

Birmingham City Council

City Council

5 December 2023



Subject: Executive Business Report
Report of: Cabinet
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Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If relevant, state which appendix is exempt, and provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential:

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. On 10th September 2019, Full Council accepted the recommendations of the Coordinating O&S Committee review in respect of changes to the Full Council agenda.
- 1.2. Recommendation 3 of the review requested that the Executive provide an update to Full Council on its work via the provision of an Executive Business Report ('EBR'). EBRs will be provided to Full Council four times per municipal

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year and will include details of progress made in relation to Council strategic outcomes and priorities linked to two Cabinet Member portfolios.

- 1.3. This EBR provides an update on two Cabinet Member portfolios:
- Health & Social Care; pages 2-10
 - Social Cohesion, Equalities and Community Safety; pages 21-35

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the report be noted.

3. Health & Wellbeing Portfolio

- 3.1. It is a privilege to be able to update City Council about the work that has been undertaken in the Health and Social Care portfolio since we last presented in November 2022. I have attempted to cover work across all service areas aligned with the Council's strategic priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan 2022-2026 to illustrate the progress made since that last report rather than providing wholesale updates from every team.
- 3.2. The portfolio contributes to all the strategic outcomes to a degree, but predominantly work falls under a Bold Healthy Birmingham. And because the portfolio encompasses Adult Social Care, Public Health and Leisure, Communities and Wellbeing, elements of all six corporate priorities are covered. Primarily health and wellbeing, and as you would expect, equality and inclusion, but also unemployment, skills and the local economy, and opportunities for children and young people.
- 3.3. This report will break down this work under the following headings to represent the following strategic priorities:
1. Tackle health inequalities
 2. Encourage and enable physical activity and healthy living.
 3. Champion mental health
 4. Improve outcomes for adults with disabilities and older people.
 5. Tackle unemployment
 6. Tackle poverty and inequalities
 7. Best start in life

3.4. 1 - Tackling health inequalities

3.4.1 Work on tackling health inequalities is underpinned by robust intelligence and insights to inform decision making in BCC and the wider system.

3.4.2 The Public Health Division provides a comprehensive suite of intelligence products aimed at identifying priorities for health and wellbeing promotion, improvement, protection and for reducing inequalities.

3.4.3 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

3.4.3.1 The JSNA is an assessment of the current and future health and social care needs of the people of Birmingham; to inform local organisations enabling them to plan services for the future, including informing the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The JSNA has been developed by Public Health but is very much in partnership through the JSNA Steering Committee which includes Adults Social Care, Children and Families Directorate, Birmingham Childrens Trust, Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board and relevant wider Public Health and Council Teams as well as voluntary sector representation.

3.4.3.2 In developing the latest JSNA, we have moved away from the traditional narrative style, single report to a multi-product, online JSNA 'library' which offers different levels of detail and presentation style to meet the needs of users.

3.4.3.3 **JSNA Dashboard and Summaries** - Taking a life-course approach, the JSNA dashboards, with accompanying summary documents, provide a 'single view' of the health and wellbeing of Birmingham's population and enables the identification of priorities for action. It refers to the Public Health Outcomes Framework ([Public Health Outcomes Framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/public-health-outcomes-framework)) and uses national routinely collected administrative data and estimates taken from the surveys of the population. In this way the health and wellbeing of the population of Birmingham can be benchmarked against that of England and statistical neighbours. The JSNA dashboards and summaries are published on the City Observatory.

3.4.3.4 **JSNA Deep dives, Locality profiles and Community Profiles** - Detailed analysis and understanding of health conditions, health behaviours and the health of populations of identity and experience in Birmingham are provided through deep dives, locality profiles and community health profiles. These intelligence products, which form part of the JSNA, include literature review, quantitative data, service mapping and use qualitative data, including ethnography, to understand the needs and experiences of citizens in greater depth. The findings from deep dives lead to recommendations and actions

which are taken up by multi sectoral partners. In this way these intelligence tools drive improvements across the health and social care system. In addition to these products which are incorporated under the JSNA, the Public Health division also undertakes a number of Health Needs Assessments to inform strategy development and decision making across the division.

3.4.4 Annual Director of Public Health (ADPH) Report

- 3.4.4.1 The statutory independent ADPH report provides the opportunity for the DPH to highlight issues of significance to the population. The theme of each DPH report is agreed in advance with me, as the Cabinet Member who leads on Public Health. This year, 2023-24, focused on the health and wellbeing implications of changing demographics of Birmingham shown in the 2021 Census.

3.4.5 Population Health Management (PHM)

- 3.4.5.1 PHM is a data-driven approach to improve the health of the population. It uses advanced analytics to segment and stratify the population to understand risk and impact ability, and through partnership working leads to implementation of evidence-based interventions to prevent ill health and reduce variation, i.e., inequalities. We are undertaking specific PHM projects, including analyses on infant mortality and diabetes, as well as working closely with ICS analytical colleagues to support the opportunity and capacity for PHM across the system.

3.4.6 City Observatory

- 3.4.6.1 Public Health collaborates with and provides the Public Health Grant to fund the Insight, Policy, and Strategy (IPS) team, which incorporates the City Observatory. The IPS provide an insight and data programme which provides, and facilitates use of, evidence base for reducing inequalities and improving health and wellbeing outcomes for Birmingham residents. The City Observatory itself provides the platform for the JSNA as well as other data from BCC and external organisations, to share information.
- 3.4.6.2 The Public Health Division provided a comprehensive suite of intelligence products aimed at identifying priorities for health and wellbeing promotion, improvement, protection and for reducing inequalities.

3.4.7 BLACHIR

- 3.4.7.1 The Birmingham and Lewisham African Caribbean Health Inequalities Review (BLACHIR) is a programme of work which developed from joint work with

Lewisham Borough Council and with Birmingham's African and Caribbean Communities. It aims at reducing the health inequalities and resulted in 39 opportunities for action and 7 key priority areas.

- 3.4.7.2 **Implementation the 'BLACHIR Opportunities for Action' across the system** - Implementation of the recommendations from BLACHIR is the responsibility of the BLACHIR Implementation Board who report to the Creating a City Without Inequalities Forum. The Board now has independent co-chairs, and the multi-sectoral plan has been developed and actions are being implemented across all systems, including the ICS and with our community engagement partners.
- 3.4.7.3 **Integrated Care System** - As one of our system partners, The Integrated Care System (ICS) has created a BLACHIR ICS Taskforce to respond to the opportunities for action from the Review. They have developed an action plan with SMART goals to track how the opportunities for action are being responded to. Some of their project work has included a West Locality Cardiovascular (CVD) Awareness and Engagement Project, a Prostate Cancer in Black Men Project, and an Infant Mortality and the Local Maternity and Neonatal Service Link Support Workers Project.
- 3.4.7.4 **Community engagement partners** - Public Health has commissioned three community organisations who act as engagement partners to support with the implementation phase of BLACHIR, focused on Black African, Black Caribbean communities and young people. The three engagement partners are Allies Network, Black Heritage Support Service and Mindseye Development. As engagement partners, they have delivered community engagement sessions, held health exhibitions, contributed to working groups and worked closely with the BLACHIR ICS Taskforce. Their engagement work has successfully covered key health concerns prevalent in the community including maternity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, Alzheimer's and dementia, mental health, and physical activity.
- 3.4.7.5 **Co-production** - All 7 key priority areas are co-produced with support given by the community engagement partners. Thus far the work completed for three of the priority areas is as follows:
- 1) Trust and transparency – developed cultural intelligence and cultural humility frameworks. The frameworks are being tested and refined with Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) leads with an aim to pilot them in Spring 2024.
 - 2) Better data - a set of standard demographic questions has been created and the new EDI question set will be integrated into core PH services and taken through BCC corporate governance and adopted through the ICS Fairer Futures Fund model. The team will also commission focus groups to explore the need for a tribal identity question in Q1 24/25

- 3) Health checks and campaigns – a rapid evidence review has been completed to explore ethnicity and health checks. The BLACHIR team will be commissioning focus groups with ethnic communities, including African and Caribbean communities, to inform re-commissioning of health checks.

3.4.7.6 **Share learning and build on successes of BLACHIR Opportunities for Action** - The BLACHIR governance processes allow for sharing of learning and promotion of success and good practice across multisector organisations. This includes sharing of information at the BLACHIR Implementation Board, Creating a City without Inequality Forum, Health and Wellbeing Board and Health and Adult Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

3.4.7.7 We have also worked with Lewisham to pro-actively share the learning from BLACHIR, its recommendations and the model. This has included:

- A parliamentary launch hosted by Paulette Hamilton MP & Janet Daby MP
- Sharing through West Midlands Community Engagement Community of Practice
- Presentation at NHS England National Health Inequalities Board
- Staff Webinars for both BCC & NHS BSoI
- Presentation at the national Co-Operative Councils Conference

3.4.8 Health inequalities and the ICS/partnerships

3.4.8.1 Reducing health inequalities is a core theme of our work with our Integrated Care Partnership across Birmingham and Solihull (BSoL ICB) and is central to the ICS 10-year health and care strategy “A Bolder, Healthier Future for the People of Birmingham and Solihull”. Integrated Care System governance arrangements have been established at a system (Birmingham and Solihull) and place (Birmingham) level. At the system level this includes the Integrated Care Partnership (BCC represented by Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care) and the Integrated Care Board (BCC represented by Strategic Director for Adult Social Care). At the Place level the Birmingham Place Committee is chaired by the Strategic Director for Adult Social Care.

3.4.9 Wellbeing Centres

3.4.9.1 The Council maintains six Wellbeing Centres located in the most deprived areas of the city where residents experience the poorest health outcomes. Supported by funding from Public Health, the service operates the Be Active scheme which allows local residents to access gym, swim, fitness classes and badminton free of charge to prevent cost acting as a barrier to participation in physical activity, thus allowing residents to gain the physical

and mental health benefits of regular exercise. Half year figures suggest the service is on track to exceed the target level of 300,000 attendances during 2023/24.

- 3.4.9.2 **Gladstone Leisure Management System** - The Wellbeing Service has worked with Public Health to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to support the funding arrangement and has invested in a new leisure management system (Gladstone) to collect and collate customer data to generate a suite of PIs to evidence the impact of the service more thoroughly and robustly. This will include structured processes to track customer “journeys” to measure health impacts and to routinely collect wider customer feedback and experiences. Reporting is scheduled to begin later in 2023/24.

3.5 2 - Encouraging and Enabling Physical Activity and Healthy Living

- 3.5.1 The Public Health Division delivers comprehensive programmes of multi sectoral work to promote health living and encourage and enable physical activity.

- 3.5.2 Healthy living is achieved through promoting behaviour change through individual, community, and environmental action. The Communications and Engagement team deliver campaigns which promote health, amplifying existing national resources and developing bespoke materials. This includes the recent campaign to increase physical activity. The Division also delivers the Bolder Healthier Community Champions programme, working in partnership with Youth Voice for the delivery of the Youth Champions programme. This programme provides community champions with the skills and knowledge to enable their families, communities, work colleagues to live healthily. The Division includes a team who work on Environmental Public Health, seeking to influence policy and planning.

3.5.3 Birmingham’s Physical Activity (PA) Strategy

- 3.5.3.1 Birmingham’s Physical Activity Strategy ‘Creating an Active Birmingham’ is aimed at increasing physical activity and reducing inactivity of the population in Birmingham.

- 3.5.3.2 One of the five priorities within the Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Strategy is to improve physical activity levels within the city. This strategy proposes a plan to do this by focusing on five key priorities:

- *Active people* - Creating and promoting access to opportunities, taking a life course approach across multiple settings to enable people to engage in regular physical activity.

- *Active environment* - creating and protecting the places and spaces that promote and engage people of all ages and abilities in activity.
- *Active societies* - changing the narrative around physical activity across the city, building insight and evidence into policy, commissioning, planning decisions and communication messages and marketing campaigns.
- *Active systems* - creating a more integrated and interconnected system by strengthening our local leadership, governance, partnerships, and workforce capabilities.
- *Closing the gap* - continuing to develop a better understanding of local barriers and enablers to increase activity across the city and ensure we focus on the least active groups as identified in the Physical Activity Needs Assessment.

3.5.3.3 The Strategy has been developed with significant contribution from multi sectoral organisations and citizens from seldom heard groups. It is progressing for sign off by Cabinet on 14th November.

3.5.4 The Birmingham Food System Strategy and 'Full of Beans' Campaign

3.5.4.1 The Birmingham Food System work is a rich programme of city wide, national, and international work. At a city level, its Strategy, now published and launched, includes:

- a vision to create a fair, sustainable, and prosperous food system and economy, where food options are nutritious, affordable, and desirable so everyone can thrive.
- cross-cutting themes including food skills & knowledge, food behaviour change, food security and resilience, and food innovation, research, and data.
- workstreams including food production, food sourcing, food transformation, food waste and recycling, food economy and employment and food safety and standards.

3.5.4.2 The Food System has worked closely with Birmingham City Council's Cost of Living Programme to distribute food and increase the capability to source and produce food in communities that are most likely to need it.

3.5.4.3 One of the deliverables linked directly to the Corporate Plan is the city-wide healthy eating campaign to promote consumption of beans and pulses, including resources targeting food businesses, schools, and families. The campaign included 250 recipes identified by the British Dietetic Association (BDA), made available through an online app. It also included a collaboration

with the Holidays, Activities and Food (HAF) Programme and Food Trails EU-funded project (led by the European and International Affairs team) to deliver summer activities to give children opportunities to taste, cook and grow beans and pulses during the summer clubs.

3.5.5 Sports Service

3.5.5.1 The Sports Service manages 3 significant leisure contracts in the city covering 11 leisure centres and swimming pools and 7 golf courses. The external leisure centres continue to perform at or above the national average benchmark despite significantly more service users coming from low socioeconomic groups and requiring a greater subsidy per visit. Overall, the contracts continue to represent good value for money by significantly contributing to the following key deliverables:

- **Delivering better-quality facilities and services** –bringing leisure specific skills, support services, and decision making that enable sustainability in a very commercially orientated market.
- **Reducing costs and providing greater financial certainty** –removing competition with other areas of direct provision, promoting invest to save options over the contract term, building more efficiency, and aiding longer term strategic planning for the Council.
- **Mitigating risks** –Mitigating against the greatest risk, in that less people access the service due to the economic climate, developing local competition, or demand for leisure opportunities. Achieved through effective programming, marketing, and a proven track record of managing leisure facilities.
- **Increasing levels of participation** –Achieved by enabling more people, access to more of the services they want, for more of the time.

3.5.52 The service is also currently delivering a Sports Strategy aligned and coordinated with the Council's Physical Activity strategy produced by Public Health (3.5.3 above). In working together to align their strategies the effective development of both will help the people of Birmingham become more active and reduce the impact of health inequalities.

3 – Champion mental health

3.6.1 Adult Social Care Mental Health update

3.6.1.1 Expected reforms to the Mental Health Act are on hold until after the General Election. Two new Duty Teams have been set up in North and South of the city to manage the daily requests for allocations and to reduce the need for longer term work. Our Memorandum of Understanding with the NHS has been reviewed and will increase Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHP) capacity from the end of November 2023. Cabinet approval was granted in

October 2023 to allocate additional funding to Mental Health Social Care Services. This will support recruitment of additional social workers to the Specialist Mental Health Team, including social workers to support prevention specifically through frontline duty responses.

3.6.2 Dementia Strategy 2022-2027

- 3.6.2.1 We worked in partnership with Solihull MBC and Birmingham and Solihull ICB to launch “Improving the lives of people with dementia: Birmingham and Solihull Dementia Strategy 2023-2028” in May 2023. We have distributed the Occupational Therapy Dementia Guide to those identified, with a 6-week follow-up contact to those families. We are currently consulting with citizens, charities, and health practitioners to review our webpages to provide information, advice, and guidance.

3.6.3 Public Health Mental Health update

- 3.6.3.1 The Public Health Mental Health team have a comprehensive programme seeking to prevent mental ill health and promote mental wellbeing. The programme includes suicide prevention, which is guided by England’s Suicide Prevention Strategy ([Suicide prevention strategy for England: 2023 to 2028 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/100444/Suicide_prevention_strategy_for_England_2023_to_2028.pdf)) which is updated annually, and analysis of local deaths by suicide.

3.6.4 Suicide Prevention Action Plan

- 3.6.4.1 The Public Health Division are working with multisectoral partners on the existing action plan and are now working to review it using an audit of deaths. The main slippage in the action plan relates to the interdependence between the Real Time Suicide Surveillance System and the Coronial Audit Outcome report.
- 3.6.4.2 To facilitate information sharing in the interim whilst a full Real Time Suicide Surveillance System (RTSS) is developed, BSOL has been involved in writing an information sharing agreement between all other West Midlands local authorities and West Midlands Police.

3.6.5 The Orange Button Scheme

- 3.6.5.1 One of the actions in the Corporate Plan is to overcome barriers to talking about suicide. This is achieved through the Orange Button Scheme, which ensures that communities and professionals are trained and available to talk about mental health and suicidal feelings. The scheme launched successfully

on 10th September 2023, World Suicide Day, with a follow up Information stand at the City Council meeting on 12/09/2023, which generated a lot of interest and engaged Councillors, who were eager to help raise awareness of the scheme with their contacts and communities.

- 3.6.5.2 All the materials to support the scheme have been received and the fortnightly steering group meetings have been moved to monthly. The promotion of the dedicated Suicide Prevention webpage continues through partners' fora and social media. Since the launch of the scheme, 44 delegates have completed training as part of the Orange Button Scheme with Every Life Matters. Work is underway to explore how best to support delegates to ensure that the work they deliver under the scheme doesn't impact their wellbeing.

3.6.6 Creating a Mentally Healthy City Forum – CMHCF

- 3.6.6.1 The 'Creating a Mentally Healthy City' Forum (CMHCF) is a sub-committee of the statutory Health and Wellbeing Board, with the ambition that every citizen is supported to achieve good mental wellness and balance to navigate life's challenges. The Forum has a focus on collaboration and building strong partnerships to enable the delivery of the ambitions of Health and Wellbeing Strategy, including having oversight of the delivery of the actions of the Prevention Concordat and the Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan.
- 3.6.6.2 The Forum, which has bi-monthly meetings, is chaired by myself as the Cabinet Member and comprises membership from statutory and wider public sector, and voluntary, community, faith, and social enterprise (VCFSE) organisations. The ambition is to further grow the membership to enable a more diverse representation from a grassroots perspective, including people living with or caring for people with mental health conditions.
- 3.6.6.3 The CMHCF will over the coming months focus its objectives on the development of the Birmingham Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy in response to the feedback from the "Creating a Mentally Healthy City Forum: framework for action" Workshop held in April this year. This undertaking will also be informed by the evaluations currently underway, of the various projects commissioned under the Better Mental Health Fund and the Public Health grant.

3.7 **4 - Improve outcomes for adults with disabilities and older people**

- 3.7.1 The Public Health Division's work to improve the health of adults and older people, including those with disabilities, includes the commissioning of Birmingham-wide sexual health service, substance misuse treatment services, adult weight management and smoking cessation services.

3.7.2 Multisectoral and partnership work to strengthen service level interventions includes:

3.7.3 Fast Track Cities Plus

3.7.3.1 This is aimed at strengthening existing programmes and accelerating locally coordinated responses to end blood-borne viruses as major public health threats by 2030, including HIV/AIDS, viral hepatitis (hepatitis B and C) and tuberculosis (TB). It also aims to strengthen communities and provide timely testing and treatment services that support those living with these conditions, without prejudice and stigma.

3.7.4 Birmingham Tobacco Control Alliance

3.7.4.1 This aimed at reducing access to tobacco, preventing uptake, and increasing access to cessation help.

3.7.5 Triple Zero

3.7.5.1 The aim of Triple Zero is to achieve zero deaths due to drugs or alcohol addiction, zero overdoses due to drug or alcohol addiction and zero people living with any addiction without the support needed to manage it.

3.7.6 Compassionate Cities

3.7.6.1 Compassionate cities aims to build compassion as a major value of life across all sectors of civic society, putting kindness at the heart of health and care strategies in all parts of society, with a particular focus on death, dying, loss and caregiving. Baseline data has been collected through a citywide survey to understand the people of Birmingham's confidence around death and dying, should a loved one pass, based predominantly on the validated Death Literacy Index. This will inform future work of the Compassionate Cities programme.

3.7.7 Healthy Ageing

3.7.7.1 Working alongside Adult Social Care, a few services have been commissioned to promote healthy ageing and social inclusion, including intergenerational befriending services, targeted community cafes and Age Well focus groups with specific population groups. As part of work to support the delivery of the Birmingham Dementia Strategy and Action Plan, a series of Brain Health information sessions have been held for health and social care staff and

community groups to raise aware of what can be done to help prevent dementia in local citizens and promote early diagnosis.

3.7.8 NHS Health Checks

3.7.8.1 The NHS Health Checks is a prescribed public health programme which aims to prevent illness and improve health for all adults. It can reduce the burden of disability and avoidable death in older age by identifying the early signs of long-term conditions and risk factors that contribute to them. The NHS Health Check programme is key to delivering the ambitions of the national Major Conditions Strategy, and the ICS. NHS Health checks are delivered by GPs and by pharmacies.

3.7.8.2 Corporate KPIs are related to the number and percentage of NHS Health Checks which are offered and taken up by the eligible population. Given the current commissioning targets, the annual targets will be met. NHS Health Checks are currently subject to phased recommissioning, where in each phase, the geographical coverage of the programme is analysed, and actions identified to mitigate any impact on citizens who would benefit most.

3.7.9 Tier 2 adult weight management services in targeted disability groups

3.7.9.1 The Public Health Division tested a programme of weight management interventions with additional OHID funding as part of the public health contribution whole systems approach to weight management which is led by the ICB. This grant funding has now ceased but three successful interventions to support individuals with disabilities, those over 55, and the App have been continued through public health grant funding.

3.7.9.2 The intervention for individuals with disabilities is integrated with Adult Social Care Day Centre provision and the Wellbeing and Be Active Council programmes. Existing contracts have been recommissioned and a new model of service delivery will commence in January 2024, pending a successful procurement exercise.

3.7.10 Integrated Services

3.7.10.1 We continue to work together in the community across social care, community nursing, therapy services, GP practices and mental health services to better manage ongoing and long-term conditions and to reduce the risk of citizens experiencing health and care crises.

3.7.10.2 Our pilot now covers all 10 constituencies with a focused prevention approach within each team, and we have hubs that link in with our NHS partners and

third sector. We have launched test sites in West and East Birmingham – with dedicated social worker and occupational therapist to support the initiative within the Integrated Neighbourhood Teams. They are exploring the top 10 percent of the frequent users (citizens) accessing services to explore how they could be better supported. This will be reviewed by the end of the year to understand the impact the pilot is having and determine next steps.

3.7.11 Be Active Plus

3.7.11.1 The Wellbeing Service operates the Be Active Plus scheme that offers 1:1 support for clients referred through their GPs because they suffer from chronic health conditions such as obesity, diabetes, or depression. It also offers cancer/stroke rehabilitation cardio rehabilitation and COPD classes with a target of 2,000 referrals a year.

3.7.11.2 Case Study: The Success of Be Active Plus at Nechells Wellbeing Centre:

- Patient referred with anxiety, depression, and obesity.
- 18 stone and 45-inch waist
- Engaged in gym sessions 3 times a week.
- After 12 weeks - 16 stone and 40-inch waist
- With continued support and motivation, alongside a healthier diet, he achieved a weight of 12st 7lb and a waist measurement of 34 inches.

3.7.11.3 **Be Active Plus Client Feedback**

“Want to say a big thanks for the help you have given me. The programme has helped me hugely. I’m more relaxed and have lots more energy. I look forward to working with you more and getting even fitter.”

“The experience has been phenomenal and the results transformational!

“Thank you! I want to say what a huge step it was, mentally, for me to be in a room with somebody new. I would also like to thank you for your professionalism and courteous manner. I’m excited about the road ahead, losing weight and gaining more confidence”.

“I have been referred to this service by my GP and can’t praise my advisor enough. They speak clearly and slowly and explain things carefully. They understand me and go out of their way to help if I am in doubt or have problems. Please pass on my thanks.”

3.8 5 - Tackle unemployment

3.8.1 PURE Project

- 3.8.1.1 PURE brings together the funding, governance, specialist experience, support networks and local community necessary to help vulnerable citizens in Birmingham make sustainable progress on their journey towards employment. We continue to develop and deliver PURE employment activities to inactive vulnerable adults who have complex and multifaceted needs to enable them to get closer and into the labour market. The Pure Digital Inclusion lending library is successfully up and running and we have loaned 89 laptops to participants who have used them for job related activities.
- 3.8.1.2 We have created eight Community Hubs in key locations, providing a service to citizens who have limited device or internet access. We have held a series of events in collaboration with providers, to help participants to realise their full potential and support them into meaningful results. Funding has been secured from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) for new delivery from April 2024 and approval is currently being sought to provide funding for the 3 months preceding this. The project has since registered 4,690 citizens as of September 2023, out of which 872 participants were supported into education/training; 177 Unemployed participants were supported into employment (including self-employment); and 211 Inactive participants were supported into employment or job search upon leaving PURE.
- 3.8.1.3 PURE run regular events to give a flavour of what's on offer. These are each focused on a specific barrier from mental health to housing issues. They are a chance to meet employers and the team in a supportive setting and allows participants to have a say on important topics.

3.8.2 Supporting employment in adult social care

- 3.8.2.1 The adult social care sector employs around 35,000 people in Birmingham and is well placed to help public money spent locally, alongside supporting the local economy. In recognition of this and the invaluable support provided by independent care providers and their staff, the Council continues to invest in the care market. In 23/24 the Council allocated £28m to support care providers to keep pace with rising costs, inflation and wage rises, albeit we recognise this still doesn't cover the full cost of care. In addition, in December 2022, the Council and our NHS partners provided £6.04m from the Adult Social Care Discharge Fund to support recruitment of over 1,100 new carers and provision of over 200,000 hours of additional care and support during the winter period.

3.9 6 - Tackle poverty and inequalities

3.9.1 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

- 3.9.1.1 The Adult Social Care Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023 to 2025 sets out the directorate's vision to create an inclusive culture which offers a greater sense of belonging by all. We want to foster a resilient workforce that demonstrates increased empathy and understanding for the citizens in our care. We want all our citizens to receive safe, compassionate, and accessible care. To thrive as a public body, we rely on the equality in participation, progression, and success for all including our workforce and citizens.



Figure 1: Adult Social Care EDI Strategy

- 3.9.1.2 The ethos of social justice is a continuous concept that features heavily throughout our ASC People Plan 23-25. It sets out how we will celebrate diversity and how our workforce will represent the community it serves. The Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard (SC-WRES) further supports this by scrutinising systems and measuring improvements in the workforce with respect to the experiences of Black and minority ethnic staff. The ASC Directorate and Birmingham Children's Trust have piloted the SC-WRES, working closely with the Department of Health and Social Care and 17 other pilot sites. Each organisation has developed a bespoke action plan based on an assessment of the metrics.
- 3.9.1.3 Our model of care is based on recognising and responding to individuals' unique needs. This includes not only the citizens who are in contact with Social Care, but also in making the city a welcome place for new arrivals. Birmingham is a 'City of Sanctuary' which aims to create a network of areas which are proud

to be places of safety, and which include people seeking sanctuary fully in the life of their communities. The Council, alongside local organisations, community groups, faith communities and individuals, are publicly committed to welcoming and including people seeking sanctuary. ASC leads the support offered to asylum seekers and refugees on behalf of the city and supports them to feel welcome and integrated, which is key to maintaining their wellbeing and helping them develop a meaningful good life.

- 3.9.1.4 We are mid-way through research into LGBTQ+ services for older adults. Findings from the research will be used to upskill our workforce and ensure that new learning guides policy and practice. Further work is planned to evaluate our Family Group Conferencing (FGC) approach as well as how we engage with people with Learning Disabilities.
- 3.9.1.5 Our aim is to be a research-active directorate where staff can draw on local and national evidence to inform decisions and plan services that meet the distinct needs of citizens in Birmingham. Research is planned to evaluate our FGC approach, our work on Direct Payments, our customer journey and how we engage with people with Learning Disabilities. We also plan to understand disproportionality data and make changes based on the gaps we see.
- 3.9.1.6 The first Day centre EDI network Day Centres for Positive Change has been set up which includes staff representatives from all day services as well as citizens with Learning Disabilities. The aim of the group is to implement initiatives that are inclusive and consistent across the centres as well as enticing a culture of learning from one another.

3.9.2 Transitions to Adulthood

- 3.9.2.1 Work is progressing to intervene earlier and in partnership with other services, supporting young people entering adulthood to be physically and emotionally resilient, so once they become an adult, they will have a connective, fulfilling productive life. We have undertaken a full review of financial expenditure and have continued to improve the commissioning activity within transitions to focus on improving quality and best value. The teams have started to make plans to align with specialist colleges and starting work on future planning with younger adults and their families/carers. The team are also collecting “Stories of difference”, that will be shared in a newsletter and in the Principal Social Worker Newsletter. One is set out below for illustration purposes.

Story of difference

“A young man was referred to TAPS to develop his confidence and support his emotional wellbeing following a close family bereavement, creating a lot of trauma and isolation. His mental health was a real concern for his family.

He formed a positive relationship with his Coaching and Resilience Worker. While discussing creating his Action Plan he shared how he loves baking and had completed a level 3 baking course at college. Together he and his Coaching and Resilience Worker enjoyed baking sessions at his home which developed his communication skills and was therapeutic which reignited his passion for baking. He showed interest in developing his skill set further and wanted to work on his employability and work skills.

He began to meet with TAPS Employment and Skills Officer and started volunteer work at a local charity shop and at a community gardens. He took part in a three-day Animal welfare course which he enjoyed thoroughly. He is now doing amazingly well and it's wonderful to see his confidence grow. In January 2024 he will start a 12-week Programme with Miss Macaroon, this will support his personal development and career aspirations into a field which he will no doubt thrive."

3.9.3 Learning Disability and Autism

3.9.3.1 Development of the Learning Disabilities and Autism Framework for Change 2023-2033: "Our Plan for a Better Life Re-Imagined" has been co-designed with system partners and people with lived experience. The aim of the approach is to work at system and at place within Birmingham to inform and embed an integrated, collaborative approach to the delivery of mutually agreed joint commissioning priorities. We seek to ensure every individual with a learning disability and or autistic people access the support they need to enable them to live healthy and fulfilling lives.

3.9.3.2 The Quality Challenge Team has been developed to supportively challenge the quality of health and social care commissioned services and universal provision for children, young people, adults and their families and carers through the lens of people who are autistic and/or have a learning disability and their family carers to inform improvements, tackle inequalities and build on examples of good practice. The Quality Challenge Team brings together citizens who have had experience of using services or caring for someone who have accessed services and/or support from health and social care in Birmingham. Experts by Experience, known in this context as Quality Challengers, will work alongside Commissioners to improve the quality of local services and to tackle inequalities.

3.9.4 Day opportunities

3.9.4.1 The co-produced review of day opportunities is progressing well. In the first phase, 35 engagement events were held to bring people together to give their view. These events were led and facilitated by trained expert-by-experience

volunteers who named themselves as the Empowering People Team (EPT) and an organisation commissioned to support the coproduction - RedQuadrant. In total, 429 individuals participated in the events to give people an opportunity to share their views and experiences. Over 250 (63%) were people who either use adult day opportunities services, attend special schools or colleges or are informal carers and families. The events also sought the views of providers and professional staff that enabled people to participate at different venues across Birmingham.

- 3.9.4.2 The Empowering People Team (EPT) and RedQuadrant are building a portfolio of images of possibility to illustrate the potential for day opportunities and showcase what good looks like. They are also visiting day centres to hear stories of success from people who use services, carers, and providers. This will also provide opportunity to explore both real and perceived barriers to people accessing day opportunities.
- 3.9.4.3 For this phase of co-production, it is important to engage with individuals and groups from communities whose voices are seldom heard. This will include different ethnic and cultural communities, those with more complex communication and support needs, younger adults who are transitioning from education without a pathway plan in place, and those who currently do not use day opportunities.
- 3.9.4.4 A specific focus is on looking at day opportunities for older adults. Informed by research recently completed by University of Bristol and Kings College London, this work will address the question as to why day opportunities do not seem to respond to the choice and variety and build on personalised and tailored activities that appeal to the wide interest of our diverse older adult population. It will consider the need to respond to increasing numbers of people with dementia and other health needs and the problem of affordable and sustainable transport.

3.10 7 - Best start in life

- 3.10.1 The Public Health Division's work to ensure the best start in life for Birmingham's children and young people is integrated with the Children and Families Directorate and delivered through the Healthy Child Programme 0-19 and providers in the community and voluntary sector.
- 3.10.2 Infant Feeding
- 3.10.2.1 The national Family Hubs and Best Start for Life Programme aims to establish Family Hubs: physical and virtual networks where families can access an

integrated and seamless service. Additional funding has been provided to Birmingham over three years.

- 3.10.2.2 The Public Health Division lead on the actions to improve rates of breastfeeding. The aim is to enable choice by ensuring that breast pumps are available, infant feeding 3.10.2.3 specialists are accessible in maternity units, peer support is available, and Birmingham becomes a breastfeeding friendly city. Progress is being made across all these actions, working in collaboration with the Local Maternity and Neonatal System, with community organisations and with parents.

3.10.3 Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) as part of the 2-2.5-year Review

- 3.10.3.1 It is critically important that children are assessed against developmental milestones in their early years. This is why there are five mandated assessments undertaken by Health Visiting Services before children reach 5 years of age. One of the assessments is at 2-2.5 years which uses the ASQ. Delivery of this assessment is monitored on a quarterly basis and at Quarter 1 was above the target.

3.10.4 Infant Mortality

- 3.10.4.1 The work of the Infant Mortality Taskforce has now been incorporated into the joint working with the BSol ICB. Work is being taken forward by the Infant Mortality Action Committee which the AD for Children and Young People jointly chairs with the ICB Senior Responsible Officer, Dr Deepthi Jyotish. The current work underway involves the development of a pre-pregnancy package, culturally competent genetics services, locality working and work in schools.

3.10.5 Development of the Healthy Happy Schools approach for Birmingham

- 3.10.5.1 This is a new programme of work which is currently being developed together with the Children and Families Directorate and involves wider stakeholders such as Birmingham Education Partnership and the academic sector. The initial focus will be on mental wellbeing and resilience. Currently the evidence base is being developed and discussions are ongoing as to the initial schools that will be part of the start-up.

3.11 **Appendix A**

[Public Health Outcomes Framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/public-health-outcomes-framework)

[Suicide prevention strategy for England: 2023 to 2028 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/suicide-prevention-strategy-for-england-2023-to-2028)

4. Social Cohesion, Equalities and Community Safety Portfolio

4.1. This report will break down this work under the following headings to represent the following strategic priorities:

- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)
- Domestic Abuse
- Serious Violence Duty
- Modern Slavery
- Criminal Exploitation of Young People
- Tackling and Reducing Hate Crime
- Local and Neighbourhood Working Around Community Safety
- CCTV and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)
- Refugees, Migration and City of Sanctuary 2023
- Bereavement Services and Register Office
- Equalities and Cohesion

4.2. Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

- 4.2.1. We have a robust process in place around ASB Case Reviews, the learning from these have, in part, supported the development of the ASB Integrated policy.
- 4.2.2. The Everyone Should Feel Safe campaign continues and is supported by the community safety team, there have been several professional learning events

also introduced as part of the campaign. A working group is in place to drive the VAWG strategy forward. We have also introduced a lived experience group who have worked with us to develop a consultation document which will be used to set the priorities within the strategy. We work closely with Adult Social Care commissioning team who are developing the Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy to ensure both strategies work in support of each other.

- 4.2.3. We have been successful with our funding application under Safer Streets 5, which will bring in an assortment of programmes to increase safety within the night-time economy (NTE). We have also introduced 2 community safety intervention officers who work within the NTE, in partnership with the BIDs and Safe Spaces.
- 4.2.4. Funding has been secured for an Inform Women Transform Lives (IWTL) campaign to raise awareness about women's right to information, to significantly increase the number of women accessing key information from municipal governments, and to demonstrate the transformative impact that information has on individual women, their families, and the wider community.
- 4.2.5. A hyperlocal awareness campaign has been developed which informs women about their human rights in relation to Gender Based Violence (GBV) and to understand early signs of coercive control and abuse.

4.3. **Domestic Abuse**

4.3.1. Draft Strategy

- 4.3.1.1. Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 placed a new statutory duty on local authorities to provide support, for victims and their children, who reside in safe accommodation and to publish a Domestic Abuse Strategy, setting out amongst other things, how they will deliver on this duty. The city's Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy 2018+ ends this year and in line with the new statutory duty, a cross agency working group was set up to develop a new strategy. The working group, reporting to the Domestic Abuse Local Strategic Partnership Board (DALSP) chaired by Councillor Brennan, agreed an approach that ensured: strong partnership involvement; embedding the Council's corporate priority of prevention and early intervention; and alignment with the new Homelessness Prevention Strategy and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, currently being drafted.
- 4.3.1.2. While drafting the strategy, to ensure strong city-wide input from the start, the working group consulted with partners from across the city and engaged with survivors through commissioned domestic abuse providers and a wider Be Heard survey.

- 4.3.1.3. Following a series of strategic working sessions, a draft strategy titled “Birmingham’s Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy 2024+” has been produced. The title reflects a city-wide partnership strategy, not a council strategy, in recognition that no one single agency can tackle domestic abuse alone. The strategy builds on the previous DA strategy and its proactive prevention model, highlighting the importance of not only preventing DA from occurring in the first place, through raising awareness and understanding of it, but to also intervene earlier to prevent escalation of risk.
- 4.3.1.4. The draft strategy continues to have a gendered approach to tackling domestic abuse, recognising that whilst domestic abuse can happen to anyone, the vast majority of survivors are women, as a result of structural gender inequality. The government’s ‘Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls’ strategy (2021) recognises domestic abuse as a crime that “disproportionately affect[s] women and girls”. In the year ending March 2022, 2.4 million adults were affected by domestic abuse related crimes and 74.1% of those were women. (CSEW, published November 2022).
- 4.3.1.5. The strategy also sets out 6 key values: being survivor-centred and survivor-led; strengths-based; ensuring early intervention and prevention; perpetrator accountability; intersectionality and robust partnership response. In addition to the approach in the previous strategy, two additional priorities have been highlighted: Children & Young people and Perpetrators to ensure appropriate focus is given. It now has 6 key priorities:
- **Priority 1: Leadership & Partnership** - Strengthening our collective partnership efforts across Birmingham (whole system approach) to DA.
 - **Priority 2: Changing attitudes & Prevention** - Prevent domestic abuse from occurring in the first place, so relationships centre on equality and respect.
 - **Priority 3: Early Help and Support** - Intervene early to reduce harm and prevent escalation of risk.
 - **Priority 4: Children and Young People** - Raising awareness of healthy relationships, intervening early to support, and protecting them from the harms of DA.
 - **Priority 5: Safety, Support and Recovery** - Single coordinated pathway of quality assured support for survivors across Birmingham
 - **Priority 6: Holding perpetrators to account** - Developing a pathway of interventions that holds perpetrators fully accountable for their actions.

- A special DALSP board away day, held on 4th October, focussed on the draft DA prevention strategy agreeing on the above values and priorities.

4.3.1.6. Following board approval of the draft strategy, a 6-week public consultation (ending 6th December 2023) is underway to gather input from across the city. A Be Heard survey link has been created, sessions have been facilitated with key agencies, and numerous public-facing events have been attended, including: the Cost-of-Living conference, full Council marketplace, and the Safeguarding Children Partnership Board conference. The draft has been presented at Neighbourhoods Oversight and Scrutiny Committee, and progress against the strategy will be reported annually to the committee. There will also be two citizen engagement sessions.

4.3.1.7. Following the consultation, the final amended strategy will be approved by the DALSPB, before being presented to Cabinet and launched in Spring 2024.

4.3.2. Part 4 Duty

4.3.2.1. Birmingham has continued to implement its statutory duty to commission support within safe accommodation. In 2022-23:

- 861 referrals were received for safe accommodation support.
- A total of 663 people were supported in safe accommodation: 319 women, 2 men, 1 transgender person, and 341 children.
- Unsuccessful referrals were mainly due to lack of capacity, the person refusing support, and the support being in the risk area for the survivor.

4.3.2.2. Moving forward, we aim to continue to commission support in safe accommodation that meets the gaps outlined in the Needs Assessment, such as support for people with disabilities, and specialist complex needs support.

4.3.3. Recommissioning 2024+

4.3.3.1. Domestic abuse contracts, sitting under broader Adult Social Care Vulnerable Adults contracts, end in November 2024. Under these contracts are refuge, dispersed accommodation, the Domestic Abuse Hub, and lead workers. The services are required to demonstrate diversity competence to reflect the needs of the local population and include support to male victims of domestic abuse, and victims from marginalised communities.

4.3.3.2. Work has begun to develop our commissioning model which will be further enhanced by a focus on Early Intervention and Prevention in line with the

Councils key priorities. In addition, we will be holding market engagement events with specialist partners to gather their input.

4.4. Serious Violence Duty

- 4.4.1. In January 2023, the Serious Violence Duty (SVD) was introduced. In response to the Duty, the Community Safety Partnership, as part of its governance review, introduced the Birmingham Violence Reduction Board (BVRB). The BVRB has been collaborating with partners to ensure Birmingham meets its responsibilities under the Serious Violence Duty and has led on the development of the Birmingham Reducing Serious Violence Strategy and the completion of the Birmingham Violence Problem Profile. The profile has been used to formulate the information to develop the Birmingham Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment Dashboard and the completion of the Birmingham Delivery Plan 2023-2026, which will feed into the Regional Reducing Violence Strategy being developed by the West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership. The Birmingham strategy has embedded a public health and early intervention and prevention approach.

4.5. Modern Slavery

- 4.5.1. A review and sustainability plan for the Modern Slavery Champion model has been produced and the initial draft has been shared with community safety management for approval. The coordinator has also prepared and delivered a presentation at the West Midlands Anti-Slavery Network meeting about the work undertaken within the LA Forum and Public Health Approach to modern slavery (Prevention Pillar). Work is also undergoing to support Adult Social Care with safeguarding enquiries relating to modern slavery.

4.6. Criminal Exploitation of Young People

- 4.6.1. The community safety team have provided funding and support to develop the Youth Inspector Programme, delivered through EMPOWERU and the Children's Trust. This programme worked with children and young people (13-18 years) from the local areas of Newtown/Lozells and Handsworth directly impacted by serious youth violence and exploitation. The training is open to all children and young people and was intended to assist and build confidence by ensuring young people are equipped to share experiences and have a voice in meetings. There are plans being developed to deliver this programme in other areas of the city. Through the people meetings within the local community safety partnerships, discussions are taking place to bring

information together which partners then use to deliver disruption activities regarding county lines. This has resulted in several successful prosecutions.

4.7. Tackling and Reducing Hate Crime

- 4.7.1. The Birmingham Hate Crime Partnership is in place with over 80 members taking forward a comprehensive delivery and action plan. The partnership has produced focussed neighbourhood plans. An example is the successful model of the 10-point plan introduced in the Gay Quarter of the city centre, following a series of LGBT hate crime incidents. This has been replicated in other night-time economy areas. The partnership has engaged with third party reporting centres to support their activities and is also working closely with national organisations such as the Community Security Trust and TellMAMA to help tackle antisemitism and islamophobia.

4.8. Local and Neighbourhood Working Around Community Safety.

- 4.8.1. Following the re-modelling of local policing by West Midlands Police, we have seen a reduction of local policing resources in neighbourhoods as the Police focus on response. The introduction of Operation Eternity, we have seen an increase in officers in locations of high ASB working closely with the Council on tackling ASB in these locations. The introduction of community safety intervention officers within the Council's Community Safety Team has allowed us to develop locality-based activities to tackle ASB. We have introduced projects in Welsh House Farm, Fox Hollies Park and increased presence in the city centre, Erdington and Stockland Green and North Edgbaston.
- 4.8.2. A review of the Local Partnership Delivery Group's was concluded in May 2023. These groups have been renamed to Local Community Safety Partnerships to be clear about their primary purpose of working to reduce crime. New terms of reference have been developed that maintain a place and people focus, whilst also introducing annual delivery plans that are reviewed quarterly alongside a performance dashboard to monitor activity and ensure they are delivering an impact in neighbourhoods.

4.9. CCTV and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

- 4.9.1. CCTV monitoring continues although we have not introduced any more cameras, we work with other departments within the city council share resources.
- 4.9.2. The ASB integrated policy has been developed and is in the process of sign off with other departments within the city council this will ensure a joint up approach regarding dealing with ASB. We have also developed a city-wide

operational group in collaboration with West Midlands Police, that although the focus is serious organised crime this will also have an impact on ASB within the targeted neighbourhoods.

- 4.9.3. We have introduced Community Safety Intervention Officers who are patch based and carry out street patrols. With the current resource they are achieving over 600 interactions each quarter, these are then resulting in providing advice, signposting, referrals for support services or enforcement. However, there is a risk with this function as most are externally funded and all are on fixed term contracts.

4.10. **Refugees, Migration and City of Sanctuary 2023**

4.10.1. Arrivals

- 4.10.1.1. Birmingham continues to welcome new arrivals to the city as part of our ongoing commitment to / involvement in the following schemes:

- Homes 4 Ukraine – c.1000 individuals (450 families) since the beginning of the scheme in 2022.
- Asylum dispersal and new refugees through asylum – c.1900 individuals at any one time, and 410 households that have left the asylum system with a positive decision (as refugees) since the beginning of 2023.
- Afghan Resettlement (includes the Afghan Relocation & Assistance Policy, the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme and the Afghan Find Your Own Pathway) – c.435 individuals since the scheme began in 2021.

4.10.2. Integration

- 4.10.2.1. Refugees in Birmingham who arrived via one of the Afghan schemes, Syrian Resettlement (2015-2020 arrivals period) or UKRS (2021 arrivals period) can currently access four services for support across tenancy sustainment, employability, participation, and mental health, and two further grant projects. These were all recommissioned in 2023. In addition, three grant projects provide further integration support. Those still within their first 12 months of settlement in Birmingham also receive dedicated support via the Arrivals, Accommodation and Orientation service (Refugee Action).
- 4.10.2.2. Support for Ukrainian guests is available through two contracts (both recommissioned in 2023) and a further 15 grant projects covering services such as general advice & guidance, employment and wellbeing support, language courses, etc. In January this year we launched the 'move on' financial package to help individuals/families move on into private accommodation and so far, 124 families have secured private rented accommodation by using this support package.

4.10.2.3. Asylum seekers with a positive refugee decision in Birmingham can access support via the Move-on Service (Refugee & Migrant Centre). Asylum seekers living in Birmingham still waiting for an asylum decision will soon be able to access one of several grant funded projects to support integration and wellbeing, subject to spend control.

4.10.2.4. The ESOL Hub (Birmingham Adult Education Service) and the Migrant Advice Portal are two portals commissioned by ASC Refugees & Migration team to provide a one-stop-shop for ESOL and Advice in the city to improve access to and quality of services.

4.10.3. Partnerships, strategy, and policy

4.10.3.1. The City of Sanctuary Partnership Board meets on a quarterly basis with a focus on the strategic work and priorities of the Council and its key stakeholders, and how these meet the City of Sanctuary objectives. The City of Sanctuary Policy and strategy is currently being reviewed and refreshed through this Partnership Board.

4.10.3.2. The Council supports the work of the City of Sanctuary Voluntary Committee, assisting the Committee to embed and expand successful schemes such as Schools of Sanctuary, and to help establish new 'streams of sanctuary' such as Universities of Sanctuary.

4.10.3.3. BCC's Refugees and Migration commissioning team continues to host the Birmingham Migration Forum (BMF) on a quarterly basis, providing a space to present and discuss key issues facing commissioners and the voluntary sector, and to inform the direction of future work.

4.11. **Bereavement Services and Register Office**

4.11.1. Improving Cemeteries and Crematoria

4.11.1.1. The project to rebuild the crematorium at Yardley commenced on 27th April 2023. This project will successfully deliver two new bariatric cremators and abatement equipment with better gas emission technology and energy efficiency measures. The chapel is also being refurbished. The project is on track and the upgraded facility is forecast to open on 19 December 2023.

4.11.1.2. The project to extend Kings Norton Cemetery has commenced and is in the investigation and design phase. Ecological surveys are currently taking place, with the development works due to commence in 2024.

4.11.2. Improving the City Council's Mortuary Provision

- 4.11.2.1. To ensure there is an improvement in the City Council's mortuary provision a scoping exercise for a new mortuary has commenced. Regulation and Enforcement are working with Acivico and Inclusive Growth (Property Programme Manager) and to determine the specification and size of new mortuary. Any new mortuary will include the capacity for the provision of Computerised Topography Post Mortems (CTPM) and increased freezer space.
- 4.11.2.2. The option to refurbish Newton Street was deemed not viable due to costs and structural configuration being unable to meet service needs. efficient. We are now awaiting the receipt of the feasibility and cost plan related to a new build on an East Birmingham Council owned site. On receipt of this information a Cabinet report will be prepared. Officers have identified that capital funding will be required to progress the proposal.
- 4.11.2.3. In the interim period the current contract to utilise CTPM facilities delivered by a private company in Sandwell has been extended until end September 2024. In the coming year we will seek to identify future provision through a tendering exercise. We are aware that many communities and citizens prefer that this type of digital (non-invasive) post-mortem is available. However, it's use is only appropriate for certain cases and which bodies are referred for a CTPM is a decision made by a Coroner.
- 4.11.3. Improving Customer satisfaction with the services
- 4.11.3.1. Over the last year the Bereavement Service has been compiling data on the ability of the service to accommodate burials and cremations requests within a reasonable timescale.
- 4.11.3.2. Current data shows that we can provide short notice burials within 24hours of the request in almost 100% of cases. We provide burial service 364 days of the year (except on Christmas day), and we can now facilitate evening burials in the winter at Sutton New Hall Cemetery. Burials at Quinton Cemetery can now also take place at short notice and later during weekday afternoons. Given the data we hold we do not see a demand for additional service for burials at the weekend or in the evening.
- 4.11.3.3. We continue to explore the opportunity to provide a crematorium service on Saturdays. However, the closure of our Yardley Crematorium for rebuild has postponed any work on scoping this delivery with current demand at our Lodge Hill site not indicated demand for a Saturday service. Once the Yardley Crematorium reopens on the forecast date of 19 December 2023, we will be able to establish more fully the demand requirements.

4.11.4. Ensuring the workforce better represents the make-up of Birmingham's communities

4.11.4.1. The future operating model for both the Bereavement and Registration Services are currently under review. We seek to ensure we provide customer response and efficient services and consider the introduction of apprenticeships and succession planning as part of the models.

4.11.4.2. Bereavement Services and Registration Services continue to review job descriptions whenever vacancies arise, to ensure they are as inclusive as possible and to advertise all vacancies to as wide a group of applicants as possible. Recent activities include attending a jobs fair at Stirchley Community Centre and promoting vacancies through the Bereavement Roundtable Group and the Muslim Bereavement Steering Group, both of which are chaired by the Cabinet Member for Social Justice Community Safety and Equalities.

4.11.5. Engaging community groups

4.11.5.1. A wider range and number of community groups are regularly engaged in both Bereavement Services and Registration Services. This includes Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery, Friends of Handsworth Cemetery and the Friends of Key Hill and Warstone Lane Cemeteries, all of whom support maintain the condition and profile of cemeteries. The Cabinet Member for Social Justice Community Safety and Equalities chairs the Muslim Bereavement Steering Group which meets regularly to ensure issues of concern to the Muslim community are raised and addressed as appropriate. This group is crucial in maintaining a positive relationship with a main user of our burial services.

4.11.6. Extend the partnership working with the Bereavement Roundtable

4.11.6.1. The Bereavement Roundtable has met twice in the last year to discuss matters to improve the bereavement process for all sectors of the community. Members include representatives who work with bereaved people and families such as: NHS trusts, Cruse Bereavement Care, Road Peace, Beyond the Horizon, Birmingham Hospice, and representatives of the Muslim and Jewish communities. It also has representatives from across Birmingham City Council and Sandwell Council who are involved in providing services to the bereaved. Feedback from the group seeks to share information and identify and progress customer improvements.

4.11.7. Ensuring there are better long-term plans in place for the Bereavement Services

- 4.11.7.1. The future operating model for Bereavement and Registration Services is currently under review and a long-term strategy for Bereavement Services will be developed as part of this process. The review of the management structure within Regulation and Enforcement included the development of a Head of Bereavement and Registration Services, which was completed in May 2023.
- 4.11.7.2. A future Capital agenda 2023 – 2027 is in place, which will be extended to include the 25 years property/asset strategy.

4.12. **Equalities and Cohesion**

4.12.1. Progress on the Race Code

- 4.12.1.1. There has been good progress on the Race Code which has included:
- Commitment to eradicate the Race Pay Gap by 2025
 - Taking positive action to improve reporting rates.
 - Director of Strategy Equalities & Partnership is the executive sponsor.
 - Revision of EIA framework is on-going.
 - Safe Space listening circles have been held.
 - Commitment for ethnically diverse recruitment panels
 - Chief Executive commitment set a range of equality objectives which will be cascaded to CLT.
 - Use Insight data to develop targeted actions to tackle racial inequality in services.

4.12.2. Creating a Diverse & Inclusive Workforce

- 4.12.2.1. The Equalities team are launching the RESPECT Allies programme in December 2023 which are volunteer roles. With training and guidance, the RESPECT Allies will:
- Work to create inclusive workplaces.
 - Raise the profile of Everyone's Battle, Everyone's Business Equality Strategy and Action Plan.
 - Promote and embed values and behaviours of equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace.

- Work with the Equalities Team and RESPECT allies to hold talks, discussions, and lunch time briefings on ED&I issues.
- Hold diversity and awareness raising events in their services.

4.12.3. Equality Impact Assessments (EIA)

- 4.12.3.1. The Equalities Team delivers weekly EIA support surgeries to support managers and improve the quality of EIAs. We are in the process of designing a new EIA which will be completed in December 2023 and will be delivering a training programme for all managers in 2024.

4.12.4. Gypsy Roma & Traveler Partnership (GRT)

- 4.12.4.1. The Equalities team have developed a partnership with the Gypsy Roma and Traveler community in Birmingham which is chaired by the Cabinet Member with the aim of creating a city-wide partnership working group which will lead on the work streams co-produced by the GRT community and the council.

4.12.5. Armed Forces Covenant

- 4.12.5.1. Birmingham is one of the first councils to co-produce a partnership group providing a dedicated support service to veterans and families. The Birmingham Armed Forces Operations Group reports directly to Armed Forces Operations Group.
- 4.12.5.2. The City Council has continued its partnership with the Armed Forces Covenant and taken forward actions to support Birmingham's Armed Forces community.
- 4.12.5.3. We are now aiming to reach the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme Gold award by the summer of 2024.

4.12.6. Progress on Everybody's Battle Everybody's Business (EBEB)

- 4.12.6.1. The Council has made progress on EBEB and is developing the EBEB Strategy 2024 – 2027 which will have a wide range of equality action across all nine protected characteristics, which will underpin the objectives.

4.12.7. EBEB Governance System

- 4.12.7.1. Corporate Leadership Team have agreed the development and implementation of a new ED&I monitoring mechanism which will increase

delivery of equality objectives and create a consistent approach across all Directorates.

- 4.12.7.2. A Strategic EBEB Group is being established, chaired by the Strategic Director of Strategy, Equalities and Partnerships. This will be supported by five Directorate EBEB Boards which will be chaired by Strategic Directors and senior officers.

4.12.8. Progress on Objectives:

- 4.12.8.1. **EBEB - Objective 2: Demonstrate inclusive leadership, partnership, and a clear organisational commitment to be a leader in equality, diversity, and inclusion in the city.**

- 4.12.8.2. A city-wide LGBTQ+ partnership was established in June 2022, the Proud Rainbow City Partnership (PRCP) which has been developed to encompass four thematic areas and discuss and develop priorities:

- Tackling discrimination & Abuse
- Understanding & Engagement
- Addressing Inequalities
- Visibility & Celebration

- 4.12.8.3. Successes included supporting Birmingham Pride to participate in the Birmingham & Sandwell Mela in 2023.

- 4.12.8.4. **EBEB Equality Objective 3: Involve and enable our diverse communities to play an active role in civic society and put the citizens' voice at the heart of decision-making.**

- 4.12.8.5. The five workstreams within the Stronger Communities strand of work have been progressed and managed by Birmingham Voluntary Sector Council. (BVSC) A Stronger Communities Community Stakeholder Panel with strategic partners was formed to oversee the workstreams in March 2022, to be a critical friend and support the delivery of EBEB.

- 4.12.8.6. Milestones confirmed for legacy committee reporting were:

- A *Peace Garden* for reflection and commemoration (this work is continuing till Jan 2024).
- A digital record of what contribution people have made to the making of Birmingham - *We made Birmingham*, young people trained as community

journalists to find out what residents and visitors to the city think of Birmingham.

- *Get Communities Talking* - encouraging participation of women who have been marginalised through difficulties with language or basic skills to engage with other communities.
- *Inspiring Future Leaders*: one of many cohesion challenges is that marginalised and disadvantaged young people are struggling with major difficulties that drastically affect their chances of success in life, and their ability to participate in society. This theme sought to build confidence of young people by connecting them to positive role models from black and Asian minority ethnic backgrounds and through delivery of practical workshops.
- Development of a series of *Heritage Trails* throughout the city highlighting the buildings and culture existing in local areas. A [Heritage Trails Celebration](#) event was organised in December 2022.

4.12.8.7. All projects workstreams are now complete and an Impact report has been produced: [Commonwealth Games Community fund Impact Report](#).

4.12.8.8. **EBEB Objective 4: Deliver responsive services and customer care that is accessible and inclusive to individual needs and respects faith, beliefs, and cultural differences.**

4.12.8.9. Birmingham Faith Covenant (originally established in 2014) was refreshed in November 2022: [Faith Covenant 2022 | Birmingham City Council](#). A formal signing event took place in the City and the forum continues to meet. An action plan has been drafted that builds on the Covenant narrative and aligns with our cities 6.

4.12.9. Other Initiatives

4.12.9.1. Supported Inclusive Cities which is an established knowledge exchange initiative supporting UK cities and their local partners to achieve a step-change in their approach towards the inclusion of newcomers in the city. Partner cities shared in the development of a shared local story of inclusion, supporting and driving inclusive economic growth, connecting communities, mainstreaming, and building inclusive public services, encouraging civic participation and representation.

- 4.12.9.2. An action plan was created, and delegates were hosted in Birmingham in 2023. This was an excellent opportunity to share with our partners our best practise and learn from other cities.
- 4.12.9.3. In January 2023, the city helped host DLUHC's visit of the United Nations (UN), a follow up visit of the Working Group on the 'Experiences of Persons of African Descent' (WGEPAD). The successful visit was designed to examine racial disparity and human rights as it relates to people of African descent. A final report is being finalised by DLUHC.
- 4.12.9.4. In January 2023, Remembering Srebrenica. A tree planting ceremony and plaque unveiling took place and in July 2023 a Remembering Srebrenica event; 'Together We are One' marked 28 years and was supported by the council, reminding of the importance of remaining vigilant against the forces of hatred.
- 4.9.1.1 A Windrush 75 task and finish group was formed in November 2022, supported by the Public Participation and Cohesion teams, and engaged with key community leaders and grassroots organisations. Small pots of grant funding were made available and enabled sharing of generational stories and experiences, to educate and spark a wider conversation about the positive impact of migration, and to celebrate the 'rich' culture and traditions the African and Caribbean diaspora have brought to the city.

4.10 Appendix B

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6194d05bd3bf7f054f43e011/Tackling_Violence_Against_Women_and_Girls_Strategy_-_July_2021.pdf

[Heritage Trails Celebration](#)

[Commonwealth Games Community Fund Impact Report](#)

[Faith Covenant 2022 | Birmingham City Council](#)