

CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
COUNCIL

Climate Change, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Panel

16 November 2023

Time 6.00 pm **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Scrutiny

Venue Committee Room 3 - 3rd Floor - Civic Centre

Membership

Chair Cllr Anwen Muston (Lab)

Vice-chair Cllr Wendy Dalton (Con)

Labour

Cllr Mary Bateman

Cllr Greg Brackenridge

Cllr Sally Green

Cllr Jeszemma Howl

Cllr Linda Leach

Cllr Barbara McGarrity QN

Cllr Rohit Mistry

Cllr John Reynolds

Conservative

Cllr Stephanie Haynes

Cllr Andrew McNeil

Quorum for this meeting is three Councillors.

Information for the Public

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the Scrutiny Team:

Contact Earl Piggott-Smith

Tel/Email earl.piggott-smith@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Address Scrutiny Office, Civic Centre, 1st floor, St Peter's Square,
Wolverhampton WV1 1RL

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Agenda

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1 **Welcome and Introduction**
[The Chair to welcome everyone to the meeting]
- 2 **Apologies**
- 3 **Declarations of interest**
- 4 **Minutes of the meeting (28 September 2023)** (Pages 3 - 20)
[To approve the minutes of the meeting as a correct record]
- 5 **Minutes of the previous meeting (19 October 2023)** (Pages 21 - 30)
[To approve the minutes of the previous meeting as a correct record]

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 6 **Performance, Budget and MTFS** (Pages 31 - 50)
[Luke Dabin-Williams, Finance Business Partner, Raeesa Mohammed, Corporate Analytics Manager, and James Amphlett, Head of Data and Analytics, to present report]
- 7 **Community Safety Police Session 1** (Pages 51 - 80)
[Chief Superintendent Richard Fisher (West Midlands Police) to present report.

Simon Foster, West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner, will also be attendance]
- 8 **Climate Change, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Panel - draft work programme (2023 - 2024)** (Pages 81 - 84)
[Earl Piggott-Smith, Scrutiny Officer, to present report]

Climate Change, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Panel

Agenda Item No: 4

Minutes - 28 September 2023

Attendance

Members of the Climate Change, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Panel

Cllr Mary Bateman
Cllr Greg Brackenridge
Cllr Wendy Dalton (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Sally Green
Cllr Stephanie Haynes
Cllr Jeszemma Howl
Cllr Linda Leach
Cllr Barbara McGarrity QN
Cllr Andrew McNeil
Cllr Rohit Mistry
Cllr Anwen Muston (Chair)
Cllr John Reynolds

In Attendance

Representatives from TfWM

| | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Alex Greatholder | Principal Policy and Strategy Officer |
| David Harris | Transport Strategy and Place Manager |

Representatives from Wolverhampton Homes

| | |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Julie Haydon | Director - Corporate Services |
| Ian Gardner | Director of Property Services |
| Simon Bamfield | Head of Assets and Stock Investment |

Employees

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Marianne Page | Head of Strategic Transport |
| Earl Piggott-Smith | Scrutiny Officer |
| John Roseblade | Director of Resident Services |

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 **Welcome and Introduction**
The Acting Chair Cllr Wendy Dalton welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised it was also being live streamed to the press and public. The Acting Chair advised the panel that Chair Cllr Muston had been delayed.

2 **Meeting procedures to be followed**

Cllr Dalton explained the process to be followed during the meeting for asking questions.

3 **Apologies**

The following apologies were received for the meeting:

Cllr Steve Evans, Cabinet Member for City Housing

4 **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest recorded.

5 **Minutes of the previous meeting (27.6.23)**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2023 be approved as a correct record.

6 **West Midlands Local Transport Plan Status - Reimagining transport in the West Midlands**

The Acting Chair invited Alex Greatholder, Principal Policy and Strategy Officer (TfWM) to present the report. The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer advised the panel that David Harris, Transport Strategy and Place Manager, would also be contributing to the presentation.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer advised that the presentation was an update to a report presented to the panel on 3 March 2023 which focused on the Core Strategy in the West Midlands Local Transport Plan (LTP). The LTP sets out what needs to change to achieve a rapid and sustainable shift to more sustainable forms of transport and accessibility across the region.

The LTP Core Strategy places a greater emphasis on acting alongside long-term planning, while also considering the impact on the citizens across the West Midlands region.

The presentation today would cover the overall implementation plan for the LTP and progress on developing four area strategies and key linked work since the Core Strategy was agreed in 2022-2023 and the Government Green Paper was published.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer gave a brief outline of the key principals which have informed the development of the LTP, and how it links to the strategic priorities in the Our City: Our Plan and the 5 Motives for Change document.

There is a statutory requirement to publish a LTP which ensures that the transport needs of Wolverhampton citizens are represented and to support applications to Government for funding for the local transport initiatives.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer advised the panel that the aim of the LTP is to focus on investing in improving accessibility to help people thrive without a car.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer referenced a map of the region showing jobs accessible within 45 mins without a car compared to people with a car, highlighting the number of people who do not have access to a car.

It was reported that between a quarter and a third of households in Wolverhampton have no car at all and other households that have a car but the use of it shared.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented on lower levels of car ownership among women, ethnic minorities, and young people. The LTP is aimed at providing investment in alternative transport options to the car for these specific groups who do have this option.

A panel member commented on the colours used in the maps and suggested they should be changed to reflect public understanding where 'green' which is generally understood to be positive rather than 'red' which is negative and help avoid any confusion about the strategy.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer accepted the point and agreed to make the change to avoid possible confusion.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented on the aims of the LTP, and core principles and the elements outlined in the inclusive growth diagram which refers to the '5 Motives for Change', for example, sustaining economic success.

These broad goals selected, or 'Motives for Change' have been further refined to three Primary Transport Outcomes to provide a way of assessing progress and impact of the changes.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented that the three primary outcomes are improving accessibility, reducing traffic, and electrifying transport to help address the external impacts of transport.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented that if these things are being done then this will show that the strategy is on the right track to achieving the priorities in the Our City Our Plan for achieving inclusive growth. The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer gave further details about the plans for improving accessibility between those citizens who do have access to a car and those citizens who don't.

The current work is focused on developing high-level principles and area strategy guidance which will inform the area strategies for each of the authorities across the West Midlands. The guidance will consider the local characteristics of a different places and communities and what actions will be effective.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented on the need for the area strategies to be resilient to the level of uncertainty affecting the future of transport, for example, lower or higher levels of transport funding.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer advised the panel that a transport user hierarchy model has been developed to help inform the assessment of the impact of changes in the policy on the lives of different groups. The need to change behaviours without compromising what people can access was highlighted.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented on plans to tackle the effects of traffic such as air and noise pollution and road safety for other users. There is an acceptance that electrifying transport, shifting to zero emission vehicles (ZEV) is not going to achieve the objectives in the LTP and that fast action will be needed to identify what can be done in short term to deliver the required level of behaviour change.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented on the need for a simultaneous action requiring investment in alternatives to the car, as well as managing demand for the car usage. The progress on reducing managing demand was considered to be limited.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented on work done on two future scenarios, where a balanced programme of transport policy initiatives is being delivered locally and nationally that achieves those aspiration levels of service that the public want to see in terms of improvement in connectivity, quality and frequency of services and the alternative where current pressures on public service provision continue.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented on the current transport priorities, for example, multi modal corridors, and the key local issues to be considered in relation to these priorities.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented on how the LTP is supporting Wolverhampton and consideration has been given to how resilient the proposals might respond to the different scenarios outlined earlier. The LTP document recognises that what might work in one local authority may not work in another area.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented on the next steps in the development of the LTP and the key dates to note. The analytical work and area strategy drafting work is expected to be completed in November 2023 and in January 2024 a report on engagement options will be presented to Strategic Transport Board (STB) to consider and approve.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented that further timescales for action were dependent on the publication of Government LTP Guidance, which is now expected to be published after the general election. There is relative confidence that the draft LTP will be aligned to government policy guidance when it is published.

The Implementation Plan for the LTP will not be published till after the Mayoral election in May 2024.

The panel were invited to comment on the report.

The Chair thanked the presenter for report and invited panel members to comment on the report.

A panel member acknowledged the complexity of the issue and commented on the risks of reducing car use and the impact of the policy if the expectation is that cars will be cleaner and suggested there is a need to consider a mix of vehicle use.

A panel member queried what consideration has been given in the strategy to impact of the development of new technology and alternative fuels such hydrogen in 20 – 30 years and wanted further details about the broader strategic thinking in the development of the LTP on these issues.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer agreed that the issue is complex which presents a challenge in communicating the ideas in the LTP and there was a need to consider how terms such as managing traffic demand will be perceived by the public.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented on the future issues and how this was considered following publication of the Green Paper in 2021 and the

acceptance of the different ways of transporting people. There is acceptance that the transition from one method of transport to another will be painful as it will involve change. The reduction in traffic is a core pillar of achieving inclusive growth and this links to work being done to improve accessibility, reduce traffic, and electrify transport. The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented on the importance of communication and the challenge in articulating the choices and the consequences of these decisions. The LTP does pick up on future changes in the green transport revolution and new innovations.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented on the how climate change declaration has affected the focus of thinking to act sooner rather than later to meet the objectives in the LTP.

A panel member welcomed the plan and highlighted the range of benefits of having a good coordinated public transport network supported by the long-term strategic investment in other European countries such as Spain, Portugal, Italy, France.

A panel member highlighted the issue of poor bus provision in terms of frequency and the cancellation of services to areas outside of Wolverhampton. The alternative public transport option would involve a longer travelling time compared the bus option.

A panel member welcomed the document which sets out the framework for the plan to achieve the goals but was concerned about the lack of detail in the report about how this would be done.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer apologised the lack of detail and responded that the detail content was not available when the document was drafted. However, the work on drafting the area strategy guidance is expected to be completed in November 2023 which will give more details.

A panel member queried if the decision to develop a Black Country LTP was a top-down decision and the highlighted the smaller areas covered by other local authorities which have their own individual plans for their area. The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer reassured that the panel that the service has been working with the local authorities across the region based on developing a Black Country Area Strategy guidance. There have ongoing conversations with colleagues in Wolverhampton, Walsall, Dudley, and Sandwell to pick up local issues.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented on the advantages of developing a Black Country plan based on the individual areas strategic plans, for example, sharing the challenge about the differences between the local authority areas and help support more collective thinking about the issues.

Marianne Page, Head of Strategic Transport, offered reassurance in response to the concerns made that Wolverhampton intends to develop its own Local Transport Plan which will provide an interpretation of the issues and how they will be addressed. The report will be shared with the panel at a future meeting.

A panel member acknowledged that the report was a high-level strategic document and supported the principals outlined but wanted further details about the financial costs to residents and the benefits of transport plans being considered to change the way people travel. The panel member also queried how current plans have

considered the recent impact nationally of public response to encourage a change in car usage such as the extension of ULEZ in London, and the national policy Government changes such as the delay in the timeline for proposed ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030 to 2035.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer welcomed the comments and advised the panel it is difficult to provide the level of detail required without information about the level of funding. The plan is based on the past resources and what is considered to be a plausible future in terms of the resources that will be available to help get back on track towards the climate change targets.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented on the work being done to interpret the proposed changes, specifically the delay in banning of the sale of diesel and petrol vehicles. However, the mandate for manufactures to stop producing vehicles has not changed.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer acknowledged the uncertainty created by the announcement and the effect on the case to be made by the region for funding to Government in the future and the possible impact on the views of the public.

A panel member welcomed priority to be given to people who either walk or use cycles in reference to the Transport for West Midlands Sustainable Transport User Hierarchy diagram. The panel member queried how peoples methods travel has changed since the pandemic and how this has been factored into the assumptions made about the future transport trends.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented that changes in behaviour in terms of home working and less commuting has affected thinking about the issue highlighted, for example the past focus on the commute as a key cause of traffic congestion at peak times. The development has led to a broader re-think about the reasons behind why people travel and the need to update current assumptions about transport models used to predict changes. The Principal Policy Officer added that there is acceptance of the need to think more about people's changing travel needs.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer highlighted the impact of the pandemic on public transport bus and rail usage, which has not recovered to the levels pre-pandemic, compared to road traffic which has been increasing. There was specific concern that bus use is about 80 to 90% of pre COVID levels which has occurred at a time of extra operating costs which has put the bus network under further financial pressure.

A panel expressed concern about the lowest priority being given in the Transport User Hierarchy to motor traffic and the impact of current parking restrictions on local business getting their goods delivered on the financial viability of businesses and the city centre if shoppers are encouraged not to use their cars.

There was also concern about the impact in the reduction in bus service provision on residents and local businesses.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer commented that the hierarchy diagram in the slide is intended to act as a guidance tool to help people to think about the impact of the suggested ideas on supporting behaviour changes and reducing the possible negative effects in the long term.

The Principal Policy and Strategy Officer reassured the panel that plan will also consider the impact on shoppers, businesses, and that the position of car users in the table does not mean that their needs will not be considered in the plan, but priority will be given to people who have less choice about their travel options.

The Principal Policy Officer and Strategy Officer commented that the reference to blue badge users is in recognition that the needs of disabled people and people with non-visible disabilities should be considered before other car users and to think about how people with a disability might be supported to use other forms of transport.

The panel thanked the presenters for the report.

Resolved:

1. The Principal Policy Officer and Strategy Officer to provide responses to queries from the panel about the Local Transport Plan in the next 10 days.
2. The panel comments on the West Midlands Local Transport Plan to be considered.

7 **Wolverhampton Homes - Customer Engagement - briefing**

The Chair invited Julie Haydon, Director - Corporate Services (Wolverhampton Homes), to present the report.

The Director commented that the presentation will provide an update on the development of the customer services offer that is being addressed in collaboration with the overall city approach and supports the delivery of the City of Wolverhampton Council's Resident Insight Strategy.

The Director commented on the major changes in housing regulations in response to Grenfell and the Awaab Ishak reviews and the publication of the Social Housing Green Paper (2018).

The Government published the Social Housing White Paper – Charter for Social Housing Residents (2020) which sets out the how it plans to ensure that residents feel safe, have a voice, live in good quality homes, and know how to raise complaints.

The Director commented that there is an ongoing commitment to review how services are delivered and to engage positively with customers while looking at identifying efficiencies and new ways of working in response to changes in customer demand.

The Director commented on the background to the development of the city's Resident Influence and Insight Strategy and progress to date. The strategy sets out a vision for resident engagement which aligns to the priorities of the current Housing Strategy "Better Homes for All" - in particular, the objective of a safe and healthy home.

The Director commented that although work is ongoing, the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 has strengthened powers and all social housing providers must work with tenants and regularly consider ways to improve and tailor their approach to delivering landlord services including tenant engagement.

The Director highlighted that a key outcome from a recent survey there was a clear indication (some 70+%) that customers wanted to be able to contact the service by phone.

The Director commented on the link between housing provision and the core strategic aims of the Council and the added value that it brings to the City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC) and local communities. The range of services delivered by Wolverhampton Homes reflects the changes in the customer base and this has led to a greater understanding of the different needs which will help shape and improve the offer in the future.

The Director commented that in a survey carried out by CWC, it was highlighted that in general for all CWC services, residents felt there was not sufficient engagement. The CWC has highlighted this is a priority for action. In response to this CWC undertook a series of consultation events, online and in person events to discuss how services are provided across all managing agents.

The aim was to develop an agreed approach as part of an overarching strategy for managing agents to tenant and leaseholder engagement.

The Director commented that the feedback had noted a more joined up approach between CWC and the managing agents, highlighting the different policies, for example, grounds maintenance. The issue of ground maintenance contract arrangements had been identified by the Cabinet Member as an example, and there was support from Wolverhampton Homes, wherever possible, that a One City approach to delivering an improved customer service in adopted.

The Director gave details of different customer engagement activity and the work being done to improve communication and to better understand the diverse needs of customers.

The Director outlined details of the aims of the customer engagement strategy and specific actions linked to the key commitments to involve customers in decision making at Wolverhampton Homes. In addition, there has been other research done to consider the behaviours and needs of customers thinking about their individual needs for example in relation for example to the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010. The research work has provided valuable information that will help the service to better tailor its services to meet these individual needs rather than offering blanket provision of services to customers.

The Director commented the service is keen to continue to develop the current digital offer in terms of how customers contact Wolverhampton Homes and highlighted the benefits of speeding up processes for example, for reporting repairs online or using mobile technology. The benefit of this approach will see services for customers who prefer digital for that to be better, but also with the added benefit of releasing resource to support others who cannot or prefer not to use digital services and would want to speak to a representative of Wolverhampton Homes.

The Director commented on the findings from a tenant satisfaction survey in 2022-2023 which has formed some of the insight being used to drive changes in the service and gave examples of work done to improve levels of customer engagement.

The Director commented on the process for developing the customer contact strategy which is aimed at creating opportunities for ensuring the voice of more customers is heard and embracing customer involvement in decision making across the organisation. The aim will be to continue building up on existing work and reviewing how current resources are being used to respond the needs of customers.

The Director commented on the current work of Homes and Communities in providing a presence in the community with tenancy officers working in area.

The vision is to have the ability, where required, to see customers in the community – for those for example who may not be able to travel or who can't use digital methods to talk about issues. It should be noted that this does already happen. The Director commented on the work being done in collaboration with CWC to use community hub network sites or Councillor surgery sessions and the customer panels to involve customers in the co-production of policies using the expertise of Councillors to support this work.

There are specialist teams dedicated to offer face to face advice and support locally. The positive work of the Money Smart team (Wolverhampton Homes) over the past 12 months was highlighted as example of supporting customers. There are also two members of Wolverhampton Homes based at the Civic Centre who can offer face to face advice and support to customers. WH currently see around 90 enquiries a week with the vast majority related to issues to do with homelessness and lettings. The average wait time for customers in the Civic Centre is around nine minutes. There is a commitment to maintain the current level of resource and to consider providing surgery type events, similar to the CWC.

The Director commented on the performance of the service against KPI targets and highlighted the high levels of customer satisfaction scores when people speak to a member of the contact centre, while accepting the struggle to meet the KPI standards for answering customer calls. The Director commented on the ongoing plans to improve the situation, which has already seen a vast improvement with call waiting times being reduced, with additional staff being recruited.

The panel were invited to comment on the report.

A panel member queried plans for using libraries or community centres to provide local venues for customer in addition to existing offer from Community Hub sites. The Director advised the panel that there are discussions ongoing with the Council and other agencies about extending the offer to other venues. In addition, tenancy officers are already being used to provide access for customers wanting a face-to-face meeting.

The Director added that Wolverhampton Homes is investigating how, by investing in technology customers can call in and schedule a meeting at more convenient location across the City that better meet their needs.

A panel member queried the days that Wolverhampton Homes would have a representative at the Civic Centre.

The Director advised the panel the service is currently available daily between 10am and 3pm and the analysis of data about the types of enquiries will be used to help shape the service in the future.

A panel member shared concerns about the need to escalate issues to a senior manager in Wolverhampton Homes on behalf of residents rather getting them earlier resolved earlier with the tenancy officer. The importance of offering face-to-face contacts was highlighted, particularly for people who are vulnerable and are not comfortable contacting the service online or by telephone.

The value of tenants and residents' association groups was highlighted as a good way of communicating with tenants. A panel member wanted evidence to be presented to a future meeting showing the impact of the changes detailed in the presentation aimed at increasing customer engagement and satisfaction with the service.

The Director reassured the panel that the service is aware of those areas highlighted and that work is ongoing to address each of them. Work is ongoing in relation to association groups etc., and opportunities for tenants to be involved in various ways – not only Tenants and Residents Associations. The Director offered to attend future meetings of the panel to give regular updates on progress. The Director accepted that Councillors should not have to involve senior directors to get issues resolved on behalf of residents and that data analysis will help to improve the service and identify ward specific issues.

A panel member commented on long telephone waiting times and residents being disconnected without being able to report a housing issue, which has led to frustration about the situation. A panel member queried what advice given to residents on managing properties with damp.

The Director advised the panel that Wolverhampton Homes has recently appointed three Healthy Homes Advisors to support tenants with advice about managing damp in their home and proactively engaging with them on housing issues.

The Director commented that staffing levels in the customer contact centre has increased from 23 to 30 and the situation is being kept under constant review. There has been an improvement in reducing call waiting times and this has been made available in the Annual Report. The Director offered to share the latest results with the panel and advised that subject matter experts were available to deal with customer queries such as repairs. The repairs team is co-located with the contact centre staff. A high percentage of calls to the contact centre relate to property repairs.

A panel member commented about the lack of detail in the data on call waiting times and call abandonment rates which have been raised previously and expressed concern about the poor performance of the customer contact centre. The panel member queried the work being done to bring the necessary change in culture of the organisation and the measures being used to assess the effectiveness of the service.

The Director commented in response that the presentation set out a programme of work that is being undertaken that has seen significant improvements. This programme of work continues and focuses on reviewing how Wolverhampton Homes works and delivers its services.

A key part of the programme is the recent investment in customer services training for staff which has started in the customer contact centre. The training will then be rolled out across the service.

This work also sees the continual review of call waiting times, abandonment rates and the use of digital to support some of the transformation.

In response to the raft of new regulations there has been a programme of development for all managers to help improve the service. The Director added that there are monthly meetings with heads of service across to review the complaints and feedback from customers about the service and to ensure that learning from complaints for example is embedded into the business. The information is used to review current processes and redesign services where required.

The Director offered to provide statistics on call waiting times and abandonment rates for the customer contact centre to a future meeting. The Director commented that the findings from a customer services survey before the pandemic which reported that about around 73 per cent of customers wanted to be contacted by phone – but it is important that the phones are answered in a timely manner. Training and awareness raising with the team has been delivered to support improvements to the service.

The Director commented on the recruitment challenges and labour shortages that are current for the UK, and these of course challenge WH however, there is a regular programme of recruitment activity and adverts.

The Director commented on the improvement in reducing call waiting times. The average call wait time is now around 7 minutes compared to around 32 minutes for the same period last year.

The Director commented that call abandonment rate are monitored – and this can be increased on occasion, for example because of efforts to direct customer service calls to online support services to have their enquiry resolved, i.e., lettings and repairs.

A panel member queried the method used to engage with residents as part of the customer services survey. The Director advised the panel that face to face, telephone and online methods were used – these were based on industry norms and WH had seen a very good response to recent surveys. There was a higher response to the online survey.

A panel member expressed concern about the use of apps and online methods to consult and communicate with residents and highlighted the challenges to people who may be visually impaired and older people who still prefer face to face contact. There was also concern about the suitability of venues for engagement who may be unable to travel and queried how the views of this group would be collected.

The Director commented that there is a commitment from Wolverhampton Homes to increase the way employee resources are available in the community - to meet the needs of people who want face to face contact. Face to face contact is available now and is utilised.

The service will also be working with colleagues in the Housing Strategy team to share information and intelligence to help better understand the health concerns of customers. The Director offered to present details on the communication plan to a future meeting of the panel.

A panel member highlighted previous concerns about the reference to 'customers' in reports from Wolverhampton Homes and suggested that the term should be replaced with 'residents' to reflect the fundamental difference between it and companies with a commercial ethos. The importance of listening to the voice of residents was highlighted and this issue was also identified in the findings from the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety: Hackitt review where concerns of residents about building safety were not properly acted upon.

It is recognised that for Wolverhampton Homes, there are customers of the service, and tenants, however, comments were noted from the panel member. Also work is underway to recruit the Customer Influence Panel that will develop the customer voice, in accordance with the City's strategy.

There was concern from the panel that the long call waiting times to customer services was resulting in more enquiries to local councillors who were able to contact senior key people at Wolverhampton Homes directly to get the issue resolved on behalf of the resident.

The Director assured the panel of the work underway to continue to reduce call waiting times.

A panel member wanted better liaison with local ward councillors in advance when tenancy officers are planning walk around the housing estates to provide the opportunity for them to attend to report issues of concern. A panel member suggested the use of interpreters would be helpful when meeting residents.

John Roseblade, Director of Resident Services, advised the panel that a report was presented to Scrutiny Board on proposed changes to the management relationship arrangements between the Council and Wolverhampton Homes. The Director commented on the improvements in the repairs housing maintenance and tenant satisfaction rates and how favourably Wolverhampton Homes compares nationally.

The Director, Corporate Services, thanked the panel for the comments on the report and presentation and acknowledged the comments made. The Director commented on the benefits of using technology and the plans of the city's digital strategy, and reassured the panel that the option for face-to face contact would continue and the service would continue to work with partners to make best use of local resources.

The Director noted the comment about notifying Cllrs about planned visits by tenancy officers and reaffirmed the commitment to ensure staff fully understand that the customer voice is key in developing services.

The Director added that this approach was being done with councillors and members of the Homes and Communities team.

The Chair thanked the presenter for the report.

Resolved

1. The panel agreed that a six-month progress report on the customer engagement strategy be presented to a future meeting.
2. The panel comments on the report and presentation to be noted and information requested shared when available.

8 **Wolverhampton Homes – Building and Asbestos Safety**

The Chair invited Ian Gardner, Director of Property Services, to present the report.

The Director thanked the Chair for giving the opportunity to brief the panel on building safety and offered to attend a future meeting to if there were any specific areas that panel members would like further information.

The Director highlighted the background to the Building Safety Act 2022 which was introduced following the Grenfell Enquiry, which seeks to address some historical issues with the application of building regulations and building control. The act also now provides some limited financial protection for leaseholders living in relevant buildings with defects, new safety management arrangements for higher risk buildings and new resident engagement requirements.

The Director commented on the creation of the Building Safety Regulator and the following national advisory committees and the implications for housing providers:

- Building Advisory
- Industry Competence
- Residents Panel

The new Building Safety Regulator and the committees will be providing further guidance that will need to be incorporated into current policies and procedures.

The Director commented on three new 'Gateways' within the Building Safety Act 2022 and gave examples of activity in each of the areas:

- Planning Permission
- Pre-Construction
- Completion

The Director commented on further changes to the Fire Safety Regulations which came into force on 23 January 2023. The regulations introduce new safety measures for buildings over 11 meters tall. The regulations also introduce additional requirements for sharing information with residents, monthly inspections, improved signage, and a specific requirement for inspecting flat entrance doors and communal fire doors.

The Director commented that Wolverhampton Homes and the Council has been very proactive since Grenfell in undertaking work to improve fire safety measures and delivering on the Council's commitment to installing fire sprinklers in the high-rise blocks, which remains a priority. The retrofitting of sprinklers in high rise buildings is not currently mandated however there is a strong commitment by the Council to do this work.

The Director commented on specific work to improve fire safety in communal areas and the entrances to flats, including annual inspections of flat entrance doors and quarterly inspections of fire doors in communal areas.

The Director commented that there is a rolling programme of work to improve the infrastructure of buildings, for example, replacing electrical wiring to reduce the risk of fire and to bring them up to date with modern standards. In addition, work is also being done at the same time to improve the look of the communal areas by making them brighter and cleaner to help people feel safer.

The Director commented on progress with the building safety enhancement programme and advised that the overall infrastructure programme will see 2,165 homes benefiting from building safety work and complete the sprinkler installation work by 2028.

The Director advised the panel of the investment over the past 12 months to build and develop the new internal Building Safety Team to help the service meet its duties arising from the Building Safety Act 2022 and other legislation and guidance. The Director outlined the independent role of the team and the Building Safety Manager who attends the Fire and Building Safety Committee and has also responsibility for the management and scrutiny of work done by contractors.

The role of the Building Safety Team is to also ensure Wolverhampton Homes takes a holistic approach in design specification and to oversee remedial actions identified in the fire risk assessments and to undertake person centred fire risk assessments in response to a fire incident.

The Building Safety Team is also responsible for arranging a range of building safety focused resident engagement events that Julie Haydon referred to earlier in the presentation customer engagement work. The Director commented that while the level engagement with customers has been good there is acceptance of the need for more work to increase attendance at some of the forum events and ensure all residents have a range of opportunities to be involved with the management of building safety issues affecting their home.

The Director advised panel about a targeted communications campaign to support the core objectives from the 2023 – 2024 WH Business, for example, ensuring WH complies with all relevant health and safety compliance requirements. The Director gave details of a fire safety campaign, which is supported by a website which includes BSL videos provided by West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) and the service continually promote messages about fire safety as part of the community engagement work led by the Building Safety Team. An analysis of website traffic shows an increase of almost 300 per cent in traffic to the main Fire Safety page during the 13-week campaign period which was welcomed.

The Director added that colleagues from WMFS have worked directly with customers with hearing impairments and the service has promoted national safety campaigns such as National Sprinkler Week 2023. The Building Safety Team has received positive feedback from customers and have responded positively to concerns raised about building or fire safety issues, for example, pushchairs blocking stairways.

The Director commented on the importance of resident engagement in supporting the work of the Building Safety Team. Wolverhampton Homes is working with representatives of Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) on a national project involving landlords covering almost 500,000 homes. The aim of the project is to develop best practice for resident engagement.

The first meeting of the group was attended by Simon Bamfield, Head of Assets and Stock Investment and the work links to the wider customer engagement work of Wolverhampton Homes with people whose first language is not English.

The Director added that there are 80 different languages spoken across the City and 27 languages spoken in 44 high rise blocks and highlighted the importance of ensuring people are heard and communicated effectively

The Director also gave an update on work done to manage asbestos and the summary of Wolverhampton Homes achievements against the 'Big 6' measures outlined in the presentation - Gas, Electrical, Lifts, Water Hygiene, Asbestos and Fire safety.

The Director gave details of a new compliance management software system which will provide more timely and accurate reporting against targets and required standards. A specialist external third-party consultant has recently been appointed to review current Wolverhampton Homes systems and procedures to help identify any further improvements needed.

The panel were invited to comment and ask questions about the presentation.

The Chair queried if any of the buildings managed by Wolverhampton Homes were affected the issue of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) concrete. The Director advised the panel that when the issue was recently reported in the press Wolverhampton Homes reviewed systems and its stock data.

The Director reassured the panel that there was no evidence of the use of RAAC in any of Wolverhampton Homes properties. The Director added that at a national meeting the issue of RAAC was discussed. The panel were reassured that Wolverhampton Homes is collaborating with other landlords and sharing information about the issue where this material has been identified. If another landlord identifies a particular build type where RAAC is suspected or the guidance changes, then this will trigger further investigations, but the current assessment is that the level of risk is very low in the Council's housing stock.

The Chair queried if information on fire safety published by WMFS is available on the website is also available people who want a paper copy. The Director reassured the panel that Wolverhampton Homes has written to residents with details about how to contact the Building Safety Team and accepts the engagement strategy is based on proactively engaging with residents using a range of methods, for example, notice boards, and community groups to get the message out.

A panel member wanted to record their praise to Wolverhampton Homes and commented that in role as Chair of West Midlands Fire Authority the feedback from fire safety officers is that Wolverhampton Homes is considered to set the gold standard locally and national for its performance on building safety. A panel member queried with reference to the installation of sprinklers if they would use hardwired fire detection systems, a recommendation of the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety: Hackitt review.

Simon Bamfield - Head of Assets and Stock Investment, reassured the panel that this work has been done before the Council approved the installation of sprinklers. These blocks will however be completed retrospectively.

A panel member recommended WMFS website page on fire safety advice which can be translated into 150 languages be added to the Wolverhampton Homes fire safety website to promote it further.

A panel member commented on the engagement work referred to in the presentation and wanted reassurance that this would be more than giving information on fire safety and would be proper consultation with residents on proposals from Wolverhampton Homes.

The Head of Assets and Stock Investment reassured the panel that the consultation would be meaningful resident engagement in decision making process to help shape the work being done. The service acknowledged the importance of capturing local intelligence on building safety matter from residents and the service gets regular feedback on issue of concern.

John Roseblade, Director of Director of Resident Services, reassured the panel that building safety matters are essential work. The Director added that the Council has invested heavily to support this work and there were funds in the HRA budget which was sufficient to address any outstanding building safety issues. The Director reiterated the previous comment about the consistently strong performance of Wolverhampton Homes against the 'Big 6' measures.

The panel thanked the presenters for the report and presentation and congratulated the service on the performance.

Resolved:

1. The panel agreed to receive a progress report in September 2024 to update on building and asbestos safety performance as part of a wider Wolverhampton Homes report.

9 **Climate Change, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Panel - Draft Work Programme 2023-2024**

The Chair commented that the next meeting of the panel is scheduled for 19 October 2023 is an extra meeting to discuss the issue of climate change. The presentation will focus on the policies of the Council.

The Chair commented that an extra meeting has been planned for March 2024 for a report on Wolverhampton Homes communication and engagement strategy.

The Scrutiny Officer invited member comments on the draft programme. There was concern expressed about the number of items on the agenda for 16 November 2023.

The Scrutiny Officer suggested the item on fly tipping be considered as an item at the meeting on 19 October 2023 to help manage the work programme agenda.

The panel discussed the idea of inviting the Police and Crime Commissioner to a future meeting and agreed to enquire about this further.

Resolved:

1. The panel agreed to add the agenda item of fly tipping to the panel meeting on 19 October 2023.
2. The Scrutiny Officer to invite the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner to a future meeting of the panel.

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3. The panel agreed to add an extra date to the work programme in March 2024 to consider a report on Wolverhampton Homes communication and engagement strategy.

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Climate Change, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Panel

Agenda Item No: 5
Minutes - 19 October 2023

Attendance

Members of the Climate Change, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Panel

Cllr Mary Bateman
Cllr Greg Brackenridge
Cllr Sally Green
Cllr Linda Leach
Cllr Barbara McGarrity QN
Cllr Andrew McNeil
Cllr Rohit Mistry
Cllr Anwen Muston (Chair)
Cllr John Reynolds

In attendance

Cllr Craig Collingswood

Cabinet Member for Environment and
Climate Change

Employees

Liz Grimshaw
David Pattison
John Roseblade
Perminder Balu
Martin Stevens
Steve Woodward
Claire Walters

Commercial Operations Manager
Chief Operating Officer
Director of Resident Services
Head of Green Cities and Circular Economy
Scrutiny Team Leader
Head of Environmental Services
Environmental Place Based Development
Manager
Section Leader: Fly Tipping

Thomas Hawkins,

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 **Apologies**
Apologies for absence received for the following Councillors:

Cllr Wendy Dalton
Cllr Stephanie Haynes
Cllr Jeszemma Howl

Cllr Ellis Turrell substitute for Cllr Wendy Dalton

- 2 **Declarations of interest**
There were no declarations of interest recorded.

3 **Council 2028 Net Zero Progress Review (report to follow)**
The Chair invited Cllr Craig Collingswood, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change, to make some introductory comments to the report. The Cabinet Member commented on his priority since being appointed was to ensure that Council was moving in the right direction to achieve its net zero target by 2028.

The Cabinet Member advised the panel that based on review of evidence that progress is being made highlighting the reduction in the Council's carbon footprint by over a third since 2019. The Cabinet Member offered the meet to discuss issue of concern with Councillors at a future date.

David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer, advised the panel that he was appointed in 2022 to be the responsible officer ensuring that there was one council approach to delivering critical aspects of the climate action. The aim was to be adopt the approach taken on the approach to equalities, diversity, and inclusion where the focus was on working collectively across the Council to ensure action led to significant improvements.

The Chief Operating Officer introduced Perminder Balu, Head of Green Cities and Circular Economy, who was appointed in 2023 to role and would provide a summary of the main report to the panel.

The Head of Green Cities and Circular Economy thanked the panel for the opportunity to present the report and commented on building on the One Council approach to help move things forward in achieving climate change goals.

The Head of Green Cities and Circular Economy commented that following the climate change emergency declaration in 2019 the Council set out an ambition to achieve Net Zero for the City across "all Council activities" by 2028. There is also a commitment to support decarbonisation across the city by 2041, in line with regional targets.

The Head of Green City and Circular Economy updated the panel on progress since the 'Future Generations: Our Commitment' document was approved at Full Council in September 2020. The document sets out the Council's commitment to reducing emissions from centralised corporate controlled sources, for example, gas central heating from corporate buildings.

The Head of Green City and Circular Economy commented on the findings from a recent benchmarking exercise with 19 similar local authorities and the results showed the Council's approach to meetings its corporate net zero emission targets were similar.

The Head of Green City and Circular Economy commented on progress to date and changes to 2028 Net Zero Action Plan published in July 2021. The success of the Climate Change Advisory Group referred to by the Cabinet Member was highlighted. The minutes and agendas from the meetings are available to the public on the Council website.

The Head of Green City and Circular Economy advised the panel that as part of the Council's commitment to transparency a climate action assessment tool has been introduced. The tool will be used when consideration is being given to take forward any new projects or schemes and to identify opportunities to further reduce the carbon footprint of the scheme.

The Head of Green City and Circular Economy commented that the Climate Action Programme Board meet regularly to check on progress of the action and this also provides a process to escalate matters to the Chief Operating Officer.

The Head of Green City and Circular Economy advised the panel that 17 of the actions on the Net Zero Action Plan have been completed and further actions will be completed over the next few months. There is a detailed reporting mechanism, and this will be supported by the development of a new dashboard that will be shared with officers and directors to help keep people updated on progress.

The Head of Green City and Circular Economy advised the panel about the progress of three key interventions aimed at achieving Net Zero target by 2028 which have been completed during the last 12 – 18 months. The achievement of 40 per cent reduction in energy use was the equivalent in savings of about £2 million.

The Head of Green City and Circular Economy added that about 85 per cent of the streetlights with low efficiency bulbs being replaced by more efficient LEDs. There were further examples given of the progress made to deliver deliverables (quick wins) which can achieve large carbon reductions and energy cost savings without significant investment.

The Head of Green City and Circular Economy commented that the Council needs to make a concerted effort to move forward and explore other options to help it make further progress to achieving its Net Zero climate change goal. The commitment of the team and the Council to this aim was praised.

The Chair thanked the presenter for the report and invited panel members to comment.

A panel member congratulated the presenter on the report and considered that it was very informative and a significant improvement on earlier reports. The consistent use of measures and metrics in the report was welcomed. The panel member commented on the difficulties in changing the culture of in organisations and businesses and queried if there were any objectives for the senior leadership team to drive forward cultural change needed.

The Chief Operating Officer acknowledged the importance of changing the culture and that he was appointed to lead a One Council approach referred to earlier and provide the level of challenge needed to achieve this. The success of new projects listed in the report were highlighted as good examples of this approach in offering challenge at the early stage and asking if this could be done in a way to have a more positive impact on climate change goals.

A panel member queried the costs involved in switching to alternative fuels, the value for money considerations and the capital costs of making major changes to fleet vehicles were requested.

The Chief Operating Officer reassured the panel that the funding for different projects is being achieved within existing budgets but accepted that other future schemes may well have significant potential budget and capital revenue implications. The funding for these projects will be built into the budgets going forward and will be presented as part of the budget setting process in February 2024 for Councillors to consider.

A panel member commented on future budget challenges which will make harder to achieve the climate change goals.

The Chief Operating Officer acknowledged that there will be a need for additional funding and the Council will be looking to maximise opportunities from central government to secure funds to support this. The Chief Operating Officer commented that with reference to changing fleet vehicles to use HVO (Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil) that the challenge was the affordability and availability of electric vehicles which is leading to lengthy waits.

The Head of Green City and Circular Economy reassured the panel that no mechanical changes were needed to vehicles as the HVO is a drop-in replacement so there is no other cost to the Council than the fuel used. There are no additional costs related to the vehicle fleet because of this change.

The panel discussed the wider impact and additional costs to the Council and residents of adapting to meet climate change targets and the possibility of grants to help meet the costs. The issue will be discussed at future meeting of the panel.

A panel member commented on the Government Net Zero Target of 2050 and queried the rationale for the Council setting a target of 2028 to achieve this while other local authorities used for comparison in the report have set a target of 2030. There was concern about setting this target date without having details about the full costs involved. The report refers to the challenges to achieving the Net Zero Target and there was concern these will add further costs.

A panel member queried if the internal audit review (March 2023) of the Council's climate change programme has been published and if so, a request was made for it be shared with the panel. There was concern expressed about the reference in the audit report following a review of progress which stated that some targets have not been achieved.

The Chief Operating Officer advised the panel that the decision to set the commitment to 2028 as target for Net Zero was made by Council in 2019 and the reasons were set out at the time.

The Chief Operating Officer confirmed that copies of the audit report can be shared with the panel.

The Chief Operating Officer acknowledged the issues about climate change related costs and the uncertainty about estimating future costs. The Chief Operating Officer commented on the impact of the volatility in the market for electric vehicles as an example of the challenge in finding cost effective and value for money solutions that will deliver the Council's commitment to achieve its Net Zero target. The Chief Operating Officer added that Wolverhampton is the first authority to undertake an audit review.

The Chair invited Cabinet Member to make a few closing comments on the report.

The Cabinet Member thanked the panel for the comments and stated his commitment to the Council reaching Net Zero target by the end of 2028. The Cabinet Member commented on his commitment to openness and transparency in decision making, highlighting the decision when appointed Chair of Climate Advisory Group to ensure minutes of the meeting were published. The Cabinet Member was happy to meet with panel members to talk about ideas that support progress towards reaching the Net Zero target.

Resolved:

The Panel agreed to receive a progress report on the Net Zero Action Plan in October 2024.

4 **Fly Tipping Update**

The Chair invited Craig Collingswood, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change, to make some introductory remarks. The Cabinet Member commented that the issue of fly tipping is a key concern of residents based on the number of complaints received. The issue of fly tipping is an endemic problem nationally. The Cabinet Member commented that the approach taken in response to this has been to develop innovative solutions and achieve the best that can be done with the resources available.

The Cabinet Member offered the panel reassurance that he and the members of the team area are doing everything possible to develop innovative solutions across the City which will be outlined in the presentation.

The Chair invited John Roseblade, Director of Resident Services, to make some comments. The Director acknowledged that the issue of fly-tipping is high in the casework of Councillors and welcomed the opportunity to bring the issue to the panel talk about the work being done to think differently to find solutions based on use of good local intelligence in how resources are used.

The Chair invited Steve Woodward, Head of Environmental Services, and Claire Walters, Edwards Environmental Place Based Development Manager, Liz Grimshaw, Environmental Project Manager and Thomas Hawkins, Section Leader: Fly Tipping to give their presentation.

The Head of Environmental Services that colleagues would be presenting different sections within their areas of responsibility.

The Head of Environmental Services commented that the issue of fly tipping as stated by the Cabinet Member is a national issue, but the report will set out the positive measures being taken to combat the issue in Wolverhampton.

The Head of Environmental Services outlined the main headlines to provide an overview of the current situation. The Head of Environmental Services commented that the issue of fly tipping remains a constant challenge and that is an ever-evolving issue that the service is working to deal with. The Head of Environmental Services reassured the panel that progress is being made to deal with issues about fly tipping reported by councillors and the public.

Claire Walters, Environmental Place Based Development Manager, gave an overview of the Shop a Tipper project.

The Environmental Place Based Development Manager commented that the approach of the project is evidence based.

There is also a recognition that because Wolverhampton is a very diverse city it is important to better understand the reasons why someone would fly tip in an area and develop the right local interventions to respond to the issue.

The Environmental Place Based Development Manager commented that in trying to understand why people fly tip, three groups were identified:

- people who do not know what they are doing is wrong in terms of leaving rubbish outside of their home for the Council to collect.
- people who can't dispose of their waste correctly because landlords of Houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) are not giving them the opportunity to do the right thing.
- residents who just won't do the right thing and know what they are doing is wrong.

The Environmental Place Based Development Manager highlighted the importance of using the right interventions to support people in each the groups, while acknowledging that different methods will be used at the ward level, and in some situations a different street by street approach will be needed.

The Environmental Place Based Development Manager commented that 70 percent fly tipping incidents across the city consists of bagged domestic waste and explained the difficulty of getting prosecutions or fines for people fly tipping due level of evidence needed. The importance of the public in reporting incidents of people fly tipping was highlighted.

Liz Grimshaw, Environmental Project Manager, gave further details about three stages of the Shop a Tipper Project

Stage 1 – education – for example, a letter is sent to all residents and businesses identified as having a persistent issue with fly-tipping.

Stage 2 – intervention – for example, CCTV is installed.

Stage 3 – enforcement – for example, captured images are passed to the Council's enforcement team.

The Environmental Project Manager commented on how enforcement officers use reports from the public via the Love Clean Street app is used to log reports on the Confirm Connect system, which is monitored by Operational Managers.

The Environmental Project Manager commented on results from Phase 1 of the Shop a Tipper project and highlighting key successes and the positive feedback reported in resident survey about the approach of the Council to fly tipping incidents.

The Environmental Project Manager commented on the new developments for Phase 2 of the Shop a Tipper project. In this stage of the project, it will assess if the impact is not simply displacing the fly tipping issue from one street to another.

The Environmental Project Manager added that nearly 70 per cent of fly-tipping in the city consists of bagged waste and that these incidents will be mapped against bin collection dates to consider if work is needed to provide education on waste disposal.

Thomas Hawkins, Section Leader: Fly Tipping gave details about the impact of the introduction of four new SMART CCTVs which also use AI to identify when fly tipping is happening to capture it and alert us to enable a quick response and increasing the Council's evidence gathering capability.

The Section Leader commented on the advantages of the new system compared to the current camera technology.

The Environmental Place Based Development Manager commented on the reconfiguration of roles within the environmental crime team, from November 2023. The changes led to the creation of two full time dedicated resources in the Environmental Crime team to address and enforce against action against fly tipping.

The Section Leader commented on the approach to addressing issues relating to fly tipping and the specific action be taken now and in the future.

The Section Leader commented that the introduction of extra cameras to the project will enable more fines for fly-tipping to be issued. The Government has introduced a change to allow increases in maximum fine limits for fly-tipping from £400 up to £1000. The Section Leader commented that a sliding scale of fines would allow the team to deal with more cases by issuing fixed penalties rather than taking the matter to court to seek a higher fine and help to ease workload pressures on the Environmental Crime team.

The Section Leader commented on the importance of education and the introduction of QR codes in information leaflets sent to residents. The QR code link provides information on waste disposal in different languages and other help. In addition, where fly tipping incidents occur on land where the ownership is not clear then consideration will be given to fencing the area to provide a barrier to further incidents.

The panel were invited to comment on the presentation.

A panel member congratulated the presenters on the excellent performance of the report and highlighted the Love Clean Street app which allows incidents to be reported easily. There have been reports however from the public who have had problems using the app and suggested that this issue should be investigated.

A panel queried the number of people who have paid fines for fly-tipping and if the level of fines was set at level to have the necessary effect of deterring landlords and businesses from fly tipping. The suggestion of having a special day where a skip was provided to allow people to get rid of their rubbish and large white goods items and residents offered help by the Council. The service could be promoted by flyers.

The Director thanked the panel member for the positive comments about the service.

The Director commented in response to the idea of the Council providing a collection skip for residents that there is a difference between someone who cannot afford the cost of transporting rubbish to the special site and someone who does not know how to do dispose of the rubbish properly which presents a challenge to the service.

The Director advised the panel the approach to issuing of fines is do so when it is proportionate and appropriate to do so.

The Director commented about the use CCTV in hot spot areas for fly tipping such as orphan or private site and other work to protect sites at risk. The Director added that the Council will work with landowners to remove rubbish from derelict sites, especially in prominent areas with high footfall and highlighted the importance of giving a good first impression of the city. There is more work to be done to deal with issue involving private landowners in a more holistic way, for example, introducing service level agreements where rubbish will be removed from private land and issues of responsibility will be resolved later.

The Environmental Place Based Development Manager agreed to contact customer services about the issues with Love Clean Street app and report back to the panel.

The Environmental Place Based Development Manager commented that there is a risk when providing a skip for residents it will reinforce the message that you can dump rubbish anywhere and the Council will remove it for free and encourage poor behaviour. A better approach suggested is working with colleagues in Public Health to identify specific areas and offer support and education people to encourage people to do the right thing.

The Environmental Place Based Development Manager commented that payments for FPN fines and Court costs are sent to Council. The money from issuing fines is used to invest in developments such as smart cameras and target hardening on orphan land to avoid having to spend money on cleaning the area when litter is blown onto the site.

A panel commented on the issue of fly tipping involving commercial offenders and queried the approach to managing litter from larger commercial public events.

The Section Leader: Fly Tipping reassured the panel as regards issuing fines that where the Council get information and evidence, involving a business or resident then action will be taken. The Section Leader added that the Council works closely with neighbouring authorities to tackle issues of cross border fly tipping incidents.

The Section Leader suggested that the maximum £400 fixed penalty notice may be adequate for a one-off offence but incidents involving commercial companies dumping large amounts of waste collected for fee then more severe penalties should be available, such as seizing vehicles.

A panel member raised concerns about domestic and commercial waste being dumped in the ward. The issue of the high turnover of tenants in HMOs was highlighted as a challenge to the Council when dealing with repeated requests for replacement bins.

The suggestion of offering business more attractive trade waste collection service was proposed as a possible solution that should be considered. The issue of contaminated trade waste bins and fly tipping around bins was highlighted.

A panel member suggested information on refuse collection could added as a sticker to bins to help new tenants in HMOs whose first language is not English as an alternative to the Love Clean Streets app.

The Environmental Place Based Development Manager commented on the challenges in educating residents in HMOs when the turnover is so high and would mean offering support to different people on a regular basis. An alternative approach is based on the idea that tenants may change but the bins for the property will stay the same. There is work being done to develop a QR Code that will be added to a sticker and placed on the bins for HMO properties. The link would allow the tenant to scan the code and choose the language required which will give information on refuse collection and advice on how refuse waste can be disposed. The service is working with private sector housing providers and the idea of including in the proposed selective licensing conditions a requirement to provide adequate means for people to get rid of their waste.

The Environmental Place Based Development Manager acknowledged businesses are free to choose who and the amount they pay companies for trade waste collection services, which the Council has no control over. The Council has an excellent commercial waste collection business and continues to develop different projects and pilot initiatives to try and address the concerns highlighted.

A panel member welcomed the plans to purchase new CCTV cameras and commented on the critical role in dealing with fly tipping, particularly on private land.

A panel member commented on the recent decision by South Staffordshire Council to increase the level of fixed penalty fines to £1000 and suggested that the Council should follow this change. There was concern that the people living in South Staffordshire may be more willing to fly tip in Wolverhampton and an increase in the maximum would also send an important message to the public.

The Environmental Place Based Development Manager commented that the need to carefully consider the policy implications of increasing the maximum fine, highlighting the situation where a fine is not paid would involve further court action.

There was also concern about the deterrent effect of a higher maximum fine on commercial operators and the impact for individuals and whether they would be able to pay the higher fee. The current maximum fee level of £400 was considered to be a deterrent. The Environmental Place Based Development Manager reassured the panel about wanting to take the appropriate enforcement action.

The Cabinet Member commented that he was very proud of the work done since his appointment to make the issue of tackling fly tipping a priority and hoped that the panel has seen this evening examples of how innovation and intelligence is being used to improve the situation. The success of the prosecutions because of Shop a Tipper campaign was highlighted and the service will continue to be proactive in media and promotional material.

The Cabinet Member welcomed the positive comments from panel members about the work being done to tackle the issue of fly tipping and agreed to consider further the ideas suggested during the meeting.

The panel discussed the merits of the recommendation to Cabinet to consider the increasing the maximum level of FPN fines for fly tipping from £400 to £1,000.

There was agreement about need for a decision about any proposed increase in the maximum fine to be proportionate and also consider the individual's financial circumstances.

Resolved:

The panel recommendations to the Cabinet Member to consider.

1. To avoid duplication of waste collection services between the Council and Wolverhampton Homes that the service provided by Wolverhampton Homes should be brought back in-house.
2. Further work to improve the fly tipping collection service that will address issues highlighted by the panel during the meeting.
3. The introduction of an upper limit of £1000 maximum for fly tipping, but it should be proportionate and consider a person's financial circumstances.
4. The Council's bulky item collection service should be promoted further on the Council website and the material should also be available in written form.

5 **Climate Change, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Panel draft work programme 2023 – 2024**

The Chair invited Martin Stevens (DL) Scrutiny Officer to present the report.

The Scrutiny Officer gave a brief overview of future items on the panel work programme.

The panel were invited to comment on the draft work programme.

Resolved:

The panel agreed to note the report.

Performance, Budget and MTFS

Climate Change, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Panel
16 November 2023

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Agenda Item No: 6

Introduction

Budget Scrutiny for

- Background
- Draft Budget 2024-2025 and Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Our City Our Plan Performance
- Future Challenges
- Strategic Risk Register

Background

- This presentation provides an update on the budget position and the draft budget for 2024-2025.
- Scrutiny are asked to:
 - consider and comment on the draft budget and how it is aligned to priorities of the Council
 - Provide feedback to Scrutiny Board for consolidation and onward response to Cabinet on the Draft Budget 2024-2025 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy

Draft Budget 2024-2025 and MTFS Overview

Overview

- The 2023-2024 budget and MTFs was approved by Full Council on 1 March 2023
- Reported a forecast budget deficit of £16.4 million in 2024-2025 rising to £23.1 million over the medium term to 2025-2026.
- Work has been ongoing to reduce the deficit with an update to Cabinet on 18 October 2023 reporting an updated forecast budget deficit of £2.6 million for 2024-2025 rising to estimated £22.0 million by 2025-2026.
- Work will continue to be undertaken to bring forward proposals to set a balanced budget for 2024-2025 and deliver a sustainable medium term financial strategy

2023-2024 Draft Budget and MTFS 2023-2024 to 2025-2026 Overview

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| Scrutiny Panel | 2023-2024 Gross Expenditure Budget £000 | 2023-2024 Gross Income Budget £000 | 2023-2024 Net Revenue Expenditure/ (Income) Budget £000 | Pay Related growth* £000 | Growth 2024-2025 £000 | Savings 2024-2025 £000 | 2024-2025 Draft Net Revenue Expenditure / (Income) Budget £000 |
|--|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Economy and Growth Scrutiny Panel | 17,430 | (10,946) | 6,484 | - | - | - | 6,484 |
| Health Scrutiny Panel | 30,993 | (29,897) | 1,096 | - | (360) | - | 736 |
| Resources and Equality Scrutiny Panel | 225,199 | (114,244) | 110,955 | 10,645 | (4,674) | 4,423 | 121,349 |
| Climate Change, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Panel | 88,320 | (49,485) | 38,835 | - | 15 | (1,000) | 37,850 |
| Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel | 262,674 | (209,208) | 53,466 | - | 1,000 | - | 54,466 |
| Adults Scrutiny Panel | 139,025 | (43,447) | 95,578 | - | 11,699 | - | 107,277 |
| Net Budget Requirement | 763,641 | (457,227) | 306,414 | 10,645 | 7,680 | 3,423 | 328,162 |
| Corporate Resources | | | (306,414) | | (19,154) | | (325,568) |
| Budget Challenge as at 18 October 2023 | | | | | | | 2,594 |

- Draft revised budget for 2023-2024 does not reflect passing out 2023-2024 pay award. This is held corporately. The 2023-2024 pay award was approved on 1 November and budgets will be passed out to services over the next few months
- * Pay related growth currently held corporately – includes provision for a 3% pay award

Overview – Uncertainties

- There continues to be significant uncertainty around
 - Future funding
 - Inflationary pressures
 - Demand for services
 - Future pay awards – currently assumes 3% in 2024-2025 and 2% for future years

Climate Change, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Panel

Draft budget 2024-2025 and MTFS

Draft Budget

| Service | 2023-2024 | 2023-2024 | 2023-2024 | Pay Related growth | Growth | Savings | 2024-2025 Draft |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--|--------------------|-----------|-----------|---|
| | Gross Expenditure Budget | Gross Income Budget | Net Revenue Expenditure/ (Income) Budget | | 2024-2025 | 2024-2025 | Net Revenue Expenditure / (Income) Budget |
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| Bereavement Services | 1,741 | (3,872) | (2,131) | - | - | - | (2,131) |
| Black Country Transport | 546 | (546) | - | - | - | - | - |
| Coroners Service | 448 | - | 448 | - | - | - | 448 |
| Director Resident Services | 207 | - | 207 | - | - | - | 207 |
| Environmental Services | 7,629 | (759) | 6,870 | - | 350 | - | 7,220 |
| Fleet Services | 3,474 | (1,210) | 2,264 | - | - | - | 2,264 |
| Green Cities and Circular Economy | 413 | (172) | 241 | - | - | - | 241 |
| Highways Maintenance | 2,407 | (778) | 1,629 | - | - | - | 1,629 |
| Housing | 2,007 | (2,388) | (381) | - | - | - | (381) |
| Landscaping | 240 | (188) | 52 | - | - | - | 52 |
| Licensing | 7,566 | (7,494) | 72 | - | - | - | 72 |
| Markets | 1,812 | (1,963) | (151) | - | - | - | (151) |

Corporate

- draft revised budget after reversal of one-off virements
- The 2023-2024 pay award was approved on 1 November and is currently held corporately -
- The forecast impact of the 2024-2025 pay related growth –increments, NI and potential pay award is also held corporately. Current working assumptions make provision for a pay award of 3%
- At this point in time some growth and savings are provisionally being held in Corporate Accounts and will allocated when services have identified where it needs to be reflected.

Draft Budget

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| Service | 2023-2024 Gross Expenditure Budget £000 | 2023-2024 Gross Income Budget £000 | 2023-2024 Net Revenue Expenditure/ (Income) Budget £000 | Pay Related growth £000 | Growth 2024-2025 £000 | Savings 2024-2025 £000 | 2024-2025 Draft Net Revenue Expenditure / (Income) Budget £000 |
|---|---|--|--|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Operation & Maintenance of Existing Network | 3,392 | (2,750) | 642 | - | - | - | 642 |
| Parking Services | 2,286 | (3,938) | (1,652) | - | (300) | - | (1,952) |
| Private Sector Housing | 855 | (294) | 561 | - | - | - | 561 |
| Public Protection | 2,339 | (412) | 1,927 | - | - | - | 1,927 |
| Street Lighting | 5,198 | (73) | 5,125 | - | - | - | 5,125 |
| Transportation | 1,319 | (571) | 748 | - | - | - | 748 |
| Travel Unit | 8,596 | (2,215) | 6,381 | - | - | - | 6,381 |
| Waste Services | 21,906 | (10,141) | 11,765 | - | - | (1,000) | 10,765 |
| Community Safety & Community Cohesion | 4,231 | (3,458) | 773 | - | - | - | 773 |
| Homelessness and New Communities | 7,327 | (4,735) | 2,592 | - | - | - | 2,592 |
| City Planning | 2,381 | (1,528) | 853 | - | (35) | - | 818 |
| Total | 88,320 | (49,485) | 38,835 | - | 15 | (1,000) | 37,850 |

- draft revised budget after reversal of one-off virements
- The 2023-2024 pay award was approved on 1 November and is currently held corporately -
- The forecast impact of the 2024-2025 pay related growth –increments, NI and potential pay award is also held corporately. Current working assumptions make provision for a pay award of 3%
- At this point in time some growth and savings are provisionally being held in Corporate Accounts and will allocated when services have identified where it needs to be reflected.

Draft Budget

- Budget setting process is still under way. The Draft Budget is subject to changes that are implemented to close the current deficit for 2024-2025.
- The budget and MTFS includes efficiency targets which are held corporately. The target for 2023-2024 is £6.2 million which has been allocated and the recurrent savings totalling £2 million are reflected in the appropriate service areas. £4.2 million is one off in nature and work is ongoing to allocate this across service areas.
- In addition, the current working assumptions include an additional £2.6 million for 2024-2025. Work is ongoing to allocate this target before the beginning of the financial year.
- The Draft Budget currently does not yet reflect any virements between services in 2024-2025.
- Work is ongoing to review and challenge budget requirements

Our City Our Plan Performance

Performance Overview

Good homes in well-connected neighborhoods

There are 15 indicators in 'Good Homes in Well-Connected Neighbourhoods' which cover housing, planning and city environment. These indicators measure performance the services the council provides to residents to ensure we are meeting timescales and providing the best service possible.

Notable increases in performance have been seen in carriageways being assessed as high quality, housing affordability, timeliness of major planning applications and trees being serviced in the city (the highest percentage since reporting began).

Some areas where we have seen decreases in performance are non-major planning application decisions (within 8 weeks) , which have dropped slightly this quarter to 85% however above the 70% target set by DLUHC. There has also been a decrease in new builds, however an increase in net additional dwellings was seen in the last year. A slight reduction in the percentage of fly tipping incidents resolved in 5 working days was seen in the quarter linked to a case management system outage however performance remains above 95%.

Performance Overview

Good homes in well-connected neighborhoods

| Number of indicators | Number showing improved or sustained performance | Number showing decreased performance | Number with no update |
|----------------------|--|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 15 | 7 | 4 | 4 |

Decreased performance

% of planning application decisions made with 8 weeks or agreed timescales

% fly tipping incidents resolved in 5 working days

Number of new builds completed in the city

Total crime recorded per 1000 population

No update in YTD

% of carriageways in city assessed as high quality - Unclassified Road

Net additional dwellings in the city

% of dwelling stock that is vacant in the city

Energy efficiency of housing stock

Performance Overview

Good homes in well-connected neighborhoods

| Indicator | Source | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 - Latest | Latest SN Rate | Latest WM Rate | Latest WLV Rank | Latest WLV Quartile | Next Quartile Target | DoT |
|--|-----------|------|------|------|---------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----|
| Number of new builds completed in the city | DCLG | 570 | 740 | 530 | 160 | 464 | 3650 | 122 | D | 200 | |
| Net additional dwellings in the city | DCLG | 818 | 614 | 1315 | no update | 654 | 8503 | 124 | D | 707 | |
| Housing affordability ratio | DCLG | 6.35 | 6.36 | 6.26 | 6.06 | 5.96 | 7.9 | 272 (1=worst) | A | 5.2 | |
| % of dwelling stock that is vacant in the city | LG inform | 3.1 | 3.1 | 2.9 | no update | 2.7% | 2.5 | 83 | D | 2.8% | |
| Energy efficiency of housing stock | ONS | N/A | 65 | 65 | no update | 66.3 | 66.2 | 264 | D | 69 | |
| Total crime recorded per 1000 population | ONS | 95 | 101 | 132 | 133 | 124.1 | 126 | 31 (1=worst) | D | 95 | |

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| Indicator | Source | Jun-22 | Sep-22 | Dec-22 | Mar-23 | Jun-23 | Sep-23 | DoT |
|---|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----|
| % of carriageways in city assessed as high quality - A Road | CONFIRM | 78% | 78% | 79% | 79% | 81% | 81% | |
| % of carriageways in city assessed as high quality - B Road | CONFIRM | 72% | 72% | 73% | 73% | 75% | 75% | |
| % of carriageways in city assessed as high quality - C Road | CONFIRM | 73% | 74% | 79% | 79% | 82% | 82% | |
| % of carriageways in city assessed as high quality - Unclassified Road | CONFIRM | 64% | 65% | 66% | 67% | N/A | N/A | |
| % of planning application decisions made with 13 weeks or agreed timescales | IDOX | 82% | 100% | 82% | 100% | 100% | 100% | |
| % of planning application decisions made with 8 weeks or agreed timescales | IDOX | 67% | 70% | 79% | 87% | 92% | 85% | |
| % fly tipping incidents resolved in 5 working days | CONFIRM | 98.0% | 97.0% | 95.0% | 99.5% | 97.4% | 94.9% | |
| Number of homeless families moved into secure housing | NEC | 68 | 72 | 113 | 107 | 66 | 82 | |
| % of trees on public land serviced every two years | CONFIRM | 67.00% | 68.00% | 69.50% | 74.00% | 79.97% | 88.00% | |

Risks / Key areas to note

Homelessness and New Communities

- Increased demand in relation to temporary and supported accommodation seen as a result of a number of factors including an increase in the cost of living, increase in people being evicted from the private sector and increased number of families being asked to leave due to relationship breakdowns. The service is focusing on preventative action where possible to reduce this pressure and also looking at expanding council owned temporary accommodation by bringing back into use some empty properties to mitigate the budget risk.

Environmental Services

- Risks to the Environmental Services budgets are from increased demand, scope and costs in a number of services in relation to requirements for traffic management, equipment and materials for additional works, fuel, insurance and security costs.

Fleet Services

- Risks to the Fleet budget are arising from increased demand and costs attributable to vehicle hire, increased vehicle maintenance costs of existing fleet, whilst lead times to procure and take delivery of replacement vehicles remains an issue.

Highways Maintenance

- Increased demand in relation to gully sweeping, planned and reactive maintenance requirements are resulting in budgetary risk from the costs of service provision.

Risks / Key areas to note

Operation and Maintenance of Existing Network

- Risks to the Operation and Maintenance of Existing Network budgets are arising from increased demand and inflationary costs associated with provision of Network Management, Condition Surveys, IT systems and Traffic Signals equipment repairs and maintenance.

Parking Services

- Risks associated with ongoing pressures on parking income targets and levels of enforcement activity, post covid remain an issue as the service continues to look at ways to mitigate against this.

Travel Unit

- Ongoing risks to the Travel Unit budget are primarily due to increased demand for services of Home to School Transport, the associated costs for travel assistants, vehicle hire costs and/or contractor costs. The Travel Unit intensely work to achieve the most cost efficient options for service provision and work remains ongoing to increase the offer of independent travel training where appropriate.

Waste Services

- Risks to Waste Services budgets arise from increasing costs of fuel, utilities, security, repairs and maintenance and volatility of markets for waste disposal income or expenditure.

Earmarked Reserves

- Full list of Earmarked Reserves balances of all reserves at the end of 2022-2023 financial year were last reported to Cabinet on 12 July 2023 which can be access from:

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[Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 12th July, 2023, 5.00 pm :: Wolverhampton City Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

- Forecast Reserves balances for 2023-2024 will be going to Resources and Equality Scrutiny Panel on 7 December 2023.

Strategic Risk Register

- Risks last reported to the Cabinet on 15 November 2022.
- The following strategic risk relevant to this panel:
 - Climate Change
 - Private hire vehicle growth
 - Housing regulator (damp and mould)
 - Negative assessment against the Consumer Standards – Social Housing (Regulation) Act
 - Housing Supply
 - Housing Standards
- Strategic Risk register is available at:
- <https://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s256782/Appendix%206-%20Strategic%20Risk%20Register.pdf>

wolverhampton.gov.uk

Briefing Note

Title: ASB Hotspot Pilot

Date: 10 October 2023

Intended Audience:

Internal

Partner organisation

Public

Confidential

Purpose

To outline arrangements for implementation of the anti-social behaviour pilot in Wolverhampton.

Background

As part of it's rollout of a national anti-social behaviour action plan, the Home Office have allocated the West Midlands £2.0 million over two years to increase the presence of authority figures within areas identified as suffering disproportionately from ASB. This funding has been allocated to the Office of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner.

The West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner has allocated the funding to local authority areas based on the existing community safety funding formula. As a result, Wolverhampton has been allocated £100,000 for 2023-2024.

The Police and Crime Commissioner will directly utilise 50% of the funding allocated to increase the presence of police officers and PCSOs within the hotspot locations. The additional 50% has been allocated to local community safety partnerships to determine wider spend locally. As a result Safer Wolverhampton Partnership has been allocated £50,000 for 2023-2024.

Wolverhampton Pilot Areas

In allocating the funding the Police and Crime Commissioner stipulated that there must be evidence that the target areas for intervention suffer disproportionately from ASB. A multi-agency group (including colleagues from community safety, public protection, West Midlands Police and the anti-social behaviour team) met to review data and identified the following priority areas:

- A. Warstones
- B. Bentley Bridge/ Heath Town corridor
- C. The Scotlands

Delivery of Activity

Additional police patrols within the identified area will be directly funded by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Safer Wolverhampton Partnership has been allocated an additional £50,000 per year to ensure wider presence within these areas.

The project group recognised that in order to address anti-social behaviour a flexible approach is important and will seek to divert offenders to diversionary activity wherever possible, using enforcement only where necessary. Therefore, PCSO's and youth workers will initially seek to increase engagement within the hotspot areas to build trust within communities and understand the issues at local level.

Given the links between young people and anti-social behaviour in all hot spot areas it is proposed that additional authority figures will be placed in the areas during peak times (after school and weekends). Authority figures will be largely made up of PCSOs and youth workers. The increased presence will act as a deterrent to the ASB and also give the opportunity for enhanced engagement with the young people involved who will be directed to existing diversionary activity within the city.

Where young people persistently continue to engage in ASB local schools will be engaged via the police and schools panel in order to identify the young people and offer additional support through schools. Parents will also be written to inform them of the young people's behaviour. Only where necessary, enforcement options will be utilised, and young people will be directed to the Turnaround programme as an alternative to criminalisation.

In addition to the additional authority figures outlined within this report, Wolverhampton Homes ASB Team will support patrols in hot spot areas and in areas where environmental ASB is a concern there will be additional presence from the Local Authority contracted enforcement team who will be able to offer additional deterrence and enforcement around environmental issues such as fly-tipping and littering.

Mobilisation of additional police patrols will begin in September 2023 and youth work will commence in the selected areas from 16th October 2023.

Funding will be allocated to existing youth work providers to deliver youth outreach and street-based work via grant agreements. City of Wolverhampton Council has an existing contract with WISE to deliver additional presence and enforcement around environmental ASB.

The pilot will be subject to evaluation to identify effectiveness and if successful opportunities will be sought to upscale activity within other areas of the City.

Briefing Note

Title: Anti-Social Behaviour

Date: 07.11.2023

Intended Audience:

Internal

Partner organisation

Public

Confidential

Purpose or recommendation

To provide an overview of the approach to addressing anti-social behaviour (ASB) in Wolverhampton.

Definition

The ASB, Crime & Policing Act 2014 defines ASB as:

“Conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person; conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person’s occupation of residential premises; or conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person”.

This broad definition means that a wide range of behaviours can be considered ASB, including neighbour disputes, street drinking, aggressive begging, intimidating behaviour, environmental issues and nuisance vehicles. Due to the scope of the definition, there are a number of different mechanisms utilised to respond to ASB, depending on the behaviour to be addressed.

The definition also means that what is considered ASB can, to some extent, be subjective. This is because residents’ thresholds for what they consider to be ‘annoyance’ will likely significantly differ. For this reason, when addressing ASB it is important to be proportionate in responses and also ensure that any action is supported by activity to increase community cohesion and tolerance where necessary.

Wolverhampton Approach

Wolverhampton is committed to embedding a partnership response to preventing and reducing ASB in the City. Vital to this approach is ensuring that intervention activity is data driven and informed by the needs of our communities. Therefore, partnerships regularly share data and information relating to ASB, trends, patterns and areas of concern.

There are various services and agencies working to address incidents of ASB in Wolverhampton. These agencies work in partnership to ensure that the most effective response to ASB is utilised, including tools and powers from the ASB, Crime and Policing Act (2014).

In addition to dealing with individual cases, partnership work takes place across the city to address high demand perpetrators, locations and themes around ASB and provide activity to prevent ASB from occurring.

Enforcement

Depending on the nature of ASB, there are various enforcement mechanisms which can be utilised to manage the behaviour of perpetrators – this may include community protection warnings, community protection notices or criminal prosecution.

The table below summarises key enforcement activity across the partnership.

| | City of Wolverhampton Council | West Midlands Police | Wolverhampton Homes |
|--|-------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Anti-Social Behaviour Injunctions | X | X | X |
| Criminal Behaviour Orders | | X | |
| Closure Notices & Orders | X | X | X |
| Community Protection Warnings & Notices | X | X | |
| Public Space Protection Orders | X | | |
| Anti-social behaviour case reviews | X | | |
| Wider enforcement around ASB related issues (i.e., fly tipping & statutory nuisance) | X | | |
| Additional crime linked to ASB (i.e., harassment, hate crime etc.) | | X | |

Support for Victims

As well as enforcement action there are a number of mechanisms to directly support victims of ASB in Wolverhampton:

- The locally funded **ASB team** support victims of ASB. The ASB team will either provide advice at the first point of contact or refer the matter to an officer or the Tenancy Management team for investigation. They will also signpost to any other organisations who may be able to assist.
- **Mediation services** are available in Wolverhampton when this may be an appropriate response to resolve or reduce ASB. Mediation helps people to better understand the nature and the causes of a conflict and empower them to manage it and generate peaceful resolution. It is a powerful alternative dispute resolution (ADR) process that uniquely allows people to remain in control in difficult situations and to contribute to their own agreements, improving the circumstances of everyone involved.
- **West Midlands Police** can offer support to victims of ASB. They identify the level of risk (using THRIVE+). A contact plan will then be developed to identify next steps. Depending

on the nature of the case this may include visits, partnership response or a referral to other agencies. Victims will be updated regarding any action taken and every contact with a victim will generate a new THRIVE+ plan.

- **Victim Support** are funded in Wolverhampton to support victims of ASB as well as crime. Victim Support will provide victims with a range of support including advice and guidance, longer term emotional and practical support, personal safety services and advocacy.

Preventative Activity

As well as utilising enforcement and providing support for victims of anti-social behaviour, a range of prevention activity also takes place across the city. Much of this activity is a result of proactive partnership work to attract funding to the city and successful funding bids.

- City of Wolverhampton Council commission **city wide detached youth work** to engage with young people within the city, this is enhanced by Safer Wolverhampton Partnership who commission targeted outreach – the aim of which is to engage and support young people and communities vulnerable to becoming a victim or perpetrator of crime, exploitation and/or ASB.
- Wolverhampton's Youth Offending Team is taking part in the **Turnaround** youth early intervention programme led by the Ministry of Justice. It aims to improve outcomes for children and young people who do not currently meet the threshold for statutory support but who may still be at risk of youth offending. This includes young people who may have come to the attention of authorities for ASB.
- **Step together** is a programme funded by the Violence Reduction Partnership in Wolverhampton which is a school chaperone service. This initiative sees youth workers deployed in targeted areas when young people are leaving school to prevent anti-social behaviour, ensure that young people get home safely and positively engage young people.
- Wolverhampton Local Policing Authority have invested in four **Early Help Officers** in Wolverhampton who are allocated to complete targeted work within primary schools to really focus on supporting children of primary school age within school settings as well as within the home and collaboratively with the Strengthening Family Hubs. Alongside these officers are five **School Intervention and Prevention Officers**, who are allocated to complete targeted work within secondary schools, PRU's, colleges, alternative provisions, special education settings, as well as supporting young people of that target age range outside of school, within the home and collaboratively with the Strengthening Family Hubs and key partners.
- **DIVERT** is a joint endeavour to promote the diversion of young people away from the criminal justice system using a Joint Decision-Making Panel. The panel aims to provide a

multi-agency process to agree appropriate outcomes for referred young people. It allows for a holistic assessment of young people's needs and the delivery of tailored interventions that promote positive opportunities as well as effectively preventing reoffending. Wolverhampton are the first in the region to implement this approach to diversion. To this end it is truly innovative and embedding the core principles of Child First Offender Second, whilst ensuring the victim voices are heard throughout the process.

- **Anti- Social Behaviour Pilot/ Op Eternity** is home office funded and provides additional investment to increase the presence of 'authority figures' within areas disproportionately affected by ASB.
- A successful bid was submitted in partnership by Safer Wolverhampton Partnership and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to **Safer Streets round 4** to tackle increasing levels of ASB within Wolverhampton City Centre. The project received significant investment to increase the presence of police officers within the city, engage young people in positive activity, enhance the safe space provided within Wolverhampton City Centre on Friday and Saturday nights and engage with off-licenses to tackle street drinking.
- Wolverhampton has a significant **offer for young people during the school holidays**. This supports to engage young people in positive activity and prevent them becoming engaged in ASB. Activities are coordinated via a range of funding sources, including #YES, Holiday Activity fund (Department for Education), Safer Wolverhampton Partnership and the Violence Reduction Partnership.

Principles for Delivery - ASB Operational Group

The Home Office Anti-Social Behaviour Strategic Board has developed a set of national principles which seek to describe a consistent approach to understanding and addressing antisocial behaviour in local communities.

The principles are not intended to fetter local decision making but rather to act as a guide in seeking to deliver the best possible outcomes for victims of antisocial behaviour:

1. Victims should be encouraged to report antisocial behaviour and expect to be taken seriously. They should have clear ways to report, have access to help and support to recover, and be given the opportunity to choose restorative approaches to tackling antisocial behaviour.
2. Agencies will have clear and transparent processes to ensure that victims can report antisocial behaviour concerns, can understand how the matter will be investigated and are kept well informed of progress once a report is made.
3. Agencies and practitioners will work across boundaries to identify, assess and tackle antisocial behaviour and its underlying causes. Referral pathways should be clearly set out

between services and published locally. This includes pathways for the anti-social behaviour case review and health services.

4. The public's antisocial behaviour concerns should always be considered both nationally and locally in strategic needs assessments for community safety. Best practice should be shared through a network of antisocial behaviour experts within each community safety partnership, each policing area and nationally.
5. Adults and children who exhibit antisocial behaviour should have the opportunity to take responsibility for their behaviour and repair the harm caused by it. Agencies should deliver appropriate interventions, which may include criminal justice options, based on the seriousness, risks and vulnerabilities of the case.

A multi-agency operational group has been established within Wolverhampton to begin self-assessment against these principles and develop an action plan to ensure that local delivery is in line with best practice.

Members of the group include West Midlands Police; Community Safety; Landlord Services; Wolverhampton Homes; Wolverhampton Youth Offending Team; Public Protection team; Homelessness Team.

Key current activity of the group includes:

- Oversight of delivery and commissioning of key services, as outlined above. Multi-agency oversight ensures that activity is aligned and prevents duplication.
- Update of websites across the partnership to share consistent information about how to report ASB, what will happen when a report is made and how agencies work together to address and prevent ASB.
- Mapping of restorative justice approaches currently utilised within the city to ensure that pathways to such approaches are promoted and utilised by a wide range of professionals.
- Regularly reviewing data to identify hotspots, trends and themes. This contributes to proactively identify, assess and tackle ASB and its underlying causes.
- Increasing awareness of pathways to support across communities and a wide range of professionals within the City, particularly when ASB is driven by an underlying vulnerability i.e., Domestic abuse, alcohol or substance misuse or mental health conditions.

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An aerial photograph of a city at night, overlaid with a semi-transparent purple filter. The city lights are visible, and the overall scene is dominated by the purple hue. The text is centered over the image.

Anti-Social Behaviour

16 November 2023

Safer Wolverhampton Partnership - Board on a page

Role of the Board

Statutory Board established under the Crime and Disorder Act

Provide strong local leadership to reduce crime and disorder

Promote coordination in the planning, commissioning and delivery of services

Identify shared priorities and appropriately coordinate activity

Commitment to a partnership response to preventing and reducing crime and disorder

Key Responsibilities

Produce an annual assessment of crime and disorder within the local area

Publish and implement a **Strategy which sets out the partnership approach to addressing crime and disorder**

Provide a platform for residents to raise concerns and contribute to crime prevention

Oversight of response to specific duties, i.e. Serious Violence Duty and Domestic Abuse Act

Domestic Homicide reviews

Anti-social behaviour case reviews

Key workstreams

Serious Youth Violence

Modern slavery/ exploitation

Community engagement

Hate crime

Anti-social behaviour

Neighbourhood Crime

Vulnerability and repeat victimisation

Community cohesion

Domestic abuse

Safety of women and girls

Violence

Members

City of Wolverhampton Council
Community Safety, YOT, Children's Services, Adult safeguarding

Probation Service

Integrated Care Board

Resident representatives

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Violence Reduction Partnership

West Midlands Police

Fire Service

Voluntary sector

Our Approach



What is Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)?

The ASB, Crime & Policing Act 2014 defines ASB as:

“conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person; conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person’s occupation of residential premises; or conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person”

A number of issues may be considered ASB, making the response varied and complex:



Experience of ASB

What type of ASB is being experienced?

Tenancy/
housing related

Environmental

Public
Place

Criminal

Is the resident living in social housing?

Yes

Contact individual registered social landlord

Contact **City of Wolverhampton Council**

Via customer services or the Report it app

Customer Services
Customer.services@wolverhampton.gov.uk
01902 555554

Love Clean Streets (App)
[Wolverhampton REPORT IT - Log In](#)

Contact **Wolverhampton Homes ASB Team**
asbu@wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk
01902 551188

Contact **West Midlands Police**

Is anybody in immediate danger of significant harm?

Yes

Call 999

No

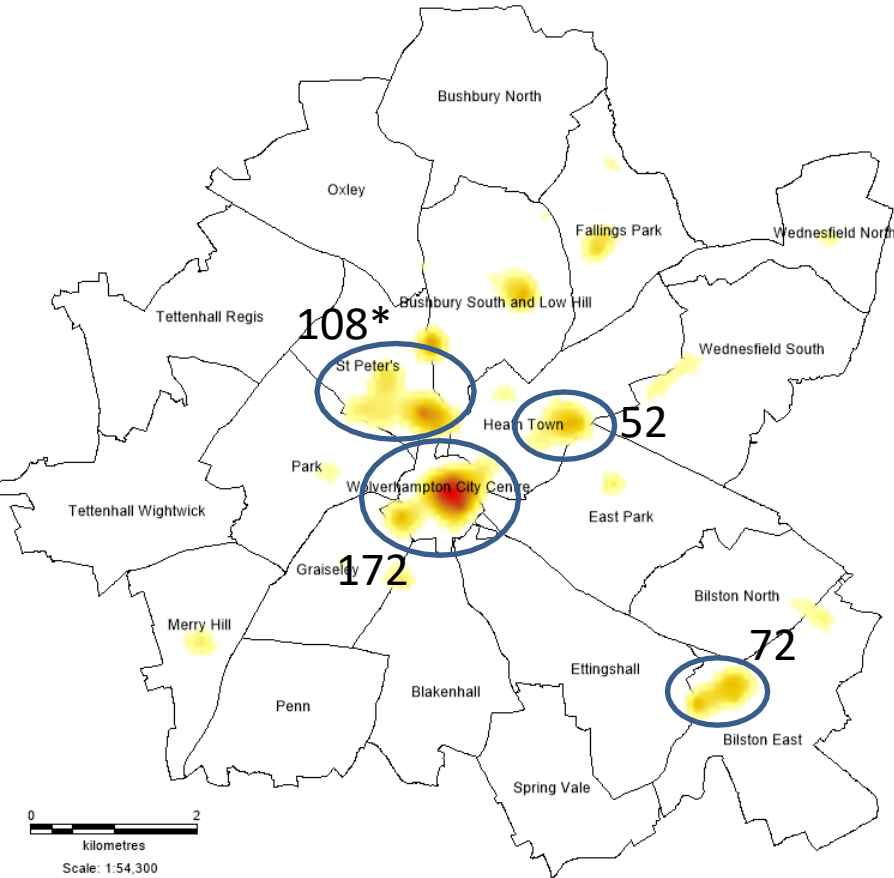
Call 101 or use the Live Chat function

Anti-Social Behaviour – Why Prioritise?

- **Key local concern** – is an issue consistently raised by residents and has a significant impact on public confidence;
- **Far reaching impact** – on individuals, the wider community, businesses and service delivery;
- **Requires a partnership response** – depending on the type of ASB delivery can be led by a number of agencies/ teams, it is therefore necessary to ensure that there is a coordinated city-wide response;
- **Addressing vulnerability and harm** – Often anti-social behaviour is linked to wider vulnerabilities (in both victims and offenders) and more far-reaching crime types;
- **Proportionality and legitimacy** – due to the wide range of behaviours which can be captured under the definition proportionality and legitimacy are vital to inform any enforcement response to ASB.

Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents

Page 65



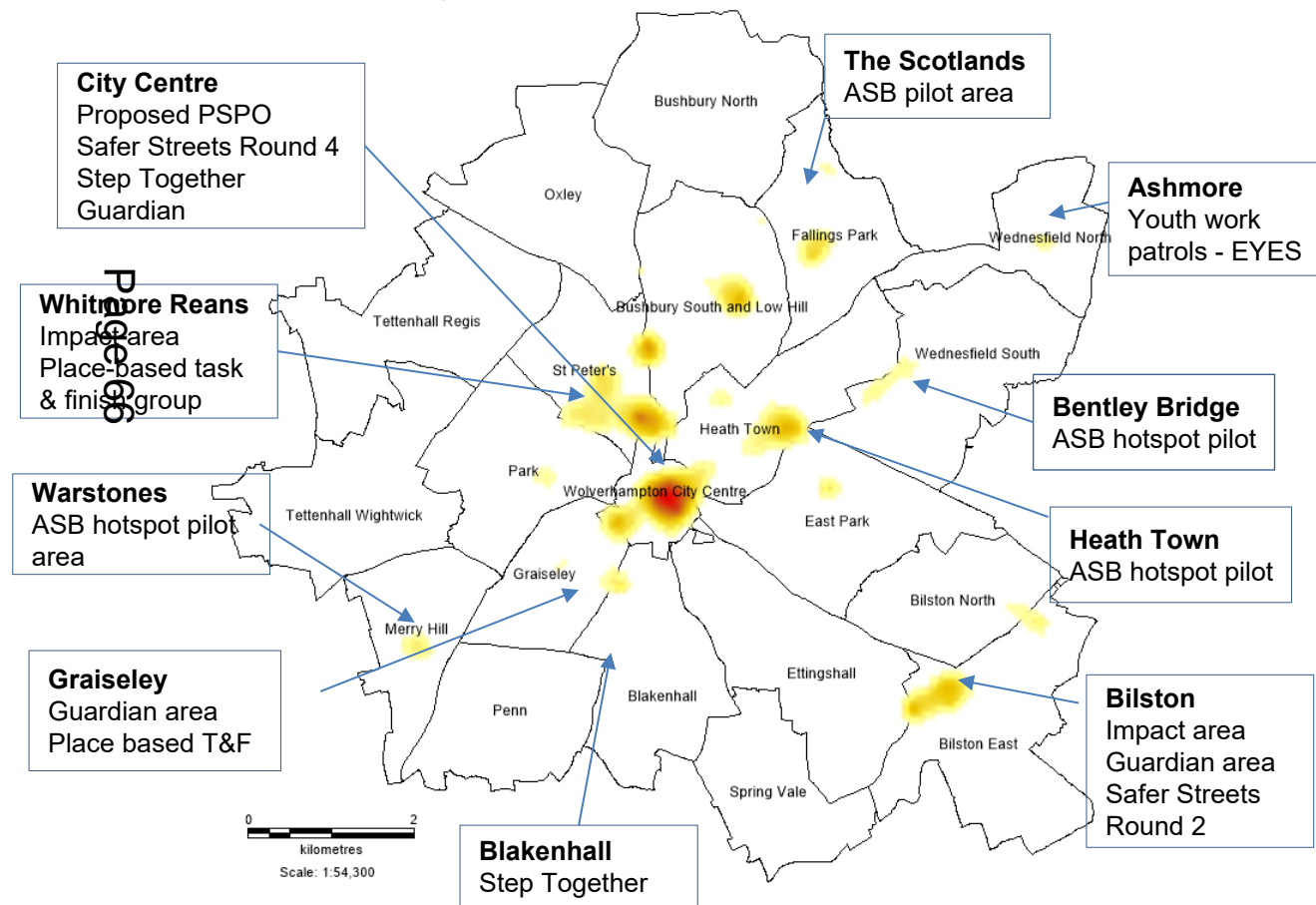
**ASB incidents recorded by
WMP
01/08/2022 to 31/07/2023**

All incidents are logged to generate an appropriate response.

Location based intervention is data driven to ensure that resources are directed to the areas of greatest need for maximum impact.

Anti-Social Behaviour Interventions

ASB incidents recorded by WMP 01/08/2022 to 31/07/2023



City-wide activity

- Anti-social behaviour team
- City-wide youth outreach service
- School holiday activity
- Turnaround programme
- Targeted mentoring provision
- Restorative justice services
- Deployable CCTV (data driven)
- School intervention police officers
- Early help officers
- DIVERT
- Enforcement tools and powers

Home Office ASB Pilot (Op Eternity)

- Force wide pilot focusing on ASB, funded by the Home Office (via the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner);
- Commenced in August 2023 and funded until March 2025;
- £50,000 per year allocated to Wolverhampton LPA to complete targeted high visibility patrols within localities that have witnessed increased levels of ASB/at risk of increased ASB;
- £50,000 per year allocated to youth organisations to support and work collaboratively with local Police;
- Identified locations are Low Hill/The Scotlands, Warstones as well as Heathtown/Bentley Bridge;
- Officers have so far completed 170 patrols at peak times/days;
- Youth work patrols (delivered by EYES and Inpower Academy) began in October 2023.

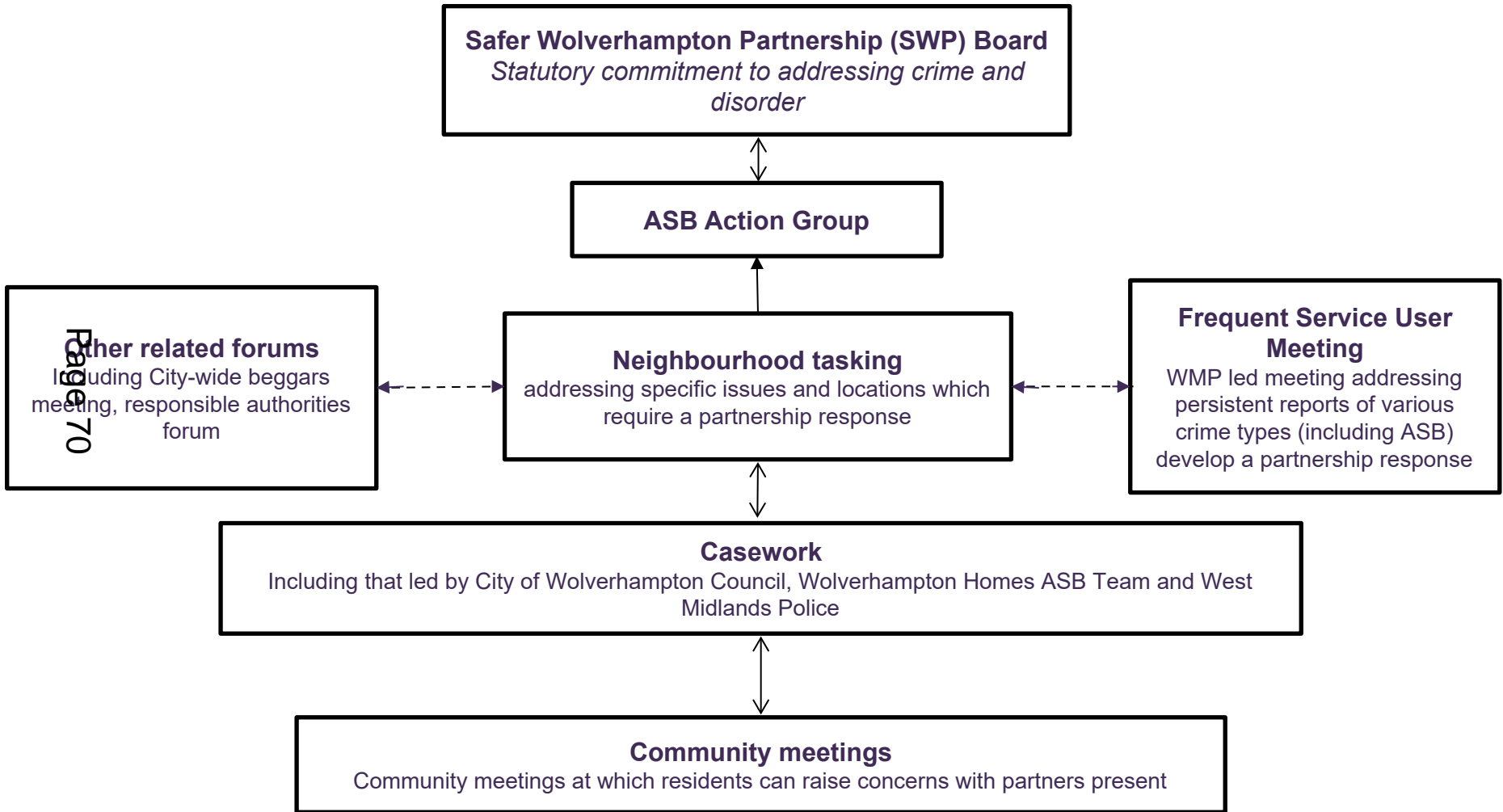
Enforcement and support

- As well as additional activity delivered via grant funding and commissioned services, there is a 'BAU' response to anti-social behaviour by WMP;
- All incidents of ASB are logged and an appropriate response generated, including a multi-agency response where necessary;
- A number of enforcement tools are utilised, currently at least 35 Civil orders are active across the City relating to ASB;
- In addition to this disruption activity regularly takes place across the City, including the execution of over 130 drug related warrants in the last 12 months.



In August 2023 Wolverhampton Officers seized more approximately £1million worth of cannabis following two successful drugs warrants

| Interventions across the Partnerships | Prevent | Divert | Intervene | Enforce |
|--|---------|--------|-----------|---------|
| ASB hotspot pilot | X | X | | X |
| Guardian funding | X | X | X | X |
| Safer Streets Round 4 | X | X | X | X |
| Turnaround | | X | X | |
| City wide outreach | X | X | | |
| Targeted intervention programme | X | X | X | |
| Step Together | X | X | | |
| Restorative justice | | | X | |
| Deployable CCTV | X | | | X |
| School Intervention Police Officers | X | | X | |
| Early help officers | X | | X | |
| DIVERT | | | X | X |
| Tools and powers (i.e. community protection notices, injunctions, closure orders etc.) | X | X | X | X |
| School holiday programme | X | X | | |
| Vulnerability based services, for example alcohol and substance misuse, rough sleeper outreach | X | | X | |
| Awareness campaigns (i.e. ASB Awareness week) | X | | | |
| Community safety groups | X | X | X | |



An aerial photograph of a city at night, with a purple color overlay. The city lights are visible, and the buildings are silhouetted against the dark sky. The text is overlaid on the image.

Scrutiny Presentation

Police Establishment and resources

16 November 2023

Information on Wolverhampton policing establishment, additional officers received from restructuring and uplift.

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How this will provide 'effective' policing in Wolverhampton and how are our numbers calculated.

Overview to Police Functionality

- Wider complexity- West Midlands Police
- Police funding and wide ranging demand profiling
- Balance of Wolverhampton and WMP both serve Wolverhampton (Key and specialist functions)
- Local to National
- New operating model
- Uplift and additional functions

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Wolverhampton Specific

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| Overall Establishment for Wolverhampton | |
|---|--|
| Total Established Officers and Staff | 488 |
| Chief Supt (LPA Commander) | 1 |
| Superintendent | 1 |
| Chief Inspector | 4 (LP, Crime, Proactive Crime, Response) |
| Inspector | 16 |
| Sergeants | 46 |
| Constables | 354 |
| PCSO | 61 |
| Police Staff | 9 |

Wolverhampton Resource Breakdown by Function

New model Local command

| Response (5 teams cover 24/7) | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Inspector | 5 |
| Sergeant | 15 |
| Constables | 135 |

| Investigation- Vol. and NH Crime) E, L & days | |
|---|----|
| Inspector | 2 |
| Sergeant | 7 |
| Constables | 57 |
| Pol. Staff | 4 |

Original resourcing

| Local Policing (Neighbourhood) E, L 7 Days | |
|--|----|
| Inspector | 3 |
| Sergeant | 11 |
| Constables | 84 |
| PCSO | 61 |

| Bespoke functions (Inc. Partnerships, SOCEX, Performance, Planning, CIRV) | |
|---|----|
| Inspector | 3 |
| Sergeant | 6 |
| Constables | 16 |
| Pol. Staff | 3 |

| Offender management Including OCG/gangs | |
|---|----|
| Inspector | 1 |
| Sergeant | 4 |
| Constables | 30 |
| Pol. Staff | 2 |

| Proactive and Intel | |
|---------------------|----|
| Inspector | 2 |
| Sergeant | 3 |
| Constables | 32 |
| Pol. Staff | 0 |

Uplift and Funded Functions

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| Uplift programme | |
|---------------------|------------|
| Impact areas (NHT) | 6 PCs |
| SOCEX | 1 Sgt 8 PC |
| Proactive | 1 Sgt 7 PC |
| School/Partnerships | 9 PC |

| Operating Model Change additional resource | |
|--|----|
| Chief Insp | 2 |
| Inspectors | 8 |
| Sergeants | 5 |
| Constables | 35 |

| Funded CIRV (3 years) | |
|-----------------------|----|
| Inspector | 1 |
| Sergeant | 1 |
| Constables | 10 |
| Total | 12 |

| Additional funding | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Guardian | Youth violence |
| Safer Streets | VAWG/Violence |
| Op Eternity | ASB |
| WMP funding | Sex workers/Drugs |

Wider Resourcing WMP Specialist

- Public Protection
 - Child
 - Domestic Abuse
 - Vulnerable Adult
- Investigation
 - Major Crime
 - Homicide
 - Regional Organised Crime Unit
 - National Crime Agency
- Intelligence
 - Data Analysis
 - Profiling
 - Intel development
 - Covert assets
- Operations
 - Firearms
 - Dogs
 - Traffic
 - Operational support
 - Safer Travel

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How does all this provide effective policing?

- Priority setting
 - Strategic-Operational
- Tasking processes
 - daily
 - weekly
 - monthly
 - quarterly
- Whole system approach
 - Answering the call
 - Respond effectively
 - Quality Investigation
 - Criminal justice outcomes
- Reactive, Proactive, Partnerships
- Threat, Risk, Harm and Intel led
- Information sources and analysis
 - Calls for service review
 - Incident trends
 - Crime analysis
 - Intelligence and development
- Performance review and Accountability
 - Daily
 - Weekly
 - Monthly
 - Strategic (SPCB, QPR, SWP, WST)

How does this translate? Headlines

- Best 999 performance
- Best 101 performance
- 2nd immediate attendance
- 2nd for Priority attendance
- Increased numbers of suspects arrested- especially for DA
- More overall incidents attend
- Higher volume of crimes investigated

- Robbery down 10%
- House burglary down 25%
- Vehicle crime down 2%
- Theft from person down 18%
- Ser. Youth Violence down 13%
- Top calls for service locations
- Top service users
- Partnership working and Civil orders

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Climate Change, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Panel draft work programme (2023 - 2024)

Chair: Councillor Anwen Muston

Vice Chair: Councillor Wendy Dalton

Scrutiny Support: Earl Piggott-Smith

Remit, Function and Measures

- Work together to deliver more new homes
- Ensuring safe and healthy homes for all
- Ensuring access to a secure home
- Ensuring clean, green neighbourhoods and public space
- Well-connected businesses and residents
- Number of new builds completed in the city
- Net additional dwellings in the city
- % of dwelling stock that is vacant in the city
- Housing affordability ratio
- Total crime recorded per 1000 population
- % of planning application decisions made with 13 weeks or agreed timescales
- Number of homeless support in the community to prevent further harm
- Number of domestic abuse cases referred to Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
- WV Active membership numbers with breakdown by- long term health conditions, disabilities, low socioeconomic groups, minority ethnic groups
- % Domestic Abuse related incidents and crimes

| Item | Description | SEB Lead | Officer Report/Author Lead | Date of Meeting | Publication Date | Status |
|-----------------------|--|-------------|----------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------|
| Rough Sleepers Update | Presentation on the Councils homelessness team and up to | John Denley | Anthony Walker | 27 June 2023 | 19 June 2023 | Completed |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|----------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| | date information on rough sleepers | | | | | |
| Improvement of Housing Standards through Licensing (exempt report) | Report on Housing Standards in the private rented sector with particular focus on licensing. | John Roseblade | Chris Howell & William Humphries | 27 June 2023 | 19 June 2023 | Completed |
| Safer Wolverhampton Partnership Strategic Priorities Consultation | Officer request. | John Denley | Hannah Pawley | 27 June 2023 | 19 June 2023 | Completed |
| Wolverhampton Homes – Building Safety Strategy (particular focus on Fire Safety) | Member requested at a previous meeting. | Shaun Aldis | Simon Bamfield/Ian Gardner (WHM) | 28 September 2023 | 20 September 2023 | Completed |
| West Midlands Local Transport Plan Status | Panel received a report last year and asked them to come back in the future. | John Roseblade | Alex Greatholder/Marianne Page (TfWM) | 28 September 2023 | 20 September 2023 | Completed |
| Wolverhampton Homes Customer Engagement Strategy - briefing | At Chair's request. | John Roseblade | Shaun Aldis/ Julie Haydon | 28 September 2023 | 20 September 2023 | Completed |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|----------------|--|------------------|------------------|------------|
| Climate Change 2028 | Chair requested. | David Pattison | Perminder Balu/Oliver Thomas | 19 October 2023 | 11 October 2023 | Completed |
| Fly Tipping | Member requested at Scrutiny Board. | John Roseblade | Steve Woodward | 19 October 2023 | 11 October 2023 | Completed |
| Community Safety Police Session 1 | Panel requested more items on the police after a previous successful meeting with the Police. | John Denley | Supt Martin Hurcomb – West Midlands Police and Simon Foster, West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner | 16 November 2023 | 8 November 2023 | Programmed |
| Budget and Performance Update | Standard item received each year. | Claire Nye | Alison Shannon | 16 November 2023 | 8 November 2023 | Programmed |
| Community Safety Strategy Consultation – final | The panel agreed to review the recommendations of the consultation | John Denley | Hannah Pawley | 22 February 2024 | 14 February 2024 | Programmed |
| Combatting Anti-Social Behaviour | Item ties in with the Police and Community collaboration theme and enables Panel full overview with a partnership approach | John Denley | tbc | 22 February 2024 | 14 February 2024 | Programmed |
| Community Safety Police Session 2 | To include Rehabilitation of offenders and | John Denley | Lynsey Kelly | 22 February 2024 | 14 February 2024 | Programmed |

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| | services for reintegration into community post-sentence | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|

To be scheduled

- Aids and Adaptations - concern about delays in assessments - possible joint work with Adults Scrutiny Panel
- One Public Estates Project - Ballal Raza - Regeneration Programme Manager
- City Centre Public Space Protection Order Proposals (Findings from Consultation)
- Invite to Police and Crime Commissioner (July 2024) and West Midlands Chief Constable

- Update on West Midlands Local Transport Plan – March 2024
- Update Wolverhampton Homes Customer Engagement Strategy – 7 March 2024 (Date being consulted on)
- Climate Change Wider Programme – 7 March 2024 (Date being consulted on)