional and rental values across the city.

3.0 Project progress and proposals

- 3.1 To progress the early stages of the project and understand the challenges and opportunities, activities have been undertaken to help develop a way forward and reach a position where alternative options can also be presented for discussion (see section 4.0). Specific progress has been made within the last 12 months with:

1. Preparation of Initial development appraisals, taking account of land value and new build construction costs
2. Due diligence on the site to identify any constraints and site abnormalities
3. Development of the draft Outline Business Case (OBC) offering an understanding of the management, commercial, economic, financial and strategic case and risk.
4. Collaborative working with stakeholders and the project team representing CWC, CCG, local GPs and Royal Wolverhampton Trust (RWT) to develop site layouts and floor plans.
5. Subsidy Control advice to ensure the scheme model is compliant with relevant rules and regulations.
6. Submission of grant applications
7. Pre application discussions with the Local Planning Authority planning officer.

- 3.2 The proposal is a locally led programme, bringing multiple public sector partners together, to:

- help reduce Council service running costs, surrender leases and relocation of services to a new facility.
- assist with rationalisation, consolidation and modernisation of assets.
- Develop a net zero carbon project.
- Utilise Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) and provide new homes.
- Create construction jobs, five apprenticeships, help upskill the work force with H&S training and vocational qualifications, deliver local economic growth, offer social value.
- release capital value with re-development.
- give access to health care and quality accommodation to improve the lives of the local people.
- and really help with levelling up for much needed services in Oxley and support the economic recovery.

- 3.3 The project will also play a key role towards the city's recovery from the COVID-19 impact in years to come and act as an opportunity to reduce the Council's Carbon footprint, provide key worker housing and will directly link to the Council's 'Relight Our City campaign'.

A modern and integrated health and wellbeing facility

- 3.4 GPs, RWT and the Council, have continued to work collaboratively with the project team to develop the clinical service model, schedules of accommodation and initial design layout options. Design development workshops have been held to progress initial concepts into more detailed layouts and plans, seeking to offer:
- improved Council health and family services with integrated general medical services.
 - more integrated working between primary care, community services, social care and secondary care providers.
 - accommodation for two local GP practices, a base for RWT's district nursing teams and a clinical bookable suite to support local delivery of 'out of hospital' services.
- 3.5 As next steps, it is planned to build on the feasibility study and prepare an outline planning application. This will require re-engagement with all the stakeholders, public consultation with the local community, development of the design and renewed commitment for the updated proposals.

Key worker housing and affordable living

- 3.6 The early design for the residential accommodation has been developed mainly above the health and wellbeing facility, with separate access. The proposal allows for a mix of apartments and some dwellings across the site to be sold to a Registered Provider. Consultation with the Local Planning Authority has been positive with advice to further consider surrounding developments and the site access. The option for a residential development only, was not explored due to the greater community need for a combined health and wellbeing facility. The inclusion of supplementary residential accommodation provides an opportunity to attract grant funding for support with the site abnormal costs.
- 3.7 To attract the LGA grant funding the project is required to include Self & Custom Build (S&CB) residential units. Further details on the S&CB government initiative have been included in Appendix 2. The project proposes a completed shell and core at the 2nd floor for the residential S&CB element, which will be made available to the successfully procured Registered Provider to then work with the occupiers to design and self-finish their homes. With this approach a first in Wolverhampton, the S&CB owners will be able to design open or conventional layouts, determine room sizes, kitchen layouts, bathroom pod layouts, internal finishes and material specification.

Scheme financial viability

- 3.8 An outline construction cost plan for the development, estimating the project cost has been prepared and this includes contingency to cover project risk. Grant funding and public intervention is required to ensure the project is viable. Should the project costs increase where the contract is tendered there is a possibility that this grant may be increased to reflect the larger viability gap, however if this is the case this will be brought forward in a further report.
- 3.9 Considering current residential sales rates, the appraisal estimates the sale value for the apartments, this income will be sought from the Registered Provider in advance of expenditure, to offset against the costs of the development. If this value and/or the amount required to support the cost of the residential build is not achieved with offers from Registered Providers then the project will look to seek open market offers from the private sector. This would impact on the S&CB proposals but maintain the viability of the scheme.
- 3.10 In addition to the sale income of the apartments and dwellings, the project will also benefit from savings from surrendering leases in alternative locations and utility costs. To maintain a strong and disciplined control on project costs and programme, in addition to the provision of internal resources an external team of professional consultants will be appointed to lead the project after obtaining planning consent and for monitoring purposes. This will offer assurance during the development stages of the project and robust contract management during the delivery stage.

Delivery Timescales

- 3.11 The following are key milestones to help understand the roadmap to delivering the overall project based on the preferred option evaluated in section 4.0:

Cabinet Approval	Mar 2022
Planning consent approval	Oct 2022
Release of Tenders	Jan 2023
Start Construction works	April 2023
Construction completion and site opening Health facility	Sept 2024
Shell completion for residential and handover to Registered Provider for internal fit-out and self & Custom Build	Oct 2024
Completion of residential by Registered Provider and overall project	Oct 2024

Proposal Conditions and Consideration

- 3.12 To reduce the financial risk to the Council and maintain an ambitious project but affordable, the following activities are proposed as conditions, prior to any construction contract award:
1. Outline planning consent is obtained.
 2. Grant funding is secured to support costs and bridge the viability gap.

3. Cost certainty is achieved with market tendering for the construction.
4. Pre-lets to health care GP's, RWT district nurses team and a Pharmacy, all with long term leases are in place.
5. Pre-sale sale of the residential accommodation to a procured Registered Provider is achieved.

The following are advantages and disadvantages identified to understand the benefits, challenges, risks and likely issues, whilst trying to unlock the Council asset.

Advantages

- Securing the future of high-quality primary care in Oxley area for the existing population and provide capacity to respond to future growth in demand.
- Provision of new much needed quality homes in Oxley that are affordable, suitable for key workers and available for self & Custom build and supports the Wolverhampton Housing Strategy 2019 – 2024.
- The addition of housing to the health facility attracts opportunity for grant funding to support abnormal costs.
- The Council would hold an occupied asset upon completion.
- The design quality and control would be maintained by the Council to deliver a sustainable and net carbon zero asset.
- Any adaptations to the proposed design could be easily considered at cost should end user space requirements change.
- Avoid an alternative use being proposed over a much needed community facility.

Disadvantages

- Council capital investment required to fund project
- Increased asset management requirements

4.0 Evaluation of alternative options

- 4.1 In addition to the proposal there are alternative options explored to seek beneficial use of the site and opportunities to unlock the Council asset. Whilst evaluating the options and determining the preferred option in the outline business case, it was imperative to ensure good value for money, maximising outputs from the asset with job creation, remediation of brownfield land and addressing community needs with the provision of modern health facilities and affordable housing are accomplished.
- 4.2 **Option 1: Do nothing** – The buildings have already been programmed to be demolished and this is included in the Corporate Asset Capital Programme, seeking approval. Beyond this activity there would be no new proposals and the asset would continue to result in non-recoverable maintenance and management costs.

Advantages

- No additional capital expenditure or borrowing is required to develop the site.
- The site remains as a void asset increasing in value overtime.

Disadvantages

- Continuation of anti-social behaviour affecting neighbours including Oxley Lodge a care facility for the elderly which shares access from the Council asset.
- The opportunity to offer other beneficial uses to the community which cannot be provided locally, is deferred indefinitely.
- Ongoing non-recoverable costs with site security, insurance, business rates, fly tipping clearance and grounds maintenance.
- Deterioration of the neighbourhood due to a redundant building with no upkeep.

4.3 **Option 2: Freehold disposal of the asset** – This option would result in the asset to be auctioned to the highest bidder.

Advantages

- Any existing liabilities such as anti-social behaviour and non-recoverable expenditure would transfer to the new proprietor.
- The sale of the site would generate income for the Council.

Disadvantages

- No control to the type of development, quality and use can, other than those permitted under planning policy.
- It is likely the communities need for a health facility will not be provided.
- The growing need and search for land to develop a modern health facility and provision of affordable housing would remain with the Council, in particular the health facility considering the responsibility and partnership with the CCG.

4.4 **Option 3: Develop a Modern Health and wellbeing facility** – This option would result in the asset being designed and built by the Council with pre-lets to health care GPs, RWT district nurses team and a Pharmacy, all with long term leases.

Advantages

- Securing the future of high-quality primary care in Oxley area for the existing population and provide capacity to respond to future growth in demand.
- Adequate capacity to expand facility in the future
- Any adaptations to the proposed design could be easily considered at cost should end user space requirements change

- Avoid an alternative use being proposed over a much needed community facility

Disadvantages

- Council capital investment required to fund project
- Additional funding required to fund abnormal costs as grant funding would not be eligible as there is no housing proposed
- Increased asset management requirements

5.0 Reasons for decision

5.1 Based on the proposal and alternative options, the recommendation for Cabinet is to pursue the proposals as outlined in section 3.0, which would offer a mixed-use scheme with a modern health facility and residential accommodation for key workers and affordable housing. Without public intervention, provision of land and funding the opportunity to develop a prominent site in the heart of the Oxley community and close proximity to the city's transport links, is unlikely to progress and will continue to be stalled, due to the viability issues.

5.2 The advantages and disadvantages of the alternative options considered are detailed above. Option 1 is difficult to pursue and be seen as 'lack of activity' by the Council. Option 2 is not advised unless alternative sites are made available for a health facility in Oxley, which currently is not possible based on property and land searches. Finally, option 3 to develop a health facility only will result in the lost opportunity to attract grant funding, the site would also be underutilised considering there is opportunity to provide an additional use, such as housing, further it does not meet the needs of the wider community and so this is not recommended to be pursued.

6.0 Financial implications

6.1 At this point the pre-tender gross project cost is estimated and this includes all construction works, professional fees and a robust contingency, which has been allowed for in the development costs estimate to cover risk of inflation, impact of COVID-19, design risk and BREXIT related matters.
The success in securing the grants and contribution from the CCG as detailed above will reduce the financial risk of the project to the Council.

6.1 It should be noted there are financial risks associated with the project; these will be monitored as the project progresses.

[HM/10032022/V]

7.0 Legal implications

7.1 In the event of the recommendations detailed in this report being approved, the Council propose to procure the development of a modern health, wellbeing, and families facility and residential accommodation at former Oxley Day Training Centre site. As such, the Council will need to ensure that it complies with its Constitution and its statutory powers in the public interest and for the purpose of which those powers have been conferred.

- 7.2 The Council has fiduciary duties that require it to act in the interest of local taxpayers. Section 151 of the Local Government Act places a general duty on local authorities to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs.
- 7.3 The Council will need to undertake a procurement for the proposed development and associated goods, works and services. It will need to adhere to its Contracts and Procedure Rules and the law relating to Subsidy Control.
- 7.4 In relation to the Council's assets the Council will need to comply with its Constitution and Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 in relation to the proposed disposals in the leases. Section 123(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 states that a council may dispose of land held by them in any manner they wish. This includes granting leases as proposed in the report. In Section 123 (2) of the Local Government Act 1972, except with the consent of the Secretary of State, a Council shall not dispose of land, otherwise by way of a short tenancy, for a consideration less than the best that can reasonably be obtained.
- 7.5 Under the Local Government Act 1972, the Secretary of State can issue a General Disposal Consent covering particular types of cases. For instance, a local authority may consider disposals at a reduced consideration if the purposes for which the land is to be disposed of is likely to contribute to the promotion or improvement of the economic, social, or environmental well being of its area. However, the Council must be aware of the rules relating to Subsidy Control as disposing of land at an undervalue could confer a benefit and therefore stand alone and unequivocal legal advice is required in respect of this proposal. The advice has therefore been sought and obtained from an external law firm.
- 7.6 The Council's Legal Services will provide legal advice throughout the progression of the matter in relation to the various legal agreements, which include the leases, funding agreements, contracts, and other ancillary agreements.
[JA/10032022/D]

8.0 Equalities implications

- 8.1 An equalities analysis has established that this project is relevant to the Council's duty to advancing equality of opportunity. The Senior Equality Diversity and Inclusion Officer has been satisfactorily consulted on this matter and no implications have been highlighted whilst jointly reviewing the Equality Analysis Form.

9.0 All other implications

- 9.1 The proposed solution is supported by Corporate Landlord as it provides new facilities for the Council's North Social Care Team that are much needed in the area and helps reduce operation costs. The scheme will also address the CCG's requirements which seeks the Councils assistance. A consultation with the Health and Wellbeing team members was also carried out.

- 9.2 The Health & Safety team have been consulted on the concept and at this stage there are no concerns. As the project develops the team shall be involved throughout the process. The demolition of the buildings is being managed as a separate project by Corporate Landlord
- 9.3 The selection of the Registered Provider and award of the professional team and construction works will be fully tendered compliant with the Councils and public procurement rules and policies. A clear procurement and contract strategy are to be developed as part of the project in consultation with the Councils procurement team.

10.0 Schedule of background papers

- 10.1 None.

11.0 Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix 1: Site Plan
- 11.2 Appendix 2: Self & Custom Build Initiative Background

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APPENDIX 1 – SITE PLAN



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Appendix 2 – Self & Custom & Build Initiative background

[Extract from www.local.gov.uk website]

The housing market is dominated by a small number of volume builders and to reach the ambition of delivering 300,000 additional homes per year we must maximise delivery across new and existing sub-sectors, catalysing new tenures and giving consumers greater choice over housing products.

Self and custom-build housing harnesses the power and initiative of individuals to instigate building projects giving them control over the look and feel of their home. Often utilising small sites of little interest to major builders, the sector brings forward housing projects delivered through SMEs and specialist builders, helping to build a more diverse and resilient housebuilding sector, and improving the design and quality of homes as they are built by the people who will live in them.

The Government is committed to increasing the number of self and custom-build homes in this country and to establish this route as a mainstream option for people to access housing or move home. A key challenge for self and custom builders is the lack of supply of serviced plots. There are often competing priorities for the use of the land and a lack of available capital and revenue funding to bring them forward which can cause demand to outstrip supply. The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act (as amended 2016), known as the Right to Build, places a duty on local authorities to support the provision of serviced plots, requiring them to hold a register of people who want to self and custom-build in their area and permission sufficient serviced plots to meet demand within 3 years. The BLRF self and custombuild funding provides support to councils to bring forward serviced self and custombuild plots on their own land.

[Extract from <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/self-build-and-custom-housebuilding>]
Self-build and custom housebuilding covers a wide spectrum, from projects where individuals are involved in building or managing the construction of their home from beginning to end, to projects where individuals commission their home, making key design and layout decisions, but the home is built ready for occupation ('turnkey').

The [Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 \(as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016\)](#) provides a legal definition of self-build and custom housebuilding. The Act does not distinguish between self-build and custom housebuilding and provides that both are where an individual, an association of individuals, or persons working with or for individuals or associations of individuals, build or complete houses to be occupied as homes by those individuals. Self-build or custom build helps to diversify the housing market and increase consumer choice. Self-build and custom housebuilders choose the design and layout of their home, and can be innovative in both its design and construction

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CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Meeting of the City Council 6 April 2022
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Report title	Youth Offending Team Inspection Outcome	
Referring body	Cabinet – 23 March 2022	
Councillor to present report	Councillor Beverley Momenabadi	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Cabinet Member with lead responsibility	Councillor Beverley Momenabadi, Children and Young People	
Accountable director	Emma Bennett, Executive Director of Families	
Originating service	Youth Offending Team	
Accountable employee	Rachel King Tel Email	Head of Service 07854943254 Rachel.King@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report has been considered by	Cabinet	23 March 2022

Recommendation for decision:

The Council is recommended to:

1. Endorse the adoption of the Youth Offending Team inspection action plan.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the recent Youth Offending Team (YOT) inspection outcome which was rated as Good; to identify the areas of strength and the areas for development that will support Wolverhampton YOT to build on its strong foundations and ensure the team continues to deliver a high-quality service for young people. An action plan has been produced based on the inspection recommendations and progress will be overseen by the multi-agency YOT Management Board on a quarterly basis.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 On 23 March 2022 Cabinet considered a report on Youth Offending Team Inspection Outcome.
- 2.2 Copies of the report have been supplied to Councillors and can also be accessed online on the Council's website [here](#).
- 2.3 Cabinet recommended to Council that it:
1. Endorse the adoption of the Youth Offending Team inspection action plan.

3.0 Financial implications

- 3.1 The financial implications are detailed in the Cabinet report of 23 March 2022.

4.0 Legal implications

- 4.1 The legal implications are detailed in the Cabinet report of 23 March 2022.

5.0 Equalities implications

- 5.1 The equalities implications are detailed in the Cabinet report of 23 March 2022.

6.0 All other implications

- 6.1 All other implications are detailed in the Cabinet report of 23 March 2022.

7.0 Schedule of background papers

- 7.1 Cabinet report of 23 March - [Youth Offending Team Inspection Outcome](#)

CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Cabinet 23 March 2022
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Report title	Youth Offending Team Inspection Outcome	
Decision designation	RED	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Beverley Momenabadi Children and Young People	
Key decision	Yes	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Accountable Director	Emma Bennett, Executive Director of Families	
Originating service	Youth Offending Team	
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Report to be/has been considered by	Directorate Leadership Team	24 February 2022
	Strategic Executive Board	25 February 2022
	Scrutiny Board	18 February 2022 (via email)

Recommendation for decision:

That Cabinet recommends that Council:

1. Endorse the adoption of the Youth Offending Team (YOT) inspection action plan

Recommendation for noting:

The Cabinet is asked to note:

1. The 'Good' inspection rating of the YOT and how the positive work will continue to further improve services for young people in the city.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the recent Youth Offending Team inspection outcome which was rated as Good; to identify the areas of strength and the areas for development that will support Wolverhampton YOT to build on its strong foundations and ensure the team continues to deliver a high-quality service for young people. An action plan has been produced based on the inspection recommendations and progress will be overseen by the multi-agency YOT Management Board on a quarterly basis.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, each Local Authority is required to have in place arrangements for the delivery of Youth Justice services. YOTs are statutory, multi-agency partnerships aimed at dealing with the needs of the whole child. YOTs are required to have staff from local authority social care and education services, the Police, the National Probation Service and local health services.
- 2.2 YOTs work with children aged 10 to 18 who have been sentenced by a court, or who have come to the attention of the Police but have not been charged – instead, they are dealt with out of court. The key focus of YOTs is to reduce the number of first-time entrants into the criminal justice system, to reduce re-offending rates and to reduce the number of young people who receive custodial sentences.
- 2.3 The YOT supports some of the most vulnerable young people and families within the city and has a clear focus on promoting community safety and protecting the public. The work of the YOT is aligned to the Council's priorities; by preventing offending this contributes to stronger families where children grow up well and achieve, and creates safer, more cohesive communities.
- 2.4 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) inspects youth offending services with a focus on three key areas – organizational delivery (including partnership working, leadership and governance); the quality of court disposal work; and the quality of out of court disposal work.
- 2.5 More recently HMIP have included a separate judgement around resettlement support which specifically focuses on how well YOTs support young people being released from custody.
- 2.6 Wolverhampton YOT were inspected in October 2021 and the inspection report was published on 8 February 2022
- 2.7 Overall, Wolverhampton YOT was rated as 'Good', with five specific aspects judged to be 'Outstanding', six 'Good' and one 'Requiring Improvement'. The quality of resettlement policy and provision was also inspected and separately rated as 'Outstanding'.
- 2.8 The inspection found an effective service, with strengths across assessment and service delivery for both court and out-of-court disposals. Positively, inspectors found that the

YOT had adapted quickly to the impact of Covid-19 and ensured that children and their families continued to be supported through a creative approach to delivering interventions.

- 2.9 The dedication of staff was specifically noted in that case managers go ‘over and above’ what is required to engage children and families. Engagement is achieved through creative interventions that support the trauma-informed approach promoted by the YOT.
- 2.10 Whilst the inspection was overwhelmingly positive, there were some areas identified for improvement - the need for more effective contingency planning in order to manage and mitigate the risk of harm to others; the need for high quality provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), especially for those with education, health and care plans (EHCPs); and more work required to better understand the experiences of Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic groups in the youth justice system.
- 2.11 As a result of the inspection findings, HMIP made three recommendations based on the areas identified for improvement. See appendix 1 for a copy of the full YOT inspection report.
- 2.12 In response to the inspection recommendations, an action plan has been produced to identify how areas for development will be addressed. This plan was submitted to HMIP on 25 February, following sign off from the YOT management board, which is the YOT’s governing body. See appendix 2 for a copy of the YOT inspection action plan.
- 2.13 Progress against the action plan will be overseen by the YOT management board on a quarterly basis.
- 2.14 Members of the Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel were consulted in relation to the draft action plan prior to it being submitted to HMIP on 25 February 2022. The feedback received was incorporated into the final version of the plan. A progress update on the inspection action plan will be presented to the Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel in October 2022.

3.0 Progress

- 3.1 Overall, Wolverhampton YOT was rated as ‘Good’, with five specific aspects judged to be ‘Outstanding’, six ‘Good’ and one ‘Requiring Improvement’. The quality of resettlement policy and provision was also inspected and separately rated as ‘Outstanding’. Table 1 below outlines the judgements for the specific areas within each domain.

Overall rating	Good
Organisational delivery	
Governance and leadership	Good
Staff	Outstanding
Partnerships and services	Outstanding

Information and facilities	Outstanding
Court disposals	
Assessment	Good
Planning	Requires improvement
Implementation and delivery	Outstanding
Reviewing	Good
Out-of-court disposals	
Assessment	Good
Planning	Good
Implementation and delivery	Outstanding
Out-of-court disposal policy and provision	Good
Resettlement	
Resettlement policy and provision	Outstanding

- 3.2 Key findings about the quality of organisational delivery included YOT management board having good representation and members being fully involved; clear evidence of a trauma-informed approach being reflected in the range of interventions available; an impressive restorative justice unit which takes a holistic approach to working with children and victims; access to an excellent suite of data; and a strong integrated health offer in the team.
- 3.3 However, with regards to organisational delivery, inspector's felt that the YOT management board members' knowledge of the profile and needs of the children was not always evident; there was a gap in high quality provision for children with SEND, especially those with an EHCP; and the YOT management board needed to be confident that YOT staff are comfortable having conversations about children's lived experience when considering their ethnicity.
- 3.4 Key findings about the quality of the YOT's work around court disposals included high quality assessments; effective involvement of children and their parents/carers with planning and delivery taking account of the child's safety and wellbeing.
- 3.5 However, when auditing court disposal cases, inspectors found that there needed to be improvement when assessing a child's risk of harm to others too; staff do not regularly take account of a child's diversity needs when completing assessments; and staff do not consistently set out the contingency arrangements to manage the child's safety and wellbeing and their risk of harm to others.
- 3.6 Key findings about the quality of out of court disposal work included assessments being thorough and effective; victims' needs and wishes being taken into account; strong

planning including young people being supported to access mainstream services following completion of the out-of-court disposal work; and an effective deferred prosecution scheme giving children the opportunity to engage with an intervention and be diverted away from the criminal justice system.

- 3.7 However, with the out of court cases that were audited, inspectors found that the assessment of children's risk of harm to others needed further clarity and contingency planning needed to evidence how a child's risk towards other would be effectively managed.
- 3.8 Work around resettlement when young people leave custody, was found to be well coordinated across the partnership. Inspectors judged the resettlement work in Wolverhampton YOT as 'outstanding' and noted that the YOT's resettlement panels are well established.
- 3.9 With regards to contingency planning, there will be refresher training for all staff to focus on the risks a young person poses, the nature of these concerns and the views of victims. This will ensure that contingency plans are identified to manage the risk of serious harm, safety and well-being.
- 3.10 The access to high quality provision for children with SEND/ EHCPs is a citywide priority that was also identified within the SEND inspection September 2021. Therefore, the YOT will ensure it is engaged with the citywide system development work around SEND. In particular, the YOT management board will provide strategic oversight of the quality of SEND/ ECHP provision for the YOT cohort of young people. The YOT will ensure it is represented at all relevant SEND task and finish groups to ensure the disproportionate number of young people known to the YOT with SEND, and the quality of provision is addressed.
- 3.11 As part of the SEND development work, a vulnerability matrix is being developed to enable the monitoring of children and young people of school age, to track school attendance, SEND support, EHCPs, suspensions and exclusions along with other areas of vulnerability, for example, exploitation risks. The YOT will have access to this information to improve the monitoring of young people known to YOT and also help inform whether young people are in appropriate learning environments.
- 3.12 Another key development across the wider SEND system is to implement a co-produced quality assurance framework with parents/ carers, young people, health, education and social care. This framework will allow improved oversight of the quality of provision and will include themed audits with specific groups of young people. Young people working with the YOT will be one cohort specifically focused upon.
- 3.13 To improve the YOTs work around understanding disproportionality, YOT staff will be provided with refresher training around how to consider diversity within assessments and how this should influence interventions. Cultural competence training will also be completed to increase staff levels of confidence in having conversations with young

people about identity. There will be ongoing engagement with young people to provide a focus on young peoples' lived experience.

4.0 Evaluation of alternative options

4.1 Given the statutory requirements regarding the YOT and the report from HMIP inspection, the YOT management Board agreed the action plan for submission to HMIP on 25 February 2022 and alternative options were not considered to be appropriate in this instance.

5.0 Reasons for decision(s)

5.1 To have a YOT is a statutory function and this report and action plan represent a response to a recent Youth Offending Team inspection. The action plan is a requirement stipulated by HMIP following the inspection. The YOT management board approved the plan for submission to HMIP on 25 February 2022 in order to comply with HMIP timescales and deadline.

6.0 Financial implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Any costs associated with any actions will be met from existing budgets within Children's and Young People's Service.
[JG/22022022/T]

7.0 Legal implications

7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the report.

7.2 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires each local authority in England and Wales to deliver youth justice services in line with a statutory framework that outlines YOS responsibilities in relation to out of Court disposals, Court work, bail and remand, the assessment of young people who offend, the provision of Court reports, the delivery of community interventions, and custody and resettlement.

7.3 As a statutory plan, the Youth Justice Plan forms part of the Council's policy framework and as such requires approval of Cabinet and Full Council.
[TC/15022021/B]

8.0 Equalities implications

8.1 The YOT provides services for some of the most vulnerable young people both as offenders, but also as victims of youth crime. There is on-going work to address the potential for disproportionality in the Youth Justice System. The inspection noted that a significant amount of work has been undertaken by Wolverhampton YOT to develop a better understanding. However, more work is required to evidence how the child's lived experience is taken into consideration to inform the planning and delivery of interventions.

- 8.2 YOT performance data indicates a disproportionate representation of males from Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic groups. The YOT cannot solely influence and address this disproportionality as the police and the courts are also key in the decisions made when a Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young person commits an offence. There is also a key role for universal services, e.g. health and education, to deliver early intervention support to prevent Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people entering the youth justice system. The YOT, as a multi-agency forum, will continue to coordinate a partnership response to disproportionality and the YOT's deferred prosecution scheme specifically aims to divert young people from the criminal justice system as well as identify unmet health needs.
- 8.3 The YOT is committed to developing practice and interventions that positively engage young people from Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic communities. Although there is a disproportionate representation of black males within the criminal justice system, Wolverhampton YOT data shows that black males have better engagement rates with the YOT than white males. Similarly, the re-offending rates for black males are lower than for white males. Staff will be provided with further training around cultural competence to improve confidence levels when having conversations with young people about their identity.

9.0 All other implications

- 9.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

10.0 Schedule of background papers

- 10.1 There are no background papers pertaining to this report.

11.0 Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix 1: Full Youth Offending Team inspection report.
- 11.2 Appendix 2: Youth Offending Team inspection action plan.

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Her Majesty's
Inspectorate of
Probation

An inspection of youth offending services in
Wolverhampton

HM Inspectorate of Probation, February 2022

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The role of HM Inspectorate of Probation

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation is the independent inspector of youth offending and probation services in England and Wales. We report on the effectiveness of probation and youth offending service work with adults and children.

We inspect these services and publish inspection reports. We highlight good and poor practice and use our data and information to encourage high-quality services. We are independent of government and speak independently.

Please note that throughout the report the names in the practice examples have been changed to protect the individual's identity.

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Foreword

This inspection is part of our programme of youth offending service (YOS) inspections. We have inspected and rated Wolverhampton Youth Offending Team (YOT) across three broad areas: the arrangements for organisational delivery of the service, the quality of work done with children sentenced by the courts, and the quality of out-of-court disposal work. Overall, Wolverhampton YOT was rated as 'Good'. We also inspected the quality of resettlement policy and provision, which was separately rated as 'Outstanding'.

The inspection found an effective service, with strengths apparent across assessment and service delivery for both court and out-of-court disposals. Reviewing was also robust in post-court cases. The YOT has an excellent understanding of what is required to deliver services and interventions to children and families, and work to promote this was evident. However, improvements were required in planning for a child's risk of harm to others. Clearer analysis and improved contingency planning were considered necessary to manage and mitigate these risks.

The YOT's arrangements for staffing, partnerships and information and facilities are rated 'Outstanding' and its governance and leadership are 'Good'.

The inspection found that the YOT adapted quickly to the impact of Covid-19 and ensured that children and their families continued to be supported. The service was creative in its approach to delivering interventions and this was especially evident in how it made adaptations to the referral order panel to ensure children and families remained included and supported throughout the process.

The YOT benefits from sound provision from health services, including a full-time forensic and clinical psychologist. There is an excellent framework in place to support work with victims using restorative practices, and with children who are displaying harmful sexual behaviour. However, there is limited provision across the area for children with special educational needs and disabilities, especially for those with education, health and care plans. The board recognises further work is required to improve this.

Considerable work has been carried out to analyse disproportionality in the numbers of black, Asian and minority ethnic children known to the YOT. Although this is encouraging from a strategic perspective, the board needs to do more to understand the experiences of these children so that the services delivered effectively support their needs.

The YOT has a resettlement policy in place that includes guidance for the resettlement support panels. These have been operating for a number of years and have a multi-agency membership, which helps to meet the needs of children leaving custody.















Staff are offered the opportunity for development through their roles as champions in specific areas of practice, and training is prioritised. We found that case managers go 'over and above' what is required to engage children and families. They are creative when delivering interventions and use language and techniques that support the trauma-informed approach promoted by the YOT.

In this report, we make a number of recommendations which we hope will support Wolverhampton to build on their strong foundations and ensure they continue to deliver a high-quality service for children.



Justin Russell
HM Chief Inspector of Probation

Ratings

Wolverhampton Youth Offending Team		Score	28/36
Overall rating		Good	
1. Organisational delivery			
1.1	Governance and leadership	Good	
1.2	Staff	Outstanding	
1.3	Partnerships and services	Outstanding	
1.4	Information and facilities	Outstanding	
2. Court disposals			
2.1	Assessment	Good	
2.2	Planning	Requires improvement	
2.3	Implementation and delivery	Outstanding	
2.4	Reviewing	Good	
3. Out-of-court disposals			
3.1	Assessment	Good	
3.2	Planning	Good	
3.3	Implementation and delivery	Outstanding	
3.4	Out-of-court disposal policy and provision	Good	
4. Resettlement			
4.1	Resettlement policy and provision	Outstanding	

Executive summary

Overall, Wolverhampton YOT is rated as: 'Good'. This rating has been determined by inspecting the YOT in three areas of its work, referred to as 'domains'. We inspect against 12 core 'standards', shared between the domains. The standards are based on established models and frameworks, which are grounded in evidence, learning and experience. They are designed to drive improvements in the quality of work with children who have offended.¹ Published scoring rules generate the overall YOT rating.² We inspected the quality of resettlement policy and provision separately and rated this work as: 'Outstanding'. The findings and subsequent ratings in those domains are described below.

Organisational delivery

The YOT's arrangements for partnership and services, staffing, and information and facilities are rated as 'Outstanding'. The arrangements for governance and leadership are rated as 'Good'.

Wolverhampton YOT management board members were actively involved in the National Standards audit and each has now been allocated a lead area with action plans to track and report on. The board is aware of the limited provision that is available across the area for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and especially for those with education, health and care plans (EHCPs). The YOT has access to speech and language services. Work has also been undertaken to train staff in recognising children's speech and language needs. However, the resources to develop this provision are limited and the YOT would benefit from increased capacity to ensure that all of the needs of YOT children are met effectively. Much work has been undertaken to analyse disproportionality in the numbers of black, Asian and minority ethnic children known to the YOT. This has resulted in partner agencies analysing their own data and action plans being developed. Although this is encouraging from a strategic perspective, the board needs to do more to understand the experiences of these children so that services are delivered which effectively support their needs.

Staff at the YOT report that they are comfortable with their workload and are offered the opportunity for development through their roles as champions in specific areas of practice. A trauma-informed approach to working with children and families is evident in the language used by staff and the creativity of the interventions that they deliver. Staff know the children very well and go 'over and above' what is expected of them to ensure children are engaged and receiving the appropriate provision. Training is prioritised and staff are encouraged to find new ways of working with children. The YOT has considered the views of staff regarding their working conditions and practice skills, and appropriately adapted their learning and development to ensure wherever possible the impact of Covid-19 has been minimised.

The YOT has a performance analyst who provides comprehensive performance reports. It has a strong offer from health services, including a full-time forensic and clinical psychologist. All children receive a health needs assessment. The YOT has access to an

¹ HM Inspectorate of Probation's standards can be found here:

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/about-our-work/our-standards-and-ratings/>

² Each of the 12 standards is scored on a 0–3 scale in which 'Inadequate' = 0; 'Requires improvement' = 1; 'Good' = 2; 'Outstanding' = 3. Adding these scores produces a total score ranging from 0 to 36, which is banded to produce the overall rating, as follows: 0–6 = 'Inadequate', 7–18 = 'Requires improvement', 19–30 = 'Good', 31–36 = 'Outstanding'.

educational psychologist and a speech and language therapist, although it is noted that the speech and language therapist capacity is quite limited. YOT workers are trained in advocating for children with SEND and those with EHCPs. The YOT has an excellent restorative justice unit, which is victim-focused in both its direct and indirect reparation work.

The facilities available to YOT children at Retreat Street are a strength and offer high-quality provision, where children can access other agencies alongside the YOT. The children helped to design the premises and it is a welcoming, child-friendly space.

There is evidence that the service is continually learning and uses research to develop the services it provides. It has developed its use of technology to engage children and families and gathers feedback from them to improve the service offer.

Key findings about organisational delivery are as follows:

- Board members were fully involved with the Youth Justice Board (YJB) National Standards self-assessment and were allocated roles in specific areas of practice.
- The service manager is committed to delivering services that are research-led and evidence-based.
- Staff and managers go 'over and above' what is expected of them to ensure that children are engaged and receiving the appropriate provision.
- The process for referral orders is inclusive and encourages **engagement from the child and their family**.
- The trauma-informed approach is reflected in the range of interventions available. These were personalised to best meet the needs of the child.
- The YOT has its own dashboard, which gives it access to an excellent suite of data.
- The YOT has an impressive restorative justice unit, which takes a holistic approach to working with children and victims.
- Health provision to the YOT is good and staff consider the health needs of all of the children and decide who is best to work with them.
- The YOT reviews cases when serious incidents occur and learns from the outcomes of other areas' inspections in order to improve practice.
- The quality of management oversight in both post-court and out-of-court cases was a significant strength.

But:

- Although the board is presented with very comprehensive performance reports, some board members' knowledge of the profile and needs of the children was not always evident during the inspection.
- The partnership does not provide sufficient high-quality provision for children with SEND, especially those with an EHCP.
- The YOT has limited access to speech and language services, and although it accesses provision elsewhere, it has little capacity to develop the provision further.
- The YOT needs to be confident that staff are comfortable having conversations about children's lived experience when considering their ethnicity.

Court disposals

We took a detailed look at 11 community sentences managed by the YOT. We also conducted 11 interviews with the relevant case managers. We examined the quality of assessment, planning, implementation and delivery of services, and reviewing. Each of these elements was inspected in respect of work done to address desistance, to keep the child safe, and to keep other people safe.

Our key findings about court disposals are as follows:

- Assessments were satisfactory in the areas of desistance and safety and wellbeing. They take account of the child's strengths and protective factors, as well as their ability and motivation to change.
- Case managers involved children and their parents or carers in planning.
- When planning for the child's safety and wellbeing, their risks were addressed, and other agencies were involved appropriately.
- In the great majority of cases, implementation and delivery of services were satisfactory in all three areas of desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others.
- Case managers focused on developing and maintaining an effective relationship with children and their parents or carers.
- Staff were creative when delivering interventions and used language and techniques that support the trauma-informed approach promoted by the YOT.

But:

- When assessing a child's risk of harm to others, staff need to identify and analyse more clearly the risks that the child poses, including who is at risk and the nature of that risk.
- Staff do not regularly take account of a child's diversity needs when completing assessments.
- The concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims are not consistently considered when planning to address the risk of harm to others.
- Staff did not consistently set out the contingency arrangements to manage the child's safety and wellbeing and their risk of harm to others in the cases inspected.

Out-of-court disposals

We inspected 13 cases managed by the YOT that had received an out-of-court disposal. These consisted of five youth conditional cautions, six youth cautions and two community resolutions. We interviewed the case managers in 12 cases.

We examined the quality of assessment, planning, and implementation and delivery of services. Each of these elements was inspected in respect of work done to address desistance, to keep the child safe and to keep other people safe. The quality of the work undertaken for each factor needs to be above a specified threshold for each aspect of supervision to be rated as satisfactory.

We also inspected the quality of policy and provision in place for out-of-court disposals, using evidence from documents, meetings and interviews.

Our key findings about out-of-court disposals are as follows:

- When carrying out an assessment, case managers considered the child's strengths and protective factors, as well as their level of maturity, ability and motivation to change.
- Where a victim had been identified, their needs and wishes were taken into account. The views of parents or carers were considered as part of the assessment and planning process.
- Planning was rated as a strength in the areas of desistance and safety and wellbeing. It effectively set out the opportunities for community integration and supported access to mainstream services following completion of the out-of-court disposal work.
- Implementation and delivery of services were excellent in all three areas of desistance, a child's safety and wellbeing and their risk of harm to others.
- Staff used creative methods to help children participate in the interventions and exceeded the expectations of their role to meet the needs of the children and their families.
- The YOT has an effective deferred prosecution scheme that gives children the opportunity to engage with an intervention and then be diverted away from the criminal justice system.

But:

- Assessments of children's risk of harm to others need to identify more clearly who is at risk and the nature of the risk.
- Contingency planning needs to be evident so that the arrangements for managing a child's risk of harm to others is clear.

Resettlement

We inspected the quality of policy and provision in place for resettlement work for children leaving custody, using evidence from documents, meetings and interviews. To evaluate that work, we inspected one case managed by the YOT that had received a custodial sentence.

The YOT has had a resettlement policy in place for a number of years, which includes guidance on the operation of resettlement panels. The policy has been reviewed and updated. There is a local agreement with children's social care that all children will be released into appropriate accommodation. There is a representative from the secure estate on the management board, and evidence that the YOT appropriately escalates concerns about children in custody.

Our key findings about resettlement work are as follows:

- The YOT has resettlement panels that are well established and considered effective by staff and managers.
- There is a commitment to these panels from partners to support effective joint working.
- YOT staff have taken parents and carers and siblings to visits and facilitated video calls and telephone calls so that families can stay in touch.

- The management board has a designated member with oversight for the secure estate.
- There is a local arrangement with children's social care to ensure that all children are released to suitable accommodation.

But:

- There had been no specific training for staff in managing resettlement cases.

Recommendations

As a result of our inspection findings, we have made three recommendations that we believe, if implemented, will have a positive impact on the quality of youth offending services in Wolverhampton. This will improve the lives of the children in contact with youth offending services, and better protect the public.

The YOT management board should:

1. make sure that all YOT children with SEND, and especially those with an EHCP, have access to high-quality education and training services that are matched to their needs
2. ensure that staff are appropriately trained and confident in having conversations to understand black, Asian and minority ethnic children's experiences in order to improve the quality and suitability of service provision.

The YOT service manager should:

3. improve the quality of contingency planning in all cases, when managing and mitigating a child's risk of harm to others.

Background

Youth offending teams (YOTs) work with children aged 10 to 18 who have been sentenced by a court, or who have come to the attention of the police because of their offending behaviour, but have not been charged – instead, they were dealt with out of court. HM Inspectorate of Probation inspects both these aspects of youth offending services.

YOTs are statutory partnerships, and they are multidisciplinary, to deal with the needs of the whole child. They are required to have staff from local authority social care and education services, the police, the National Probation Service and local health services.³ Most YOTs are based within local authorities, although this can vary.

YOT work is governed and shaped by a range of legislation and guidance specific to the youth justice sector (such as the National Standards for Youth Justice) or else applicable across the criminal justice sector (for example, Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements guidance). The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) provides some funding to YOTs. It also monitors their performance and issues guidance to them about how things are to be done.

Wolverhampton is part of the Black Country, which includes the four metropolitan district council areas of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton. It is a city in the West Midlands and has a population of 262,000 based on 2018 mid-term estimates: an increase of almost five per cent from the 2011 census. As of 2019, children aged 10 to 17 years comprise 9.5 per cent of the population. In the 2015 Indices of Deprivation (IMD⁴) scale, Wolverhampton was ranked 17th (with one being the most deprived) of England's 326 local authorities, when ordered by 'rank of average score'.

The City of Wolverhampton has directorates with the relevant senior leadership team for Families, Organisations and Community and Place. The YOT's corporate governance structure sits within the children's social care division of the Families directorate. The YOT service manager is line managed by the Head of Specialist Support, who is accountable to the Deputy Director for Children's Services. The YOT's cohort of children for 2020-2021 showed that 90 per cent of all disposals and all custodial outcomes relate to boys and 10 per cent of the cohort are children in care. Black, Asian and minority ethnic children account for 52 per cent of all disposals and 83 per cent of custodial outcomes. Offences of violence against the person account for 48 per cent of all offences.

The fieldwork for the Wolverhampton YOT inspection started on 25 October 2021

³ The *Crime and Disorder Act 1998* set out the arrangements for local YOTs and partnership working.

⁴ Index of Multiple Deprivation.

Contextual facts

Population information⁵

201	First-time entrant rate per 100,000 in Wolverhampton YOT ⁶
167	First-time entrant rate per 100,000 in England and Wales
40.6%	Reoffending rate in Wolverhampton ⁷
35.6%	Reoffending rate in England and Wales
264,407	Total population Wolverhampton
26,657	Total youth population (10–17 years) in Wolverhampton

Caseload information⁸

Age	10–14 years	15–17 years
Wolverhampton YOS	13%	87%
National average	22%	78%

Race/ethnicity	White	Black and minority ethnic	Unknown
Wolverhampton 10-17-year old population ⁹	61%	39%	0%
Wolverhampton YOS	53%	46%	1%
National average	69%	28%	3%

Gender	Male	Female
Wolverhampton YOS	88%	12%
National average	85%	15%

⁵ Office for National Statistics. (2021). *UK population estimates, mid-2020*.

⁶ Youth Justice Board. (2021). *First-time entrants, January to December 2020*.

⁷ Ministry of Justice. (2021). *Proven reoffending statistics, January to December 2019*.

⁸ Youth Justice Board. (2021). *Youth justice annual statistics: 2019 to 2020*.

⁹ Data supplied by the YOT.

Additional caseload data¹⁰ All supplied by YOT as standard data.

51	Total current caseload: community sentences
4	Total current caseload in custody
91	Total current caseload: out-of-court disposals
13.6%	Proportion of current caseload 'children in care'
4.7%	Percentage of current caseload with child protection plan
19.1%	Percentage of current caseload with child in need plan
8.9%	Percentage of children aged 16 and under in a pupil referral unit or alternative education
15.1%	Percentage of current caseload aged 17+ not in education, training or employment

For children subject to court disposals (including resettlement case):

Offence types ¹¹	%
Violence against the person	82%
Theft and handling stolen goods	9%
Other indictable offences	9%

¹⁰ Data supplied by the YOT, reflecting the caseload at the time of the inspection announcement.

¹¹ Data from the cases assessed during this inspection.

1. Organisational delivery

The YOT's corporate governance structure sits within the children's social care division of the council's Families directorate. The YOT's integration with partners is assisted by the Head of Service for Specialist Support having a broad portfolio, including edge of care services, a residential children's home and, more recently, the Partnership Exploitation and Missing Hub.

Wolverhampton YOT management board is well established, with many experienced members having attended over a sustained period of time. The chair has recently changed, although was the vice chair previously, and so this has provided consistency. Members were actively involved in the National Standards audit and now have lead areas with action plans on which they report progress. The management team is stable and provides an effective conduit between the strategic and operational elements of the service. Each manager has an action plan that links to the youth justice plan.

The board is aware of the limited provision that is available across the area for children with SEND, and especially for those with EHCPs. The YOT has limited access to speech and language services, and although it accesses provision elsewhere, it has little capacity to further develop the provision for YOT children. The YOT has undertaken work to analyse disproportionality in the numbers of black, Asian and minority ethnic children known to the YOT. This has resulted in partner agencies analysing their own data and action plans being developed.

Staff at the YOT report they are comfortable with their workload, receive regular supervision and are offered the opportunity for development, such as through their roles as champions in specific areas of practice. A trauma-informed approach to working with children and families is evident in the language used by staff and the creativity of the interventions that they deliver. Staff know the children very well and go beyond what is expected of them to ensure children are engaged and receiving the appropriate provision. Training is prioritised and staff are encouraged to find innovative ways of working with children. The YOT has considered the views of staff regarding their working conditions and practice skills. It has adapted its learning and development offer as a result of Covid-19 to ensure staff feel appropriately trained and supported. Staff development is also evidenced. The service has recruited practitioners to act-up into more senior positions, seen staff progress from practitioner level to management roles and supported practitioners to achieve external qualifications.

The YOT has a performance analyst who provides detailed performance reports. These allow the YOT to analyse the data on and profile of the children known to the service. The YOT has a strong offer from health services, including a full-time forensic and clinical psychologist, and all children receive a health needs assessment. The YOT has access to an educational psychologist and a speech and language therapist and YOT workers are trained in advocating for SEND children and those with EHCPs. The council recognises that Wolverhampton has high youth unemployment and that this impacts on the quality of provision for SEND children, especially those who are older than 16 and have an EHCP. The YOT has an excellent restorative justice unit that is victim-focused in both its direct and indirect reparation work.

The facilities available to children at Retreat Street are a strength and offer high-quality provision, where children can access other agencies alongside the YOT. The children helped to design the premises and it is a welcoming, child-friendly space.

There is evidence that the service is continually learning and uses research to develop the services it provides. It has developed its use of technology to engage children and families and gathers feedback from them to influence and inform how to improve the service provision.

The YOT has the appropriate policies in place and guidance on these is available. The YOT has had a resettlement policy in place for a number of years, which includes guidance on the operation of resettlement panels. The policy has been reviewed and updated. There is a local agreement with children's social care that all children will be released into appropriate accommodation. There is a representative from the secure estate on the management board, and evidence that the YOT appropriately escalates concerns regarding children in custody.

Strengths:

- Board members were fully involved with the YJB National Standards self-assessment and were allocated roles in specific areas of practice.
- The service manager is committed to delivering services that are research-led and evidence-based.
- Staff and managers go beyond what is expected of them to ensure that children are engaged and receiving the appropriate provision.
- The process for referral orders is inclusive and encourages **engagement from the child and their family**.
- The trauma-informed approach is reflected in the range of interventions that are available. These are personalised to best meet the needs of the child.
- The YOT has its own dashboard, which gives it access to an excellent suite of data.
- The YOT has an impressive restorative justice unit, which takes a holistic approach to working with children and victims.
- Health provision to the YOT is good and staff consider the health needs of all of the children known to the YOT and decide who is best to work with them.
- The YOT reviews cases when serious incidents occur and learns from the outcomes of other areas' inspections in order to improve practice.

Areas for improvement:

- The partnership does not provide sufficient high-quality provision for SEND children, especially those with an EHCP.
- The YOT has limited access to speech and language services, and although it accesses provision elsewhere, it has little capacity to continue to develop the provision further.
- The YOT needs to develop staff confidence to ensure they are comfortable having conversations to understand the child's experience when considering their ethnicity.

Organisations that are well led and well managed are more likely to achieve their aims. We inspect against four standards.

1.1. Governance and leadership



The governance and leadership of the YOT supports and promotes the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children.

Good

Key data¹²

Total spend in previous financial year	£2,242,456
Total projected budget current for financial year	£2,365,837

In making a judgement about governance and leadership, we take into account the answers to the following three questions:

Is there an effective local vision and strategy for the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children?

The chair of the board is a superintendent from West Midlands Police, who has been a member of the board since January 2020. Until June 2021, the chair was from Public Health and the current chair was the vice chair. The board is attended by representatives with the right level of seniority and the chair is effective in managing the members' participation and engagement.

The board includes all statutory partners, as well as some non-statutory agencies, for example a representative from the voluntary and community sector, the court's youth bench chair and a person from HM Young Offender Institution (HMYOI) Werrington. The consistency of attendance by the probation service and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) was challenged by the chair and has now improved.

New board members receive an induction into their role from the chair and/or the service manager. The board's terms of reference were reviewed in March 2021 and standing agenda items were agreed as follows: staffing, partnership update, youth justice plan progress, performance report, disproportionality, safeguarding update and a 'spotlight on practice' section. At a meeting recently, the board heard directly from a child on a YOT order. Listening to the child's experiences had such an impact that some board members met with the child, following the board meeting, to learn more.

Although there have not been any specific development days, one meeting included a workshop to discuss priorities for the YOT. Another meeting focused on the role of each of the members, including an outline of what they can offer the board. The youth justice plan for 2021-2022 was developed following a number of events with the management board. Children, staff, and community panel volunteers were also consulted to gain their views.

Board members were fully involved with the YJB National Standards self-assessment and were allocated roles in specific areas of practice. This led to the board members and staff working together to complete the self-assessment. One board member was allocated the national standard relating to court services. To increase their knowledge of this area of practice, the board member attended a number of court sessions alongside YOT staff.

¹² Data supplied by the YOT.

Do the partnership arrangements actively support effective service delivery?

Issues impacting on youth offending are prominent on the agendas of other key strategic groups within the City of Wolverhampton. These include the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership, the Health and Wellbeing board, the Safeguarding Together board and the police's local Tactical Delivery Board.

The number of looked after children on an out-of-court disposal or a court order is in line with the number of looked after children generally in the Wolverhampton area. The YOT regularly monitors arrangements between children's homes and the police to ensure that policies and practices do not result in children being criminalised unnecessarily.

The management board escalated safeguarding concerns regarding two children in HMYOI Werrington. These concerns were raised by the management board to the Wolverhampton safeguarding manager and then to the safeguarding board for Werrington and assurances were received from the establishment.

The partnership does not provide sufficient high-quality provision for children with SEND children, especially those with an EHCP. The board has acknowledged this and will develop an action plan that also takes account of the findings from the local authority's recent SEND inspection.

Does the leadership of the YOT support effective service delivery?

The service manager has held various roles within the YOT and has been in their current role since 2018. The service manager, the team leader and the operational managers are knowledgeable about youth justice and work well together in supporting the team.

The service manager attends the management board, and operational managers will attend to present on specific pieces of work as part of the 'spotlight on practice' item on the agenda. Communication from the board is shared through the management and team meetings. Each manager is responsible for an action plan linked to the priorities in the youth justice plan based on their roles and responsibilities.

The service manager is committed to delivering services that are research-led and evidence-based. Staff are encouraged to contribute ideas on how their practice with children and families can be changed and/or improved.

The staff survey was completed by 39 staff members, and 71 per cent of these understood the vision and mission of the YOT very well. Alongside this, 54 per cent were 'very aware' of the activities of the management board and understand its role and 43 per cent were 'quite aware'. Most staff who completed the survey felt they were updated on strategic issues.

Covid-19 meant that the YOT had to adapt its service delivery. It moved to a range of digital platforms, using new technologies, while also maintaining face-to-face contact with children and families. The YOT has delivered out-of-court disposals and referral order panels virtually. The restorative justice offer introduced a range of home-based activities for reparation and victim work was also completed virtually. Throughout the pandemic, face-to-face contact has been maintained with children through utilising outdoor spaces for sessions. This has allowed staff to maintain relationships and manage risks and safeguarding concerns appropriately. It also further embedded the whole family service delivery model, with contacts happening within family households.

1.2. Staff



Staff within the YOT are empowered to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children.

Outstanding

Key staffing data¹³

Total staff headcount	45
Vacancy rate (total unfilled posts as percentage of total staff headcount)	10.1%
Average caseload case managers ¹⁴	8
Average annual working days sickness (all staff) ¹⁵	3.2%

In making a judgement about staffing, we take into account the answers to the following four questions:

Do staffing and workload levels support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children?

The YOT has a team of 45 staff. The team structure sits under the local authority's head of specialist support, alongside edge of care services, a residential children's home and, more recently, the Partnership Exploitation and Missing Hub. There is a service manager, one team leader, three operational managers, and two assessment and development officers. The main case management team has a total of nine qualified social workers and 13 YOT officers.

YOT social workers have case responsibility for all the statutory work within the service. They complete the referral order reports and pre-sentence reports for court and any custody and resettlement assessments or parole reports. Due to the increase in the number of out-of-court disposals, they are now involved in assessing and delivering these. YOT officers have case responsibility for out-of-court disposals. All the YOT officer staff are trained in AssetPlus and deliver a range of activities. They have practice lead areas, including participation (mentoring), resettlement provision and support for children who are subject to the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance programme.

The YOT team leader is responsible for allocating cases, taking into consideration the caseload numbers held by case managers and their specific skills and knowledge. The YOT team leader completes a number of enquiries before deciding who would be best to supervise the case and discusses the case with the case manager to ensure any sensitive issues are considered. Out-of-court disposals are triaged to identify the most complex and serious offences, which are then allocated to a YOT social worker. If a case allocated to a YOT officer requires support from a social worker because of any risks identified, co-working arrangements are put in place. Allocation also considers which staff have previously been involved with the family so that consistency of worker is prioritised.

¹³ Data supplied by YOT and reflecting staffing at the time of the inspection announcement.

¹⁴ Data supplied by YOT; based on staffing and workload at the time of the inspection announcement.

¹⁵ Data supplied by YOT; average days lost up to October 2021.

On average, case managers had approximately eight cases each at the time of the inspection, although this has been affected by Covid-19 and it is anticipated that this will rise. The staff survey was completed by 39 members of staff and 97 per cent of respondents said that they find their workload or caseload manageable.

There was evidence in the inspected cases that staff and managers know the children very well and go 'over and above' what is expected of them to ensure children are engaged and receiving the appropriate provision.

Do the skills of YOT staff support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children?

For a number of years, the YOT has been developing its trauma-informed practice approach to working with children. YOT interventions have been designed within the ARC (Attachment, Regulation and Competency) framework of trauma-informed practice. Programmes such as sports, theatre and creative arts build attachments, provide opportunities for co-regulation and assist children in developing their thinking skills and confidence. This approach also includes a 15-day interventions meeting following a child's order or disposal starting. At this meeting, managers chair a review of the planned interventions to ensure they are appropriate, timely and trauma-informed, and that relevant staff and resources are available.

The trauma-informed approach is reflected in the range of interventions that are available. These are personalised to best meet the needs of the child. For example, YOT workers carry games with them, such as UNO and Jenga, to support engagement with children. The YOT also has access to the 'gazebo theatre' (drama and art), boxing and gym facilities, and resources for creating music and music videos.

Staff are involved in working groups to develop specific areas of practice. They can volunteer to be the 'champion' for particular initiatives. These include child exploitation and trauma-informed practice.

Service volunteers feel well supported, receive regular one-to-one supervision, attend quarterly meetings and can access relevant ongoing training. Training has recently included adverse childhood experiences, trauma-informed practice and disproportionality. The YOT has tried to ensure the panel members represent the diversity of the local community, and currently volunteers reflect a range of ages, backgrounds and cultural heritage. The YOT aims to have the same panel members on the initial referral order panel and the review panels in order for them to develop a relationship with the child and their family. YOT staff spend time with volunteers both before and after the panel to discuss any issues that have arisen.

During Covid-19, the YOT changed the way the referral panels were run in order to ensure the child remained engaged and the required technology was available to everybody. For each panel a YOT staff member visited the child's home before the panel began and used their technology to log into MS Teams. This offered the staff member the opportunity to explain the process to the child and their family, which encouraged engagement and inclusivity. The staff member guides the child and their family through the virtual panel and checks that they understand what has happened after the panel has finished. The views of the child and their family are captured after the panel. Because of this, attendance at panels has increased and there is less need for them to be rearranged.

There is a seconded police officer who leads on out-of-court disposals. This person shares information and intelligence between the police and the YOT and attends relevant risk panels. The seconded YOT probation officer post is vacant, and during the period of the vacancy the Probation Service has offered funding to cover the gap. Unfortunately, it has been difficult to recruit to the role, as it is for three days per week. It has now been

agreed that the role be full-time, and the recruitment process is underway. Although the service manager takes the strategic lead for Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements in the absence of a probation officer, inspectors noted that staff knowledge of the processes is limited and needs further development. Cases appropriate for transition to the Probation Service have been dealt with on a case-by-case basis during this time.

Feedback from the courts highlights that input from officers in the YOT's court team, and information in their pre-sentence reports, demonstrates that they have a detailed understanding of children's health and educational needs. It states that, in recent years, the courts have been impressed with the YOT's understanding of trauma and how it impacts children. Courts also identify how the YOT uses this understanding of trauma to inform its interventions and programmes. There is good communication between the YOT and the courts, and the chair of the Youth Court Bench is a member of the YOT management board.

Does the oversight of work support high-quality delivery and professional development?

Staff receive regular monthly supervision, which covers case load (if appropriate), workload, any challenges to their emotional and mental health, the quality of work and areas of improvement and professional development. Annual appraisals (called professional conversations) are completed, and procedures are in place for addressing staff competency. An induction process for all new staff members is in place. Seconded staff are supervised by their home agency, which completes an appraisal, as well as by their YOT line manager.

Management oversight met the needs of the case in 91 per cent of post-court cases and in all of the out-of-court disposals and this is a significant achievement. Staff reported feeling supported by both their managers and peers.

Are arrangements for learning and development comprehensive and responsive?

The YOT has a training and development plan in place for 2021-2022. Recent training has included Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth (SAVRY) training and AssetPlus, as well as Assessment, Intervention and Moving On (AIM3) training for working with harmful sexual behaviour cases, and briefings on contextual safeguarding and exploitation.

Staff have access to a mandatory training programme across children's services, which includes safeguarding courses, and feel encouraged to take up training opportunities. The YOT actively promotes staff development through offering management opportunities within the service and supporting staff to complete external qualifications.

Do managers pay sufficient attention to staff engagement?

Staff reported feeling very well supported by both Wolverhampton Council and the YOT throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. During the first lockdowns there were regular virtual meetings and 'check-ins' from both managers and peers.

The YOT has completed a learning and development report based on a number of surveys of staff's opinions on their practice skills, learning and development, and working conditions during the Covid-19 pandemic. Going forward, staff will have a blended model of home-based working and working within the office and in community venues.

Staff receive praise and appreciation emails from senior leaders and through supervision with their line managers. Team meetings encourage the sharing of positive news and recognition of good practice and the council also circulates a newsletter that recognises effective practice.

1.3. Partnerships and services



A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, enabling personalised and responsive provision for all children.

Outstanding

Caseload characteristics¹⁶

Percentage of current caseload with emotional wellbeing or mental health issues	37%
Percentage of current caseload with substance misuse issues	41.8%
Percentage of current caseload with a learning disability, a learning difficulty or subject to an education, health and care plan	32.2%

In making a judgement about partnerships and services, we take into account the answers to the following questions:

Is there a sufficiently comprehensive and up-to-date analysis of the profile of children, used by the YOT to deliver well-targeted services?

The YOT has its own dashboard, which gives it access to an excellent suite of data. Comprehensive performance management reports are provided for the YOT management board. These include national and local indicators and very detailed profiling and analysis.

Regular monitoring reports presented to the management board include a quarterly health report, victim engagement report and a participation report. Further in-depth analysis reports are also provided, and these have recently included reports on serious youth violence, disproportionality and a review of vulnerable learners, including children with EHCPs.

The YOT's performance is monitored across the partnership, and the performance reports are shared with other partners, including the Wolverhampton Children's Senior Leadership Team, Strategic Executive Board and the Safeguarding Together Partnership.

The YJB published data, which is time delayed, indicates that the number of first-time entrants and the rate of reoffending are higher than the national average, while the number of children in custody is lower than the national average. More recent local data shows that the first-time entrant rate for 2020-2021 has fallen, both in the number of entrants to the system and the number of offences committed compared with the previous year. The reoffending live tracker toolkit showed that the frequency of reoffending and the number of offences committed were lower in Wolverhampton than the national rate. The number of children receiving a custodial sentence was also decreasing.

The number of cases on the YOT caseload in October 2021 was 146, of which 11 per cent were female, 50.7 per cent were black, Asian and minority ethnic (an increase from the annual YJB statistics quoted above), 33.6 per cent had a disability, 37 per cent had emotional, mental health and wellbeing needs, and 32.2 per cent had learning needs, including special educational needs, or had an EHCP. The YOT is proactively monitoring these figures and the management board recently received a report about girls in the youth justice system.

¹⁶ Data supplied by the YOT

Does the YOT partnership provide the volume, range and quality of services and interventions required to meet the needs of all children?

The YOT has strong partnership arrangements with children's services and community safety areas of work. This is assisted by the Head of Service for Specialist Support having a broad portfolio, including edge of care services, a residential children's home and, more recently, the Partnership Exploitation and Missing Hub.

The YOT uses a number of screening tools to identify risk, whether it is the risk to a child's safety and wellbeing or the risk they pose to others. These include the SAVRY (violence), AIM3 (sexual harmful behaviour) and Trauma Symptom Checklists (TSC), which is linked to a trauma-informed approach to practice. There are Risk Management and Safety and Wellbeing panels, where areas of high concern are highlighted and managed. These are multi-agency meetings chaired by a YOT operational manager. The YOT is represented at Multi-Agency Criminal Exploitation (MACE) meetings, the Partnership Exploitation and Missing Hub and the Partnership Gang Forum.

The YOT has a good relationship with the children's homes in the local area, and the staff from these attend meetings at the YOT. Restorative practice work has been delivered to staff in placements and the success of these interventions reflected in the low number of looked after children (20 out of 146) on out-of-court disposals and post-court orders.

The YOT has an impressive restorative justice unit (RJU) and all YOT staff are trained in restorative practice. The Witness Care Service provides victim contact details for cases that have been heard in court, and the police provide the details for out-of-court disposals. The YOT sends a letter to set up a meeting within seven days, unless the victim decides to opt out of the process. This is followed up with a telephone call to see what support is needed and what can be offered in terms of the different options for restorative practice. Victims are given the opportunity to complete a statement so that their experience can inform the referral order panel, out-of-court decision-making, and the pre-sentence report. There is a weekly case discussion meeting that decides which is the best way to work with the victims in order to promote a victim-centred approach. A number of restorative practices are available, including letters of explanation and letters of apology, shuttle mediation and face-to-face meetings. There is a desire for all children to take part in victim empathy work, as the RJU believes it is vital that victims' views are understood, even if the victim does not wish to take part.

The YOT has held a number of face-to-face restorative meetings, some of which have included corporate victims. Restorative justice staff work with the child and the injured person and feel that working with both parties, knowing the case and understanding the different perspectives, provides a more holistic approach to restorative practice. The victim workers will also share information with case managers regarding what licence conditions the victim has requested.

Reparation projects are discussed at the RJU's weekly meetings. They include the 'Bladed Angel of Change' (creative arts project that deals with the dangers of knife crime), 'Let's Get Cooking', the 'Get Outdoors Project' (developed as a response to Covid-19), 'The Endz' project (dealing with anti-social behaviour), social media and online safety, 'SHUZ' (a victim empathy project), photography, working on allotments, and making cards and jewellery. Some of these had to stop during lockdown, although most are now available again. The YOT also offers the opportunity for children to obtain Award Scheme Accreditation and Development Network (ASDAN) qualifications for each activity.

The YOT has links with the voluntary and community sector, including Catch22 and the Kitchen Table Talks service delivered by First Class Foundation, which uses creative and

innovative ways to support parents and families through face-to-face or online communication.

The YOT has set up a peer mentoring service, but due to the restrictions of Covid-19 the service has yet to see the impact of this. Its intention is that children previously known to the service will be trained to provide a mentoring intervention to YOT children.

Are arrangements with statutory partners, providers and other agencies established, maintained and used effectively to deliver high-quality services?

Health provision to the YOT is of a high standard. There is a regular 'Health Summit' meeting, which includes all health staff and partnership managers, chaired by the YOT operations manager. It considers the health needs of children, decides who is best to work with them, and is a platform for operational planning to deliver health services. It also provides the opportunity to quality assure the work of the team. Every child known to the YOT is triaged to identify their health needs. The YOT nurse completes a full health assessment, which includes GP registration, dental care and emotional wellbeing. The nurse also works directly with children, including to provide a 'sleep' intervention, which helps children to regulate their sleep patterns, and refers them on to wider health provision, including sexual health services as appropriate.

The YOT has a full-time forensic and clinical psychologist, who provides consultations with staff, as well as psychological assessments and intervention work with children. They also signpost children to wider emotional mental health and wellbeing services. The YOT also has access to a liaison and diversion worker for children in police custody, who completes health background checks and makes referrals, where relevant.

The YOT has a seconded speech and language therapist for two days a week, who provides assessments where needed and offers consultations to YOT staff. They also work with looked after children and the pupil referral unit. This is a limited provision and does not allow for developments in this area of work to meet the specific needs of children known to the YOT. There is a commissioned service to support children with substance misuse, which includes a worker who is seconded for three days per week. This post is currently vacant but interim arrangements are in place.

The YOT is represented on the Education Inclusion Support and Alternative Provision Panel, which focuses on reducing school exclusions. This is helped by the Back on Track project, which is available in some schools and identifies and works with Year seven, eight and nine pupils who are at risk of exclusion and of offending. For one day a week, the YOT has access to an educational psychologist, who will complete assessments as well as collaborate with schools to ensure that the child's educational needs are being met. They provide consultation and training for YOT staff who are working with SEND children and children with an EHCP.

Previously the YOT had a Connexions worker, who provided intensive support to children so that they could access the most appropriate provision for them. At the time of the inspection this post was vacant, and recruitment was underway. The YOT is also currently recruiting for an education, training and employment (ETE) adviser. The YOT can also access the Impact Project. This supports 16- to 18-year-olds and finds suitable ETE opportunities for them, although it is subject to short-term funding. The YOT acknowledges that ETE provision for children over 16 years old, especially those with an EHCP, is limited. This is reflected in the council's £3 million investment to reduce youth unemployment across Wolverhampton.

The YOT's relationship with children's social care is good, and staff are invited to and attend all meetings regarding children in need, children on a child protection plan and looked after children. Staff trained in AIM3 work jointly on cases where there has been harmful sexual behaviour. This follows the model of good practice.

Involvement of children and their parents or carers

The YOT facilitates and supports a Voices from Youth Justice forum, which was set up in August 2019. These are participation sessions that enable children to meet and work together throughout the year and gain awards. The forum also links with the local authority participation officer and the Youth Council.

As part of the inspection process, children are invited to participate in a text survey, and those whose cases are inspected are offered the opportunity to speak to an inspector, to give their feedback.

Seven children returned the text survey, with all rating the YOT as eight or more out of 10 (with 10 being 'fantastic').

Inspectors spoke to three children, and one parent. They all knew the aims of the YOT and felt that their workers had the right skills to do the work.

One child said:

"The best thing about my YOT worker was that they didn't make me feel like a bad person and listened to me."

A parent said:

"We wish our kids could be perfect. I try my best, but it's not perfect, my child's YOT workers understand this, don't judge us or me as a mother they just support us and my child's journey to change".

1.4. Information and facilities



Timely and relevant information is available and appropriate facilities are in place to support a high-quality, personalised and responsive approach for all children.

Outstanding

In making a judgement about information and facilities, we take into account the answers to the following four questions:

Do the policies and guidance in place enable staff to deliver a high-quality service, meeting the needs of all children?

There is a full range of policies and guidance in place, which are accessible to staff. People are kept up to date with any changes through emails and team meetings. Information-sharing protocols are in place and understood across the partnership. There is an escalation process for all partners to help in challenging another agency and staff feel supported by managers in raising concerns.

Does the YOT's delivery environment(s) meet the needs of all children and enable staff to deliver a high-quality service?

The plan in 2020 had been to move the YOT from the premises where it had been for 20 years, as the building had deteriorated. This happened quicker than expected, as the

office was closed during the first Covid-19 lockdown in March 2020. The YOT moved into its new premises (Retreat Street) in June 2021, which is a set of offices attached to the fire station. Children known to the YOT designed the décor and decided on the type of furniture and what security was needed at the premises. They also chose motivational quotes to have on the walls around the building. Staff and partner agencies can base themselves at Retreat Street, where they can see children and deliver interventions in child-friendly rooms. After the Covid-19 restrictions are lifted, the YOT envisages that staff will balance their time between working in the office, in community venues and at home.

Do the information and communications technology (ICT) systems enable staff to deliver a high-quality service, meeting the needs of all children?

YOT staff are able to share information through access to children’s social care systems and relevant partners have their own access to the YOT case management system. The YOT case management system enables the YOT to produce data on performance. As a result of Covid-19, all staff, including those who are normally office-based, were issued with laptops and phones. The YOT has developed the Viewpoint Hub for gathering feedback from children and families. It has hosted Microsoft Teams live events during lockdown and is developing a web-based intervention site that children will be able to access to complete a range of offence-related programme activities.

Are analysis, evidence and learning used effectively to drive improvement?

The YOT has a monitoring system in place for quality assuring work. Managers review all AssetPlus assessments at every stage, and there is a gatekeeping process for pre-sentence reports and referral order reports. Managers complete regular audits and benchmarking exercises, and these are supported by staff across all grades. One day every three months is set aside for the auditing process.

The YOT was recently part of a multi-agency community risk meeting audit, which looked at five cases from different agencies’ perspectives. The service has also completed a number of thematic audits looking at specific areas of practice, including a restorative justice and victim audit and a report on the Back on Track project.

A participation report is produced and reported to the management board. It outlines the feedback that has been collated from children through forums, self-assessments and the Viewpoint Hub. The feedback includes the different activities that children have been involved in, for example their experience of the referral order panel, reparation, the out-of-court disposal panel and workshops.

There is evidence that the YOT reviews cases when serious incidents occur and learns from the outcomes of other areas’ inspections in order to improve practice.

Diversity

Throughout our standards, we expect a personalised and responsive approach for all children, which includes taking account of their diversity and protected characteristics. Those factors may influence our judgements in specific standards. Here, we present an overall summary of the approach to diversity that we found in this YOT.

Based on the 2011 census data, 61 per cent of 10–17-year-olds in Wolverhampton are white and 39 per cent are from a black, Asian or minority ethnic background. Of staff at the YOT, 34 per cent are from a black, Asian or minority ethnic background and 20 per cent are male. Black, Asian and minority ethnic children are over-represented in the YOT.

In 2020-2021, 90 per cent of all disposals and 100 per cent of custodial outcomes related to boys. In particular, 52 per cent of all disposals and 83 per cent of custodial outcomes related to black, Asian and minority ethnic children. Of children known to the YOT, 37 per cent were assessed as having emotional, mental health and wellbeing concerns and 32 per cent had a learning disability, learning difficulty or were subject to an education, health and care plan.

The trauma-informed approach is reflected in the range of interventions that are available to meet the diverse needs of children. The YOT has access to an educational psychologist and a forensic and clinical psychologist, who work alongside YOT practitioners to help identify the appropriate interventions that should be delivered to meet the individual needs of the child.

There was evidence that the YOT has tried to ensure the panel members represent the diversity of the local community, and currently volunteers reflect a range of ages, backgrounds and cultural heritage.

The YOT uses the YJB disproportionality toolkit and the management board commissioned a report to analyse performance from December 2019 to December 2020. An action plan was implemented, and this is regularly reviewed. Actions included setting up a YOT equality forum, completing cultural competency training and peer mentoring training, setting up the YJB Levelling the Playing Field project and recruiting panel members from more diverse backgrounds. A number of changes have also been made to the out-of-court disposal arrangements to try to address disproportionality. The YOT is adapting the children's feedback questionnaire to capture the child's lived experience when considering their ethnicity. However, the YOT needs to be confident that staff are comfortable in having conversations with children about their diversity and know what is expected of them. It can then ensure that it has appropriate provision in place to support the identity and cultural heritage of black, Asian and minority ethnic children.

2. Court disposals

We took a detailed look at 11 community sentences managed by the YOT. We also conducted 11 interviews with the relevant case managers. We examined the quality of assessment, planning, implementation and delivery of services, and reviewing. Each of these elements was inspected in respect of work done to address desistance, keep the child safe and keep other people safe.

HM Inspectorate of Probation's ratings panel applied professional discretion in relation to the ratings given to our standards for the quality of assessment and reviewing. The case data was reviewed and identifying contingency arrangements when considering a child's risk of harm to others was judged by inspectors to be insufficient. There was evidence, however, that practice was strong when case managers assessed and reviewed a child's desistance and their safety and wellbeing. After considering all of the evidence in the round and the views of the lead inspector, the panel agreed to move the judgement on both these standards from 'Requires improvement' to 'Good'.

The great majority of assessments were strong in the areas of desistance and safety and wellbeing. Case managers considered the child's personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context, and information from other agencies. They took account of the child's strengths and protective factors, and their ability and motivation to change. Analysing the child's diversity, however, needs developing. We found that most cases were sufficient when assessing a child's risk of harm to others; however, there was room for improvement. Although case managers used different sources of information and involved other agencies when appropriate, they needed to identify and analyse more clearly the risks that children pose to others, including who is at risk and the nature of that risk.

Nearly all of the cases we inspected were satisfactory for planning in relation to desistance, and in most cases the manager appropriately planned for the child's safety and wellbeing. Case managers took account of the child's personal circumstances, and considered their strengths and protective factors, as well as their level of maturity and motivation to change. We found that case managers involved children and their parents or carers in the planning. When planning for the child's safety and wellbeing, case managers addressed their risks, and involved other agencies appropriately. However, planning could have given more consideration to the needs and wishes of victims. The concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims were not consistently considered when planning to address the risk of harm to others. Work to set out contingency arrangements to manage the child's safety and wellbeing and their risk of harm to others should be improved.

Implementation and delivery of services was satisfactory in the great majority of cases in all three areas of desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others. Case managers focused on developing and maintaining an effective relationship with children and their parents or carers and they encouraged and enabled the child's compliance with the court order. We found that case managers went beyond what was required to engage children and families. They were creative when delivering interventions and used language and techniques that support the trauma-informed approach promoted by the YOT.

The great majority of reviews were satisfactory in the areas of desistance and safety and wellbeing. Case managers identified and responded to changes in the child's circumstances and took account of their strengths and protective factors. They considered the child's motivation and included the parents or carers in the reviewing process. When case managers reviewed safety and wellbeing, they included information from other

agencies and adjusted the ongoing plan accordingly. Although most of the cases inspectors reviewed were satisfactory, contingency planning could be improved. Staff must ensure that any necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to manage and minimise the risk of harm to others are made. Planning to keep other people safe was the weakest area of practice across both post-court orders and out-of-court disposals.

Strengths:

- Assessments were strong in the areas of desistance and safety and wellbeing. They took account of the child's strengths and protective factors, and their ability and motivation to change
- Case managers involved children and their parents or carers in planning.
- When planning for the child's safety and wellbeing, their risks were addressed, and other agencies are involved appropriately.
- Delivery of services was strong in the great majority of cases in all three areas of desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others.
- Case managers focused on developing and maintaining an effective relationship with children and their parents or carers. Staff went 'over and above' what is required to engage children and families.
- Staff were creative when delivering interventions and used language and techniques that support the trauma-informed approach promoted by the YOT.

Areas for improvement:

- When assessing a child's risk of harm to others, staff need to identify and analyse more clearly the risks that the child poses, including who is at risk and the nature of that risk.
- Staff do not regularly take account of a child's diversity needs when completing assessments.
- The concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims are not consistently considered when planning to address the risk of harm to others.
- Staff did not consistently set out the contingency arrangements to manage the child's safety and wellbeing and their risk of harm to others in the cases inspected.

Work with children sentenced by the courts will be more effective if it is well targeted, planned and implemented. In our inspections, we look at a sample of cases. In each of those cases, we inspect against four standards.

2.1. Assessment



Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.

Good

Our rating¹⁷ for assessment is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?	82%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?	73%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	64%

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?

In seven out of the 11 cases inspected, the assessment had sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child's attitudes towards, and motivation for, their offending. Staff considered the child's diversity issues in seven out of 11 cases and their personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context, in all cases. The assessment was informed by information from other agencies in all cases. In all but one case, the assessment focused on the child's strengths and their protective factors, and recognised their level of maturity, ability and motivation to change.

The child's views were considered in all cases, and those of their parents or carers were included in all relevant cases. The needs and wishes of the victim were taken into account in all but one of the relevant cases.

The factors that are most related to a child's offending are self-identity, learning and education, training and employment, and their living arrangements. In nine out of the 11 cases, the assessment analysed sufficiently how to address these factors and support desistance.

One inspector noted:

"The assessment describes a supportive home and structured lifestyle, including good attendance at school and community activities, such as links to sports clubs and positive peer associates."

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?

In seven out of the 11 cases, staff identified and analysed the risks to a child's safety and wellbeing. In nine out of 11 cases, assessments drew appropriately on assessments or information held by other agencies. In eight out of 11 cases, staff had given enough attention to analysing the controls or interventions that best promoted the child's safety and wellbeing. Inspectors judged the safety and wellbeing risk classification as reasonable in all but one case. Overall, the assessment analysed sufficiently how to keep the child safe in eight out of 11 cases inspected.

¹⁷ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

This was evidenced by one inspector, who said:

“The assessment discussed concerns around the child’s possible exploitation and the level of risk they may be experiencing. This has been supported by children’s social care and discussions with the parents, informing a contextual picture of the level of potential harm the child could be facing.”

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?

Professional discretion was applied to this area of practice as outlined above. In eight of the 11 cases, assessments identified and analysed any risk of harm to others posed by the child, including who was at risk and the nature of that risk. In all but one case, staff used available sources of information, including past behaviour and convictions, and involved other agencies, where appropriate, in the assessments. In four out of 11 cases, however, the assessment did not analyse controls and interventions to manage and minimise the risk of harm presented by the child.

Inspectors judged the case manager’s assessment of the level of risk of serious harm as reasonable in all but one case. Case managers analysed how to keep other people safe in seven out of 11 cases.

2.2. Planning



Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.

Requires improvement

Our rating¹⁸ for planning is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child’s desistance?	91%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	73%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	64%

Does planning focus on supporting the child’s desistance?

Overall, planning supported the child’s desistance in all but one of the cases inspected.

In 10 out of 11 cases, staff set out the services most likely to support desistance, paying attention to the available timescales and the need for sequencing. It took account of the child’s personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context. Although planning considered the child’s strengths and protective factors in nine out of 11 cases, it did not address the child’s diversity issues in six out of 11 cases. Staff took account of the child’s level of maturity, ability and motivation to change in all but one case.

Planning did not give appropriate attention to the needs and wishes of the victim in three out of seven relevant cases, therefore missing opportunities for restorative practice. In 10 out of 11 cases, there was evidence that the child and their parents or carers had been involved in the planning, and their views taken into account.

¹⁸ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?

In eight out of 11 cases, the risks to a child’s safety and wellbeing were addressed as part of the planning. Case managers involved other agencies and aligned their plans in all but one of the relevant cases. Planning adequately outlined the controls and interventions necessary to promote the child’s safety and wellbeing in seven of the relevant cases. However, contingency arrangements to manage identified risks were set out in only four of the 11 cases.

Overall, planning focused on keeping the child safe in eight of the 11 cases inspected.

One inspector noted:

“Given the complex nature of this case and the classification of high risk of potential harm, I would have expected to see a much more detailed multi agency plan to protect the child”.

Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?

There was sufficient planning to promote the safety of others in only seven of the 11 cases inspected. All cases involved other agencies, where appropriate. Planning to address any specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims was not evident in six of the nine relevant cases. This is disappointing, as case managers have access to the restorative justice unit and this information is available.

Planning set out the necessary controls and interventions to promote the safety of other people in only half of the cases inspected. Effective contingency arrangements to manage the risks that had been identified were not evident in seven out of the relevant 11 cases inspected. Planning to keep other people safe was the weakest area of practice across both post-court orders and out-of-court disposals.

One inspector noted:

“Insufficient attention was given to the risks to specific individuals and what may be needed to mitigate that risk. The contingency planning does not reference any need for monitoring or undertaking actions where risk is seen to increase”.

2.3. Implementation and delivery



High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child.

Outstanding

Our rating¹⁹ for implementation and delivery is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child’s desistance?	100%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child?	91%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	82%

¹⁹ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child's desistance?

Overall, the delivery of services supported the child's desistance in all of the cases inspected. In all cases, the services delivered reflected the wider familial and social context of the child, involving the parents, carers or significant others, and in all but one case service delivery built on the child's strengths and protective factors. Service delivery took account of the child's diversity issues in only seven of the 11 cases.

In every case, it was clear that staff focused on developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child and their parents or carers. This reflects the comments made by inspectors that staff went 'over and above' the expectations of their role when working with children and families.

The following comment from an inspector demonstrates this:

"A significant amount of intervention work has taken place throughout this order, including attempts to support both parents with complex needs, in the hope that this provides stability for the child. Interventions are delivered in respect of the child's education and it is clear that the case manager has built a good, trusting relationship which supports desistance factors in a complex case".

In all but one case, opportunities to access services post-supervision had been promoted. Case managers had encouraged and enabled the child's compliance with the work of the YOT in every case. Enforcement actions were taken when appropriate and the interventions delivered were proportionate to the disposal and completed within the required timescales in all cases inspected.

Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child?

The delivery of services to promote the child's safety and wellbeing was evident in eight of the 10 relevant cases, and the case manager had coordinated the involvement of other organisations in all but one of the relevant cases. Overall, the implementation and delivery of services supported the safety of the child effectively in 10 out of the 11 cases inspected.

One inspector noted:

"In order to keep the child safe, priority was given to the child's mental health and wellbeing through an early referral to CAMHS and joint work with the social worker. There was a well-coordinated multi-professional approach to jointly address the child's needs whilst supporting the safety of the child".

Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?

Services delivered to keep other people safe, by managing and minimising the risk of harm, were evident in nine of the 11 cases inspected. In all of the relevant cases, staff had coordinated the involvement of other agencies. Overall, the service delivery effectively supported the safety of other people, and this was evidenced in nine out of the 11 cases inspected. However, sufficient attention to the protection of actual and potential victims had only been given in a small number of cases (four of the nine relevant cases) and this is an area for development.

2.4. Reviewing



Reviewing of progress is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.

Good

Our rating²⁰ for reviewing is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?	100%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	73%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	64%

Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?

Case managers are aware that children's circumstances can change rapidly, and that this can result in an increase, or sometimes decrease, in the likelihood of reoffending, risk of harm to others or risks to their safety and wellbeing.

Reviews resulted in the identification of, and a subsequent response to, changes in the factors linked to desistance in all of the cases inspected. They built on the child's strengths and considered the personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context of the child in every case. The review included an analysis of, and a response to, the child's diversity factors in six of the nine relevant cases and considered their motivation and engagement levels in all cases. The child and their parents or carers had been involved meaningfully in the process, and their views taken into account, in all but one case.

In all cases, the review led to changes in the plan of work and, overall, every case inspected focused sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance.

One inspector noted:

"Regular reviews have been completed and a number of services informed the reviews including the YOT nurse, school, police and a restorative justice worker. Intervention actions were updated, and the child was praised for the good progress they were making, further supporting desistance".

Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?

Case managers identified and responded to changes in a child's safety and wellbeing in eight out of 10 relevant cases. When reviewing, case managers had considered information from other agencies in all relevant cases, and the reviewing process had led to the necessary changes in the ongoing plan in seven of the 10 relevant cases. Overall, reviewing focused on keeping the child safe in eight out of 11 cases inspected.

This is demonstrated in the case below, where an inspector noted:

"Regular reviews took place involving parents and a number of services. Progress was noted and further barriers identified which needed to be addressed. There was evidence

²⁰ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

that the case manager listened to the child's wishes and feelings and understood that trust needed to be built before the child would open up and be able to engage in some of the interventions to be delivered."

Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?

As referred to above, professional discretion was applied to this area of practice. The case manager had identified, and responded to, changes in risk in six of the nine relevant cases. Reviewing was informed by information gathered from other agencies in all relevant cases. In eight out of 10 relevant cases, the child and their parents or carers had been involved meaningfully in reviewing the risk of harm to others, and had their views considered. The reviewing process led to necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to manage and minimise these risks in only five of the nine relevant cases. Overall, reviewing focused on keeping other people safe in seven of the 11 cases inspected.

3. Out-of-court disposals

We inspected 13 cases managed by the YOT that had received an out-of-court disposal. These consisted of five youth conditional cautions, six youth cautions and two community resolutions. We interviewed the case managers in 12 cases.

We examined the quality of assessment, planning, and implementation and delivery of services. Each of these elements was inspected in respect of work done to address desistance, keep the child safe and keep other people safe. The quality of the work undertaken for each factor needs to be above a specified threshold for each aspect of supervision to be rated as satisfactory.

We also inspected the quality of policy and provision in place for out-of-court disposals, using evidence from documents, meetings and interviews.

Assessment was satisfactory in most of the out-of-court cases assessed in the areas of desistance and a child's safety and wellbeing. Case managers considered the child's strengths and protective factors, and their level of maturity, and ability and motivation to change. Where a victim had been identified, their needs and wishes were taken into account, and the views of parents or carers were considered as part of the assessment. Although assessments of children's risk of harm to others were strong, they should be improved by identifying more clearly who is at risk and the nature of the risk.

Planning was a significant strength in the areas of desistance and safety and wellbeing. Case managers took account of the child's personal circumstances, their strengths and protective factors and their level of motivation to change. Planning set out the opportunities for community integration and access to mainstream services following completion of the out-of-court disposal work. Case managers considered the needs and wishes of victims and included the child and parents or carers in the planning process. Planning for the child's risk of harm to others was positive and, in most cases, involved other agencies where appropriate. However, setting out the contingency arrangements to manage the risks presented would improve this area of work.

Implementation and delivery of services were also particularly strong in all three areas of desistance, a child's safety and wellbeing and their risk of harm to others. Case managers identified the factors that were most likely to support the child's desistance. They took account of the child's diversity issues and involved parents, carers or significant others. They focused on developing and maintaining a good working relationship with children and families and encouraged and enabled the child's compliance with the work. Inspectors noted that staff used creative methods to help children participate in the interventions and exceeded the expectations of their role to meet the needs of the children and their families.

The YOT had a good process in place for out-of-court disposals, which included completion of the AssetPlus assessment and a panel to determine the outcomes. Following its involvement in a YJB Pathfinder project, the YOT has worked with another YOT to further develop its provision by introducing the DIVERT scheme. This is a deferred prosecution scheme that gives children the opportunity to engage with an intervention and then be diverted away from the criminal justice system. There has been joint work with the police and policies have been updated. A new joint decision-making panel has been introduced to decide between an out-of-court disposal and DIVERT. This new process had not been fully implemented at the time of the inspection and so inspectors could not judge whether the outcomes anticipated had been achieved.

Strengths:

- When carrying out an assessment, case managers considered the child's strengths and protective factors, and their level of maturity, ability and motivation to change.
- Where a victim had been identified, their needs and wishes were taken into account. The views of parents or carers were considered as part of the assessment and planning process.
- Planning was rated as a strength in the areas of desistance and safety and wellbeing. It set out the opportunities for community integration and access to mainstream services following completion of the out-of-court disposal work.
- Implementation and delivery of services were excellent in all three areas of desistance, a child's safety and wellbeing and their risk of harm to others.
- Staff used creative methods to help children participate in the interventions and exceeded the expectations of their role to meet the needs of the children and their families.
- The YOT has a deferred prosecution scheme that gives children the opportunity to engage with an intervention and then be diverted away from the criminal justice system.

Areas for improvement:

- Assessing a child's risk of harm to others needs clearer identification of who is at risk and the nature of the risk.
- Contingency planning needs to be evident so that the arrangements for managing a child's risk of harm to others is clear.

Work with children receiving out-of-court disposals will be more effective if it is well targeted, planned and implemented. In our inspections, we look at a sample of cases. In each of those cases, we inspect against four standards.

3.1. Assessment



Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.

Good

Our rating²¹ for assessment is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?	85%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?	85%

²¹ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?

77%

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?

There was sufficient analysis of offending behaviour in all but one of the 13 cases. Case managers took account of the child's personal circumstances and used information from other agencies in 12 out of 13 cases. The case manager considered the child's strengths and protective factors in every case, although they did not appropriately analyse the child's diversity issues in six of the 13 cases.

Case managers had involved the child and their parents or carers in the assessment and taken their views into account in all cases. The child's level of maturity, ability and motivation to change were considered in 11 out of 13 cases. The needs and wishes of victims had been taken into account in nine of the 10 relevant cases.

The factors in out-of-court disposals that relate most to a child's offending are self-identity, lifestyle, substance misuse, learning and education, training and employment; and in 11 of the 13 cases the assessment analysed sufficiently how to address these factors and support desistance.

In one case, the inspector noted:

"A range of sources were used to inform the assessment, including information from children's social care, police and the family and consideration was given to any language barriers. The offence analysis was good and explored all factors contributing to the offence".

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?

In 10 of the 13 cases, the risk to the child's safety and wellbeing had been identified and analysed appropriately by the case manager. The assessment used sources of information, including other assessments, and involved other agencies where appropriate in 10 out of 13 cases.

Inspectors judged the case manager's assessment of the level of safety and wellbeing as reasonable in all but one case. Overall, the assessment was judged to have analysed sufficiently how to keep the child safe in 11 out of 13 of the inspected cases.

One inspector noted:

"There is recognition in the assessment of the loss the child has experienced in family relationships and the impact of the verbal and physical abuse they have experienced. The case manager considers concerns relating to possible exploitation and identifies the impact that all this is having on the child's emotional and mental health and wellbeing".

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?

In 10 out of 13 cases, the assessment identified and analysed the risk of harm to others, including who is at risk and the nature of the risk. Similarly, in the same number of cases the case manager had used available sources of information, including other assessments, to inform their own judgement. Inspectors judged the case manager's assessment of the level of risk of serious harm to others as reasonable in all but one case and, overall, the assessment sufficiently analysed how to keep other people safe in 10 out of 13 of the cases inspected.

3.2. Planning



Planning is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.

Good

Our rating²² for planning is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does planning focus on supporting the child's desistance?	100%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	85%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	69%

Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?

Overall, planning supported the child's desistance sufficiently in every case inspected. In all cases, staff planned the services most likely to support desistance, paying attention to appropriate timescales and sequencing. In all 13 cases, staff took account of the child's wider familial and social context. However, in six out of 13 cases, planning did not address the child's diversity issues well enough. In 11 out of 13 cases, staff had taken account of the child's strengths and protective factors. The child's level of maturity and motivation to change were considered by the case manager in 12 out of 13 cases.

Case managers had taken account of opportunities for community integration and access to mainstream services for the child after completing their out-of-court disposal in all but two cases. Planning was proportionate to the disposal type, which meant that interventions could be completed within the timescales, in all cases.

In all cases, staff had involved the child and their parents or carers in the planning process, and in all but one of the relevant cases the needs and wishes of victims had been considered.

Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?

In 11 out of the relevant 13 cases, planning promoted the safety and wellbeing of the child, and in all but two relevant cases information from other agencies was included. Contingency arrangements for any changes to the level of risk were not evident in seven out of 13 cases but, overall, planning focused on keeping the child safe in 11 out of 13 cases inspected.

This was demonstrated in the case below, where an inspector noted:

"The planning meeting evidences consideration of the child's sense of belonging, acceptance, emotional regulation, sexual and general health. There is a detailed plan to support them to access counselling and sessions on understanding healthy relationships as well as awareness of exploitation".

Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?

Overall, planning that focused on keeping people safe was evident in nine of the 13 cases inspected. Planning to promote the safety of others by addressing the factors related to

²² The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

the risk of harm to others was evident in all but three relevant cases but planning for contingency arrangements to manage those risks was not identified in seven out of 12 relevant cases.

One inspector noted:

“When discussing the safety of others, the plan lacked focus as to who is going to deliver critical work, why and when, and the contingency planning lacked sufficient detail”.

Case managers involved other agencies in seven out of 10 relevant cases and planning to address concerns related to actual and potential victims was evident in seven out of the 11 relevant cases inspected.

3.3. Implementation and delivery



High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child.

Outstanding

Our rating²³ for implementation and delivery is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does service delivery effectively support the child's desistance?	100%
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child?	92%
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people?	85%

Does service delivery focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?

Overall, support for the child's desistance was evident in all of the 13 cases inspected. Interventions to support desistance had been delivered in good time in every case. The case manager had accounted for any diversity issues in all but three cases and had considered the child's social context, involving parents or carers in all of the cases.

The delivery of the interventions promoted opportunities for community integration and access to mainstream services in all but one case. Case managers developed and maintained an effective working relationship with the child and their parents or carers. They encouraged and enabled the child's compliance in every case. Similar to court orders, inspectors noted that staff used creative methods to help children participate in the interventions and exceeded the expectations of their role to meet the needs of the children and their families.

One inspector noted:

“There was evidence that the child did not want to be labelled and was reluctant to talk about the details of the offence. This was managed well by the case manager, who took a strengths-based approach and focused on the positives”.

Does service delivery focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?

Promoting the safety and wellbeing of the child through service delivery was evident in all but one of the relevant cases, and case managers involved other agencies in keeping

²³ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

children safe in nine out of 10 of the cases. Overall, service delivery supported the safety of the child in all but one of the cases inspected.

One inspector noted:

“The case manager has linked well with children’s social services and the child’s family in order to monitor any ongoing gang-related activity, developing relationships in order to gain knowledge of the child’s activities and experiences”.

Does service delivery focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?

For keeping other people safe, case managers had considered the protection of actual and potential victims in nine out of the 11 relevant cases.

This was evidenced in one case, where the inspector noted:

“Discussions were held with the victim and victim’s family about the proposed outcome for the child. There was also a targeted piece of work to address the impact on the victim as well as the wider community”.

The services delivered, managed and minimised the risk of harm in all but one of the relevant cases, and, overall, inspectors judged that the safety of other people was sufficiently supported in 11 out of the 13 cases inspected.

3.4. Out-of-court disposal policy and provision



There is a high-quality, evidence-based out-of-court disposal service in place that promotes diversion and supports sustainable desistance.

Good

In making a judgement about out-of-court disposal policy and provision, we take into account the answers to the following questions:

Is there a policy in place for out-of-court provision that promotes appropriate diversion and supports sustainable desistance?

There is a Wolverhampton out-of-court disposal policy, which is agreed between West Midlands Police and the YOT. This was updated in March 2021 to include the arrangements for the new DIVERT processes that were to be introduced from September 2021.

There is also a joint working agreement which outlines the provision for a joint decision-making panel that offers two alternative routes rather than a referral to court. One of these is a formal out-of-court disposal; the other route, which avoids a criminal record, is the DIVERT pathway using Outcome 22. This means prosecution is deferred until the child has been given the opportunity to engage with an intervention, diverting the child away from the youth justice system.

Does out-of-court disposal provision promote diversion and support sustainable desistance?

When a child is referred to the YOT by the police, the YOT screens partners’ databases, including children’s social care. Where a victim has consented to involvement, a member of the restorative justice unit makes contact with them. The case is allocated to a YOT

worker to complete an AssetPlus assessment. Every child is referred to the YOT health worker, who assesses their health needs.

The YOT had an out-of-court decision-making panel in place, which offered out-of-court disposals, including community resolution, youth caution and youth conditional caution. However, since September 2021, the YOT has introduced a DIVERT pathway, which means that some children can receive a police Outcome 22. As a result of the implementation of DIVERT, a new joint decision-making panel has been introduced to determine whether the child should receive DIVERT or an out-of-court disposal. The joint decision-making panel includes representatives from early help, liaison and diversion, the restorative justice unit and education services. Other practitioners, such as children's social care, attend as necessary.

There is no fixed number of out-of-court disposals that a child can receive. The decision depends on the type of offence, acceptance of responsibility or agreement to a voluntary intervention, what is right for the community and what will meet the child's needs. The YOT worker presents the assessment to the panel. If there are any disagreements on the appropriate outcome, this is escalated to the service manager and relevant police sergeant.

It is expected that an out-of-court disposal will be completed within three months, although an additional three months can be added with management approval where there is a need. If a child does not comply with their disposal, case managers make efforts to support their engagement. Where risks are identified, the YOT will refer the case to other services, including the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub and the Partnership Exploitation Hub.

YOT staff carry out exit interviews to support learning and provide feedback to police. Provision for out-of-court disposals before the introduction of DIVERT was good and it is agreed that the new process will offer children more opportunities avoid becoming criminalised unnecessarily. At the time of the inspection, however, this process had not been fully implemented and so inspectors could not determine whether these outcomes had been achieved.

Are the out-of-court disposal policy and provision regularly assessed and updated to ensure effectiveness and maintain alignment with the evidence base?

The out-of-court disposal process was reviewed and has been changed to include DIVERT and the deferred prosecution option of Outcome 22. This offers children an opportunity to engage with an intervention even if they have not admitted responsibility for the offence. The evidential test has to be applied to ensure that children who would not have been charged due to lack of evidence are not being included.

The YOT policy refers to the need for DIVERT in order to ensure that children are not being unnecessarily criminalised. It also refers to the Lammy review²⁴ and the scheme aims to ensure black, Asian and minority ethnic children are offered the opportunity to be diverted away from the criminal justice system.

The performance and analysis of out-of-court disposals are included in the performance report to the management board.

²⁴ Ministry of Justice. (2016). Lammy Review of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) representation in the Criminal Justice System.

4. Resettlement

4.1. Resettlement policy and provision



There is a high-quality, evidence-based resettlement service for children leaving custody.

Outstanding

We inspected the quality of policy and provision in place for resettlement work, using evidence from documents, meetings and interviews. To illustrate that work, we inspected one case managed by the YOT that had received a custodial sentence. Our key findings were as follows.

Strengths:

- The YOT has resettlement panels that are well established and considered effective by staff and managers.
- There is a commitment to these panels from partners to support effective joint working.
- YOT staff have taken parents, carers and siblings to visits and facilitated video and telephone calls so that families can stay in touch.
- The management board has a designated member with oversight of the secure estate.
- There is a local arrangement with children's social care to ensure that all children are released to suitable accommodation.

Areas for improvement

- There had been no specific training for staff managing resettlement cases.

We gathered evidence for this standard from documents and meetings and inspected one case to allow us to illustrate the qualitative standards. In making a judgement about resettlement policy and provision, we take into account the answers to the following three questions:

Is there a resettlement policy in place that promotes a high-quality, constructive and personalised resettlement service for all children?

The YOT has a resettlement policy in place, dated 2019, which introduced resettlement panels. These panels are well established and are considered effective by staff and managers. They are held every six weeks and chaired by a YOT operational manager or the service manager. An example was given where the panel was able to address a child's accommodation needs at an early stage in their sentence and this resulted in accommodation being secured before the child's release. There is also a commitment to resettlement panels from partners to support effective joint working.

YOT staff described communication with the secure estate as very good. Each child is allocated a resettlement worker and there are weekly conversations between the YOT and the establishment. Information exchange with the secure establishment is timely, and any adjudication outcomes are usually received within 24 hours.

During Covid-19, most children have been kept in bubbles and those children who are most vulnerable have struggled with less time out of their cells. Direct work has also been limited and so YOT workers have been attending establishments to deliver interventions. Where possible, and when restrictions were lifted, YOT workers attended establishments with partner agencies. YOT staff have also taken parents, carers and siblings to visits and facilitated video and telephone calls so that families can stay in touch.

The management board has a designated member with oversight of the secure estate. They are routinely invited to the YOT resettlement panels. The HMYOI Werrington Resettlement Manager also attends the panels.

There is a process in place for escalating concerns about issues in the secure estate. In the first instance, the YOT operations manager and the secure estate resettlement manager will attempt to resolve the matter. If this does not resolve the issue, then there is the option to escalate to the YOT team leader.

Does resettlement provision promote a high-quality, constructive and personalised resettlement service for all children?

Finding accommodation for children leaving custodial establishments can be particularly difficult, as it is difficult to source timely, good-quality placements with appropriate support. The YOT has a local arrangement with children's social care to ensure that all children are released to suitable accommodation. If a child is a child in care or has leaving care status when in custody, then a member of the Children and Young People in Care Team is invited to the resettlement support panels so that they remain up to date with the circumstances of the child in custody and their needs on release.

The YOT had one resettlement case in the inspection. In this case, discussions and planning around accommodation started at the beginning of the sentence and indicated that the family's circumstances would be monitored to ensure that the child was released to appropriate provision. Planning and provision for ETE and health were not needed at that stage of the child's sentence.

The case showed that initial contact was made with the child in custody and their family within appropriate timescales following the custodial sentence. However, due to Covid-19, contact between YOT case manager and the child was initially hampered. The case manager wrote to the child and kept in touch with key workers at the establishment. Once restrictions were lifted, face-to-face contact took place approximately monthly, followed up by telephone calls. The case manager helped with virtual visits for the family and formal planning meetings were attended by the YOT and the child's family, as well as key professionals from the establishment. The case manager considered approaching the restorative justice unit to provide some family mediation work.

The case showed evidence of escalation as the case manager raised concerns about the child's safeguarding and the lack of access to meaningful interventions. These concerns were raised with the YOI Head of Safeguarding and the Wolverhampton safeguarding lead. Key senior managers sent them formally to the YOI and the relevant safeguarding partnership in the area. The response highlighted the safeguarding measures in place and the interventions that would be provided. This was recorded by the resettlement support panels chaired by the service manager.

There is evidence in the resettlement case that appropriate information was shared between the custodial establishment and the YOT case manager and vice versa. There was also a good level of contact between the YOT case manager, the child and their family.

At the time of the inspection there had been no specific training for resettlement work, although staff felt that trauma-informed practice training was especially relevant to resettlement cases.

Are resettlement policy and provision regularly assessed and updated to ensure effectiveness and maintain alignment with the evidence base?

The YOT resettlement policy and guidance were reviewed and updated for 2021-2022. Initially, resettlement support panels were being convened monthly, but following a review of the process with secure estate colleagues, it was reduced to bi-monthly, although this depends on the child's circumstances.

In addition to resettlement support panels, the review developed a risk review process. The risk review indicates the primary risk factors for the child in custody and in the community, and also collates the views of the child, their carers, community and custody case managers and other professionals working with the child.

Annexe 1: Methodology

HM Inspectorate of Probation standards

The standards against which we inspect youth offending services are based on established models and frameworks, which are grounded in evidence, learning and experience. These standards are designed to drive improvements in the quality of work with children who have offended.²⁵

The inspection methodology is summarised below, linked to the three domains in our standards framework. We focused on obtaining evidence against the standards, key questions and prompts in our inspection framework.

Domain one: organisational delivery

The youth offending service submitted evidence in advance and the Executive Director of Families delivered a presentation covering the following areas:

- How do organisational delivery arrangements in this area make sure that the work of your YOS is as effective as it can be, and that the life chances of children who have offended are improved?
- What are your priorities for further improving these arrangements?

During the main fieldwork phase, we conducted 23 interviews with case managers, asking them about their experiences of training, development, management supervision and leadership. We held various meetings, which allowed us to triangulate evidence and information. In total, we conducted 12 meetings, which included meetings with managers, partner organisations and staff. The evidence collected under this domain was judged against our published ratings characteristics.²⁶

Domain two: court disposals

We completed case assessments over a one-week period, examining case files and interviewing case managers. Forty per cent of the cases selected were those of children who had received court disposals six to nine months earlier, enabling us to examine work in relation to assessing, planning, implementing and reviewing. Where necessary, interviews with other people significantly involved in the case also took place.

We examined 11 court disposals. The sample size was set to achieve a confidence level of 80 per cent (with a margin of error of five), and we ensured that the ratios in relation to gender, sentence or disposal type, risk of serious harm, and risk to safety and wellbeing classifications matched those in the eligible population.

Domain three: out-of-court disposals

We completed case assessments over a one-week period, examining case files and interviewing case managers. Sixty per cent of cases selected were those of children who had received out-of-court disposals three to five months earlier. This enabled us to

²⁵ HM Inspectorate's standards are available here:

<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprobation/about-our-work/our-standards-and-ratings/>

examine work in relation to assessing, planning, and implementation and delivery. Where necessary, interviews with other people significantly involved in the case also took place.

We examined 13 out-of-court disposals. The sample size was set based on the proportion of out-of-court disposal cases in the YOT.

Resettlement

We completed case assessments over a one-week period, examining one case file and interviewing the case manager in the case where the child had received a custodial sentence or been released from custodial sentences four to 12 months earlier. This enabled us to gather information to illustrate the impact of resettlement policy and provision on service delivery. Where necessary, interviews with other people significantly involved in the case also took place.

In some areas of this report, data may have been split into smaller sub-samples – for example, male/female cases. Where this is the case, the margin of error for the sub-sample findings may be higher than five.

Annexe 2: Inspection data

In this inspection, we conducted a detailed examination of a sample 11 court disposals and 13 out-of-court disposals. In each of those cases, we inspect against standards regarding assessment, planning and implementation/delivery. For court disposals, we also look at reviewing. For each standard, inspectors answer a number of key questions about different aspects of quality, including whether there was sufficient analysis of the factors related to offending; the extent to which young offenders were involved in assessment and planning; and whether enough was done to assess the level of risk of harm posed, and to manage that risk. We reviewed a further one case to obtain data to illustrate our findings about resettlement policy and provision.

To score an 'Outstanding' rating for the sections on court disposals or out-of-court disposals, 80 per cent or more of the cases we analyse have to be assessed as sufficient. If between 65 per cent and 79 per cent are judged to be sufficient, then the rating is 'Good' and if between 50 per cent and 64 per cent are judged to be sufficient, then a rating of 'Requires improvement' is applied. Finally, if less than 50 per cent are sufficient, then we rate this as 'Inadequate'. Resettlement cases are not separately rated; the data is for illustrative purposes only.

The rating at the standard level is aligned to the lowest banding at the key question level, recognising that each key question is an integral part of the standard. Therefore, if we rate three key questions as 'Good' and one as 'Inadequate', the overall rating for that standard is 'Inadequate'.

Lowest banding (key question level)	Rating (standard)
Minority: <50%	Inadequate
Too few: 50-64%	Requires improvement
Reasonable majority: 65-79%	Good
Large majority: 80%+	Outstanding ☆

Additional scoring rules are used to generate the overall YOT rating. Each of the 12 standards are scored on a 0–3 scale in which 'Inadequate' = 0; 'Requires improvement' = 1; 'Good' = 2; and 'Outstanding' = 3. Adding these scores produces a total score ranging from 0 to 36, which is banded to produce the overall rating, as follows:

- 0–6 = Inadequate
- 7–18 = Requires improvement
- 19–30 = Good
- 31–36 = Outstanding.

Domain one standards, the qualitative standard in domain three (standard 3.4) and the resettlement standard (standard 4.1) are judged using predominantly qualitative evidence.

The resettlement standard is rated separately and does not influence the overall YOT rating. We apply a limiting judgement, whereby any YOT that receives an 'Inadequate' rating for the resettlement standard is unable to receive an overall 'Outstanding' rating, regardless of how they are rated against the core standards. Where there are no relevant resettlement cases, we do not apply a rating to resettlement work.

Data from inspected cases:²⁷

2.1. Assessment (court disposals)	
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?	% yes
a) Is there sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child's attitudes towards and motivations for their offending?	64%
b) Does assessment sufficiently analyse diversity issues?	64%
c) Does assessment consider personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context of the child?	100%
d) Does assessment utilise information held by other agencies?	100%
e) Does assessment focus on the child's strengths and protective factors?	91%
f) Does assessment analyse the key structural barriers facing the child?	73%
g) Is enough attention given to understanding the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and their likelihood of engaging with the court disposal?	91%
h) Does assessment give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of victims, and opportunities for restorative justice?	55%
i) Are the child and their parents or carers meaningfully involved in their assessment, and are their views taken into account?	91%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?	% yes
a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child?	64%
b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including other assessments, and involve other agencies where appropriate?	82%
c) Does assessment analyse controls and interventions to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	73%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	% yes
a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risk of harm to others posed by the child, including identifying who is at risk and the nature of that risk?	73%

²⁷ Some questions do not apply in all cases.

b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including past behaviour and convictions, and involve other agencies where appropriate?	91%
c) Does assessment analyse controls and interventions to manage and minimise the risk of harm presented by the child?	64%

2.2. Planning (court disposals)

Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?	% yes
a) Does planning set out the services most likely to support desistance, paying sufficient attention to the available timescales and the need for sequencing?	91%
b) Does planning sufficiently address diversity issues?	45%
c) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context of the child?	82%
d) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's strengths and protective factors, and seek to reinforce or develop these as necessary?	82%
e) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and seek to develop these as necessary?	91%
f) Does planning give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of victims?	36%
g) Are the child and their parents or carers meaningfully involved in planning, and are their views taken into account?	91%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	% yes
a) Does planning promote the safety and wellbeing of the child, sufficiently addressing risks?	73%
b) Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate, and is there sufficient alignment with other plans (e.g. child protection or care plans) concerning the child?	82%
c) Does planning set out the necessary controls and interventions to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	64%
d) Does planning set out necessary and effective contingency arrangements to manage those risks that have been identified?	36%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	% yes
a) Does planning promote the safety of other people, sufficiently addressing risk of harm factors?	73%

b) Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate?	91%
c) Does planning address any specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims?	27%
d) Does planning set out the necessary controls and interventions to promote the safety of other people?	45%
e) Does planning set out necessary and effective contingency arrangements to manage those risks that have been identified?	36%

2.3. Implementation and delivery (court disposals)

Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child's desistance?	% yes
a) Are the delivered services those most likely to support desistance, with sufficient attention given to sequencing and the available timescales?	100%
b) Does service delivery account for the diversity issues of the child?	64%
c) Does service delivery reflect the wider familial and social context of the child, involving parents or carers, or significant others?	100%
d) Does service delivery build upon the child's strengths and enhance protective factors?	91%
e) Is sufficient focus given to developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child and their parents or carers?	100%
f) Does service delivery promote opportunities for community integration, including access to services post-supervision?	91%
g) Is sufficient attention given to encouraging and enabling the child's compliance with the work of the YOT?	100%
h) Are enforcement actions taken when appropriate?	45%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child?	% yes
a) Does service delivery promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	73%
b) Is the involvement of other organisations in keeping the child safe sufficiently well-coordinated?	73%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	% yes
a) Are the delivered services sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm?	82%

b) Is sufficient attention given to the protection of actual and potential victims?	36%
c) Is the involvement of other agencies in managing the risk of harm sufficiently well-coordinated?	73%

2. 4. Reviewing (court disposals)

Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?	% yes
a) Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors linked to desistance?	100%
b) Does reviewing focus sufficiently on building upon the child's strengths and enhancing protective factors?	100%
c) Does reviewing include analysis of, and respond to, diversity factors?	55%
d) Does reviewing consider the personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context of the child?	100%
d) Does reviewing consider motivation and engagement levels and any relevant barriers?	100%
e) Are the child and their parents or carers meaningfully involved in reviewing their progress and engagement, and are their views taken into account?	91%
f) Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to support desistance?	100%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	% yes
a) Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors related to safety and wellbeing?	73%
b) Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies involved in promoting the safety and wellbeing of the child?	73%
c) Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	64%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	% yes
a) Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors related to risk of harm?	55%
b) Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies involved in managing the risk of harm?	64%

c) Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan all of work to manage and minimise the risk of harm?	45%
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3.1. Assessment (out-of-court disposals)

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?	% yes
a) Is there sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child's acknowledgement of responsibility for, attitudes towards and motivations for their offending?	92%
b) Does assessment sufficiently analyse diversity issues?	54%
c) Does assessment consider personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context of the child?	92%
d) Does assessment utilise information held by other agencies?	92%
e) Does assessment focus on the child's strengths and protective factors?	100%
f) Does assessment analyse the key structural barriers facing the child?	54%
g) Is sufficient attention given to understanding the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change?	85%
h) Does assessment give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of victims, and opportunities for restorative justice?	69%
i) Are the child and their parents or carers meaningfully involved in their assessment, and are their views taken into account?	100%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?	% yes
a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child?	77%
b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including other assessments, and involve other agencies where appropriate?	77%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	% yes
a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risk of harm to others posed by the child, including identifying who is at risk and the nature of that risk?	77%
b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including any other assessments that have been completed, and other evidence of behaviour by the child?	77%

3.2. Planning (out-of-court disposals)	
Does planning focus on supporting the child's desistance?	% yes
a) Does planning set out the services most likely to support desistance, paying sufficient attention to the available timescales and the need for sequencing?	100%
b) Does planning sufficiently address diversity issues?	54%
c) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context of the child?	100%
d) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's strengths and protective factors, and seek to reinforce or develop these as necessary?	85%
e) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and seek to develop these as necessary?	92%
f) Does planning take sufficient account of opportunities for community integration, including access to mainstream services following completion of out-of-court disposal work?	85%
g) Does planning give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of the victims?	62%
h) Are the child and their parents or carers meaningfully involved in planning, and are their views taken into account?	100%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	% yes
a) Does planning promote the safety and wellbeing of the child, sufficiently addressing risks?	85%
b) Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate, and is there sufficient alignment with other plans (e.g. child protection or care plans) concerning the child?	69%
c) Does planning include necessary contingency arrangements for those risks that have been identified?	46%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	% yes
a) Does planning promote the safety of other people, sufficiently addressing risk of harm factors?	69%
b) Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate?	54%
c) Does planning address any specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims?	54%
d) Does planning include necessary contingency arrangements for those risks that have been identified?	38%

3.3. Implementation and delivery (out-of-court disposals)	
Does service delivery effectively support the child's desistance?	% yes
a) Are the delivered services those most likely to support desistance, with sufficient attention given to sequencing and the available timescales?	100%
b) Does service delivery account for the diversity issues of the child?	77%
c) Does service delivery reflect the wider familial and social context of the child, involving parents or carers, or significant others?	100%
d) Is sufficient focus given to developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child and their parents or carers?	100%
e) Is sufficient attention given to encouraging and enabling the child's compliance with the work of the YOT?	100%
f) Does service delivery promote opportunities for community integration, including access to mainstream services?	92%
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child?	% yes
a) Does service delivery promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	92%
b) Is the involvement of other agencies in keeping the child safe sufficiently well utilised and coordinated?	69%
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people?	% yes
a) Are the delivered services sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm?	83%
b) Is sufficient attention given to the protection of actual and potential victims?	69%

Appendix 2: Action Plan name: Wolverhampton YOT Inspection Action Plan 2022-23

Directorate/Service Area:	Children's Services: Youth Offending Team
<small>WOO</small>	Lead officer: Celia Payne / Rachel King v.7



Action Title	Responsible Officer	Anticipated Outcome/Result	Timescales		Performance Measures	Progress Update	RAG Rating
			Proposed Start Date	Proposed End Date			
<p><u>HMIP Recommendations:</u></p> <p>The YOT management board should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. make sure that all YOT children with SEND, and especially those with an EHCP, have access to high quality education and training services that are matched to needs. (HMIP1) 2. ensure that staff are appropriately trained and confident in having conversations to understand black, Asian and minority ethnic children's experiences in order to improve the quality and suitability of service provision. (HMIP2) <p>The YOT service Manager should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. improve the quality of contingency planning in all cases, when managing and mitigating a child's risk of harm to others. (HMIP3) 							
<p>Organisation Delivery – Domain 1</p>							
Review the terms of reference for YMB in light of the YJB "Practice Guidance for Youth Offending Teams Management Boards in England and Wales" (HMIP1,2,3)	SI/BK/KL/SM /CP	To ensure ToR are fit for purpose and aligned to YJB guidance.	February 2022	April 2022	ToR reviewed and updated if required.		



Redesign the YMB data performance dashboard to ensure that key trends and YP needs are clearly identified & understood. (HMIP1 & 2)	AS/CP/BK	To ensure the YMB members have a detailed knowledge of the profile and needs of the children.	February 2022	July 2022	Redesigned YMB dashboard available for YMB 2022-23		
YMB standing agenda item for SEND/EHCP cohort analysis at each meeting. (HMIP1)	SI/BK/DM	Provide a strategic focus on the quality of provision for children with SEND & EHCP. Ensure YMB has a 2-way strategic link with the Culture of Inclusion project and the written statement of action for the recent SEND inspection.	April 22	On-going	Agenda item on quarterly boards and minutes from meeting recording analysis and progress.		
YMB to monitor development and implementation of the vulnerability Matrix to be developed across the council by Head of Inclusion & Empowerment. (HMIP1)	Helen Bakewell (HoS Inclusion & Empowerment / YMB chair (BK)	YMB chair (BK) sitting member of the SEND Partnership Board and to provide the strategic link between both boards. Linkage to be developed with the SEND Strategic Commissioning Group. The vulnerability Matrix database enables the monitoring of children and young people with or without EHCP's to track attendance, SEND support, EHCP, suspension and exclusion. In addition, identifies those at risk of other vulnerability risks.	Commenced February 2022	On-going Sept 2022	Request updates from Head of Inclusion and Empowerment (Helen Bakewell & BK) Evidence the use of the vulnerability matrix within YOT reviews and practice.		

		<p>YOT to access the vulnerability matrix for use during reviews and to help inform if children are in appropriate learning environments</p> <p>YOS workers to contribute to EHCP assessment and annual reviews and where required request TAC meetings with the schools SENCO and the SEN Officer should there be concerns about the placement</p>					
<p>YOT to be included within the SEND provision quality assurance framework. This will be co-produced with young person, parent carers, health, education and social care colleagues. This will include requirements for audit and moderation panels and include a themed audit test cycle (HMIP1)</p>	<p>Helen Bakewell / YMB</p>	<p>Themed audits to include children and young people involved with social care, youth offending, mainstream settings, specialist, alternative provision and independent providers.</p> <p>Ensure that provision for young people on EHCP and in alternative placements are in receipt of appropriate and high-quality provision. Reflecting the positive impact of co-production.</p> <p>Gaps in services, provision and plans are</p>	<p>April 2022</p>	<p>April 2023</p>	<p>Audit outcomes evidence, moderation panels and monitoring of improvements.</p>		

		responded to by services through the moderation process and improvements monitored by the audit team.					
Devise a role in SENSTART for a specific SEND officer to have an operational link to YOS for a single point of contact for all reviews. (HMIP1)	Deborah Beasley (SEND Service Manager)	<p>Improve the operational practice between YOT and SENSTART.</p> <p>Improved outcomes for young people, especially for EHCP reviews.</p>	July 2022	Sept 2022	<p>Revised Job Description for SEND Officer to include this new function.</p> <p>Recruitment to position for start of summer term.</p> <p>Evidence of improved outcomes for YOT young people via EHCP reviews.</p>		
Review PRU and Alternative Provision to consider Early Intervention options and therapeutic educational placements to reduce the number of young people requiring longer term placements in AP and PRU placements (HMIP1)	Helen Bakewell	<p>Early education options are available to support children and young people access the interventions needed to retain mainstream educational placements</p> <p>Specialist placements work collaboratively with partner agencies to meet the needs of children and young people</p>	April 2022	Sept 2023	<p>ISAP Panel ToR updated</p> <p>Alternative Provision SLA's reflect wider short term/part-time intervention support options</p> <p>Reduction in long-term placements at the PRU</p> <p>Improved educational outcomes for children and young people who attend specialist placements</p>		
YMB to receive quarterly updates from Head of Skills on progress of the 18-24 Wolves at Work initiative to address youth unemployment in the city.(HMIP1)	Julie Obada (head of Skills) /NK/DM	Post 16 provision for vulnerable learners and links with new initiative reviewed at YMB to ensure YOT cohort issues are addressed.	April 2022	On-going	Engagement levels with post 16 in provision and monitoring of data on levels of youth employment.		

YMB to explore potential funding streams to increase SLT provision within the YOT. (HMIP1)	YMB	Capacity increased to provide a greater range of developmental opportunities for further embedding SLT into YOT Practice	April 2022	September 2022	Increase in funding pathways for SLT future provision.		
Addressing areas of disproportionality and promoting wider partnership engagement to reduce areas of significant disproportionality. (HMIP2)	YMB/ Partnership	Tackle issues further "upstream" which impact on risks associated with a young person's involvement in the CJS, including SEND. Integrated partnership analysis and action planning for any identified areas of disproportionality. Increase life opportunities for Black Asian & Minority young people and prevent them entering the CJS.	February 2022	On-going	Reduction in the areas of disproportionality within identified practice areas. Ensuring interventions/support met the diverse needs of our young people. YMB oversight of delivery of Disproportionality Action Plan.		
YMB to commission the delivery of whole team training on cultural competency. Including input from those with lived experience. (HMIP2)	YMB	To promote confidence with staff to have the conversations about children's lived experiences when considering their ethnicity. Participation forum and activity to provide a focus on young people's lived experiences and provide input into selected forums and team learning to promote further understanding.	February 2022	September 2022	Evidence within assessment, planning and delivery of these "conversations" being had and impacting on practice. Thematic case audit to evidence practice. Young people feedback gathered from a range of participation activities.		

		<p>YOT Equality Forum to provide the platform for the development, learning and practice in this area.</p> <p>Operationally, staff supervision to ensure that this practice development is a standing agenda item.</p>			Regular YMB updates on progress on developing the culture and confidence in this practice area.		
YMB to use the HMIP thematic report on the “Experience of Black & Mixed Heritage Boys in the Youth Justice System” as a basis for systemic review and implementation of the key findings. (HMIP2)	YMB	Embed best practice from the HMIP Effective Practice Guide	February 2022	September 2022			
Court Disposals – Domain 2 Out of Court – Domain 3							
Refresher training for assessment authors team on risk management assessment and practice. (HMIP)	CP/LE	<p>Training with specific focus on improving the following practice:</p> <p>ROSH – risk child poses; risk and nature of that risk.</p> <p>Victims – Concerns & risks when planning to address the ROSH</p> <p>Contingency – Ensure arrangements for SWB/ROSH are specific and detailed.</p>	May 2022	June 2022	<p>Training commissioned with Lyla Ward</p> <p>Thematic case audits focusing on these specific practice areas.</p> <p>Quality assurance processes for assessments.</p>	Assetplus Training : Learning and practice improvement from HMIP booked for delivery on 4 th /11 th /16 th /23 rd May 2022.	

Refresher training for assessment authors on improving how diversity considerations are included in all assessments. (HMIP3)	CP/LE	<p>Assessment improvement in the identification of diversity issues.</p> <p>Evidence that once identified how they contribute the assessment and analysis. How diversity consideration influence and shape delivery of interventions.</p> <p>How the above is captured and evidenced in the above</p>	May 2022	June 2022	<p>Training commissioned with Lyla Ward</p> <p>Thematic case audits focusing on these specific practice areas.</p> <p>Quality assurance processes for assessments.</p>	Assetplus Training : Learning and practice improvement from HMIP booked for delivery on 4 th /11 th /16 th /23 rd May 2022.	
Review of managerial Quality Assurance processes for Assessment / reports and Risk Management. (HMIP3)	YOT Management Team.	Improve QA and gatekeeping processes to ensure specific areas of practice identified above are key focus.	February 2022	May 2022	<p>Development of redesigned QA processes.</p> <p>Impact of revised QA on raising standards.</p>		
Management team training on QA practices for ASSETPLUS and risk management practice. (HMIP3)	CP	Improve quality of management oversight on ROSH/ Victim/Contingency planning and Diversity.	June 2022	June 2022	Training commissioned with Lyla Ward	Assetplus Training : Learning and practice improvement from HMIP booked for delivery on /23 rd May 2022.	
Improve Case Managers and Managers understanding of MAPPA processes and practice.	CP/Angie Batham	Improve team understanding on MAPPA	July 2022	July 2022	MAPPA training to be delivered by West Midlands Regional MAPPA co-ordinator.		
Provide specialist resettlement training for practitioners working with young people in the secure estate.	CP	Further improve practitioner knowledge of the best resettlement practice.	June 2022	September 2022	<p>Training to be identified.</p> <p>Resettlement Guidance/workshops/ reflective practice circles to be established.</p>	ASSETPLUS resettlement training identified for SW staff (23.05.22)	

RAG Rating:

Significant Risk that it will not be achieved



Some risk that it may not be achieved although this may be corrected by remedial action



On target to complete on or before its target date



Completed



CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Meeting of the City Council 6 April 2022
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Report title	Gambling Act Policy	
Referring body	Statutory Licensing Committee - 16 March 2022	
Councillor to present report	Councillor Phil Page – Chair of Statutory Licensing Committee	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Cabinet Member with lead responsibility	Councillor Steve Evans, City Environment and Climate Change	
Accountable director	John Roseblade, Director of City Housing and Environment	
Originating service	Licensing	
Accountable employee	Paul Dosanjh	Service Manager: Trading Standards and Licensing Act
	Tel	01902 556056
	Email	Paul.Dosanjh@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report has been considered by	Statutory Licensing Committee	16 March 2022

Recommendation for decision:

The Council is recommended to:

1. Adopt the Statement of Gambling Policy (2022-2025).

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To adopt the Statement of Gambling Policy (2022-2025).

2.0 Background

- 2.1 On 16 March 2022, Statutory Licensing Committee considered a report on the Gambling Act Policy.
- 2.2 Copies of the report have been supplied to Councillors and can also be accessed online on the Council's website [here](#).
- 2.3 Statutory Licensing Committee recommended to Council that it:
 - 1. Adopts the draft Statement of Gambling Policy (2022-2025) subject to the percentage being corrected in the introduction paragraph in the policy at section 2.

3.0 Financial implications

- 3.1 The financial implications are detailed in the Statutory Licensing Committee report of 16 March 2022.

4.0 Legal implications

- 4.1 The legal implications are detailed in the Statutory Licensing Committee report of 16 March 2022.

5.0 Equalities implications

- 5.1 The equalities implications are detailed in the Statutory Licensing Committee report of 16 March 2022.

6.0 All other Implications

- 6.1 All other implications are detailed in the Statutory Licensing Committee report of 16 March 2022.

7.0 Schedule of background papers

- 7.1 Gambling Act Policy, Statutory Licensing Committee, 16 March 2022.

Statement of Gambling Policy

This Gambling Licensing Policy shall take effect from the 7th April 2022

STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY

Gambling Act 2005

(Published for consultation purposes October 2021)

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PART A

1. The Licensing Objectives

In exercising most of their functions under the Gambling Act 2005 (the Act), the Council must have regard to the licensing objectives as set out in section 1 of the Act. The licensing objectives are:

- preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime
- ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way
- protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling

It should be noted that the Gambling Commission has stated: “The requirement in relation to children is explicitly to protect them from being harmed or exploited by gambling”.

In carrying out its licensing functions under the Act and in accordance with section 153, the Council will, when making decisions about premises licences and temporary use notices aim to permit the use of premises for gambling in so far as it thinks it is:

- in accordance with any relevant code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission
- in accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission
- reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives and
- in accordance with this statement of gambling policy

2. Introduction

The City of Wolverhampton is situated in the West Midlands, which consists of seven Councils in total. The Council area has a population of almost 260,000 and covers an area of 26 square miles (ONS 2020). The Council area is urban in nature and is densely populated with approximately 3,500 residents per square kilometre. The City is ethnically diverse with 36% of its residents being of BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) heritage. Furthermore, 16.4% of the population in the 2011 census were not born in the UK. The City is religiously diverse with the second highest proportion of Sikh residents in the Country. In addition to the Wolverhampton city centre, there are 3 other local centres, Bilston, Wednesfield and Tettenhall. These areas are shown in the map below.



The table below shows the breakdown by ward and type of gambling establishments in the City.

Type of licence	Number issued
Bingo	5
Track Betting	3
Betting	29
Adult Gaming Centre	4
Converted Casino	3
Small Casino	1
Unlicensed family entertainment centre	1

Location	Number and Type of Licence
St Peters	2 Bingo, 2 Track, 8 Betting, 2 Adult Gaming Centre, 1 Converted Casino, 1 Small Casino
Wednesfield South	1 Bingo, 3 Betting, 1 Adult Gaming Centre, 1 Unlicensed Family Entertainment Centre
Ettingshall	1 Bingo, 2 Converted Casino
Bilston East	1 Bingo, 6 Betting, 1 Adult Gaming Centre
East Park	1 Track
Fallings Park	2 Betting
Heath Town	1 Betting
Blakenhall	3 Betting
Bushbury South and Low Hill	2 Betting
Bushbury North	2 Betting
Merry Hill	2 Betting

The Council Plan (2019-2024) has six strategic outcomes namely:

- Children and young people get the best possible start in life
- Well skilled people working in an inclusive economy
- More good jobs and investment in our city
- Better homes for all
- Strong, resilient and healthy communities
- A vibrant, green city we can all be proud of

Effective regulation of the gambling sector is a contributor to building and sustaining strong, resilient and healthy communities.

The Council is required by the Gambling Act 2005 to publish a statement of the principles which they propose to apply when exercising their functions. This statement must be published at least every three years. The statement must also be reviewed from

“time to time” and any amended parts re-consulted upon. The statement must be then re-published.

The Gambling Act requires that the following parties are consulted by the Council:

- the Chief Officer of Police;
- one or more persons who appear to the authority to represent the interests of persons carrying on gambling businesses in the authority’s area.
- one or more persons who appear to the authority to represent the interests of persons who are likely to be affected by the exercise of the authority’s functions under the Gambling Act 2005.

3. Declaration

In producing the final statement, the Council declares that it has had regard to the licensing objectives of the Gambling Act 2005, the guidance issued by the Gambling Commission, and any responses from those consulted on the policy statement.

4. Responsible Authorities

The Council is required by regulations to state the principles it will apply in exercising its powers under Section 157(h) of the Act to designate, in writing, a body which is competent to advise the authority about the protection of children from harm. The principles are:

- the need for the body to be responsible for an area covering the whole of the licensing authority’s area; and
- the need for the body to be answerable to democratically elected persons, rather than any particular vested interest group.

In accordance with the suggestion in the Gambling Commission’s Guidance for licensing authorities, this Council designates the Children and Young People Service for this purpose.

The contact details of all the Responsible Authorities under the Gambling Act 2005 are available via the Council’s website at

<http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/article/3000/Responsible-authorities-gambling>

In addition to the Responsible Authorities, the Council recognises the significant risk gambling can have on health and wellbeing and will therefore seek to consult the Director of Public Health on all applications for a gambling licence.

5. The Gambling Commission

The Gambling Commission regulates gambling in the public interest. The Commission provides independent advice to the Government about the manner in which gambling is carried out, the effects of gambling and the regulation of gambling generally. The Commission is also responsible for regulating online gambling.

The Commission has issued guidance regarding the manner in which local authorities exercise their licensing functions under the Act. They can be contacted at www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk or by post at, The Gambling Commission, Victoria Square House, Victoria Square, Birmingham, B2 4BP.

6. Interested parties

Interested parties can make representations about licence applications or apply for a review of an existing licence. These parties are defined in the Gambling Act 2005 as follows:

“a person is an interested party in relation to an application for or in respect of a premises licence if, in the opinion of the licensing authority which issues the licence or to which the applications is made, the person

- a) lives sufficiently close to the premises to be likely to be affected by the authorised activities,
- b) has business interests that might be affected by the authorised activities, or
- c) represents persons who satisfy paragraph (a) or (b)”

The Council is required by regulations to state the principles it will apply in exercising its powers under the Gambling Act 2005 to determine whether a person is an interested party.

Each case will be decided upon its merits. This Council will not apply a rigid rule to its decision making. It will consider the examples of considerations provided in the Gambling Commission's Guidance for licensing authorities at 8.9 - 8.11. It will also consider the Gambling Commission's Guidance that "has business interests" should be given the widest possible interpretation and include partnerships, charities, faith groups and medical practices.

The Gambling Commission has recommended that the licensing authority states that interested parties include trade associations and trade unions, and residents' and tenants' associations (Gambling Commission Guidance for local authorities 8.16). This Council will not however generally view these bodies as interested parties unless they have a member who can be classed as an interested person under the terms of the Gambling Act 2005 i.e. lives sufficiently close to the premises to be likely to be affected by the activities being applied for.

Interested parties can be persons who are democratically elected such as councillors and MP's. No specific evidence of being asked to represent an interested person will be required as long as the councillor / MP represents the ward likely to be affected. Other than this however, the Council will generally require written evidence that a person/body (e.g. an advocate / relative) 'represents' someone who either lives sufficiently close to the premises to be likely to be affected by the authorised activities and/or has business interests that might be affected by the authorised activities. A letter from one of these persons, requesting the representation will be considered sufficient.

If individuals wish to approach councillors to ask them to represent their views, then care should be taken that the councillors are not part of the Licensing Committee dealing with the licence application. If there are any doubts then please contact Licensing Services, Civic Centre, St Peters Square, Wolverhampton. WV1 1RP.

7. Exchange of Information

The Council is required to include in its statement the principles to be applied by the authority in exercising its function under sections 29 and 30 of the Act with respect to the

exchange of information between it and the Gambling Commission, and the functions under section 350 of the Act with respect to the exchange of information between it and the other persons listed in Schedule 6 to the Act.

The principle that this Council applies is that it will act in accordance with the provisions of the Gambling Act 2005 in its exchange of information which includes the provision that the Data Protection Act 2018 will not be contravened. The Council will also have regard to any guidance issued by the Gambling Commission on this, as well as any relevant regulations issued by the Secretary of State under the powers provided in the Gambling Act 2005.

8. Enforcement

The Council is required by regulations under the Gambling Act 2005 to state the principles to be applied by the authority in exercising their functions under part 15 of the Act, with respect to the inspection of premises; and the powers under section 346 of the Act to institute criminal proceedings in respect of the offences specified.

The Council's principles are that:

It will be guided by the Gambling Commission's Guidance for licensing authorities and will endeavour to be:

- Proportionate: regulators should only intervene when necessary: remedies should be appropriate to the risk posed, and costs identified and minimised;
- Accountable: regulators must be able to justify decisions, and be subject to public scrutiny;
- Consistent: rules and standards must be joined up and implemented fairly;
- Transparent: regulators should be open, and keep regulations simple and user friendly; and
- Targeted: regulation should be focused on the problem and minimise side effects.

The Council is committed to avoiding duplication with other regulatory regimes so far as possible. However, it should be noted that it will be necessary to liaise with West Midlands Police on occasion in relation to the consideration of applications and reviews of gambling premises licenses. The Council intends to adopt a similar approach to that utilised for the Licensing Act 2003 and on this basis will seek to agree a set of protocols with the Police that will determine the way in which the two parties interact which is set out within Regulatory Services enforcement policy.

The Council recognises that some companies within the gambling industry will have a number of premises within the City. In order to ensure that any compliance issues are identified and resolved at the earliest stage, operators will be requested, where appropriate, to give the Council a single, named point of contact, who should be a senior individual, and whom the Council will contact first should any compliance issues arise.

This Council has adopted and implemented a risk-based inspection programme based on;

- The licensing objectives
- Relevant codes of practice
- Guidance issued by the Gambling Commission, in particular at Part 36
- The principles set out in this Statement of Gambling Policy

The main enforcement and compliance role for the Council in terms of the Gambling Act 2005 is to ensure compliance with the premises licences and other permissions which it authorises. The Gambling Commission is the enforcement body for operating and personal licences. It is also worth noting that concerns about manufacture, supply or repair of gaming machines will not be dealt with by the Council but will be notified to the Gambling Commission.

The Council will also keep itself informed of developments as regards the work of the Better Regulation Executive and its successors in its consideration of the regulatory functions of local authorities.

9. Licensing Authority Functions

The Council is required under the Act to:

- Be responsible for the licensing of premises where gambling activities are to take place by issuing Premises Licences
- Issue Provisional Statements
- Regulate members' clubs and miners' welfare institutes who wish to undertake certain gaming activities via issuing Club Gaming Permits and/or Club Machine Permits
- Issue Club Machine Permits to Commercial Clubs
- Grant permits for the use of certain lower stake gaming machines at unlicensed Family Entertainment Centres
- Receive notifications from alcohol licensed premises (as delivered by the Licensing Act 2003) for the use of two or fewer gaming machines
- Issue Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permits for premises licensed to sell/supply alcohol for consumption on the licensed premises, under the Licensing Act 2003, where there are more than two machines
- Register small society lotteries below prescribed thresholds
- Issue Prize Gaming Permits
- Receive and Endorse Temporary Use Notices
- Receive Occasional Use Notices
- Provide information to the Gambling Commission regarding details of licences issued (see section above on 'information exchange')
- Maintain registers of the permits and licences that are issued under these functions

It should be noted that licensing authorities will not be involved in licensing remote gambling at all. This will fall to the Gambling Commission via operating licences.

PART B

PREMISES LICENCES

1. General Principles

Premises licences will be subject to the requirements set-out in the Gambling Act 2005 and regulations, as well as specific mandatory and default conditions which are detailed in regulations issued by the Secretary of State. The Council is able to exclude default conditions. The Council also has the power to impose additional conditions or exclude conditions from the licence.

Decision Making - The Council is aware that in making decisions about Premises Licences it should aim to permit the use of premises for gambling in so far as it thinks it is:

- In accordance with any relevant code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission;
- In accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission;
- Reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives; and
- In accordance with the Council's Statement of Gambling Policy.

It is appreciated that, as stated in the Gambling Commission's Guidance for licensing authorities, "moral objections to gambling are not a valid reason to reject applications for premises licences" (except in the case of a 'no casino resolution' - see section on Casinos) and also, that "unmet demand" is not a consideration for a licensing authority.

Definition of "premises" – In the Act, "premises" is defined as including "any place". Section 152 therefore prevents more than one premises licence applying to any place. But a single building could be subject to more than one premises licence, provided they are for different parts of the building and the different parts of the building can be reasonably regarded as being different premises. This approach has been taken to allow large, multiple unit premises such as a pleasure park, pier, track or shopping mall to obtain discrete premises licences, where appropriate safeguards are in place. However, licensing authorities should pay particular attention if there are issues about subdivisions of a single building or plot and should ensure that mandatory conditions relating to access between premises are observed.

The Gambling Commission states in its latest guidance that Licensing authorities should take particular care in considering applications for multiple licences for a building and those relating to a discrete part of a building used for other (non-gambling) purposes. In particular, they should be aware that entrances and exits from parts of a building covered by one or more licences should be separate and identifiable so that the separation of different premises is not compromised and that people do not 'drift' into a gambling area. The plan of the premises should clearly denote entrances and exits.

The Council takes particular note of the Gambling Commission's Guidance for Licensing authorities which states that: Licensing authorities should take particular care in considering applications for multiple licences for a building and those relating to a discrete part of a building used for other (non-gambling) purposes. In particular they should be aware of the following:

- The third licensing objective seeks to protect children from being harmed by gambling. In practice that means not only preventing them taking part in gambling, but also preventing them from being in close proximity to gambling. Therefore premises should be configured so that children are not invited to participate in, have accidental access to or closely observe gambling where they are prohibited from participating.
- Entrances to and exits from parts of a building covered by one or more premises licences should be separate and identifiable so that the separation of different premises is not compromised and people do not 'drift' into a gambling area. In this context it should normally be possible to access the premises without going through another licensed premises or premises with a permit.
- Customers should be able to participate in the activities named on the premises licence.

The Guidance also gives a list of factors which the licensing authority should be aware of, which may include:

- Do the premises have a separate registration for business rates
- Is the premises' neighbouring premises owned by the same person or someone else?
- Can each of the premises be accessed from the street or a public passageway?
- Can the premises only be accessed from any other gambling premises?

The Council will consider these and other relevant factors in making its decision, depending on all the circumstances of the case.

Casinos

- the principal entrance to the premises must be from a street (as defined at 7.23 of the guidance)
- no entrance to a casino must be from premises that are used wholly or mainly by
- children and/or young persons no customer must be able to enter a casino directly from any other premises which holds a gambling premises licence.

Adult Gaming Centre

- No customer must be able to access the premises directly from any other licensed gambling premises.

Betting Shops

- Access must be from a street (as defined at 7.23 of the guidance) or from another premises with a betting premises licence
- No direct access from a betting shop to another premises used for the retail sale of merchandise or services. In effect there cannot be an entrance to a betting shop from a shop of any kind and you could not have a betting shop at the back of the café – the whole area would have to be licensed.

Tracks

- No customer should be able to access the premises directly from:
 - a casino
 - an adult gaming centre

Bingo Premises

- No customer must be able to access the premises directly from:
 - a casino
 - an adult gaming centre

- a betting premises, other than a track

Family Entertainment Centre

- No customer must be able to access the premises directly from:
 - a casino
 - an adult gaming centre
 - a betting premises, other than a track

Premises “ready for gambling”

The Guidance states that a licence to use premises for gambling should only be issued in relation to premises that the council can be satisfied are going to be ready to be used for gambling in the reasonably near future, consistent with the scale of building or alterations required before the premises are brought into use.

If the construction of a premises is not yet complete, or if they need alteration, or if the applicant does not yet have a right to occupy them, then an application for a provisional statement should be made instead.

In deciding whether a premises licence can be granted where there are outstanding construction or alteration works at a premises, this authority will determine applications on their merits, applying a two stage consideration process:-

- First, whether the premises ought to be permitted to be used for gambling
- Second, whether appropriate conditions can be put in place to cater for the situation that the premises are not yet in the state in which they ought to be before gambling takes place.

Applicants should note that this authority is entitled to decide that it is appropriate to grant a licence subject to conditions, but it is not obliged to grant such a licence.

More detailed examples of the circumstances in which such a licence may be granted can be found at paragraphs 7.58-7.65 of the Guidance.

Location – The Council is aware that demand issues cannot be considered with regard to the location of premises but that considerations in terms of the licensing objectives are relevant to its decision making. In accordance with the Gambling Commission’s Guidance for licensing authorities, the Council will pay particular attention to the protection of children and vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling, as well as issues of crime and disorder. Should any specific policy be decided upon as regards areas where gambling premises should not be located, this statement will be updated. It should be noted that any such policy does not preclude any application being made and each application will be decided on its merits, with the onus upon the applicant showing how potential concerns can be overcome.

Planning:

The Gambling Commission Guidance to licensing authorities states:

7.58 - In determining applications, the licensing authority should not take into consideration matters that are not related to gambling and the licensing objectives. One example would be the likelihood of the applicant obtaining planning permission or building regulations approval for their proposal. Licensing authorities should bear in mind that a premises licence, once it comes into effect, authorises premises to be used for gambling. Accordingly, a licence to use premises for gambling should only be issued in relation to premises that the licensing authority can be satisfied are going to be ready to be used for gambling in the reasonably near future, consistent with the scale of building

or alterations required before the premises are brought into use. (Equally, licences should only be issued where they are expected to be used for the gambling activity named on the licence). This is why the Act allows a potential operator to apply for a provisional statement if construction of the premises is not yet complete, or they need alteration, or he does not yet have a right to occupy them. Part 11 of this Guidance gives more information about provisional statements.

The Council will not take into account irrelevant matters as per the above guidance. In addition this authority notes the following excerpt from the Guidance:

7.65 - When dealing with a premises licence application for finished buildings, the licensing authority should not take into account whether those buildings have to comply with the necessary planning or building consents. Nor should fire or health and safety risks be taken into account. Those matters should be dealt with under relevant planning control, building and other regulations, and must not form part of the consideration for the premises licence. S.210 of the Act prevents licensing authorities taking into account the likelihood of the proposal by the applicant obtaining planning or building consent when considering a premises licence application. Equally, the grant of a gambling premises licence does not prejudice or prevent any action that may be appropriate under the law relating to planning or building.

Duplication with other regulatory regimes – The Council seeks to avoid any duplication with other statutory / regulatory systems where possible, including planning. The council will not consider whether a licence application is likely to be awarded planning permission or building regulations approval, in its consideration of it. It will though, listen to, and consider carefully, any concerns about conditions which are not able to be met by licensees due to planning restrictions, should such a situation arise.

When dealing with a premises licence application for finished buildings, the council will not take into account whether those buildings have to comply with the necessary planning or buildings consents. Fire or health and safety risks will not be taken into account, as these matters are dealt with under relevant planning control, buildings and other regulations and must not form part of the consideration for the premises licence.

Licensing objectives - Premises licences granted must be reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives. With regard to these objectives, the Council has considered the Gambling Commission's Guidance to licensing authorities and some comments are made below.

Preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime – The Council is aware that the Gambling Commission takes a leading role in preventing gambling from being a source of crime. The Gambling Commission's Guidance does however envisage that licensing authorities should pay attention to the proposed location of gambling premises in terms of this licensing objective. Thus, where an area has known high levels of organised crime the authority will consider carefully whether gambling premises are suitable to be located there and whether conditions may be suitable such as the provision of door supervisors. The Council is aware of the distinction between disorder and nuisance and will consider factors (for example whether police assistance was required and how threatening the behaviour was to those who could see it) so as to make that distinction.

Ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way – The Council has noted that the Gambling Commission state that it generally does not expect licensing

authorities to be concerned with ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way as this will be addressed via operating and personal licences. There is however, more of a role with regard to tracks which is explained in more detail in the 'tracks' section below.

Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling – The Council has noted the Gambling Commission's Guidance (**for local authorities**) states that this objective means preventing children from taking part in gambling (as well as restriction of advertising so that gambling products are not aimed at or are, particularly attractive to children). The Council will therefore consider, as suggested in the Gambling Commission's Guidance, whether specific measures are required at particular premises, with regard to this licensing objective. Appropriate measures may include, but are not limited to,

- the supervision of entrances to prevent access by children (or known vulnerable persons)
- the supervision and monitoring of gaming machines,
- specifying the location of gaming machines
- areas where the nature of the gambling carried on in those areas should not be available to children should be segregated to exclude their entrance.

Measures are also likely to include a general requirement, in terms of the licensing of premises, in relation to the protection of children from harm and the prevention of vulnerable persons being harmed or exploited by gambling. In so doing it is anticipated that the Council will encourage, in its administration of gambling premises licensing, the promotion of organisations that seek to protect members of the public from gambling beyond their means and provide assistance to those who already gamble beyond their means.

The Council is also aware of the Gambling Commission Codes of Practice as regards this licensing objective, in relation to specific premises.

As regards the term “vulnerable persons” it is noted that the Gambling Commission does not seek to offer a definition but states that “it will for regulatory purposes assume that this group includes people who gamble more than they want to; people who gamble beyond their means; and people who may not be able to make informed or balanced decisions about gambling due to a mental impairment, alcohol or drugs.” The Council will consider this licensing objective on a case by case basis.

Conditions - Any conditions attached to licences will be proportionate and will be:

- Relevant to the need to make the proposed building suitable as a gambling facility;
- Directly related to the premises and the type of licence applied for;
- Fairly and reasonably related to the scale and type of premises; and
- Reasonable in all other respects.

Decisions upon individual conditions will be made on a case by case basis, although there will be a number of measures the Council will consider utilising should there be a perceived need, such as, the use of supervisors, appropriate signage for adult only areas etc. There are specific comments made in this regard under some of the licence types below. The Council will also expect applicants to offer their own suggestions as to way in which the licensing objectives can be met effectively.

The Council will also consider specific measures which may be required for buildings which are subject to multiple premises licences. These measures may include, but are not limited to, the supervision of entrances; segregation of gambling from non-gambling areas frequented by children and the supervision of gaming machines in non-adult gambling specific premises in order to pursue the licensing objectives. These matters are in accordance with the Gambling Commission's Guidance.

The Council will seek to ensure that where category C or above machines are available for use in premises to which children are admitted:

- All such machines are located in an area of the premises which is separated from the remainder of the premises by a physical barrier which is effective to prevent access other than through a designated entrance;
- Only adults are admitted to the area where these machines are located;
- Access to the area where the machines are located is supervised;
- The area where these machines are located is arranged so that it can be observed by the staff or the licence holder; and
- At the entrance to, and inside any such areas there are prominently displayed notices indicating that access to the area is prohibited to persons under 18.

These considerations will apply to premises including buildings where multiple premise licences are applicable.

The Council is aware that tracks may be subject to one, or more than one, premises licence, provided each licence relates to a specified area of the track. In accordance with the Gambling Commission's Guidance, the Council will consider the impact upon the third licensing objective and the need to ensure that entrances to each type of premises are distinct and that children are excluded from gambling areas where they are not permitted to enter.

The Council notes that there are conditions which the licensing authority cannot attach to premises licences which are:

- Any condition on the premises licence which makes it impossible to comply with an operating licence condition;
- Conditions relating to gaming machine categories, numbers, or method of operation;
- Conditions which provide that membership of a club or body be required (the Gambling Act 2005 specifically removes the membership requirement for casino and bingo clubs and this provision prevents it being reinstated) and
- Conditions in relation to stakes, fees, winning or prizes.

Door Supervisors - The Gambling Commission advises in its Guidance to Licensing Authorities that if the Council is concerned that a premises may attract disorder or be subject to attempts at unauthorised access (for example by children and young persons) then it may require that the entrances to the premises are controlled by a door supervisor, and is entitled to impose a premises licence to this effect.

Where it is decided that supervision of entrances/machines is appropriate for particular cases, a consideration of whether these need to be SIA (Security Industry Authority) licensed or not will be necessary. It will not be automatically assumed that they need to be licensed, as the statutory requirements for different types of premises vary (as per the Guidance, Part 33).

2. Adult Gaming Centres

The Council will have specific regard to the need to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm or being exploited by gambling and will expect the applicant to satisfy the authority that there will be sufficient measures to, for example, ensure that under 18 year olds do not have access to the premises.

The Council may consider measures to meet the licensing objectives such as:

- Proof of age schemes
- CCTV
- Supervision of entrances / machine areas
- Physical separation of areas
- Location of entry
- Notices/signage
- Specific opening hours
- Self-exclusion schemes
- Provision of information leaflets/helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare.

This list is not mandatory, nor exhaustive, and is merely indicative of example measures.

3. (Licensed) Family Entertainment Centres

The Council will have specific regard to the need to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm or being exploited by gambling and will expect the applicant to satisfy the authority, for example, that there will be sufficient measures to ensure that under 18 year olds do not have access to the adult only gaming machine areas.

The Council may consider measures to meet the licensing objectives such as:

- CCTV
- Supervision of entrances / machine areas
- Physical separation of areas
- Location of entry
- Notices / signage
- Specific opening hours
- Self exclusion schemes
- Provision of information leaflets / helpline numbers for organisations such as Gamcare.
- Measures/Training for staff on how to deal with suspected truant school children on the premises

This list is not mandatory, nor exhaustive, and is merely indicative of example measures.

The Council will, as per the Gambling Commission's guidance, refer to the Commission's website to see any conditions that apply to operating licences covering the way in which the area containing the category C machines should be delineated. The Council will also make itself aware of any mandatory or default conditions on these premises licences, when they have been published.

4. Casinos

Casinos and competitive bidding – Small casinos

The Council was specifically empowered by Parliament to grant one premises licence for a small casino. The licence has now been granted. The Council has no power to grant further casino licences.

Licence considerations / conditions – The Council will attach conditions to casino premises licences according to the principles set out in the Gambling Commission's Guidance at paragraph 9 of part 17, bearing in mind the mandatory conditions listed in paragraph 17 of the same part of the Guidance, and the Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice published by the Gambling Commission.

Betting machines – The Council will, as per the Gambling Commission's Guidance, take into account the size of the premises, the number of counter positions available for person-to-person transactions, and the ability of staff to monitor the use of the machines by children and young persons (it is an offence for those under 18 to bet) or by vulnerable people, when considering the number/nature/circumstances of betting machines an operator wants to offer.

5. Bingo Premises

The Council notes that the Gambling Commission's Guidance states:

18.5 Licensing authorities will need to satisfy themselves that bingo can be played in any bingo premises for which they issue a premises licence. This will be a relevant consideration where the operator of an existing bingo premises applies to vary their licence to exclude an area of the existing premises from its ambit and then applies for a new premises licence, or multiple licences, for that or those excluded areas.

18.8 - S.172(7), as amended, provides that the holder of a bingo premises licence may make available for use a number of category B gaming machines not exceeding 20% of the total number of gaming machines on the premises. For example, a premises with a total of 25 gaming machines available for use can make five or fewer category B3 gaming machines available on that premises. Premises that were licensed before 13 July 2011 are entitled to make available eight category B gaming machines, or 20% of the total number of gaming machines, whichever is the greater. There are no restrictions on the number of category C or D machines that can be made available. Regulations state that category B machines at bingo premises are restricted to sub-category B3 (SI 2007/2158: Categories of Gaming Machine Regulations 2007 (opens in new tab)) (but not B3A) and B4 machines. Licensing authorities should ensure that gambling machines are made available for use in a manner consistent with our guidance within Part 16. For the purpose of calculating the category B machine entitlement in gambling premises, gaming machines should only be counted if they can be played simultaneously by different players without physical hindrance. This includes tablets.

6. Betting Premises

Betting machines – The Council will, in accordance with the Gambling Commission's Guidance, take into account the size of the premises, the number of counter positions available for person-to-person transactions, and the ability of staff to monitor the use of the machines by children and young persons (it is an offence for those under 18 to bet) or by vulnerable people, when considering the number/nature/circumstances of betting machines an operator wants to offer.

7. Tracks

S.353 of the Act defines a track as a horse racecourse, greyhound track or other premises on any part of which a race or other sporting event takes place or is intended to take place.

The Act does not give a list of premises that are officially recognised as 'tracks' but there are a number of venues where sporting events do or could take place, and accordingly could accommodate the provision of betting facilities. Examples of tracks include:

- a horse racecourse (referred to in this guidance as 'racecourses')
- a greyhound track
- a point-to-point horserace meeting
- football, cricket and rugby grounds
- an athletics stadium
- a golf course
- venues hosting darts, bowls, or snooker tournaments
- a premises staging boxing matches
- a section of river hosting a fishing competition
- a motor racing event.

Gaming machines - Where the applicant holds a pool betting operating licence and is going to use the entitlement to four gaming machines, machines (other than category D machines) should be located in areas from which children are excluded.

Betting machines – The Council will, as per part 6 of the Gambling Commission's Guidance, take into account the size of the premises and the ability of staff to monitor the use of the machines by children and young persons (it is an offence for those under 18 to bet) or by vulnerable people, when considering the number/nature/circumstances of betting machines an operator proposes to offer.

Applications and plans

The Gambling Act (s51) requires applicants to submit plans of the premises with their application, in order to ensure that the licensing authority has the necessary information to make an informed judgement about whether the premises are fit for gambling. The plan will also be used for the Council to plan future premises inspection activity.

Plans for tracks do not need to be in a particular scale, but should be drawn to scale and should be sufficiently detailed to include the information required by regulations.

Some tracks may be situated on agricultural land where the perimeter is not defined by virtue of an outer wall or fence, such as point-to-point racetracks. In such instances, where an entry fee is levied, track premises licence holders may erect temporary structures to restrict access to premises.

In the rare cases where the outer perimeter cannot be defined, it is likely that the track in question will not be specifically designed for the frequent holding of sporting events or races. In such cases betting facilities may be better provided through occasional use notices where the boundary premises do not need to be defined.

The Council appreciates that it is sometimes difficult to define the precise location of betting areas on tracks. The precise location of where betting facilities are provided is not required to be shown on track plans, both by virtue of the fact that betting is permitted anywhere on the premises and because of the difficulties associated with pinpointing exact locations for some types of track. Applicants should provide sufficient information that the council can be satisfied that the plan indicates the main areas where betting might take place. For racecourses in particular, any betting areas subject to the "five times rule" (commonly known as betting rings) must be indicated on the plan.

8. Travelling Fairs

The Council is responsible for deciding whether, where category D gaming machines and/or equal chance prize gaming without a permit is to be made available for use at travelling fairs, the statutory requirement, that the facilities for gambling amount to no more than an ancillary amusement at the fair, is met.

The Council will consider whether the applicant falls within the statutory definition of a travelling fair. Travelling fairs do not require any permit to provide gaming machines but must comply with legal requirements about the way the machine operates. They may provide an unlimited number of category D gaming machines provided that facilities for gambling amount to no more than an ancillary amusement at the fair.

It has been noted that the 27-day statutory maximum for the land being used as a fair, applies on a per calendar year basis, and that it applies to the piece of land on which the fairs are held, regardless of whether it is the same or different travelling fairs occupying the land. The Council will work with its neighbouring authorities to ensure that land which crosses our boundaries is monitored so that the statutory limits are not exceeded.

9. Provisional Statements

Developers may wish to apply to the council for provisional statements before entering into a contract to buy or lease property or land to judge whether a development is worth taking forward in light of the need to obtain a premises licence. There is no need for the applicant to hold an operating licence in order to apply for a provisional statement.

S204 of the Gambling Act provides for a person to make an application to the licensing authority for a provisional statement in respect of premises that he or she:

- expects to be constructed;
- expects to be altered; or
- expects to acquire a right to occupy.

The process for considering an application for a provisional statement is the same as that for a premises licence application.

The applicant is obliged to give notice of the application in the same way as applying for a premises licence. Responsible authorities and interested parties may make representations and there are rights of appeal.

In contrast to the premises licence application, the applicant does not have to hold or have applied for an operating licence from the Gambling Commission and they do not have to have a right to occupy the premises in respect of which their provisional application is made.

The holder of a provisional statement may then apply for a premises licence once the premises are constructed, altered or acquired. The Council will be constrained in the matters it can consider when determining the premises licence application, and in terms of representations about premises licence applications that follow the grant of a provisional statement, no further representations from relevant authorities or interested parties can be taken into account unless:

- they concern matters which could not have been addressed at the provisional statement stage, or
- they reflect a change in the applicant's circumstances.

In addition, the council may refuse the premises licence (or grant it on terms different to those attached to the provisional statement) only by reference to matters:

- which could not have been raised by objectors at the provisional statement stage;
- which in the authority's opinion reflect a change in the operator's circumstances; or
- where the premises has not been constructed in accordance with the plan submitted with the application. This must be a substantial change to the plan and this licensing authority notes that it can discuss any concerns it has with the applicant before making a decision.

10. Premises Reviews

Requests for a review of a premises licence can be made by interested parties or responsible authorities; however it is for the council to decide whether the review is to be carried out. This will be on the basis of whether the request for the review is relevant to the matters listed below;

- in accordance with any relevant code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission;
- in accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission;
- reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives; and
- in accordance with the Council's Statement of Gambling Policy.

The request for the review will also be subject to the consideration by the council as to whether the request is frivolous, vexatious, or whether it will certainly not cause this authority to wish to alter/revoke/suspend the licence, or whether it is substantially the same as previous representations or requests for review.

The Council can also initiate a review of a particular premises licence, or a particular class of premises licence, on the basis of any reason which it thinks is appropriate.

Once a valid application for a review has been received by the council, representations can be made by responsible authorities and interested parties during a 28 day period. This period begins 7 days after the application was received by the licensing authority, who will publish notice of the application within 7 days of receipt.

The council must carry out the review as soon as possible after the 28 day period for making representations has passed.

The purpose of the review will be to determine whether the council should take any action in relation to the licence. If action is justified, the options open to the licensing authority are:-

- (a) add, remove or amend a licence condition imposed by the licensing authority;
- (b) exclude a default condition imposed by the Secretary of State or Scottish Ministers (e.g. opening hours) or remove or amend such an exclusion;
- (c) suspend the premises licence for a period not exceeding three months; and
- (d) revoke the premises licence.

In determining what action, if any, should be taken following a review, the council must have regard to the principles set out in section 153 of the Act, as well as any relevant representations.

In particular, the licensing authority may also initiate a review of a premises licence on the grounds that a premises licence holder has not provided facilities for gambling at the premises. This is to prevent people from applying for licences in a speculative manner without intending to use them.

Once the review has been completed, the council must, as soon as possible, notify its decision to:

- the licence holder
- the applicant for review (if any)
- the Commission
- any person who made representations
- the chief officer of police or chief constable; and
- Her Majesty's Commissioners for Revenue and Customs

PART C

Permits / Temporary & Occasional Use Notices

1. Unlicensed Family Entertainment Centre gaming machine permits (Statement of Principles on Permits - Schedule 10 paragraph 7)

Where a premises does not hold a premises licence but wishes to provide gaming machines, it may apply to the Council for a gaming machine permit. It should be noted that the applicant must show that the premise will be wholly or mainly used for making gaming machines available for use (Section 238).

The Gambling Act 2005 states that the Council may prepare a 'Statement of Principles' that they propose to consider in determining the suitability of an applicant for a permit and in preparing this statement, and for considering applications, it need not (but may) have regard to the licensing objectives and shall have regard to any relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission ~~under section 2.5~~. The Gambling Commission's Guidance to licensing authorities also states: In its statement of policy, a licensing authority may include a statement of principles that it proposes to apply when exercising its functions in considering applications for permits. In particular it may want to set out the matters that it will take into account in determining the suitability of the applicant. Given that the premises is likely to appeal particularly to children and young persons, licensing authorities may wish to give weight to matters relating to protection of children from being harmed or exploited by gambling and to ensure that staff supervision adequately reflects the level of risk to this group. Licensing authorities are also encouraged to also specify in their statement of policy that a plan for the uFEC must be submitted. Guidance also states: an application for a permit may be granted only if the licensing authority is satisfied that the premises will be used as an unlicensed Family Entertainment Centre, and if the chief officer of police has been consulted on the application. On this basis the Council will ask applicants to demonstrate

- a full understanding of the maximum stakes and prizes of the gambling that is permissible in unlicensed Family Entertainment Centres
- that the applicant has no relevant convictions (those that are set out in Schedule 7 of the Act); and
- that staff are trained to have a full understanding of the maximum stakes and prizes.

It should be noted that a licensing authority cannot attach conditions to this type of permit.

Statement of Principles

The Council will expect applicants to show that there are policies and procedures in place to protect children from harm. Harm in this context is not limited to harm from gambling but includes wider child protection considerations. The efficiency of such policies and procedures will each be considered on their merits, however, they may include appropriate measures and training for staff as regards suspected truant school children on the premises, measures and training covering how staff would deal with unsupervised very young children being on the premises, or children causing perceived

problems on or around the premise. The Council will require applicants to be able to demonstrate a full understanding of the maximum stakes and prizes of the gambling that is permissible in unlicensed Family Entertainment Centres; that the applicant has no relevant convictions (those that are set out in Schedule 7 of the Act); and that staff are trained to have a full understanding of the maximum stakes and prizes.

A full copy of the statement of principles is available on request to:

Licensing Services
City of Wolverhampton Council
Civic Centre
St Peters Square
Wolverhampton
WV1 1RP

licensing@wolverhampton.gov.uk

2. (Alcohol) Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permits

There is provision in the Act for premises licensed to sell alcohol for consumption on the premises to automatically have two gaming machines, of categories C and/or D. The premises merely need to notify the Council of them.

The Council can remove this automatic authorisation in respect of any particular premise, if:

- provision of machines is not reasonably consistent with the pursuit of the licensing objectives;
- gaming has taken place on the premises that breaches a condition of section 282 of the Gambling Act (i.e. that written notice has been provided to the licensing authority, that a fee has been provided and that any relevant code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission about the location and operation of the machine has been complied with);
- the premises are mainly used for gaming; or
- an offence under the Gambling Act has been committed on the premises.

Permit: 3 or more machines

If a premises wishes to have more than 2 machines, then it will need to apply for a permit from the Council. The Council will then consider the application based upon the licensing objectives and any guidance issued by the Gambling Commission. The Commission also states that the Council should also consider other relevant matters. Such matters will be decided on a case by case basis but generally the Council will have regard to the need to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm or being exploited by gambling and will expect the applicant to satisfy the authority that there will be sufficient measures to ensure that under 18 year olds do not have access to the adult only gaming machines. These measures may include the adult machines being in sight of the bar, or in the sight of staff that will monitor the machines to ensure they are not being used by those under 18.

Notices and signage may also be help. As regards the protection of vulnerable persons applicants may wish to consider the provision of information leaflets and helpline numbers for organisations such as Gamcare.

The Council recognises that some alcohol licensed premises may apply for a premises licence for their non-alcohol licensed areas. Any such application would most likely need to be applied for, and dealt with, as an Adult Gaming Centre premises licence.

It should also be noted that the Council can decide to grant the application with a smaller number of machines and/or a different category of machines than that applied for. Conditions, other than these, cannot be attached.

Applicants should also note that the holder of a permit must comply with any Code of Practice issued by the Gambling Commission regarding the location and operation of gaming machines.

3. Prize Gaming Permits

The Gambling Act 2005 states that the Council may “prepare a Statement of Principles that they propose to apply in exercising their functions under this Schedule” which “may, in particular, specify matters that the licensing authority proposes to consider in determining the suitability of the applicant for a permit”.

Accordingly, the Council has prepared a Statement of Principles which requires the applicant to set out the types of gaming that he or she is intending to offer. The applicant should be able to demonstrate:

- that they understand the limits to stakes and prizes that are set out in regulations;
- and, that the gaming offered is within the law.
- Clear policies that outline the steps to be taken to protect children from harm

In making its decision on an application for this permit the Council does not need to (but may) have regard to the licensing objectives but must have regard to any Gambling Commission guidance.

It should be noted that the Council cannot and therefore will not attach conditions to the permit. However where facilities are provided in an adult gaming centre, a licensed family centre or for equal chance prize gaming, section 293 of the Gaming Act 2005 provides conditions with which the permit holder must comply. These are:

- the limits on participation fees, as set out in regulations, must be complied with;
- all chances to participate in the gaming must be allocated on the premises on which the gaming is taking place and on one day. The game must be played and completed on the day the chances are allocated; and the result of the game must be made public in the premises on the day that it is played;
- the prize for which the game is played must not exceed the amount set out in regulations (if a money prize), or the prescribed value (if non-monetary prize); and
- participation in the gaming must not entitle the player to take part in any other gambling.

4. Club Gaming and Club Machines Permits

Members Clubs and Miners' Welfare Institutes (but not Commercial Clubs) may apply for a Club Gaming Permit or a Club Gaming machines permit. The Club Gaming Permit will enable the premises to provide gaming machines (3 machines of categories B, C or D), equal chance gaming and games of chance as set-out in forthcoming regulations. A Club Gaming machine permit will enable the premises to provide gaming machines (3 machines of categories B, C or D).

Gambling Commission Guidance states: "Members clubs must have at least 25 members and be established and conducted "wholly or mainly" for purposes other than gaming, unless the gaming is permitted by separate regulations. The Secretary of State has made regulation and these cover bridge and whist clubs, which replicate(s) the position under the Gaming Act 1968. A members' club must be permanent in nature, not established to make commercial profit, and controlled by its members equally. Examples include working men's clubs, branches of Royal British Legion and clubs with political affiliations."

The Commission Guidance also states that "licensing authorities may only refuse an application on the grounds that:

- (a) the applicant does not fulfil the requirements for a members' or commercial club or miners' welfare institute and therefore is not entitled to receive the type of permit for which it has applied;
- (b) the applicant's premises are used wholly or mainly by children and/or young persons;
- (c) an offence under the Act or a breach of a permit has been committed by the applicant while providing gaming facilities;
- (d) a permit held by the applicant has been cancelled in the previous ten years; or
- (e) an objection has been lodged by the Commission or the police."

There is also a 'fast-track' procedure available under the Act for premises which hold a Club Premises Certificate under the Licensing Act 2003 (Schedule 12 Paragraph 10). As the Gambling Commission Guidance to licensing authorities states: "under the fast-track procedure there is no opportunity for objections to be made by the Commission or the police, and the grounds upon which the Council can refuse a permit are reduced. And "The grounds on which an application under the process may be refused are:

- (a) that the club is established primarily for gaming, other than gaming prescribed under schedule 12;
- (b) that in addition to the prescribed gaming, the applicant provides facilities for other gaming; or
- (c) that a club gaming permit or club machine permit issued to the applicant in the last ten years has been cancelled.

There are statutory conditions on club gaming permits that no child uses a category B or C machine on the premises and that the holder complies with any relevant provision of a code of practice about the location and operation of gaming machines. The Council will enforce these statutory conditions.

5. Temporary Use Notices

Temporary use notice(s) allow the use of premises for gambling, where there is no premises licence, but where a gambling operator wishes to use the premises temporarily for providing facilities for gambling. Premises that might be suitable for a temporary use notice according to the gambling commission would include hotels, conference centres and sporting venues.

The council can only grant a Temporary Use Notice to a person or company holding a relevant operating licence, i.e. a non-remote casino operating licence.

The Secretary of State has the power to determine what form of gambling can be authorised by Temporary Use Notices, and at the time of writing this Statement the

relevant regulations (SI no 3157: The Gambling Act 2005 (Temporary Use Notices) Regulations 2007) state that Temporary Use Notices can only be used to permit the provision of facilities or equal chance gaming, where the gaming is intended to produce a single winner, which in practice means poker tournaments.

There are a number of statutory limits as regards Temporary Use Notices. The meaning of "premises" in Part 8 of the Act is discussed in Part 7 of the Gambling Commission Guidance to Licensing Authorities. As with "premises", the definition of "a set of premises" will be a question of fact in the particular circumstances of each notice that is given. In the Act "premises" is defined as including "any place".

In considering whether a place falls within the definition of "a set of premises", the licensing authority needs to look at, amongst other things, the ownership/occupation and control of the premises.

6. Occasional Use Notices

The council has very little discretion as regards these notices aside from ensuring that the statutory limit of 8 days in a calendar year is not exceeded. The council will though consider the definition of a 'track' and whether the applicant is permitted to avail him/herself of the notice.

The Council will though consider the definition of a 'track' and whether applicant is permitted to avail him/herself of the notice.

- Betting on a track will be permitted by an occasional use notice providing it is for 8 days or less in a calendar year. The calendar year will commence on the 1st January.
- The notice must be served by a person who is responsible for the administration of events on the track, or by an occupier of the track.
- A notice must be served on the Council and copied to the Chief of Police.
- The notice must specify the day on which it has effect and may be given in relation to consecutive days providing the overall limit of 8 days is not exceeded in a calendar year.
- The Council will maintain a record of the number of notices served in a calendar year to ensure the limit of 8 days is not exceeded.
- No gaming machines may be provided

7. Lotteries

All lotteries are unlawful unless they are run in accordance with an operating licence issued by the Gambling Commission or it is an 'exempt' lottery as defined by the Act. One exemption is in respect of what are termed 'small society lotteries'. The Council will be responsible for registering these small lotteries.

A society will be allowed to register with the Council if it is a 'non commercial' lottery i.e. it is established and conducted:

- for charitable purposes,
- for the purpose of enabling participation in, or of supporting, sporting, athletic or cultural activities or
- for any other non-commercial purpose other than for private gain

The Council will maintain a register of small society lotteries which it has registered.

8. Local Authority Lotteries

Under the terms of the Act Council's can, if they elect to do so, apply to the Gambling Commission for a licence to operate a Local Authority Lottery, the proceeds of which should be utilised for the benefit of the local community.

CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Meeting of the City Council 6 April 2022
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Report title	Auditor's Annual Report, on City of Wolverhampton Council 2020-2021	
Referring body	Audit and Risk Committee – 14 March 2022	
Councillor to present report	Councillor Alan Butt, Chair of Audit and Risk Committee	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Cabinet Member with lead responsibility	Councillor Ian Brookfield, Leader of the Council	
Accountable director	Tim Johnson, Chief Executive	
Originating service	Strategic Finance	
Accountable employee	Claire Nye	Director of Finance
	Tel	01902 550478
	Email	Claire.Nye@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Audit and Risk Committee	14 March 2022

Recommendations for noting:

The Council is asked to note:

1. The Annual Report from the Council's external auditors, Grant Thornton.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To update members on the Auditor's Annual Report, on City of Wolverhampton Council for 2020-2021.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Under Section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, Grant Thornton, as the Council's auditor, are required to satisfy themselves that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources.
- 2.2 The Code of Audit Practice issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) requires Grant Thornton to consider whether the Council has put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources. The auditor is no longer required to give a binary qualified/unqualified Value for Money (VFM) conclusion. Instead, they now report in more detail on the Council's overall arrangements, as well as key recommendations on any significant weaknesses in arrangements identified during the audit. Auditors are required to report their commentary on the Council's arrangement under three areas:
- Financial sustainability
 - Governance
 - Improving economy, efficiency, and effectiveness
- 2.3 Following a recommendation from the Redmond Review, the auditor's annual report is being brought to Full Council, to improve transparency to the public and ensure all members are aware of issues raised by the auditor and recommendations.

3.0 Outcome

- 3.1 The Auditor's Annual Report is attached in Appendix 1 and provides the detail. To summarise:
- 3.2 Grant Thornton have completed their audit of the Council's financial statements and issued an unqualified opinion on 11 October 2021.
- 3.3 Overall, the Grant Thornton reflected positively on the financial governance of the Council. The auditors have also reported that they did not have to apply any of their formal auditors powers (these are detailed in Appendix 1).
- 3.4 With regards to Value for Money, the auditors can make recommendations under the following types :

- Statutory – this is a written recommendation to the Council under Section 24 (schedule 7) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. A recommendation under schedule 7 requires the Council to discuss and respond publicly to the report.
- Key – the National Audit Officer Code of Audit Practice requires that where auditors identify significant weaknesses as part of their arrangements to secure value for money they should make recommendations setting out the actions that should be taken by the Council. We have defined these recommendations as ‘key recommendations’.
- Improvement – these recommendations, if implemented should improve arrangements in place at the Council, but are not a result of identifying significant weaknesses in the Council’s arrangements.

3.5 Overall, no statutory or key recommendations were reported by Grant Thornton.

Financial sustainability

3.6 The auditors are required to consider our arrangements for ensuring the Council can continue to deliver services. This includes planning resources to ensure adequate finances and maintain sustainable levels of spending over the medium term (3.-5 years).

3.7 Grant Thornton’s report notes that we are operating in an increasingly uncertain financial environment. But, despite this uncertainty, and the challenges posed by Covid-19, the Council has maintained a good financial position – reporting ‘the Council has historically performed well, with a record of strong financial and budgetary management’.

3.8 Overall, Grant Thornton reported no significant weaknesses in the arrangement to secure financial stability at the Council. They only identified two improvement recommendations.

Governance

3.9 The auditors are required to consider our arrangements for ensuring that the council makes appropriate decisions in the right way. This includes arrangements for budget setting and management, risk management, and ensuring the Council makes decisions based on appropriate information.

3.10 The report notes that ‘there are good systems in place for oversight of the budget’. ‘This constitution is regularly reviewed and updated, including very recently, in order to ensure that any changes in processes occurring as a result of Covid-19 were constitution-compliant’. ‘There is a good suite of polices in place, covering anti-fraud and corruption, and the Council has an established antifraud culture’.

3.11 Overall, the Grant Thornton reported they found no evidence of significant weaknesses in the council’s arrangements for ensuring that it makes informed decisions and property manages it risk. They only identified three improvement recommendations in relation to governance.

Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness

- 3.12 The auditors are required to consider our arrangements for improving the way the council delivers its services. This includes arrangements for understanding costs and delivering efficiencies and improving outcomes for service users.
- 3.13 Overall, Grant Thornton reported they were satisfied the council has appropriate arrangements in place to ensure it manages risks to its oversight in ensuring economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources and found no significant weaknesses in its arrangements.
- 3.14 Grant Thornton also provided commentary on the impact of Covid-19. They reported 'the council has been mindful of the impact of the pandemic on its most important resources, its staff. Actions have been put in place to support staff wellbeing and supporting staff remains a key priority for the council'. Grant Thornton reported they had not identified any significant weaknesses in the council VFM arrangements for responding to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 3.15 All recommendations along with management responses can be found in more detail in Appendix 1.
- 3.16 This report was presented to the Audit Committee on 14 March 2022.

4.0 Financial implications

- 4.1 The financial implications are detailed in the body of the Annual Report (Appendix 1).
[EB/29032022/P]

5.0 Legal implications

- 5.1 Under Section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Council's auditor, is required to satisfy themselves that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources.

The Code of Audit Practice issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) requires the Council's auditor to consider whether the Council has put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources. [JB/29032022/P]

6.0 Equalities implications

- 6.1 While there are no direct equalities implications arising from the recommendation in this report, the local audit process is a key part of the preparation and sign-off of the Statement of Accounts, and thereby will aid the Council in its ability to meet its equality objectives.

7.0 All other Implications

- 7.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

8.0 Schedule of background papers

8.1 None

9.0 Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1: Auditor's Annual Report on City of Wolverhampton Council

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Auditor's Annual Report on City of Wolverhampton Council

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We are required under Section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to satisfy ourselves that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The Code of Audit Practice issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) requires us to report to you our commentary relating to proper arrangements.

We report if significant matters have come to our attention. We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.



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The contents of this report relate only to the matters which have come to our attention, which we believe need to be reported to you. It is not a comprehensive record of all the relevant matters, which may be subject to change, and in particular we cannot be held responsible to you for reporting all of the risks which may affect the Council or all weaknesses in your internal controls. This report has been prepared solely for your benefit and should not be quoted in whole or in part without our prior written consent. We do not accept any responsibility for any loss occasioned to any third party acting, or refraining from acting on the basis of the content of this report, as this report was not prepared for, nor intended for, any other purpose.

Executive summary



Value for money arrangements and key recommendation(s)

Under the National Audit Office (NAO) Code of Audit Practice ('the Code'), we are required to consider whether the Council has put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The auditor is no longer required to give a binary qualified / unqualified VFM conclusion. Instead, auditors report in more detail on the Council's overall arrangements, as well as key recommendations on any significant weaknesses in arrangements identified during the audit.

Auditors are required to report their commentary on the Council's arrangements under specified criteria. As part of our work, we considered whether there were any risks of significant weakness in the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We identified risks in respect of:

- Financial sustainability
- Governance

We have not had to apply any of our formal auditor's powers. For information the powers we can deploy are set out at Appendix C.



Financial sustainability

The Council is operating in an increasingly uncertain financial environment. For the second successive year, the Comprehensive Spending Review was a single year spending review. Wolverhampton, as with all local authorities, will need to continue to plan with little certainty over funding in the medium term.

Despite this uncertainty, and the challenges posed by COVID-19, the Council has maintained a good financial position. Having planned its budgets for future years well in advance will enable sensible phasing of proposals to minimise the impact of the financial climate on services to residents.

Our work has not identified any significant weaknesses in arrangements to secure financial stability at the Council, but we have identified two improvement recommendations.



Governance

Our work this year has focussed on developing a detailed understanding of the governance arrangements in place at the Council, including those in relation to the group as a whole, and the changes instigated as a response to the pandemic.

Our work on both business as usual governance and adapted structures has not identified any significant weaknesses in arrangements, but we have raised three improvement recommendations in relation to governance.



Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness

The Council has demonstrated a clear understanding of its role in securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Our work has not identified any significant weaknesses in arrangements.



Opinion on the financial statements: we have completed our audit of the Council's financial statements and issued an unqualified audit opinion on 11 October 2021.

Other opinion/key findings

We did not identify any significant unadjusted findings in relation to other information produced by the Council, including the Narrative Report or the Annual Governance Statement.

Audit Findings Report (AFR)

Detailed findings can be found in our AFR, which was published and reported to the Council's Audit and Risk Committee on 27 September 2021. At this Committee meeting we reported that there were some outstanding items which were still a work in progress, including anticipated changes to the accounts. Subsequently, a final version of the Audit Findings Report was provided to management on 11 October 2021 concurrently with our signed audit opinion. A summary of the misstatement is set out below:

Adjusted misstatements

6 adjustments were made, one of which resulted in a change to the Council's Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) of £3.6m, but did not impact on the Council's reserves:

- 1) Derecognition of the Sports Ground at Wobaston Road from the balance sheet: £3.6m.
- 2) Reclassification of Wobaston Road land from other land and buildings to assets held for sale: £6.3m.
- 3) Reclassification of income and expenditure within the CIES: £3.0m.

- 4) Reclassification of two COVID-19 grants (tax income guarantee scheme and section 31 rates relief) within the CIES: £35.3m.

Unadjusted Misstatements

There were a further 6 unadjusted misstatements reported, which management did not adjust for on the grounds of materiality:

- 1) Reversal of a prior period adjustment (PPA) to assets held for sale opening balances, which was not material and therefore did not meet the criteria of a PPA: £1.6m.
- 2) Correction of the valuation of Loxdale Primary School for updated pupil numbers: £0.7m.
- 3) Understatement of the Council's share of the West Midlands Pension Fund pension fund assets: £6.39m.
- 4) Correction of CIES element of revaluation reserve debit entries: £4.5m
- 5) Note 2C - Pooled Budgets: in our view this did not clearly describe the nature of the arrangement or how the Council has accounted for the pooled budget.
- 6) Note 2K - Events after the Reporting period: In accordance with IAS10 this note should be used to describe an event after the year end that could potentially have an impact on the figures reported. Whilst informative, (as it explains the challenges the Council continues to face in light of the pandemic) it could be enhanced to more explicitly note what the event after the reporting period has been and which figures could be impacted.





Opinion on the financial statements: we have completed our audit of the Council's financial statements and issued an unqualified audit opinion on 11 October 2021.

Unadjusted Misstatements (continued)

These errors were considered immaterial both individually and in aggregate. There would have been no impact on the Council's usable reserves had these adjustments been made. The overall impact on the balance sheet would have been an increase to assets of £7.1m.

Whole of Government Accounts

To support the audit of the Whole of Government Accounts (WGA), we are required to review and report on the WGA Return prepared by the Council. This work includes performing specified procedures under group audit instructions issued by the National Audit Office. We will complete our work on the Whole of Government Accounts consolidation pack in line with the national deadline, when it is announced.



Commentary on the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

All Councils are responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness from their resources. This includes taking properly informed decisions and managing key operational and financial risks so that they can deliver their objectives and safeguard public money. The Council's responsibilities are set out in Appendix A.

Councils report on their arrangements, and the effectiveness of these arrangements as part of their annual governance statement.

Under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, we are required to be satisfied whether the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

The National Audit Office's Auditor Guidance Note (AGN) 03, requires us to assess arrangements under three areas:



Financial sustainability

Arrangements for ensuring the Council can continue to deliver services. This includes planning resources to ensure adequate finances and maintain sustainable levels of spending over the medium term (3-5 years).



Governance

Arrangements for ensuring that the Council makes appropriate decisions in the right way. This includes arrangements for budget setting and management, risk management, and ensuring the Council makes decisions based on appropriate information.



Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness

Arrangements for improving the way the Council delivers its services. This includes arrangements for understanding costs and delivering efficiencies and improving outcomes for service users.



Our commentary on each of these three areas, as well as the impact of COVID-19, is set out on pages 7 to 22.

Financial sustainability



We considered how the Council:

- identifies all the significant financial pressures it is facing and builds these into its plans
- plans to bridge its funding gaps and identify achievable savings
- plans its finances to support the sustainable delivery of services in accordance with strategic and statutory priorities
- ensures its financial plan is consistent with other plans such as workforce, capital, investment and other operational planning
- identifies and manages risk to financial resilience, such as unplanned changes in demand and assumptions underlying its plans.

Financial position 2020/21

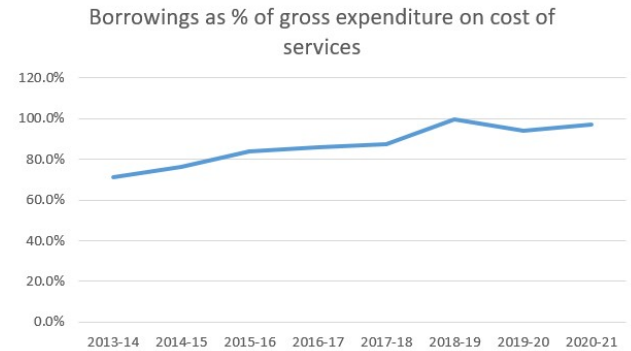
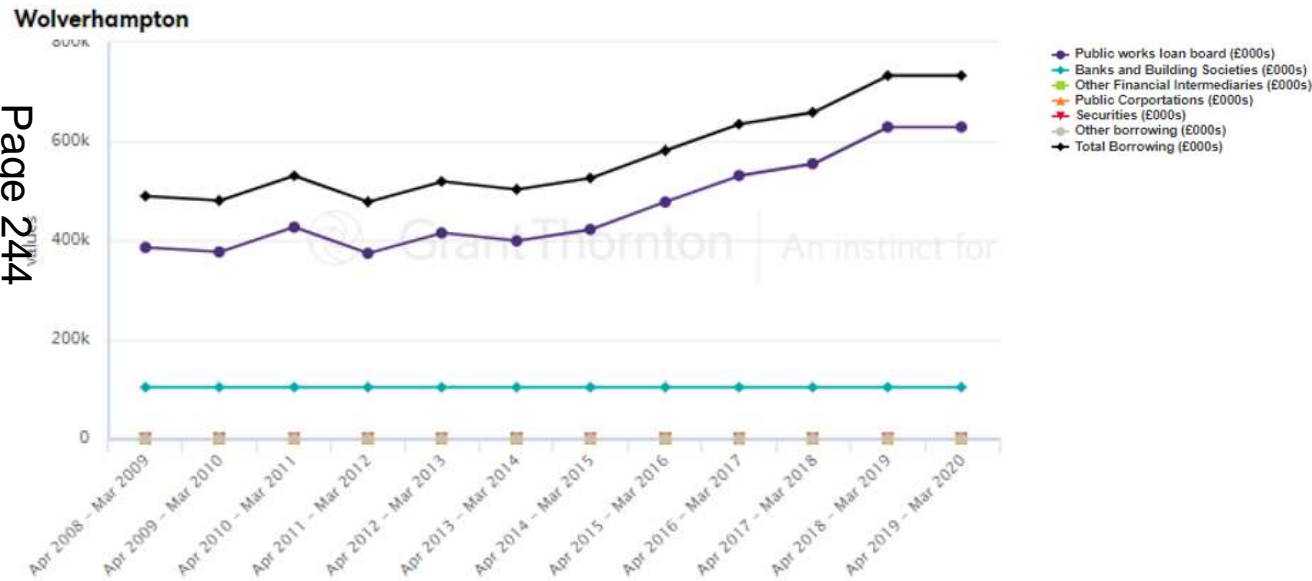
The Council has historically performed well, with a record of strong financial and budgetary management. That being said, it is in a challenging environment, and this is set to continue, as the impact of COVID-19 as well as pe-existing funding pressures persist. The Council has increased its level of general fund marginally, as it now stands at £13.7m and has increased its level of earmarked reserves significantly from £64.6m to £121.4m (Note that the table shown below is for the Council but the general fund and earmarked reserves balances for the group are the same). Reports to Cabinet note in order to be able to balance the budget for 2021/2022 work has continued to identify further efficiency measures. In summary and despite the net budgetary impact of COVID-19, we note that a balanced budget for 2021/2022 was proposed without the need to undertake a fundamental review of services or the use of general reserves.

	General Fund Balance	General Fund Earmarked Reserves	Total General Fund Balance	Housing Revenue Account	Major Repairs Reserve	Capital Receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied Account	Total Usable Reserves	Total Unusable Reserves	TOTAL (Council)
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Balance Brought Forward	(13.0)	(64.6)	(77.6)	(7.1)	(1.2)	(10.3)	(5.2)	(101.4)	54.8	(46.6)
Surplus/(Deficit) on Provision of Services	28.3	-	28.3	(21.2)	-	-	-	7.1	-	7.1
Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	211.0	211.0
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	28.3	-	28.3	(21.2)	-	-	-	7.1	211.0	218.1
Net Decrease/(Increase) before Transfers & other Movements	28.3	-	28.3	(21.2)	-	-	-	7.1	211.0	218.1
Adjustments between Accounting Basis & Funding Basis under Regulations	(85.7)	-	(85.7)	21.2	(0.5)	0.7	(2.3)	(66.6)	66.6	-
Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves	56.8	(56.8)	(0.0)	-	-	-	-	(0.0)	-	(0.0)
(Increase)/decrease for the Year	(0.6)	(56.8)	(57.5)	-	(0.5)	0.7	(2.3)	(58.6)	277.6	218.1
Balance Carried Forward	(13.7)	(121.4)	(135.1)	(7.1)	(1.7)	(9.6)	(7.5)	(161.0)	332.4	171.5

Source: Movement in Reserves Statement from 2020-21 audited financial statements

Borrowings and cash

In comparison to its neighbours, the Council, has a reasonably high level of borrowings. The graph below to the left showcases the total borrowing of the Council over time, starting with 2008/09, while the graph to the right shows how borrowing has initially increased since 2013/14 as a % of gross expenditure on cost of services but has stabilised in recent years.



Source: CFO Insights: Total Borrowing

Source: City of Wolverhampton Council's historic financial statements

However, borrowing is one tool within the suite of treasury management armoury that the Council employs to ensure that the management of the local Council's borrowing, investments and cash flows is effectively controlled and optimum performance pursued, which is commensurate with those risks (as defined in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy). The Council therefore ensure that the levels of borrowing in any one year does not exceed the authorised borrowing limit, and that key targets are set, the monitoring of which ensures compliance with Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators. These are monitored on a quarterly basis by both Cabinet and Council. The report received by Cabinet on 7 July 2021 confirmed that all relevant prudential indicators and treasury management indicators had been complied with.

The Council demonstrates a clear and explicit link between the capital programme, treasury management and ongoing revenue costs. There are appropriate cross references in the relevant key documentation, which demonstrate the connection, including the impact of capital and treasury management decisions on the Council's minimum revenue provision.

Minimum Revenue Provision

Under Regulation 27 of the 2003 Regulations, local authorities are required to charge MRP to their revenue account in each financial year. Before 2008, the 2003 Regulations contained details of the method that local authorities were required to use when calculating MRP. This has been replaced by the current Regulation 28 of the 2003 Regulations, which gives local authorities flexibility in how they calculate MRP, providing the calculation is 'prudent'.

Before the start of each financial year a local Council should prepare a statement of its policy on making MRP in respect of that financial year and submit it to full Council for approval. For local authorities without a full Council the statement could be presented for approval at the closest equivalent level. The statement should describe how it is proposed to discharge the duty to make prudent MRP during that year.

We have RAG rated the Council's MRP both as a percentage of its capital financing requirement (CFR) and of its total debt.

The Council's MRP as a percentage of total debt is 4.05% (4.8% in 2019/20). Anything greater than 2% we consider to be "green" on the grounds that it is indicative at a high level of appropriate amounts of provision being put aside to pay for ongoing debt obligations.

The Council's debt as a percentage of its CFR is 87% (91% in 2019/20). Anything above 80% we, consider to be high (with a "red" rating). This consideration is mirrored in the Council's own prudential indicators (PI5: in order to ensure that over the medium term debt will only be for a capital purpose, the local Council should ensure that debt does not, except in

the short term, exceed the total of capital financing requirement in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years), which ensures that the capital financing requirement never exceeds gross debt.

Therefore while at the higher end, we are comfortable that this is being monitored by the Council appropriately.

Savings

Significant work has been undertaken by the Council to identify savings opportunities to balance the books, and the medium term financial planning undertaken demonstrates a prudent approach, with a recognition that future funding levels remain uncertain. There is no evidence that there are unrealistic plans in place. Strategic Directors are aware that their budgets are reasonably tight but acknowledge the financial reality facing the sector and are working within the limits made available to them.

Savings are taken out of the budget as it is developed, which is through an iterative process, in consultation with partners, tax payers and other stakeholders as appropriate, particularly if changes to the way services are operated are proposed, before it is formally reported through the Cabinet process and then onwards for formal approval by Full Council.

From discussions with officers, we are aware there are ongoing discussions, even once the budget is agreed and approved, to identify further savings, should slippage in the achievement of the budget occur.

Savings are monitored as part of quarterly budget monitoring meetings, which are also viewed through the leadership team.

At present the delivery of savings is not monitored independently of budget monitoring. The General Fund Revenue Budget Monitoring table does contain a column for a narrative for the reasons for variances. However it is uncertain whether these variances are adequately challenged. It is therefore difficult to measure the extent to which particular savings scheme have been successful as they are taken out of the budget. As there is no clear post-implementation review, there is also no clear assessment or whether any quality risks have occurred as a result of the savings being made.

If a service subsequently breaks even the assumption would be that the savings have been met, but this could mask underspends in other areas.



Medium Term Financial Strategy

There is evidence that the Council's financial plans are based on key assumptions that are realistic and are not reliant on uncertain income streams that are significant to the delivery of the plans. Scenario planning and modelling is undertaken to determine what increases in demand are likely to look like, though with the acknowledgement that there is still a sense of the unknown in terms of how we will live with the impacts of COVID-19 in the future, and consequently what support people will need from its local Council. The budget pressures and how they are managed are explicitly set out in the MTFs along with transparency on what the key assumptions are such as pay awards, council tax increase, adult social care precept, price inflation for utilities, borrowing interest rate etc. We are therefore satisfied that the Council's financial plans adequately reflect the impact of key expenditure drivers and potential pressures such as salary increments.

We note that the Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out the projected deficit to 2023/24 as shown to the right. Note that each year's gap is rolled up into the next year's net budget brought forward which impacts on the projected cumulative budget deficit.

The MTFs and annual budget are monitored on a quarterly basis alongside one another, which allows for timely revisions to be made to the MTFs as required. There is no planned use of reserves: we have reviewed the reserves of the Council to identify any 'pinchpoints' that could arise should the required savings not materialise. On the assumption that no savings are realised, based on the values in the accounts as at 31 March 2021, for the immediate future the Council has sufficiency of reserves to ensure that no shortfall arises.

We further note that there is a budgeted contingency reserve within the Medium Term Financial Strategy, and a further £3 million budget built into the Corporate Contingency for Budget Growth.

The MTFs as a standalone document does not reflect the impact of the Council's involvement with significant group entities. Although each component has its own separate business plans and is considered as part of separate scrutiny arrangement, the Council should consider expanding and enhancing the MTFs to include explicit consideration of the group's medium term financial plan and not just the Council's.

	2020- 2021 £000	2021- 2022 £000	2022- 2023 £000	2023- 2024 £000
Previous Years Net Budget Brought Forward	234,934	248,223	261,769	273,394
Increasing / (Decreasing) Cost Pressures				
- Pay Related Pressures	(533)	5,074	5,250	5,426
- Treasury Management	1,436	3,321	379	-
- Budget Growth	17,898	4,659	5,276	5,126
- Budget Reduction, Income Generation & Financial Transactions	(5,512)	492	720	(4,480)
- Net Impact on changes to specific grants	-	-	-	-
Net Budget (Before Use of Resources)	248,223	261,769	273,394	279,466
Projected Corporate Resources				
- Council Tax (including Adult Social Care Precept)	(108,843)	(114,318)	(120,068)	(126,107)
- Enterprise Zone Business Rates (including use of related reserve)	(2,700)	(1,530)	(1,490)	(1,450)
- Top Up Grant	(26,578)	(26,578)	(26,578)	(26,578)
- Business Rates (net of WMCA growth payment and Collection Fund deficit)	(73,769)	(74,199)	(75,703)	(77,237)
- New Homes Bonus	(1,614)	(568)	(265)	-
- Section 31 Grant – Business Rates support	(11,703)	(11,703)	(11,703)	(11,703)
- Improved Better Care Fund	(12,947)	(11,000)	(11,000)	(11,000)
- Winter Pressures – Adult Social Care	(1,376)	-	-	-
- Social Care Grant	(8,693)	(6,342)	(6,342)	(6,342)
	(248,223)	(246,238)	(253,149)	(260,417)
Projected Budget Annual Change in Budget Deficit / (Surplus)	-	15,531	4,714	(1,196)
Projected Cumulative Budget Deficit	-	15,531	20,245	19,049

Source: Table 7 – Medium term Financial Strategy, as presented to Cabinet 19 February 2020

Improvement recommendations



Financial sustainability

1 Recommendation	Consideration should be given to more formal, explicit monitoring, at a Member level, of the extent to which proposed savings are realised.
Why/impact	The Annual budget sets out proposed savings per service area and their impact on the budget. Reporting on the progress of these specific programmes would help Members (and other readers of the documents) to better understand the performance in each area which would inform decision making as to any additional spending which may be required.
Auditor judgement	The monitoring of specific savings programmes could be made clearer. Currently it is not apparent whether proposed savings are monitored and reported against.
Summary findings	No distinction is made in the Revenue Budget Monitoring Reports of the progress being made against the proposed savings as set out in the Annual Budget.
Management comment	Savings are identified on specific cost centres and are monitored as part of the monthly and quarterly monitoring process. Going forward we will make clear reference to the delivery of savings within the budget monitoring reports to Cabinet/Cabinet (Resources) Panel.



The range of recommendations that external auditors can make is explained in Appendix C.

Improvement recommendations



Financial sustainability

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2 Recommendation	The Medium Term Financial Strategy should be expanded to explicitly consider group entities, particularly those which are considered sufficiently significant to be consolidated into the group accounts; namely City of Wolverhampton Housing Company Limited and Wolverhampton Homes.
Why/impact	The Council's financial plans should reflect the impact of its involvement with significant group entities.
Auditor judgement	The inclusion of the group entities as part of the MTFS would ensure a more cohesive reporting of group strategy, especially important given that each of the consolidated components have a part to play in helping to deliver the Council's strategic objectives.
Summary findings	The MTFS as a standalone document does not reflect the impact of the Council's involvement with significant group entities
Management comment	Going forward, the Budget and MTFS report will include reference to our group entities and corresponding financial implications. We will also ensure that, in future, the HRA business plan report is strengthened to consider the group impact of Wolverhampton Homes.



The range of recommendations that external auditors can make is explained in Appendix C.

Governance



We considered how the Council:

- monitors and assesses risk and gains assurance over the effective operation of internal controls, including arrangements to prevent and detect fraud
- approaches and carries out its annual budget setting process
- ensures effectiveness processes and systems are in place to ensure budgetary control
- ensures it makes properly informed decisions, supported by appropriate evidence and allowing for challenge and transparency
- monitors and ensures appropriate standards.

Monitoring and assessing risk

Risk registers are used to monitor risks: risks can change over time and need to be monitored closely to make sure proper controls remain in place. The leadership team and the Audit and Risk Committee receive quarterly reports on the strategic risk register. This gives them assurance that risks are being reviewed and actions are being taken to either reduce, mitigate or monitor them. Such reporting also provides a chance to identify and discuss new and developing areas of risk.

The Strategic Risk Register is updated on an ongoing basis: evidence that risk is embedded in the every day business of the Council is that at the commencement of the pandemic, a COVID-19 specific risk register was put into place to recognise that it brought very specific risks with it. That the COVID-19 specific risk register no longer exists, as the risks have been subsumed within the "normal" strategic risk register, is further evidence of risk assessment being embedded, given that COVID-19 is now considered as part of business usual activity.

The register is informed by departmental registers, which are also updated on an ongoing basis, and follow a similar format with a RAG rating of risks based on an assessment of their impact/likelihood. Risk owners and relevant cabinet members associated with each risk, are named but there is no explicit link to corporate objectives nor information in relation to the key controls and sources of assurance available as well as what gaps exist. There is a commentary which includes some of this information but it is not clearly set out.

The Council considers risks as part of its decision making role on corporate policies, including the annual budget setting processes, major policy decisions and major projects. The Council's Strategic Executive Board also reviews these corporate risks through quarterly monitoring reports.

There is a good audit and investigations function operating at the Council. Internal Audit has demonstrated itself to be a dynamic service capable of reacting and responding to changing circumstances. Planned Internal Audit work for 2020/21 has been subject to some delay and postponement as the audit team were redeployed as part of the response to COVID-19. Nevertheless, the audit team were able to complete 24 reviews (15 substantial, 7 satisfactory and 2 limited) which compares against total of 31 reviews in 2019-20. It has therefore proved itself to be sufficiently agile to change its plan in order to certify a number of COVID-19 grants, providing assurance over the grants process itself as well as delivering a sufficient number of audits in

All issued reports have their agreed actions tracked and followed up, with internal audit providing a report on the progress made by management in implementing the agreed actions. Progress against delivery of actions to address high priority recommendations are reported to the Audit and Risk Committee for information and discussion. Similarly, the Counter Fraud Specialists undertake a programme of work to support the Audit and Risk Committee, including a mix of proactive and investigatory work. Findings are reported appropriately.

Budgetary Setting Process

The budget-setting process is multi-layered and thorough, with several stages, including stakeholder consultation. The draft budget was presented for review in November, with additional papers presented to Council to approve the budget in February. The following year's budget and forward looking MTFS are considered concurrently.

This high level of scrutiny together with the Council's track record of achieving its planned savings and balancing its budget confirm the strength and validity of the budget setting processes in place.

Budgetary control

There are good systems in place for oversight of the budget. As well as quarterly budget reports to Cabinet Resources Panel, budget holders have access to real time

information via self-service budget reports. These can be viewed either at a summary (high) level or at a detailed level. The quarterly budget monitoring reports detail variances by department (and service lines within departments) demonstrating a regular identification of in-year variances. Actions being taken or to be taken by departments in response to such variances are set out.

Leadership and committee effectiveness/decision making

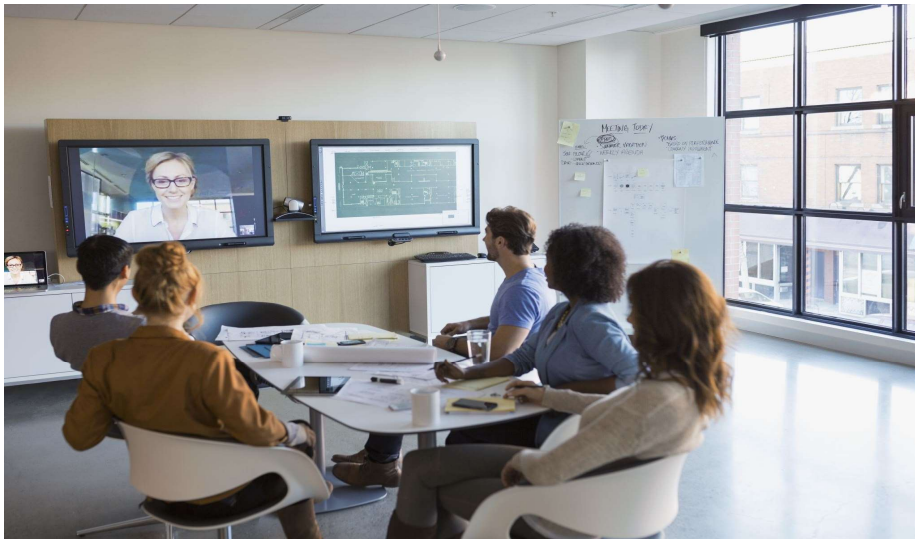
The work of the Council's committees is governed by the Constitution. This constitution is regularly reviewed and updated, including very recently, in order to ensure that any changes in processes occurring as a result of COVID-19 were constitution-compliant. The Annual Governance Statement needs to be read alongside the Council's Constitution, which sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the policies which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people.

There is a good suite of policies in place, covering anti-fraud and corruption, and the Council has an established antifraud culture.

The Council seek user feedback via the consultation hub, "Citizen Space", which invites thoughts and comments from the public when changes are planned. While there is a list of open and closed consultations it is not clear how the public responses have been taken into account in the decision making process. We have therefore raised a recommendation in this regard for the Council to consider.

Monitoring and ensuring appropriate standards

The Annual Governance Statement is compliant with the CIPFA code. An appropriate level of care is taken to ensure the Council's policies and procedures comply with all relevant codes and legislative frameworks. Local authorities are required to apply the requirements of CIPFA's Financial Management Code with effect from 1 April 2020. We have considered the requirements and commend the Council on undertaking a self-assessment against the Code and reporting it to the Audit and Risk Committee. This has allowed the Council to create a base from which improvement opportunities can be identified, and will constitute good evidence in its next Annual Governance Statement of how it is continuously monitoring and improving its arrangements.



Group Governance

We identified in our audit plan a risk of significant weakness in relation to group governance arrangements. This is because in our Audit Findings Report in respect of the year ending 31 March 2020 we raised a number of recommendations for the Council to consider as part of its ongoing investment in and work with the City of Wolverhampton Housing Company Limited. We also noted that there had been a number of Public Interest Reports (PIRs) issued: Nottingham City Council (August 2020), the London Borough of Croydon (October 2020), and Northampton Borough Council (January 2021), which are the first issued since 2016. [Lessons from recent Public Interest Reports](#) | Grant Thornton.

Along with other weaknesses, the PIRs have drawn attention to failings in the governance arrangements where subsidiaries and associated entities are involved as well as a lack of understanding of how to manage financial and commercial uncertainty and risk in the medium to long term.

We have followed up action taken by the Council in response to the recommendations made. In addition we have reviewed the governance arrangements in its place with its associated entities.

City of Wolverhampton Housing Company Limited

The Council has significantly enhanced its Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2021, and as part of the additional information now included, are details as to how the Council have addressed previous recommendations made.

In order to better understand the risks to the Council should the company suffer delays to its house building schemes and there being a knock on effect to its ability to repay loans, the Council has worked with the company to approve a new business plan which is regularly reviewed and reported against both at officer and member level, to ensure continued compliance with agreed targets. Updated business plans will be brought to Cabinet for approval on an annual basis.

The Company previously had little equity funding: the split between equity and debt means that the Company was highly leveraged, creating a risk regarding the Company's ability to make loan repayments especially if there were adverse changes in projected sale or take-up rates, fluctuations in demand or increase in development

costs. This has been partly addressed by the continuing monitoring of the Company's ongoing compliance against targets, as well as the issuance of equity by the Council to the company as agreed by Council in December 2020, for the purposes of supporting the delivery of housing in Wolverhampton.

In our 2019/20 Audit Findings Report, we recommended that given recent failures in local government energy companies, the Council should ensure that the majority of board directors have housing company expertise. This is a work in progress though the skills of the Board have been bolstered by the appointment of a non-executive director with significant housing experience. Additionally, the Council's shareholder board has been strengthened by increasing the number of members from six to ten.

In addition to the specific details set out earlier, there is also a standing monthly agenda item for the Monitoring Officer/Chief Operating Officer to provide an update to the Executive Team on those bodies either owned by the Council with potentially large liabilities to the Council. Ostensibly this covers City of Wolverhampton Housing Company, Wolverhampton Homes, Wolverhampton College and Yoo Recruit Ltd, but will expand as necessary to cover any new partnerships.

Conclusion

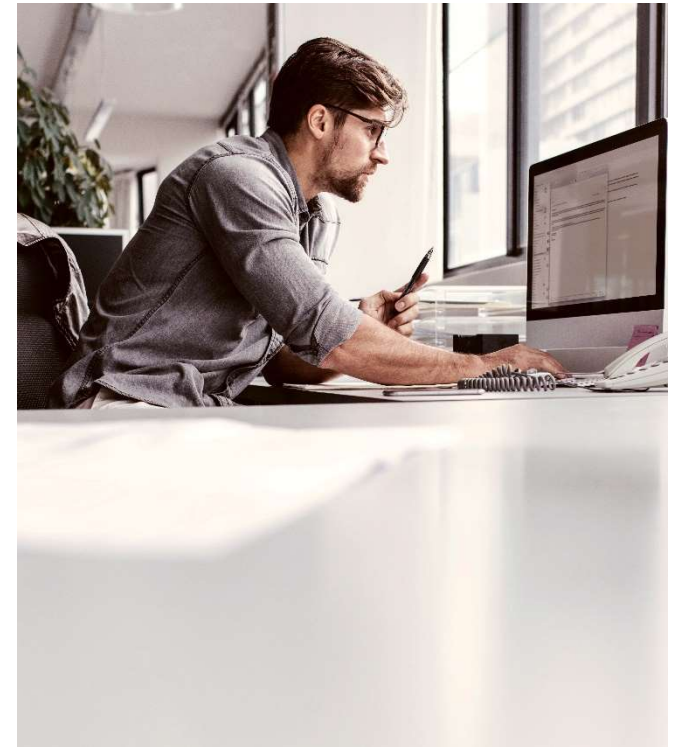
Overall, we found no evidence of significant weaknesses in the Council's arrangements for ensuring that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks. We have identified three opportunities for improvement, set out overleaf.

Improvement recommendations

Governance

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3 Recommendation	When documenting a strategic risk, the Council should be explicit in linking it to which of the corporate objectives is at risk, as well as clearly setting out details of the controls and assurance already in place, such that gaps can be easily identified.
Why/impact	With all the relevant information at their command, Committee members will be more readily able to hold officers to account on the action being taken to fill any gaps.
Auditor judgement	It is important for the Audit and Risk Committee (and all users of the risk register) to be able to clearly identify what actions have been taken to mitigate the risk identified, along with any further work that is proposed to be carried out, so that it has greater assurance over the continual monitoring and risk management activity that is being undertaken.
Summary findings	There is not a clear link in the register between the issue identified and the corporate objective being put at risk, should appropriate measures and mitigations not be effective. Information in relation to the key controls and sources of assurance available as well as what gaps exist is not clear.
Management comment	<p>During 2021-2022 the Strategic Risk Register reported to Audit and Risk Committee has been strengthened. Council priorities are now identified against each risk. The latest iteration reported in December 2021 included additional information on mitigating action being taken and other sources of assurance.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to how quarterly performance/budget reporting can be enhanced to reference to risk aligned to new council plan objectives.</p>



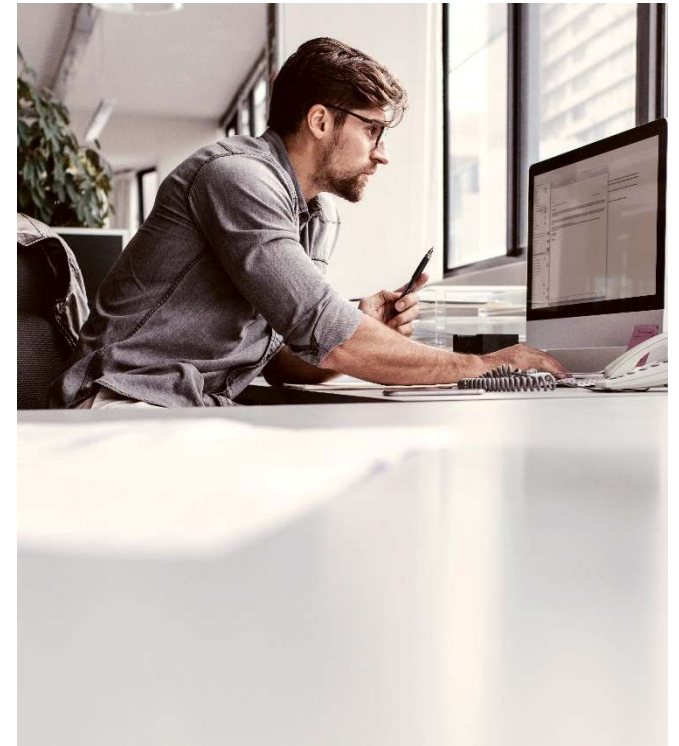
The range of recommendations that external auditors can make is explained in Appendix C.

Improvement recommendations

Governance

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4 Recommendation	The Council has a consultation hub, which invites thoughts and comments from the public when changes are planned. We recommend that the Council consider including a section in its consultation pages setting out details of the questions asked, the responses received, and what was done as a result.
Why/impact	While there is a list of open and closed consultations it is not clear how the public responses have been taken into account in the decision making process.
Auditor judgement	The Council could enhance the transparency of its consultation process by setting out explicitly what difference the public response has made to the decision.
Summary findings	Actioning the above recommendation will demonstrate that service user feedback is being taken into account.
Management comment	The outcome of consultations is reported to Cabinet, and therefore we are exploring how we add a link on our consultation hub 'citizen space' to the specific cabinet report, which will include the outcome of the consultation and the decision made, and also make this clear in future consultation and engagement strategy.



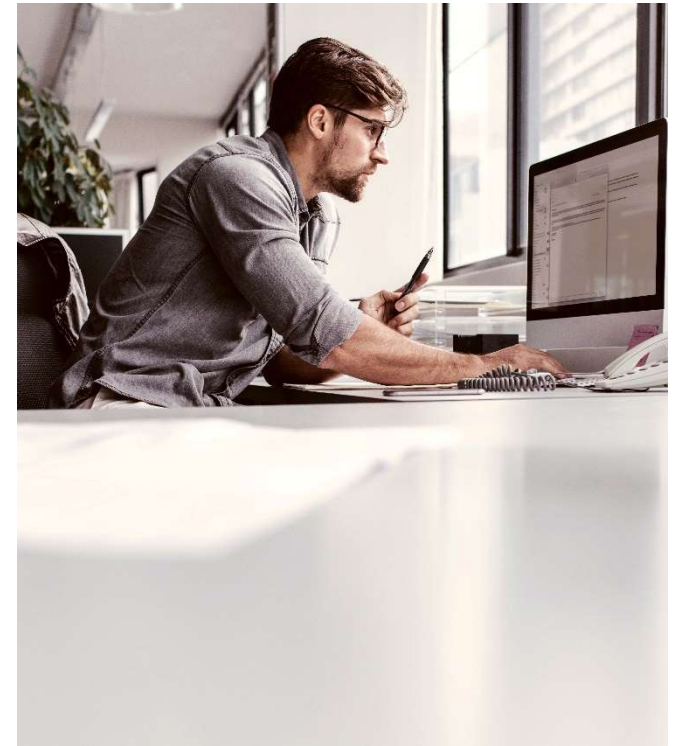
The range of recommendations that external auditors can make is explained in Appendix C.

Improvement recommendations

Governance

5 Recommendation	We recognise the improvements made by the Council in partnership with City of Wolverhampton Housing Company Limited in terms of it having relevant sector expertise on the Board. We recommend that the a skills and knowledge assessment is undertaken to inform the consideration of whether further additional expertise would add value to the Board.
Why/impact	Without appropriates sector knowledge and expertise there is a risk that decisions are not appropriately challenged or informed, or that risks themselves are not identified and addressed sufficiently.
Auditor judgement	Given recent failures in local government energy companies, the Council should ensure that the majority of board directors have housing company expertise.
Summary findings	The Council has appointed one member to the Board with significant housing experience and the Board would benefit from considering whether additional expertise in this area would be of benefit.
Management comment	We will ensure that a skills and knowledge assessment is undertaken and that the WV Living Shareholder Board are assured that the company board has sufficient expertise.

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The range of recommendations that external auditors can make is explained in Appendix C.

Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness



We considered how the Council:

- uses financial and performance information to assess performance to identify areas for improvement
- evaluates the services it provides to assess performance and identify areas for improvement
- ensures it delivers its role within significant partnerships, engages with stakeholders, monitors performance against expectations and ensures action is taken where necessary to improve
- ensures that it commissions or procures services in accordance with relevant legislation, professional standards and internal policies, and assesses whether it is realising the expected benefits.

We have reviewed arrangements at the Council for improving services and the way in which they are delivered.

Performance review, monitoring and assessment

The Council has an Insight and Performance team which is driving a real focus on performance management and how the Council uses insights and data. This has been done by developing an intelligence team but also a technical reporting team to bring together all data and create power BI dashboards: working in partnership with the services to enable them to bring together data and understand how data is best presented and used to drive evidence-based decision making.

Council-wide there is a move to build on a more integrated finance and performance reporting approach, which was first presented to Cabinet after the year under review (in July 2021), but nevertheless is evidence of the trajectory the Council was on during the year ended 31 March 2021. This included a variety of relevant benchmarking information such as CIPFA nearest neighbours, regional comparators and national comparators which will be tracked against over time to ensure that outcomes in the areas of, for instance, social value, jobs to skills gaps, grow our businesses are all monitored and reported against.

The key principle underpinning the “Relighting our City” programme is “We are a first and foremost a public service organisation. Everything we do will be based on delivering the very best possible services for our city” and therefore key to that is understanding current levels of performance, including its drivers so decisions can be made on how best to improve.

Between 20 September 2021 and 24 September 2021. Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission conducted a joint inspection of the local area of Wolverhampton to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the disability and special education needs (SEND) reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. This was done after the year in question (as was not published until October 2021) but is clearly therefore indicative of arrangements in place during the year in question. As a result of the findings of this inspection and in accordance with the Children Act 2004 (Joint Area Reviews) Regulations 2015, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector (HMCI) has determined that a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) is required because of significant areas of weakness in the area’s practice.

Ahead of the report being published the informal feedback was considered by Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel: minutes show that panel members appropriately scrutinised the presenters in terms of improvement action already being taken. This is not considered to be indicative of a significant weakness as it is not pervasive across the entire service area. Furthermore, we note that the Council was anticipating the outcome of the review to be mixed given the significant change that had occurred in that area before the review was undertaken, which therefore demonstrates good self-awareness on the part of the Council. We will consider this further, particularly the actions taken to address the findings, as part of our 2021/22 considerations.

Partnership Working

The need to work with others in partnership is an implicit part of the remit of each strategic director. A positive legacy of COVID-19 identified is that it has brought people together into a much stronger joint working culture, where teams now naturally think to talk to one another as part of their business as usual activities.

The Council is proactive in identifying its stakeholders and ensuring each is appropriately informed and/or consulted as appropriate including workforce, businesses, other public sector entities, communities, and members.

Additionally, there is evidence of partnership working in the development of the Wolverhampton pound. The City of Wolverhampton Council, City of Wolverhampton College, Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust and Wolverhampton homes have signed an agreement committing to spending more money within the city and working with businesses, communities and the voluntary sector to retain local wealth, create new jobs and opportunities for residents.

As mentioned earlier as part of governance arrangements, the Council has already addressed the need to formally consider the performance of the partner it works with on a formal and regular basis, which is a positive step.

Procurement and contract management

The Council recognises that more can be done in relation to contract management: a contract management framework has been developed to train relevant officers to ensure that the right skills are in place across the Council, as while there were pockets of good practice, there were also instances of contracts being awarded but then not closely monitored within the services.

A paper was presented to the Strategic Executive Board picking up best practice from the NAO, and identifying potential savings that could be made if contract monitoring is fully embedded as well as recognising the Council's responsibility as a local Council achieving best value.

A working group was developed and staff surveyed to set a baseline and determine what current practices were. A contract management system will be put in place with links to the procurement system, linked to payments made so that there is a full comprehensive

understanding of what the spend is and can therefore enhance informed decision making.

Major capital projects

For major capital projects, there are arrangements in place to monitor, control and report on costs. There are a number of capital projects underway at any one time, but the most high profile of them is arguably Civic Halls, due to the time delays and expansion of budget that have occurred. This continues to receive a significant level of scrutiny, appropriately so, given the high profile nature of the project. Arrangements are as follows:

The operational group meet on a 2-weekly basis and look over the day to day matter of operations. There are representatives within this group from corporate assets, finance, procurement, the project management team as well as internal audit (in an advisory capacity). The group consider actions taken, the programme overview, costs, and risks on a day-to-day basis.

Above the operational group there is a Programme Board dedicated to overseeing the Civic Halls Restoration, with senior management membership including the Director of Finance, and the Chief Executive. The Council has commissioned Faithful Gould in a project management capacity, and they also sit on the Programme Board.

For additional oversight, there is a Project Assurance Group, to which all such projects and programmes report.

Progress is reported frequently to members and lessons learned from the internal audit review into the management of the project, have been taken on board and applied more widely to other projects.

Based on our discussions with officers, and review of relevant documentation, we are satisfied that this is being given the appropriate management attention and proactive rather than reactive measures are being taken to ensure that the Council's exposure to risk is mitigated and would encourage continued senior management focus on this issue.

Conclusion

Overall, we are satisfied the Council has appropriate arrangements in place to ensure it manages risks to its oversight in ensuring economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

COVID-19 arrangements



Since March 2020 COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the population as a whole and how Council services are delivered.

We have considered how the Council's arrangements have adapted to respond to the new risks they are facing.

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Financial sustainability

The Council has adapted arrangements to respond to the new risks being faced from 2020-21 onwards in respect of COVID-19 and have arrangements in place to identify and monitor additional costs arising from responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

From a financial perspective the additional costs have been tracked through the normal monitoring process and through regular returns to Central Government: costs which are non-operational (i.e. of a nature which the service has only incurred because of the pandemic) were charged to a separate cost centre controlled by Finance, which meant that no budget changes were needed to reflect these costs. Most of the individual items of expenditure incurred because of COVID-19 come into this category (e.g. food hubs, accommodating the homeless, community mobilisation fund, and one-off IT costs).

Costs which are of an operational nature, but which have increased because of the pandemic, were charged to service budgets.

This is a sensible approach as it recognises the difference between what are likely to be one-off costs from potentially recurring costs, which may continue to impact on a service's budget due to longer term changes in demand and need.

Monitoring reports were received by Cabinet along with regular verbal updates from a range of Officers, both at Cabinet and Full Council as well as other sub committees, where members were kept abreast on how each service area was responding to the needs of its users as a result of the pandemic.

Governance

While the Council generally maintained a business-as-usual approach to its governance arrangements during the pandemic, some adjustments were required. As a result of the lockdown restrictions announced on the 16th March 2020, the Council adjusted some of its internal control processes to support effective governance throughout the pandemic. As soon as these were lawful, the Council started holding members' meetings online.

When the pandemic began, it was acknowledged that it was appropriate for decisions to be made in the correct way, but it was deemed necessary to utilise emergency powers, as set out in the constitution. Decision logs have been maintained throughout and continue to be live documents: key members were briefed frequently (eg the Council Leader was briefed every day, as well as the Leader of the Opposition, with councillor briefings held weekly) and communications

were sent out from the Director of Governance clearly setting out expectations about who could make decisions and how.

The Strategic Executive Board routinely used to meet regularly via their 9am check-in, (which was in place prior to COVID-19 as a helpful way to connect) but in respect to the pandemic this was extended to include a 5pm check in, which provided a space for agile decision making.

The Council was conscious that there were three overarching themes to consider at any one time: COVID-19 response, business as usual, and recovery. It is clear that the Council concluded early that all three things needed to continue and therefore they were stepped up to and down from the agenda at the daily meetings as required: this grip meant that the Project and Programmes team quickly moved around the organisation depending on the key priority.

The Council recognises that it has had to act promptly to carry out central government requests, but to ensure that Governance arrangements were adequate, post implementation audits were commissioned from the Council's internal audit service, such as to consider contract arrangements during COVID-19, as well as

COVID-19 arrangements

how the distribution and allocation of grants was managed.

In its Annual Report delivered to the Audit and Risk Committee in July, internal audit reported that at the Council a significant proportion of the audit resources during 2020-2021 was temporarily redeployed to other areas of the Council's business in order to provide support in a number of critical areas including:

- the food distribution hub
- helping to administer the wide range of business support grants provided by Central Government – including reviewing and assessing applications, payment uploads, reconciliations, monthly returns and introducing a pre and post assurance framework
- undertaking supplier due diligence checks with Procurement regarding the supply of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- sense checking other COVID-19 related support and grant package returns

There were no adverse findings referred to in this report as a result of this work and the overall Head of Internal Audit opinion given in respect of the year ended 31 March 2021, was that there was reasonable assurance that the Council has adequate and effective governance, risk management and internal control processes.

Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness

To recognise its ongoing impact, as noted on page 14, a COVID-19 specific risk register was put into place to recognise that it brought very specific risks with it. That the COVID-19 specific risk register no longer exists, as the risks have been subsumed within the "normal" strategic risk register, is further evidence of risk assessment being embedded, given that COVID-19 is now considered as part of business usual activity.

As noted in the Governance section of this report, risk management is well embedded and therefore that, COVID-19 continues to be included in risk discussions.

The Council has been mindful of the impact on the pandemic on its most important resource, its staff. Actions have been put in place to support staff wellbeing and supporting staff remains a key priority for the Council.

Conclusion

Our review has not identified any significant weaknesses in the Council's VFM arrangements for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We have not identified any improvement recommendations.



Appendices

Appendix A - Responsibilities of the Council



Role of the Chief Financial Officer (or equivalent):

- Preparation of the statement of accounts
- Assessing the Council's ability to continue to operate as a going concern

Public bodies spending taxpayers' money are accountable for their stewardship of the resources entrusted to them. They should account properly for their use of resources and manage themselves well so that the public can be confident.

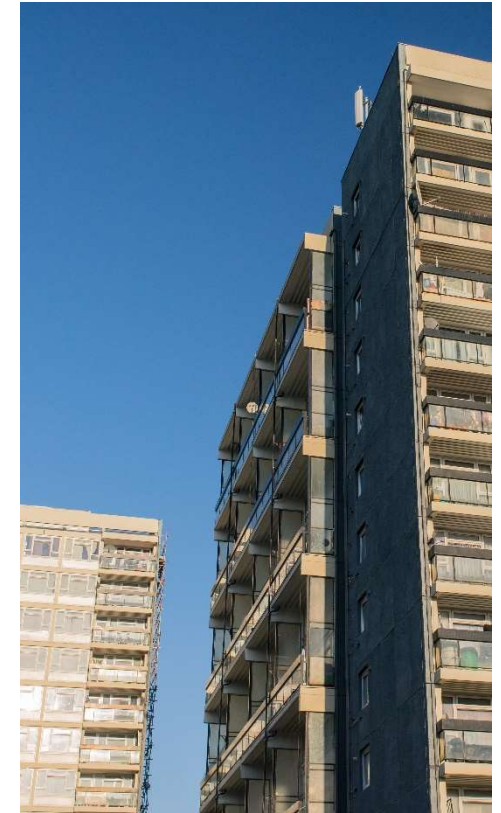
Financial statements are the main way in which local public bodies account for how they use their resources. Local public bodies are required to prepare and publish financial statements setting out their financial performance for the year. To do this, bodies need to maintain proper accounting records and ensure they have effective systems of internal control.

All local public bodies are responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness from their resources. This includes taking properly informed decisions and managing key operational and financial risks so that they can deliver their objectives and safeguard public money. Local public bodies report on their arrangements, and the effectiveness with which the arrangements are operating, as part of their annual governance statement.

The Chief Financial Officer (or equivalent) is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Chief Financial Officer (or equivalent) determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

The Chief Financial Officer (or equivalent) or equivalent is required to prepare the financial statements in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC code of practice on local Council accounting in the United Kingdom. In preparing the financial statements, the Chief Financial Officer (or equivalent) is responsible for assessing the Council's ability to continue as a going concern and use the going concern basis of accounting unless there is an intention by government that the services provided by the Council will no longer be provided.

The Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance, and to review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.



Appendix B - An explanatory note on recommendations

A range of different recommendations can be raised by the Council's auditors as follows:

Type of recommendation	Background	Raised within this report	Page reference
Statutory	Written recommendations to the Council under Section 24 (Schedule 7) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. A recommendation under schedule 7 requires the Council to discuss and respond publicly to the report.	No	N/A
Key	The NAO Code of Audit Practice requires that where auditors identify significant weaknesses as part of their arrangements to secure value for money they should make recommendations setting out the actions that should be taken by the Council. We have defined these recommendations as 'key recommendations'.	No	N/A
Improvement	These recommendations, if implemented should improve the arrangements in place at the Council, but are not a result of identifying significant weaknesses in the Council's arrangements.	Yes	Financial sustainability – pages 11 and 12 Governance – pages 16 to 18

Appendix C - Use of formal auditor's powers

Statutory recommendations

Under Schedule 7 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, auditors can make written recommendations to the audited body which need to be considered by the body and responded to publicly

We have not made any such recommendations.

Public interest report

Under Schedule 7 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, auditors have the power to make a report if they consider a matter is sufficiently important to be brought to the attention of the audited body or the public as a matter of urgency, including matters which may already be known to the public, but where it is in the public interest for the auditor to publish their independent view.

We have not issued a public interest report, nor do we consider that the issuance of such a report is necessary from the results of our review.

Application to the Court

Under Section 28 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, if auditors think that an item of account is contrary to law, they may apply to the court for a declaration to that effect.

We did not apply for such a declaration.

Advisory notice

Under Section 29 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, auditors may issue an advisory notice if the auditor thinks that the Council or an officer of the Council:

- is about to make or has made a decision which involves or would involve the Council incurring unlawful expenditure,
- is about to take or has begun to take a course of action which, if followed to its conclusion, would be unlawful and likely to cause a loss or deficiency, or
- is about to enter an item of account, the entry of which is unlawful.

We have not issued an advisory notice.

Judicial review

Under Section 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, auditors may make an application for judicial review of a decision of an Council, or of a failure by an Council to act, which it is reasonable to believe would have an effect on the accounts of that body.

We have made no application for a judicial review.

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CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Meeting of the City Council Wednesday 6 April 2022
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Report title	Annual Scrutiny Review 2020-2021	
Referring body	Scrutiny Board – 22 March 2022	
Councillor to present report	Councillor Paul Sweet, Chair of Scrutiny Board	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Cabinet Member with lead responsibility	Councillor Paula Brookfield, Cabinet Member for Governance and Equalities	
Accountable director	David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer	
Originating service	Governance	
Accountable employee	Julia Cleary	Systems and Scrutiny Manager Tel: 01902 555046 Email: julia.cleary@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report has been considered by	Scrutiny Board	22 March 2022

Recommendation for decision:

The Council is recommended to:

1. Approve the Annual Scrutiny Review 2020-2021.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Annual Review highlights some of the key achievements of the Scrutiny function over the 2020-2021 municipal year including details of the progress and outcomes from a selection of Panel meetings.

2. Background

- 2.1 Main areas for consideration this year included:

- Focus on Digital – Connected City Theme
- Adding value through the pandemic – Partnership working in Health scrutiny
- Place and Community – Critical friend challenge and feedback
- Protecting out most vulnerable children and young people – cross panel working, and member led enquiry
- Relighting our City – Regeneration and holding the Executive to account
- Challenges and future direction for scrutiny.

3. Scrutiny

- 3.1 Scrutiny is a vital component of good governance and the work carried out by Councillors through scrutiny this year has been invaluable in influencing policy. This has been through representing the concerns and interests of the public and by providing challenge to the Cabinet. Scrutiny also undertakes reviews of partners working with the Council through detailed and critical analysis of their annual plans and reports. The Board and all the Panels undertook thorough scrutiny of the budget savings proposals.
- 3.2 Wolverhampton operates a model similar to that used by most unitary councils across England. The Scrutiny Board provides the overall co-ordination of the work programme with the six Panels focussing on key areas of priority.

4. Financial implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications associated with the recommendation in this report as Councillors are requested to endorse the Annual Scrutiny Review 2020-2021 and recommend that it be received by Full Council on 6 April 2022. Any financial implications emerging as work is undertaken in pursuit of Scrutiny recommendations will continue to be incorporated in reports to the Scrutiny Board and Panels. Ongoing scrutiny function developments will be implemented utilising current budgeted Scrutiny Team resources. [GE/14032022/K]

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 This report provides an overview of the scrutiny which has taken place during 2020-2021 and future plans for the on-going improvement and development of the service. For legal implications, specific to each project please refer to the reports taken to Scrutiny Board and Panels during the year. [AS/14032022/A]

6.0 Equalities implications

- 6.1 In scrutinising issues, the members of the Board, Panel or group are required to consider the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups of people in order to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
- 6.2 For equalities implications relating to each issue considered, please refer to the reports taken to Scrutiny Board and panels during the year.

7.0 All other implications

- 7.1 There are no other implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

8.0 Schedule of background papers

- 8.1 Copies of all agendas and minutes for scrutiny panel meetings can be found [here](#).

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Annual Scrutiny Review

2020 - 2021

CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
COUNCIL

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Introduction from the Chair



Cllr Paul Sweet
Chair of Scrutiny Board
2019-present

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On 16 March 2020, the Health and Social Care Secretary told the House of Commons that unnecessary social contact should be avoided.

On 23 March 2020 the Prime Minister told the country that people must stay at home.

Life as we knew it changed, in more ways and for longer than we could have ever imagined.

Throughout these changes scrutiny has held and continues to hold a very privileged and unique position. This position has allowed scrutiny and those working with it to witness and document the journey of the council, working alongside partners and citizens through an unprecedented moment in time.

The work carried out by scrutiny through the pandemic sought to focus on where scrutiny could add value or impact and support our citizens and colleagues with the challenges facing them. Scrutiny has been about people, about partnerships, about seeking to understand the reality of a constantly changing landscape, about supporting those in need and about recognising those who have gone above and beyond what was ever thought necessary or

even possible. All of this whilst continuing to hold those responsible for making key decisions to account and keeping a close eye on the budget.

A key area this year was to consider what was working and what wasn't working in the communities to support citizens through the pandemic. A vital contribution to this work centred on the role of the local scrutiny councillor. The local intelligence that each member holds regarding their ward is crucial, scrutiny councillors are able to draw on the experience of their constituents as to the effectiveness of the processes that the Council and its partners are putting in place and communicate common messages and concerns back into the work planning and decision-making processes.

From the first meeting in June when hope was on the horizon and normality felt within reach, to the second wave in the new year and the renewed resilience and determination that colleagues, citizens and partners showed as they rose to what was a hugely challenging situation; scrutiny has been there. Scrutiny has sought to document the journey of our council, our city and our citizens, working together to make it through the pandemic, to come out the other side with hope, pride, trust, confidence, ambition and creativity still intact.



“Out of darkness cometh light.”

And there is light, a lot of light. New ways of working, the food hub, the stay safe be kind helpline, social prescribing, supporting the vulnerable, agile working, community and voluntary sector initiatives, food banks, lateral flow testing, vaccinations, equalities, homelessness, housing, 5G, full fibre broadband, digital infrastructure, the civic halls and art gallery refurbishments and the harnessing of smart technology to make our City safer. The pandemic has acted as a catalyst for so many initiatives and as an opportunity for us all to take a step back and really consider how and why we work and act in certain ways; it has shone a light on who the key workers really are and how much of a debt we owe to the public sector, voluntary and community sector and NHS workers who have shown themselves to be true heroes throughout this time. Our own colleagues have risen to previously unthinkable challenges and conquered them head on and scrutiny seeks to celebrate these monolithic achievements and the people who have helped to make them possible, this year has been a true example of a ‘one council’ approach that is so central to how we all seek to work in Wolverhampton.

As previously stated, Scrutiny has a unique vantage point in being able to work with such a vast number of colleagues and partners and by pulling a number of threads and themes together in this report, **scrutiny can impact on how we continue to emerge from the pandemic** and keep a watching brief over this emergence. Scrutiny can help to ensure that innovation, inspiration, pride and the desire to improve services continues and to make sure that solid foundations are being laid for a modern, futureproof city and council.

Scrutiny will also seek to ensure that there continues to be informed decision making based on accurate data and evidence so that money is spent well and in the right places, to help bridge all divides, both digital and other, to make Wolverhampton the best city it can be.

Introduction from the Vice Chair



Cllr Jonathan Crofts
Vice Chair of Scrutiny
Board 2019-2021

For obvious reasons 2020 will prove a memorable year for all. Like all at the Council the pandemic radically changed the nature of Scrutiny's work as we moved to a fully online process.

Earlier in the year it was decided for all scrutiny panels to give a specific focus to digital inclusion due to much of society moving online and the fact that unfortunately Wolverhampton faces a digital divide between those who do and those who do not have digital access. I hope you'll agree that our work in this area has laid the foundations in addressing this shortfall faced by many residents.

Together with the Chair of Scrutiny Board, Cllr Paul Sweet, Scrutiny gained real decision making powers through our roles on the Scrutiny Board in approving, or not, the Council's use of urgent decisions. I hope that our perspective as 'critical friends' ensured the Council made the right decisions in what was an incredibly challenging time.

I, too, would like to pay tribute to the many across the City, region and country that helped in so many different ways to keep our communities safe during these unprecedented times.

Statement from the Leader



Cllr Ian Brookfield
Leader, City of
Wolverhampton Council

Extreme measures had to be taken to ensure that, as a Council we were able to protect and support our citizens, especially those deemed to be vulnerable or at high risk.

I was pleased to see how the scrutiny function rose to the challenges posed and continued to provide constructive and intelligent challenge on the issues that really mattered throughout this critical period.

As we move forward, the Council is and will continue to be dedicated to protecting the health, wellbeing and livelihoods of the communities we serve. The long-term impacts of the crisis are still emerging, and as we move together towards a new normal, we remain dedicated to improving services and outcomes for local people.

Scrutiny will have a large part to play in this by continuing to act as a critical friend to the Executive and in holding us to account in relation the decisions being made. I am looking forward to hearing the outcomes from the new Select Committee Review into the Wolverhampton Pound and I hope that areas such as youth unemployment and digital inclusion will continue to feature on scrutiny workplans in the future. Following the work carried out by the Council in relation to digital connectivity and the ongoing input from scrutiny throughout the year, I decided this year to create a new portfolio for Digital City that will be able to pick up many of the recommendations made in this report.

I would like to thank the chairs, vice chairs and all scrutiny councillors for their hard work and support throughout what has been a very challenging year and I look forward to working with you all moving forward.

Statement from Martin Stevens (Scrutiny Officer)



Martin Stevens

There are two items which stand out for me in this last Municipal year, the Dentistry item, and Mental Health during Covid-19, which were both considered by the Health Scrutiny Panel. Research and preparation are key to effective Scrutiny and for both of these items there was substantial research and extensive planning meetings with a wide range of health partners. These informal planning meetings helped to shape the contents of the reports given and informed the questions which would be asked by Members at the Panel meeting. The Dentistry item led to a clear recommendation at the end of the meeting ***“That Health Partners give consideration to developing a local Wolverhampton campaign to raise awareness with parents and carers of young children of the need to take children to the Dentist and the key oral health messages for this age group. Clearly it would need to launch at an appropriate time because of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.”***

The Mental Health during Covid-19 item was a real example of Scrutiny working with multiple Health Partners and the Youth Council to enhance accountability and improve the decision-making process. The results from the Mentimetre consultation, carried out with the Youth Council, were reported to the Health Scrutiny Panel meeting by their chosen representative. It was also an example of Scrutiny Panels working together in a matrix way, as the findings from the meeting were reported to the Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel. Mental Health was a key subject because it affects every one of our Citizens and is especially important at a time of great national change, due to the pandemic.

The Scrutiny Function has adapted well to conducting the formal public meetings in the virtual environment due to the restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Across the three Scrutiny Panels I support, the Digital Theme given to the Panels by Scrutiny Board has been a running thread throughout the meetings. This had led to some innovative and stimulating discussions throughout the year. I have enjoyed working with all the Chairs, Vice-Chairs, Panel Members and key council partners to help support the vital Scrutiny Function of the Council. Excellent Scrutiny leads to better decision making and better decisions benefit the Citizens of Wolverhampton.

Statement from Earl Piggott-Smith (Scrutiny Officer)



Earl Piggott-Smith

The issue of loneliness and social isolation has been a concern of the Adults and Safer City Scrutiny panel since the start of the pandemic, particularly the effect on older people living alone. The lockdown rules and increased use of remote communication to meet this need has provided a solution and real benefits to many, but it has also highlighted the hidden issue of digital poverty.

The panel invited the Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council to talk about the impact of their Support to the Connect project. The panel also invited Sandra Ashton Jones, Head of service – Mental Health and Tom Denham, Head of Service - Adult Services, to talk about the range of changes made to Adult Social Care Services.

The speakers shared examples of different community and digital solutions introduced to tackle the issue of loneliness and isolation, particularly among vulnerable groups. It was really good to see the range of creative and innovative solutions developed to continue supporting people during the pandemic.

The opportunity to hear presentations from different approaches to the same issue on this topic gave panel members a much richer understanding and awareness about the good work being done, highlighted gaps in the service and the potential to use digital solutions in the future to meet needs of people who would not have previously contacted the service. There was a very positive press report to the presentations.

Adding Value through the Pandemic: Partnership Working in Health Scrutiny



The key principles of any partnership working are clarity, openness, trust, shared goals and values, and regular communication between partners, despite the pandemic this has grown between both of our organisations to the benefit of the local community and people we serve. During the formal Panel meetings in which we share updates and discuss changes to service provision for all sectors this has been most useful in adapting our service provision.

**Professor David Loughton CBE,
Chief Executive, Royal Wolverhampton
NHS Trust**

**With a shared vision and clearly
communicated objectives our
partnership has been a great success.**



The meetings have run very smoothly this year and the Scrutiny Team have done wonders with the new ways of working and digital technology. It has been a pleasure to work with John Denley and his team, they have done a fantastic job through this pandemic along with David Laughton and his team at the Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust and all our other partners.

The last 12 months have been some of the most difficult that we have ever had to endure but the partnership working, and understanding has been of the highest level. There have been tragedies for many families, but we are now starting to emerge into a better position. I was very impressed by the presentation we received from the Ambulance Service and the work that they have done through the pandemic has been second to none. I would like to thank every partner who has joined us through the year and also a big thank you to the panel members for all their support.

**Cllr Phil Page, Chair of Health Scrutiny Panel
(15/05/2019-20/05/2021)**

“

Black Country Healthcare NHS FT has worked in close partnership with the Health Scrutiny Panel in Wolverhampton throughout the year – we have welcomed the constructive and supportive approach of all partners around the Scrutiny table and this has helped inform not only our approach to managing the pandemic, but also to developing our newly formed Trust.

**Marsha Foster, Director of Partnerships,
Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust**

“

I have found working with Health Scrutiny Panel has brought welcome challenge to the work we are undertaking in conjunction with Health partners, it has also allowed us the space to engage with partners to establish system wide plans. For example Health scrutiny allowed us a one agenda item meeting to share and answer questions on the Winter Plan 2020 which was crucial to keeping flow going through the Health and Care system during the winter period.

Questions and challenge from the panel has always being well informed and gives us scope to improve our work We really value the role of Health Scrutiny within Adult Services.

Becky Wilkinson, Deputy Director, Adult Services





Thank you for the opportunity to provide a reflection on the work of the Wolverhampton Health Scrutiny Panel over this last year.

The panel has, of course, directed its attention principally to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on local people and the response of Wolverhampton's health and care services. The council's scrutiny function is an essential mechanism by which our NHS organisations are accountable through elected councillors to the population that we serve. We have welcomed the opportunity that the scrutiny meetings have provided to talk about key local health issues; the actions that we have taken this year; and to answer the questions raised by Health Scrutiny Panel members on behalf of local people. As well as the immediate issues of managing the pandemic and treating patients with Covid-19 disease, you have also looked more widely at the implications for other services, health inequalities and the impact on people's mental health and mental health services.



I have found the panel members very professional in their approach and with the interests of the citizens of Wolverhampton always central to their thinking. They are well informed, respectful and ask appropriate questions to ensure that citizens receive appropriate care and also are committed to improving the health of people living in Wolverhampton by promoting healthy life styles, health prevention & promotion and cross agency working.

Professor Steve Field CBE, Chairman of the Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust

In September we attended a meeting of the Health Scrutiny Panel to discuss the proposed merger of the Black Country and West Birmingham CCGs. You raised points about the importance of a merged CCG continuing to have a strong and effective relationship with the City of Wolverhampton Council and other local partners and we have been pleased to provide you with those assurances and we look forward to continuing to develop those relationships in the future.

Whilst the Scrutiny Panel is, as it should be, thorough and challenging in its engagement with the CCG on areas of interest and concern, we appreciate the constructive approach that you take as a Health Scrutiny Panel to your engagement with us at formal meetings and the continuing and helpful dialogue that we have with yourself as Scrutiny Officer and with the Chair and Vice-Chair on an on-going basis.

We look forward to continuing our work with your during 2021/22.

Paul Maubach, Chief Executive Officer of the Black Country and West Birmingham CCGs

Paul Tulley, Managing Director of Wolverhampton CCG

Equality and Diversity - Pushing Boundaries and Evidencing Impact



I have been a Councillor for ten years and it is great to see the changes in the Council, such as the appointment of our BAME colleagues to Heads of Services positions – we definitely need to keep pushing forward and continue to make progress in this area.

The issue of promoting equalities and increasing opportunities for BAME employees to progress within the Council has been championed by me for many years. In response to my request earlier in the year The Our Council Scrutiny Panel received a progress report from David Pattison, Director of Governance, on range of work being done to tackle inequalities within the Council and the wider community.

The Director commented at the meeting about the renewed focus on equalities within the Council in response to events such as the death of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter campaign, and also the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 pandemic on particular communities.

The issue of employee progression and particularly into senior positions within the Council has also been a concern for a long time. However, I welcome the progress made to recruit three people from BME groups to senior positions within the Council and the range of other positive initiatives aimed at increasing opportunities for people to progress. I am confident that the Council is moving in the right direction.

I personally believe that there is so much talent within the Council and it is important to build on recent achievements and move forward to capitalise on the progress made and not to fall back. The panel will be getting a further report in the next few months from the Director of Governance on the inclusion of equalities in the assessment of employee performance and recruitment. I look forward to seeing more evidence of progress being made in this important area.

Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal,
Chair of the Our Council Scrutiny Panel
 (06/07/2020-12/05/2021)

Place and Community - Critical Friend Challenge and feedback



Housing was part of the Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel Scrutiny panel in November 2020. Being asked to present to Scrutiny challenged us to draw together all of the information we had on how the Council's housing managing agents delivered contact services to customers, both pre lockdown and during lockdown. During lockdown, service delivery changed in ways we would never have predicted; more people were accessing services online as front line services closed. The Scrutiny panel gave us an opportunity to analyse the performance of these online services during this time and start the conversation with councillors about how services could be provided in the future. This opportunity was valuable, as it allowed us to get very early feedback and councillors posed questions which were useful for us to consider as part of our service planning.

Jenny Lewington,
Service Manager - Housing Strategy and Policy





2020 was a challenging year and a difficult one for all of us.

In our lifetime it has been a first, The Council as a whole has been put under a lot of pressure to make decisions for the safety of our citizens.

I have to applaud senior officers, cabinet members and all of the staff involved and we as a Panel continued to review all actions taken and sought to feedback from and to our residents.

Decisions had to be made as to whether certain services were to continue through the pandemic and national guidelines were carefully followed to keep all our residents and council employees safe and well.

We all had to adapt to new working challenges such as working online and becoming part of the digital platform which lined in well with the overarching scrutiny theme.

This new and growing digital way of working and living has brought many of the writers and filmmakers visions we have seen on cinema screens or on our televisions to life.

In scrutiny we understood how the bereavement team had dealt with demanding and difficult times and heart-breaking moments as residents watched loved ones' funerals online.

An extra hotline was introduced at the start of the pandemic, STAY SAFE BE KIND, food parcels were provided to vulnerable residents and within 72 hours, vulnerable homeless people were placed in a hotel or hostel.

All general waste and recycling continued throughout the pandemic with residents reporting that the key workers had done a great job in relation to this. Unfortunately, even with the lockdowns, fly tipping remained at the same level.

WV Active was affected by the pandemic but was able to adapt to allow members to take classes online, whilst Aldersley Sports Village was transformed into a food distribution hub.

Advancements continued to be made such as the replacement of street lighting with 27,000 LED bulbs and Highways used LED signage to display Covid-19 messages. Public transport was also used less and more people were encouraged to cycle and walk which was both good for the environment and for health and wellbeing.

Cllr Mak Singh,
Chair of Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel
 (16/05/2019-21/06/2021)

Protecting our most vulnerable children and young people: Cross Panel Working and Member Led Enquiry



It was a pleasure to attend a meeting of the Youth Council with my colleague Cllr Rita Potter where we heard first-hand about the challenges that young people had faced through the pandemic. One of the main issues that arose was in relation to mental health and we asked representatives of the Youth Council to attend a meeting of Health Scrutiny to discuss the matter, the meeting was very well attended with a number of partners including the following:

**Professor David Loughton CBE,
Chief Executive of the Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust**

Paul Maubach, CEO of the Black Country and West Birmingham CCGs

Paul Tulley, Managing Director of Wolverhampton CCG

**Steven Marshall, Programme Director for Mental Health Integration
and Transformation - Black Country and West Birmingham CCGs**

**Chris Masikane, Chief Operating Officer - Black Country Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust**

**Marsha Foster, Director of Partnerships - Black Country Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust**

**Professor Sultan Mahmud, Chief Innovation, Integration and Research
Officer of the Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust**

**Simon Evans, Chief Strategy Officer -
The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust**

**Andrew Moody, Black Country STP
Mental Health Commissioning**

**Mags Courts, Children's Commissioning
Manager - Wolverhampton CCG**

Syed Naqvi, Youth Council - Chair

Anna Tabner, Youth Council Representative

It was a very productive meeting and I have since written to the Children's Commissioning Manager on the matter of Mental Health Support Teams in Schools, the Government's intention to roll out these Teams to all Schools in the future and if there were any expected timescales for this rollout. A response has been received and will be followed up.

**Cllr Phil Page
Chair of Health Scrutiny Panel
(15/05/2019-20/05/2021)**

“

The Youth Council this year have continued to play a role in the City Council Scrutiny Process, they have attended the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel meetings and contributed to discussions.

During these meetings the issue of Education in Lockdown was discussed. The Youth Council carried out a survey with young people based on their experiences in Lock down One, the Youth Council then presented the findings and recommendations to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel.

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Health Scrutiny Panel attended a Youth Council meeting to discuss emotional wellbeing and mental health during Covid-19. As a result of this discussion the Youth Council presented a report based on the groups experiences of the topic to the Health Scrutiny Panel.

Wolverhampton Youth Council

“

2020/2021 has been an unprecedented year. The Health Scrutiny Panel has worked extremely hard with all our partners to ensure that the health and social care needs of our residents have been met. It has been a great honour to serve as the Vice-Chair with so many passionate and hardworking individuals. I would like to express my gratitude to all of those that have helped with the testing for Covid-19 and the vaccination programme, including volunteers from places of worship across the city.

The outbreak of Covid-19 has highlighted the importance of better mental health support, and how important it is to ensure that our whole community is included in planning health services. We were pleased to meet with young people so that we could ensure that their needs and concerns were also taken on board. The key is challenging and addressing what is not working and our community engagement work has helped us to effectively do this. Being a member of the Health Scrutiny Panel has vastly added to my knowledge and helped me in my role as a local councillor. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to everyone who has helped us fulfil our duties. Covid-19 has brought our sector closer together and strengthened how we work. We will only benefit from what we have learned in the years ahead of us.

Cllr Paul Singh, Vice Chair of Health Scrutiny
(17/05/2018-present)

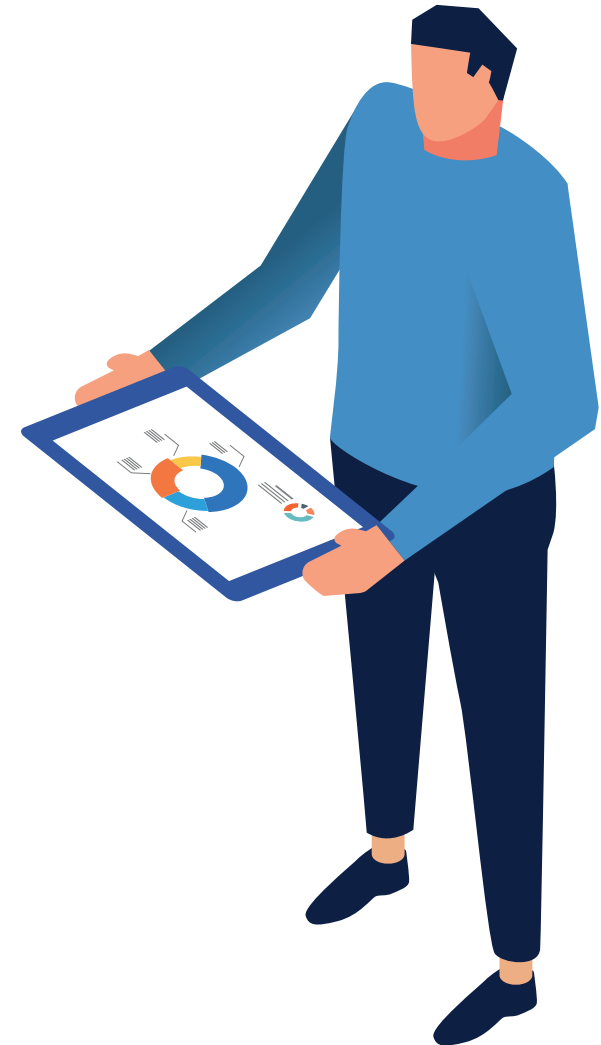
Relighting our City - Regeneration

Scrutiny was pleased to welcome the Director for Regeneration and the Head of City Development to a number of Stronger City Economy meetings to receive updates on the Council's key regeneration projects in the City. This included Lower Horseley Fields which would provide 370 residential units incorporating the historic Union Mill buildings.

Scrutiny was supportive in relation to the Interchange project which was a partnership delivery between the Council, Network Rail and Transport for West Midlands and would provide a fully integrated multi-modal transport hub. Scrutiny was pleased to hear that Phase 1 of the new station facility had now been completed and was open to the public and that Phase 2 was well underway and was scheduled for completion in Spring 2021. At a later meeting, Scrutiny was also pleased to hear that the Interchange Project had been awarded the RTPi West Midlands Award for Planning Excellence and had won Regeneration Project of the Year at the Insider Property Awards having been shortlisted and nominated for three awards.

Scrutiny was pleased to hear that the i9 Project (a 50,000 square foot office floorspace), was now an award winning Glenn Howells designed building. Scrutiny understood that the building had been designed to achieve BREEAM 'Excellent' rating and WiredScore 'Gold' Standard.

Scrutiny was pleased to hear that the i54, was a continuing success. The i54 Western Extension (South) was a joint venture between City of Wolverhampton Council and Staffordshire County Council. The scheme would provide up to 100,000 m² of B1 and B2 end uses and generate up to 1,700 new jobs. The Southern 60-acre site was under development and was controlled by City of Wolverhampton Council. The project was currently scheduled to deliver on time and very much on budget.



Relighting our City - Growing our Vital Businesses

Scrutiny heard from the Director of Communications and External Relations and the Head of Enterprise about how we were hoping to “Grow Our Vital Businesses.” **Areas covered in the presentation included:**

1. Impact of Covid-19 on businesses
2. Brexit update
3. Current business support offer
4. Developing the business support offer

Scrutiny understood that there were three key principles relating to the “Grow Our Vital Local Businesses” theme in the Council’s Relighting Our City strategy. **The three principles were:**

- Being climate focused,
- Being driven by digital, and
- Being fair and inclusive.

Scrutiny noted that 97% of the City’s businesses were small enterprises (employing less than 50 staff) and that the highest employment sector in the City was health, followed by retail. Employment levels in Wolverhampton were at 67.2% which was approximately 10% below the national average. Due to

Covid-19, some key sectors had been severely affected including hospitality, retail and leisure. There were however some sectors which had experienced unprecedented growth including food, distribution, digital and communication. The main issues faced by businesses included **Crisis Management and Response, Workforce, Finance and Long-Term Challenges.**

Scrutiny understood that moving businesses online and accelerating digital transformation had been more challenging for some of the City’s businesses. Managing disruption to operation and supply chains and complying with the latest government guidance and mandatory closure of non-essential businesses were all issues businesses had faced during the pandemic.

Managing the health and wellbeing of employees had been made ever more difficult due to the added pressure of home schooling. Businesses also had to support extremely vulnerable staff and those that were shielding. As business activity slowed, there was less cash flow and therefore liquidity issues were arising. The uncertainty of the future was having a big impact on businesses being able to plan effectively.

Relighting our City - Wolves in Business

Scrutiny welcomed the launch of the brand “Wolves in Business” which had been launched in the Summer and provided support and guidance to businesses. It was also connecting businesses with partners and was having a strong impact. During the last 12 months over 2000 job vacancies had been identified in the City by the Council. Over the Summer, the Council had delivered £45 million in grants to 4,500 businesses in the first national Covid-19 national lockdown. They were currently delivering £2 million in grant support to 1,600 businesses across the City. They were supporting businesses who had vacancies through Wolves at Work. The Council’s business support line had received over 10,000 calls since April. The Council would be receiving a share of a national £595 million discretionary fund to support other impacted businesses.

Business Relight Programme

Scrutiny welcomed the programme which would seek to run 5 cohorts of 40 businesses over the next 12 months, each cohort would reflect a cross section of business sectors and sizes. The programme was supported by the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and the Chamber of Commerce, and it was predicted that there would be a potential return on investment of £1.4 million.

Scrutiny expressed support for the business grants but sought reassurance as what safeguarding measures were in place to prevent fraudulent claims. Scrutiny was satisfied that there were a number of rigorous checks which took place including on the bank account and business status. Scrutiny considered that the process was working well and noted the important distinction between fraud and an error.

Holding the Executive to Account - Portfolio Holder Question Time

Scrutiny invited the Portfolio Holder for City Economy to attend the meeting on 18 March 2021. The Portfolio holder remarked that the team of officers had performed exceptionally well in unprecedented times and that he was immensely proud of the work that had taken place in regenerating the City and the economy.

The following areas were listed as priorities for the Directorate and the Portfolio Holder for City Economy as follows:

- Relighting our City
- Completion of Interchange and i9, over the next few months
- Attracting end users to i54
- Delivery of Future High Streets and Town Fund project
- Bringing forward major regeneration projects such as Brewers Yard, City Learning Quarter and Westside
- Providing continued business support post the Covid-19 pandemic
- Events

Scrutiny referred to the different employment sectors within Wolverhampton and was pleased that there was now a broader employment sector base as it gave more future resilience for the City, not to be heavily reliant on one sector. Scrutiny understood that the Health sector in Wolverhampton had benefited from the growth of the education sector in Wolverhampton including the University and considered that it was important to maintain the manufacturing sector whilst accepting a broad employment sector base was beneficial.

The Portfolio Holder for City Economy commented on the resilience of the general population of Wolverhampton and their ability to move with changes. The global change and transition meant that Green technology was the way forward. He referred to the different sectors where this applied such as transport, housing and components. He believed the new Green Deal moving forward should be the key driver. One of the next tasks was to see what opportunities there were for the Council moving forwards.

The Portfolio Holder for City Economy referred to the importance of entertainment in the City such as the Arts and leisure facilities. He believed education would be key to what he described as the Green Revolution. He believed elected Members and Officers had a key role in suggesting innovating ideas. He commented on the importance of working with the WMCA (West Midlands Combined Authority) and with the Councils in the Black Country Area. He spoke highly of the new train station and the new transport Hub.

Scrutiny spoke highly of the relight scheme and supporting small businesses but considered that there was some further work required internally to support small businesses. Scrutiny considered that the City needed to do more to promote Wolverhampton as a Learning and that the importance of the partnership with Wolverhampton University need to be highlighted. Scrutiny welcomed all of the work that had taken place in the last twelve months to help bridge the digital divide and felt this should be celebrated.

The Portfolio Holder stated that it was important to see how the City would be in the future. Not only did new houses need to be built, but the economy also had to be built up as well. The question of the future for City Centres and shopping centres was important to answer. Covid-19 had accelerated a changing retail landscape, with online shopping becoming more prevalent. Building resilience back into the marketplace and the centres of the City was key, along with seeking the opportunities from the new green agenda.

Scrutiny asked the Portfolio Holder for City Economy what he wanted Wolverhampton to look like in twelve months' time and what was the biggest challenge for the year. He responded that the biggest challenge was competing for funding streams. He wanted Wolverhampton to be the shining light for the whole of the West Midlands. He thought it was essential to have good discussions with the Police, to ensure the safety of the citizens in the City and its assets. The area around the Civic Centre and the Art gallery was an important part in enhancing the City. He thought the use of the accelerator fund in Wednesfield and Bilston was a good example of using funds for the benefit of the City. International companies investing in the City had offered to help the community. He spoke highly of the principle of openness and transparency in working relationships with partners. He wanted the youth of the City to have a bigger input into the future of the City.

The feedback and updates from the Director and Portfolio holder were considered extremely valuable and were built into the scrutiny work programme for future consideration:

- a). Working at a local electoral Ward level to help develop Economic Strategy.
- b). Exploring how, hotels, tourism, leisure, and the culture offer, can help enhance the City economy and in particular the night time economy.
- c). Exploring how partnership working with key partners can be enhanced for the benefit of the City economy.
- d). How the City is marketed in the future.



Work Programme - Connected City Theme

Scrutiny Board agreed a Connected City Theme at its meeting on 14 July 2020 for the following reasons:

Digital Revolution in Wolverhampton underway:

- Increasing productivity, sparking innovation and driving economic growth by creating new jobs, attracting start-ups and enticing further inward investment.
- Enabling those in education, health and social care sectors to adopt the latest technologies.
- Enabling e-learning techniques in schools, colleges and universities.
- Providing the foundation for crucial health and social care solutions such as remote monitoring and remote consultations.

Digital Inclusion:

- The Digital divide: Covid-19 has highlighted more issues than previously realised and if not addressed the identified gap will grow - it's not just older people who are being left behind:
- 59,000 citizens do not have access to basic digital skills & 35,000 citizens have not been online in the last three months
- Many of those who have not been online are under 60 and often the more vulnerable citizens concentrated in areas of deprivation.
- Only 52% of the workforce have the necessary digital skills for work
- Change is happening faster than we think - it continues to evolve and adapt as the needs of the end user evolve and change. How do we keep up with this to support our citizens?

All scrutiny panels and Scrutiny Board sought to incorporate digital considerations into all items that were considered.



Overarching Theme - Connected City

The outbreak of the pandemic exposed the true scale of digital exclusion throughout the City and the country as a whole. Digital exclusion affects all areas of life from the ability to access remote learning and work and earn an income to a person's quality of life, quality of education, access to healthcare and even their ability to connect with friends, family and dependants. Those who are digitally excluded may also experience a number of other social and economic disadvantages which are compounded by the inability to access digital means.

One key source of information that was presented to scrutiny and taken into consideration when drafting the attached recommendations was the Council's [Digital Infrastructure Strategy](#). Scrutiny also considered all of the presentations and reports received at the panel meetings throughout the year and publications such as '[Learning from Lockdown, 12 steps to eliminate digital exclusion](#)' (The Carnegie UK Trust October 2020) and information available on the [#DigitalWolves](#) website.

Scrutiny are aware that a revised [Wolverhampton Digital Strategy](#) is currently under development.

This revised strategy will set the framework for and update the Wolverhampton Digital Infrastructure Strategy resulting in a more action orientated partnership approach to delivering the following overarching aims:

- Making Wolverhampton a Gigabit and Smart City enabled through futureproofed digital infrastructure
- Ensuring a 100% digitally included Wolverhampton
- Supporting a growing Digital Economy

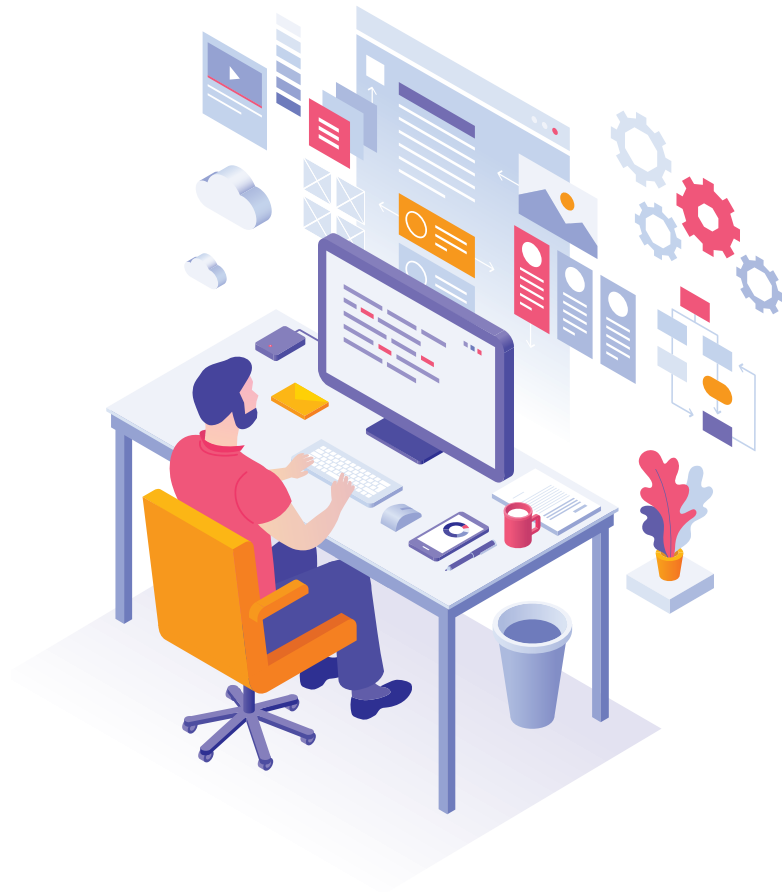
The Digital Wolverhampton Strategy centres around four themes:

- Digital Infrastructure
- Digital Innovation
- Digital Inclusion
- Digital Economy

Overarching Theme - Connected City

Digital infrastructure comprises the physical resources that are necessary to enable the use of data, computerised devices, methods, systems and processes. Futureproofed Digital infrastructure is the backbone of a modern thriving economy driving productivity and spreading growth to deliver effective and efficient public services. It is thought that Covid-19 may have accelerated the adoption of digital services by 2-5 years with digital now being considered as critical to economic growth and social recovery.

Scrutiny has made a number of recommendations (Appendix 1) that it considers are necessary to help diminish and resolve the digital divide in the city, and to ensure that digital is given the status it needs as an essential utility, in line with gas and electricity.



CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON

RELIGHTING OUR CITY

RELIGHTING OUR CITY

Support people who need us most

Create more opportunities for young people

Generate more jobs and learning opportunities

Grow our vital local businesses

Stimulate vibrant high streets and communities

COUNCIL PLAN

Wulfrunians live longer, healthier and more fulfilling lives

VISION 2030

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OUR PRINCIPLES

We will underpin our work with the following key principles;



CLIMATE FOCUSED

This recovery commitment is aligned to our climate change strategy 'Future Generations' and our target to make the City of Wolverhampton Council carbon – neutral by 2028. We are committed to delivering on the recommendations of our Climate Citizen Assembly and to upholding the promises we made when the Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019.



DRIVEN BY DIGITAL

The city is at the forefront of digital infrastructure and innovation, Wolverhampton will be one of the first cities in the world to host a 5G accelerator hub making us truly a world leader in emerging technology. Now more than ever digital skills and connectivity are vital to ensure our residents can access services, interact with friends and family, and enter the job market.



FAIR AND INCLUSIVE

We will continue to tackle the inequalities in our communities which impact on the opportunities of local people. The Council's 'Excellent' rated equalities framework is at the heart of our recovery commitment. No community will be left behind as we transform our city together.

Driven by Digital

'Driven by digital' forms a cross cutting theme throughout the Council's **Relighting Our City** strategy, with digital transformation underpinning work on assets, agile working and service redesign and delivery.

A **digital strategy** is currently being drawn up and scrutiny supports the Council in continuing to develop the **Digital Wolves** website <https://www.digitalwolves.co.uk> and in using **#Digital Wolves** to raise the profile of this vital agenda.

Scrutiny supports the identification of a Digital Champion, Digital Co-ordinator and Councillor Digital Innovation Champion to drive forward the digital agenda. Scrutiny is pleased to note that a Cabinet Member for Digital Cities was created in 2021-2022.

Scrutiny welcomes the establishment of the **Digital Wolverhampton Partnership** which comprises the City of Wolverhampton Council, the Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, the City of Wolverhampton College, CCG, Wolverhampton Homes and the University of Wolverhampton. Scrutiny will request updates from this partnership as its work progresses. All services within the Council and all partners working with the Council must seek to build digital into their work, with a refreshed focus on tackling digital exclusion to support individuals and communities, particularly those experiencing disadvantage.

Scrutiny considers that it is vital for ownership of the digital inclusion agenda to be shared right across the council, with council partners, voluntary organisations and at the community level. Scrutiny considered that this can be achieved in part through the work of the Digital Wolverhampton Partnership. The Partnership seeks to develop Wolverhampton's approach to digital by providing strategic leadership for digital across the City and overseeing the planned revision of the Digital Wolverhampton Strategy. Scrutiny is supportive of the following objectives being included in the revised Digital Wolverhampton Strategy:

- Supporting the rollout of future proofed digital infrastructure
- Building on relationships with strategic companies
- Developing digital Health and Innovation
- Developing a 5G plan for the City including potential use cases
- Driving the ambition for Wolverhampton to become a 100% digital included city linked to place-based approaches to tackling health inequalities
- Capturing other elements of digital including the University of Wolverhampton's vision around a Centre of Excellence for Digital Innovation for Smart Cities (DISC), digital skills including Digital Training Academy and supporting the growth of the digital economy

Scrutiny also welcomes the formation of the Digital Inclusion sub-group which has been set up to include community and voluntary sector partners to drive Wolves Online and the wider digital inclusion agenda. This will link to initiatives underway such as the Wolverhampton Learning City regional work around digital skills, the Black Country and West Birmingham Sustainable Transformation Partnership work around digital inclusion and the West Midlands Coalition for Digital Inclusion.

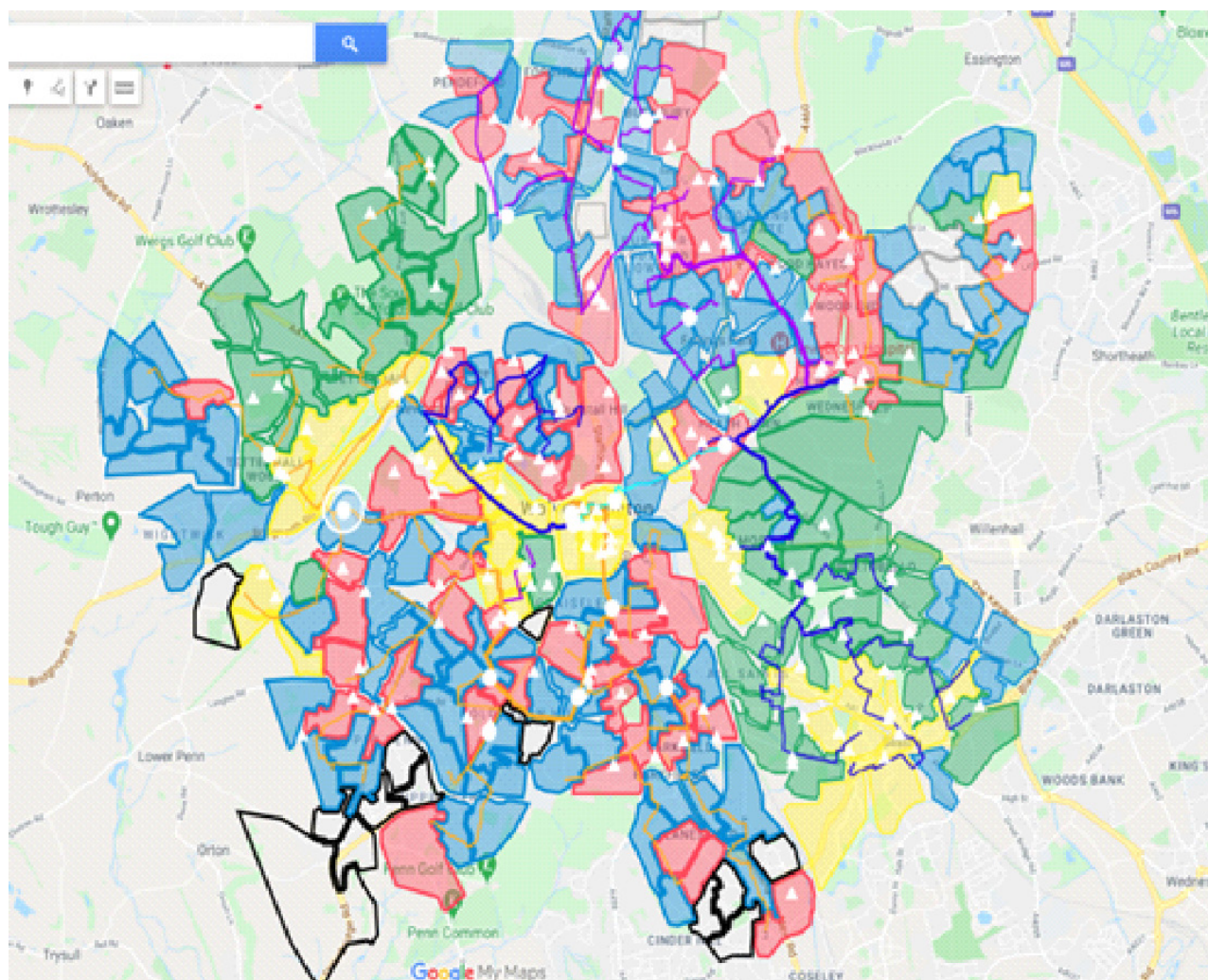


Figure 1

Digital by Design or Face to Face

Scrutiny were keen that where appropriate, more services across the public sector be made available digitally and that the innovative work that has been carried out during the pandemic continue to be built on and improved.

Wolverhampton's 'Digital by design' enables those who can, to access services online and encourages multiple channel shifts which will ultimately lead to better customer experiences and financial savings. However, this approach needs to take into account the needs of those who are digitally excluded and to consider and make available alternative options if digital is not appropriate.

5G and Wireless Technology

Scrutiny were keen to support the Council in working with partners in relation to the rollout of wireless technology including 5G via masts on places such as on rooftops, masts, small cell technology and Wi-Fi meshes.

Small cell technology is a radio access point with low radio frequency (RF) power output, footprint and range and is used to complement the macro network to improve coverage, add targeted capacity, and support new services and user experiences.

A wi-fi mesh is a network that relies on additional units to propagate signals. Although the wireless signal may start at a base station (access point) attached to a wired network, a wireless mesh network extends the transmission distance by relaying the signal from one computer to another.

In 2018, Wolverhampton secured £4.9 million from the LocalFull Fibre Network to connect 170 public buildings in Wolverhampton. Progress is set out on the previous page (Figure 1) with green showing completed, blue to use existing ducting and red to be programmed.

Scrutiny understands that all 4 Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) announced rolling out 5G in Wolverhampton in 2020 and that the West Midlands now has the best 5G coverage of all the regions, with Wolverhampton's proactive approach accelerating deployment of 5G by 6 months including the UK's first 5G mast.

Scrutiny welcomes the use of transparent processes being introduced for planning applications for masts, these include pre-application discussions with Planning in relation to siting and appearance. Scrutiny recommends that the Council continues to identify and mitigate any barriers to the use of smart infrastructure and 5G wireless technology, including the development of non-exclusive wayleave agreements covering residential estates, the standardisation of procedures and guidance, and principles for commercial providers. This should also include the continued development of relationships with providers and mobile network operators. Scrutiny notes the work that has been undertaken with WM5G and that Wolverhampton have introduced new systems to support the rollout of 5G including the identification of suitable assets viable for telecoms use.

A Wayleave is a legally binding agreement between a land or property owner and Telecoms, Utilities or Fibre providers that grants access for the installation and subsequent maintenance or management of network cabling and equipment over or under land.

Scrutiny welcomes the preparation of a Wolverhampton Digital toolkit to facilitate the rollout in partnership with WM5G.

Scrutiny were supportive of the Council making available street furniture on a non-exclusive basis to facilitate the rollout of Small Cell technology. An expression of interest was released before Christmas and the Council received three responses from Operators. Scrutiny was pleased to hear that three expressions of interest had since been received and three leases signed. Scrutiny recommend that an update report be provided in relation to the Wolverhampton Digital toolkit and the use of street furniture for small cell technology will continue to monitor the implementation of this initiative.

Digital Technology in Transportation

Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel received a presentation from the Head of City Transport in January 2021 in relation to digital technology in transportation. Scrutiny were pleased to hear that the Council had been successful in securing European Regional Development Funding to replace all of the City's 27,750 street lights to low energy light emitting diode (LED) lanterns, with smart enabled technology and a central management system. The programme is due to be completed in around 18 months and the energy saving will contribute to the Council's climate change agenda.

Scrutiny understands that the funding will also provide the infrastructure for the future deployment of smart city sensors and opportunities to remote control further council operations, thus unlocking urban data to provide unique insights to improve efficiencies, sustainability and citizen interaction.

An interactive map showing the progress of the LED replacement programme can be found here: <http://35.177.157.9/LED.aspx>

Scrutiny will continue to monitor how the roll out of full fibre and 5G improves the use of CCTV, the traffic management system and parking management systems. Scrutiny understands that CCTV, traffic management and parking management are part of phase 2 of the Public Services Network, whereby full fibre will connect our council assets and open up further opportunities for innovation.



Full Fibre Broadband as a Basic and Essential Utility

Scrutiny are keen to ensure that having access to good quality broadband is a given and that during development, full fibre to all new premises is treated in the same way as the installation of gas or electricity. Scrutiny understands that guidance to Planning to encourage the installation of full fibre broadband has been produced to encourage discussions with developers at the planning stage. Scrutiny welcomes this and recommends that unless there are extenuating circumstances, all new developments should have access to full fibre broadband.

By adopting this approach, the need for expensive fibre retrofitting programmes in the future can be avoided (this often results in attaching fibre to existing copper networks resulting in a less than optimum solution when compared to new fibre networks being delivered). The cost of installing full fibre in new developments is considered to be relatively small during the build phase of the development. Any costs can be balanced with increased sales values that are likely to be achieved on account of fast and reliable broadband speeds being available. Developers are not required to deliver full fibre solutions themselves, but they should conduct early dialogue with providers

in order to best understand what their infrastructure specifications are and how these can be accommodated as part of the new development. The majority of the broadband infrastructure providers will install fibre into developments of a certain size at no or minimal costs during construction.

To futureproof our estates, scrutiny understands that the Council have sought to include a policy for fibre to the premise (FTTP) in the draft **Black Country Core Strategy**. This policy expects that all major residential and employment developments should be able to deliver FTTP. To facilitate this, any application for a qualifying development should be supported by an “FTTP Statement” which provides details of dialogue with the telecom operators, explains how FTTP will be provided and confirms that this process will be completed upon first occupation. By implementing this policy approach, the Black Country authorities are seeking to ensure that future developments remain at the forefront of advances in broadband technology, allowing the Black Country to be a market leader and remain an attractive location for businesses and residents alike. **Scrutiny is fully supportive of this approach.**

Digital Inclusion

Scrutiny are keen that the Council continue to support access to computers and digital connectivity (MiFis and Sims) and to ensure that support is available to improve confidence and skills to get online. Scrutiny consider that this can be partly achieved by working closely with community and voluntary groups in the City.

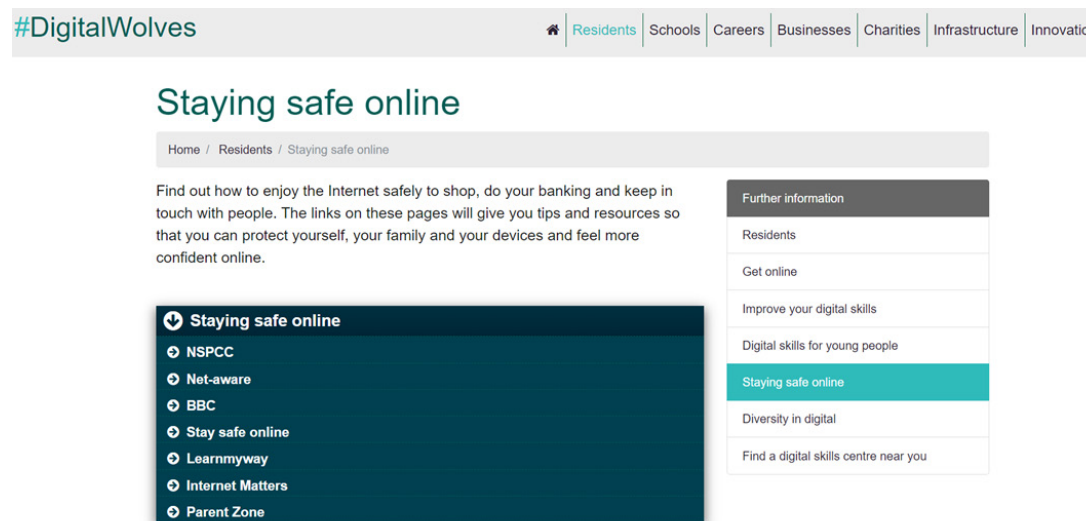
Scrutiny understand that nationally, 9 million people are struggling to use the internet. Prior to the pandemic, 35,000 residents had not been online in the last 3 months. Although age was considered to be the biggest indicator, 44% of those offline were under the age of 60, the pandemic highlighted the extent of the digital exclusion issue with many residents unable to access online learning, employment support and access to services including health, with low take up of online support for vulnerable groups.

Schools reported lack or unsuitability of devices for pupils to access remote learning and challenges around connectivity.

Scrutiny were informed that as part of the Council's approach to supporting Wolverhampton to be 100% digitally included, the following activities had been carried out:

- **Wolves Online:** A new device and connectivity lending scheme launched to target residents to access online learning, employment support, access services and reduce isolation. Funding secured from European Social Fund for additional devices.
- **Wolves Tech Aid:** driven by Learnplay to seek donated devices that are recycled and distributed to school children to get online.
- **Community Online centres** have bid for devices from DevicesDotNow to distribute to residents to enable them to access learning and support and reduce isolation. The latest funding available is to provide devices to people with learning disabilities.
- **Schools proactively bid for DfE resources**, with additional devices available for schools to borrow for access for pupils who are remote learning. Connectivity and additional devices have been funded by ward funds and donated BT Hotspot vouchers.
- **Digital exclusion mapped** to inform a place-based approach going forward

Scrutiny understands that the Council is working closely with community and voluntary groups to support the distribution of devices through encouraging them to become **Online Centres** and trusted partners in the **Wolves Online scheme**. In addition, the Council is supporting the development of a **Digital Buddies** network, upskilling trusted partners and volunteers to help people get online and funding some capacity building with the intention of a larger bid to the **Community Renewal Fund** and subsequently the **Shared Prosperity Fund**. The Digital Buddies network will also signpost information on online harms and how to avoid scams etc. Scrutiny welcome the inclusion of staying safe online information on the **#DigitalWolves** website.



Baseline for a Minimum Digital Living Standard - Device, Connectivity, Motivation and Skills

Scrutiny are keen that a baseline be established for a minimum digital living standard based on an agreed definition of what it means to be digitally included. Scrutiny understand that the definition currently being considered is **access to a device and connectivity, motivation and skills to use the device**. The nature of the device and connectivity should reflect the specific needs of the individual or particular group. In particular, the city has good connectivity infrastructure in the form of broadband and 4G, however data poverty has been identified as a particular issue during the pandemic e.g. remote learning consumes a lot of data so mobile connectivity may not be sufficient.

Scrutiny understand that a **Connectivity Working Group** is being developed as part of the **West Midlands Coalition for Digital Inclusion** to explore different means of connectivity and the exploration of innovative solutions such as redistributing unused data.

Data has indicated that 11,659 households in Wolverhampton are without broadband and that these households are often concentrated in the most deprived areas of the City as shown in figure 2 below. However, the **Good Things Foundation** estimates there are 118,000 limited and non-users of the internet in Wolverhampton, including those who may only have access to a smart phone, use their devices only when help is available or use a device for limited reasons such as social media.

Scrutiny are also minded that in agreeing such a baseline, that consultation should take place with our citizens and in particular those with lived experience of digital exclusion.

Scrutiny welcomed feedback from participants and understands that **Wolves Online** has used trusted partners and services to distribute and support residents to get online and improve their digital skills. As part of this, case studies will be part of the evaluation and feed into the future design of schemes.

The **Housing Assistance Policy** has been adopted which enables the use of disabled facilities grants to fund assisted technology. Personal budgets have also been used to buy devices and connectivity to get people online to address a range of issues e.g. isolation but also enable access to services. Scrutiny requests that the Council continue to explore the use of personal budgets, disabled facilities grants and other options for access to devices and connectivity.

Scrutiny understands that a Wolverhampton Assisted Technology Strategy is currently under development to explore the potential of technology enabled living aimed at supporting people to keep their independence through preventative measures, however there was scope to look broader to maximise the potential of technology to address a series of outcomes across partners. This strategy will be brought to a future meeting of Scrutiny for consideration.

Accessibility of Information

Scrutiny recommends that any guidance developed be available in different formats that reflect the rich make up of our City. Scrutiny understands that amongst the Council's trusted partners for **Wolves Online**, the **Refugee Migrant Centre** and The **Learning College (TLC)** are supporting people where English is not their first language. Scrutiny welcomes the continuation of this work to develop the network of trusted partners and the link to the **Digital Buddies network** to ensure support is available in different languages/formats to meet the needs of our diverse communities.

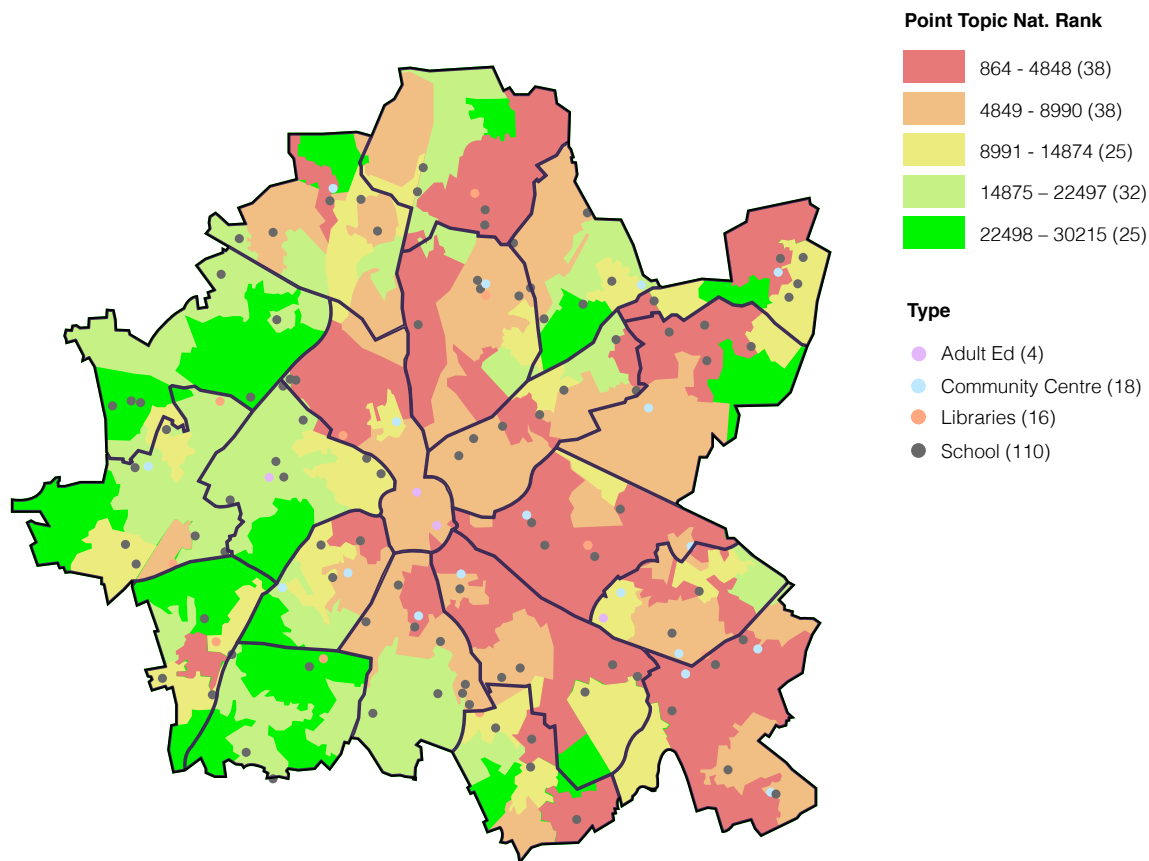
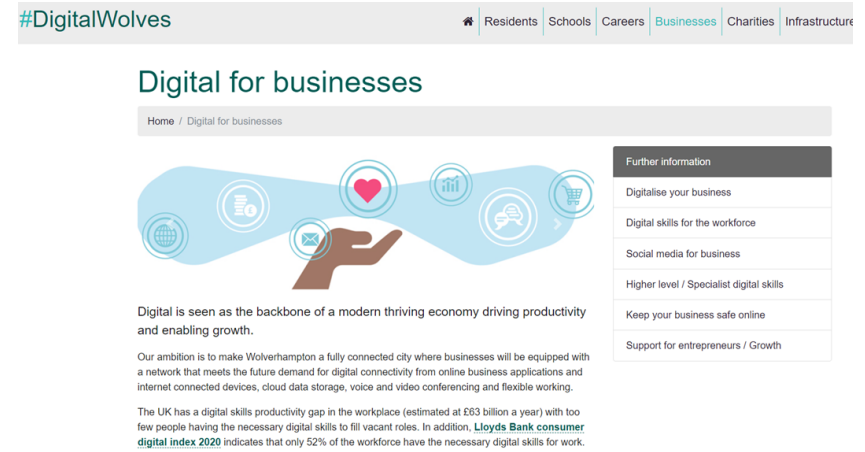
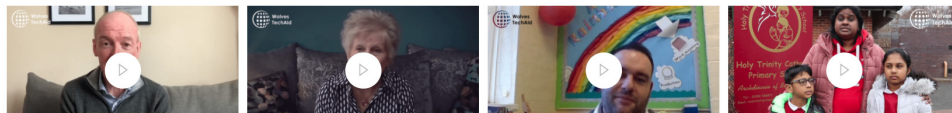
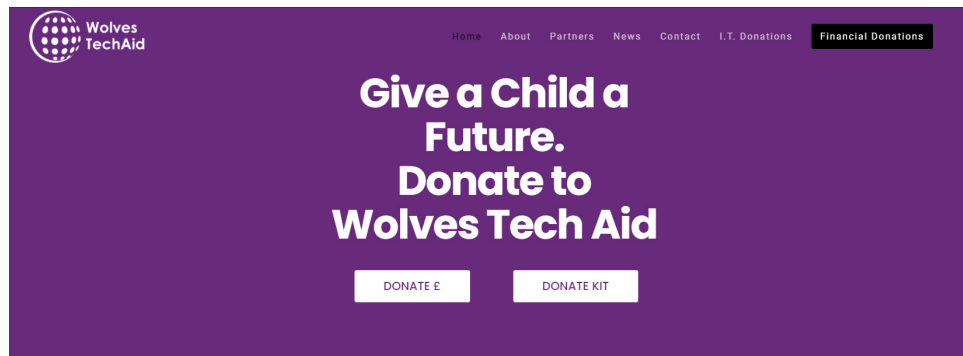


Figure 2 oncentrations of geographic digital exclusion

Role of Business

Scrutiny considers that it is important to highlight the role that businesses can play in closing the digital divide, including the donation of devices for recycling for digital inclusion initiatives. Scrutiny understood that some work was already being undertaken in this field through Learnplay, a local tech company who are leading the recycling scheme **Wolves Tech Aid** which launched in March 2021. The scheme invites donations from local businesses and residents of devices that can be recycled and redistributed initially to schools then to other digitally excluded residents of funding to cover the cost of recycling and connectivity.

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Scrutiny understands that **Wolves in Business** offers a comprehensive support package to businesses in Wolverhampton and advice on how to digitalise a business, increase productivity and upskill the workforce with the latest digital skills to improve communications, sell online, and develop employees in specialist roles. Scrutiny recommends that all businesses should be encouraged to invest in the digital capabilities of their employees to develop a more skilled and confident workforce through the **Wolves in Business Brand**

Becoming a Community of Providers

Scrutiny would like to see the City of Wolverhampton become a Community of Providers by continuing to encourage and support public provision of digital access in public and community spaces and through doing this to provide a safety net to those who need it.

This would include encouraging more community organisations to sign up to the **Online Centres Network** and promoting the take up of the **device recycling scheme** **Wolves Online** to help form a network of digital hubs. This would also include continuing to build on the relationships that have been made during the pandemic with community, voluntary and faith-based groups and to strengthen community capacity and resilience.

Feedback provided to scrutiny stated that in order to become 100% digitally included, the Council will continue to work with a range of organisations; public, private and in the voluntary community sector to address the issues linked to digital exclusion. A range of trusted partners are part of the **Wolves Online** lending scheme and play a critical role in supporting residents to get online and improve digital skills to access services, learning and employment opportunities. As part of this approach, Scrutiny supports the Council in ensuring that there are physical digital hubs in communities, including libraries, online centres and community venues which have access to free Wi-Fi and support to enable citizens to get online and improve their digital skills.

In recognition of the role of community organisations and charities in supporting their communities to get online and become

more digitally included, scrutiny supports the move to invite these organisations to become trusted partners under **Wolves Online** and to become **Online Centres**. Benefits of joining the network include an e-learning platform **Learn My Way**, access to free training and tutor support resources, marketing materials and opportunities to apply for funding.

The emerging **Digital Buddies Network** will also bring together trusted partners and digital and non-digital volunteers, to build their capacity to support residents to get online and improve their digital skills. As part of 100% digitally included Wolverhampton, scrutiny understands that it is proposed to commission intensive support to residents to get online whilst building the capacity of other trusted partners and volunteers who are supporting residents through the **Digital Buddies Network**. Scrutiny is fully supportive of this approach.

Education

Scrutiny propose that any citizen of any age who is learning (school, FE, HE, apprentice, other) be guaranteed access to a suitable, connected device and the skills to use the device. Scrutiny understands that there are a number of national and local schemes to help learners get online.

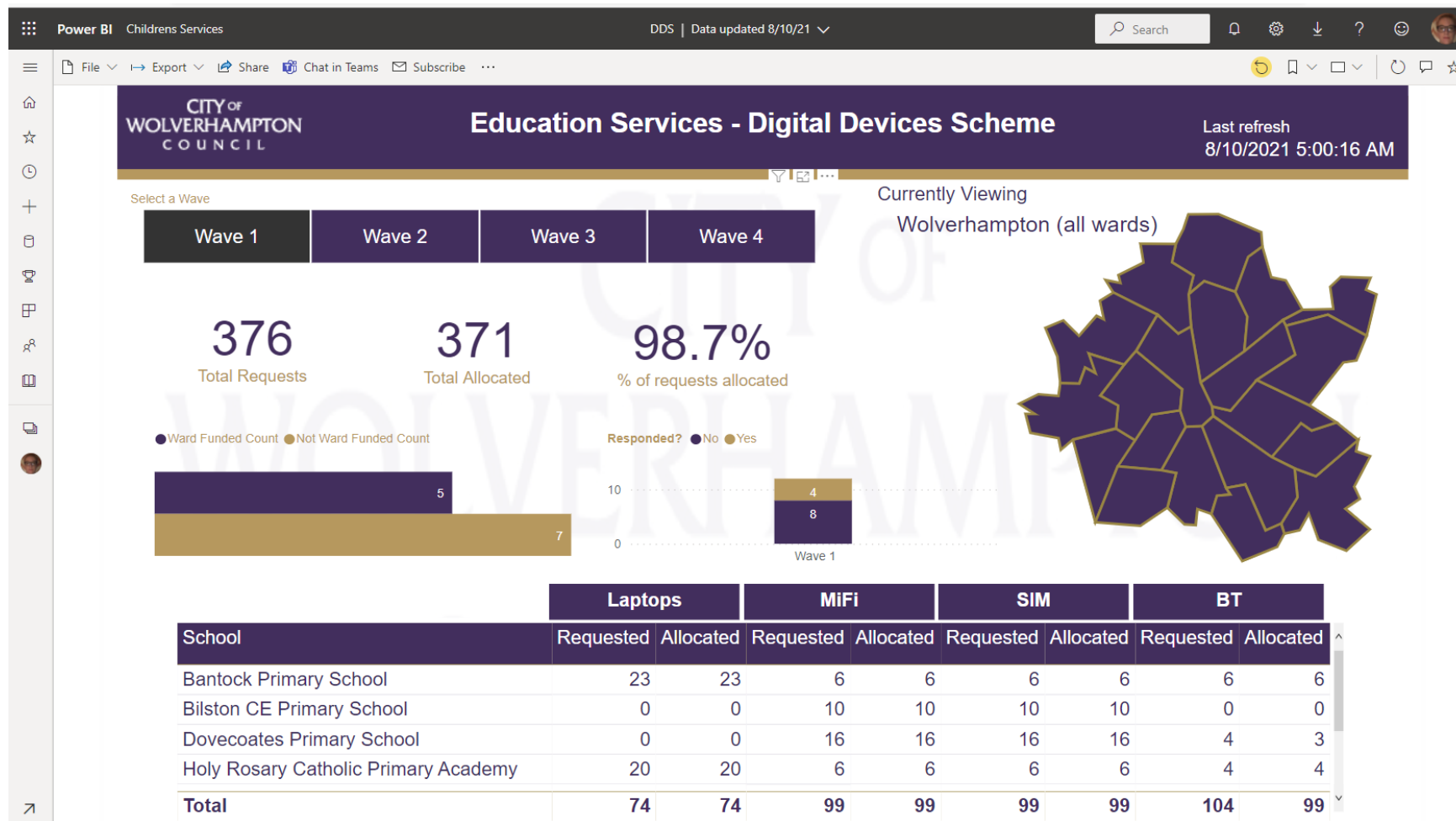
The Schools team have been supporting schools to apply for nationally available **Department for Education** devices and connectivity as well as filling the gaps through a local device and connectivity lending scheme part funded by ward funds. To date, the local scheme has received 259 laptop requests and 214 MiFi requests.

However, findings based on early responses to a school survey show that a third of schools responding are identifying more device access as a priority. Out of 12 schools, 2 reported that only 50-74% of pupils have access to a device at home, 2 different schools are citing mobile phones as the most prominent device for learning and that device sharing continues to be a barrier. To complement the other schemes aimed at schools, **Learnplay**, a local tech company, are leading the recycling scheme for launch in March 2021. The Council will facilitate this scheme through comms and promotion, offering drop off points at libraries and the Civic Centre and helping to distribute to schools. Feedback from schools is that some parents have been reluctant to take up the loan scheme as they were worried about breakages. To complement the device and connectivity lending schemes, the Schools team and Adult Education have organised digital literacy training for parents to increase their digital skills to help them support remote learning.



Digital Inclusion Dashboard

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Scrutiny Board received a presentation and report from the **Head of Adult Education** at its meeting in March. Scrutiny understood that in relation to the digital divide:

Issues facing residents included:

- Large numbers not going online at all; lacking basic digital skills; lacking devices and connectivity; not being able to take advantage of offers and information online; not being able to apply for jobs online and not having digital skills for work

Issues facing employers included:

- Accelerated digitalisation of businesses during Covid-19; businesses needing more digitalisation to survive; difficulty upskilling and recruiting people with the skills needed for now and the future

A survey showed that 25% of learners didn't have a laptop or a PC and 35% didn't have Wi-Fi at home. Learners responded that a laptop or PC would help them (26%), a Wi-Fi connection (24%) and more digital skills (12%).

Scrutiny are supportive of the measures taken by the **Head of Adult Education** and her team in response to the survey results, and the on-going disruption from the pandemic, scrutiny support the implementation of the following:

- Intensive digital skills development frontloaded at the beginning of learning
- An enhanced loan service with over 100 laptops available to loan to students
- A 'dongle/MiFi' service providing internet cards to students with enough connectivity at home.
- 64 laptops have been loaned and 6 MiFi 30GB 'dongles' have been provided to students.

Scrutiny understands that the Service has devised a digital transformation plan to implement changes that will enhance its service to staff and students that will enable the Service to continue to make rapid progress in this area and position it well for the future. Scrutiny will seek to monitor the implementation of this plan.

Workforce Planning, Organisational Development and Digital Inclusion

Scrutiny have sought assurance that future workforce planning includes detailed plans that are clearly aligned with the Council's digital transformation plans in order to ensure there is capacity to meet digital aims. A presentation to the **Our Council Scrutiny Panel** updated councillors on the **Our People Strategy 2019-2024**.

The presentation included the following points in relation to digital and future opportunities for the **Our People Strategy**:

- Move to Provance (Customer Relationship Management system, with improved forms for raising HR queries)
- Agresso/Talentlink integration for an improved service to new entrants to the Council
- Review of all HR forms - move to electronic
- Improved dashboards for HR information including equalities
- Digital inclusion - including ability to engage with employees who do not have corporate access to the network (e.g. HR app)
- Consider use of 'chatbots' for frequently asked HR questions
- External HR website - aimed at candidates who want to work for the Council (including videos/testimonials of our employees, information on staff equality forums etc)

Scrutiny understands that the **Our People Strategy** is due to be refreshed and requests to be involved in this process. It was understood that significant changes in the context the Council was operating in needed to be referenced, including:

- Implications of Covid-19
- Relight Our City
- Equalities
- Apprenticeships including Kick Start
- Health and wellbeing
- Climate change
- Digital
- Refreshed narrative, action plans and performance framework planned – proposal to include on forward plan for future pre-decision scrutiny

Workforce Planning, Organisational Development and Digital Inclusion

As the use of digital increases so does the amount of digital data that the Council and its partners collect and store. Concerns as to how we manage, share and protect this data were considered across many of the panel meetings. Scrutiny recommends that if one is not already in place, that an appropriate data sharing and use policy be developed to detail exactly what data is being collected, where it is collected from, what it will be used for and how or if it will be shared with partners. Scrutiny suggested that consideration be given as to whether an open data sharing arrangement with partners was a viable way forward.

Scrutiny were keen that such a policy should also seek to monitor and record the implementation of Smart technology as it is introduced across the City, and where possible evidence the impact that this technology has had (an example may be where smart street lighting has helped to reduce crime).

Scrutiny considers that any policy relating to data should also be able to show how the data collected is being used to make evidence-based decisions and to help inform future planning. It is recommended that where appropriate, dashboards continue to be developed to enable easy visualisation of the data collected, making it more accessible and able to demonstrate where it has impacted decision making and future planning. Where possible this data should be used to build common solutions that can be reused and shared to create better value for money.

Scrutiny recommend that where data is held on many different legacy systems, work should be undertaken to connect these systems or move to a new more integrated system such as has happened with the move to **ECLIPSE** in **Children's Services**.

Digital and City Environment

Scrutiny was pleased to see and supported the use and continued role out of digital in relation to the following areas **Environmental Maintenance, Waste & Recycling Services, Parks and Open Spaces, Public Protection and Environmental Crime and Bereavement Services.**

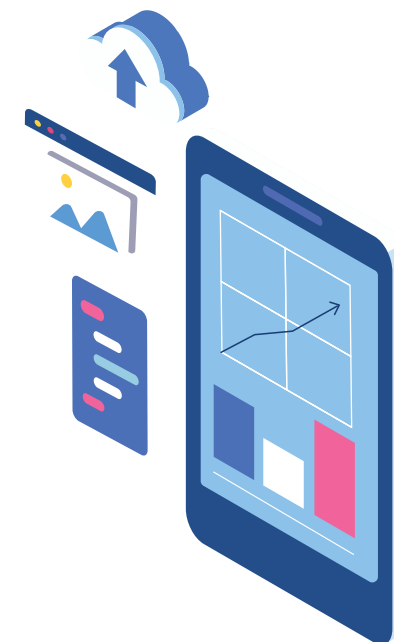
In particular, scrutiny was very impressed with the **Digital Autopsy** programme in Partnership with 'iGene' who provide **Digital Autopsy** facilities in Sandwell on behalf of the **HM Coroner** for the **Black Country** four authority jurisdiction.

Scrutiny understood that a **Digital Autopsy** is a non-invasive post-mortem in which digital imaging technology, with Computerised Tomography (CT) images, are used to develop cross-sectional images for a virtual exploration of a human body. Through Digital Autopsy the need for invasive procedures can be reduced which can help to minimise the pain for bereaved families. Digital Autopsy can establish cause of death in around 75% of all post-mortems ordered by the Coroner. The procedure is conducted by an iGene radiographer and reported by a UK based GMC

registered radiologist on the post-processed CT images of the deceased to produce a radiological interpretation in the form of a Digital Autopsy report that is then sent to the Coroner and their pathologists.

The use of a Digital Autopsy facility is still in its infancy within the UK, but the City of Wolverhampton Council with scrutiny's backing is keen to support the use of the system and save the need for invasive Post Mortems, which are obviously upsetting for families and can ultimately cause delays to funeral services being arranged.

All recommendations in relation to the Connected City theme are attached at Appendix 1



Challenges and Future Direction for Scrutiny

One of the main challenges faced by scrutiny is how to evidence that work carried out has actually had a positive impact or added value to a process under consideration and that items being considered are the right items.

Improvements were made this year which included introducing an overarching theme of **'Connected City'** for all the scrutiny panels. This did help to provide some additional structure and cohesion to scrutiny, but feedback has also suggested that it was too constrictive when considering what items should be brought to scrutiny and did lead to duplication of information across the different panels. One possible option going forward may be to agree on one substantive issue for each panel to consider and to receive updates and to monitor this issue across the year, with informal meetings held in between panel meetings to gather evidence and carry out discussions with relevant officers and partners. Other, appropriate items could also be added to the agendas for panel meetings alongside the substantive items under consideration.

Feedback received from officers and partners has suggested that before an issue is added to a scrutiny agenda, the objectives of the scrutiny should be explicitly agreed and more consideration given as to why a certain issue should come before a scrutiny panel and what answers or solutions scrutiny is seeking that cannot be achieved through a briefing note or informal meeting with a relevant officer or partner.

There should be a focus on establishing scrutiny as a place to which critical local issues can be escalated. These may be complex matters of developing policy, poor performance in a certain area, or worries about future priorities driven by changes in national policy in a given area. Understanding which are the "right" things to escalate depends on a clear understanding of scrutiny's role. Briefing meetings with the Chair, Vice Chair, SEB Lead and Scrutiny Officer should focus on agreeing and designing topics to maximise effect, add clear value and show impact.



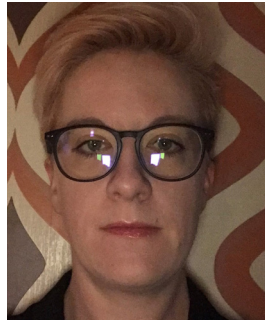
The following should be agreed and documented:

- The objectives for undertaking the work
- The basics on method - how evidence will be gathered
- The likely, or hoped for, outcomes - what impact will it have or how will it add value?

Reasons for not carrying out a specific piece of work may include:

- It relates to similar review being carried out by the Executive
- It is not happening at the right time. The timescale may be too tight to influence a decision
- It does not relate to an issue on which scrutiny can influence a decision maker. The main issues involved may lie within the purview of central Government, or another partners, to resolve

Once scrutiny has considered an issue (and recommendations have been submitted) the chair, along with other members, and support officers should meet to consider how the work went and how the recommendations or outcomes should be monitored and followed up.



Julia Cleary

Statement from Julia Cleary (Scrutiny and Systems Manager)

I have been immensely proud this year with how the Team have adapted to remote working and have managed to live stream all scrutiny meetings successfully by harnessing all the digital tools available. Since legislation was passed allowing **Virtual Local Government** meetings, we have held a total of **35 Live Public Scrutiny meetings**, with the first one being Scrutiny Board on 16 June 2020 and the rest as follows:

- Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel - five meetings
- Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel - five meetings
- Health Scrutiny Panel - seven meetings
- Our Council Scrutiny Panel - four meetings
- Scrutiny Board - six meetings
- Stronger City Economy Scrutiny Panel - four meetings
- Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel - four meetings
- Specific Reserves Working Group - one meeting

As we continue to improve and enhance the scrutiny function, it will also be important to consider how we better engage with our citizens, I was especially encouraged to receive the below feedback from a member of the public following a meeting of the Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel:

“ I’ve just been watching tonight’s scrutiny panel meeting.

I was blown away by the wonderful video that was presented. As a citizen of Wolverhampton, it made me really proud to see the work that you and your colleagues are doing under very difficult circumstances. So good to see the joy on some many faces.

Well done to you all. ”

I would like to thank the Scrutiny and Systems Team for all their extremely hard work during the year, all our colleagues who we have constantly chased for reports, the SEB leads who have provided advice and guidance throughout and of course our Chairs, Vice Chairs and scrutiny councillors.

Appendix 1

1. To continue to communicate a clear digital vision and ambition and to create an innovative and collaborative culture that drives change.
2. To continue to champion and advance an understanding of the potential of people and digital technologies to transform services for citizens.
3. To commit to ensuring that all council members and employees have the right level of digital awareness, expertise and skills to enable the implementation of a successful digital strategy.
4. To continue to identify and mitigate any barriers to the use of smart infrastructure and 5G wireless technology, including the development of non-exclusive wayleave agreements covering residential estates, the standardisation of procedures and guidance, and principles for commercial providers.
5. To ensure that unless there are extenuating circumstances, all new developments should have access to full fibre broadband.
6. To establish a baseline for a minimum digital living standard based on an agreed definition of what it means to be digitally included and that all devices and connectivity provided should reflect the specific needs of the individual or particular group. In agreeing a base line consultation should take place with our citizens and in particular those with lived experience of digital exclusion.
7. To continue to explore the use of personal budgets, disabled facilities grants and other options for access to devices and connectivity and that the Wolverhampton Assisted Technology Strategy be brought to a future meeting of Scrutiny for consideration.
8. To ensure that any guidance developed be available in different formats that reflect the rich make up of our City.
9. To see the City of Wolverhampton become a Community of Providers by continuing to encourage and support public provision of digital access in public and community spaces and through doing this to provide a safety net to those who need it.
10. To ensure that any citizen of any age who is learning (school, FE, HE, apprentice, other) be guaranteed access to a suitable, connected device and the skills to use the device.
11. To put in place an appropriate data sharing and use policy, detailing exactly what data is being collected, where it is collected from, what it will be used for and how or if it will be shared with partners.
12. To ensure that where data is held on many different legacy systems, work is being undertaken to connect these systems or to move to a new more integrated system.
13. To support the further use of the Digital Autopsy system and save the need for invasive Post Mortems, which are obviously upsetting for families and can ultimately cause delays to funeral services being arranged.

You can get this information in large print, braille,
audio or in another language by calling 01902 551155

wolverhampton.gov.uk 01902 551155

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City of Wolverhampton Council, Civic Centre, St. Peter's Square,
Wolverhampton WV1 1SH

CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Meeting of the City Council 6 April 2022
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Report title	Municipal Calendar of Meetings 2022-2023	
Referring body	Governance and Ethics Committee – 25 March 2022	
Councillor to present report	Councillor John Reynolds – Chair of Governance and Ethics Committee	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Cabinet Member with lead responsibility	Councillor Ian Brookfield Leader of the Council	
Accountable director	David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer	
Originating service	Democratic Services	
Accountable employee	Jaswinder Kaur	Democratic Services Manager
	Tel	01902 550320
	Email	Jaswinder.kaur@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report has been considered by	Governance and Ethics Committee	25 March 2022

Recommendation for decision:

The Council is recommended to:

1. Approve the City of Wolverhampton Council Municipal Calendar of Meetings for 2022-2023.
2. Note, titles of the scrutiny panels will be reviewed in advance of the Annual General Meeting.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To approve the City of Wolverhampton Council Municipal Calendar of Meetings for 2022-2023.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 On 25 March 2022, Governance and Ethics Committee considered a report on the Municipal Calendar of Meetings 2022-2023.
- 2.2 Copies of the report have been supplied to Councillors and can also be accessed online on the Council's website [here](#).
- 2.3 Governance and Ethics Committee recommended to Council that it:
1. Approve the City of Wolverhampton Council Municipal Calendar of Meetings for 2022-2023.
 2. Note, titles of the scrutiny panels will be reviewed in advance of the Annual General Meeting.

3.0 Financial implications

- 3.1 The financial implications are detailed in the Governance and Ethics Committee report of 25 March 2022.

4.0 Legal implications

- 4.1 The legal implications are detailed in the Governance and Ethics Committee report of 25 March 2022.

5.0 Equalities implications

- 5.1 The equalities implications are detailed in the Governance and Ethics Committee report of 25 March 2022.

6.0 All other Implications

- 6.1 All other implications are detailed in the Governance and Ethics Committee report of 25 March 2022.

7.0 Schedule of background papers

- 7.1 Municipal Calendar of Meetings 2022-2023, Governance and Ethics Committee, 25 March 2022.

Governance and Ethics Committee

25 March 2022

Report title	Municipal Calendar of Meetings 2022-2023	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Ian Brookfield Leader of the Council	
Accountable director	David Pattison, Director of Governance	
Originating service	Democratic Services	
Accountable employee	Jaswinder Kaur	Democratic Services Manager
	Tel	01902 550320
	Email	Jaswinder.kaur@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be considered by	Council	6 April 2022

Recommendations for decision:

The Governance and Ethics Committee recommends that Council:

1. Approves the City of Wolverhampton Council Municipal Calendar of Meetings for 2022-2023 as detailed in Appendix 1.

Recommendations for noting:

The Governance and Ethics Committee is recommended to:

1. Approve consultation with the political groups on the City of Wolverhampton Council Municipal Calendar of Meetings for 2022-2023.
2. Delegate any amendments to the City of Wolverhampton Council Calendar of Meetings for 2022-2023 to the Chair of Governance Committee in consultation with the Director of Governance following consultation with political groups.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To consider a proposed timetable for Council and committee meetings for the next Council Municipal Year (2022-2023).

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Full Council Meeting Procedure Rules set out the responsibility of Council to approve a programme of Ordinary meetings of the Full Council, the Cabinet, the Scrutiny Board and Scrutiny Panels and Regulatory or other committees for the year. Full Council is asked to agree the meeting dates for all meetings to enable the programme to be co-ordinated.
- 2.2 The proposed Calendar of Meetings for 2022-2023, which was drafted in consultation with the responsible officers for each body and addresses issues raised by Councillors and officers in relation to the current year's timetable.
- 2.3 At the request of the Finance Team the February 2023 Cabinet meeting has been scheduled to take place in half term week, this would allow the Finance Team sufficient time to prepare the budget report.
- 2.4 At the request of the Scrutiny Team, Our Council Scrutiny Panel is scheduled to meet on a Thursday and Stronger City Economy Scrutiny Panel is scheduled to meet on a Wednesday.
- 2.5 The Governance and Ethics Committee has been moved to a Thursday afternoon to avoid clashes with regional meetings on a Friday.
- 2.6 Amendments to the programme of meetings can be agreed during the year by the relevant bodies or by councillors and officers as set out in the Council's Constitution.

3.0 Financial implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications associated with the recommendation in this report.
[GE/31012022/D]

4.0 Legal implications

- 4.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.
[SZ/02022022/P]

5.0 Equalities implications

- 5.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

6.0 All Other Implications

- 6.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

7.0 Schedule of background papers

7.1 None.

8.0 Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1 – Calendar of Meetings 2022 - 2023

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Municipal Calendar of Meetings 2022 - 2023	No. of Meetings	Usual day & time	2022								2023				
			May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Council & Executive															
Council	9	Wed (5:45pm)	18a		20		14		2	7	25		1b, 29		17a
Cabinet	13	Wed (5:00pm)	25	15	6, 27		7	19	16	14	18	22c	22	26	24
Cabinet (Resources) Panel	13	Wed (4:00pm)	25	15	6, 27		7	19	16	14	18	22c	22	26	24
Executive Team	19	Mon (5:00pm)	23	13, 27	11		5, 19	3, 17	7, 28	12	9, 23	6, 27	13, 27	17	22
Scrutiny															
Scrutiny Board	6	Tues (6:00pm)		14			6		1	6		7	7		
Adults and Safer City	4	Tues (6:00pm)			5			18			17		21		
Children, Young People and Families	4	Wed (6:00pm)			13			5			11		15		
Our Council	4	Thurs (6:00pm)		29				13		1		2			
Health	5	Thurs (1:30pm)		30			22		10		19		23		
Stronger City Economy	4	Wed (6:00pm)		22			28		30			15			
Vibrant and Sustainable City	4	Thurs (6:00pm)			4d		29		17			16			
Pensions															
Pensions Committee	4	Wed (10:00am)		29			21			14			22		
Pensions Board	4	Tues (2:00pm)			19			18			24			25	

Municipal Calendar of Meetings 2022 - 2023	No. of Meetings	Usual day & time	2022								2023				
			May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Regulatory and Oversight															
Audit and Risk Committee	5	Mon (2:00pm)		20	25		26		28				6		
Planning Committee	6	Tues (2:00pm) (site visits 10:00am)	24		12		13		15		17		21		
Statutory Licensing Committee	5	Wed (10:00am)		14			28		9		11		8		
Regulatory Committee	5	Wed (10:30am)		14			28		9		11		8		
Licensing Sub-Committee (as required)		As required (10:00am)													
Governance and Ethics Committee	7	Thurs (2:00pm)			7		1	20	24		12	9	16		
Partnership Boards															
Health and Wellbeing Together	4	Wed (12:00pm)			13			12			18			26	
Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together Board	3	Thurs (2:15pm)		16			8			1			9		
Children and Families Together Board*	4	Thurs (5:30 pm)		9			8			8			16		
Corporate Parenting Board*	6	Thurs (5:30 pm)	26		7		22		24		12		23		
Schools' Forum*	5	Thurs (4:00 pm)		30			29			1	19	16			
Wolverhampton SACRE*	4	Days Vary (6:00 pm)		16				6					9		18
Safer Wolverhampton Partnership Board*	3	Fri (10:00 am)			22			21			20				

Municipal Calendar of Meetings 2022 - 2023	No. of Meetings	Usual day & time	2022								2023				
			May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Advisory Groups															
Councillor Development Advisory Group	4	Fri (10:00 am)			15				14			27		31	
Equalities Advisory Group	4	Tue (10:00 am)		7				6			6			7	
Climate Change Advisory Group	4	Tues (5.00 pm)		21				20			13			28	
Briefings															
Councillor Briefings	6	Tues (5:00 pm)	24		19			27		29		31		14	

*Attendance not monitored for these meetings

a Annual Council 6pm

b Budget setting

c During School Holidays

d Taking place on a Monday

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CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Meeting of the City Council 6 April 2022
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Report title	Motion on Notice
Referring body/person	Councillor Ellis Turrell
Wards affected	All Wards
Cabinet Member with lead responsibility	N/A
Accountable director	David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer
Originating service	Governance
Accountable employee	David Pattison Chief Operating Officer Tel 01902 550320 Email David.pattison@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Recommendation for decision:

The Council is recommended to:

Consider the motion received in accordance with the Council's procedure rules.

1.0 Purpose

1.1 For Council to consider the motions received:

a. Brownfield Land

Councillor Ellis Turrell will move the following motion:

“The Leader of Wolverhampton Council has previously stated that “every inch” of brownfield land in Wolverhampton has been assessed for housing and has been included in the draft Black Country Plan for development.

The Mayor of the West Midlands, Andy Street, will be imminently publishing a report commissioned to assess all brownfield land and seeking to offset the use of greenbelt sites in Wolverhampton. In a previous Full Council meeting, the Labour Group voted against the active promotion of identifying further brownfield land in the city.

On 11th March 2022, Dudley Council announced that it would remove two council-owned greenbelt sites in the borough from the Black Country Plan, in response to the huge number of objections received during the consultation.

Thousands of objections have been received to building on greenbelt land in Wolverhampton in the first consultation phase. The Leader of the Council has said that he would listen to what people have to say, but so far there has been no evidence of this in the Council’s actions.

This Council therefore:

- i) Rejects the assertion from the Leader of the Council that “every inch” of brownfield land has been included in the Black Country Plan.*
- ii) Will upon publication of the Mayor of the West Midlands Brownfield Report commit to working with the Mayor to include any additionally identified brownfield sites into the draft Black Country Plan.*
- iii) Welcomes the decision by Dudley Council to remove its own greenbelt land from the Black Country Plan, and commits to immediately doing the same in Wolverhampton.”*

CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Meeting of the City Council 6 April 2022
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Report title	Written Questions by Councillors
Referring person	Councillor Craig Collingswood, Councillor Susan Roberts MBE, Councillor Clare Simm, Councillor Qaiser Azeem, Councillor Paul Singh, Councillor Wendy Thompson, Councillor Paul Appleby, Councillor Andrew McNeil, Councillor Adam Collinge, Councillor Jonathan Yardley, Councillor Wendy Dalton, Councillor Jonathan Crofts
Wards affected	All Wards
Cabinet Member with lead responsibility	Councillor Stephen Simkins, Deputy Leader Inclusive City Economy Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal, Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing Councillor Steve Evans, Cabinet Member for City Environment and Climate Change Councillor Ian Brookfield, Leader of the Council
Accountable director	David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer
Originating service	Governance
Accountable employee	David Pattison Chief Operating Officer Tel 01902 550320 Email David.pattison@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Recommendation for action:

The Council is recommended to:

That Councillors respond to the questions received in accordance with Council's procedure rules.

1.0 Purpose

1.1 For Councillors to respond to the questions received:

a. Eye Infirmary

Councillor Craig Collingswood to ask the Deputy Leader Inclusive City Economy:

The former eye infirmary in my Ward at Chapel Ash has fallen into ruins and become one of the city's biggest eyesores. What is the cause of the delay and the current situation regarding the site's redevelopment?

b. Oxley Day Training Centre

Councillor Susan Roberts MBE to ask the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing:

It has been reported that the Council is exploring the option to demolish the vacant Oxley Day Training Centre, on Probert Road, to build a new health centre and homes and that there will be full consultation on these proposals using the local Tenants and Residents Association.

However, can the Cabinet Member of City Assets and Housing assure us that once the doctors move into the proposed new facility, that the old doctor's surgery building will not be left derelict, given that residents have experienced anti-social behaviour for a while?

Also, will residents be consulted on this piece of land?

c. Nelson Mandela Site

Councillor Clare Simm to ask the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing:

Can the Cabinet Member of Housing provide an update on the Nelson Mandela site?

Has the Council had any more information from the Environment Agency?

d. Wolverhampton Homes

Councillor Qaiser Azeem to ask the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing:

I have a resident living in my ward who I will call Mr X

Mr X has one son who's life changed for the worse over night after an accident.

Mr X's son has been left severely disabled and in need of constant care 24/7. They live in a property which cannot be adapted to meet their son's new requirements. His son cannot leave the house independently and a ramp cannot be fitted because of the design of the house. Mr X has to have help from his neighbours to help push the wheelchair onto the footpath.

His son is like a prisoner in his own home. The family have been bidding for a more suitable property since September 2021 and are still waiting to be re-housed. As well as suffering life changing, devastating physical effects of his accident, his mental health is greatly affected too.

Can the Cabinet member for City Housing and Assets please tell me what Wolverhampton Homes are actually doing to re-house this resident?

e. Penn Cricket Club

Councillor Paul Singh to ask the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing:

The historic Penn Cricket Club is an integral part of the Penn community providing invaluable sporting opportunities to all ages. What support can the Council offer to enhance the club's offer and vision going forwards?

f. Parking

Councillor Wendy Thompson to ask the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing:

Please can the portfolio holder give consideration to increasing the parking available around the Council's housing stock where there is suitable space to do so to help alleviate some of the problem parking that exists?

g. Climate Change Emergency

Councillor Paul Appleby to ask the Cabinet Member for City Environment and Climate Change:

In 2019 Council declared a climate change emergency and pledged to become carbon neutral by 2028. Will the portfolio holder bring forward a carbon budget to set out, year-by-year, service by service how net zero will be achieved?

h. Dudley Street

Councillor Andrew McNeil to ask the Cabinet Member for City Environment and Climate Change:

How much did the Council spend on paving Dudley Street?

i. Road Sweep Programme

Councillor Adam Collinge to ask the Cabinet Member for City Environment and Climate Change:

The Council's full road sweep programme is planned for approximately every 12 weeks or 4 times a year, but does the portfolio holder accept that some areas of Wolverhampton do not always receive this level of service and what more will be done to support the

maintenance team in fulfilling a full street cleansing programme annually, as a service guarantee?

j. Civic Halls

Councillor Jonathan Yardley to ask the Deputy Leader Inclusive City Economy:

As strong supporters with fond memories of the Civic Halls, members of the Conservative Group are disappointed to see yet another deadline missed on this project. Please can the portfolio holder clarify how many completion dates have been set and missed for the completion of the Civic Halls?

k. Wolves at Work

Councillor Wendy Dalton to ask the Leader of the Council:

As someone keen to see both young people and small businesses succeed, will the Leader of the Council provide support through the Wolves@Work 18-24 programme to assist young people in setting up their own businesses?

l. Covid Support Grants

Councillor Jonathan Crofts to ask the Leader of the Council:

Please can the Leader of the Council advise the number of businesses supported through the various Government funded Covid support grants?

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