

# **BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

## **MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**TUESDAY, 02 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 14:00 HOURS**  
**IN ON-LINE MEETING, MICROSOFT TEAMS**

### **A G E N D A**

**1     NOTICE OF RECORDING**

Lord Mayor to advise that this meeting will be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site ([www.civico.net/birmingham](http://www.civico.net/birmingham)) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there are confidential or exempt items.

**2     DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Members are reminded that they must declare all relevant pecuniary and non pecuniary interests arising from any business to be discussed at this meeting. If a disclosable pecuniary interest is declared a Member must not speak or take part in that agenda item. Any declarations will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

**1 - 114**

**3     MINUTES**

To confirm and authorise the signing of the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 12 January 2021.

**4     LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**(1400-1410)**

To receive the Lord Mayor's announcements and such communications as the Lord Mayor may wish to place before the Council.

**5     PETITIONS**

**(10 minutes allocated) (1410-1420)**

To receive and deal with petitions in accordance with Council Rules of Procedure (B4.4 E of the Constitution)

As agreed by Council Business Management Committee a schedule of

outstanding petitions is available electronically with the published papers for the meeting and can be viewed or downloaded.

**6 QUESTION TIME**

**(80 minutes allocated) (1420-1540)**

To deal with oral questions in accordance with Council Rules of Procedure (B4.4 F of the Constitution).

- A. Questions from Members of the Public to any Cabinet Member or Ward Forum Chair (10 minutes)
- B. Questions from any Councillor to a Committee Chair, Lead Member of a Joint Board or Ward Forum Chair (up to 10 minutes)
- C. Questions from Councillors other than Cabinet Members to a Cabinet Member (up to 30 minutes)
- D. Questions from Councillors other than Cabinet Member to the Leader or Deputy Leader (up to 30 minutes)

**115 - 204**

**7 UPDATE ON BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19**

**(20 minutes allocated) (1540-1600)**

To consider a report of the Cabinet.

**The Deputy Leader Councillor Brigid Jones to move the following Recommendation:**

"That the report be noted."

**205 - 208**

**8 LEAD MEMBER REPORT: WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**(15 minutes allocated) (1600-1615)**

To consider a report of the Lead Member: West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority.

**Councillor Zafar Iqbal to move the following Recommendation:**

"That the report be noted."

A 15 minute break will be taken.

**209 - 228**

**9 ANNUAL REPORT - AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**(30 minutes allocated) (1630-1700)**

To consider a report of the Chair of the Audit Committee.

**Councillor Fred Grindrod to move the following Motion:**

"That the report be noted."

**229 - 244**

10 **SCRUTINY INQUIRY: REDUCING FLY-TIPPING**

**(60 minutes allocated) (1700-1800)**

To consider a report of the Housing and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee together with an Executive Commentary.

**Councillor Penny Holbrook to move the following Motion:**

"That recommendations R01 to R08 be approved, and that the Executive be requested to pursue their implementation."

11 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To note that the date of the next meeting of City Council is 23 February 2021.





**MEETING OF BIRMINGHAM  
CITY COUNCIL  
12 JANUARY 2021**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL HELD  
ON TUESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2021 AT 1400 HOURS AS AN ON-LINE  
MEETING**

**PRESENT:-** Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Yvonne Mosquito) in the Chair.

**Councillors**

Muhammad Afzal	Eddie Freeman	Zhor Malik
Akhlaq Ahmed	Fred Grindrod	Karen McCarthy
Mohammed Aikhlaq	Paulette Hamilton	Saddak Miah
Alex Aitken	Roger Harmer	Gareth Moore
Safia Akhtar	Kath Hartley	Simon Morrall
Deirdre Alden	Adam Higgs	Brett O'Reilly
Robert Alden	Charlotte Hodivala	John O'Shea
Gurdial Singh Atwal	Penny Holbrook	David Pears
David Barrie	Jon Hunt	Robert Pocock
Baber Baz	Mahmood Hussain	Julien Pritchard
Bob Beauchamp	Shabrana Hussain	Hendrina Quinnen
Matt Bennett	Timothy Huxtable	Chauhdry Rashid
Kate Booth	Mohammed Idrees	Carl Rice
Sir Albert Bore	Zafar Iqbal	Lou Robson
Nicky Brennan	Morriam Jan	Gary Sambrook
Marje Bridle	Kerry Jenkins	Kath Scott
Mick Brown	Meirion Jenkins	Lucy Seymour-Smith
Tristan Chatfield	Julie Johnson	Shafique Shah
Zaker Choudhry	Brigid Jones	Mike Sharpe
Debbie Clancy	Josh Jones	Sybil Spence
Liz Clements	Nagina Kauser	Ron Storer
Maureen Cornish	Mariam Khan	Martin Straker Welds
John Cotton	Narinder Kaur Kooner	Sharon Thompson
Phil Davis	Chaman Lal	Paul Tilsley
Adrian Delaney	Mike Leddy	Ian Ward
Diane Donaldson	Bruce Lines	Mike Ward
Barbara Dring	John Lines	Suzanne Webb
Neil Eustace	Mary Locke	Ken Wood
Mohammed Fazal	Ewan Mackey	Alex Yip
Peter Fowler	Majid Mahmood	Waseem Zaffar
Jayne Francis		

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**NOTICE OF RECORDING**

19421 The Deputy Lord Mayor advised that the meeting would be webcast for live and subsequent broadcasting via the Council's internet site and that members of the Press/Public may record and take photographs except where there are confidential or exempt items.

The Deputy Lord Mayor reminded Members that they did not enjoy Parliamentary Privilege in relation to debates in the Chamber and Members should be careful in what they say during all debates that afternoon.

The Deputy Lord Mayor requested that Members ensure that their video cameras are switched off unless called to speak and that their microphone is switched off when they are not speaking.

The Deputy Lord Mayor advised Members that If they wished to speak, to indicate by using the Raise your Hand button and wait to be invited to speak and to state their name at the start of every contribution.

The Deputy Lord Mayor requested Members not to use the chat function unless they were having technical difficulties.

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**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

19422 The Deputy Lord Mayor reminded Members that they must declare all relevant pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests relating to any items of business to be discussed at this meeting

Any declarations would be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

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**MINUTES**

The Deputy Lord Mayor advised that the vote in respect of the Motion for the Interim Statement of Licensing Policy 2020 recorded in the Minutes of the last meeting had not indicated that Councillor Hendrina Quinnen voted in favour and the Minutes should be amended accordingly.

It was moved by the Deputy Lord Mayor, seconded and –

19423 **RESOLVED:-**

That, subject to the above amendment, the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2020 having been circulated to each Member of the Council, be taken as read and confirmed and signed.

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**LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**New Years Honours**

19423 The Deputy Lord Mayor indicated that it was her pleasure to congratulate those mentioned in the Queen's New Year's Honours list for services to Birmingham or who live in Birmingham as follows:-

**Dame of the British Empire**

Professor Karin Judith Barber

**Knight of the British Empire**

The Chief Constable of the West Midlands, David Thompson

**CBE**

Professor Shearer Carroll West

Director of Adult Social Care, Professor Graeme Betts

**OBE:**

Donna Karen Fraser

Mrs Karen Stephanie Williams

**MBE:**

Dr Anand John Chitnis

Mrs Rachel Jacqueline Davis

Mr Lee Alexander Fletcher

Mrs Sunita Ben Singal

Mr Peter Jason Taylor

Mrs Stella Winifred Thebridge

**BEM**

Mrs Salma Bi

Mr Steven Kapur

Mrs Adassa Cormeta Reid

Mick Braycotton of West Midland's Police

Detective Chief Inspector Jennifer Pearson of West Midlands Police received a Queen's Police Medal

The Deputy Lord Mayor asked those in the meeting to join her in congratulating them all on those marvelous achievements.

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**PETITIONS**

**Petition Relating to City Council Functions Presented prior to the Meeting**

The following petitions were presented:-

(See document No. 1)

In accordance with the proposals by the persons presenting the petition, it was moved by the Deputy Lord Mayor, seconded and -

19424 **RESOLVED:-**

That the petition be received and referred to the relevant Chief Officer to examine and report as appropriate.

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**Petitions Relating to City Council Functions Presented at the Meeting**

The following petitions were presented:-

(See document No. 2)

In accordance with the proposals by the Members presenting the petitions, it was moved by the Deputy Lord Mayor, seconded and -

19425 **RESOLVED:-**

That the petitions be received and referred to the relevant Chief Officer(s) to examine and report as appropriate.

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**Petitions Update**

The following Petitions Update had been made available electronically:-

(See document No. 3)

It was moved by the Deputy Lord Mayor, seconded and -

19426 **RESOLVED:-**

That the Petitions Update be noted and those petitions for which a satisfactory response has been received, be discharged.

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**QUESTION TIME**

19427 The Council proceeded to consider Oral Questions in accordance with Council Rules of Procedure (B4.4 F of the Constitution).

Details of the questions asked are available for public inspection via the Webcast.

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**LEAD MEMBER REPORT: WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME PANEL**

The following report of the Lead Member of the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel was submitted:-



(See document No 4)

Councillor Shafique Shah moved the motion which was seconded.

A debate ensued

Councillor Shafique Shah replied to the debate.

The Motion having been moved and seconded was agreed.

It was therefore-

19428 **RESOLVED:-**

That the report be noted.

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### **ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by the Deputy Lord Mayor, seconded and

19429 **RESOLVED:-**

That the Council be adjourned until 1600 hours on this day.

The Council then adjourned at 1545 hours.

At 1602 hours the Council resumed at the point where the meeting had been adjourned.

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### **ROUTE TO ZERO REPORT**

The following report of the Acting Director – Inclusive Growth was submitted:-

(See document No 5)

Councillor Waseem Zaffar moved the motion which was seconded.

In accordance with Council Rules of Procedure, Councillors Roger Harmer and Paul Tilsley gave notice of the following amendment to the Motion:-

(See document No. 6)

Councillor Roger Harmer moved the amendment which was seconded by Councillor Paul Tilsley.

In accordance with Council Rules of Procedure, Councillors Ian Ward and John O'Shea gave notice of the following amendment to the Motion:-

(See document No. 7)

Councillor Ian Ward moved the amendment which was seconded by Councillor John O'Shea.

In accordance with Council Rules of Procedure, Councillors Simon Morrall and Gareth Moore gave notice of the following amendment to the Motion:-

(See document No. 8)

Councillor Simon Morrall moved the amendment which was seconded by Councillor Gareth Moore.

A debate ensued during which following a speech from Councillor Liz Clements, as a point of clarification, Councillor Adam Higgs noted that he had not seconded the amendment by Councillor Simon Morrall.

Councillor Waseem Zaffar replied to the debate.

The first amendment in the names of Councillors Roger Harmer and Paul Tilsley having been moved and seconded was put to the vote and, by the recorded vote set out below, was declared to be lost.

**For the amendment (9)**

Baber Baz	Roger Harmer	Julien Pritchard
Zaker Choudhry	Jon Hunt	Mike Ward
Neil Eustace	Morriam Jan	Paul Tilsley

**Against the amendment (56)**

Muhammad Afzal	Fred Grindrod	Zhor Malik
Akhlaq Ahmed	Paulette Hamilton	Karen McCarthy
Mohammed Aikhlaq	Kath Hartley	Saddak Miah
Alex Aitken	Penny Holbrook	Brett O'Reilly
Safia Akhtar	Mahmood Hussain	John O'Shea
Gurdial Singh Atwal	Shabrana Hussain	Robert Pocock
David Barrie	Mohammed Idrees	Hendrina Quinnen
Kate Booth	Zafar Iqbal	Carl Rice
Sir Albert Bore	Kerry Jenkins	Lou Robson
Marje Bridle	Julie Johnson	Kath Scott
Mick Brown	Brigid Jones	Lucy Seymour-Smith
Tristan Chatfield	Josh Jones	Shafique Shah
Liz Clements	Nagina Kauser	Mike Sharpe
John Cotton	Mariam Khan	Sybil Spence
Phil Davis	Narinder Kaur Kooner	Martin Straker Welds
Diane Donaldson	Chaman Lal	Sharon Thompson
Barbara Dring	Mike Leddy	Ian Ward
Mohammed Fazal	Mary Locke	Waseem Zaffar
Jayne Francis	Majid Mahmood	

**Abstentions (19)**

Deirdre Alden	Charlotte Hodivala	Chauhdry Rashid
Matt Bennett	Timothy Huxtable	Gary Sambrook
Debbie Clancy	Bruce Lines	Ron Storer
Maureen Cornish	Gareth Moore	Suzanne Webb
Peter Fowler	Simon Morrall	Ken Wood
Adam Higgs	David Pears	Alex Yip
Eddie Freeman		

The second amendment in the names of Councillors Ian Ward and John O'Shea having been moved and seconded was put to the vote and, by the recorded vote set out below, was declared to be carried.

**For the amendment (57)**

Muhammad Afzal	Paulette Hamilton	Zhor Malik
Akhlaq Ahmed	Roger Harmer	Karen McCarthy
Mohammed Aikhlaq	Kath Hartley	Saddak Miah
Alex Aitken	Penny Holbrook	Brett O'Reilly
Safia Akhtar	Mahmood Hussain	John O'Shea
Gurdial Singh Atwal	Shabrana Hussain	Robert Pocock
Kate Booth	Mohammed Idrees	Hendrina Quinnen
Sir Albert Bore	Zafar Iqbal	Chauhdry Rashid
Marje Bridle	Kerry Jenkins	Carl Rice
Mick Brown	Julie Johnson	Lou Robson
Tristan Chatfield	Brigid Jones	Kath Scott
Liz Clements	Josh Jones	Lucy Seymour-Smith
John Cotton	Nagina Kauser	Shafique Shah
Phil Davis	Mariam Khan	Mike Sharpe
Diane Donaldson	Narinder Kaur Kooner	Sybil Spence
Barbara Dring	Chaman Lal	Martin Straker Welds
Mohammed Fazal	Mike Leddy	Sharon Thompson
Jayne Francis	Mary Locke	Ian Ward
Fred Grindrod	Majid Mahmood	Waseem Zaffar

**Against the amendment (2)**

David Barrie	Baber Baz
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**Abstentions (24)**

Deirdre Alden	Charlotte Hodivala	Julien Pritchard
Matt Bennett	Jon Hunt	Gary Sambrook
Zaker Choudhry	Timothy Huxtable	Ron Storer
Debbie Clancy	Morriam Jan	Paul Tilsley
Maureen Cornish	Bruce Lines	Mike Ward
Peter Fowler	Gareth Moore	Suzanne Webb
Adam Higgs	Simon Morrall	Ken Wood
Eddie Freeman	David Pears	Alex Yip

## **City Council – 12 January 2021**

The third amendment in the names of Councillors Simon Morrall and Gareth Moore having been moved and seconded was put to the vote and, by the recorded vote set out below, was declared to be lost.

### **For the amendment (25)**

Deirdre Alden	Adam Higgs	Gareth Moore
Robert Alden	Eddie Freeman	Simon Morrall
David Barrie	Charlotte Hodiola	David Pears
Matt Bennett	Timothy Huxtable	Gary Sambrook
Zaker Choudhry	Morriam Jan	Ron Storer
Debbie Clancy	Meirion Jenkins	Suzanne Webb
Maureen Cornish	Bruce Lines	Ken Wood
Adrian Delaney	Ewan Mackey	Alex Yip
Peter Fowler		

### **Against the amendment (57)**

Muhammad Afzal	Paulette Hamilton	Karen McCarthy
Akhlaq Ahmed	Kath Hartley	Saddak Miah
Mohammed Aikhlaq	Penny Holbrook	Brett O'Reilly
Alex Aitken	Mahmood Hussain	John O'Shea
Safia Akhtar	Shabrana Hussain	Robert Pocock
Gurdial Singh Atwal	Mohammed Idrees	Julien Pritchard
Kate Booth	Zafar Iqbal	Hendrina Quinnen
Sir Albert Bore	Kerry Jenkins	Chauhdry Rashid
Marje Bridle	Julie Johnson	Carl Rice
Mick Brown	Brigid Jones	Lou Robson
Tristan Chatfield	Josh Jones	Kath Scott
Liz Clements	Nagina Kauser	Lucy Seymour-Smith
John Cotton	Mariam Khan	Shafique Shah
Phil Davis	Narinder Kaur Kooner	Mike Sharpe
Diane Donaldson	Chaman Lal	Sybil Spence
Barbara Dring	Mike Leddy	Martin Straker Welds
Mohammed Fazal	Mary Locke	Sharon Thompson
Jayne Francis	Majid Mahmood	Ian Ward
Fred Grindrod	Zhor Malik	Waseem Zaffar

### **Abstentions (5)**

Baber Baz	Jon Hunt	Mike Ward
Roger Harmer	Paul Tilsley	

The Motion as amended having been moved and seconded was put to the vote and, by the recorded vote set out below, was declared to be carried.

**For the Motion as amended (63)**

Muhammad Afzal	Paulette Hamilton	Zhor Malik
Akhlaq Ahmed	Roger Harmer	Karen McCarthy
Mohammed Aikhlaq	Kath Hartley	Saddak Miah
Alex Aitken	Penny Holbrook	Brett O'Reilly
Safia Akhtar	Jon Hunt	John O'Shea
Gurdial Singh Atwal	Mahmood Hussain	Robert Pocock
Baber Baz	Shabrana Hussain	Julien Pritchard
Kate Booth	Mohammed Idrees	Hendrina Quinnen
Sir Albert Bore	Zafar Iqbal	Carl Rice
Marje Bridle	Morriam Jan	Lou Robson
Mick Brown	Kerry Jenkins	Kath Scott
Tristan Chatfield	Julie Johnson	Lucy Seymour-Smith
Zaker Choudhry	Brigid Jones	Shafique Shah
Liz Clements	Josh Jones	Mike Sharpe
John Cotton	Nagina Kauser	Sybil Spence
Diane Donaldson	Mariam Khan	Martin Straker Welds
Barbara Dring	Narinder Kaur Kooner	Sharon Thompson
Neil Eustace	Chaman Lal	Paul Tilsley
Mohammed Fazal	Mike Leddy	Ian Ward
Jayne Francis	Mary Locke	Mike Ward
Fred Grindrod	Majid Mahmood	Waseem Zaffar

**Against the motion as amended (0)**

**Abstentions (21)**

Deirdre Alden	Adam Higgs	David Pears
David Barrie	Eddie Freeman	Chauhdry Rashid
Matt Bennett	Charlotte Hodivala	Gary Sambrook
Debbie Clancy	Timothy Huxtable	Ron Storer
Maureen Cornish	Bruce Lines	Suzanne Webb
Adrian Delaney	Gareth Moore	Ken Wood
Peter Fowler	Simon Morrall	Alex Yip

It was therefore-

19430

**RESOLVED:-**

To endorse the Action Plan and the priority areas set out within it.

To note that the Council is committed to delivering additional resources to the Route to Zero R20 work including the establishment of a Climate Change and Sustainability Team led by a new Assistant Director for Climate Change and Sustainability, the resources for which will be sought through the Medium-Term Financial Plan at February 2021 City Council.

The City Council's desire to be Net Zero Carbon by 2030 and support the reduction of carbon emissions across Birmingham is reliant upon National Government and the Combined Authority adopting a more ambitious approach to tackling the climate change emergency.

Currently neither are demonstrating the required leadership having set targets to be net zero carbon by 2050 and 2041 respectively.

The City Council will require support in both the provision of resources and changes to national policy to allow for the full delivery of the items contained within the Action Plan to reach the target of carbon neutrality by 2030.

By not doing so National Government and the Combined Authority will be failing in their duty to take seriously the existential threat that climate change poses and will be failing to grasp the economic opportunities that de-carbonisation of our local economy can bring. In the context of Covid-19, this is of greater significance as we seek to rebuild and renew the City once the coronavirus pandemic has finally passed.

The Council resolves to write to the Government to set out the necessary asks (in both resource and policy terms) in order to facilitate our transition to net zero carbon.

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### **EXTENSION OF TIME FOR THE MEETING**

It was proposed by the Leader, Councillor Ian Ward and seconded by Councillor Robert Alden that the overall time for the meeting be extended by 15 Minutes to allow 30 minutes to be allocated to agenda item No. 9.

The Deputy Lord Mayor sought agreement and it was-

19431

### **RESOLVED:-**

That the overall time for the meeting be extended by 15 Minutes to allow 30 minutes to be allocated to agenda item No. 9.

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### **ROUGH SLEEPING ADDENDUM TO BIRMINGHAM HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION STRATEGY**

The following joint report of the Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods and the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care was submitted:-

(See document No 9)

Councillor Sharon Thompson moved the motion which was seconded by Councillor Paulette Hamilton.

A debate ensued during which Councillor Morriam Jan declared an interest in that she worked directly with homeless people on a day to day basis

Councillor Sharon Thompson replied to the debate.

The Motion having been moved and seconded was put to the vote and, by the recorded vote set out below, was declared to be carried.

**For the Motion (83)**

Muhammad Afzal	Eddie Freeman	Saddak Miah
Akhlaq Ahmed	Fred Grindrod	Gareth Moore
Mohammed Aikhlaq	Paulette Hamilton	Simon Morrall
Alex Aitken	Roger Harmer	Brett O'Reilly
Safia Akhtar	Kath Hartley	John O'Shea
Deirdre Alden	Adam Higgs	David Pears
Robert Alden	Charlotte Hodivala	Robert Pocock
Gurdial Singh Atwal	Penny Holbrook	Julien Pritchard
David Barrie	Jon Hunt	Hendrina Quinnen
Baber Baz	Mahmood Hussain	Carl Rice
Matt Bennett	Shabrana Hussain	Lou Robson
Kate Booth	Mohammed Idrees	Gary Sambrook
Sir Albert Bore	Zafar Iqbal	Kath Scott
Marje Bridle	Morriam Jan	Lucy Seymour-Smith
Tristan Chatfield	Kerry Jenkins	Shafique Shah
Zaker Choudhry	Julie Johnson	Mike Sharpe
Debbie Clancy	Brigid Jones	Sybil Spence
Liz Clements	Nagina Kauser	Ron Storer
Maureen Cornish	Mariam Khan	Martin Straker Welds
John Cotton	Narinder Kaur Kooner	Sharon Thompson
Phil Davis	Chaman Lal	Paul Tilsley
Adrian Delaney	Mike Leddy	Ian Ward
Diane Donaldson	Bruce Lines	Mike Ward
Barbara Dring	Mary Locke	Suzanne Webb
Neil Eustace	Ewan Mackey	Ken Wood
Mohammed Fazal	Majid Mahmood	Alex Yip
Peter Fowler	Zhor Malik	Waseem Zaffar
Jayne Francis	Karen McCarthy	

**Against the motion (0)**

**Abstentions (0)**

It was therefore-

19432 **RESOLVED:-**

That the Rough Sleeping Addendum (Appendix A) is approved and the Interim Director of Neighbourhoods be authorised to publish and disseminate the document as appropriate, as part of the City's overall Homelessness Prevention Strategy.

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**PROVISIONAL DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

19432 The Deputy Lord Mayor asked Members to note that the provisional date of the next meeting of City Council is 2 February 2021.

The meeting ended at 1803 hours.



**APPENDIX**

Questions and replies in accordance with Council Rules of Procedure B4.4 F of the Constitution:-

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM  
COUNCILLOR ROBERT ALDEN**

**A1      Home to School Transport Improvement Board**

**Question:**

**Will you commit to the Home to School Transport Improvement Board meetings being held in public, with published paperwork and recorded\streamed meetings?**

**Answer:**

It is was never my intention that the Home to School Transport Improvement Board would be a public meeting as it is not a formal decision-making forum for the purposes of Local Government legal requirements; it therefore does not need to comply with the requirements in relation to access to information. The purpose of the board is to provide an inclusive forum that allows key stakeholders (particularly Head Teachers, parents and carers,) the opportunity to constructively influence and shape the implementation of the recommendations of the EY report, the Cabinet report of 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and any other improvements to the Home to School Transport Service. The Terms of Reference will set out how the board will operate.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM  
COUNCILLOR DAVID BARRIE**

**A2     COVID Marshalls**

**Question:**

**What was the process followed for the recruitment of COVID Marshalls, including any checks carried out such as DBS?**

**Answer:**

All of the Covid Marshalls have been recruited through Hays Recruitment Agency which is a Birmingham City Council procured contract.

The job description was approved through the job evaluation process and as part of this the necessity for a DBS check is considered. The Covid Marshal job description determined that a DBS check was unnecessary because they will not be in control of vulnerable persons. Therefore, the City Council is legally obliged not to ask for such checks.

In addition, all training requirements for the role have been undertaken by Environmental Heath.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR  
DAVID PEARS**

**A3     Home to School Transport Improvement Board**

**Question:**

**Will you commit to allowing an opposition Member to sit on the Home to School Transport Improvement Board?**

**Answer:**

Yes – one seat on the Board will be allocated to an opposition Member.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR  
JON HUNT**

**A4     CIL Review and Crowdfunding**

**Question:**

**Currently only 12 Wards are benefitting from the Community Infrastructure Levy. Although it is acknowledged the threshold for this Levy in Birmingham is very high, only a fraction of the City is currently benefitting which is disappointing considering current ongoing development and forthcoming development pipeline. Could you please explain why this has been allocated to so few wards in the City?**

**Answer:**

The aim of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is to generate funds which can help to contribute to the infrastructure required to deliver the relevant plan; the Birmingham Development Plan 2031. It is not intended to fund all the associated infrastructure costs.

The CIL setting process is set out in Regulations. This process determines that the CIL is set at level guided by the viability of various development types, in different areas of the local authority area. When deciding the levy rates, an authority must strike an appropriate balance between additional investment to support development and the potential effect on the viability of developments.

For the current charging schedule, a high level viability assessment of various types of development across the city was carried out. In accordance with the Regulations, this evidence, which led to the proposed charges, was published and subject to two public consultation rounds and an examination in public before approval.

The viability assessment determined that only 4 types of development were chargeable:

- Residential development in particular higher value Wards
- Hotels within the city centre
- Student accommodation
- Larger supermarket developments

All development within the proposed Sutton Coldfield urban extension was exempt from CIL.

Due to the city's development patterns and trends, CIL chargeable development only occurs in these twelve wards (consisting mainly of residential development and purpose built student accommodation). The CIL Regulations do not allow the authority to transfer these local CIL funds to other wards within the city.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR  
ZAKER CHOUDHRY**

**A5     Paradise Square Redevelopment**

**Question:**

**Could the Leader inform the Council how much capital the Council, specifically, has put into the Paradise Square redevelopment, including the Centenary Square refurbishment, setting out the repayment schedule for this capital?**

**Answer:**

The redevelopment of Paradise Square and the refurbishment of Centenary Square represents excellent value for money for the people of Birmingham.

**Paradise Square Redevelopment:**

The council has not put any direct capital funds into this project. BCC was awarded an Enterprise Zone grant of £139m for both phases 1 and 2 of the Paradise redevelopment by the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP).

**Centenary Square - funded as below:**

**Direct Council Funds:**

- |        |   |
|--------|---|
| £0.03m | - direct revenue funding from directorate   |
| £3.1m  | - capital contribution approved by cabinet and subsequently funded by prudential borrowing over a standard 20 year asset life |
| £1.2m  | - Section 106 – ringfenced receipts held by the council for specific purposes and locations (usually infrastructure)          |

**External body funds:**

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| £10.4m | - Enterprise Zone grant awarded by GBSLEP. |
|--------|--|

As accountable body to the GBSLEP, the council undertakes borrowing on their behalf and repayments are made from the uplift in non-domestic rates generated from the 39 sites identified within the Enterprise Zone investment plan. The cost of both Paradise and Centenary Square grants will be repaid by 2046.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR  
PAUL TILSLEY**

**A6      Disposal of Multi Storey Car Park at Brindley Drive**

**Question:**

**It is understood the car park at Brindley Drive is in the process of being disposed of meaning the city will be losing 610 car parking spaces a significant number of which are used by disabled badge holders. This has caused significant concern to the neighbouring entertainment and cultural centres. This allocation will be in part, accommodated by the new Chamberlain Square car park. Could the leader clarify how many spaces will be available in the new car park for members of the public, setting out how many spaces will be available for the disabled and for electric vehicle charging?**

**Answer:**

The Brindley Drive multi storey car park supplies 610 spaces. Of this amount, 100 spaces are physically secured and dedicated for private use by the owners of Baskerville House, therefore providing 510 spaces for public use. There are 8 disability blue badge holder spaces and of note a further 6 blue badge dedicated spaces that will remain on the highway outside the car park.

Planning consent for the new Chamberlain Square Car Park contains 550 car spaces. Phase One construction is complete and scheduled to be officially opened week commencing 11<sup>th</sup> January. There are 292 spaces delivered to modern high specification standard with full illumination and security CCTV of which 30 spaces are dedicated for disabled use. There are proposals to include 20 electric vehicle charging spaces within the phase 2 extension.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM  
COUNCILLOR BABER BAZ**

**A7     City Assets**

**Question:**

**Of the assets currently owned by Birmingham City Council either inside or outside the city boundary, could you detail which assets are earmarked for sale or development and confirm which wards these fall into?**

**Answer:**

Please see attached schedule detailing those Council owned assets which have been declared surplus or identified for disposal. Officers are undertaking an ongoing Asset Review, which will identify further potential surplus assets to complement this existing programme of sale.

Those assets once identified following Ward Member consultation, will be reported in accordance with the appropriate governance arrangements.

## City Council – 12 January 2021

BCC Sites Forecast for Disposal up to 31/03/2023		As at 06/01/2021		
BCC Sites Forecast for Disposal up to 31/03/2023	Locality	Anticipated Year of Disposal		
(Phase 1) Peddimore Employment Site, Peddimore Lane, Wishaw Lane, Sutton Coldfield	Sutton Coldfield	2020/21		
Lee Bank Business Centre, 33 Holloway Head, Lee Bank	Ladywood	2020/21		
Southside Business Centre, Ladypool Road	Sparkbrook	2020/21		
Northside Business Centre, Wellington Road, Winson Green.	Winson Green	2020/21		
Unit 4 Small Heath Business Park, Talbot Way	Small Heath	2020/21		
Site Ptg Key Hill, Hockley	Hockley	2020/21		
363-365 Dudley Road, Winson Green	Winson Green	2020/21		
*Coleridge Chambers & Ruskin Buildings 173-209 Corporation St	City Centre	2020/21		
Site B Land at Lea Ford Way, Stechford	Stechford	2020/21		
*Soho Loop Land Swap (Dudley Road)	Winson Green	2020/21		
Brindley Drive Multi Level Car Park, City Centre	City Centre		2021/22	
*The Brasshouse Language Centre, 30 Sheepcote St, Ladywood	Ladywood		2021/22	
Holiday St Car Park, Ladywood	Ladywood		2021/22	
Pitman Building & Murdoch Chambers, 139-161 Corporation Street, City Centre	City Centre		2021/22	
Lawson Street, Car Park, Lancaster Circus	Aston		2021/22	
Car Park, Upper Gough Street/Chapmans Passage, off Holloway Head, Ladywood	Ladywood		2021/22	
Arena Central, Broad St. (Phase 3)	City Centre		2021/22	



## City Council – 12 January 2021

Land fronting Station Rd, Stechford, adj new Cascades Pool.	Stechford		2021/22	
Site known as Ventureast Project (Eastside Locks Site), Lawley St/Ashted Row & various Holdings, City Centre	Aston		2021/22	
*(Phase 2 Estimate) Peddimore Employment Site, Peddimore Lane, Wishaw Lane, Sutton Coldfield	Sutton Coldfield			2022/23
Land at Great Charles St k/a Ludgate Hill Car Park, City Centre	City Centre			2022/23
Plot 6 Aston Manufacturing Hub, Aston Regional Investment Site, Aston Hall Road	Aston			2022/23
Newtown Swimming Pool & Community Centre, Newtown	Newtown			2022/23
Site from AWM at Eastside (Fox St/Grosvenor St)	Digbeth			2022/23
Sites at the Meadow Housing Estate, Stechford	Stechford			2022/23
Land at Lionel Street, Snow Hill, City Centre	City Centre			2022/23
(2 Sites) Corner of Princip St & Lancaster Street	Aston			2022/23
Site of Fmr Beaufort Special School, Coleshill Road, Washwood Heath.	Washwood Heath			2022/23
Former Wattville Infant School (inc caretakers House) George St, Handsworth	Handsworth			2022/23

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM  
COUNCILLOR ADAM HIGGS**

**B1      Covid Business Grants – Rate of Payment**

**Question:**

**For each phase of the Government's support grants for businesses, what was the total number of grants issued per week from the date the money was first made available by Government?**

**Answer:**

The Council has put in place arrangements for the administration of the following five schemes:

- Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open) (for Tier 2 from 14 October to 4 November and Tier 3 from 2 December onwards);
- Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) (for national lockdown 5 November to 1 December and Tier 3 from 2 December);
- Local Restrictions Support Grant (Sector) (for 1 to 4 November);
- Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) (from 14 October);
- Christmas support payments for 'wet led pubs'.

Applications for the new grants to support businesses, due to the restrictions imposed from Tier 2 and during the national lockdown, opened on 25 November. This is an online process and businesses in Birmingham **are only having to make one application for all grant schemes (including any future schemes)**. This approach is different to most councils which are dealing with applications on a scheme by scheme basis – but we think that one application will maximise the available funding considerably and reduce the burden for businesses. This will continue to be the process as the Council awaits further Government guidance on the schemes for Tier 4, National Lockdown and the new grants announced this week. **Our process also ensures that businesses are automatically triaged for a discretionary application if they do not fit the mandatory criteria.**

The approach in Birmingham has been significantly influenced by our ongoing dialogue with key stakeholders such as the Chamber of Commerce and Business Improvement Districts.

The task is huge – over 13,000 claims for (currently) against five schemes to consider (around 60,000 considerations). Payments started to be made for the initial claims (from 25 November) within two weeks (7 December). The influx of so many applications in a short space of time means it is not possible to assess all payments at once – there are just too many and each requires an individual assessment to establish:

- the sector of the business;
- the rateable value of each business;

## City Council – 12 January 2021

- for the discretionary scheme what the affect has been;
- whether or not the business is/was open or closed; and
- the applicable dates for each scheme for each business.

Further assurance checks are made via the Government's 'Spotlight' system and Companies House once the above criteria have been considered and met.

The current average speed from application receipt to payment is around 25 calendar days. This one payment covers all the grant schemes the businesses are eligible for. We paid 100% of the 'wet led' pubs which applied for the specific grant before Christmas – within days of the announcement. The total staff working on grants in the Council is now nearly 100 (the normal resource for Business Rates is around 25 FTE). Overtime is in place and being maximised in addition to the number of staff who opted to work over the Christmas period to help to keep the momentum going. The team are working hard to clear the applications as quickly as possible. Emails are being sent on a regular basis to all businesses still waiting for payment to try to prevent unnecessary contact.

Detailed below are the grant stats up until 8 January 2021 against each of the current schemes. Please note that one business may receive multiple payments but only need to fill in one form. The Council started accepting applications on 25 November 2020.

### **Mandatory and Council Grants**

<b>Period of Report: From 25 November to 8 January 2021</b>	
Total No. of Applications Received	13,100
Total No. of Applications Paid/approved for payment	5,224
Total Value of Applications Paid/approved for payment	£7.910 million

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Total Confirmed/ Paid No.</b>	<b>Total Confirmed/ Paid £</b>
LRSG(S)	60	£52,814
LRSG(O)	1438	£1,368,745
LRSG(C)	3301	£5,456,903
LRSG(C)Disc (ARG)*	280	£886,969
Wet Pubs	145	£145,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,224</b>	<b>£7,910,431</b>

### **Additional Restrictions Grants**

		Award
<b>Received</b>	925	

4512

**City Council – 12 January 2021**

<b>Awaiting further information</b>	60	
<b>More information received</b>	22	
<b>Confirmed (Approved)</b>	830	£1,304,108.40
<b>Duplicate</b>	15	
<b>Rejected</b>	162	
<b>Total</b>	2014	

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM  
COUNCILLOR SIMON MORRALL**

**B2      Covid Business Grants – Interest Earned**

**Question:**

**In total, how much interest has the Council accrued from business Covid Grant money paid to it by the Government from all of the available schemes, whilst it has been in Council accounts waiting to be paid out to businesses?**

**Answer:**

The Council manages its cash inflows and outflows in aggregate on a daily basis. It is not possible to separately attribute interest to a single item.

What can be said is that the government has supported all councils cashflow by paying grant sums early. The council has equally paid out business grants as quickly as it could.

In the current environment the safest place to hold cash in the short term is with the government's Debt Management Account Deposit Facility (DMADF). Up until recently, the DMADF account was charging negative interest rates, that is to say it was charging councils for holding their cash. Currently the DMADF deposit rate is 0% for overnight deposits and only 0.01% for deposits for over a week.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM  
COUNCILLOR BOB BEAUCHAMP**

**B3      Covid Social Isolation Payments**

**Question:**

**How many requests for social isolation payment requests has the Council received in total and how many of these have been paid out up to 31 December?**

**Answer:**

The Benefit Service met the Government's deadline of accepting applications for the Social Isolation Payments (SIPs) of £500 on 12th October 2020. This follows the announcement of the scheme on 25th September 2020.

The volume of claims received (around 500 per week) have continued to be higher than the estimate provided by the Department for Health and Social Care's (DHSC) of around 200 per week. The team have had to deal with multiple issues verifying the data through DHSC's 'CTAS' eligibility checker. As a consequence, the process has taken longer than anticipated. Concerns have been raised directly with DHSC and examples of the types of issues facing the Council have been provided. This is not unique to Birmingham, with other councils experiencing similar difficulties. The situation is being closely monitored with escalations in place.

As of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020, the Social Isolation Payment figures were:

Claims received 6,171 which is far greater than the predicted volumes and the associated administration funding received.

Out of the 6,171:

- 310 were duplicate applications;
- 3,439 had been awarded;
- 142 had been refused due to citizens not meeting the mandatory criteria;
- 1,221 applications were awaiting further information from the Citizen and/or waiting for the CTAS eligibility validation system to be updated;
- 1,059 applications had been received over the Christmas period and are being processed;

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM  
COUNCILLOR ADRIAN DELANEY**

**B4      Covid Social Isolation Payments time taken**

**Question:**

**What is the average time taken to pay out a social isolation payment from the initial date of request?**

**Answer:**

There are various factors outside of BCC control that contribute to the length of time it takes to make a payment. In the majority of applications, the evidence for verification is not provided and numerous checks need to be made, from responding to the citizen to request various documents to contacting the employer. These verification steps are mandated upon BCC from DHSC and take a considerable amount of time.

Initially the biggest time delay was caused by inaccurate information displayed on the CTAS test and trace system that again BCC are mandated to use to verify a citizen's isolation status. These issues result in continuous rechecking and rework for BCC. Added to this the high volume of claims received, over twice the number estimated by DHSC, has meant additional staff resources being utilised to meet the demand. The Council's request to DHSC to accept alternative forms of evidence (such as screen shots) was turned down.

Once all the necessary documentation is received and the CTAS system shows eligibility the payment is then processed and authorised. However, the average for time taken to make payment from date of initial request, given all of these factors, is 13.5 days.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM  
COUNCILLOR EDDIE FREEMAN**

**B5      Covid Business Grants Outstanding**

**Question:**

**As of the date answering this question, how many outstanding applications for each type of covid grant for businesses and individuals are there, broken down by scheme?**

**Answer:**

The Council has put in place arrangements for the administration of the following five schemes:

- Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open) (for Tier 2 from 14 October to 4 November and Tier 3 from 2 December onwards);
- Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) (for national lockdown 5 November to 1 December and Tier 3 from 2 December);
- Local Restrictions Support Grant (Sector) (for 1 to 4 November);
- Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) (from 14 October);
- Christmas support payments for 'wet led pubs'.

Applications for the new grants to support businesses, due to the restrictions imposed from Tier 2 and during the national lockdown, opened on 25 November. This is an online process and businesses in Birmingham **are only having to make one application for all grant schemes (including any future schemes)**. This approach is different to most councils which are dealing with applications on a scheme by scheme basis – but we think that one application will maximise the available funding considerably and reduce the burden for businesses. This will continue to be the process as the Council awaits further Government guidance on the schemes for Tier 4, National Lockdown and the new grants announced this week. **Our process also ensures that businesses are automatically triaged for a discretionary application if they do not fit the mandatory criteria.**

The approach in Birmingham has been significantly influenced by our ongoing dialogue with key stakeholders such as the Chamber of Commerce and Business Improvement Districts.

The task is huge – over 13,000 claims for (currently) against five schemes to consider (around 60,000 considerations). Payments started to be made for the initial claims (from 25 November) within two weeks (7 December). The influx of so many applications in a short space of time means it is not possible to assess all payments at once – there are just too many and each requires an individual assessment to establish:

- the sector of the business;
- the rateable value of each business;
- for the discretionary scheme what the affect has been;
- whether or not the business is/was open or closed; and



- the applicable dates for each scheme for each business.

Further assurance checks are made via the Government's 'Spotlight' system and Companies House once the above criteria have been considered and met.

The current average speed from application receipt to payment is around 25 calendar days. This one payment covers all the grant schemes the businesses are eligible for. We paid 100% of the 'wet led' pubs which applied for the specific grant before Christmas – within days of the announcement. The total staff working on grants in the Council is now nearly 100 (the normal resource for Business Rates is around 25 FTE). Overtime is in place and being maximised in addition to the number of staff who opted to work over the Christmas period to help to keep the momentum going. The team are working hard to clear the applications as quickly as possible. Emails are being sent on a regular basis to all businesses still waiting for payment to try to prevent unnecessary contact.

Detailed below are the grant stats up until 8 January 2021 against each of the current schemes. Please note that one business may receive multiple payments but only need to fill in one form. The Council started accepting applications on 25 November 2020.

### **Mandatory and Council Grants**

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LRSG(C)Disc (ARG)*	280	£886,969
Wet Pubs	145	£145,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,224</b>	<b>£7,910,431</b>

### **Additional Restrictions Grants**

		<b>Award</b>
<b>Received</b>	925	
<b>Awaiting further information</b>	60	

**City Council – 12 January 2021**

<b>More information received</b>	22	
<b>Confirmed (Approved)</b>	830	£1,304,108.40
<b>Duplicate</b>	15	
<b>Rejected</b>	162	
<b>Total</b>	2014	

The total applications received is now in excess of 13,000, which in turn requires each application to be looked at and assessed against five schemes. It is therefore not possible to provide details of the outstanding applications by scheme – as this will only be determined as each case is assessed.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM  
COUNCILLOR CHARLOTEE HODIVALA**

**B6      Covid Business Grants time to process**

**Question:**

**What is the average time take from the date of receipt of application to pay out to the date payment was made, for the award of each type of government funded covid business grant**

Answer:

The Council has put in place arrangements for the administration of the following five schemes:

- Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open) (for Tier 2 from 14 October to 4 November and Tier 3 from 2 December onwards);
- Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) (for national lockdown 5 November to 1 December and Tier 3 from 2 December);
- Local Restrictions Support Grant (Sector) (for 1 to 4 November);
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- Christmas support payments for 'wet led pubs'.

Applications for the new grants to support businesses, due to the restrictions imposed from Tier 2 and during the national lockdown, opened on 25 November. This is an online process and businesses in Birmingham **are only having to make one application for all grant schemes (including any future schemes)**. This approach is different to most councils which are dealing with applications on a scheme by scheme basis – but we think that one application will maximise the available funding considerably and reduce the burden for businesses. This will continue to be the process as the Council awaits further Government guidance on the schemes for Tier 4, National Lockdown and the new grants announced this week. **Our process also ensures that businesses are automatically triaged for a discretionary application if they do not fit the mandatory criteria.** The approach in Birmingham has been significantly influenced by our ongoing dialogue with key stakeholders such as the Chamber of Commerce and Business Improvement Districts.

**Government guidance**

The Council has to ensure that the grants are paid in line with the guidance. The Government has put in place measures to check payments are made accurately 'post payment'. Any grants paid in error are likely to have to be repaid. Hence, our process could not fully commence until the full guidance had been received which was:

- LRSG Open (Tier 2 – effective from 14 October) – guidance finalised 23 November;
- LRSG Closed (Lockdown was 4 November) – guidance finalised 23 November;

- Tier 3 updated guidance (Tier 3 – effective from 2 December) – 18<sup>th</sup> December;
- Christmas Support payments for wet-led pubs – 10th December.

### **Progress and resourcing**

The task is huge – over 13,000 claims for (currently) against five schemes to consider (around 60,000 considerations). Payments started to be made for the initial claims (from 25 November) within two weeks (7 December). The influx of so many applications in a short space of time means it is not possible to assess all payments at once – there are just too many and each requires an individual assessment to establish:

- the sector of the business;
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Detailed below are the grant stats up until 8 January 2021 against each of the current schemes. Please note that one business may receive multiple payments but only need to fill in one form. The Council started accepting applications on 25 November 2020.

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**Additional Restrictions Grants**

		<b>Award</b>
<b>Received</b>	925	
<b>Awaiting further information</b>	60	
<b>More information received</b>	22	
<b>Confirmed (Approved)</b>	830	£1,304,108.40
<b>Duplicate</b>	15	
<b>Rejected</b>	162	
<b>Total</b>	2014	

Due to the complexity of administering so many schemes over a very short period of time, it is not possible to breakdown the receipt and payment of each grant type without considerable resource being invested. The team is fully stretched with staff transferred from tax collection to grant payments and overtime being fully maximised.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM  
COUNCILLOR DEBBIE CLANCY**

**B7      Covid Business Grants Process**

**Question:**

**What differences were made to the process for applications for COVID business grants for the latest round in November compared to the process earlier in the summer?**

Answer:

**First scheme**

In March 2020 the business grant scheme was based around the fact that all businesses were closed. The payment was a fixed one-off lump sum (either £10,000 or £25,000) depending on the rateable value. The Council therefore put in place a process for one application for the following schemes:

- Small Business Grant Funding, a one-off grant for businesses receiving Small Business Rates Relief in 2020 to 2021; and
- Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Scheme, a one-off grant for businesses in the retail, leisure or hospitality industry which are occupied in 2020 to 2021.

The simplicity of this scheme meant we were able to automate a significant part of the process. A separate application was required for the Councils discretionary scheme.

**Latest scheme**

The Council has put in place arrangements for the administration of the following five schemes:

- Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open) (for Tier 2 from 14 October to 4 November and Tier 3 from 2 December onwards);
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**Additional Restrictions Grants**

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<b>Total</b>	2014	



**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S  
WELLBEING FROM COUNCLLOR ROBERT ALDEN**

**C1     DBS assurance for home to school transport**

**Question:**

**From what date have you as Cabinet Member been able (or will be able) to categorically say that every single individual working in contact with children on the home to school transport service has had a fully cleared and approved DBS check in place?**

**Answer:**

I can categorically state that I have been assured that there are no individuals in contact with children from the home to school transport service that have not had a fully cleared and approved DBS check.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S  
WELLBEING FROM COUNCLLOR EWAN MACKEY**

**C2     Home to school transport"**

**Question:**

**How many unannounced inspections of home to school transport suppliers have been undertaken since February to check on quality and safety?**

**Answer:**

From February 2020 to present there have been 591 unannounced quality and safety inspections carried out. From September 2020 when the compliance team was established these checks have included Covid 19 checks which include cleaning touch points, internal cleanliness of vehicles, ventilation, correct PPE and social distancing.

In addition, there have been 272 unannounced vehicle maintenance inspection carried out at supplier's premises.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S  
WELLBEING FROM COUNCLLOR CLANCY**

**C3     SEND Consultant**

**Question:**

**In both November (C16) and December (B16) you neglected to answer the question on consultancy spend within SEND. Whilst it was promised the first week of January, please provide it here so it is in public. As a reminder, the request was to tell us who received this money and what benefit the council obtained from it. Please could you therefore answer the question again with the missing information included, namely:**

- Interim/consultant details (named where permissible)**
- Reports produced**
- Performance improvement that has been made as a result of these costs**

**Answer:**

Work has been completed on the resource list to provide:

- a list of the activities or reports interim resource and consultants were involved in
- a summary of the improvements that have been made as a result.

We have highlighted those that are consultants and provided comparable grades for the interim officer resource that are backfilling vacancies or providing additional officer capacity.

We have also provided a cumulative count of the number of agency resources that have been in post during the period.

### Appendix to C3

Area & Number of resources between Sept 2019 and Nov 2020	Consultant or Comparable role grade for interim resource (backfilling vacancies or providing additional officer capacity)	A high-level list of activities they've been involved with	A summary of the improvements they've made (bullet points of what has improved since the consultants have been here).	Number in post at end of Dec 2020
SEND Strategic Transformation Sensory Consultant 1 resource	CONSULTANT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Review of sensory resource bases</li> <li>* Review of FAMS</li> <li>* Supporting implementation of recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of more inclusive provision for children with physical difficulties</li> </ul> <p>Improved use of resources through use of sensory resource bases</p>	1
Home To School Transport Interim Transport Manager Operations, Commissioning & Contracts 1 resource	Grade 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed system requirements for the Home to school transport database</li> <li>• Procurement Business case for the purchase of the new system (365 Response chosen)</li> <li>• Implementation Plan for 365</li> <li>• Communications Plan for the implementation of 365</li> <li>• Mobile Phones for Guides requirements document</li> <li>• CXM Bus Pass Administration requirements</li> <li>• Also developed the daily route report which underpins the Daily SitRep reporting to Chief Executive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taken the request for a new transport system from concept, through requirements definition and procurement to commencement of operational roll out and live testing.</li> </ul> <p>Defined additional costs to cover data requirements for BCC in the absence of a legacy database and revised the business case to justify new requirements. Revised business case includes the cost of project management.</p>	1
Home To School Transport	Grade 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Weekly &amp; monthly performance reports</li> <li>* Safeguarding process for complaints</li> <li>* data analysis from supplier returns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robust compliance team who apply safeguarding checks at schools and supplier premises to ensure vehicles and staff are compliant.</li> </ul>	1

**City Council – 12 January 2021**

Area & Number of resources between Sept 2019 and Nov 2020	Consultant or Comparable role grade for interim resource (backfilling vacancies or providing additional officer capacity)	A high-level list of activities they've been involved with	A summary of the improvements they've made (bullet points of what has improved since the consultants have been here).	Number in post at end of Dec 2020
Interim Safeguarding & Compliance SEND Transport Manager 1 resource		(monthly)	<p>Vehicle inspections carried out to ensure vehicles transporting clients are fully roadworthy and feedback given to supplier they additional checks to ensure compliance.</p> <p>Supplier performance has improved as a result of the checks and visits made to schools and suppliers, once concerns are identified and improvement plans are agreed.</p> <p>Depot Audits at supplier premises to ensure policies are being applied throughout the operation against their contract.</p> <p>Regular supplier meetings to ensure performance issues are identified and actioned.</p> <p>Safeguarding tracker to capture safeguarding complaints ensure escalated to LADO and managed appropriately in a timely way.</p> <p>Supplier monthly reporting processes are accurate and identify DBS application's so they are processed as quickly as possible to ensure supplier has sufficient staff to</p>	

**City Council – 12 January 2021**

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			<p>delivery service.</p> <p>Improved communication and feed back to suppliers is carried out in a timely was to ensure failings identified are rectified.</p>	
Home To School Transport Interim Ops Manager (Transport) 1 resource	Grade 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone systems – Cirrus</li> <li>• Email system – Cirrus Omni</li> <li>• Bus Pass report</li> <li>• Invoice reports</li> <li>• Staff 1-to-1</li> <li>• Complaints</li> <li>• Restructure operations service</li> <li>• Performance Improvement - guides</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify current telephone system failings resulting in Cirrus implementation. Daily / weekly reports regarding the Cirrus phone system. Calls answered / abandoned. Time taken to answer calls / calls being abandoned in compliance with the BCC KPI's of 90% answered – 10% abandoned. Ensuring the team meet these KPI's</li> </ul> <p>Bus Passes- Identifying hidden issues within the service; identifying the weakness in the service and ensuring new staff are training in the processing of these bus passes. Identifying improvements with the system to avoid the volume of future applications given the 80% rejection rate.</p> <p>Invoice reports – ensuring the overdue invoices are processed in a timely manner considering value and age of invoices and finding solutions to improve</p>	1

**City Council – 12 January 2021**

Area & Number of resources between Sept 2019 and Nov 2020	Consultant or Comparable role grade for interim resource (backfilling vacancies or providing additional officer capacity)	A high-level list of activities they've been involved with	A summary of the improvements they've made (bullet points of what has improved since the consultants have been here).	Number in post at end of Dec 2020
			service Redesign of the variation form to provide transparency with the variation form process submitted by contractors asking for price increase/ decrease	
Home To School Transport Interim Senior Compliance Officer 1 resource	Grade 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supplier performance figures on a daily and weekly basis</li> <li>• Carry out record and report on Supplier Audit.</li> <li>• Daily engagement with suppliers to address any issues identified within compliance checks.</li> <li>• Recognize training needs for drivers and suppliers relating to compliance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robust and engaging compliance team in place. Robust procedures implemented to improve supplier /driver compliance Implemented a revised parking plan at 2 schools to date (Calthorpe &amp; Dame Ellen Pinsent) Allocate work to the compliance team to ensure work is completed and prioritised. Advise suppliers on compliance matters i.e. procedures and technique to improve performance.</li> <li>• Improved communication with suppliers, schools and internal teams to ensure concerns are addressed and recorded in a timely way</li> <li>• Support other service areas to address any safeguarding /compliance issues and resolve in a timely way.</li> </ul>	1

**City Council – 12 January 2021**

Area & Number of resources between Sept 2019 and Nov 2020	Consultant or Comparable role grade for interim resource (backfilling vacancies or providing additional officer capacity)	A high-level list of activities they've been involved with	A summary of the improvements they've made (bullet points of what has improved since the consultants have been here).	Number in post at end of Dec 2020
Home To School Transport Interim Compliance Officer 1 resource	Grade 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed Safeguarding and PATS training program to be delivered to 480 guides in the new year.</li> <li>• Driver and Guide handbook to be issues to all guides and then drivers.</li> <li>• Daily compliance reports</li> <li>• Supplier check reports</li> <li>• Investigation findings for safeguarding complaints</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As per Compliance Manager and Senior Compliance Officer</li> </ul>	1
Home To School Transport Interim Compliance Performance Officer 1 resource	Grade 3	Generate information from the Compliance team and Assessment officer to develop and produce accurate information that can provide an overview of the service performance and suppliers, identify trends and areas of improvement. Provide additional support to the Compliance team to carry out site visits and depot audits as required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directors and Heads of service are now understanding the performance of suppliers and identify social, mechanical or performance trends at source and in the coming weeks/ months note an increase in service delivery</li> </ul>	1
Link Service Interim Link Officers 4 resources	Grade 3 / 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Responding to contact from parents and schools via email and telephone</li> <li>* Support families through the needs assessment process</li> <li>* Signposting families to relevant support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing support to families (24 new referrals in Jan 20 &gt; 205 in Dec 20) New satisfaction survey launched in Dec 20 recorded a positive rating of 4.78 / 5</li> </ul>	5



**City Council – 12 January 2021**

Area & Number of resources between Sept 2019 and Nov 2020	Consultant or Comparable role grade for interim resource (backfilling vacancies or providing additional officer capacity)	A high-level list of activities they've been involved with	A summary of the improvements they've made (bullet points of what has improved since the consultants have been here).	Number in post at end of Dec 2020
Senar - Case Work Interim PO / SEND Case workers 32 resources	Grade 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Statutory processes for assessment and review of EHCPs</li> <li>* Research and respond to complaints</li> <li>* Associated case work, including consultations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in the backlog of assessments from 500 to 200</li> <li>• Complaints allocation process</li> <li>• 5,271 outstanding reviews closed with all action completed</li> <li>• 2,873 outstanding reviews actioned and awaiting issue by Business Support</li> </ul>	22  (Including 1x Special School Provision Lead & 3x Operational Leads)
Senar - Case Work Interim Tribunal Officers 3 resources	Grade 5	Managing the throughput of mediations, appeals and tribunals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High level of compliance with statutory timelines.</li> <li>• Robust mediation process to ensure resolution</li> </ul>	1
Senar Recovery - Annual Review Interim Annual Review Officer / Plan Writers 23 resources	Grade 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Reviewing and actioning 9,197 outstanding annual review paperwork</li> <li>* Reviewing and actioning newly received review paperwork</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5,271 outstanding reviews closed with all action completed</li> <li>• 2,873 outstanding reviews actioned and awaiting issue by Business Support</li> <li>• Reduction in the backlog of assessments from 500 to 200</li> </ul>	6
SENAR Recovery - Annual Review Interim SEN Coordinator - EHCP Reviews 1 resource	Grade 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Managing allocation of paperwork to officers</li> <li>* Maintaining record of activity</li> <li>* Liaising with schools to obtain further information as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5,271 outstanding reviews closed with all action completed</li> <li>• 2,873 outstanding reviews actioned and awaiting issue by Business Support</li> </ul>	1

**City Council – 12 January 2021**

Area & Number of resources between Sept 2019 and Nov 2020	Consultant or Comparable role grade for interim resource (backfilling vacancies or providing additional officer capacity)	A high-level list of activities they've been involved with	A summary of the improvements they've made (bullet points of what has improved since the consultants have been here).	Number in post at end of Dec 2020
Transformation & Project Support Interim Transformation Lead/Programme mgr 1 resource	Grade 6 / 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Review recovery project</li> <li>* Draft EHCP multi agency QA framework</li> <li>* Draft managing send provision model</li> <li>* PCF briefing</li> <li>* Internal engagement and briefings</li> <li>* Multi agency operational stakeholder engagement</li> <li>* Draft Pathways</li> <li>* Resource tracker &amp; resource plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a contact database for families</li> <li>5,271 outstanding reviews closed with all action completed</li> <li>• 2,873 outstanding reviews actioned and awaiting issue</li> <li>• Multi agency operational stakeholder engagement</li> <li>• Progress against the written statement of action</li> </ul>	1
Transformation & Project Support Interim Performance Lead 3 resources	Grade 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* HST dashboard</li> <li>* HST immediate fixes plan</li> <li>* HST weekly sit rep report</li> <li>* HST contract performance reporting schedule</li> <li>* SEND dashboard</li> <li>* SEND Weekly sit rep report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visibility of data</li> <li>• Improved data reliability</li> </ul>	1
Transformation & Project Support Interim Project Manager 1 resource	Grade 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Developing &amp; managing local provision project plan and associated governance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DLP project launched</li> </ul>	1
Transformation & Project Support	Grade 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* School Planning meeting documentation</li> <li>* Local offer website upload</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local offer website launched in Jan 2021</li> <li>Improved communication with special school transport leads</li> </ul>	2

**City Council – 12 January 2021**

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Interim Project Support Officer 2 resources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Weekly report and liaison with special schools</li> <li>* Consolidation report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Input to Home to school transport improvement programme</li> </ul>	
<b>• Resources no longer in post as of end December 2020</b>				
SEND Strategic Transformation Strategic SEND Consultant 1 resource	CONSULTANT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Funding comparison for special schools to inform the special school funding review</li> <li>* Preparatory work for the DLP project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DLP project launched</li> <li>• Special school funding review in progress</li> </ul>	0
Home To School Transport Interim Transport Operations Manager 1 resource	Grade 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Mobility Assessment Risk Assessment Process.</li> <li>• Review of Current Assessment Process and recommendations</li> <li>• Provide guidance on improving safer accurate assessments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved Risk Assessments are being carried out. Engage with relevant service areas to obtain all relevant information to produce accurate information and assessments.</li> </ul>	0
Home To School Transport Guide transformation lead 1 resource	Grade 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business case to support the reduction of Agency Guides</li> <li>• 1st Draft Business Case in relation to SEND Transport Application process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution to the service Saving Strategy and improved gatekeeping and application of policy conditions relating to transport eligibility</li> </ul>	0
Home To School Transport Interim SEND Transport manager	Grade 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* DfE bid for COVID funding</li> <li>* Deed variation for supply of guides</li> <li>* Deed variation for alteration of DBS process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The service has had improved leadership and structure in order to achieve a number of significant improvement key tasks. This development has worked in</li> </ul>	0

**City Council – 12 January 2021**

Area & Number of resources between Sept 2019 and Nov 2020	Consultant or Comparable role grade for interim resource (backfilling vacancies or providing additional officer capacity)	A high-level list of activities they've been involved with	A summary of the improvements they've made (bullet points of what has improved since the consultants have been here).	Number in post at end of Dec 2020
1 resource		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Communication &amp; Implementation plan</li> <li>* Org chart for restructure</li> <li>* Summer operations plan</li> <li>* Draft revised risk assessment process</li> <li>* Contribution to immediate fixes plan, weekly and daily sit rep, monthly covid plan, service dashboard and revised implementation plan</li> </ul>	partnership with the recommendations outlined in the Service Investigation Report. The service is now able to ensure early identification of operational concern and introduce strategies in order to improve performance and administration across the service as a whole	
Home To School Transport Interim Safeguarding & QA Lead 1 resource	Grade 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* initial safeguarding audit of suppliers</li> <li>* DPS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contracts confirmed with suppliers baseline safeguarding reports</li> </ul>	0
SEND Strategic Transformation Interim Post 16 SEND Lead 1 resource	Grade 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Review of post 16 service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommendations to improve preparation for adulthood</li> </ul>	0
SEND Strategic Transformation Interim SEND Transformation lead 4 resources	Grade 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Review of SENAR administration services</li> <li>* Draft review recovery project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5,271 outstanding reviews closed with all action completed</li> <li>• 2,873 outstanding reviews actioned and awaiting issue by Business Support</li> </ul>	0

**City Council – 12 January 2021**

Area & Number of resources between Sept 2019 and Nov 2020	Consultant or Comparable role grade for interim resource (backfilling vacancies or providing additional officer capacity)	A high-level list of activities they've been involved with	A summary of the improvements they've made (bullet points of what has improved since the consultants have been here).	Number in post at end of Dec 2020
SEND Strategic Transformation Interim Educational Psychologist 1 resource	Grade 6	* Tracker of children awaiting a special school place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consolidated view of children awaiting special school place so placements could be managed</li> </ul>	0
SEND Strategic Transformation Interim Early Years SEND Lead 1 resource	Grade 7	* Review of early years service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations to improve early years service</li> </ul>	0
Transformation & Project Support Interim Data Officer 2 resources	Grade 4	* EHCP requests tracker and associated reports * EHCP review recovery project database and associated reports * Tracker for new EHCP reviews * Tracker for complaints * Tracker for mediations and appeals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved workflow management Automated monitoring reports for managers</li> </ul>	0
Transformation & Project Support Interim Communication Officer 2 resources	Grade 4	* Communication strategy * Communication plan * Communication material including newsletters for schools and parents, and briefings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved communication and engagement with PCF</li> </ul>	0
Transformation & Project Support	Grade 4	* Review formula funding for specialist provision		0

**City Council – 12 January 2021**

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Interim Finance Project Support Officer 1 resource			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established mechanisms for financial reporting for specialist provision</li> <li>• New criteria and allocation of top up funding for mainstream</li> </ul>	
Transformation & Project Support Interim Project Lead - Local Offer Website 1 resource	Grade 4	* Local offer website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New local offer website launched in Jan 2021</li> <li>• Online booking system in final stages of development to be launched in the spring</li> </ul>	0

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S WELLBEING  
FROM COUNCILLOR JON HUNT**

**C4     Send Home to School Transport'**

**Question:**

**Could you please explain when you expect all staff in contact with children through the Home to School Transport service will have completed DRB checks?**

**Answer:**

I understand that you are referring to DBS checks not DRB as mentioned above.

I have been assured all staff who have contact with children within the Home to School Transport service have a completed DBS check.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S WELLBEING  
FROM COUNCILLOR BABER BAZ**

**C5     Send Home to School Transport**

**Question:**

**In the Independent Service Review of SEND Home to School Transport (November 2020), there is a requirement for an immediate fix by the start of the January term 2021, involving a number of comprehensive items such as a new IT system, more effective management of guides and a short-term fix on capability and capacity. Could you explain how you are planning to meet this timetable and when you expect new IT systems will to be in place?**

**Answer:**

Plans are already in place and are in progress to deliver the changes, which are reported to the Home to School Transport Programme Board and to me. These build on the Home to School programme that was established in 2020. They are being delivered by the operational team, supported by additional programme resources.

The service is making good progress. We have put in place IT improvements such as a Cirrus system to help manage and monitor phone calls, and we have started to use 365, a new transport management system, to capture data and to work with some of our transport providers.

In terms of the performance outcomes this and the other improvements we have made, have supported, at week ending 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020:

- 99.86% of routes that were needed were delivered over the course of the week;
- 99.94% of pupils who needed to be transported to school were transported over the week, delivering an average of 3404 pupils per day;
- 99.1% of calls were answered on average over the week, and 0.9% of calls were aborted on average over the week, which exceed the corporate KPIs, and;
- 0 complaints were overdue.

We will build on this as there is much more to do, including provision of safeguarding and PATs (Passenger Assistant Training scheme) which is a national recognised qualification for guides, commencing on 18<sup>th</sup> January. This will include continuing to improve the data we have in 365 and rolling this out to other providers, schools and parents in time for the new academic year and using this to drive efficiencies.



**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S  
WELLBEING FROM COUNCLLOR ADAM HIGGS**

**C6     SEND Consultant**

**Question:**

**In responding in December to question B16 (which was itself a follow up to C16 from November), you complained about the amount of time it would take to provide this simple information. Given the importance of ensuring value for money and of ensuring promised improvements are actually delivered, if that information is not being actively tracked and monitored by you, can you please explain why?**

**Answer:**

The answer given in C3 provides the outstanding information, this has taken significant time to collate and has detracted officer attention from service delivery.

The significant majority of resources working within the SEND and Inclusion service are backfilling vacant establishment posts or providing additional officer capacity to the service to support recovery activity and transition to a new model, therefore individual performance management is consistent with that provided to substantive post holders. All agency workers report into a named manager who manages their workload outputs and ensures they deliver on the expectations of their role. Unsatisfactory performance is managed and where required contracts are terminated.

Where consultants are used there is agreement about the products they will deliver and agreed delivery expectations that are monitored, with the impact of their work being monitored as part of the service transformation.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES  
FROM COUNCILLOR BABER BAZ**

**D      Lockdown Deficit**

**Question:**

**Now we are going into a third national lockdown, what will be the process be for dealing with any additional deficit incurred as a result and how much would this attribute to each Ward?**

**Answer:**

The Council has been monitoring and reporting on the financial impacts of Covid-19 on a weekly basis since the first national lockdown. The financial impact is being managed as a corporate issue.

The month 7 finance report considered by the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10 December showed the Council forecasting a net underspend of £5.4m. This was a £4.5m overspend on Covid offset by non-Covid underspends of £9.9m.

In addition, the 4<sup>th</sup> tranche of un-ringfenced Covid grant announced in October, which is £44.2m, has not been spent. Cabinet approved at its November meeting when considering the quarter 2 financial report, that this will be held separately in a reserve.

In summary, we are not in deficit, we currently have a small surplus and have £44.2m in reserve to help cope with the uncertainty of the coming months.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE  
FROM COUNCILLOR JON HUNT**

**E      COVID-19'**

**Question:**

**Bearing in mind the disturbing increase in COVID cases, could the Cabinet Member explain to the Chamber (a) any provision pledged by the City Council to support the NHS in mass testing and also mass vaccination and (b) when the Nightingale Hospital, based at the NEC, will be used to support the rise in local cases that is pushing local hospitals to breaking point?**

**Answer:**

The council is working with multi-agency partners across the city and region, to continue to offer full support to all programmes in the response to COVID-19. The response to COVID-19 requires the council and all partners to work flexibly together, both in support of the NHS and our own responsibilities to save lives and reduce the spread and impact of COVID-19.

**Testing**

Testing continues to be a cornerstone of the national response, covering different elements (Asymptomatic and Symptomatic testing), some of which the Council leads on (eg Lateral Flow Device Testing), some it supports (eg Mass Testing Units – MTUs) and some it is just aware of (Regional Testing Site).

The Council fully supports, all elements of the testing programme and has supported this work from the start of the pandemic. This includes a wide range of activities from providing sites and traffic management to DHSC, through to delivering Lateral Flow Testing.

**Vaccination**

The vaccination programme is led by the NHS, in particular University Hospitals Birmingham and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Early in the vaccination planning, it was clear that BCC had a range of skills and assets that would support the NHS vaccination programme rollout.

BCC recognised that the quickest way out of COVID was to vaccinate the population, therefore BCC has been working closely with the NHS to provide as much support as possible to the NHS, in line with their requests.

To date, this has been around:

- Officer time and planning expertise,
- Social Care awareness/access/support
- Highways and traffic support
- Access to council assets eg Car Parks and Buildings
- Support with mass vaccination centres
- Staff vaccination

- Communications
- Administration support

This is a fast and evolving areas and we are very much working in support of the NHS.

**NHS Nightingale**

The nightingale hospital at the NEC site is an NHS (CCG) facility and activity located in the Solihull MBC authority area.

BCC has ensured we can support NHS bodies when requested with activities such as discharge into Adult Social Care. We have previously offered non clinical skills - however the use of nightingale, its resourcing remains with the NHS and we have limited involvement in any element of the nightingale hospitals including if/when they maybe used.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES AND  
NEIGHBOURHOODS FROM COUNCILLOR EWAN MACKEY**

**F1 Christmas Day Cemetery Opening**

**Question:**

**On what date, and by what method, were the security company responsible for New Hall Cemetery informed that they would be required to open the Cemetery on Christmas Day as advertised by the Council?**

**Answer:**

The Company was given a written instruction via email on 18 December, an extract of which is below:-

**“Opening and contact details for Bereavement Services – Cemeteries & Crematoria**

<b>Site</b>	<b>Thursday 24 December 2020</b>	<b>Friday 25 December 2020</b>	<b>Saturday 26 &amp; Sunday 27 December 2020</b>	<b>Monday 28 December 2020</b>	<b>Tuesday 29 – Thursday 31 December 2020</b>	<b>Friday 1 January 2021</b>
<b>Sutton New Hall Cemetery</b>	Open to visitors 12:30 – 18:00  <b>Security working as normal</b>	Open to visitors 10:00 – 16:00  <b>Security required to open and close as per weekends</b>	Open to visitors 12:30 – 16:00  <b>Security working as normal but close at 16:00 – work to 16:30</b>	Open to visitors 12:30 – 16:00  <b>Security working as normal but close at 16:00 – work to 16:30</b>	As current website <a href="http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/cemeteries">www.birmingham.gov.uk/cemeteries</a>  <b>Security working as normal</b>	Open to visitors 12:30 – 16:00  <b>Security working as normal but close at 16:00 – work to 16:30</b>

“

The arrangements were rechecked by City Council staff with the contractor on 23 December to ensure the necessary arrangements were in place.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES AND  
NEIGHBOURHOODS FROM COUNCILLOR MAUREEN CORNISH**

**F2      Christmas Day Cemetery Opening failure**

**Question:**

**Were any cemeteries other than New Hall affected by the failure of the security company to open on Christmas Day as advertised by the council?**

**Answer:**

No other cemeteries were affected.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES AND  
NEIGHBOURHOODS FROM COUNCILLOR RON STORER**

**F3      Christmas Day Cemetery Opening cost**

**Question:**

**What was the cost to the council of the security company opening up cemeteries on Christmas Day as advertised, and how much of this was refunded after the failure to do so?**

**Answer:**

The contract with the security company is arranged through Acivico. To date there has been no recharge made by Acivico for this work, so this question cannot be answered at this time.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES AND  
NEIGHBOURHOODS FROM COUNCILLOR PETER FOWLER**

**F4      Selective Licensing**

**Question:**

**Please provide a copy of all advice provided by the government department in preparing the new policy approved for consultation at the December Cabinet meeting?**

**Answer:**

We have relied on the Selective Licensing 'Guide for Local Authorities' which is attached. There have also been telephone conversations with Ministry Officials to ensure we have followed the procedures appropriately as set out in the guide that follows:-





Department for  
Communities and  
Local Government

## Selective licensing in the private rented sector

A Guide for local authorities

March 2015  
Department for Communities and Local Government



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## Introduction

The Government values the private rented sector and wants to see a strong, healthy and vibrant market. Its aim is a bigger and better private rented sector that offers security, stability and decency. We are increasing the supply of private rented sector housing through the £1 billion Build to Rent fund and a £3.5 billion Private Rented Sector Guarantee scheme to underpin investment in the private rented sector. We are also educating tenants so that they understand their rights, and their responsibilities. We want landlords to treat their tenants as valued customers, not just someone who they can extract rent from without providing any kind of service.

The Government is keen to ensure that the sector is encouraged to meet, in a professional way and with decent quality accommodation, the demands placed upon it by the housing needs of the wide range of tenants it services. It strongly supports voluntary arrangements such as accreditation and landlords' forums.

Currently local authorities have powers to introduce selective licensing of privately rented homes in order to tackle problems in their areas, or any part or parts of them, caused by low housing demand and/or significant anti-social behaviour. Local residents, landlords and tenants (and any other person likely to be affected by the selective licensing designation) must be consulted prior to the introduction of a licensing scheme. Landlords who rent out properties in an area that is subject to selective licensing are required to obtain a licence from the local authority for each of their properties.

With effect from 1 April, a new General Approval will come into force. Local authorities will be required to obtain confirmation from the Secretary of State for any selective licensing scheme which would cover more than 20% of their geographical area or would affect more than 20% of privately rented homes in the local authority area. Additional criteria for making a scheme are also now in force. A designation may be made to combat problems in an area experiencing poor property conditions, an influx of migration, a high level of deprivation or high levels of crime.

Together these new rules will enable local authorities to make effective licensing schemes to address specific problems arising in particular areas.

This (non-statutory) guidance explains the criteria for making a selective licensing scheme and discusses the type of evidence needed to support a designation. It sets out what a local authority would expect a scheme to deliver in terms of the economic and social conditions of the designated area and how during the period of the designation this will be evaluated. It also explains the processes that need to be complied with before a designation can be brought into force. This Guidance applies to both designations made under the General Approval 2015 and those which require confirmation by the Secretary of State.

## Overview

1. Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004 (the Act) sets out the scheme for licensing private rented properties<sup>1</sup> in a local housing authority area. Under section 80 of the Act a local housing authority can designate the whole or any part or parts of its area as subject to selective licensing. Where a selective licensing designation is made it applies to privately rented property in the area. Subject to certain exemptions specified in the Selective Licensing of Houses (Specified Exemptions)(England) Order 2006<sup>2</sup>, all properties in the private rented sector which are let or occupied under a licence, are required to be licensed by the local housing authority, unless the property is a House In Multiple Occupation and is required to be licensed under Part 2 of the Act<sup>3</sup>. With effect from 1 April 2015 a local housing authority will now need to apply to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Secretary of State) for confirmation of any scheme which would cover more than 20% of their geographical area or that would affect more than 20% of privately rented homes in the local authority area.
2. Under the new arrangements if a local housing authority makes a designation that covers 20% or less of its geographical area or privately rented properties, the scheme will not need to be submitted to the Secretary of State, provided the authority has consulted for at least 10 weeks on the proposed designation. However, if the local housing authority makes one or more designations that are in force partly concurrent to an existing scheme, and cumulatively all the designations cover more than 20% of the area or the private rented stock, those new designations will need to be submitted to the Secretary of State for approval. Likewise if the local housing authority makes two or more designations at the same time, each of which account for less than 20% of the area or private rented stock, but cumulatively account for more than 20% of either, all of the schemes will need to be submitted to the Secretary of State for confirmation.
3. In deciding the number of privately rented properties a scheme would apply to the local housing authority may want to consider data it holds on sector, including housing benefit and council tax records.

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<sup>1</sup> Private rented properties do not include accommodation where the tenancy is granted by a non-profit registered provider of social housing or a profit-making registered provider of social housing, within the meaning of Part 2 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.

<sup>2</sup> SI 2006/370

<sup>3</sup> Housing Act 2004 Section 85 (1)(a).

## Conditions applying to Selective licensing

4. A selective licensing designation may be made if the area to which it relates satisfies one or more of the following conditions. The area is one experiencing:
  - low housing demand (or is likely to become such an area)<sup>4</sup>;
  - a significant and persistent problem caused by anti-social behavior<sup>5</sup>;
  - poor property conditions<sup>6</sup>;
  - high levels of migration<sup>7</sup>;
  - high level of deprivation<sup>8</sup>;
  - high levels of crime<sup>9</sup>.
5. In considering whether to designate an area for selective licensing on the grounds above on property conditions, migration, deprivation and crime the local housing authority may only make a designation if the area has a high proportion of property in the private rented sector<sup>10</sup>. Nationally the private rented sector currently makes up 19% of the total housing stock in England<sup>11</sup>. The actual number of privately rented properties in a given area may be more or less than this, and if it is more than 19%, the area can be considered as having a high proportion of privately rented properties. 19% is the figure as of March 2014. This figure will vary from time to time, so local authorities are strongly advised to consult the latest available English Housing Survey when considering whether an area has a high proportion of privately rented properties.
6. When considering whether to make a selective licensing designation a local housing authority must first identify the objective or objectives that a designation will help it achieve. In other words it must identify whether the area is suffering problems that are caused by or attributable to any of the criteria for making the designation and what it expects the designation to achieve - for example, an improvement in property conditions in the designated area.
7. Secondly, it must also consider whether there are any other courses of action available to it that would achieve the same objective or objectives as the proposed scheme without the need for the designation to be made. For example, if the area is suffering from poor property conditions, is a programme of renewal a viable alternative to making the designation? In areas with Anti-Social Behaviour,

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<sup>4</sup> Housing Act 2004 Section 80(3)

<sup>5</sup> Housing Act 2004, Section 80(6)

<sup>6</sup> The Selective Licensing of Houses (Additional Conditions)(England) Order 2015 – Article 4

<sup>7</sup> The Selective Licensing of Houses (Additional Conditions)(England) Order 2015 – Article 5

<sup>8</sup> The Selective Licensing of Houses (Additional Conditions)(England) Order 2015 – Article 6

<sup>9</sup> The Selective Licensing of Houses (Additional Conditions)(England) Order 2015 – Article 7

<sup>10</sup> The Selective Licensing of Houses (Additional Conditions)(England) Order 2015 - Article 3 (1) (a)

<sup>11</sup> English Housing Survey 2013/2014

where landlords are not taking appropriate action, could an education programme or a voluntary accreditation scheme achieve the same objective as a selective licensing designation?

8. If the problems of anti-social behavior are only associated with a small number of properties a local housing authority should consider making a Special Interim Management Order, rather than a selective licensing designation covering properties with regard to anti-social behaviour (see Annex below).
9. Only where there is no practical and beneficial alternative to a designation should a scheme be made.
10. If the local housing authority decides there is no practical and beneficial alternative to the scheme, it must only make the designation if it is satisfied that the scheme will significantly assist it in achieving its objective or objectives, with other actions the local housing authority may be taking.
11. Any designation made must:
  - ensure that the exercise of the power is consistent with their overall housing strategy<sup>12</sup>; and
  - seek to adopt a co-ordinated approach in connection with dealing with homelessness, empty properties and anti-social behaviour affecting the private rented sector as regards combining licensing with other action taken by them or others.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Housing Act 2004, Sections 81(2)

<sup>13</sup> Housing Act 2004, Sections 81(3)

## **Making a scheme – identifying the factors affecting an area, assessing impacts of schemes and measuring their outcomes**

### **Introduction:**

12. Before proposing a designation and embarking on a consultation the local housing authority must identify the problems affecting the area to which the designation will apply and provide evidence to support the existence of the problems. It must also decide what other measures it, or other persons together with the local housing authority, will take together with the selective licensing scheme to eliminate or mitigate those problems and how they will work together. The local housing authority must also assess what outcomes will be delivered through the making of a scheme and taking the other measures<sup>14</sup>.

### **Low Housing Demand**

13. When deciding if an area is suffering from, or likely to become, an area of low housing demand, it is recommended that local housing authorities consider the following factors:
- The value of residential premises in the area, in comparison to the value of similar premises in other areas which the authority considers to be comparable (whether in terms of type of housing, local amenities, availability of transport).
  - The turnover of occupiers of residential premises (in both rented and owner occupied properties).
  - The number of residential premises which are available to buy or rent, and the length of time for which they remain unoccupied.
  - The general appearance of the locality and the number of boarded up shops and properties.
14. The scheme should state how it will help address the problems associated with low demand in the designated area, for example, through imposing conditions relating to the management of properties. It must identify how the scheme will work in combination with other specified measures that the local housing authority is taking to combat those problems.
15. The outcome of the scheme should be a reduction in or elimination of the blight of low demand which has led to improvements of the social and economic conditions of the sector, which are identifiable.

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<sup>14</sup> It should be noted that in making a selective licensing designation, the local housing authority must also take other measures to help address the problems. A scheme cannot be made unless those other measures are to be introduced (or continued in force).



## Anti-Social Behaviour

16. In deciding whether an area suffers from anti-social behavior, it is recommended that local housing authorities consider whether private sector landlords in the designated area are not effectively managing their properties so as to combat incidences of anti-social behaviour caused by their tenants or people visiting their properties and in particular the area suffers from anti-social behaviour as a result of this failure or because that failure significantly contributes to that problem.
17. In considering whether the area is suffering from anti-social behaviour which a landlord should address regard must be had as to whether the behaviour is being conducted within the curtilage of the rented property or in its immediate vicinity and includes acts of (but not limited to):
  - intimidation and harassment of tenants or neighbours;
  - noise, rowdy and nuisance behaviour affecting persons living in or visiting the vicinity;
  - animal related problems;
  - vehicle related nuisance;
  - anti-social drinking or prostitution;
  - illegal drug taking or dealing;
  - graffiti and fly posting;
  - and litter and waste within the curtilage of the property.
18. The scheme should state what measures will be taken to address the problems associated with anti-social behaviour, for example by including conditions in licences requiring landlords to take action to deal with such behaviour, to ensure that properties are not let to persons with a known record of anti-social behaviour and relating to the use of the property. It should also make clear how the measures taken in the scheme when combined with other specified measures will work together to combat the problems caused by anti-social behaviour.
19. The outcome of the scheme should be a reduction in, or elimination, of anti-social behaviour (caused by tenants in the private sector) in the designated area.

## Poor property conditions

20. Local housing authorities can address poor property conditions through their powers in Part 1 of the Act, which are extensive. As mentioned below a local housing authority should not use its Part 3 powers (selective licensing) where it is appropriate to tackle small numbers of properties which are in disrepair directly and immediately under Part 1. There may, however, be circumstances in which a significant number of properties in the private rented sector are in poor condition and are adversely affecting the character of the area and/ or the health and safety of their occupants. In that case, as part of wider strategy to tackle housing conditions, the local housing authority may consider it appropriate to make a selective licensing scheme so that it can prioritise enforcement action under Part 1 of the Act, whilst ensuring through licence conditions under Part 3 that the properties are properly managed to prevent further deterioration.
21. It is recommended that local housing authorities consider the following factors to help determine whether there are poor property conditions in their area:
- The age and visual appearance of properties in the area and that a high proportion of those properties are in the private rented sector<sup>15</sup>;
  - Whether following a review of housing conditions under section 3(1) of the Act<sup>16</sup>, the authority considers a significant number of properties in the private rented sector need to be inspected in order to determine whether any of those properties contain category 1 or 2 hazards. In this context "significant" means more than a small number, although it does not have to be a majority of the private rented stock in the sector. It would not be appropriate to make a scheme if only a few individual properties needed attention.
22. The scheme should state what action the authority intends to take under Part 1 of the Act if it identifies there are serious deficiencies with properties, including the timescale for taking the appropriate action and its enforcement plan for non-compliance with improvement notices or prohibition orders it serves.
23. The outcome of the designation would be a general improvement of property conditions in the designated area within the lifetime of the designation.

## High levels of migration

24. Migration refers to the movement of people from one area to another. It includes migration within a country and is not restricted to migration from overseas. A selective licensing designation can be made, as part of wider strategy, to preserve or improve the economic conditions of the area to which migrants have moved and ensure people (including migrants) occupying private rented

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<sup>15</sup> The proportion of properties is a statutory requirement- see The Selective Licensing of Houses (Additional Conditions)(England) Order 2015- Article 3 (1) (a)

<sup>16</sup> It is a prerequisite to making a scheme that such a review has been carried out. The Selective Licensing of Houses (Additional Conditions)(England) Order 2015 – Article 4 (a)

properties do not live in poorly managed housing or unacceptable conditions.

25. In considering whether an area is experiencing, or has experienced, high levels of migration: the local housing authority will want to consider whether the area has experienced a relatively large increase in the size of the population over a relatively short period of time. In assessing this, the local housing authority should consider whether net migration into the designated area has increased the population of the area. We suggest a population increase of around 15% or more over a 12 month period would be indicative that the area has or is experiencing a high level of migration into it.
26. The designated area must contain a high proportion of privately rented properties with a significant number of migrants to the area occupying them. In assessing whether the area is experiencing or has experienced significant migration the local housing authority will want to have regard to such information it holds on households in the area; any significant increase in the call for, or in the provision of, local authority services in the area; any increase in local authority or police intervention in the area and any changes to the socio-economic character of the area.
27. The scheme should state what actions the local housing authority intends to take to ensure the preservation or improvements to the social or economic conditions of the area. It should also state what it would put in place through licensing, to ensure proper standards of management of privately rented properties in the area are maintained, and to prevent properties becoming overcrowded.
28. The outcome of the designation should be to preserve or improve the economic or social conditions of the area during the lifetime of the designation and ensure that a proper standard of management of privately rented property is maintained and that properties do not become overcrowded.

### **High levels of deprivation**

29. A local housing authority may make a designation if the area is experiencing a high level of deprivation. It must, however, be clear that by making the scheme it will, together with other measures as part of a wider strategy, improve housing conditions in the private rented sector in that area.
30. In deciding whether to make a designation because the local authority considers the area suffers from a high level of deprivation we recommend that the local housing authority considers the following factors when compared to other similar neighbourhoods in the local authority area or within the region:
  - the employment status of adults;
  - the average income of households;
  - the health of households;
  - the availability and ease of access to education, training and other services

for households;

- housing conditions;
- the physical environment;
- levels of crime.

31. Although it is a matter for the local housing authority to determine, whether having regard to the above factors, the area is one that is suffering from a high level of deprivation, the local housing authority may only make a designation if a high proportion of housing in the area is in the private rented sector.

32. The scheme should state what actions the local housing authority intends to take to combat housing problems associated with the deprivation; including, for example, through licence conditions to ensure properties are managed properly, and can contribute to an improvement in the well-being of the occupants and wider community.

33. The outcome of the designation should be (together with other measures) a reduction of the problems with housing in the private rented sector contributing to the high level of deprivation.

### **High levels of crime**

34. In considering whether an area suffers from a high level of crime the local housing authority may wish to have regard to whether the area has displayed a noticeable increase in crime over a relatively short period, such as in the previous 12 months; whether the crime rate in the area is significantly higher than in other parts of the local authority area or that the crime rate is higher than the national average. In particular the local housing authority may want to consider whether the impact of crime in the area affects the local community and the extent to which a selective licensing scheme can address the problems.

35. The licensing scheme must be part of a wider strategy to address crime in the designated area and can only be made if a high proportion of properties in that area are in the private rented sector. In particular the local housing authority should consider:

- whether the criminal activities impact on some people living in privately rented accommodation as well as others living in the areas and businesses therein;
- the nature of the criminal activity, e.g. theft, burglary, arson, criminal damage, graffiti;
- whether some of the criminal activity is the responsibility of some people living in privately rented accommodation.

36. The scheme should show what measures the local housing authority will be able to take through licensing (and such other measures as are being taken), to reduce criminal activity in the area, such as by imposing conditions in licences to ensure properties are safe from intruders.
37. The outcome of the designation (together with the other measures) should lead to a reduction in crime in the area.

## **Selective licensing as part of the overall housing strategy**

38. Selective licensing is not a tool that can be used in isolation. The local housing authority will have to show how such a designation will be part of the overall strategic borough wide approach<sup>17</sup>, and how it fits with existing policies on:

- Homelessness
- Empty Homes
- Regeneration
- Anti-social behaviour associated with privately renting tenants

39. Local housing authorities must also ensure that selective licensing complements other measures. It should only be used where existing measures alone are not sufficient to tackle the underlying housing problems of a specific area. Local authorities should also carefully consider any potential negative economic impact that licensing may have on their area – particularly the risk of increased costs to landlords who are already fully compliant with their obligations. These additional costs can reduce further investment and are frequently passed on to tenants through higher rents.

40. The selective licensing scheme must be consistent with the overall housing strategy and co-ordinated with procedures for homelessness, empty properties, anti-social behaviour in the private rented sector, and housing market renewal activity.

41. Local housing authorities will also have to demonstrate the role of other partners (if any), such as the Police or Social Services, in ensuring the designation reaches its goal.

42. The local housing authority must show:

- It has considered whether there are any other courses of action available to them that might provide an effective method of achieving the objectives that the designation is intended to achieve, and;
- how the making of the designation will significantly assist the local housing authority in achieving its' objectives (whether or not in conjunction with those other measures).

43. It is important for local housing authorities to demonstrate how licensing will work in conjunction with existing initiatives (such as landlord accreditation) and partnerships. Licensing in itself is not a stand-alone tool, and local housing authorities should take account of this. For example, landlords will need adequate

support to help them deal with problem tenants. Local housing authorities should ensure that their schemes are adequately resourced and include services such as active outreach support programmes to engage with landlords and tenants who need their assistance.

44. It is also important for local housing authorities to consider some of the possible effects of making a designation, and to include any risk assessment they may have carried out. For example, has there been an assessment of the likelihood of possible displacement of unprofessional landlords to other areas within the local authority's jurisdiction, or to neighbouring local authorities.

## Consultation requirements

45. Section 80 (9) of the Act states that when considering designating an area the local housing authority must:

- take reasonable steps to consult persons who are likely to be affected by the designation, and,
- consider any representations made in accordance with the consultation.

46. Local housing authorities will be required to conduct a full consultation. This should include consultation of local residents, including tenants, landlords and where appropriate their managing agents and other members of the community who live or operate businesses or provide services within the proposed designation. It should also include local residents and those who operate businesses or provide services in the surrounding area outside of the proposed designation that will be affected. Local housing authorities should ensure that the consultation is widely publicised using various channels of communication.

47. If the designation does not require the confirmation of the Secretary of State because of its extent the local housing authority must consult on the proposed scheme for at least 10 weeks. We recommend that if the scheme requires confirmation the local housing authority should aim to consult for at least 10 weeks unless there are special reasons for not doing so.

48. The consultation should be informative, clear and to the point, so the proposal is readily understood. It should inform local residents, landlords, letting agents and businesses about the proposed designation, giving the reasons for proposing it, why alternative remedies are insufficient, demonstrating how it will tackle specific problems together with other specified measures, and describing the proposed outcome of the designation. It should also set out the proposed fee structure and level of fees the authority is minded to charge (if any). Consultees should be invited to give their views, and these should all be considered and responded to.

49. Once the consultation has been completed the results should then be published and made available to the local community. This should be in the form of a summary of the responses received and should demonstrate how these have either been acted on or not, giving reasons.





## **Application to the Secretary of State for Confirmation**

50. Applications for confirmation of Selective Licensing designations should be submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government and should use the following structure.

- **Introduction.** This should cover the strategic significance of the proposed area and provide a detailed description of the proposed area (including the number and types of properties affected, and a map of the area).
- **An explanation of whether the designation is for more than 20% of the local authority's geographical area; or affects more than 20% of privately rented homes in the area and how this was calculated or where the scheme is for less than 20% of the area or homes, how it together with other schemes affects more than 20% cumulatively.**
- **Where the designation would cover over 20% of the area or 20% of properties the application should set out what the rationale for adopting a large scale scheme is.**
- **Current position with regards to tackling:**
  - low housing demand;
  - anti-social behaviour;
  - poor property conditions;
  - an influx of migration;
  - a high level of deprivation;
  - high levels of crime;

demonstrating how the area would benefit from the combination of existing policies and selective licensing.

- **Conclusion, addressing the relevant issues that were raised in the stakeholder consultation and details as to what the long term impact of the scheme will be on the proposed area.**

51. In addition the local housing authority must include with the application:

- **A copy of the consultation document and the published summary of the responses;**
- **Details of the fees that will be charged;**

- A copy of the Designation and minutes of the Council meeting resolving to make the designation;
- A copy of the local housing authority's strategy to ensure compliance with the scheme and enforcement against those who do not comply. It must also supply the level of compliance with other licensing schemes it operates, including mandatory House of Multiple Occupation licensing.

52. Applications should be e-mailed to: [selectivelicensing@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:selectivelicensing@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

Hard copies should be sent to:

The Department for Communities and Local Government

Private Sector Property

Fry Building

2 Marsham Street

London SW1P 4DF

### **Department's role in the confirmation process**

53. The Secretary of State's role in confirmation will be exercised by officials in the Private Sector Property Division and the final decision whether to confirm or refuse to confirm the designation will be made by a senior official of the division.
54. The decision will be in writing and where appropriate, will give reasons where the Secretary of State declines to give consent. There is no appeal against the Secretary of State's decision, although it can be subject to judicial review.
55. We aim to make a decision in relation to an application within 8 weeks from receipt, but processing applications may take longer if we have not been given all the information required, or we require further information or research, or if the case is complex.
56. We may request further information relating to the application and supporting documentation, including clarification of matters which are unclear and we may seek further evidence of certain matters. If we do not have sufficient information to make a decision we will let you know.
57. The role of the Secretary of State is not about second-guessing the local housing authority's reasons for making the decision. As this guidance makes clear local housing authorities will know their local housing market conditions better than the Department. The approval system is concerned with ensuring that the local housing authority has carried out the requirements imposed on it through the legislation before making the designation and can sufficiently demonstrate,

where a scheme will impact on a large geographical area or number of privately rented properties, that there is robust evidence to support the reasons for making the designation.

58. There is no presumption towards refusal or acceptance. All applications will be considered impartially on a case by case basis balancing the views and interest of all parties and we will consider representations in support of the application from Government Departments and agencies, such as the Home Office.
59. However, the Secretary of State will take into account in deciding whether to confirm a scheme, the robustness of the proposed measures to ensure compliance<sup>18</sup>. In particular, the Secretary of State will expect to be assured there are systems in place to monitor compliance, and enforcement measures are in place where there is non-compliance. He will also take account when considering confirmation of a new scheme whether there has been sufficient compliance with other licensing schemes operating in the local housing authority area.
60. It is important that licensing schemes that exist are robustly enforced and if a local housing authority is unable to show compliance this will cast doubt on its ability to ensure compliance with the application scheme.

## **Duration and Notification of a Selective licensing Scheme**

61. Where a designation does not require confirmation, it cannot come into force until three months after it is made. Where it requires confirmation, it cannot come into force until three months after it has been confirmed by the Secretary of State<sup>19</sup>.

62. A designation may be made for up to 5 years<sup>20</sup>.

63. Section 83 of the Act requires local housing authorities to publish a notice of the designation once it has been confirmed. A local housing authority must:

- publish a notice within the designated area within seven days of the designation being confirmed.
- notify all those consulted on the proposed designation within two weeks of the designation being confirmed.

64. Further information on the publication requirements relating to additional and selective licensing designations can be found in Statutory Instrument No. 373 "The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006" which can be found on the Office of Public Sector Information website [www.opsi.gov.uk](http://www.opsi.gov.uk).

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<sup>19</sup> Housing Act 2004, section 82 (3) and (7)

<sup>20</sup> Housing Act 2004, section 84 (2)

## **Local Authority Review of a Selective licensing Scheme**

65. Sections 84 of the Act require local housing authorities to:

- Review the operation of a designation made by them from time to time, and;
- If following a review they consider it appropriate to do so, they may revoke the designation.

66. Selective licensing is not intended to be an end in itself. It is a means to an end. It is about improving management standards in the private sector in areas where those standards are sorely needed to be improved, for the benefit of occupiers and the wider community. Therefore after making a designation local housing authorities must continue to monitor designations to show that they are achieving the desired effect. For example, if a selective licensing designation is deemed to have worked, and the problems of low demand and/or anti-social behaviour have been resolved in an area, the local housing authority may consider that the designation is no longer needed and should be revised or revoked. Alternatively, if a designation is failing to tackle the issues it is meant to address, the local housing authority may consider that the designation should be revised or revoked and alternative measures considered addressing the issues. The Government recognises that licensing may have to be a long term strategy and that it will not provide instant solutions. It also appreciates that, if in the initial phase there has been little improvement in an area, this does not necessarily mean that a designation is a failure.

### **Renewal of a Selective licensing Scheme which requires confirmation**

67. When considering whether a local housing authority should renew a selective licensing scheme which requires confirmation by the Secretary of State, consideration will be given as to whether the existing schemes have met or not met their objectives, and whether they were properly made. The Secretary of State will only confirm a renewal if he is satisfied there is a continuing need for a scheme in the area and the consultation and other processes have been gone through.

68. Any existing scheme that covers more than 20% of the geographical area of the authority or 20% of private rented homes in the area will require confirmation on any proposed renewal as will any scheme which covers less than 20% but cumulatively with other schemes would include more than 20% of the area of stock.

## Annex

### Special Interim Management Order

It will not be appropriate to make a selective licensing designation to address isolated individual problems of anti-social behaviour which nevertheless seriously impact upon the local community. In such cases local housing authorities should consider making a Special Interim Management Order (SIMO) under part 4 of the Act<sup>21</sup>.

A Special Interim Management Order transfers the management of a residential property to the local housing authority for a period of up to twelve months and can only be made if approved by the First Tier Tribunal (Residential Property). The tribunal may not authorise a Special Interim Management Order in respect of a property unless, in the case of non-Houses of Multiple Occupation, there is anti-social behaviour emanating from the property, the landlord is failing to take appropriate action to deal with the problem, and, that it is necessary to make the order to protect the health, safety or welfare of persons occupying, visiting or engaged in lawful activities in the locality of the house.

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<sup>21</sup> The criteria for making such an order is set out in SI 2006/360- The Housing (Interim Management Orders) (Prescribed Circumstances) (England) Order 2006

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES AND  
NEIGHBOURHOODS FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID PEARS**

**F5      Cemetery Opening**

**Question:**

**What was the reason the security company did not open the gates to New Hall Cemetery on Christmas Day at the time advertised?**

**Answer:**

The Security Company has indicated it was an oversight on their behalf i.e. human error.



**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES AND  
NEIGHBOURHOODS FROM COUNCILLOR NEIL EUSTACE**

**F6      Homelessness**

**Question:**

**Recent figures released by the Office for National Statistics has shown the number of deaths of homeless people in England and Wales has seen an increase of 7.2 per cent in 2019, representing the highest number of estimated deaths since statistics began. The City's efforts to get people sleeping rough off the streets and stop people from becoming homeless during the COVID-19 pandemic have shown it is possible to make a significant difference to the numbers of people forced to sleep on the streets. Could the Cabinet Member provide details of how work will continue helping the homeless now we are moving from Tier 4 to National Lockdown, including a breakdown of costs and how this is likely to continue into the new financial year?**

**Answer:**

It is with sadness that we note the figures representing the deaths of homeless people. It must be noted that these statistics record homelessness to include hostels, night-shelters, and temporary accommodation, as well as people rough sleeping. We are not aware of anyone dying on the streets of Birmingham as a rough sleeper, in 2019.

There has been notable success this year in reducing the number of people found sleeping rough on the streets. The groundwork for the approach taken is through existing, ongoing funding, in particular Adult Social Care commissioning of Street Outreach, emergency accommodation, long-term supported accommodation and complex needs services; as well as prevention Hubs for young people, domestic abuse, offenders and over 25's. These contracts were newly in place December 2019 and are for a minimum of 3 years.

In addition, Birmingham is in its third year receiving MHCLG Rough Sleepers Initiative funding £788,000. Programmes funded for rough sleepers include coordination of services, social work, substance misuse treatment, navigators, and Housing Options Officers, as well as additional emergency accommodation. Government has announced an additional £105m for RSI 4. Birmingham would hope to see at least as much funding available next year as this and has been encouraged to consider what has worked this year, and therefore should attract additional RSI for 2021-22. Further the WMCA has received RSI funding this year and is financing further outreach capacity, dedicated women's support, and help to people with 'no recourse to public funds'. This income again is hoped to continue into 2021-22.

Funding made nationally available in response to Covid-19, and received by Birmingham City Council, has had a significant impact; some of this funding ends March 2021, some is for a longer period.

The Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP) has provided £595,000 revenue, primarily meeting the costs of emergency accommodation. The need for this provision is expected to have ceased by March 2021 as it largely is focused on accommodating people in

response to protection from Covid-19. NSAP capital funded £37,680 capital for the refurbishment of an existing care home. This will re-open in March 2021 as the Adult Transition Centre, for 11 most vulnerable rough sleepers, It is further supported by £508,000 revenue from NSAP 2020-24. The WMCA secured further NSAP which will enable the purchase of 10, 1-bedroom flats in Birmingham for rough sleepers. Birmingham is receiving £93,000 to support those individuals 2020-24.

Birmingham received £90,000 of Cold Weather Funding. This enables Severe Weather Emergency Protocol provision for rough sleepers and should enable provision through this winter. Such funding is likely to be repeated in winter 2021.

Birmingham received £430,000 from MHCLG for the Protect Programme November 2020 – March 2021. This programme provides for additional accommodation and a targeted, personalised approach to remaining, core, entrenched rough sleepers. Successes from this programme will look to be incorporated into RSI 4.

It has been announced that Birmingham will receive an additional £792,075 for substance misuse treatment for rough sleepers and homeless people, from PHE and for 2020-22. This will significantly increase the capacity for treatment and support to people who are most at risk of death due to the combination of risks their lives present.

Birmingham has also bid for Out of Hospital Care (Shared Outcomes) funding; £40,000 2020-21 and £600,000 2021-22. The outcome of this bid is awaited. If secured the pathways out of hospital for homeless people will be further strengthened. An opportunity to bid for a similar fund relating to prison release is also anticipated shortly. A bid is also being prepared for the Shared Outcomes Fund for young people's (16-25 Transition Centre) service development.

There is now a strong accommodation and support offer to people sleeping rough. This offer has remained in place from the first lockdown and will continue through the current lockdown, while also enhanced by the range of additional offers described above.

There is not anticipated to be additional cost to Birmingham City Council (unless funded by other routes), going into 2021-22.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES AND  
NEIGHBOURHOODS FROM COUNCILLOR ROGER HARMER**

**F7 Council House Modernisation Programme'**

**Question:**

**How many kitchen and bathroom modernizations have taken place/are planned to take place in council housing during the current financial year, the previous 5 financial years and how many more are planned for the coming financial year? Could this information be split by Ward?**

Answer:

The previous 5 financial years are as follows:

	Bathroom	Kitchen
ACOCKS-GRN	121	128
ALLENSCRSS	86	60
ALUM-ROCK	4	3
ASTON-WARD	7	7
BALSALLHTW	3	3
BARTLEYGRN	25	24
BILLESLEY	53	48
BIRCHFLD	2	3
BORDESLEY	5	5
BORD-HIGH	3	4
BOURN-COTT	6	7
BOURNSELLY	9	5
BRANDKINGS	40	44
BROMFHODGE	2	2
DRUIDSMONY	5	7
EDGBASTON	2	1
EDGBNORTH	7	10

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	Bathroom	Kitchen
ERDINGTON	15	20
FRANK-GPRK	5	7
GARRETTS	37	45
GLEBE-TILE	103	120
GRAVELLY	42	48
HALLGREENN	35	36
HANDSWORTH	5	8
HARBRNE	31	31
HEARTLANDS	6	7
HIGHTERSH	39	36
HOLYHEAD	3	3
KINGSNORTN	13	14
KINGSNORTS	1	1
KINGSTANDG	315	392
LADY-WOOD	5	4
LONG-WESTH	9	9
LOZELLSWRD	8	9
MOSELEYWRD	7	9
NECHELLS	2	1
NEWTOWN	10	14
NORTHFLD	1	1
OSCOTT	79	88
OUTOFCITY	2	2
PERRY-BARR	3	3
PERRY-COMM	50	57
PYPE-HAYES	75	88
QUINTON	18	20
RUBERY-RED	14	16

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	Bathroom	Kitchen
SHARD-END	7	10
SHELDN-WRD	3	5
SMALLHEATH	4	5
SOHO-JEWEL	10	16
SPARK-BHE	1	1
SPARKHILL	3	3
STH-YARDLY	8	11
STIRCHLEY	25	22
STOCKLANDG	71	82
SUTT-FOURO	1	2
SUTT-MERE	6	8
SUTT-REDDI	23	24
SUTT-ROUGH	5	5
SUTT-TRIN	20	23
SUTT-VESEY	9	11
SUTT-WARM	8	9
SUTT-WYLDE	1	1
TYSELEYHAY	68	69
WARD-END	11	15
WEOLEYSELL	82	79
YARDLEY-E	4	9
YARDW-STET	27	31
Total	1710	1891

For the year 2020/21 our intention was to provide 360 kitchen / bathrooms

For the year 2021/22 our intention is to provide 1200 kitchen / bathrooms

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES AND  
NEIGHBOURHOODS FROM COUNCILLOR JON HUNT**

**F8      Starter Homes'**

**Question:**

**The failure to deliver discounted starter homes has left some 85,000 young people nationally waiting for an affordable place to live, according to the Commons Public Accounts Committee. There is a desperate need to reverse the decline in council housing over the past few decades with Council's generally supporting the aspiration of people wanting to buy their own home and helping those that want to buy to be able to. However, it is important a full mix of homes and tenures are available especially in our local area. Could the Cabinet Member detail what steps are being taken to address this shortfall, giving details of the current and planned pipeline of council development for HRA and affordable market sale properties to include numbers of properties to be developed by tenure and anticipated build dates, also indicating which wards this additional development will affect?**

**Answer:**

The City Council recognises its role to ensure that we are building and planning to respond to the housing needs of all members of our community, including our constituents who want to buy their own homes.

The Council's developer arm, BMHT which has already seen over 3,400 new homes built since 2009 continues to make an important contribution to housing delivery in the city and has a programme that seeks to plan and deliver homes for rent and homes for sale. The sales programmes are targeted at our residents who want to own their own homes who may be key workers, for example and on lower incomes.

The table attached gives details of the homes for sale and rent that BMHT is currently planning for this financial year and the next 10 years.

It is to be noted that we are looking at ways of accelerating and increasing the delivery of affordable homes including sales and other equity share products. This will include the following:

- Key worker schemes
- Build to Rent products
- Shared ownership and other equity products working with registered providers to deliver

We will also explore ways in which our InReach our wholly owned subsidiary can contribute to the delivery of sale products in response to various funding initiatives available via WMCA, LEB and Homes England.

Neighbourhoods, Inclusive Growth and Planning have commissioned a strategic housing market analysis to secure update information on the needs of our community which will directly

feed into the growth and delivery targets for all affordable housing tenures. The attached programme is therefore expected to grow subject to the availability of funds and capacity across all sectors including private and Registered Providers.



Copy of BMHT Future  
Programme overview

F8 - Excel sheet attachment

Ward	2021 / 2022		2022 / 2023		2023 / 2024		2024 /
	Rent	Sales	Rent	Sales	Rent	Sales	Rent
Allens Cross			11				
Alum Rock	14		14				
Barkley Green		24	24	20	23	22	
Billey	5		6				
Bordesley Green	4						
Brandwood			10		45		10
Druids Heath & Moryhull				10	20	20	25
Edlington	2	13		6			
Frankley Great Park			25	14	18	14	
Garnett Green					10		
Harborne			5				
Heartlands							
Hodge Hill	21		50		27		25
Kings Norton	13	59	54	17	77	10	45
Kingsland			15	5	41	40	45
Longbridge	9						
Longbridge & West Heath					7		
Lozells and East Handsworth		10		6			
Nechells	32		10				
North Edgbaston					25	30	25
Perry Barr			34		23		
Quinton	9						
Shard End	3		71	30	36	30	30
Sheldon							
South Yardley	7		17				
Sparkbrook			30		55		10
Stockland Green			5		25		29
Sutton New Hall	5						
Sutton Reddick			4				
Sutton Walmsley & Minworth							
Tyburn	20	51	20	33	10		
	144	157	405	143	442	155	249



**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES AND  
NEIGHBOURHOODS FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL TILSLEY**

**F9     Homelessness**

**Question:**

**Could the Cabinet Member advise the Council how many homeless people are in accommodation outside the city, providing the Council with the number of people that are in temporary accommodation in the City in (a) hostels and (b) hotels?**

**Answer:**

The City Council is currently accommodating (as at 6.1.2021), 3542 households in temporary accommodation. The breakdown is as follows:

- 554 Households are in Bed and Breakfast (91 of which are outside of the City)
- 190 Households are in Hostels
- 2798 Households are in other forms of temporary accommodation (233 of which are outside of the City)

The Housing Options Service is working extremely hard to prevent homelessness, where possible, and to look at alternative move on options for those who are accommodated in temporary accommodation.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES AND  
NEIGHBOURHOODS FROM COUNCILLOR ZAKER CHOUDHRY**

**F10 Council House Modernisation Programme**

**Question:**

**Splitting by ward, could you detail how many kitchen and bathroom modernizations have successfully taken place in council houses during the last 10 years and also confirm the costs associated with these modernization programmes?**

**Answer:**

Listed below is the number of kitchen and bathroom modernizations that have successfully taken place in council houses during the last 10 years under the capital steam (from January 2011 to year to date), and does not include any properties where the kitchen or bathroom has been upgraded whilst the property has been void.

	Bathroom	Kitchen
ACOCKS-GRN	196	208
ALLENSCRSS	125	104
ALUM-ROCK	14	13
ASTON-WARD	15	15
BALSALLHTW	5	6
BARTLEYGRN	38	41
BILLESLEY	84	86
BIRCHFLD	4	5
BORDESLEY	9	10
BORD-HIGH	8	10
BOURN-COTT	12	12
BOURNSELLY	29	25
BRANDKINGS	49	55
BROMFHODGE	22	23
DRUIDSMONY	11	17
EDGBASTON	5	7
EDGBNORTH	12	50

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ERDINGTON	32	37
FRANK-GPRK	14	16
GARRETTS	43	51
GLEBE-TILE	140	157
GRAVELLY	65	73
HALLGREENN	81	88
HALLGREENS	4	3
HANDS-WOOD	8	9
HANDSWORTH	6	10
HARBRNE	45	47
HEARTLANDS	46	44
HIGHTERSH	56	52
HOLYHEAD	18	19
KINGSNORTN	21	23
KINGSNORTS	4	6
KINGSTANDG	408	485
LADY-WOOD	5	5
LONG-WESTH	34	39
LOZELLSWRD	11	13
MOSELEYWRD	12	15
NECHELLS	5	4
NEWTOWN	12	17
NORTHFLD	2	3
OSCOTT	119	127
OUTOFCITY	2	3
PERRY-BARR	5	5
PERRY-COMM	92	100
PYPE-HAYES	111	123
QUINTON	30	32

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RUBERY-RED	28	30
SHARD-END	49	51
SHELDN-WRD	6	8
SMALLHEATH	11	12
SOHO-JEWEL	22	30
SPARK-BHE	14	13
SPARKHILL	14	14
STH-YARDLY	12	18
STIRCHLEY	48	47
STOCKLANDG	107	117
SUTT-FOURO	2	3
SUTT-MERE	17	18
SUTT-REDDI	28	29
SUTT-ROUGH	7	7
SUTT-TRIN	28	31
SUTT-VESEY	12	15
SUTT-WARM	11	12
SUTT-WYLDE	1	1
TYSELEYHAY	97	98
WARD-END	29	33
WEOLEYSELL	105	103
YARDLEY-E	6	11
YARDW-STET	42	46
Total	2765	3040

## Costs associated with the kitchen and bathroom modernizations:

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	nd £m	Spend £m	Spend £m	Spend £m	Spend £m	Spend £m	Spend £m	Spend £m	Spend £m	Spend £m
<b>Kitchens and Bathrooms</b>	4.1	4.0	6.3	9.9	8.9	8.6	7.8	9.2	9.6	6.8

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES AND  
NEIGHBOURHOODS FROM COUNCILLOR MORRIAM JAN**

**F11     Sprinkler Systems**

**Question:**

**Could the Cabinet Member detail how much money has been spent on retro fitting full sprinkler systems to council tower blocks and maisonettes, by ward, confirming which systems have been used and if these have a yearly maintenance cost?**

**Answer:**

Please see the costs for retro fitting full sprinkler systems each year below:

In financial year 2018/19 the spend came to £2.80m

In financial year 2019/20 we spent £11.871m

To date in financial year 2020/21 we have spent £8.60m

The system that has been installed is fully compliant to BS9251

There is no additional maintenance cost of the sprinkler system to the council, as this is a fixed asset and is covered under Price Per Property in accordance with the contracts.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHAIR OF LICENSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION  
COMMITTEE FROM COUNCILLOR NEIL EUSTACE**

**G      COVID-19**

**Question:**

**It has been reported scammers are using the COVID vaccine roll out to target constituents with fraudulent messages, could the Cabinet Member explain the actions that are being taken in the City to clamp down on such behaviours?**

**Answer:**

The Trading Standards Service has been undertaking investigations into scam texts, websites and emails that are being used to target constituents during the coronavirus pandemic. As many of these scams originate abroad, the Service is liaising with other Trading Standards enforcing authorities nationally and using the press and social media to warn residents about the scams. There has been a success removing a scam website and investigations are ongoing with colleagues from Audit about scam grant applications. Where a UK based scammer the Service will act. There have been no recorded allegations specifically about vaccine scams but the Service is aware of texts circulating.

As an example of the intelligence the Service has about current scams, the latest scam is an alleged NHS text asking for credit card or debit card details. The Service has circulated the message to notify colleagues across the region and issued warnings to residents to delete the message should they receive it.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR STREET SCENE AND  
PARKS FROM COUNCILLOR GARETH MOORE**

**H1      Parks Survey 2020**

**Question:**

**Please provide a copy of the Birmingham Parks Survey 2020?**

**Answer:**

Participation in the 2020 survey closed on 8 November 2020 and the results will be made available on the Council's website once they have been verified:

[https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20089/parks/1099/parks\\_performance](https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20089/parks/1099/parks_performance)

The survey was published on BeHeard and is not available as hard copy.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR STREET SCENE AND  
PARKS FROM COUNCILLOR ZAKER CHOUDHRY**

**H2      Fleet and Waste Recycling Recruitment**

**Question:**

**Diversity in terms of gender, ethnicity and other protected characteristics is a key issue for council employment policy. Why are there no fleet and waste recycling jobs advertising on the council's website?**

**Answer:**

The Street Scene service is not currently recruiting to these roles but once all internal recruitment processes have been completed the vacancies will be posted on relevant websites.



**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR STREET SCENE AND  
PARKS FROM COUNCILLOR NEIL EUSTACE**

**H3     Refuse Collections**

**Question:**

**Could the Cabinet Member state how many times waste crews are having to return to an area to collect litter during the financial year to date and indicate the cost of this to the Council split by depot?**

**Answer:**

Street Cleansing is carried out to a scheduled programme. This programme has been developed from the Ward Plans based on need and current budget. We do try and keep to the schedule to enable an efficient cleansing programme. Additional cleansing is sometimes carried out based on reports, complaints and proactive observations by crews and managers.

There are a number of fly tipping hot spots across the City that are regularly cleansed, and wherever possible these sites are monitored by Waste Enforcement Officers.

The costs of these operations are contained within the overall Street Cleansing Expenditure and are not identified separately.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR STREET SCENE AND PARKS FROM COUNCILLOR ROGER HARMER**

**H4     Fly Tipping**

**Question:**

**Could the Cabinet Member provide a report on the number of complaints, by ward, concerning fly tipping, including the number of incidents logged by month for the year to date and breakdown of associated costs of removal?**

**Answer:**

The below table gives information for 2020. The 'unknown ward' is where the incident has been recorded on non-corporate properties and we don't have a ward associated with the property.

The costs of clearing up fly tipping are not recorded specifically as these duties are carried out as part of the Street Cleansing function.

<b>Ward / Month received</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>Jul</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
Unknwn Ward	14	7	18	21	18	28	28	27	36	26	19	15	257
Acocks Green	36	49	26	26	52	71	85	81	53	73	61	50	663
Allens Cross	10	7	10	10	11	12	17	28	16	14	13	20	168
Alum Rock	99	107	100	78	66	129	180	125	157	126	72	104	1343
Aston	72	61	46	53	52	78	95	176	180	105	48	60	1026
Balsall Heath West	63	107	42	39	69	109	99	91	92	60	48	41	860
Bartley Green	42	38	25	38	48	53	56	58	48	37	50	31	524
Billesley	31	23	23	33	44	37	37	25	45	34	49	37	418
Birchfield	37	41	40	61	58	76	94	82	53	60	73	58	733
Bordesley & Highgate	62	61	37	49	56	83	101	86	109	90	77	66	877
Bordesley Green	110	104	75	106	99	158	205	133	206	139	140	119	1594
Bournbrook & Selly Park	34	40	26	19	30	39	71	34	48	72	49	25	487
Bournville & Cotteridge	17	4	7	5	14	13	21	26	15	14	13	17	166
Brandwood & Kings Heath	38	29	20	28	54	58	59	46	51	64	44	40	531
Bromford & Hodge Hill	23	35	25	33	40	49	56	58	84	89	56	40	588
Castle Vale	17	13	13	9	7	23	19	16	19	9	14	15	174
Druids Heath & Monyhull	9	11	14	15	17	23	38	18	22	25	32	9	233
Edgbaston	13	21	8	16	12	11	13	16	21	18	16	7	172
Erdington	54	48	37	38	40	50	65	68	43	49	30	40	562

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Frankley Great Park	12	6	5	10	25	24	21	25	24	19	13	23	207
Garretts Green	14	14	12	16	25	28	20	16	22	17	22	27	233
Glebe Farm & Tile Cross	36	32	31	54	54	62	88	58	65	63	49	51	643
Gravelly Hill	14	12	14	15	15	23	27	18	25	29	14	18	224
Hall Green North	36	35	22	30	32	45	49	47	77	44	37	26	480
Hall Green South	15	4	5	4	24	12	15	11	11	13	23	13	150
Handsworth	56	59	38	33	47	71	66	101	99	99	61	59	789
Handsworth Wood	35	42	24	52	42	53	85	82	70	58	52	50	645
Harborne	24	19	25	55	47	45	76	50	70	61	94	53	619
Heartlands	58	46	43	51	48	103	76	81	92	60	76	48	782
Highters Heath	15	7	2	12	23	22	33	20	13	23	9	11	190
Holyhead	85	69	62	89	70	94	62	130	139	96	68	61	1025
Kings Norton North	13	13	6	10	12	24	16	28	4	12	2	10	150
Kings Norton South	21	10	7	26	22	59	37	38	37	33	23	13	326
Kingstanding	20	22	19	40	32	38	51	46	71	55	39	43	476
Ladywood	19	16	15	33	23	46	57	45	26	36	39	29	384
Longbridge & West Heath	21	38	15	23	27	23	25	18	27	25	22	23	287
Lozells	42	37	23	30	30	44	46	63	58	41	40	63	517
Moseley	39	31	38	25	37	47	63	59	74	47	83	54	597
Nechells	26	39	29	20	44	45	52	49	67	33	25	42	471
Newtown	41	26	23	9	19	35	52	45	41	24	25	27	367
North Edgbaston	56	50	27	71	44	77	90	96	121	86	75	72	865
Northfield	11	5	3	15	13	18	6	15	20	20	35	13	174
Oscott	15	13	9	12	17	27	23	17	24	17	17	13	204
Perry Barr	18	26	26	25	19	28	32	30	31	31	27	16	309
Perry Common	17	12	12	12	15	13	21	25	22	38	65	34	286
Pype Hayes	9	13	7	12	26	9	21	19	18	12	9	11	166
Quinton	30	31	20	32	38	41	31	55	54	37	58	36	463
Rubery & Rednal	8	12	5	7	10	10	21	13	4	9	15	4	118
Shard End	17	15	17	27	20	31	40	30	38	16	14	29	294
Sheldon	21	20	10	17	17	34	24	27	35	23	32	22	282
Small Heath	71	63	54	96	109	125	131	120	180	134	147	108	1338
Soho & Jewellery Quarter	104	79	71	59	98	189	172	199	145	121	86	110	1433
South Yardley	5	4	7	11	9	13	29	16	11	21	13	6	145
Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East	179	112	95	133	117	218	229	194	273	153	161	144	2008
Sparkhill	58	52	30	71	70	106	90	107	138	88	75	69	954
Stirchley	12	23	8	13	16	13	19	31	9	14	13	14	185
Stockland Green	37	21	23	42	35	55	109	58	54	62	80	61	637

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Sutton Four Oaks	2		2	4	2	3		1	1	4	9		28
Sutton Mere Green	2		1	3	1	4	4	2	4	3		1	25
Sutton Reddicap	12	5	4	5	13	8	11	13	7	4	11	8	101
Sutton Roughley	4	4	6	12	9	13	7	5	8	3	6	6	83
Sutton Trinity	2	1	3	8	4	5	10	4	4	13	2	2	58
Sutton Vesey	3	5	5	6	8	11	15	11	17	9	6	7	103
Sutton Walmley & Minworth	21	12	6	19	24	22	17	13	18	13	27	14	206
Sutton Wylde Green	3	12	2	7	6	8	3	3	6	4	1	3	58
Tyseley & Hay Mills	29	22	19	38	41	78	88	49	59	76	74	85	658
Ward End	39	42	35	39	47	67	84	70	88	93	69	63	736
Weoley & Selly Oak	48	27	16	23	35	50	58	60	41	47	35	31	471
Yardley East	11	8	15	12	14	15	20	31	27	18	31	6	208
Yardley West & Stechford	10	19	18	28	18	35	38	36	39	28	28	22	319
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2277</b>	<b>2091</b>	<b>1606</b>	<b>2173</b>	<b>2380</b>	<b>3369</b>	<b>3799</b>	<b>3574</b>	<b>3906</b>	<b>3189</b>	<b>2941</b>	<b>2548</b>	<b>33853</b>

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR STREET SCENE AND PARKS FROM COUNCILLOR JON HUNT**

**H5      Maintenance Programme**

**Question:**

**Now that monies have been approved for this financial year to enable the additional clearing of leaves, could the Cabinet Member explain how this budget has been allocated, setting out how many extra rounds of cleaning has been accounted for and delivered in the City, by ward, and indicating how priority has been given to the clearance of blocked drains and gully's?**

**Answer:**

The budget was allocated for short term hire as follows:

Employees	£294,232.00
Vehicles and Equipment	£105,768.00

The has enabled an additional 3 vehicles and supplementary staff at Lifford Lane, Perry Barr and Redfern Road and 3 additional Glutton vehicles and supplementary staff at Montague Street.

The additional crews were not deployed on a ward basis at depot level. The crews were directed to manage known flooding areas. This included clearing drain gullies, as well as areas with high tree densities. Other roads were scheduled for cleansing on a rota to ensure all roads were cleared. They also responded to request for cleansing from Members, council colleagues and the general public.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR STREET SCENE AND PARKS  
FROM COUNCILLOR MORRIAM JAN**

**H6      Refuse Collections**

**Question:**

**Could the cabinet member provide details of the number of reports of missed collections, by month and ward?**

**Answer:**

Information for 2020 is detailed below. This includes both residual and recycling. It excludes containers at flats for residual waste and also garden waste. Residents cannot report the same missed collection more than once, hence the data does not contain any duplicates.

During the course of January to December 2020, approximately 27,799,200 of collections were scheduled to be made. A total of 45,241 were reported as missed collections, which represents 0.16%.

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>Jul</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>45241</b>	<b>5703</b>	<b>2763</b>	<b>5528</b>	<b>2831</b>	<b>2707</b>	<b>3601</b>	<b>3964</b>	<b>3595</b>	<b>3787</b>	<b>3605</b>	<b>3312</b>	<b>3845</b>
<b>Acocks Green</b>	<b>1215</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>Allens Cross</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Alum Rock</b>	<b>886</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Aston</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Balsall Heath</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>West</b>													
<b>Bartley Green</b>	<b>1138</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>Billesley</b>	<b>872</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Birchfield</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Bordesley &amp; Highgate</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Bordesley Green</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>Bournbrook &amp; Selly Park</b>	<b>838</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Bournville &amp; Cotteridge</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Brandwood &amp; Kings Heath</b>	<b>920</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>Bromford &amp; Hodge Hill</b>	<b>658</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Castle Vale</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Druids Heath &amp; Monyhull</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Edgbaston</b>	<b>660</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Erdington</b>	<b>1183</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Frankley Great Park</b>	<b>808</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Garretts Green</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Glebe Farm &amp; Tile Cross</b>	<b>1390</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>112</b>

4545

## City Council – 12 January 2021

Gravelly Hill	383	41	15	127	14	24	38	28	18	19	24	16	19
Hall Green North	812	111	50	73	64	34	67	76	80	62	73	58	64
Hall Green South	579	99	19	60	50	36	32	25	40	51	94	35	38
Handsworth	327	37	25	36	20	14	29	32	28	17	32	27	30
Handsworth Wood	468	70	22	29	20	24	27	35	39	62	42	64	34
Harborne	1352	154	105	143	101	82	110	102	114	97	116	129	99
Heartlands	378	23	17	91	23	14	31	24	30	44	24	28	29
Highters Heath	432	78	48	21	19	27	30	43	35	35	32	23	41
Holyhead	294	41	14	17	11	18	22	30	34	23	26	30	28
Kings Norton North	532	94	37	32	44	39	48	52	34	50	40	30	32
Kings Norton South	743	99	38	48	40	77	80	64	62	35	80	74	46
Kingstanding	918	86	33	204	62	44	72	98	51	94	55	57	62
Ladywood	461	33	55	22	18	11	33	58	71	61	33	35	31
Longbridge & West Heath	959	182	90	75	55	66	56	83	56	75	74	58	89
Lozells	269	36	23	42	11	11	16	17	18	23	27	11	34
Moseley	731	105	46	99	35	48	61	103	44	49	50	39	52
Nechells	348	47	29	25	38	29	31	20	55	19	14	11	30
Newtown	248	27	19	28	15	20	14	27	18	19	29	17	15
North Edgbaston	1361	110	115	128	51	57	102	130	182	135	99	163	89
Northfield	552	82	46	27	31	32	32	56	28	49	89	45	35
Oscott	936	54	49	348	45	44	63	35	41	94	42	49	72
Perry Barr	695	82	40	103	68	43	41	70	39	55	65	49	40
Perry Common	499	55	13	142	14	25	37	40	24	36	36	28	49
Pype Hayes	604	151	46	86	20	33	24	41	22	38	48	50	45
Quinton	874	54	50	89	51	47	100	76	59	64	60	81	143
Rubery & Rednal	337	26	15	24	26	31	36	43	15	17	50	26	28
Shard End	545	38	41	96	41	30	58	67	43	35	28	22	46
Sheldon	885	134	37	114	74	53	88	53	52	80	49	49	102
Small Heath	493	60	18	31	29	29	62	73	30	37	33	44	47
Soho & Jewellery Quarter	846	91	68	76	43	39	40	73	143	82	68	62	61
South Yardley	461	95	18	46	37	16	27	47	21	31	28	46	49
Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East	647	60	31	49	49	66	76	35	44	70	63	59	45
Sparkhill	576	52	38	103	37	44	37	72	35	52	21	45	40
Stirchley	404	72	14	12	31	25	31	45	40	23	43	24	44
Stockland Green	871	155	47	202	44	73	71	60	33	59	48	35	44
Sutton Four Oaks	641	104	21	128	73	34	48	32	36	69	34	29	33
Sutton Mere Green	432	72	30	123	51	18	19	17	13	37	18	20	14
Sutton Reddick	502	70	26	37	30	49	21	50	55	41	33	49	41
Sutton Roughley	372	34	31	37	32	20	24	36	28	64	18	26	22
Sutton Trinity	542	42	23	182	29	29	30	20	46	30	30	59	22
Sutton Vesey	749	50	34	325	35	24	32	36	34	42	37	33	67
Sutton Walmley & Minworth	677	187	26	126	39	41	39	44	36	55	35	16	33
Sutton Wylde Green	435	102	28	70	18	12	19	13	36	66	16	20	35
Tyseley & Hay Mills	574	84	32	31	49	36	55	85	31	43	19	47	62
Ward End	408	32	19	63	44	31	31	27	27	19	27	43	45

### City Council – 12 January 2021

<b>Weoley &amp; Selly Oak</b>	1259	99	83	92	84	83	123	114	102	114	121	97	147
<b>Yardley East</b>	510	49	17	37	34	30	22	36	75	28	44	60	78
<b>Yardley West &amp; Stechford</b>	421	49	38	33	33	37	25	24	25	56	33	32	36



**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR STREET SCENE AND PARKS FROM COUNCILLOR MIKE WARD**

**H7     Recycling**

**Question:**

**Could the Cabinet Member update the Council on progress in improving recycling rates, setting out changes by quarter, and indicating the impact of the recycling promotion specialists attached to crews and the number of interventions undertaken?**

**Answer:**

As you can imagine the impact of Covid 19 has had a significant impact on the face to face interactions staff have been able to make this year.

The WRCO role has continued to record contamination and tag bins and provide information on what residents can and cannot recycle.

From 30/03/2020 recycling collections brought in 23,424 tonnes of co-mingled recycling. This is a significant increase to the same period in 2019 where the tonnage was 18,918.

Whilst this is an improvement there is still a way to go to improve the whole City's recycling figure as the residual waste has also increased.

We are planning further information and recycling programmes to roll out over the next 12 months.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR ADAM HIGGS**

**I1      CAZ advertising**

**Question:**

**How much has been spent, and how much committed to be spent, on advertising for the Clean Air Zone, broken down by type of advert (radio, press, social media, billboards etc)**

**Answer:**

The Council bid for and has received £1.23m of funding to support engagement and marketing activity around the launch of the Clean Air Zone. This funding was provided to the Council from the government's Clean Air Fund (£0.40m) and the Clean Air Zone Implementation Fund (£0.83m). Since 2019 the delivery programme has spent £0.438m. This spend has been split across the following categories:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Spend £m</b>
Advertising <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Print</li><li>• Digital (inc social media)</li><li>• Out of home (billboards etc)</li></ul>	£0.003m £0.065m £0.080m
Direct Mail	£0.041m
Research	£0.022m
Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Events</li><li>• Content</li></ul>	£0.141m £0.085m

The remainder of this budget is forecast to be spent as part of preparations for the launch of the Clean Air Zone and in the period shortly after launch. This spend is forecast as follows. These figures do not include a small amount of contingency which is held in reserve.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Spend £m</b>
Advertising <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Radio</li><li>• Print</li><li>• Digital (inc social media)</li><li>• Out of home (billboards etc)</li></ul>	£0.100m £0.070m £0.200m £0.100m

**City Council – 12 January 2021**

Direct Mail	£0.090m
Research	£0.050m
Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Partnerships (inc events)</li><li>• Content</li></ul>	£0.100m £0.060m

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR JON HUNT**

**I2      Speed Cameras**

**Question:**

**Following his written answer to Cllr Harmer at last council, could the cabinet member set out what, if any, steps he is taking, by date, to get a programme of average speed camera installation going in the city, explaining whether he is committed to this happening or not and, if he is, to what timetable?**

**Answer:**

Yes, I remain committed to the further roll-out of average speed enforcement (ASE) in the city. The City Council has a statutory obligation on road safety to fulfil but ultimately the responsibility for speed enforcement rests with the Police and it is they who operate the system but with local authorities generally funding both the initial capital outlay and ongoing revenue costs.

Moving forward we need a position where the operating regime with the Police is financially sustainable and all parties able to recover the significant operating costs associated with running the system – the current arrangement does not do this. This may need to include hypothecation of revenues from fines which currently go direct to Treasury and/or the reinstatement of the Road Safety Grant which was previously abolished by the Coalition Government.

The Police are also clear that they wish to move towards a single agreement with local authorities when the current individual agreements will expire. Officers are working with the police and the Combined Authority to progress this, in the first instance, to secure the ongoing operation of existing sites when current arrangements end later this year.

Notwithstanding the need to identify funding for installation of the equipment, the timetable for further roll-out of ASE is dependent on resolution of these issues and not something that the City Council can directly control.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR MORRIAM JAN**

**I3      Speed Cameras**

**Question:**

**Early on last year, the cabinet member gave my ward colleague Jon Hunt a written commitment to investigate the installation of average speed cameras as part of the installation of Sprint bus lanes on the A34 in my Ward. Last month in answers to residents and other Councillors, he indicated that the Council has no plans to fund the installation of speed camera. He also indicated he was talking to the combined authority – sponsors of the Sprint project – about this.**

**Could the Cabinet Member indicate who is responsible for making a decision about installing average speed cameras, linked to Sprint development, setting out how any such decision will be made in a transparent way?**

**Answer:**

The Police are responsible for enforcement of speed limits. Local authorities also have a statutory duty regarding promotion of road safety and delivery of a road programme aligned to analysis of collision data. The Combined Authority has a coordinating role on road safety with a particular focus on the Key Route Network where they have concurrent powers. We all have a role to play in this and will continue to work together.

Whilst we remain committed to further roll-out of average speed enforcement (ASE), the current financial model is not sustainable as we are not able to recoup the significant cost of maintaining the system. So rather than not having any plans to fund further ASE, it is more a case of not being in a position to do so at this time. Since the abolition of the Road Safety Grant under the Coalition Government, we have limited resources to fulfil our road safety obligations.

Officers have been working with the Sprint team to review road safety audits for the scheme and identify if further action is required or opportunities to make improvements are presented. A review of collision data for the last three years highlights that sections of the A34 Walsall Road would have met the historic criteria for further consideration for camera based speed enforcement and so it will be included in the prioritisation process as and when we are in a position to move forward.

Assuming that BCC is the scheme promoter for further ASE roll-out which is the most likely scenario, then an executive decision would be required either by Cabinet or under officer delegations in consultation with the Cabinet Member depending on value.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO COUNCILLOR KATH HARTLEY, LEAD MEMBER OF  
WMCA TRANSPORT DELIVERY COMMITTEE FROM COUNCILLOR MIKE WARD**

**J      Concessionary Passes**

**Question:**

**With so many senior citizens not using their concessionary passes on buses, trams and trains in the area, the WMCA must be saving lots of money in payments to bus companies.**

**What will these savings be used for?**

**Answer:**

The WMCA is required by the Department for Transport and Central Government to maintain concessionary travel payments to operators at a level assuming Covid-19 had not happened. Therefore, TfWM has continued to pay operators at the same rate to support their operations during this difficult time to ensure that they can provide services for key workers and other essential public transport users, and to aid the financial recovery of the region.

Operators also continue to be supported by central government through payment of the Bus Services Operators Grant (BSOG) at pre-Covid levels and the additional Covid-19 Bus Services Support Grant (CBSSG).

# Executive Business Report

## Birmingham City Council

### City Council

2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021



**Subject:** Update on Birmingham City Council's response to Covid-19

**Report of:** Cabinet

**Report authors:** Chris Naylor (Gold Commander & Interim Chief Executive)

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. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, following previous reports brought to City Council in June and September 2020.
- 1.2. In addition, this report provides an overview of Council preparations for the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020.

#### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the report be noted.

#### 3. Introduction

- 3.1. At the time of writing, 1880 people in Birmingham have lost their lives to Covid-19. Our thoughts are with their families and loved ones, and the medical and care staff who have attended to them.
- 3.2. As Birmingham celebrates the beginning of a new year, it is now clear that Covid-19 was not the short-term crisis that some commentators may have predicted (or hoped for) in March 2020. Instead, it seems that Covid-19 will continue to define 2021 just as it defined 2020; and that the lingering

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economic and social impacts of the pandemic will be with us for many years to come.

- 3.3. The situation in February 2021 is characterised by uncertainty. Since the last update to City Council in September 2020, the United Kingdom has seen the introduction of a new tiered system of local restrictions and three national lockdowns, one of which is still ongoing. Birmingham businesses and communities have had to rapidly adapt in response to a complex landscape of quickly changing rules and restrictions, often with a notice period of days or even just hours. This has severely hampered both short-term business recovery and efforts at longer-term planning.
- 3.4. Birmingham City Council has continued to lobby national government for the support that our businesses need to keep running, as well as providing additional clarity on guidance and regulations where they are unclear. In this way we have hoped to mitigate what we recognise is an incredibly worrying time for our business community, and provide at least some small measure of stability and hope.
- 3.5. As the Covid-19 crisis continues, it is now in danger of becoming part of the new 'business as usual' for the Council. This is especially true as we turn our attention to new pressing issues on the horizon, including delivery of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games and the longer-term economic fall-out of Brexit.
- 3.6. However, we must not lose sight of the massive impact that the ongoing pandemic has had on the Council, both in terms of our day-to-day running and long-term strategic planning. We are incredibly proud of our hard-working teams and services as they continue to go above and beyond to support citizens and communities during one of the most difficult periods of their lives.
- 3.7. With the arrival of the vaccine in December 2020, there is hope on the horizon. We hope that by this summer we will start to see the impact of the vaccine on Covid-19 rates and hospital admissions, with restrictions slowly starting to lift thereafter. However, this is not the time to become complacent. We understand and empathise with the fatigue of many after months of restrictions, but we must all continue to play our part in reducing transmission and keeping each other safe. Social distancing, wearing a mask, and practicing good hygiene are all still vital steps we need to take to protect our national health service and the vulnerable in our communities.
- 3.8. There will continue to be uncertainty for some time, but the Council continues to work alongside partners and communities to plan for the recovery, and design a bright new future that we can all share in.
- 3.9. Details in relation to specific areas of response can be found as follows:



- Health & Wellbeing; pages 3 - 13
- Education, Skills and Children's Wellbeing; pages 13 - 31
- Communities (including Housing, Bereavement Services); pages 32 - 48
- Street Scene & Parks (including Waste Management); pages 49 - 51
- Transport; pages 51 - 60
- Covid-19 Support Grants (including Business Support Grants); pages 61 - 69
- Council Finances (including Corporate Procurement); pages 69 – 82
- Brexit; pages 82 - 89

#### **4. Health & Wellbeing**

##### **4.1. Adult Social Care**

- 4.1.1. The coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic is an unprecedented challenge for the nation, requiring an equally unprecedented response from the social care sector and its dedicated workforce.
- 4.1.2. Both the paid social care workforce and the tens of thousands of people in Birmingham who provide unpaid care have made an invaluable contribution during this time. They have worked tirelessly to support all those who need care or support, particularly those who are older or are living with underlying health conditions that might make them more vulnerable to the virus.
- 4.1.3. The following paragraphs are a snapshot of how the Council and our partners have come together to work with citizens during one of the most difficult periods in our city's history.

##### **Supporting our service users**

- 4.1.4. Covid-19 has had a profound impact on people receiving and providing social care, none more so than those who care for citizens in their own homes. Adult Social Care (ASC) staff have been in regular contact with our service users and carers during this period to offer them support, assistance and guidance during this challenging time.
- 4.1.5. In July 2020 we carried out a short online survey with service users, who told us that they would benefit from more frequent contact just to make sure that they are safe and well. These findings, alongside a report from Healthwatch about our response to the first wave of the pandemic, have helped us to

identify improvements in how we work with service users and their families in subsequent waves.

- 4.1.6. We now send out frequent information and advice letters to every person who is in receipt of care and support from Adult Social Care. These bimonthly letters also provide information about continuity care and further support options across the Council.
- 4.1.7. Initial 'safe and well' calls to citizens, carried out in summer 2020, were well-received and garnered positive feedback for the service. We are planning further 'safe and well' calls to all service users during the current lockdown. These calls are designed to monitor service user health and welfare status and identify those service users who may benefit from additional support, either from ourselves or our voluntary sector partners.
- 4.1.8. The risk of Covid-19 transmission to the most vulnerable citizens and carers has seen many providers pause regular services to protect their clients. We are working closely with those who used to access day care and respite services to identify alternative arrangements to meet their needs.

#### **Supporting our carers**

- 4.1.9. Working alongside partners, we have continued to support carers across the city during the pandemic. Council webpages, and those of the Carers Hub, are continually updated to ensure that they provide the latest information, advice and guidance. The Carers Strategy Group, made up of providers and commissioners, meets regularly to manage the response to Covid-19.
- 4.1.10. The Carers Support Service regularly reviews its services to ensure that it is optimising the offer to carers. It has seen a sharp rise in the number of carers registering for the Birmingham Carers Card, which validates the key worker status of carers and has proved to be useful in obtaining discounts, as well as facilitating priority access to supermarkets and online delivery slots.
- 4.1.11. Prior to the third national lockdown, outreach services, including safe and well checks, were due to be scaled back. However, in light of the new restrictions and surge in infection rates, the current protocol will continue until further notice. The Carers Hub will continue to offer emergency destitution payments to carers where these are required.
- 4.1.12. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has made the welcome decision to include carer allowance recipients and unpaid/family carers in the national vaccination prioritisation. However, these vaccinations must be accessed through the NHS, which poses a problem when we know that only a small percentage of carers have registered their caring status with their GP. ASC officers are exploring options to see if we can assist in raising awareness of vaccination entitlement with carers, and we await further information on whether carer allowance recipients can be automatically

notified of their vaccine priority status. The priority vaccination programme may help to identify thousands of hidden carers, providing a valuable opportunity to inform them of their rights and the support options available.

- 4.1.13. Unpaid/family carers are also now in scope for the ASC Project Welfare Initiative. Activity is underway to arrange a virtual meeting to enquire if there are any perceived gaps in the universal and carer support offer. Work is also progressing to identify the longer-term negative impacts of Covid-19 for carers and how this should be addressed as part of the city's recovery journey. Potential themes identified so far include: the financial impact of the pandemic, isolation, loss of independence, and the risk to health of both carers and the people they care for.
- 4.1.14. All Birmingham carers who provide an element of personal care, or are required to provide carer support in close proximity to those that they care for, now have access to free Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits through the council. Kits are delivered to their door and regularly replenished in line with need or usage.

#### **Supporting our Shielded and Clinically Extremely Vulnerable**

- 4.1.15. ASC has continued to work with colleagues from across the Council to support and protect our shielded and vulnerable cohort, whilst ensuring activities are not duplicated.
- 4.1.16. Full shielding guidance for Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) people was paused for most of the country on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020 and the Government reviewed its approach to support based on latest understanding of the virus. New advice was issued to people who are CEV on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2020, aligned to the new Local Covid Alert Levels. The revised guidance was aimed at supporting people who are CEV to protect themselves from exposure to the virus, based on the level of risk in the local area.
- 4.1.17. In October 2020 the Government launched the national shielding framework, which signalled the introduction of a more localised approach to support rather than the hybrid national-local model in place during the first lockdown. Government decided that support to access food for those shielding would be locally led and that there would be no national food box scheme. It was confirmed that councils would be expected to support people to access food and basic support through routes that promote choice and independence, with direct provision of food being a last resort for those with no alternative. Councils were also provided with access to the "Supermarket Offer Toolkit" to enable the most vulnerable citizens to access priority supermarket slots.
- 4.1.18. As Covid-19 cases continue to rise, there have now been two additional national lockdowns (5<sup>th</sup> November – 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020, and 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021 to present). In January 2021 the Department for Health and Social Care

(DHSC) issued updated advice to people who are CEV, writing to them directly to inform them of the reintroduction of Shielding guidance. Whilst the guidance to people who are CEV is not compulsory, they are strongly advised to follow extra precautionary steps to help keep themselves safe.

- 4.1.19. In Birmingham, there are over 36,000 people listed as CEV of whom just under 2,000 had re-registered for support as of 12<sup>th</sup> January 2020. Currently, around 60-100 CEV people are re-registering for support every day. These individuals are contacted via the Council's Covid Emergency Hub which continues to support vulnerable people in the City.
- 4.1.20. During the first wave of the pandemic the Council called on the West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) for mutual aid to undertake 'Safe and Well' checks to hundreds of 'uncontactable' shielded individuals, to support the visits being undertaken by Council staff. The WMFS have indicated their willingness to support with Safe and Well checks in this third lockdown and officers are working with WMFS to progress this.
- 4.1.21. National government have recognised that the new restrictions and the reintroduction of Shielding guidance create additional financial pressures for local authorities. The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) has provided councils with additional funding equivalent to £14.60 per CEV individual on the Shielded Patient List (SPL) for each 28 day period of restrictions.
- 4.1.22. For Birmingham this equated to a one-off grant of £520,000 for the second national lockdown. This funding was allocated to support people who are CEV, with weekly outcomes reported to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government. The Council awaits notification of the amount it will be allocated for the first 28 days of the third national lockdown.

### **Supporting our communities**

- 4.1.23. The core structures that supported the initial city-wide response to Covid-19 remain in place as we move through the winter. These include:
- A network of thematic organisations
  - Locality leads as part of the Early Help Offer (Children's Partnership)
  - The Neighbourhood Network Schemes (NNS) network
  - Maintenance of the database of services offered by Routes to Wellbeing (R2W)
- 4.1.24. These structures continue to meet and deliver core elements of support such as financial advice, access to food, and information, advice and guidance (IAG) services. The capacity of these support structures have been

strengthened through targeted funding from the Emergency Assistance Grant.

- 4.1.25. The impact of the current lockdown is being monitored by the thematic leads and locality lead organisations. Council officers meet weekly with BVSC to discuss emerging issues and prepare for support post-March 2021. The Active Wellbeing Society (TAWs) continue to act as the central point of delivery for food and ensuring onward distribution to localities, as well as acting as the single point of contact to access local community support.
- 4.1.26. ASC is working with the Council's Insight Programme to analyse data on levels of vulnerability across the city during the pandemic. The team are mapping CEV and lockdown demands, both to help inform the response to the pandemic and to develop strategies to support vulnerable citizens in the longer-term.
- 4.1.27. Organisations funded through the Adults Prevention and Communities Grants scheme have continued to refocus their activities to respond to the demands associated with the pandemic. The infrastructure of this scheme has been mirrored by the Birmingham Children's Partnership to provide urgent front-line resources for children and families in need. Further crisis support for children and families impacted by Covid-19 will be led by Education and Skills using the Winter Grant Scheme funding.
- 4.1.28. The Prevention Operational Group is also being re-focused to consider other vulnerable adults with care and support needs or on the threshold of care and support, including younger adults transitioning into adulthood at risk, carers, and people with Learning Disabilities and Mental Health requirements.
- 4.1.29. As part of the city's wider recovery journey, organisations supporting adults and children across the city are engaging in longer-term discussions about the development of an All Age Grant Prospectus, in order to ensure a whole life-course approach to investment within the community and voluntary sector. This will ensure that the services available to vulnerable citizens are not unnecessarily fragmented by the age segmentation of funding streams.
- 4.1.30. Sector leads are now also working with BVSC in their coordinating role to establish the infrastructure which will form part of the recovery journey. As a result of this work a draft recovery framework has been presented to Corporate Leadership Team. BVSC have been asked to develop an action plan for the middle of January 2021 for discussion by the Recovery Group and then for identification of lead senior officers and members support as needed.

## **Supporting our care providers**

- 4.1.31. Throughout the pandemic, ASC have worked proactively with partners to provide robust practical and financial support for care homes and the wider care sector. The pressure on care providers is unprecedented, and partners have worked together tirelessly to assist the sector in coping with the impact of the virus, as well as enhanced testing and vaccination activities. As a health and care organisation, we recognise both the incredible efforts of providers in caring for their residents, and the further challenges they face as a result of ongoing requirements and changes in guidance.
- 4.1.32. Regular contact has been maintained with providers across the city to ensure they can raise concerns promptly, and regular information, advice and guidance is being published on the Council's website and social media. We have developed a care home tracker to help target extra support, such as enhanced testing and advice, to homes at highest risk. Where providers are facing staff shortages, support is being provided on a mutual aid basis and work has begun to pilot regular testing of care agency staff that are supporting our care providers as well as routine testing of the wider domiciliary care workforce.
- 4.1.33. System wide assistance has also been increased to support the care sector. This has included:
- Coordination of clinical support for care homes, including enhanced GP cover and on-site clinical support from the Enhanced Support to Care Homes Team.
  - Expansion of the Trusted Assessor model for hospital discharge to reduce the need for providers to conduct their own assessments.
  - Commissioning of additional care and support for citizens who are Covid positive and require care in their own home.
  - Provision of training on a range of issues including: Infection Prevention Control measures; appropriate PPE use; managing deterioration in care home residents' health; and mental health and bereavement support for staff.
- 4.1.34. The system has extended extensive financial support to care homes, implementing a previously agreed fee increase that reflects inflation and National Living Wage, as well as reimbursement of around £3m for additional staffing, PPE and other Covid-19 related costs. Temporary changes to costs of care and action to assist with cashflow has also been introduced. In addition, the Council have distributed nearly £17m of Infection Control Grant to providers to help improve infection control and reduce movement of staff within and between care settings.

- 4.1.35. The restrictions to visiting in care homes has been particularly difficult for people who have been unable to meet with their loved ones for an extended period, and partners have worked hard to balance these needs alongside managing and reducing the number of care home Covid-19 outbreaks. Visiting is recognised as being important part of maintaining wellbeing and revised national guidance has confirmed that providers are best placed to decide how to safely manage visits and balance the associated risks with regards to infection. The importance of involving residents and families in decisions is reinforced and it is clear that end of life visits should continue in all circumstances.

### **Supporting the health and care system over winter**

- 4.1.36. Throughout the pandemic, partners across the health and social care system have come together to implement measures aimed at protecting citizens and shielding the most vulnerable, based on national evidence and guidance. Resources and capacity have been redeployed to focus on saving lives, protect the NHS and control the spread of the virus.
- 4.1.37. This winter is placing unique pressures on health and care organisations across the city. Covid-19 is co-circulating with seasonal flu and other viruses, and transmission has increased due to a number of factors including the emergence of a more contagious variant. Even as Birmingham came out of the second national lockdown, infection rates remained high, and are continuing to accelerate as we experience a third wave and further surges in demand. The health and wellbeing of both service users and the social care workforce, including unpaid carers, may impact on capacity, particularly as many people are tired and fatigued by the unrelenting Covid-19 pressures. The winter plan for the city reflects both regular winter preparations and specific Covid-19 specific activities, as well as further surge planning as we ride out the third wave.
- 4.1.38. The winter plan this year is also set in the context of provider viability challenges that have been exacerbated by the pandemic. Actions include not only the system response to traditional increases in seasonal demand for services, but the impact of the virus on care capacity and viability. Advances in Covid-19 testing and vaccines are of course welcome, but bring with them increased uncertainty and expectation on systems already experiencing intense day to day pressures.
- 4.1.39. System partners across the city have continued to work closely to plan and prepare for the additional pressures that we face this winter, including the resurgence of Covid-19 cases. The plan sets out the clear and robust steps we are taking to ensure that the sector is prepared for winter and that we

protect both the people who need care and the workforce that supports them. The key focus now is on getting as many people vaccinated as quickly as possible.

## **4.2. Public Health**

### **Strategic Response to Covid-19**

- 4.2.1. The Director of Public Health (DPH) continues to lead the Public Health response to Covid-19, working closely with a range of both internal and external stakeholders including elected Members, the NHS, West Midlands Police (WMP), Public Health England (PHE), and organisations across the voluntary and community sector.
- 4.2.2. Partnership working plays a key role in the public health response to the pandemic, with regular activities including:
- Weekly briefings to all elected Members;
  - Monthly meetings between the DPH and Directors of Infection Control and Prevention at major hospitals across the city;
  - Weekly meetings with local NHS senior leads to ensure close working across the system;
  - Regular (three times a week) regional meetings with chief executives and Directors of Public Health from neighbouring local authorities;
  - Weekly meetings of the West Midlands Association of Directors of Public Health;
  - And, weekly meetings with the Chief Medical Officer and his team.

### **Governance**

- 4.2.3. The Public Health team has taken a robust approach to governance and oversight of the Covid-19 public health response, including the creation of the monthly Local Outbreak Engagement Board.
- 4.2.4. Public health support is regularly provided to the Birmingham Strategic Command Group, the Birmingham City Incident Management Team, and the Birmingham Tactical Command Group. Public health has also led the Test and Trace Silver Command Group.



- 4.2.5. Regular updates on the Covid response are provided to the Health & Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in addition to Cabinet.

### **Health Protection Response**

- 4.2.6. The Public Health team rapidly moved into an emergency cell structure in March 2020 to support the acute health protection response to the pandemic.
- 4.2.7. A team has been established to provide specialist public health advice to care homes, schools, workplaces, and other settings where there are outbreaks and clusters of cases. A second team has been created to follow up on cases that did not engage with the national contact tracing system. Both of these teams operate seven days a week, with consultant cover.
- 4.2.8. We have also established new data management processes to extract data from national systems, as well as analyse local data as it becomes available.
- 4.2.9. A dedicated Test and Trace team, led by Dr Mary Orhwere, was established in the summer of 2020, supported by a seven day rota of staff from the main Public Health team. Staff rotate into the team on four day blocks to support surge capacity.
- 4.2.10. On a weekly basis the team are responding to between 3-500 situations which require detailed follow up and support to help contain the spread of the pandemic in Birmingham.

### **Community Engagement Response**

- 4.2.11. Public Health has undertaken extensive community engagement throughout the course of the pandemic, working closely with the corporate communications team to ensure that citizens have access to accurate information about Covid-19.
- 4.2.12. Headline engagement activities include:
- Commissioning 18 community partner organisations to undertake deeper engagement with specific communities, including Central and Eastern European communities, LGBT communities, faith communities, and disabled communities.
  - Commissioning partnerships with six local community radio stations, focusing on local ethnic communities and communities where English is not the first language.

- Conducting over 60 media interviews, including a weekly live Q&A on WM BBC radio and regular Facebook Q&A sessions with Birmingham Live.
- Facilitating over 30 interfaith meetings, and participating in monthly regional interfaith meetings alongside the West Midlands Metro Mayor.
- Dedicated engagement sessions with Birmingham masjids, and ministers/pastors from black churches.
- Attending over 100 ward meetings to support local elected Members in engaging with local communities.

4.2.13. We have adapted the existing HealthyBrum public health campaign to provide a trusted source of information and advice on Covid-19 for the general public. Since July 2020, the HealthyBrum twitter account has directly engaged with over 1200 people, with similar levels of engagement on Facebook. Social media channels have been used to drive over 8000 people to the BCC website for further information on Covid-19. One campaign, focused on increasing people's awareness of the NHS Covid App, reached over 51,000 people through Facebook advertising targeted at the highest prevalence areas of the city.

4.2.14. Public Health has developed and launched the Covid Community Champions programme, building on learning from Newham. To date, over 500 Champions have been recruited and supported through weekly live Q&A sessions with the DPH or Assistant Directors of Public Health. Champions receive weekly emails and text messages for cascade through their personal networks, and to date over 7,200 emails and 3,400 text messages have been shared into local communities through this route.

### **Testing Provision**

4.2.15. Public Health has led the development and implementation of a testing strategy for Birmingham. Initially, this focused on testing site development for symptomatic testing through the PCR testing programme, with the identification and delivery of two drive-through and ten walk-through facilities across the city.

4.2.16. At the end of November 2020, the Council was asked to develop a testing strategy for asymptomatic testing using the new rapid result LFD testing kits. This has been developed on a hub and spoke model, with a focus on case finding, early containment of infectious cases in high risk settings, and using testing to enable activities such as dining in restaurants. The hub site

launched in early December 2020, with the first spokes going live in week commencing 21<sup>st</sup> December.

### **Health and Wellbeing Support**

- 4.2.17. Over 3,000 citizens responded to our Birmingham Covid Impact Survey, helping to inform and shape action moving forward. Findings from this survey, alongside commissioned ethnographic research, will underpin the Director of Public Health Annual Report.
- 4.2.18. We have developed the BHealthy Campaign, tailored to focus on risk reduction for some of the modifiable risk factors most associated with Covid mortality, including obesity. Campaign resources were translated into over 20 different languages, and 19 webinars were held for community members to provide more in-depth information and discussion of topics.
- 4.2.19. In November 2020, we successfully bid for additional financial support from the Global Healthy City Partnership to invest in PPE provision for food banks and homelessness services. These materials were distributed across the city in December 2020.

### **Non-Covid activities**

- 4.2.20. Understandably, Public Health has had limited capacity to work on non-Covid related issues during the pandemic. However, progress has been made in some priority areas.
- 4.2.21. Work has continued on creating a healthy food economy in East Birmingham, securing funding in partnership with several universities to undertake focused research in this area.
- 4.2.22. We have continued to deliver the key outputs of the Global Healthy City Partnership funded campaign to increase active travel in specific ethnic communities in ten key wards across the city.
- 4.2.23. Delivery of the Childhood Obesity Trailblazer Programme has been successfully reprofiled, working alongside partners the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC).

## **5. Education, Skills and Children's Wellbeing**

### **5.1. Birmingham Children's Trust**

- 5.1.1. At the time of writing, Birmingham is in a third period of national lockdown. The Trust is striving to deliver all our core services to children and families in need, including maintaining high levels of face-to-face contact. We continue

to play a system leader role, supporting and galvanising the wider children's partnership to ensure a strong multi-agency response is in place in the community, and that partners maintain home visits to our most vulnerable.

### **Trust activity and performance**

- 5.1.2. Performance against the fifteen contractual Performance Indicators (PIs) has remained strong throughout the pandemic. In November 2020, the last quarter for which figures are available, ten PIs were at or better than target, four were within tolerance, and only one PI was outside tolerance, caused by delays in the family courts rather than something within control of the Trust.
- 5.1.3. Placement stability for children in our care is better than it has ever been. Only 2% of our children in care experienced three or more placements in a years, compared with the national and statistical average of 10%. This is testament to the work of our social workers and the commitment of our foster carers.
- 5.1.4. The Trust is maintaining its approach to supporting staff to carry out their work face-to-face, safely. We have experienced some difficult outbreaks in our short breaks care homes, but these have been managed well. We have had to suspend much face-to-face contact/family time for children in care, due to outbreaks in our contact centres, but we are working on recovery plans to resume this.
- 5.1.5. The locality-based Early Help offer has been maintained and will need once again to step up in this latest lockdown. Social work support to schools has increased, with Trust managers linked to schools for advice and support across the city.
- 5.1.6. A cohort of new Early Help workers is starting work, further bolstering the offer to families in need, and the SEMH Pathfinder (a schools-based family support service developed in and funded by the Trust in partnership with some schools) has extended its reach with some early success in Northfield. The initial allocation has targeted key localities where data suggests need is greatest.
- 5.1.7. We are once again working to ensure that vulnerable children are attending school. We recognise that, as in the first period of school closure, many children in care will be required to learn from home. All were equipped with a laptop in the summer to support this.
- 5.1.8. Throughout the pandemic we have maintained oversight of the quality of practice through practice evaluation, audit, practice forums, learning webinars and surveys of staff and with families. We have introduced additional data collection to ensure that we understand school attendance, visiting quality and service demand.

- 5.1.9. The Trust is experiencing greater pressure now than at any point in the pandemic: demand at the front door, staff vacancies and rising sickness all pose a significant risk, and at the time of writing leaders are developing additional contingency plans for the potential redeployment of staff to front-line practice.
- 5.1.10. We are also concerned about staff morale and wellbeing, not least in the context of this much more virulent variant. It is very important therefore that the vaccination programme for front-line staff in the Trust is underway and we are working hard to get everyone vaccinated who is in a 'critical worker' role. Trust staff and managers have worked tirelessly over the last 10 months to keep as many children and families safeguarded and supported during the pandemic.

### **Trust Financial Position**

- 5.1.11. The Trust has been able to use Covid-related funding, drawn down through the Council, to cover critical expenditure related to the pandemic. The Trust has sought to minimise its call on these scarce funds and has spent less than initially forecast, incurring £1.6m of Covid-specific costs to date, all of which are eligible for the Government Covid grant.
- 5.1.12. In relation to its core budget, the Trust has driven down an anticipated £7m deficit earlier in the year to £0.5m. We continue to work hard to produce a balanced budget. The Trust has completed a review of its financial management by CIPFA (with a creditable rating of 3/5) and has just received a draft review of its strategic financial position commissioned with the Council, from which will emerge a joint action plan to ensure the Trust is operating as efficiently as it can, and that it has the resources it requires to deliver appropriate service levels.

### **Key Risks**

- 5.1.13. The key risks currently faced by the Trust are as follows:
- Failure to agree a sustainable financial settlement with BCC.
  - The impact of further growth in demand as we emerge from this phase of the pandemic, and the potential safeguarding risks associated with any further restrictions.
  - The impact of the pandemic on the physical health and emotional wellbeing of our staff.
  - Maintaining an adequate social care workforce while we are constrained by the Council's Equal Pay concerns, and in a competitive regional market for social workers.

- Ensuring a strong focus on contractual dependencies such as corporate parenting, education, and housing, including an accommodation strategy that is flexible and responsive to local need.

## **5.2. Schools**

- 5.2.1. We have continued to update our comprehensive risk assessment document as government and public health guidance changed, to support schools with reopening and then closing to most pupils again in January 2021. This risk assessment was a crucial support for Birmingham schools to remain open to pupils despite rising case levels during the autumn term.
- 5.2.2. Birmingham schools were open to all pupils from September 2020 until the third national lockdown in January 2021. Attendance data from the DfE during the autumn term showed Birmingham broadly in line with other core cities and elsewhere in the region, despite being subject to the highest level of local restrictions. Officers from Education and Skills, particularly those in the Education Legal Intervention team, provided additional support to schools and families to encourage pupils' attendance when schools were fully open.
- 5.2.3. The council, working closely with colleagues in Birmingham Children's Trust, has ensured that self-isolating vulnerable children and young people and those with SEND are supported. The Council has set up a robust taskforce with local partners including the city's schools' fora, Birmingham Children's Trust, Health, the Birmingham Education Partnership, West Midlands Police and others to provide a joint response that prioritises vulnerable children and ensures their needs are met more effectively. When schools were closed to all but vulnerable children and those of critical key workers in January 2021, this taskforce ensured that vulnerable families were supported.
- 5.2.4. The council is ensuring that all critical key workers are able to access school places to enable them to work during the third period of national lockdown. The council is also supporting schools who are reporting an increased number of requests for places for eligible pupils than in the first national lockdown.
- 5.2.5. We have provided significant support to all schools by facilitating regular webinars on key issues (including Public Health, safeguarding, attendance, risk assessments, buildings, the new Ofsted framework) and providing documents including flowcharts, checklists and FAQs to support them with remaining open. Further webinars are taking place in January to support schools with lateral flow testing and risk assessments in the new period of national lockdown.
- 5.2.6. Officers from Education and Skills have continued to work closely with public health on Test and Trace. Where suspected cases have arisen in school

settings, these have been dealt with appropriately and in full compliance with all Public Health guidance.

- 5.2.7. To support families with food costs incurred during the October half-term holiday, and in the absence of a national government scheme, the council provided one week of vouchers to families eligible for free school meals. These were distributed to families through schools during November.
- 5.2.8. A further two weeks of vouchers were provided to support families over the Christmas holidays, using Birmingham's allocation from the government's COVID Winter Grant Scheme. These were again distributed to families through schools before the end of the autumn term. The council has strongly recommended that all Birmingham schools take up the national voucher scheme to support families eligible for free school meals once it is in place from Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January. Using the COVID Winter Grant Scheme funding, the council has committed to provide a further week of vouchers to families to cover the February half-term period.
- 5.2.9. The council is working with partners to provide IT support to schools to enable pupils to access remote education. Hundreds of council devices have been repurposed for pupils to use and donations are being received through the Digital Education Partnership.

### **5.3. SEND**

#### **SEND Improvement and Transformation Journey**

- 5.3.1. Despite the considerable disruption caused by Covid-19, work has continued at pace to deliver the SEND service improvement and transformation programme. Since the last update report to City Council in September 2020, key activities in this area have included:
- Continuation of weekly meetings with all schools and early years PVI settings to discuss children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) up until their return to on-site learning in September.
  - Keeping in regular contact with the families of pre-school children with EHCPs in the Early Years to provide remote advice around appropriate activities to support ongoing learning and development and in relation to transition.
  - Weekly virtual meetings with school leadership teams to discuss children with EHCPs were provided from April to October, at which point the SEND Inclusion Services resumed in-school support.
  - Regular SENCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) online briefings with updates from health and education in relation to Covid-19, as well as focused work on aspects of the SEND

transformational projects have taken place throughout the autumn. These have been well attended by SENCOs across the city with positive feedback.

- A programme of locality meetings for schools has taken place, providing an opportunity for SEN leaders to develop collaborative working across the consortia of schools and specialised services, including Occupational Therapy (OT) and Speech And Language Therapy (SALT).
- A programme of monthly online professional development webinars for schools and settings has taken place, led by a national SEND lead, with an initial focus on SENCo wellbeing.
- The development of online consultations with an Occupational Therapist or a Speech and Language Therapist has continued, offering advice and support around for SENCOs and class teachers for pupils returning to schools / working in bubbles, as well as more strategic input.

### **Supporting our SEND families**

- 5.3.2. The Assistant Director for SEND and the Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing continue to have regular meetings with our Parent Carer Forum. These meetings have been very useful to ensure they are engaged in all service developments and make sure that the information and advice on our local offer website and locality working is relevant to families and carers.
- 5.3.3. The local offer website is continually updated to make sure that it provides the latest information, advice, and resources for SEND children and their families. The website also signposts to useful partner websites and resources.
- 5.3.4. The Parent Link Service is available to provide advice for parents/carers. Details about a series of parent webinars, focused upon SEND, are now publicised on the Local Offer website. Families can use an online booking service to reserve a place.
- 5.3.5. Our specialist advisory teacher services team have been providing a range of advice and ideas to support children and families at home during the past 6 months. If children are still at home, either because they are self isolating or are extremely clinically vulnerable, services continue to offer virtual support.

### **Special Schools**

- 5.3.6. Throughout the pandemic, the service has worked with our 27 Special Schools to ensure that students, parents and carers remain supported. Regular meetings with the headteachers and the Assistant Director for SEND and the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture have continued.



- 5.3.7. Weekly individual school meetings with SEND Link officers continued until the October half-term, at which point they were replaced by multi-agency drop-in sessions held every half-term. Headteachers can use these sessions to discuss individual pupils or wider issues relevant to their school.
- 5.3.8. Since January 2021, the local authority named contacts (SEND Link) allocated to each school (Mainstream/Special/ Independent) have held virtual meetings with school leadership teams. These meetings are intended to be a supportive discussion about the most vulnerable pupils with SEND who are not in school and to plan for their return. Specifically, these meetings will provide a space to:
- Ensure special schools have the up to date guidance and support needed to fulfil their duties, follow up on queries.
  - Provide challenge when settings are not fulfilling their requirements
  - Promote collaboration and innovation to meet the needs of our vulnerable children/young people
  - Escalate issues and opportunities to the local authority named contact
- 5.3.9. Schools are aware that they should contact their allocated Link officer for ongoing support regarding individual pupils.
- 5.3.10. Partners from social care and health are aware that these individual school meetings are taking place (information shared via the Joint Responses Group) and meet with school and Link officers to support planning for individual pupils when requested. Schools and SEND Link officers are aware of the named social care colleague linked to each school.
- 5.3.11. Weekly meetings are held with the AD for SEND and the SEND leads to address attendance of vulnerable pupils with EHCP and themes to be addressed each week.
- 5.3.12. Support and guidance for Special Schools has been sent to each headteacher, with a focus on vulnerable pupils and attendance.
- 5.3.13. 'Schools Causing Concern' meetings with the Birmingham Education Partnership (BEP) are being held to focus on solutions for individual schools.
- 5.3.14. Communication to parents has been refreshed and shared with schools and via the Local Offer. Each of the SEND Inclusion Services has an email drop box for parental contact which has been shared. The Parent Link Service is available, via phone or online, to address parent concerns and offer a signposting service.

- 5.3.15. We have continued to work closely with head teachers to ensure the supply of the necessary equipment to keep children and staff safe in Special Schools. The Council has continued to directly supply PPE to Special Schools through our corporate procurement function. This direct distribution of equipment contrasts with other authorities, who did not supply PPE to schools beyond initial emergency supplies when schools reopened towards the end of term.
- 5.3.16. Following October half term there have been some significant changes in the way PPE is being supplied to the Local Council from Central Government Departments. The Council can now only distribute supplies from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) which is COVID specific PPE.
- 5.3.17. All schools will be issued with emergency packs to be used until March 2021. BCC Officers are working with schools to discuss a process with our procurement and commissioning teams, with a view to schools becoming self-sufficient for the summer term.
- 5.3.18. We are continuing to work closely with health colleagues to provide joined-up support to those children who require aerosol generating procedures (AGP) whilst at school. Pods (small cabins) are in situ on several school sites so that the procedure can take place safely inside these structures. Updated government guidance, released in November, is being scrutinised by health to ensure the safe return of all these children.
- 5.3.19. We understand that many parents and carers are anxious about their children returning to school, especially if their child has complex care needs. Where there is a concern, schools have proactively worked with families to carry out individual pupil risk assessments focusing on reducing risk and enabling a return to on-site learning.
- 5.3.20. The Educational Psychology service has resumed school visiting and is now able to carry out observations and assessments of pupils within the school setting. During the first half term, pupils generally adapted well, and schools reported that pupil engagement was good. Since the half term holiday, there have been increased requests for support with meeting pupil's social and emotional needs. Some pupils are experiencing heightened anxiety, and some are struggling with curriculum engagement/regulation of behaviour. Schools are requesting advice on how to manage pupil behaviour whilst maintaining the safety measures put in place to reduce infection risks.
- 5.3.21. Meeting and training sessions continue to be held via MS Teams. There has been good take up of the Wellbeing for Education Return training and demand for other, more specialist training remains high.
- 5.3.22. Since the beginning of the third national lockdown, the EPS has responded to 20 requests for critical incident support. This is similar to the number of

requests for support received in the same time period last year. All requests have been responded to within 2-3 hours.

- 5.3.23. More broadly, the SEND service is in the process of supporting schools across the city in promoting wellbeing holistically and in adopting a graduated approach to address wellbeing and mental health issues by incorporating a four stage 'assess, plan, do, review' cycle.
- 5.3.24. We have been supporting schools to appoint wellbeing leads from within their leadership teams as well as dedicated practitioners.
- 5.3.25. Over the coming months, we will be providing tools, resources, support, guidance and training for wellbeing leads and wellbeing practitioners to assist them in being more effective in their roles. Educational Psychologists will be facilitating wellbeing networks to foster greater collaboration between settings and provide collective support within local areas.
- 5.3.26. The Home Bridging Team continues to support children and young people who are anxious about returning to school or are without a school place. Over the autumn term the team have supported children with their transition back into on-site learning, while ensuring that appropriate social distancing measures are in place.
- 5.3.27. Over the autumn term placements have been secured for a significant number of children, but the number of children awaiting a special school place is 78. Of those, 14 of these children are Looked After with a number of those from out of authority placements and several families have moved into Birmingham. The Home Bridging Team and Link Professionals continue to work directly with schools to establish early intervention and support across all Key Stages. Regular meetings are taking place between commissioning, special school DMG and Home Bridging to review current situation and ways forward.

#### **Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)**

- 5.3.28. Over this period, we are working hard to keep the Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) process on track. The service continues to operate via telephone calls and video conferencing where possible, and decision-making panels have successfully moved online. Work has taken place to introduce three clear pathways for the assessment, review and where needed, a resolution to meeting the needs of children and young people with complex needs. The restructure of the SENAR service is underway, with commencement of the consultation with staff expected in the spring. The significant structural changes needed and have caused some disruption within the services and additional resource has been provided to support the management of the changes during this challenging period of change.

- 5.3.29. Link Officers continue to work alongside all agencies across the SEND landscape to seek resolutions to issues and improve outcomes for children and young people. The majority of referrals received are related to requests for assessment, school placements, communication breakdowns, and general request for advice and guidance.

#### **Home to School Transport**

- 5.3.30. Birmingham City Council currently conveys over 4200 children to SEND schools and resource centres, which presents a major challenge in the context of Covid-19 social distancing guidance and risk assessments. These children are transported on around 600 routes per day.

- 5.3.31. Despite the difficulties posed by the pandemic, we continue to support transport arrangement for our children and young people. To do this, we have put in place approximately 200 additional bubble routes, which has increased the total number of routes to around 800 per day. This has presented a challenge to the service when faced with a reduction of staff, drivers and guides relating to social isolation or shielding issues. However, despite these challenges we have:

- Continued to consult with all schools concerning new bubble routes and how they will operate;
- Continued to work with travel operators to plan new routes that meet bubble requirements whilst minimising change for each young person;
- Continued to issue guidance to travel operators, parents and schools on new routes and timetables;
- Established a Weekly School Report that identifies compliance issues for further investigation and remedy.
- Established a positive working relationship with the schools and the Parent Carer Forum in order to address ongoing matters;
- Established Compliance: Training, Supplier Audit and Site Inspections;
- Established and started implementation of the 365 ICT system for transport;
- Administered all outstanding personal budget applications and complaint enquiries;
- Established a daily catch up meeting to ensure successful development of the service;

- Introduced a Deed of Variation for the employment of Guides by suppliers;
- Established a timeframe for review for the existing Home to School Transport Policy;
- Introduced a telephone monitoring database to be able to manage more effectively a response to incoming calls;
- And, drafted a proposal for revised risk assessment and transport needs assessment.

5.3.32. Following feedback from parents, suppliers and schools, and significant performance challenges in September 2020, we commissioned an Inquiry, which undertook a comprehensive review of the service. At the same time, we recruited additional resources to put in place an Immediate Fixes Plan to address our key challenges at pace. The immediate fixes have already driven significant performance improvements, and this will be built upon over the coming months.

5.3.33. The findings and recommendations of the Inquiry were agreed by Cabinet and will be taken forward through a focussed change programme, which is currently being scoped and resourced.

5.3.34. The closure of schools in the latest national lockdown has meant that only those children who are vulnerable or are the children of critical workers are in school settings. This has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of children who need to be transported to 750 for week ending 15th January 2021, and a reduction in the number of routes needed to around 430 routes. This necessitated the increased use of single person vehicles rather than multiple occupancy vehicles. The service has continued to work with schools, parents, carers and providers to ensure the effective delivery of these routes and, in addition, it has reallocated resources to address issues such as the backlog in processing bus passes.

#### **5.4. Birmingham Careers Service (BCS)**

5.4.1. Careers Service staff have continued to deliver services on a virtual and agile basis throughout the duration of the pandemic, and are continuing to do so during the current national lockdown.

5.4.2. The service is offering careers information, advice and guidance services to NEET (aged 16-19), young people at risk of becoming NEET, and some young people who attend schools who secure a guidance service for their pupils on a traded basis with BCS. We are also in the process of working with and identifying other cohorts to target (due to small amount of funding) around those young people in year 11 who are home educated.

- 5.4.3. Where possible, support services have been moved to virtual/online delivery, with careers advice and guidance provided to NEET young people and students via phone, email, WhatsApp, text, and social media. Microsoft Teams & Zoom are also proving essential and assisting an enhanced service delivery. The development of the website has also continued. A range of new online resources have been produced, all accessible via the website and social media platforms for parents, carers, young people and our partners.
- 5.4.4. The service has maintained contact with all schools, encouraging the referral of all Year 11, 12 and 13 pupils who are at risk of becoming NEET. This led to over 500 referrals within one month and ongoing referrals depending on the time of year.
- 5.4.5. An increase in staffing resource is also planned to deal with the increasing demand on the service from both schools and NEET young people, due to the current recession and dramatic rise in youth unemployment.

## **5.5. 14-19 Full Participation and Skills Team**

- 5.5.1. Currently, post-16 providers are mandated to remain open.
- 5.5.2. The Full Participation team continues to support the Test and Trace team, remaining on duty for part of the Christmas holidays to ensure successful contact tracing. Support is provided on a rota basis, providing guidance to colleges and following up any queries raised by parents, staff, and other stakeholders. This includes both general requests for information and guidance, and whistle-blowing enquiries. Since the start of 2021, we have also supported Public Health by keeping stakeholders updates on lateral flow testing requirements for post-16 in education settings.
- 5.5.3. The 14-19 team worked with all eligible post-16 settings to make sure that 10 days' worth of retrospective payments were provided for all young people eligible for free school meals, covering the Christmas holiday period.
- 5.5.4. We have shifted the delivery of our 'business as usual services' to virtual and online platforms, including:
- An increased and flexible careers service
  - Employability and enterprise expertise through the Library of Birmingham and community library services
  - Targeted employability training and signposting through the Youth Service
  - Enhanced tracking of 16-18 year olds, to ensure that they continue in education or work (particularly those in Year 11/12)

- Identification of 16-19 year old apprentices and trainees who have withdrawn from learning or been made redundant, so that further support can be provided
- Signposting and sharing resources such as mental health support services
- Creating new virtual and online learning opportunities, including the planned delivery of Virtual Work-Based Learning Open Days
- Supporting Independent Training Providers to remain viable during the pandemic, and ensuring that they continue to enrol and support NEET young people

## **5.6. Employment and Skills Service**

- 5.6.1. We are now in our third national lockdown, with a huge impact on local businesses and employers. We are rapidly scaling up delivery to help residents to upskill, reskill, and secure and/or sustain good jobs. We have adapted and reached new levels in partnership working with DWP, including Jobs Centre Plus (JCP), with West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP), and key employers such as NHS Trusts and construction industry leaders and their supply chains.
- 5.6.2. DWP has brought forward a set of support measures for employers and employees, with the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme ('Furlough' scheme) and a range of loans and grants for employers, which the Council (Inclusive Growth Directorate) has been instrumental in delivering for the city.
- 5.6.3. West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) has created a Youth Unemployment Taskforce, chaired by Cllr Brookfield, Leader of City of Wolverhampton Council. This has also been supported by the Deputy Leader Cllr Jones, who is the WMCA Portfolio Lead for Inclusive Communities.
- 5.6.4. The WMCA Taskforce has overseen strong collaborative work, working with partners including the DWP and JCP, Local Authorities, the voluntary sector and local colleges and providers to develop a West Midlands Youth Offer delivered through JCP's Youth Hubs (new Youth Employability Work Coaches based at community locations) and an online platform that sets out training, education and support services available regionally, and at a city level.

### **Proposed approach to employment and economic recovery**

- 5.6.5. Based upon previous responses to large scale redundancies it is proposed that we build upon the existing model with a staged but urgent "call to arms".

5.6.6. The ambition is to create a regional Jobs Taskforce, bringing forward a collaborative partnership connecting available provision into a single offer of support.

- This would cover support for individuals:
- who may be seeking a career path having exited formal education;
- have been made redundant through the lockdown, period of the pandemic or the ending of the furlough scheme;
- seen a reduction in their zero-hour contracts;
- are seeking a sector switch as the sector they are working in is facing a decline as a result of the pandemic.

#### **Planning, procurement and social responsibility**

5.6.7. We continue to 'sweat our assets' and gain maximum outputs from capital projects set out in the Covid-19 Birmingham Economic Recovery Strategy and other regeneration activity including Commonwealth Games related sites such as Alexander Stadium, Perry Barr Regeneration Scheme and major regeneration projects such as Peddimore, Smithfield, Langley, HS2, Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust, East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy and S106 agreements on larger projects.

5.6.8. This provision is delivered through the Employment Access Team (EAT) which is also delivering the World of Work (WoW) job brokerage project funded by ESF.

5.6.9. WoW provides good equality of access to the jobs and skills opportunities, with BAME engagement at 63%, people with disabilities and/or long-term health condition at 16%. The project currently has an overall job conversion rate of 38% - this is higher than the usual target of around 33%. Job outputs are mainly in blue- and white-collar roles within the construction sector. We are currently bidding to extend this project to October 2023 to support ongoing recovery response.

#### **Addressing youth unemployment**

5.6.10. Through the EU funded Youth Promise Plus (YPP) project we currently have capacity to support around 1,500 young people per annum with one to one support for as long as needed (often 9 - 12 months).

5.6.11. The project also funds specialist support for young people who are care leavers, or referred due to complex situations. We receive direct referrals from West Midlands Police and the Youth Offending Service. The project has professional mental health support available that is linked to NHS mental health provision as needed.



- 5.6.12. YPP provides good equality of access to the jobs and skills opportunities, with young people who have Black and Asian Minority Ethnicity (BAME) representing 56% of those supported, and young people with disabilities and/or long-term health condition representing 19%. The project currently has an overall positive result rate of 34% - this is on a par with the usual level for similar projects at 33%. We aim to improve this or at least maintain in in the face of the pandemic impact on jobs and education/training.
- 5.6.13. The team are also working with GBSLEP and Solihull Council to create a Kickstart Gateway – proposed to support businesses to be able to employ young people aged 16 – 24 for 6-month paid placements under the Government’s Kickstart scheme. Subject to approval, this will start in spring 2021. Again, subject to final approval the Council is aiming to be a Kickstart employer in its own right to support young people with opportunities at this critical time in their lives.

#### **Developing our Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Strategy**

- 5.6.14. We are developing this programme to launch £650k pa levy funding support for Birmingham’s SME’s, with a direct link back to the Employment and Skills Team to manage recruitment to any new positions to ensure opportunities are focussed on our priority groups and localities across the City.

#### **Providing a rapid response to recovery**

- 5.6.15. Together with DWP, GBSLEP, National Careers Service, Solihull MBC and WMCA, we are supporting a local Redundancy Taskforce to bring forward a single point of access service to support our employers and help our residents into alternative jobs and sectors.

#### **Providing support to furloughed workers**

- 5.6.16. During 2020, 55,400 (12%) of the City’s workforce were placed on furlough – this will likely produce a second peak of redundancies at the end of furlough in April 2021. We are working with National Careers Service (NCS) whom the government has funded to provide furlough support, and through BAES we can provide skills development opportunities, and Library of Birmingham provides a comprehensive free business start-up service including legal and Intellectual Property advice provided pro-bono by city businesses.
- 5.6.17. In early 2021 we will hold a Self-Employment Summit, bringing together local support providers to ensure that residents can gain the support they need if self-employment is their goal.

### **5.7. Birmingham Youth Service**

- 5.7.1. Birmingham Youth Service has continued to deliver youth work to young people in Birmingham throughout lockdown. This has taken on different

formats and the emphasis has changed depending on the level of restrictions and the National Youth Agency guidance.

5.7.2. Our priority is providing continued support to young people through the following agendas:

- Supporting NEET young people to find strategies to cope with the pandemic and access training, education and employment opportunities.
- Addressing youth violence and anti-social behaviour through our detached presence and partnership work with the VRU, (Place Based approach, Violence Interrupters) and CSP.
- Providing individual and tailored support to vulnerable young people either in small groups or one to one eg on to one, food parcels, doorstep check, support groups.
- Improving the voice of young people to ensure they can engage in decision making processes.

5.7.3. During the current lockdown the youth service will continue to deliver services through a mixed model of online/digital delivery, 'detached' work, one-to-one work with vulnerable young people, and support groups delivering small group work with vulnerable youth people.

5.7.4. This is consistent with advice from the National Youth Agency which has been endorsed by Public Health England, the Health and Safety Executive and DCMS. Youth workers are recognised as key workers and our role is to engage and support young people.

5.7.5. All small group work and face to face work will be carried out in the spirit of lockdown. There needs to be a clearly defined group for a clearly defined purpose. This should only happen if necessary and kept as short as possible. This is to ensure that we continue to support vulnerable young people when needed.

5.7.6. The Youth Service is also continuing to help with tackling the wider pandemic. The service is in negotiations with NHS regarding the use of a centre for administering the vaccine and also some of the sites are being used to deliver the lateral flow tests in community centres. This is being delivered with minimal disruption to delivery of the service to young people.

## **5.8. Birmingham Adult Education Service (BAES)**

5.8.1. The service has now moved all provision to remote delivery for the duration of the third national lockdown, pending the release of any further government guidance.

- 5.8.2. In order to support learners without access to a suitable device for online learning, BAES has set up a 'laptop loan' scheme which is now fully operational. We will continue to respond flexibly to learners' needs with regards to modes of delivery and support, while always abiding with current restrictions.
- 5.8.3. Although the number of new enrolments for Term 2 (2020/21 Spring Term) is down compared to previous years, attendance numbers are steady. In some cases the start of courses is postponed to February to take advantage of any increase in demand.
- 5.8.4. BAES continues to support residents and learners by overcoming barriers to digital inclusion in a number of ways. Actions include:
- Delivery of a variety of courses in IT, including basic level 'IT Skills for Work' and 'Essential Digital Skills' We have had over 1,000 enrolments on these courses since September 2020.
  - Delivery of workshops to all learners, on topics including 'Becoming a Digital Learner' and 'IT Fundamentals'.
  - Planned rollout of an ESOL learning app.
- 5.8.5. During Term 1 (2020/21 Autumn Term), around 85% of provision was online and 15% was on-site (specifically for the most vulnerable and digitally excluded learners). BAES also implemented IT workshops (Becoming a Digital Learner) to train learners who joined a programme and had access to a device and Wi-Fi, but who did not have the knowledge or experience to access the full range of live lessons via online platforms, including interactive resources and support.
- 5.8.6. In Term 3 (2020/21 Summer Term), we anticipate the percentage of onsite provision to increase slightly. Appropriate safe spaces are available to support the most disadvantaged learners to study at our centres.
- 5.8.7. This academic year, our programme of provision has attracted more young learners (below 29 years of age) than previously, particularly in Health and Social Care (18% of the cohort), SEND (20% of the cohort), maths (23% of the cohort) and English (17% of the cohort). The Languages provision has continued to attract young learners (24% of cohort).
- 5.8.8. To date, we have completed circa 11,000 enrolments in Adult Skills and Community Learning courses and just over 12,000 when non-funded provision is included. Across the provision, enrolment of working age adults has increased.
- 5.8.9. In the Autumn Term, we launched the Route to Work scheme, which utilises a systematic approach to identifying the skills that unemployed learners require and leads to a package of tailored support.

- 5.8.10. The service's Community Hub continues to offer a valuable live resource for learners and citizens of Birmingham and is promoted broadly in-house and via social media. There have been over 5,100 visits to the Hub from 15<sup>th</sup> April 2020 (when it went live) to date. We continue to work with local and national providers - such as the 'Waiting Room' resource - to ensure up to date and relevant information is provided to learners and those in the wider community.
- 5.8.11. The Learner Services Support Team continue to offer monthly online sessions to learners, focusing on Safeguarding, Prevent, internet safety and well-being. There are also weekly 'Drop in and Chat' sessions which focus on well-being and course support.
- 5.8.12. The Learner Services Support Team have worked closely with curriculum colleagues to identify learners who are risk. A new initiative has been set up to provide out of class 'catch up' and homework sessions for learners at risk to ensure they are not disadvantaged. These are beginning on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021.
- 5.8.13. Progress Coaches are supporting curriculum with enrolled learners who are not engaging, to improve retention and to offer any further support required including attendance, pastoral support, and signposting to external services. They are also facilitating 'Conversation Clubs' for ESOL learners, which have a health and well-being and COVID response theme. The conversation clubs are designed to encourage confidence and independence.
- 5.8.14. There is a new initiative to provide targeted dyslexia workshops for learners who have had a dyslexia assessment, however, these are also open to all learners who feel they would benefit from these sessions. They have been marketed through the Learner Dashboard and will begin mid-January 2021.
- 5.8.15. In response to COVID -19, we have identified the need for an inhouse counselling service which has now been approved, to support those learners who are in need.
- 5.8.16. In response to the government's ruling in respect of GCSE exams this summer, we are working closely with curriculum to provide extra support to help ensure that learners have the best possible chance of success at this difficult time.
- 5.8.17. The service will be taking part in the National Apprenticeship Week as we did last year. We will be providing a Power Point presentation outlining what an apprenticeship is, how to register with the National Apprenticeship website, and the supporting information available. This will be accessible via the service's Community Hub and will include information around contacting the Careers Team to arrange a follow-up 1:1 meeting for further assistance.

- 5.8.18. There will be a virtual Choices Event taking place on 12 February 2021 for learners considering their next steps. It will be broken down into two elements, education and employment. There will be speakers from FE Colleges, HE Institutions, Employers and Voluntary Organisations providing information. Follow up opportunities will be available to learners and tutors to arrange one to one, or class virtual meetings, to find out more specific information in respect of progression routes.

## **5.9. Libraries**

- 5.9.1. Following the announcement of a third national lockdown, in line with BCC and industry (Libraries Connected) guidance, the Order and Collect Service has been suspended. All library buildings have been temporarily closed to allow us to revise our service offer in light of new restrictions.
- 5.9.2. A plan for the introduction of a new postal book delivery service (as a temporary replacement for the Order and Collect Service) is being developed. This is planned to commence operation in the week beginning 25<sup>th</sup> January. This will enable customers, including children and young people, to obtain books without having to leave their homes.
- 5.9.3. An enhanced online offer is being developed to include more learning resources, e-books, health and wellbeing advice and resources. This will include more live sessions for children and young people.
- 5.9.4. The service offer will be reviewed on a weekly basis with a view to reintroducing services such as Order and Collect, public browsing, publicly accessible PCs, and community activities. This will be subject to local circumstances and government guidelines.
- 5.9.5. Online services provided by the library service since lockdown include the following:
- 'Virtual library' website
  - Children's "Story Time" twice weekly (via YouTube)
  - "Rhyme Time" twice weekly (via YouTube)
  - Poetry sessions
  - Book review sessions
  - Book collections provided to homeless in hostels and hotels
  - Access to newspapers from across the world covering 100 countries in 60 languages
  - Addition of 1500 comics and graphic novels to website
- 5.9.6. Since lockdown, over 33,565 eBooks and 11,998 e-audio books have been loaned out to citizens.

## **6. Communities**

### **6.1. Housing**

#### **Rough sleeping and homelessness**

- 6.1.1. Birmingham has been praised by MHCLG for its response to homelessness and rough sleeping during Covid-19, and remains a national priority area to be supported in tackling rough sleeping. All those found to be sleeping rough are consistently offered accommodation and support.
- 6.1.2. We have been awarded £595,000 through the Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP), a one year MHCLG/Homes England programme in response to the ongoing needs of those previously accommodated through 'everyone-in' and those currently rough sleeping. This funding will be used to ensure that as few individuals as possible return to the streets, and that services are in place to provide for all those who have remained or fallen onto the streets.
- 6.1.3. Winter plans are in place, including those for Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) which cannot use shared bedroom/dormitory spaces. Plans allow for an additional 900 bed nights October 2020 – March 2021, with further units if required. These plans should be further bolstered by a bid we have submitted to the MHCLG Cold Weather Fund, which will provide a further £90,000 if successful.
- 6.1.4. On 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020, Government announced the Protect Programme, £15 million of funding to be shared with 22 local authorities including Birmingham. This money is to be used to protect vulnerable rough sleepers over the winter and during the Covid-19 crisis. Through this programme, we have successfully secured additional funding of £495,000 to target support at the most entrenched rough sleepers and ensure sufficient capacity in the sector.
- 6.1.5. We are currently funding accommodation and subsistence for approximately 70 individuals deemed to be with no recourse to public funds (MRPF) in hotel, temporary accommodation and supported housing. This is in response to the Covid-19 threat and measures are in place to conclude this provision.
- 6.1.6. Since the first lockdown 7473 households have presented as homeless and 4058 households have had a full Housing Needs Assessment (HNA). We continue to support families and rough sleepers at the Domestic Abuse Hub and singles through services at Washington Court, Sifa Fireside, and St Basils.
- 6.1.7. The number of people coming through the Housing Options Centre via phone reduced during the second national lockdown (November – December 2020) to an average of 200 per week. We did, however, see an increase in presentations once the lockdown ended in December 2020. We are

resourcing the service to ensure there is enough coverage for all to be assisted.

- 6.1.8. Homeless prevention visits have recommenced, with all social distancing guidelines being observed. A sufficient supply of PPE equipment has been sourced.
- 6.1.9. We have already prevented 1,450 households from homelessness in 2021. 70 of these were assisted through the Homelessness Prevention Fund.
- 6.1.10. Demand for temporary accommodation continues to increase. On average 30 households a week are entering B&B accommodation, keeping total numbers remaining over 500. However, the average number of households leaving/moving out of temporary accommodation has also been increasing, with the majority moving into permanent accommodation.
- 6.1.11. There is still a shortage of self-contained/longer term accommodation due to the effects of Covid-19 on our contractors, who have taken longer than originally envisaged to resume business as usual. This is being closely monitored.

### **Evictions**

- 6.1.12. On 21<sup>st</sup> August, Government made an announcement to extend its national ban on evictions for renters to the end of the year. Without this extension, there was widespread concern that it would lead to a surge in homelessness and Birmingham wrote to Government urging them to take action and provide financial assistance to support renters and landlords. This was revisited on 21<sup>st</sup> October and the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) guidance stated that there was to be no entry to residential properties to carry out evictions.
- 6.1.13. It was again further revisited by MOJ on 5 November due to national lockdown for 4 weeks which led to an extension of the furlough scheme and a continuation of the pause of evictions on residential premises.
- 6.1.14. On the 11 December the 'truce' period for evictions recommenced and ended on 11 January. However on 8 January the Secretary of State confirmed the ban on evictions will be extended further until 21 February 2021 – with measures kept under review. In addition, a new mediation pilot will further support landlords and renters who face court procedures and potential eviction from next month. It will offer mediation as part of the possession process to try and help landlords and tenants to reach a mutual agreement and keep people in their homes.
- 6.1.15. We continue to urge all council tenants who have concerns or find themselves struggling to pay their bills to contact us directly to discuss options. As a landlord to over 60,000 households, we have seen rent arrears increase significantly since March 2020. We have now reached out to over

18,000 tenants with arrears to try and understand what support is required to prevent them from falling any further into debt.

- 6.1.16. Help and support is available to all residents in Birmingham that require it. However, if tenants can afford to pay their rent, we strongly urge them to make this a priority to prevent any avoidable issues when the eviction ban ends.
- 6.1.17. We continue to work with national organisations and other local authorities across the UK to ensure a consistent and reliable approach to evictions if and when the ban is removed.

#### **Private Rented Sector (PRS)**

- 6.1.18. In October 2020, we launched 'Help 2 Rent', a PRS housing scheme for homeless families that is set to help hundreds of people find affordable housing, as well as support landlords in the private rented sector.
- 6.1.19. The scheme will look to provide incentives to landlords who offer 12-month fixed tenancies to those on the council's homeless and housing registers. Participating landlords will be able to select from a range of assurances such as landlord insurance, rental deposits or rental guarantees, tackling the barriers that commonly prevent landlords from accepting people on benefits, low-income families, and people on the council's housing register as tenants.
- 6.1.20. We are rapidly progressing work to tackle the issue of supported exempt accommodation, which has increased sharply in Birmingham over the last twelve months. Over 20,000 people were living in exempt accommodation in Birmingham in December 2020, compared to just 14,000 in November 2019. Poor quality exempt accommodation traps some of the most vulnerable people in society, leaving them without support, unable to take up employment and without any pathway to move on.
- 6.1.21. Birmingham has been successful in securing £1.04m in national government funding to support oversight work into the supported exempt housing sector in the city. A strong governance structure and project delivery plan is now in place to drive this project for the remainder of this financial year. The pilot seeks to explore how the provision of supported housing in Birmingham can be improved by:
- creating a Charter of Rights to make tenants and their families aware of the service they should expect, to be launched and rolled out over the pilot duration;
  - rolling out a Quality Standard for providers of exempt accommodation so that the service they provide meets a high standard;



- and, employing ten additional inspectors and additional benefit, community safety and social workers to carry out more inspections on properties to ensure that those living in these properties are not being exploited and are receiving the support they need.

6.1.22. A number of mini conferences have taken place across the city to provide an opportunity for MPs, councillors and residents to have their say. Discussions focused on what actions can be taken to improve the support provided to vulnerable residents, reduce anti-social behaviour and other negative impacts this accommodation is having on their neighbourhoods. In addition, the mini conferences discussed specific areas of the Private Rented Sector (PRS) including HMOs.

6.1.23. Cabinet has approved the commencement of consultation where conditions for selective licensing based on deprivation and crime have been met for 28 wards across the city.

### **Housing repairs and maintenance**

6.1.24. Since Covid-19 restrictions were lifted on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020, this service has returned to business as usual, completing routine repairs in customers' homes while abiding by all social distancing and safe working guidance.

6.1.25. The gas servicing backlog is reducing as officers are working hard to contact customers to make appointments to carry out the necessary works.

6.1.26. Contract works officers have returned to business as usual where possible, targeting the following priority areas: disrepair and litigation, void inspections, mutual exchanges, complaints and customer service visits.

6.1.27. Weekly meetings on voids continue to have an impact and the number of overdue voids is reducing. We are continuing to prioritise these works and reduce the repairs turnaround time, as well as working with Housing Management to reduce the mistreatment of properties by tenants, which increases the overall void turnaround and cost.

### **Housing management**

6.1.28. We continue to update risk assessments to reflect changing national and local restrictions, working flexibly to ensure services are maintained and function as normally as possible. This includes the move to Tier 4 restrictions in Birmingham and the current national lockdown.

6.1.29. Visiting services continue to be undertaken virtually wherever possible and will only take place physically for urgent or emergency situations (externally where possible). As with other services, we have seen an increase in domestic violence over the course of the pandemic, and have stepped up public messaging and resources as a result.

- 6.1.30. Night-time security patrols are being maintained at normal levels, with internal assessments when visiting designated blocks and areas undertaken on a reactive basis where required.
- 6.1.31. Estate Services teams are focussing on business-critical tasks including: daily Block inspections, dealing with critical health and safety hazards, and the cleaning of high frequency contact points. Teams are also undertaking external activities where social distancing can be maintained, with provision for staff to start and finish earlier in the day to reduce contact with residents.
- 6.1.32. We are conducting weekly telephone contact with all sheltered scheme tenants, focussing on the lone and most vulnerable. Only critical face to face visits and health & safety checks are taking place, with common rooms remaining closed.
- 6.1.33. Lettings are continuing and being conducted on a virtual basis which is proving to be very successful.
- 6.1.34. The Careline Service which provides support to vulnerable residents remains fully operational, including repairs and new installations.

#### **Housing development/Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT)**

- 6.1.35. A number of new developments are due to start on site, most notably the Farnbrough Road development in Castle Vale which is due to commence on site in Spring 2021. This is a joint scheme between BMHT and Pioneer to deliver 124 new homes.
- 6.1.36. Contactors continue to operate at 80% efficiency against pre-Covid activity, resulting in some forecast slippage in the BMHT 2020/21 budget.
- 6.1.37. We have pushed forward with tender evaluations and acceptance reports to ensure that we are ready to hit the ground running when Covid-19 restrictions lift. This includes a contract award in December 2020 for the development of Yardley Brook, set to deliver 300 new homes. Two additional contract awards were approved at Cabinet in November 2020 for final stage developments at Birchfield and Abbeyfield, providing 39 new homes across the two sites
- 6.1.38. Activity to identify and investigate sites is continuing so that the development programme can continue at pace once the crisis has passed. We anticipate bringing forward plans for development in Pool Farm to Cabinet in early 2021, which will seek to deliver 300 new homes.
- 6.1.39. Our contractors continue to work on site during the current nationwide lockdown, adhering to all Covid-19 safe working protocols. We are monitoring any emerging impacts on resources, suppliers and services.

## **6.2. Register Office and bereavement services**

### **Birth registrations**

- 6.2.1. Working arrangements in the Register Office have been reviewed, and new arrangements made in line with current Government guidance. This ensures greater safety for staff and the public when carrying out face-to-face registrations as required under legislation. Requirements for face coverings changed with effect from August 2020, and all people accessing the Register Office must wear a face covering unless they have a medical exemption. Staff are also encouraged to wear face coverings if moving about the office or in situations where social distancing is not practical.
- 6.2.2. Following the reinstatement of birth registrations on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020, a fully operational service is now in place.
- 6.2.3. When the service recommenced, there was a backlog of approximately 6,200 births to be registered. By 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 this had reduced to 2,890 applications in the system. Recovery arrangements are in place to continue to reduce the backlog and register new births, with registrations prioritised in chronological order unless there are exceptional or urgent circumstances e.g. passport applications.

#### **Citizenship ceremonies**

- 6.2.4. Citizenship ceremonies were cancelled between March and July 2020 in line with national legislation, but have now recommenced.
- 6.2.5. The Birmingham Registration Service is planning to introduce virtual ceremonies, avoiding the need for new citizens to attend face-to-face citizen ceremonies at the Register Office.

#### **Marriages and civil partnerships**

- 6.2.6. For the duration of the third lockdown, marriage and civil partnership ceremonies are only allowed in exceptional circumstances. The maximum number of attendees is six, excluding photographers, ministers, and registrars.
- 6.2.7. Notices of Marriage and Civil Partnership have been suspended during the current national lockdown.
- 6.2.8. Registrar General License requests for marriages and civil partnerships are being risk-assessed and considered on a case-by-case basis. Staff safety is paramount, and ceremonies for customers diagnosed with Covid-19 will not take place.
- 6.2.9. Applications to reduce the waiting period for marriages or civil partnerships are not being processed. Any notices of marriage or civil partnership cancelled due to lockdown have been refunded or rebooked.
- 6.2.10. Approved premise licences cannot be processed during this period. However, Birmingham City Council's Registrar Service is considering extensions to existing licences where appropriate and if it is allowable legally.

### **Death and still-births**

- 6.2.11. The Coronavirus Act 2020 changed the death registration process, with electronic or telephone registration made permissible for the first time. Demand was high and changes were made to the initial process in response, increasing operational efficiency. This, along with the allocation of additional resources, has reduced waiting times down to less than half a day on average (provided that there are no complications).
- 6.2.12. The service has introduced new ways of working which have helped to improve the administration of death registration processes. Improvements have been maintained during the second wave of the pandemic, and additional staff are being redeployed to death registrations from birth registrations where possible.
- 6.2.13. While we saw an increase in demand of over 25% during November and early December, there are minimal backlogs in the service at present.

### **Bereavement services (burials and cremations)**

- 6.2.14. For this emergency period, and in line with national requirements for social distancing, attendance at funerals is currently limited to 30 people. Funerals are being actively managed in conjunction with funeral directors and families to ensure that the risk of transmission of Covid-19 is minimised.
- 6.2.15. Services will normally be a maximum of 30 minutes. The number of services provided each week varies in line with demand.
- 6.2.16. Since August 2020, all persons attending funerals inside crematorium chapels are required to wear face coverings. Ministers must wear face coverings while going into and leaving buildings, and funeral director employees are encouraged to wear face coverings. All attendees at burials are also encouraged to wear face coverings.
- 6.2.17. The number of slots available for funerals is actively varied in line with demand, and has been increased since mid-November 2020.
- 6.2.18. Reduced daylight hours are impacting on the ability to provide more burial slots while maintaining time for personal cemetery visits. In the event that demand for burials increases significantly, there may be a need to reduce opening hours for the public, but this will only be done as a last resort.

## **6.3. Communities**

### **Community centres**

- 6.3.1. Following the Government announcement of a national lockdown on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020, all council managed community centres were closed to the public. A few remained open on a restricted basis to accommodate essential community services such as food banks, including the council funded the

Active Wellbeing Society (TAWS)/Fare Share operation at Ladywood Health and Community Centre and later a local testing site at Summerfield community centre.

- 6.3.2. Subsequently, the service was allowed to open on a restricted basis and the council has undertaken extensive measures to amend normal operating procedures and introduce new Covid-19 secure arrangements to allow council run community centres to safely re-open to the public. This has included supporting user groups and tenants to develop risk assessments for their specific activities in accordance with the relevant guidance, for example, in relation to early years provision, sport and recreation, or places of worship.
- 6.3.3. The detail of the regulations setting out what activities are permitted has changed repeatedly with the successive introduction of the national lockdown, limited re-opening, “rule of six”, Tier 2, second lockdown and then Birmingham’s move to the new Tier 3. At each stage, the operation of around 160 community groups has been assessed and, where possible and permitted, groups have been welcomed back, limited by the following factors:
- Social distancing requirements which have significantly reduced the capacity of rooms and halls.
  - Heightened risk levels of some activities e.g. group singing.
  - Clinical vulnerability of group attendees.
  - Financial viability of groups running with limited numbers.
  - Ventilation requirements which limit the use of some spaces, or mean that spaces can only be used if doors and windows are left open to ensure a sufficient flow of fresh air.
- 6.3.4. During winter it has become necessary to find alternative solutions to leaving doors and windows open. The service is working collaboratively with other front line services, Birmingham Property Services and ACIVICO to develop a ‘Winter Ventilation Strategy’. In the first instance the deployment of CO2 monitors is being adopted in order to provide reassurance to customers and staff alike and to identify any particular problem areas where more permanent solutions may be required. However, we are experiencing supply chain issues as other local authorities and organisations follow suit.
- 6.3.5. As at 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020, 37 groups and activities were back on site and only one of twelve centres remained closed. However, the move to Tier 4 and the subsequent third national lockdown introduced on 31<sup>st</sup> December have again further limited activities to nurseries, foodbanks and welfare support. Currently nine of the twelve community centres are open in part for permitted activities, with three closed completely.

- 6.3.6. The service is also still hosting a local testing station at Summerfield and a mobile lateral flow testing van at Sheldon.
- 6.3.7. The impact of the closures and operating restrictions on income generation and expenditure is captured in the council's Covid-19 financial tracker.

#### **Localisation and neighbourhood development**

- 6.3.8. A Localism Delivery Plan setting out the actions to be progressed in the next 18 months has been developed.
- 6.3.9. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have worked to develop virtual ward forums on the Teams Event Live platform, in an effort to maintain local community governance and engagement.
- 6.3.10. As of 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021, there have been a total of 53 virtual ward forum meetings with around 1,200 virtual attendees. From 2<sup>nd</sup> December, all recorded virtual ward forum meetings have been uploaded to the Neighbourhood Development Support Unit (NDSU) channel on YouTube, garnering over 1,000 views. Notifications of uploads are sent to all councillors and ward contacts, and will be added to the Council website. 44 ward plans have been completed.
- 6.3.11. Pioneer Places bi-monthly get-togethers have continued online, enabling peer to peer information sharing and learnings. Two 'Speak Truth To Power' sessions have been held with the Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods and the Interim Chief Executive. Officers from the NDSU have also worked with the national organisation 'Economy' to support Pioneer Places around their understanding of global and local economics/funding. Further workshops are planned for 2021.
- 6.3.12. External funding opportunities, generally relating to Covid-19, are circulated to staff, councillors, MPs, and community and voluntary organisations to promote sources of much-needed financial support during the current crisis.
- 6.3.13. Work continues on other aspects of the 'Working Together in Birmingham's Neighbourhoods' strategy, including: the development of the local Community Infrastructure Levy, Parish and Neighbourhood Councils, Assets of Community Value, and the running of two Neighbourhood Network Programmes and Perry Barr and Selly Oak. Work is also progressing with Locality on their national work around Community Ownership of Assets, alongside a number of other local authorities.

#### **6.4. Community Safety and equalities**

- 6.4.1. Community Safety and Prevent teams have resumed business as usual activity where possible, while working remotely and continuing to support the Council's response to Covid-19.

- 6.4.2. A Community Safety Team transition plan is now in place, with priorities identified and team capacity adjusted accordingly. These include strengthened links and coordination between the Community Safety Partnership Board with the other partnership boards in the city, including the Health & Wellbeing, Children's Safeguarding and Adult Safeguarding boards. This reduces duplication and ensures proportionate and effective responses are in place, whilst helping to reduce any identified gaps in activity or provision.
- 6.4.3. Officers have continued to engage and work collaboratively with all partners to ensure safety in our communities. This ranges from pre-planning and monitoring arrangements in response to a number of protests held in the city, to supporting West Midlands Police (WMP) and other enforcement partners to manage more complex incidents of anti-social behaviour.
- 6.4.4. The Birmingham Community Safety Partnership (BCSP) adopted a Gold/Silver/Bronze operating model during the pandemic. This arrangement was further reviewed as part of the transition plan and has continued to operate during this quarter:

- **Gold – Executive Board Core Group**

A Core Group of the Community Safety Partnership has continued to meet fortnightly and has set key priorities to work on during the current pandemic. These include domestic abuse, hate crime, modern slavery and reducing anti-social behaviour. The group have also begun work on developing a Community Resilience Framework to support the Council's recovery work.

The Core Group have also been finalising the performance measures for community safety to be included within the Council's Delivery Plan for 2022-24. These will form the basis of a new community safety performance framework.

- **Silver – Community Safety Partnership Operations Group**

The Operations Group continues to meet twice a week virtually, with a view to meeting weekly in the longer term.

In addition, the Community Safety Youth Focus Group continues to meet weekly with partners, sharing information with regards to supporting young people and working in partnership to reduce youth crime.

- **Bronze – Local Partnership Delivery Groups (LPDG)**

Under the transition plan the five of the six LPDGs have continued to meet monthly, whilst the City Centre LPDG continues to meet on a fortnightly basis. We are working in partnership with the police to ensure that elected Members are fully engaged with the work of LPDGs.

### **Prevent**

- 6.4.5. The Council's Channel Panel has continued to work closely with the WM Counter Terrorism Unit to ensure that multi-agency arrangements are maintained for vulnerable individuals throughout the Covid-19 crisis. Channel Panel meetings have been held virtually on a monthly basis with minimal impact to processes although referrals are down due to lockdown.
- 6.4.6. The Prevent team have continued to work closely with the Home Office and civil society organisations, ensuring any disruption to project delivery has been minimised. Civil society organisations have now moved activities onto online platforms where face to face delivery has not been possible.
- 6.4.7. The Prevent Executive Board have also agreed a Terms of Reference for an Independent Review of Prevent Delivery in Birmingham which began in January 2021, with the aim of reporting back to the Birmingham Contest Board in June 2021.

### **Domestic abuse**

- 6.4.8. Birmingham City Council has continued to work with Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid (BSWAID) to provide support for those at risk of domestic abuse. The Community Safety Team, alongside Housing colleagues, secured extra funding through the emergency Covid fund to support the additional capacity needed to deal with increases in domestic abuse enquiries. These funds have strengthened domestic abuse support capacity within the Birmingham City Council housing team, increased resources for the Domestic Abuse Helpline and enhanced the capacity of the sanctuary scheme. The funding has also provided two additional officers within the Community Safety Team, who will work within the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process to support high risk victims and ensure that action is taken against preparators.
- 6.4.9. During the summer BSWAID extended their helpline's opening hours to cover weekends and bank holidays ensuring that those seeking help have the maximum opportunities to do so. For those unable to speak safely to operators, the charity also piloted a local webchat service through [www.bswaid.org](http://www.bswaid.org), where victims were able to use a confidential web chat between 10am and 2pm initially on weekdays. This service has now been extended to 4pm on weekdays.



- 6.4.10. The Domestic Abuse Hub, which the City Council opened in partnership with BSWAID in March 2019, remains open to those who are at risk of being made homeless as a result of domestic abuse.
- 6.4.11. The Domestic Abuse Local Strategic Partnership Shadow Board is chaired by Cllr Nicky Brennan in her role as Cabinet Advisor on Domestic Abuse and Councillor John Cotton (Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Community Safety & Equalities and Chair of the Birmingham Community Safety Partnership) is also a member of the Board.
- 6.4.12. The Board has been set up in preparation of the strategic oversight requirements of local authorities for the planned implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act in 2021. During the first national lockdown and throughout the summer of 2020 the Board met on a fortnightly basis to provide a coordinated partnership support offer to victims. This was supported by a BCC communications campaign which provided social media messages of reassurance and support to victims across the city. In September the Board resumed its monthly meeting schedule and continues to provide partnership support to victims. More recently the partnership supported the 16 days of action, a global campaign against gender-based violence. Partners from across the city worked together on this campaign.
- 6.4.13. To support the work of the Board and the delivery of the Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy, two subgroups have been formed to focus on equalities and on children. The aim of both groups is to provide a tailored support offer to victims with protected characteristics, men and children.
- 6.4.14. Across the Council two Teams Live Events took place in September and October led by Chris Naylor and Councillor Cotton. The events highlighted senior leadership support for the promotion of a workplace culture that raises awareness of domestic abuse, breaks the stigma that is attached to reporting it in the workplace and signposts to organisations that can help staff. A domestic abuse Human Resources action plan has been developed to support the above work. A safe space for staff as victims of domestic abuse was also launched.
- 6.4.15. In December 2020 a cross-directorate domestic abuse officers' group was convened to discuss our coordinated response to tackling domestic abuse across the council. The meeting was chaired by Craig Scriven, Assistant Director for Organisational Development and Human Resources.

#### **Exempt accommodation**

- 6.4.16. Birmingham City Council is one of five local authorities that successfully bid to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to undertake a pilot project on exempt accommodation. Birmingham's pilot includes a specific community safety focus, given the levels of concerns in Birmingham

over potential links between serious organised crime and activities within parts of the sector. The Birmingham pilot includes proposals to introduce a complex case team to undertake work on high risk and complex investigations. The composition of the team has been informed by our experiences with other similar work programmes. It will be closely aligned with West Midlands Police and their current structures for addressing serious and organised crime.

### **Places of worship**

- 6.4.17. National guidance for the safe use of places of worship during the pandemic was updated on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Under the current national lockdown, places of worship remain open for communal worship. This is now one of the very few legal exemptions that allow larger numbers of people to gather. It is therefore crucial that places of worship and those attending comply with both law and the Covid-19 secure guidance. Under these restrictions, places of worship in England must only open for specific purposes.
- 6.4.18. The Council and faith communities have continued to work together to mark religious events throughout the pandemic, albeit in a different way, and the Council has continued to hold regular virtual meetings with faith groups, circulating guidance and key messages.
- 6.4.19. The 2020 Birmingham's annual Remembrance Sunday service was live-streamed from St Philip's Cathedral. While there was no public event in the city centre, people were able to join the service to remember the fallen by visiting the cathedral's website. Citizens could also share moments on social media from their own acts of remembrance at home and school and tributes to relatives who served in the forces using the hashtag #BhamRemembers.
- 6.4.20. The Council recognises the importance of religious festivals to all Birmingham's faith communities and the impact lockdown and social distancing measures have upon planned celebrations, especially for families. In keeping with our ongoing conversations and commitment with faith communities the Council will continue to mark important religious festivals whilst national restrictions are in place.
- 6.4.21. The festivals of Eid, Diwali, Hanukkah and Christmas have all taken place in very different ways in 2020 and throughout this most challenging of years, our faith communities have continued to provide inspiring and compassionate leadership.

### **Equalities**

- 6.4.22. Over the last three months, Birmingham's residents, council staff, grassroots community organisations, faith-based organisations, practitioners and public sector policy makers have been sharing their views on the Council's

proposals to address and tackle inequalities that affect communities across the city.

- 6.4.23. A virtual public consultation, which kickstarted a city-wide conversation on a range of issues, closed on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020.
- 6.4.24. The report 'Everyone's Business, Everyone's Battle: Tackling Inequalities in Birmingham', presented to Cabinet in September 2020, highlighted the full extent to which inequalities have impacted Birmingham – and how the city plans to address them. In addition to virtual conversations, 710 responses have been received to the online survey. An action plan shaped by the consultation findings is now being developed, setting out how the Council will take forward proposals for tackling inequalities, working with our communities and wider city partners. These will be presented to Cabinet for approval.
- 6.4.25. The City Council took a major step towards strengthening its internal approach to equalities matters in November 2020, with the publication of the first Workforce Race Equity Review. This report deliberately goes further than the Council's minimum legal obligations in order to ensure that robust action is taken to close the pay gap and other issues facing staff from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups. The actions are focused upon removing barriers and improving outcomes for current and future staff, providing career routes through to senior roles. The Council will also be working with independent human resources experts to undertake a thorough review of the Council's recruitment processes, HR policies and procedures, training and development, together with other related activity.
- 6.4.26. Following the launch of the RACE Equality Code 2020, Birmingham City Council announced that it will become an early adopter of the framework, which draws together over 200 recommendations outlined in reports, charters and pledges which aim to tackle diversity and inclusion challenges.
- 6.4.27. The RACE Code provides a set of standards and an overarching accountability framework based on best practice. It streamlines existing recommendations into actions for organisations and their workforces across every sector. This framework drives equity based on four key principles: Reporting, Action, Composition and Education (RACE). To deliver on the Council's ambitious plans to address structural inequalities and mainstream equality and cohesion, we have made a commitment to set up an Equalities and Cohesion division with in-house expertise. The Head of the Division has been recruited and is currently in the process of recruiting the wider team.

#### **Armed Forces Covenant**

- 6.4.28. During Covid-19, the council's Armed Forces Partnership has continued to take forward actions to support Birmingham's Armed Forces community, including veterans and their families.

- 6.4.29. Birmingham is the first city council to establish a cross-partner group to provide wrap around support to individuals and families connected to the Armed Forces with a coordinated approach to welfare. The Birmingham Armed Forces Operations Group reports directly into the Armed Forces Covenant partnership group. The Operations Group is attended by welfare organisations and charities such as the Royal British Legion, Walking with the Wounded and SSAFA, alongside statutory services such as the NHS Veterans' Mental Health Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service (TILS), Police and other organisations including housing associations, Department for Work and Pensions, employment support organisations and substance abuse charities.

### **Living Wage**

- 6.4.30. We continue to work in partnership with the Living Wage Foundation and partner organisations to make Birmingham a real living wage city. In November, the council participated in the Living Wage Week 2020 to encourage more employers to tackle in-work poverty by paying the real living wage.
- 6.4.31. Due to the social distancing restrictions, there was an increased focus on social media and digital events in the run up to Living Wage Week. The Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Community Safety and Equalities delivered a webinar emphasising the importance of public sector organisations as major employers, showing leadership and a commitment to ensure front-line service workers such as carers, nurses and retail workers are not facing in-work poverty.
- 6.4.32. As a signatory of the Business Charter for Social Responsibility and as a major procurer of commissioning services, we want to ensure that contracted workers within the supply chain also are not experiencing in-work poverty. As result of these events during Living Wage Week 2020, the Living Wage Foundation received a record level of inquiries from large Birmingham organisations seeking to become accredited Real Living Wage employers.

### **Migration**

- 6.4.33. Birmingham City Council continues to work with the Home Office and its providers, as well as with local stakeholders, to manage the additional local challenges in the asylum system. These are represented in the continued use of contingency hotel accommodation – in the first instance since October 2019, and in the second instance since May 2020. The Council's Public Health, Environmental Health, and Refugee & Migration Teams, as well as the Council's Executive, have also supported Public Health England (PHE), the Home Office and its providers in managing a large outbreak of Covid-19 at an official asylum accommodation unit in Birmingham. Officers have also supported the Lessons Learned exercise led by PHE and have supported

Home Office providers to make improvements in order that the site be reopened.

- 6.4.34. Birmingham City Council has been awarded £1.4m in European funding from the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund for an 18 month project to improve the welcome and advice & guidance pathways for newly arrived communities in Birmingham. This project is the second phase to two successful projects supporting new communities to settle and to prevent crisis and destitution when exiting Home Office provision. Birmingham City Council has partnered with the Refugee & Migration Centre, Central England Law Centre, and Asirt to deliver the project.
- 6.4.35. This partnership continues to act as a referral route from the Everyone- In and Next Steps Accommodation Pathway work for rough sleepers with No Recourse to Public Funds. Referrals have been made into the project that enable information and advice be provided to individuals, with a view to improving the options available to individuals on exiting this support. This includes access to legal representation and the resolution of immigration, welfare, housing, employment and other issues.
- 6.4.36. The Refugees & Migration Team has worked closely with the central Brexit Contingency programme to secure funding to support vulnerable and at-risk individuals to access the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS). This project is delivered in partnership with external organisations providing regulated immigration advice, as well as with Birmingham Children's Trust. The aims of the project are a) to expand the availability of EUSS advice for complex cases in Birmingham; b) to make available training around EUSS to frontline staff; c) to train Community Champions in EUSS; d) to allow the Council to become an ID Scanning Location.
- 6.4.37. The Government's resettlement programmes for refugees continue to be paused with no planned arrivals imminent in Birmingham. The UK Resettlement Scheme, planned to launch in 2020 and for which Cabinet has endorsed a pledge of 110 individuals, continues to be delayed with no revised start date set by the Home Office.
- 6.4.38. Resettled families in Birmingham continue to be supported via the Council's commissioned providers, which include arrival & orientation services, employment support services, active citizenship projects, tenancy & welfare support services, and mental health awareness projects. In addition, a well-accessed grants scheme continues to run alongside the commissioned services, for which the council has encouraged bidders to work with resettled families to identify and address gaps in services. Projects include parenting & family support services, driving theory courses, English as an Additional Language in schools support, a bicycle donation and maintenance scheme, and capacity building support. In November, the Refugees & Migration Team

hosted the first digital version of its Community Days for resettled refugee families, which was a well-attended and successful event.

- 6.4.39. The team has continued to run external partnership and forum meetings remotely, and to increase the profile of significant events in the migration calendar, such as International Migrants Day on 18<sup>th</sup> December.

#### **Neighbourhood Advice & Information (NAIS)**

- 6.4.40. Covid safety works have been carried out within NAIS offices at Erdington and Northfield to facilitate a safe return to an open door public service when national guidelines make this possible.
- 6.4.41. In the meantime, NAIS advisors continue to work from home delivering a range of advice services including welfare benefit, debt and housing advice. NAIS advisors have also supported the BCC Contact Centre with more complex enquiries when required and supported the City Council's Emergency Hub with calls from citizens requiring food and related money advice. They have also made outgoing calls to citizens who received regular food parcels during lockdown from The Active Wellbeing Society (TAWS.) In addition, NAIS advisors have maintained support to the Housing Lettings Team and the Home Options Team as well as supporting Citizens Advice Birmingham.
- 6.4.42. In the year to date (April to December 2020) NAIS advisors handled 24,697 enquiries from 9,915 different citizens. This included 1,599 foodbank referrals, during which money advice was also provided to ensure citizens had the maximum benefit to which they were entitled and to try and avoid further recourse to foodbanks.

#### **Third Sector Advice Service**

- 6.4.43. Historically, the City Council has supported third sector organisations to deliver advice services across the city. Contractual arrangements with accredited advice providers Citizens Advice Birmingham, Birmingham Settlement and Spitfire Advice Services have continued throughout the 2020/21 year albeit with advice being delivered over the telephone rather than face to face. With Emergency Welfare Assistance funding received from central government it has been possible to further enhance the funding provided to the third sector to deliver advice services for the period December 2020 to March 2021 to more fully respond to the growing demand for such services

## **7. Street Scene & Parks**

### **7.1. Waste management**

#### **Activity undertaken relating to Covid-19**

- 7.1.1. Throughout the periods of lockdown and varying restrictions imposed by either national lockdown or the tiers, refuse collections have been maintained. Staff have showed enormous resilience to not only maintain residual and recycling collections but also reintroduce bulky waste collections and open the garden service to new customers. Staff from Street Cleansing have been utilised to protect the collection service, but general street cleansing services have been maintained throughout the year.
- 7.1.2. There have been challenges to the service, with increased amounts of refuse being presented from each household as a result of more people working from home. It is regrettable that some collections have been missed, but later collected, due to an increase in the number of cars parked on the streets throughout the day causing access difficulties. The Christmas break had an effect on performance, including an increase of positive tests and self-isolation. Issues were compounded by the snow and ice, resulting in a drop of performance over the last 2 weeks. However, the service has now caught up and performance continues to improve, and at the time of writing the total number of 'dropped' roads across the city stands at 4 out of a total of 12,250.
- 7.1.3. As previously stated, this level of service has only been possible with the continued dedicated commitment from our crews and close cooperation with Trades Union colleagues.
- 7.1.4. Owing to the considerable queues at the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) a booking system was introduced. This has had great success in reducing the queues, freeing up the highway and allowing the sites to maintain Covid safe operations. Initially, clearly demonstrating levels of demand, the sites were reaching full capacity on a daily basis. Over ensuing weeks the number of available 'slots' were increased and on-site capacity gradually increased. The service has now introduced a 'live time' cancellation and booking system. This means that available slots can now be booked 'same-day', subject to capacity at the chosen site. At the time of writing there is availability at all HWRCs.

#### **'Business as usual' activity**

- 7.1.5. Nationally there has been an increase in fly-tipping and many of the city's streets and parks have not escaped this criminal activity. The Council's Waste Enforcement Team has continued to operate during the pandemic and a number of successful prosecutions against individuals have been made.

- 7.1.6. The Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Parks, alongside officers from Waste Management and Enforcement, has contributed to the recent Scrutiny review into fly-tipping, looking at various options to reduce the number of incidences, increase enforcement activity against perpetrators and tackle this problem that blights our streets.
- 7.1.7. The replacement refuse collection vehicles which were delayed due to the first lockdown have now started to be delivered. 18 vehicles have been received to date and it is anticipated that delivery will continue at a rate of approximately 10 a month. These new Clean Air Zone (CAZ) compliant vehicles will be in service by June 2021 subject to maintaining the delivery schedule.
- 7.1.8. Following engagement and discussion during the summer with a cross-party group of elected Members, the procurement of the interim Waste Disposal contract continues and has now reached the more detailed bidder interaction stage.

## **7.2. Parks and Grounds Maintenance**

### **Activity undertaken relating to Covid-19**

- 7.2.1. With the first national lockdown coming to an end in the summer of 2020, operations relating to parks management have quickly returned to normal levels. Grounds Maintenance staff are working amended hours to limit interaction in depots. COVID Safe Operating Procedures and Risk Assessments have been agreed with staff and Trade Unions.
- 7.2.2. Birmingham's 232 play areas and outdoor gyms re-opened on 4th July with signage advising on safe use the maximum number of people allowed on each play area at one time. Re-opening of these facilities was very popular, and their use has been generally problem free.
- 7.2.3. Prior to the current national lockdown volunteering had recommenced in many areas of the city, led by Friends of Parks Groups. Volunteer activity took place in accordance with social distancing guidelines and Covid-19 restrictions on group activity. Staff worked closely with the Birmingham Open Spaces Forum to ensure COVID Secure Operating Procedures were in place and being followed.
- 7.2.4. With the latest lockdown, volunteering is once more suspended and the Cabinet Member has written to thank groups for ceasing group volunteering activities and adhering to lockdown guidance. Once lockdown is lifted we will support volunteer activities on site once more.
- 7.2.5. Parks, along with other divisions of the City Council, are regularly reviewing the government's Covid-19 guidance as they relate to events and outdoor



performances. As a result of the current lockdown all events and activities, as well as grassroots sports, have now been suspended.

#### **‘Business as usual’ activity**

- 7.2.6. The Parks Service has again retained its 15 Green Flag Awards. These national (and now international) awards recognise parks that are well managed and have good community input and support in their day to day management.
- 7.2.7. In July 2019, Cabinet agreed to receive £1.1m from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to run the Future Parks Accelerator (FPA) Programme, with the huge ambition to embed the value of green spaces across the Council. The programme has been running in earnest since December 2019, testing key proposals to help the wider Council better understand and recognise the value of our green spaces
- 7.2.8. The programme was due to end in May 2021 but, due to its initial success and the disruption caused by Covid-19, we have successfully secured an extension. The programme will now finish in March 2022, with the Council receiving an additional £204,000 to support the continuation of the work.
- 7.2.9. Improvements have already been seen in how residents engage with green spaces across the three pilot sites, with further work commencing on the Druids Heath housing development in January 2021. Implementation guides are now being developed on how to successfully replicate this approach across the City.
- 7.2.10. Strong links have been made with the Route To Zero (R20) taskforce as well as Planning, demonstrating the value that the FPA is already having across the Council.

## **8. Transport**

### **8.1. Impact of Covid-19 on traffic levels**

- 8.1.1. Having fallen to historic lows of around 25% of normal traffic in April 2020 during the first national lockdown, traffic volumes increased gradually until the beginning of September, when traffic stabilised at around 90% of normal volume on weekdays and around 80% of normal volumes at the weekend. The greatest increases were during the AM and PM peak periods, as people returned to school and work.
- 8.1.2. During the second lockdown period, traffic volumes decreased to around 75% of normal traffic on weekdays and 50% at weekends. The decrease was more pronounced in the city centre, with lower decreases recorded in many of the suburban areas of the city.

- 8.1.3. There have been no major differences in proportions of different types of vehicles (car, bus, lorry etc), except that van traffic is around 5% above normal levels.
- 8.1.4. After the second national lockdown was lifted on 2<sup>nd</sup> December, traffic returned to similar levels as before the lockdown (i.e. around 90% of normal levels), with slightly higher increases in the city centre than elsewhere.
- 8.1.5. Since we entered a third national lockdown on 5<sup>th</sup> January traffic has reduced to around 65% of normal levels (at time of writing). Further monitoring of traffic flows will take place throughout the lockdown

## **8.2. Emergency Birmingham Transport Plan & Active Travel Fund**

- 8.2.1. Throughout the summer of 2020, an ambitious programme of active travel schemes were delivered across Birmingham, funded through Tranche 1 of the Department for Transport (DfT) Emergency Active Travel Fund.
- 8.2.2. A review of Tranche 1 schemes is underway, running from 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 to 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021. This review will assess the impact and effectiveness of schemes, and decide whether they should be made permanent, modified or removed in the future.
- 8.2.3. £13.1 million of Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 funding has now been allocated to the WMCA, and it is anticipated that Birmingham City Council will be successful in its bid for £4.477 million of this funding. This will enable us to commence the next phase of transport schemes planned for the city, including:
- delivery of enhancements to schemes delivered as part of Tranche 1;
  - Places for People projects including more Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and School Streets;
  - further rollout of the City Centre Traffic Segments (Cells);
  - and additional Cycling and Walking Interventions; including further pop-up cycle lanes across the city.
- 8.2.4. As stated above, the outcome of the Tranche 1 review will assist in determining the final schemes delivered through Tranche 2 funding.
- 8.2.5. Other highway schemes at the design stage have been reassessed to ensure they support the Emergency Birmingham Transport Plan and support ongoing COVID-19 recovery. As we move into 2021, we will measure the success of the Emergency Transport Plan through a comprehensive assessment of schemes delivered through the Emergency Active Travel Fund, the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund, and other projects delivered by the Council and our partners. Focus can then begin to shift back to

business as usual priorities, including delivery of the Birmingham Transport Plan.

### **8.3. Public transport**

- 8.3.1. Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) has continued to support the region in its recovery as well as continuing to provide a safe, clean, reliable integrated public transport system for the people of the West Midlands.
- 8.3.2. Following the initial period of lockdown, Bus and Metro returned to full service. Rail services were increased proportionally, and some services have seen the introduction of additional carriages, however the rail network has yet to recover to a full pre-Covid timetable. Rail operators continue to review service frequency and are supporting this with timetable changes.
- 8.3.3. Prior to the second national lockdown in November 2020 the bus network had recovered to over 60% of pre-Covid passenger levels, with a short spike in the days leading to the then-new restrictions. Service levels had increased to around 103% of pre-Covid provision, reflecting the need for additional capacity to enable social distancing. During the second period of lockdown patronage dropped to around 50% Monday to Friday and 40% on Saturday and Sunday, reflecting the fact that only essential travel was being undertaken.
- 8.3.4. From the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020, with the reintroduction of the area based tiered system, service levels were maintained at over 100% of pre-Covid provision. During this period patronage again recovered to over 60% and peaked at 65% on the busiest shopping days ahead of Christmas.
- 8.3.5. On Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021 England entered a third period of lockdown, to be reviewed after an initial seven-week period. This lockdown includes the closure of non-essential retail, schools and colleges. Critically during this period construction and manufacturing are considered to be key industries and these have continued to function. As a result, this has meant that compared to the first period of lockdown patronage levels have remained higher, with passenger numbers at approximately 30% of pre-Covid levels. This retained level of employment has also meant that there are larger numbers of school children (of essential workers) continuing to travel.
- 8.3.6. At the time of writing, discussions are on-going with bus operators on proposed service levels with a review to these being reduced from 24<sup>th</sup> January. Key principles are to retain coverage of the network along with the times of the first bus and last bus, reducing any duplicate services and reducing service frequency. It is likely service levels will be at an average of 90% of business as usual.
- 8.3.7. Metro patronage has reduced to 40% of normal levels during the present lockdown with revenue less than this, but normal service levels have

continued to enable key workers and essential travellers to access Metro services. This however is under review and changes to service frequency may be implemented to match demand. Midland Metro is the only tramway in the UK with automatic passenger counting technology on board all trams and this enables a data led approach to capacity management.

- 8.3.8. Rail is operating at around 10% and operators will shortly be introducing a reduced timetable which is expected to be in place until late March.
- 8.3.9. Enhanced cleaning regimes have not only been vital to ensure the network remains safe but to assure customer that public transport is clean and safe to use. Cleaning of buses to meet central government guidance, and their own risk assessments, remains the responsibility of bus operators. However, through the West Midlands Bus Alliance TfWM have attempted to ensure this is consistent across operators to enable to us to take a network wide approach to building passenger confidence. In light of the new variant of Covid-19 bus operators are reviewing their risk assessments and ensuring that staff and customers are following the specified guidance. Bus operators and TfWM are in the process of reviewing and refreshing customer messaging to ensure passengers are remind of the key elements of the guidance.
- 8.3.10. In respect of TfWM managed bus stations, interchange and hub cleaning regimes have been enhanced with high volume touch points being cleaned every hour and shelters across our major interchanges and high boarding points are cleaned at least every 48 hours. Enhanced cleaning regimes are also in place across Rail and Metro also with additional cleaning of trams, tram stops and customer touch points using viricidal disinfectant.
- 8.3.11. Following the announcement of mandatory use of face masks on vehicles TfWM has worked with operators and partners to ensure a high level of compliance across the network and also made additional resource available for crowd management in busy locations. Enforcement has been managed through a task force in partnership with the Safer Travel Police team and front line TfWM staff who have been patrolling key interchanges to engage and educate those without a face covering and thousands of face coverings have been distributed. Over 1000 direction to leave orders have been issued to those who have refused to comply.
- 8.3.12. In addition to timetable changes, operators such as West Midlands Metro, West Midlands Trains and National Express West Midlands have all created additional functionality on their websites that provide passenger information. Various customer information features have been brought together onto the West Midlands Network website as further support to our passengers making it as easy as possible to find the information they need.

#### **Future public transport operation**

- 8.3.13. Data insight and analysis continues, especially with the introduction of the tiered systems and additional lockdowns. BCC and TfWM have trialled working with DfT data to help to try to understand the change in the movement around the region. This proved to be too coarse and the decision to pursue the use of more granular mobile network data is being explored, this is currently in progress with the WMCA Procurement Team. At present we are using a range of data to look at how we can manage increased demand on the transport network when vulnerable groups start to be vaccinated.
- 8.3.14. There is currently a great deal of uncertainty about the coming months and years in terms of the pace and nature of the recovery post-Covid and the likely impact of this on demand for travel. During the crisis, public transport services have received significant public subsidy in order to maintain service levels at largely pre-Covid rates in order to maintain social distancing. This level of subsidy is not sustainable long term and it is currently unclear what level of subsidy will continue after March 2021. Any reduction in subsidy whilst patronage levels and associated revenues from fare boxes are reduced will certainly result in a reduction in service levels, notwithstanding any impact on transport policies to encourage mode shift away from private cars. In the short term this will impact most severely on those citizens that already suffer the greatest amounts of social exclusion and deprivation, the very same citizens who have been worst impacted during the Covid-19 crisis. There is analytical work being undertaken, utilising Swift data, to identify the “core” users of the public transport network to enable a greater understanding and to allow considerations of equality in the decision making process.
- 8.3.15. Moving forward it may be that the Covid-19 crisis will act as a catalyst for alternative models of public transport operation such as franchising models or elements of re-regulation, especially if higher levels of public subsidy are required during the recovery.
- 8.3.16. Despite various potential scenarios and trajectories, it is clear that public transport will continue to play a key role in the future integrated transport network, especially in the context of a low carbon green recovery and ambitious carbon reduction targets in line with BCC’s R20 strategy. Protecting public transport networks and rebuilding public confidence that it is once again safe to use public transport will be critical. We have an opportunity as restrictions are lifted to encourage and embed a change in travel behaviour towards public transport and active travel and keep the levels of car usage down. Through marketing and messaging campaigns TfWM will aim to restore confidence and ensure the essential service our integrated transport system provides can recover quickly and continue to

support their long term goals to improve air quality, reliability and reduce congestion.

#### **Future public transport infrastructure**

- 8.3.17. The delivery of TfWM schemes has continued whilst working in a safe manner and in accordance with government guidelines.
- 8.3.18. The Westside Metro Extension has used the pandemic in a positive way to progress the works along Broad Street with a large portion of the construction work being accelerated. Despite Covid-19 restrictions, work on the project has progressed well, and the Midland Metro Alliance have co-ordinated with businesses along Broad Street to plan paving works outside their premises at times which are convenient wherever possible.
- 8.3.19. Tram stops have been installed and all of the track and road surface along Broad Street has been completed and there is now continuous track from the existing Line 1 through Centenary Square and out to almost the terminus at Hagley Road. This leaves installation of the remaining paving and Overhead Line Equipment poles as the last main construction work on Broad Street before cables are run and the testing of the tram systems commence in the second half of this year.
- 8.3.20. Work is also progressing on Metro's Birmingham Eastside Extension (BEE). Utility works have progressed on Lower Bull St and in Digbeth Centre, and discussions have been held with the Department for Transport and HS2 about the phasing and co-ordination of tram and Curzon Street station works. This should hopefully enable TfWM to proceed quickly to full delivery of the BEE scheme, although the date of opening to passenger service remains under discussion. Main works proceed in earnest during the first half of this year.
- 8.3.21. The majority of the enabling works for the Sprint Hagley Road section have also been completed and hope to confirm the start of the main delivery work there in February 2021.
- 8.3.22. Work on the infrastructure to support the first cross-city services through Birmingham starts to move into delivery by Spring 2021 and the first planned operations from 2022 between Druids Heath, Moseley, Birmingham City Centre, Cape Hill, Smethwick and Dudley. This Government funded scheme will progress through the year in phases along the route to improve bus journey times and improve accessibility across the city.
- 8.3.23. Construction commenced on the A45 Sprint route just after the Christmas period. A site compound has been established at Bordesley Green to support construction activity. In line with COVID-19 guidance, steps have been taken to safeguard the workforce by introducing a lateral-flow COVID-19 Testing Programme for anyone coming on to site. This includes construction workers

and all office base staff and visitors. In addition to this a track and trace / temperature sensor.

- 8.3.24. Progress on the A34 Sprint continues with construction set to commence on the route early in 2021. Tenders for packages B (Great Barr to Stadium) and C (Stadium to Perry Barr) are due to be returned in late January. Contracts are anticipated to be finalised by mid- February with construction starting by late March. This scheme is on track with its project timelines.
- 8.3.25. The tender for Package D (Perry Barr to Birmingham) is due to be returned in late February. Contract signature is expected in late March with the start of construction the latter half of April.
- 8.3.26. TfWM have been supporting BCC on the A34 Highways Scheme by developing and deploying a mitigation strategy with dedicated travel demand management resource and communications packages. Work has been undertaken to improve the performance of the network by upgrading and revalidating traffic signals, installing CCTV and static automatic traffic count (SATC) cameras which will provide visibility of traffic volumes and enabling the identification of and rapid response to incidents. The Regional Transport Coordination Centre (RTCC) will also coordinate across transport authorities and operators in the management of the network to ensure we minimise delays.

#### **8.4. Parking**

- 8.4.1. All BCC car parks are open except for Victoria Road multi-storey car park in Sutton Coldfield. Usage at nearby surface level car park remains low indicating there is insufficient demand for parking in the area to warrant reopening the multi-storey.
- 8.4.2. Paradise Circus multi-storey car park is closed to the general public but reopened in the week commencing 7<sup>th</sup> December to allow parking for NHS staff and patients only attending the newly created Covid-19 testing centre at the NIA. This arrangement will run 7 days a week until 18th February 2021 (except for Christmas week).
- 8.4.3. From Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January, Millennium Point Car Park is being used to support the NHS COVID-19 Vaccination Programme at the Millennium Point COVID-19 Vaccination Hub.
- 8.4.4. Car parking spaces are available free of charge at Millennium Point Car Park for NHS staff working at the Millennium Point COVID-19 Vaccination Hub. Staff will be working 12 hours per day.
- 8.4.5. 1-hour free car parking is also available at Millennium Point Car Park for people attending the Millennium Point COVID-19 Vaccination Hub to receive a vaccine.

8.4.6. Parking charges in Council car parks and on streets (where applicable) have recommenced. Concessions for NHS staff, health and social care workers and NHS volunteer responders remain available.

8.4.7. The consequences of the pandemic and the subsequent restrictions applied to the operation of businesses, offices and the retail sector on the income generated by parking services have been very significant for the 2020/21 financial year. Officers are developing best estimates for income for 2021/22 in an attempt to understand the potential for on-going budget pressures. Beyond the recovery from the pandemic, officers are also working to model the impact on future parking income with respect to changes in travel behaviour as citizens are encouraged to find alternative travel methods to private car use as part of the aim to reduce vehicle-borne emissions.

## **8.5. Road safety**

8.5.1. Road traffic collisions and casualties in Birmingham have been analysed for the period April to August 2020, covering the period of the first national lockdown. This data has been compared with data from the same period during the previous three years.

8.5.2. Compared to the same period in the previous three years, April to August 2019 vs April to August 2020, road traffic collisions (RTCs) across all categories are down as follows:

- All RTCs are down by 64%, and all KSIs (killed or seriously injured) are down by 49%.
- Involving pedestrians down by 82%, and pedestrian KSIs are down by 72%.
- Involving cyclists down by 52%, and cyclist KSIs are down by 33%.
- Involving powered-two-wheeler road traffic collisions down by 41% and powered-two-wheeler KSIs are down by 30%.
- Involving children down by 72%, and child KSIs are down by 53%.

8.5.3. We are continuing to promote national campaigns such as the Road Safety Charity Brake's 'National Road Safety Week'. The theme of 'No need to speed' this year was particularly pertinent due to increased speeding concerns reporting during the period of lockdown. Birmingham City Council's own 'Slower is Safer' campaign was also promoted as part of this.

8.5.4. In advance of Road Safety Week, all school staff in Birmingham were invited to attend a special road safety webinar. This gave information on existing support and resources available, plus further guidance and information on the issue of speeding.



8.5.5. Above all, in order to reduce the number of vehicles on the roads in Birmingham, citizens are encouraged to walk or cycle where possible, particularly for shorter journeys.

## **8.6. Return to school travel advice**

8.6.1. Walking and cycling continue to play a vital role in ensuring that pupils can attend classes safely, helping to make space for those who have no alternative but to use public transport.

8.6.2. We have been maximising the additional travel planning support provided through funding from the Department for Transport. This has given us with the ability to work with a greater number and variety of schools than normal, including secondary schools where we are seeing particular issues around pupils being driven to school rather than using public transport.

8.6.3. Using TfWM data, including watch spot areas, high bus boarding and congestion data from the pulse reports, priority areas have been mapped.

8.6.4. Key successes include:

- Communicating important school restart travel messages and promotion of resources, especially to 80 identified high priority schools.
- Production of a specific risk assessment around pick up and drop off times, and the journey to and from school. Further guidance was produced related to social distancing at the school gate.
- Tailored messaging and support packages to schools who are experiencing issues with public transport or congestion at the school gate. Other bespoke messaging and offers of support has been given to schools affected by the Emergency Active Travel Fund Schemes, for example schools within low traffic neighbourhood areas.
- Signing up and beginning travel plans with about 10 schools.
- Trialling of the Agilysis Active Streets Assessment Tool to allow us to identify and prioritise schools for possible physical infrastructure measures.
- Additional resources will be made available to schools to support use of Modeshift's 5-minute walking bubble maps
- Development and delivery of webinars to school staff including topics of road safety, clean air and getting started with Modeshift STARS. We are also looking to develop additional webinar presentation slides and accompanying notes on the topics of 'Developing and delivering a travel plan' and 'Gaining

accreditation' to add to our existing CPD programme and further promote Modeshift STARS.

## **8.7. eScooter trial**

- 8.7.1. The eScooter trial was launched in August 2020, initially covering the city core (area bound by the A4540 inner ring road). This is a privately-operated service, delivered in partnership with the Council and TfWM. In early December 2020, the trial zone was expanded to cover a much larger area of city outside the core city centre, The current trial zone covers the city core and areas to the north and southwest of the city around the flagship blue cycling routes along the A38 and A34, reaching key destinations such as Birmingham City Hospital, the University of Birmingham and Queen Elizabeth Hospital.
- 8.7.2. As of mid-January 2021, there were 379 active e-scooters in the trial area, with plans for further fleet expansion up to 750.

## **8.8. E-cargo bike trial**

- 8.8.1. Following a competitive application process, the Council was awarded an e-cargo bike grant by the Energy Saving Trust in May 2020. The council has purchased 20 e-cargo bikes, 16 of which will be allocated to local partners and 4 will become part of the council's fleet. The purpose of the trial is to demonstrate different uses of e-cargo bikes through case studies and data that the partners will produce.

## **8.9. Clean Air Zone (CAZ)**

- 8.9.1. Following agreement from Ministers, the Council confirmed on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2020 that Birmingham's CAZ would now launch on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021. Simultaneous to the announcement of the launch date for the CAZ, the team also launched its Exemptions and Mitigations measures, which are designed to provide additional time to prepare for the CAZ and/or encourage the upgrade or replacement of vehicles that do not meet the emission standards of the Clean Air Zone.
- 8.9.2. As of the end of December 2020, the team has approved a total of 862 exemption applications and approved applications to the taxi and private hire fund to a value of £0.394m.
- 8.9.3. We have acquired business continuity assurances from third parties to ensure project delivery remains on track during the ongoing COVID pandemic and continue to monitor the evolving situation.

## **9. Covid-19 Support Grants**

### **9.1. Business Support Grants**

9.1.1. Since the last update report to City Council in September 2020, the business support grants landscape has become increasingly complex, with a number of new business support grants schemes announced by national government.

9.1.2. The majority of current business grants schemes are linked to the tiered system of local restrictions, implemented by national government in October 2020. Birmingham has now spent time in every tier of restrictions with an associated business grants scheme, which means that since October 2020 we have had to design and administer five separate business grants schemes (not including new schemes for Tier 4 and the third national lockdown). The scale of the challenge facing Birmingham City Council, in comparison to some other local authorities which have only been in one or two tiers, is significant and continues to increase as new schemes are announced.

9.1.3. Despite these additional challenges, we have continued to work with national and local partners, including the Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce, to lobby for the support and additional funding that our businesses need to survive the current crisis.

9.1.4. At the time of writing this report, we are currently administering five separate business support grant schemes:

- Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open) (for open but impacted businesses, covering time spent in Tier 2 from 14<sup>th</sup> October to 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020, and Tier 3 from 2<sup>nd</sup> December to 30<sup>th</sup> December 2020)
- Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) (for closed businesses, covering time spent in national lockdown from 5<sup>th</sup> November to 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020, and Tier 3 from 2<sup>nd</sup> December to 30<sup>th</sup> December 2020)
- Local Restrictions Support Grant (Sector) (for businesses in sectors that have been required to close nationally, covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> November, and 2<sup>nd</sup> December onwards)
- Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) (a discretionary support grant scheme for businesses who may not qualify through other schemes, with locally set criteria)
- Christmas Support Payments for 'wet-led pubs'

- 9.1.5. Applications for existing business support grant schemes opened on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020. This is an entirely online process. Considering the complexity of the current schemes, and after consultation with the local business community, we decided to ease the administrative burden on businesses by designing a 'one application' process. Under this process, Birmingham businesses only need to make one online application to be considered for all existing and future business support schemes.
- 9.1.6. This 'one application' approach is different from most other local authorities, which have mainly chosen to operate separate application processes for each businesses grant scheme. However, we believe that our process minimises the administrative burden for businesses and maximises available funding and resources. The current process also ensures that businesses are automatically triaged for support under the discretionary Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) scheme if they do not meet the criteria for other schemes.
- 9.1.7. Delays in receiving finalised guidance from national government has presented an additional challenge to the service, with teams having to manage the expectations of businesses that are, understandably, desperate for any additional financial support available. Any grants paid in error are likely to require repayment from businesses, which means that the Council is unable to finalise the design of schemes until guidance is agreed.
- 9.1.8. As of 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021, we have received 14,056 applications for support from businesses. Taking into account the five schemes currently in operation, this means over 70,000 individual considerations that need to be made by the team. All applications must be assessed against the eligibility criteria for each scheme, as well as a nationally mandated anti-fraud check through the Government's 'Spotlight' system.
- 9.1.9. Once an application has been processed and a decision made, businesses receive one lump sum payment covering all business grant schemes. The average time from application receipt to payments is currently 25 calendar days.
- 9.1.10. Additional resource has been deployed into the business rates team from the council tax team to help process applications, with nearly 100 FTE working on grants. Normal staffing within the business rates team is 25 FTE. Overtime is in place and being maximised, in addition to a number of staff who opted to work over the Christmas period to maintain momentum. External recruitment, or redeployment of staff from other areas of the council, is not a viable option due to the level of training that would be required.
- 9.1.11. We recognise that this is a worrying time for many businesses, and regular emails are being sent to all applicants to keep them updated on timescales and likely payment dates. The business rates team is proactively working

with both colleagues and external stakeholders, including the Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce, to develop a communications plan around the grants schemes.

- 9.1.12. The below tables set out the latest position with regards to business support grants as at 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021 (not including the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) discretionary scheme). So far, we have paid out just over £10 million in grants to eligible businesses.

Period of report: 25 <sup>th</sup> November 2020 – 15 <sup>th</sup> January 2021 (not including Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) Discretionary Scheme)	
Total number of applications received	14,056
Total number of applications paid/approved for payment	7,125
<b>Total value of applications paid/approved for payment</b>	<b>£10,642,000</b>

Period of report: 25 <sup>th</sup> November 2020 – 15 <sup>th</sup> January 2021 (not including Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) Discretionary Scheme)		
<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Total no. of applications paid/approved for payments</b>	<b>Total value of payments made/confirmed payments</b>
LRSG (Sector)	80	£99, 872
LRSG (Open)	1798	£1,749,655
LRSG (Closed)	4389	£7,076,733
LRSG (Closed) <i>*ARG discretionary element</i>	361	£1,006,899
Christmas Support Payments for wet-led pubs	145	£145,000
LRGSOV2	127	£138,982
LRGSCV2	225	£317,905
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,125</b>	<b>£10,642,000</b>

- 9.1.13. At full capacity, we project that we will be able to process around 2,500 grants per week, which would mean clearing all pending applications by the end of January 2021 (for the five existing schemes).
- 9.1.14. Guidance has now been received from national government for the two new business support grant schemes linked to Tier 4 and the third national

lockdown. The service is in a good position to process these additional payments using existing applications from businesses, but the sheer number of assessments required means that some businesses may not be assessed until February 2021.

## **9.2. Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) discretionary scheme**

- 9.2.1. In contrast to the other business support schemes which have nationally set eligibility criteria, the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) discretionary scheme provides additional funding to local authorities to distribute according to locally set criteria. Using this funding, councils are able to establish their own business support grant schemes or business support programmes according to local priorities and need.
- 9.2.2. Birmingham has received a total allocation of £22,836,320 from national government to be distributed through this scheme.
- 9.2.3. Since the current round of business support grant schemes opened on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020, all Birmingham businesses who do not qualify for the Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open), Local Restrictions Support Grants (Closed) or Local Restrictions Grant (Sector) are automatically triaged for discretionary financial support through the Additional Restrictions Grant process.
- 9.2.4. This includes the following:
- Supply chain businesses severely impacted because they wholly or exclusively supply businesses in the hospitality, accommodation, events or leisure sectors
  - Sector business that are operating in shared premises or where the landlord is liable to pay Business Rates
  - Bed and Breakfast businesses which are classed as domestic and subject to Council Tax will also be eligible for support
  - Businesses which have been severely impacted due to government restrictions
- 9.2.5. To receive grant funding through this scheme, businesses must demonstrate that their business has been 'severely affected' by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and/or restrictions on operations.
- 9.2.6. The below table set out the latest position with regards to the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) discretionary scheme, as at 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021. So far, we have paid out £1.8 million in grants to businesses through this scheme.

Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) discretionary scheme		
Period of report: 25 <sup>th</sup> November 2020 – 15 <sup>th</sup> January 2021		
Application status	No. of applications	Total value of payments made
Received, in review	1086	
Awaiting further information	83	
More information received	28	
Approved	1167	£1,804,610
Duplicate	19	
Rejected	234	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2617</b>	<b>£1,804,610</b>

- 9.2.7. The first round of ARG discretionary scheme funding closed to new applications on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021. A new ARG grant scheme is currently in development, for those businesses in key sectors that continue to be impacted by tiered restrictions.

### 9.3. One-off grant payments to hospitality and leisure businesses

- 9.3.1. Using funding from the ARG discretionary scheme fund, we will be paying out one-off grants of £10,000 to hospitality and leisure businesses in Birmingham with a rateable value of over £51,000. These businesses have previously been ineligible for any business support grant funding due to their high rateable value.

- 9.3.2. 421 eligible businesses have been identified by the Council from business rates records, with grants targeted at businesses in the following sectors:

- Restaurants
- Pubs, clubs and bars
- Museums and art galleries
- Cinemas and theatres
- Bingo halls and amusement arcades
- Cafés and coffee houses

- 9.3.3. Eligible businesses do not need to apply for these one-off grants, but will be required to provide the necessary banking details to process payments. Council officers have begun contacting businesses to confirm their eligibility and payment details, with an aim of processing all payments by the end of January 2021.

#### **9.4. Social Isolation Payments (SIP)**

- 9.4.1. Two support schemes were established by national government in September 2020 to provide financial assistance to individuals on low incomes who are asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace but are unable to work from home. These are the Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme and the Test and Trace Discretionary Support Payment Scheme.
- 9.4.2. These schemes are designed to help ensure that people who test positive for Covid-19, and their close contacts, are able to self-isolate for the required period to stop the onward spread of the virus.
- 9.4.3. Anyone told to self-isolate on or after 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020 may be eligible for a (backdated) payment of £500 under these schemes.
- 9.4.4. Local authorities were required to have arrangements in place to administer payments through both schemes by 12<sup>th</sup> October 2020.
- 9.4.5. National government has provided ringfenced funding for these schemes, with Birmingham receiving a total allocation of £1,186,663 (£741,500 for the Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme, and £445,163 for the Test and Trace Discretionary Support Payment Scheme). Allocations to local authorities were based on DHSC modelling.
- 9.4.6. Eligibility criteria for the Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme have been set nationally by Government, with eligibility restricted to people who:
- Have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Test, either because they have tested positive for Covid-19, or because they have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive; **and**
  - Are employed or self-employed; **and**
  - Are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result; **and**
  - Are currently receiving Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit.
- 9.4.7. The Test and Trace Discretionary Support Payment Scheme is designed to support individuals who do not meet the criteria for the main scheme, but nonetheless would face financial hardship as a result of not being able to work from home. This scheme has some nationally set criteria, but local authorities were advised that they could also introduce their own locally set criteria to ensure that support goes where it is most needed. Any locally set criteria must operate in addition to, rather than instead of, nationally set criteria.



- 9.4.8. Under the nationally set criteria for the Test and Trace Discretionary Support Payment Scheme, eligibility is restricted to people who:
- Have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Test, either because they have tested positive for Covid-19, or because they have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive; **and**
  - Are employed or self-employed; **and**
  - Are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result; **and**
  - Are **not** currently receiving Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit; **and**
  - Are on low incomes and will face financial hardship as a result of not being able to work while they are self-isolating.
- 9.4.9. As there is only a limited amount of funding available under the Test and Trace Discretionary Support Payment Scheme, we judged it necessary to introduce additional, locally set criteria to ensure that we support those who need it most. Based on the available funding pot of £445,163, and estimating a payment of £500 for each eligible individual, we are only able to support a total of 890 citizens through this scheme.
- 9.4.10. We have therefore limited eligibility for the Test and Trace Discretionary Support Payment Scheme to individuals who have less than £6,000 in capital or savings, **and** fall into at least one of the following categories:
- People who have applied for any of the benefits mentioned in criteria 4 or been refused and have made an appeal against the decision, as they meet the other statutory and discretionary criteria.
  - People from abroad who are excluded from claiming benefits but meet all the other statutory and discretionary criteria, as long as someone has the right to work in the UK.
  - Applicants who have a gross weekly earnings figure of no more than £372 per week (40 hours x £9.30 per hour living wage (living wage as defined by the Living Wage Commission)).
  - Applicants who would suffer severe financial hardship if a payment is not made (and can evidence this).
- 9.4.11. Applications and payments for both schemes are administered through the Benefits Service, with additional funding provided by national government to cover administrative and start-up costs.

- 9.4.12. We have consistently received around 500 claims for support a week through these schemes, which is considerably higher than the initial DHSC estimate of around 200 claims per week. No additional funding for the administration of the schemes has been provided.
- 9.4.13. Before a claim can be paid, applications must be checked against the national DHSC 'CTAS' eligibility validation system. We have experienced multiple issues using this system, with significant delays in confirming eligibility for payments, which has slowed down the process considerably. Concerns have been raised directly with DHSC, and the situation has been closely monitored over the lifetime of the scheme with specific escalations in place. Similar difficulties have been faced by other local authorities.
- 9.4.14. As of 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2021, we have now received a total of 8,803 applications for support. A breakdown of these applications is provided in the below table.

Application status	No. of applications
Approved, paid	2,057
Rejected, do not meet criteria	2,822
Pending – awaiting further information from citizens or DHSC	1,016
New applications, awaiting review	2,908 ( <i>including 2,359 received in last two weeks</i> )
Total	8,803

- 9.4.15. As of 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2021, we have now paid out a total of £1,028,500, including:
- 1,306 'standard' payments paid out under the Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme, totalling £653,000
  - 751 'discretionary' payments paid out under the Test and Trace Discretionary Support Payment Scheme, totalling £375,500
- 9.4.16. We continue to await further information from national government about whether these schemes will be extended past the original closing date of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021.

## 9.5. Council Tax Hardship Fund

- 9.5.1. National government has provided local authorities in England with £500 million in new grant funding to support economically vulnerable households. This money has been allocated based on each council's share of the national

caseload of working-age recipients of Council Tax Support (CTS), with Birmingham City Council receiving £17.4 million.

- 9.5.2. Local authorities are expected to use this additional funding to reduce the council tax bills of all working-age recipients of CTS by £150, or to clear the balance where less than £150 remains to be paid for the 2020/21 financial year. These reductions are to be applied regardless of whether residents have been financially impacted by Covid-19.
- 9.5.3. This support scheme commenced in April 2020, and will continue to be operated for the remainder of the financial year, with all in-year/new CTS applicants receiving the discount.
- 9.5.4. To date the Council has reduced the bills of 95,026 residents using this additional funding. Residents have not had to apply for this reduction, with discounts being applied automatically.
- 9.5.5. Citizens that are on a low income are encouraged to apply for Council Tax Support online at [www.birmingham.gov.uk/benefitsnewclaim](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/benefitsnewclaim). Where residents are unable to complete the online form, they can call the contact centre and book a telephone appointment to complete an application over the phone.

## **10. Council Finance and Resources**

### **10.1. Finance (position as at 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021)**

- 10.1.1. Government has provided grant funding to Birmingham to support the response to the Covid-19 pandemic. A total of £586.8m of grant funding has been confirmed to date, including £128.5m of un-ringfenced grants and £6.5m reimbursement for unachieved sales, fees and charges (SFC) income for the period to July 2020. The second SFC claim for £6.4m was submitted to MHCLG on 23 December 2020 to cover the period August to November 2020. £44.2m of the un-ringfenced grants has been transferred to a dedicated reserve to manage the ongoing pandemic through the higher risk winter months.

- 10.1.2. The below table summarises current grant allocations.

<b>Grant</b>	<b>£m</b>
<b>Support to business due to national lockdown and additional restrictions</b>	
ARG Top-Up	10.1
Closed Business Lockdown payment	57.8
Closed Addendum payment	28.9
	<b>96.8</b>

Community Testing Funding - to support expenditure incurred in undertaking Covid-19 testing in the community. Reimbursed at £14 per test.	2.2
<b>Total funding confirmed</b>	<b>99.0</b>

- 10.1.3. Government has announced a national scheme for £100m to provide some support to local authority leisure centres. The Council is putting together a bid. The current assumption is that we could secure funding of approximately £3m which would cover supplier relief claims for the period December 2020 to March 2021. However, the impact of the latest restrictions and closure of leisure sites has not been factored into these figures and further information is awaited from Government as to how the claim may be affected.
- 10.1.4. As part of the Local Government Provisional Finance Settlement on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020, Government has confirmed that there will be some additional funding to mitigate the pressures in respect of Covid-19 for 2021/22. This is in the form of £43.8m of un-ringfenced grant to fund expenditure pressures. It was also confirmed that the income compensation scheme for lost fees, charges and sales would be extended by a further 3 months to June 2021, using the 2020/21 income budgets as the baseline for the compensation and that £762m would be provided nationally to compensate councils for 75% of irrecoverable loss of council tax and business rates revenues in 2020/21. The funding of the income compensation scheme and the collection fund scheme will be dependent on the losses identified, but it is anticipated that Birmingham may receive around £39.6m to cover Business Rates and Council tax losses.
- 10.1.5. In a letter to local authorities on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government called for councils to increase efforts to ensure that rough sleepers have secure and safe accommodation over the winter period. This means making offers to people who may have previously been offered accommodation but rejected it or left accommodation, and individuals new to rough sleeping who require help to move on from rough sleeping. There was also a call for local authorities to ensure that all those receiving interventions are registered with a GP and included in the local vaccination plans.
- 10.1.6. It should be noted that the financial impact of the current national lockdown is still being evaluated.
- 10.1.7. The below table provides the latest overview of pressures and risk that the Council is facing up to 2021/22 and provides a comparison between this forecast and the confirmed un-ringfenced grants. The total forecast additional spend/loss of income to the Council on COVID-19 related general fund

activities for 2020/21 and 2021/22 is £153.8m including risks. This is inclusive of additional expenditure, loss of income and likely risk materialising. The 2021/22 position will be better understood as we start to plan recovery and the 'new norm'.

<b>Forecast pressures on expenditure and income</b>			
<b>Financial year</b>	<b>Expenditure £m</b>	<b>Income £m</b>	<b>Total £m</b>
2020/21	71.874	56.908	128.781
2021/22	2.678	22.293	24.971
<b>Gross GF Pressures</b>	<b>74.552</b>	<b>79.201</b>	<b>153.752</b>
Grant Received	N/A	N/A	(128.519)
Income Reimbursement Received (April – July 2020)	N/A	N/A	(6.455)
<b>Net GF Pressures</b>	<b>74.552</b>	<b>79.201</b>	<b>18.778</b>

- 10.1.8. The un-ringfenced grant allocations currently exceed the two-year costs identified to date. However, the Council expects that further costs may materialise as a result of winter pressure and wave 2 of Covid-19, which are not yet reflected in the numbers above. Costs will be kept under constant review and updated for future reports. However, when risks are also factored in, costs could exceed the allocation by £18.8m. However, this will be partially mitigated by the amounts that the Council will be able to claim under the Government's income compensation scheme for income losses for the period August 2020 to March 2021, currently estimated to be a further £15.4m. When this is taken into account, the residual shortfall is £3.4m inclusive of risks.
- 10.1.9. It should be noted that additional costs are beginning to be identified for 2022/23 and beyond, mainly around slippage on planned savings proposals, including lower assumptions around ability to grow income. These will be addressed as part of the budget process.
- 10.1.10. Basis and assumptions
- Forecasts are based on decisions and emerging actions where Finance are sighted on these.
  - Where estimated figures have been used these will continue to be reviewed and updated.

- Forecasts reflect the impact of service closure or restrictions as a result of social isolating policy from national government, such as leisure centres.

10.1.11. A return on the latest estimates of costs and losses of income due to Covid 19 was submitted to MHCLG on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2020, which was based on the Strategic Cell report for week commencing 4<sup>th</sup> December 2020. There will be no return in January due to the Christmas break; to account for this the November return requested actuals for both October and November, and a forecast for December. The next return is expected in early February. The MHCLG return also asks for full year costs and therefore is in line with our Strategic Cell reporting. The Council estimated total costs in 2020/21 of £225.506m General Fund and £7.107m HRA. This includes expenditure in relation to ringfenced grants in line with Government instructions. The impact of Covid-19 as per the MHCLG return is summarised in the below table.

<b>MHCLG November Return Summary</b>	
<b>2020/21 Impact</b>	<b>£m</b>
Additional Costs	83.708
Income Losses (after Business Rates Relief)	97.462
Ringfenced Grant Expenditure	45.336
<b>Total General Fund Impact</b>	<b>226.506</b>
HRA Impact	7.107
<b>Total Impact Submitted to MHCLG</b>	<b>233.613</b>

### **Emerging financial risks**

- 10.1.12. The financial risks are considered to be a most likely impact of £21.858m.
- 10.1.13. It must be noted that this is an emerging and evolving set of financial risks and will continue to be monitored and updated as there is greater visibility by Finance of financial decisions being made. We are also comparing with other Local Authorities to ensure consistency of financial reporting.

### **Business Rates Grant and Hardship Fund**

- 10.1.14. The Council has received £231.6m Business Rates Grant.
- 10.1.15. The business rates grant scheme ended on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020. The Council made grant payments to 18,153 businesses, totalling £217.9m.
- 10.1.16. In line with Government guidance the Council set aside 5% (£11.6m) of its estimated underspend on the business rates grant scheme to fund a discretionary grant scheme. The Government anticipated that this would be

used to support small businesses with fewer than 50 employees that do not have their own business rates assessment, B&Bs that pay Council Tax rather than business rates and some charity properties.

- 10.1.17. The Council determined how to allocate the grants using its local knowledge within the Government's criteria.
- 10.1.18. Round 1 of the Council's discretionary scheme went live on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020. Almost 2,000 applications for grants were received by the Council for that round. A total of 1,026 applications were approved for this round and grant payments to the value of £4.582m were processed. The Council launched round 2 of the scheme on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2020 and of just over 1,300 applications were received, 725 were paid. Payments for this round have now completed, and total £6.217m. This means that payments for both rounds total £10.799m.
- 10.1.19. There were applications totalling £0.6m that were received in advance of the 30<sup>th</sup> September cut-off date, but which could not be processed at the time due to missing information. The required information was received after 30<sup>th</sup> September, and the Council is awaiting advice from BEIS as to whether these claims can now be processed.
- 10.1.20. Now that final payments have been made on all schemes, the underspend of £2.3m must be returned to BEIS.
- 10.1.21. The Government has announced funding will be provided to support BIDs. Birmingham has received £0.212m.

#### **Support to Business During Restrictions**

- 10.1.22. The Government provided £47.287m of grant to Birmingham in November 2020 to support businesses who face restrictions during the national lockdown and during periods then restrictions were in place due to high alert levels for the area. The scheme went live on 23 November, and to date £8.664m has been spent.

#### **Council Tax Support Hardship**

- 10.1.23. Work has begun on applying discounts to the Council Tax bills of those receiving Council Tax Support. These will be paid for from the £17.383m Hardship Grant for Council Tax. To date, 95,026 discounts have been applied to those in receipt of Council Tax Support, totalling £8.0m. Cabinet on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2020, approved the recommendation that £6.4m of COVID costs in relation to food provision be funded from the Hardship Grant. This means that there is £3.0m of the grant left. The fund needs to continue to be allocated to new cases for CTS for the remainder of the financial year. Hence, any further increases in the caseload need to be considered first –

and this will be highly dependent on the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on the economy.

### **Other Ringfenced Grants**

#### **Infection Control Grant**

- 10.1.24. The Council has received an allocation of £18.5m as part of the Infection Control funding. To date, expenditure from the grant totals £13.2m, consisting of Phase 1 and 2 payments to providers and providers of extra care, supported living and home support. This means that there is a further £5.3m of grant left to be committed, but which has been identified to support care providers.

#### **Test and Trace Service Support Grant and Contain Outbreak Management Fund**

- 10.1.25. The Council has received £10.7m to develop and action its plans to reduce the spread of the virus in the local area and a further £9.1m of Contain Management Funds, a total of £20.9m. Commitments against the grant total £13.5m (£7.3m in 2020/21 and £6.2m in 2021/22) including salary costs, software and system costs, communications, equipment, enforcement, testing facilities and welfare support and community swabbing. The commitments against the grant are currently under review and will be updated in future reports.

#### **Welfare Assistance Fund**

- 10.1.26. An additional £63m was confirmed by Government on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2020 to assist those who are struggling to afford food and other essentials due to Covid-19. Birmingham has been allocated **£1.9m**. A report was approved by Tactical Cell on 8<sup>th</sup> September and the indicative cost of the programme is expected to be £1.9m, meaning the whole grant has been committed.

#### **Reopening the High Streets Safely**

- 10.1.27. The Council expects to spend its £1.017m fully in 2020/21. To date, £0.408m has been spent.

#### **Test and Trace Support Payments**

- 10.1.28. From 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020, individuals are entitled to a Test and Trace or discretionary support payment of £500. The payment is intended to support those on low income who are unable to work from home if ordered to self-isolate, and therefore will suffer some income loss. Government announced a national grant of £50m to support this scheme and Birmingham has been allocated a total of £1.317m. The breakdown of this grant allocation is as shown in the table below:



	Allocation	Payment value to be made	How many citizens can be paid?	Across 18 weeks eligibility period	Top up possible
SJP Payments	741,500	£500	1483	82	Yes, by Govt if exceeds
Discretionary Covid-19 Payments	445,164	£500	890	49	No, 4 month fixed cash envelope
Administration	130,335				In discussion with DHCS
<b>Total</b>	1,316,999				

- 10.1.29. The scheme went live in Birmingham on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2020 and ended on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021. Over 4600 applications under the scheme have been received and to date £1.003m of this grant has been spent on both standard and discretionary payments.

#### **Compliance and Enforcement Grant**

- 10.1.30. On 22<sup>nd</sup> September Government announced £60m of funding nationally to support additional compliance and enforcement activities. Birmingham has been allocated £0.890m. The proposed spending breakdown for this grant is as shown in the table below. To date, £0.117m of the grant has been spent.

	£
Covid Marshalls, equipment, bicycles, PEE, and tabards	241,600
Universities	80,000
Faith Group Covid Champions	30,000
Environmental Health – staffing, PPE, Bodycams, IT, vehicle costs etc.	290,100
Letter drop and advice	30,000
Media and publicity	50,000
Parks – signage, adverts, Marshalls	167,200
<b>Total proposed plan</b>	888,900

#### **Next Steps Accommodation Programme**

- 10.1.31. The Council has been successful in securing £0.595m funding from the recent bidding round for the Next Steps Accommodation Programme. The bid submitted was to cover extended emergency accommodation costs, Washington Court accommodation scheme and 2 additional transition

support workers. A further £0.639m has been provided to Birmingham to provide longer term solutions for rough sleepers. To date, £0.456m of the initial grant has been spent.

### **Funding for the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV)**

- 10.1.32. The Council has been allocated £0.520m funding (equivalent to £14.60 per CEV individual on the Shielded Patient List) for the 28-day period that lockdown restrictions are in place. The funding will be an un-ringfenced section 31 grant to provide maximum flexibility, but councils are expected to use the funding to deliver the activities and outcomes outlined in the Shielding Framework.

### **Domestic Abuse Capacity Building Fund**

- 10.1.33. The Domestic Abuse Bill includes a new duty on Tier 1 local authorities to assess the need for, and commission support to victims and their children, safe accommodation in England. Each Local Authority in England has been allocated £0.050m to assist early planning and preparation work ahead of implementation of a new duty due to come into force April 2021. Further details of Birmingham's spending plans will be reported when known.

### **Covid Winter Grant Scheme**

- 10.1.34. On 23<sup>rd</sup> November Government announced £170m would be made available in early December to support those most in need across England with the cost of food, energy, water bills and other essentials. Of this national amount, Birmingham has been allocated £5.189m. To date, £1.598m has been spent.

## **10.2. Human Resources**

- 10.2.1. HR Covid-19 support began in February 2020 with the release of All Staff Guidance which communicated what was known about the virus at that time along with the initial precautions to take and where to seek further advice and guidance.
- 10.2.2. There followed a series of Manager Bulletins and staff guidance updates signposting HR mechanisms developed and implemented to support the workforce to continue to provide key services, whilst ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of BCC employees, service users and citizens. Regularly updated Covid-19 guidance for managers and employees has been made available on the council website, addressing the latest developments and issues raised by trade unions (accessible to all staff online).

### **Risk Reduction Framework/Risk Assessment**

- 10.2.3. Following national guidance, a BCC specific Risk Reduction Framework was compiled outlining key considerations for employees in vulnerable groups, building related control measures that were being put into place and the process for services areas to follow with regards to continuing to provide services or in relation to those that may be considering a return to work. This framework supported staff with risk factors, including certain ethnic groups, older employees and staff with underlying medical conditions with a robust individual risk assessment to mitigate risks.
- 10.2.4. A prepopulated Sample Risk Assessment was developed for BCC and one tailored for schools and a number of MS Team risk assessment training courses were delivered to managers. A system was established for requesting PPE whereby the identification of such measures could via local risk assessment could be centrally assessed and supplied following a hierarchy of need.
- 10.2.5. The undertaking of both local risk assessments by managers and those related to properties and assets was also supported by HR, in addition to auditing the effectiveness and adequacy of those assessments when put into practice. Trade Union consultation took place throughout the process and feedback was used to shaped systems accordingly.
- 10.2.6. A wider stress risk assessment at service level was developed, with a pilot carried out within Waste. The identification of root cause stressors was conducted by Occupational Health, with the consideration of management interventions picked up by Organisational Development. This approach is now being offered to other teams where criteria is met and indicators direct the organisation towards the assessment of underlying factors related to the service.
- 10.2.7. A Health Surveillance Needs Assessment has been undertaken during the pandemic to confirm that the occupational health needs of the organisation are adequately managed. In line with this an annual return audit for those responsible for properties and assets (Responsible Persons) has been launched.
- 10.2.8. Lastly, a Be Heard audit of safety management was launched in November to increase central knowledge of the adequacy of arrangements in place related to health, safety and welfare of staff – both in relation to where they work and in relation to the activities they carry out.

### **Home working**

- 10.2.9. With the implementation of Business Continuity Plans and the resultant increase in agile working, Home Working Guidance was updated and equipment (chairs, keyboards, mouse, camera, laptop riser) made available

to those working from home, along with establishing a safe process for collection and instructions for adjustment and use.

### **Covid-19 testing**

- 10.2.10. BCC Keyworkers and those performing certain critical roles across Birmingham were provided access to Covid-19 tests via Occupational Health. A few thousand workers were triaged for testing with Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group prior to the .gov system going live. In addition, Birmingham care homes were sent a bundle of useful links to the various support available to them whilst working under some very difficult and upsetting circumstances.
- 10.2.11. Lateral Flow (rapid) Testing – HR and OD worked together with facilities and tactical cells to mobilise 80 staff to be recruited, onboarded, trained and paid in 4 days with the first test done at 8am on Friday 4th December. This will now be rolled out for prioritised workers and key partners across the city as part of the testing strategy.
- 10.2.12. LTS Allocation Roll Out – OH have developed a system for triaging Birmingham Keyworkers for a number of ringfenced COVID tests at Local Test Sites. This work will allow swift testing for those in critical roles when arranging a test via the .gov route may not be possible.

### **Flu vaccinations**

- 10.2.13. The Flu Vaccination for BCC and BCT employees (including those working in maintained and non-maintained schools) was negotiated with an external provider and a booking system set up so that free access to the vaccine was easily achieved and without delay to further increase workforce resilience during the pandemic. 2000 employees accessed the vouchers and received a vaccine over the flu vaccine season.

### **Taxi Medicals**

- 10.2.14. Occupational Health (OH) put measures in place to support Licencing with regards to the need to continue to perform taxi driver medicals during the pandemic, considering the significant risk of continue extension of the validity of the medical certificate. Both processes and office layouts underwent thorough risk assessment to allow the provision of this key service to continue.

### **Occupational Health Referrals**

- 10.2.15. Manager referrals to Occupational Health understandably increased during the period, some of which continued to be related to BAU, the majority related to the pandemic. The team focused efforts on providing managers with sufficient guidance to support employees in front facing roles, employees with underlying health conditions, those within vulnerable groups

and those required to shield. The team also advising the development of associated local and individual risk assessments and interpreting the hierarchy of control measures and options made available.

### **Psychological Therapies**

- 10.2.16. Occupational Health have set up Psychological Therapies (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy) for both individuals and for team level interventions. The interventions are evidenced as the most effective currently available (as recommended within NICE guidelines).
- 10.2.17. Current coping mechanisms and the demands of role and working patterns are reviewed. The sessions are a proactive, evidence-based intervention for employees, aim at preventing sickness absence and the development of diagnosable mental health problems.

### **Strategic Cells**

- 10.2.18. Representatives from HR have played a significant part in the Strategic Cells that were formed as a part of the command and control structure implemented during the major incident, with the Director for HR and Organisation Development taking charge of Business Continuity. Numerous cells meetings take place and are attended by HR daily and have supported the management of key emerging issues across BCC Directorates. HR have supported the Health and Welfare Cell and joint cell decisions regarding risk assessments and standing up services.

### **Sickness absence and RIDDOR reporting**

- 10.2.19. The collection of and analysis of sickness absence data has been an important consideration during the pandemic in order to track any clusters, trigger the necessary manager interventions and HRs responsibilities under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence (RIDDOR) Regulations to notify the HSE of any confirmed cases where there is reasonable evidence to suggest that the exposure was via the workplace / work activity. There has also been the additional need to verify the existence and adequacy of associated Risk Assessments in such circumstances.

### **Employee health and wellbeing**

- 10.2.20. Since March 2020, Organisational Development's Culture Change Team (Health & Wellbeing) has increased the number of communications, resources and support for colleagues working remotely as they adjusted to the new ways of working, e.g. 4 pillars of support (Employee Assistance Programme, Mental Health First Aiders, Occupational Health, Chaplains), A-Z Wellbeing guide, monthly top tips now moved to fortnightly Your Wellbeing Matters newsletter, health and wellbeing support guide as a one-stop shop

for support and advice and other specific advice on financial wellbeing, sleep etc. These are available on the intranet.

- 10.2.21. The first-ever health and wellbeing survey was launched June 2020, and high-level results were published August, with presentations to Directorate Management Teams taking place between September to November. In September, directorate level results were published with audio recording and subtitles which were available for all staff to watch on the intranet. Furthermore, presentations to staff at directorate and divisional level were conducted to highlight the results of the survey, a high-level “you said, we’re doing”, and summarised to the 4 pillars of support.
- 10.2.22. The survey results indicated 20% of respondents were working carers (361 colleagues). Resources were directed towards the Working Carers Network and other Employee Networks such as the Menopause Workplace Forum to increase their presence and visibility so colleagues can access peer-to-peer support.
- 10.2.23. In October, for Domestic Abuse Awareness Month, BCC launched a safe space for colleagues to access support for colleagues who are survivors of domestic abuse including controlling behaviour and coercive behaviour. This safe space is for staff to be listened to, provided with initial support and signposted to specialised organisations. Further guidance and information is available on the intranet.
- 10.2.24. In terms of engagement, there were two Yam Jams, the first with Craig Scriven (Assistant Director for Organisational Development) in April 2020 and the second in October 2020 co-hosted with our Employee Network chairs, occupational health, the Stop Loan Sharks Team, and Organisational Development. Other engagement activities include:
- Managers Bulletins;
  - internal communications with intranet page articles;
  - Yammer Employee Health and Wellbeing group;
  - monthly top tips;
  - Your Wellbeing Matters fortnightly newsletter;
  - presentations to directorate and divisional teams;
  - and the launch of the first health and wellbeing focus group on 9th December 2020.
- 10.2.25. Furthermore, an Employee Assistance Programme survey was launched to capture 150 colleagues’ views on the existing service and what we need to consider for the procurement process for a new contract.

- 10.2.26. A draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy, alongside a second staff Health and Wellbeing Survey, has now been launched on the Intranet.

#### **Trade Union consultation**

- 10.2.27. Every week HR hold two meetings with Trade Unions to discuss 'business as usual' issues as well as issues arising from Covid-19. Trade Union feedback has shaped staff guidance and developed a number of processes to support staff during COVID response. After lengthy negotiation, agreement has been reached on a process to resolve as many HR cases as possible without the need for formal hearings. Following a request from trade unions to recognise additional costs for staff maintaining good hygiene by cleaning clothes/uniform/PPE, a payment was negotiated and made to staff at the end of 2020.

#### **Business as usual activity**

- 10.2.28. Business as usual has seen the development of the Council Plan which includes a more agile workforce adopting new ways of working, the Apprenticeship Strategy, improved Employee Relations, a review of pay and grading the development of further mandatory training sessions and senior leadership development programmes.
- 10.2.29. The Workforce Strategy has been refreshed to support delivery of Council Delivery Plan which includes culture change, workforce planning, performance, engagement, equality, diversity and inclusion.
- 10.2.30. In addition, the HR/OD Business Plan & Target Operating Model includes two critical programmes which have both progressed significantly during the pandemic; the 1B programme and New Ways of Working.
- 10.2.31. There has also been progress made with regards to property and asset compliance, improved standards at higher risk locations, and the development of a single Risk Marker System for field workers.

### **10.3. Corporate Procurement**

- 10.3.1. The Council's corporate procurement function has supported the wider procurement of PPE and Covid-19 testing, by:
- Liaising with the LGA's national PPE Procurement group that regularly meet with DHSC, MHCLG, CO and DfE.
  - Discussing the market position with regional groups such as Warwickshire Manufacturers Alliance, Midlands Engine, WMCA and LEPs to then reflect this position back to DHSC to put the argument that a longer-term PPE strategy needs to provide local manufacturers/suppliers the opportunity to support the national supply.

- Liaising with regional Heads of Procurement to coordinate activity where required.
- Supporting the implementation of lateral flow testing in Birmingham, including the establishment of the hub at the Utilita Arena, letting contracts for a mobile testing service and pharmacy testing services. CPS is currently working on standardising engagement/contracting with employer and community spokes.

## **11. Brexit**

### **11.1. Brexit Readiness Programme**

11.1.1. While the United Kingdom officially left the European Union (EU) on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019, that did not mean that Brexit was over. Throughout 2020 and the Covid-19 pandemic, Birmingham City Council has continued to prepare and plan for the end of the Brexit transition period on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020, including the likely impact of any deal or 'no deal' scenarios.

11.1.2. The Brexit Readiness Programme (BRP) was established in 2019 to oversee the Council's preparations for Brexit, working across eight workstreams. These workstreams, and their main areas of focus, are briefly outlined here:

- **Workstream I – Trading Standards**

Monitoring and managing identified risks around imports, exports, product safety, market surveillance, fraud and changes to regulatory regimes.

- **Workstream II – Environmental Health**

Supporting businesses around exports to the EU, particularly in relation to live exports and Export Health Certificates.

- **Workstream III – EU Funding**

Understanding the impact of the loss of EU funding, both for the Council's EU-funded services and the wider West Midlands, and developing alternative funding strategies and ways of working.

- **Workstream IV – EU Settlement Scheme**

Supporting the 94,000 European citizens in Birmingham to keep their rights to live and work in the UK, and access public services. This includes vulnerable adults, looked-after children, and care-leavers.



- **Workstream V – BCC Supply Chain and Procurement**

Focusing on potential challenges within the Council's supply chain due to changes in exchange rates and import costs, as well as any potential legal or operational issues with existing supplier contracts.

- **Workstream VI – Economic Impact on BCC Revenue & Services**

Understanding and preparing for the impact of the predicated economic shock on the Council's revenue and demand for services.

- **Workstream VII – Communication**

Development and implementation of a communication plan to inform and raise awareness of Brexit-related risks and issues, both internally and externally.

- **Workstream VIII – Regulatory Change**

Supporting other workstreams and Council services in monitoring regulatory changes as a result of Brexit, and understanding the likely impact of such changes.

11.1.3. The BRP provides a dedicated programme management function for the coordination and oversight of all Council activities relating to Brexit, ensuring a single point of contact for all Brexit-related issues, plans, risk assessments and reports. It also acts as liaison with a wide range of national and local stakeholders, including the WMCA, other local authorities in the West Midlands, national government departments and external stakeholders in the business community and voluntary sector.

11.1.4. The internal Brexit Contingency Working Group (BCWG), chaired by the Assistant Chief Executive and including representatives from all services involved in the Brexit response, continued to meet monthly throughout 2020.

11.1.5. In September 2020, Cabinet agreed a financial contribution of £198,000 from the Council's Policy Contingency Budget to extend the Brexit Readiness Programme for a period of one year from January 2021 onwards. The BRP will therefore continue to coordinate the Council's activities in relation to Brexit over the next twelve months, with a new focus on understanding the impact of the agreed Brexit deal on the Council, local communities and businesses, both in the short and longer-term.

## **11.2. Impact of Covid-19 on Brexit planning**

11.2.1. At the beginning of 2020, it was hard to imagine that the Council would soon be facing a crisis even more pressing than the end of the transition period

and the possibility of a 'no-deal' Brexit. Over the last year, we have had to rise to the challenge of two 'once in a generation' events happening at the same time, with the Covid-19 outbreak in danger of diverting sorely-needed time, resources and attention from Brexit preparations.

- 11.2.2. The redeployment of national government and civil service resource away from Brexit planning to the Covid-19 response had a significant impact on preparations at every level, from interruptions to negotiations with the EU to delays in the clarification of key points of guidance around EU citizens' access to benefits. Continued levels of uncertainty all the way through to the end of the transition period threatened to undermine the ability of the Council, our partners, and the business community to effectively plan and assess risk.
- 11.2.3. The vast majority of economic forecasters predicted an economic shock in 2021 due to Brexit, creating 'perfect storm' conditions of a decrease in local authority revenues at the same time as an increase in demand for services. The only disagreement was on the extent of this decline, and whether the United Kingdom might avoid the reasonable worst-case scenario through the negotiation of a robust exit deal. Instead, we saw both United Kingdom and West Midlands GDP plunge in 2020 due to the Covid-19 crisis, with an increasingly volatile economic landscape making it even more difficult to accurately predict or mitigate the financial impact of Brexit. In November 2020, despite some early signs of economic recovery over the summer, UK GDP remained 8.5% below the level of February 2020 (the last month before the economic impact of the pandemic was felt).
- 11.2.4. By the end of 2020, many businesses found themselves in an extremely precarious financial position, and poorly positioned to prepare for the end of the Brexit transition period. Multiple national lockdowns and restrictions on operations, while necessary to keep people safe, dealt a significant blow to the Birmingham and West Midlands economy, and by November 2020 24% of UK businesses were reporting that they had either already run out of reserves, or would do so by the end of the year. Where resources and capacity still remained, businesses focussed on surviving the pandemic rather than preparing for the end of the transition period. Engagement with the local business community revealed a high level of 'change fatigue', with many businesses reluctant to begin planning for the end of the transition period without a final agreed deal. In a survey carried out by the British Chambers of Commerce, 32% of businesses reported that Covid-19 had reduced their capacity to effectively prepare for Brexit.
- 11.2.5. On 24<sup>th</sup> December 2020, a Trade and Cooperation Agreement was finally agreed between the UK and EU. Up until this point, all Brexit preparations had been taking place on a dual footing, forced to take into account the likelihood of both deal and 'no-deal' scenarios. While welcome, the last-

minute nature of this deal left both businesses and local authorities with less than a week to review the agreement and prepare for new regulations and restrictions on trade, coinciding with the Christmas and New Year holiday period. This challenge was further exacerbated by the emergence of a new, more contagious strain of Covid-19 in the south-east of England, leading to the temporary closure of the border with France and chaos at major ports.

- 11.2.6. Despite all these challenges, Birmingham City Council continued to work with local and national stakeholders throughout 2020 to prepare for the end of the transition period, taking a lead role in regional planning and communications through our membership in the West Midlands Combined Authority Brexit Pooled Fund.

### **11.3. Priority areas of focus**

#### **Loss of EU funding**

- 11.3.1. In July 2020, we carried out an impact assessment to understand the impact of the loss of EU funding on Birmingham and the wider West Midlands and the risks for Council services. Between 2014 and 2020 the Council received £85 million in funding through the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF), directly supporting 78 FTE staff and a number of projects and services that will play a key role in the Covid-19 economic recovery. These include SME support, employment and skills, youth and career services, urban planning and regeneration, and the transition to a zero-carbon economy.
- 11.3.2. In 2017, national government announced its intention to establish a UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to replace ESIF funding, ensuring that communities across the UK would not lose out as a result of Brexit. However, following that initial announcement, no further information was forthcoming about the design of the fund or how much funding would be available, affecting our ability to plan for the long-term and putting some of our most vital services at risk of closure.
- 11.3.3. The very nature of the ESIF means that its loss, without an adequate UK replacement scheme, would disproportionately impact regions like the West Midlands and dramatically increase regional inequalities, putting Birmingham at a further disadvantage as we seek to recover from Covid-19. Over the last few months of 2020 we stepped up our lobbying to national government for further information about the UKSPF. Through the BRP, and our membership in key partnerships including Core Cities and the WMCA, we will continue to press for further details of the UKSPF and the funding that Birmingham and the West Midlands can expect to receive.

### **Assessing supplier risk**

- 11.3.4. In the latter months of 2020, as part of the preparations for a potential 'no-deal' scenario, we carried out an online survey with over 561 unique vendors to the Council to understand their Brexit preparedness and the level of risk to the Council. Within this group, we identified 242 'priority' vendors, holding 327 key contracts for the Council.
- 11.3.5. We received responses from approximately 27% of vendors, providing key data that we used to RAG rate their Brexit preparedness and assess risk to Council services and key corporate functions. Where responses were rated Amber, contract managers were alerted so that they could proactively identify, manage and mitigate any risks or arising issues.

### **European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS)**

- 11.3.6. There are an estimated 94,000 European citizens in Birmingham, and they represent a valuable part of our global community. To retain their right to live and work in the UK, and access public services, they must apply for the European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS) by the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2021.
- 11.3.7. We are aware that there are still a large number of EU citizens – potentially as many as 20,000 – that have yet to apply to the EUSS. A significant proportion of this group will be vulnerable citizens who need guidance support to complete their applications, and there is an important role for the Council to play in providing this support, working alongside our partners in the voluntary and community sector.
- 11.3.8. Local authorities and health and social care trusts supporting looked after children and care leavers have mandatory obligations to identify and register all eligible children to the EUSS.
- 11.3.9. Over the past few years we have carried out a range of engagement activities to get the message out about the need to apply for settled status, as well as offer additional support to those who may need help with their application. This includes:
- The creation of a dedicated EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) information and guidance page on the Council website, including information about local organisations that are able to provide further support
  - A BCC EUSS social media campaign, with videos of EU citizens working for BCC sharing their own experiences of the EUSS
  - The establishment of an EUSS Working Group, working together with voluntary sector organisations and community groups across Birmingham. This group meets regularly to discuss progress and challenges in the scheme, and build a collaborative approach to

improve the support and advice available to EU citizens in Birmingham.

- Publication of an open letter to Birmingham citizens, on behalf of the Deputy Leader, asking everyone to get the word out about the EUSS

11.3.10. The BRP successfully applied for grant funding from the Home Office to run a series of targeted engagement activities between November 2020 and March 2021, reaching out to EU citizens in vulnerable groups. This money will be used for:

- Basic advice, engagement and signposting: OISC L1 advice will be provided by partner organisations. This advice and guidance will be outreach based as much as possible, with “hosting” arrangements coordinated by the BCC EUSS Project Coordinator, who will access the BCC ASC Neighbourhood Networks Community Asset Register of over 1,000 trusted community organisations.
- Expert immigration advice for practical support with EUSS applications: This advice will be follow-on for complex casework identified as part of the project activities providing basic advice and information. There will also be access to this advice through referrals into other projects (same partners; to avoid double counting).
- Community Champions training scheme: 30 volunteers to be trained from specific EU communities in the city. Trained to identify and signpost to agencies.
- Small-scale community events: Up to three community drop-in style events to be organised and targeted in specific areas or communities in the city.
- Training for frontline staff: Training to be produced and provided for Job Centres, Social Workers, Housing Officers, and VCS (including commissioned providers of services in: homelessness, modern slavery, children in care) to recognise, inform and signpost on EUSS. Includes regular info sheets / briefings to larger networks such as schools.
- EUSS Document ID Scanning location: Becoming an ID Scanning location will allow the Council to take an active role in supporting EUSS applications for people with limited digital access. The service will be available at a “home” in the Libraries or Registry Office Services and will also be partially mobile, visiting libraries, places of worship, community centres, etc.

- Designated monitoring and tracking capacity for children in care and care leavers: A new post for the Children's Trust to understand and track progress with the registration of children in care. They will support social workers in identifying eligible children and in ensuring they have access to information, advice and training on EUSS through the project partners.

11.3.11. We have also successfully bid for additional funding from the West Midlands Combined Authority Brexit Pooled Fund, for a collaborative communications campaign across the West Midlands, aiming to:

- Develop a WM approach to guide, support and encourage the EU citizens to apply for the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) and get their status,
- Improve the collaboration and coordination of the EUSS initiatives in WM led by the Home Office, local authorities, voluntary sector organisations and community groups,
- Develop and implement a West Midlands specific communication campaign focusing on:
  - Warm, clear and simple messaging for the targeted audience (especially the vulnerable groups),
  - Signpost to all available advice & support including the voluntary sector organisations funded by the Home Office
  - Communicate the important notices, modifications, adjustments and new deadlines,
  - Using different communication channels and materials, such as:
    - Banners on school railings,
    - Posters for bus stops, GP surgeries, police stations, housing associations, etc.
    - Leaflets for social workers, housing officers, etc. who are in direct contact with EU citizens and their family members, especially the vulnerable groups).

#### **11.4. Understanding the impact of Brexit**

11.4.1. The UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) is one of the biggest trade deals ever made, providing a framework for the future UK-EU relationship in several key areas. However, it will not end the debate on the United Kingdom's relationship with Europe and the future role that we want to play on the international stage.

- 11.4.2. Uncertainty for businesses and local authorities is likely to continue well into 2020, as the implications of the TCA are better understood. The TCA falls short of the UK's stated aspirations in several key areas, and there is much still to be negotiated, including:
- Mutual recognition of professional qualifications
  - UK membership of EU standardisation and regulatory bodies
  - Service sector and financial services
  - Data sharing provisions
- 11.4.3. We can expect the longer-term impact on the economy to become more visible with time as the costs of compliance begin to stack up for businesses and further negotiations take place.
- 11.4.4. Birmingham City Council will have a key role to play in the months and years ahead - not just in providing support and guidance to businesses, but in understanding the longer-term social, cultural and economic impact of Brexit for Birmingham and the West Midlands. The immediate challenge for the Council will be to understand the specific impacts of Brexit and where these diverge from and interact with the impacts of Covid-19, and what this means for the Birmingham recovery journey.





# Birmingham City Council

## City Council

02 February 2021



**Subject:** Lead Member Report: West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority

**Report of:** Cllr Zafar Iqbal, Lead Member

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? ☐ Yes ☒ No

### 1 Recommendation

- 1.1 That the report be noted.

### 2 Response to Covid-19 Pandemic

- 2.1 On the 18th March 2020, West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) formally implemented business continuity arrangements in response to COVID19 and in preparation of the expected announcement of a Major Incident across the West Midlands Conurbation.
- 2.2 A major incident was declared on the 20th March by West Midlands Police and the Strategic Enabling Team (SET) 'stood up' as the Business Continuity Management Team (BCMT), broadly based on the National Fire Chief Council (NFCC) 'Fire-Gold' structure which had been implemented to coordinate sector wide information in response to COVID19.
- 2.3 The Business Continuity Management Team continues to operate to the following strategic outcomes during this business continuity period:
  1. Maximise the continuity of critical activities delivered to the most vulnerable across the West Midlands
  2. Support and lead the health and wellbeing of our staff
  3. Be a responsive partner across the Public Sector to protect vital services to our communities and proactively limit the spread of COVID 19
  4. Establish a 'new' normal with a healthy workforce

### 3 Delivery of core services

- 3.1 Prevention, Protection, Response and Prevention services have continued to develop during the pandemic to support effective delivery to our communities in a safe and effective way.

- 3.2 Response services have continued to be delivered as usual, with additional measures in place to ensure all staff are working in a safe environment.
- 3.3 Prevention and Protection services have adapted because of COVID19 and its existence in the community to enable delivery of these services in a tailored way to ensure they are available where needed and these services continue to be targeted to those most vulnerable to fire and other related incidents.
- 3.4 Where a premises has to be entered, pre-screening questionnaires are used and new methods such as a 'digital' fire safety audits are being developed with Safe and Well visits providing alternative approaches to enabling the delivery of core services at this current time.
- 3.5 All activities are risk assessed to ensure the safety of our communities and staff.
- 3.6 More recently as the COVID alert level has moved from 4 to 5, the Fire Service continues to operate within established COVID guidance and respond effectively to changes within this.

#### 4 Key Performance Indicators (Birmingham)

Performance Indicator	Actual 2019/20	Target to end of Dec-20	Actual to end of Dec-20
The number of accidental fires in dwellings	709	529	554
The number of casualties from accidental fires in dwellings	26	22	9
The number of deliberate fires in dwellings	87	79	75
The number of accidental fires in non-domestic premises	179	141	100
The number of deliberate fires in non-domestic premises	55	54	54
The number of deliberate vehicle fires	255	224	183

<b>The number of deliberate rubbish fires</b>	511	449	304
<b>The number of malicious false alarms calls received</b>	217	N/A	144
<b>The number of false alarm calls due to automatic fire alarms</b>	2738	2052	1974
<b>Number led to safety from fires with brigade assistance</b>	100	N/A	111
<b>Number of rescues from fires</b>	13	N/A	23
<b>Number of RTCs attended</b>	1202	N/A	750
<b>Number of extrications from RTCs</b>	90	N/A	45

- 4.1 Response' incidents have continued overall to be below the three-year average and the current pandemic has impacted this when comparing performance to previous years. There has been no detrimental impact on appliance availability.
- 4.2 The Service has been at the forefront of the National Fire Chief Council's response to the pandemic providing a range of additional activities to support the response to tackling the Covid-19 pandemic in our communities.
- 4.3 WMFS's approach of requesting volunteers from existing members of staff to undertake any new activities agreed and requested locally continues to work well.
- 4.4 Some of the main areas of support provided through additional activities have been:
- The delivery of essential items
  - The operation of COVID – 19 Body Movement
  - Face mask fitting for NHS dentists
  - Drop and collect of swab testing kits.
- 4.5 Working with Birmingham City Council, WMFS has supported the provision of 'No Contact' letters alongside food packages. More recently, essential deliveries have been further supplemented by support for the 'track and trace'

system, where individuals have been in close contact with a positive COVID case but are uncontactable using remote methods such as phone calls, texts or emails.

- 4.6 WMFS has committed to support the establishment of Lateral Flow Testing (LFT) Centres across the West Midlands Local Authority (LA) areas and initial efforts have focused on supporting the pilot schemes which are delivering LFT to priority groups, including the NHS, care sector, West Midlands Police (WMP) and LA staff. Through our engagement, all WMFS staff are part of this priority group.

## **5 Financial Summary**

- 5.1 Two Separate COVID related funding allocations amounting to £2.786M have been made by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to the Authority. The first, issued on 20th March 2020 was for £0.594M and the second, issued on 28th April 2020 was for £2.192M. COVID related expenditure incurred up to the end of December 2020 amounted to circa £2.9M.

## **6 Fire Authority arrangements**

- 6.1 West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority has continued to operate within the aegis of the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) Regulations 2020.
- 6.2 Since the beginning of the pandemic the Authority has been holding regular briefings for members of the Fire Authority and since August 2020 briefings with the Chief Fire Officer operate through the Authority's usual Policy Planning Forum (PPF), which is a Member engagement forum, on a monthly basis. These briefings have continued to provide us with an overview of COVID business continuity services, as well as an overview of the recovery of usual business. I feel that this approach has been very successful, and it has ensured that Authority Members have been regularly updated and kept informed. During September/October Fire Authority meetings commenced alongside the continuation of statutory meetings which have been held via virtual platforms.
- 6.3 Fire Authority meetings other than statutory meetings, PPF and the February Authority and budget setting meeting have also been paused with the February Budget Setting meeting planned for 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021.
- 6.4 Finally, as Lead member for this council on the Fire Authority, and on behalf of all members, I would like to state my thanks to all WMFS staff, officers and fire fighters for their continued work and dedication to the communities that they serve during what has been an extremely challenging time for all.

# Birmingham City Council

## City Council

2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021



**Subject:** Annual Report - Audit Committee  
**Report of:** Chair of Audit Committee  
**Report author:** Councillor Fred Grindrod

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 This report provides a summary of the work of the Audit Committee over a 12 month cycle.

### 2 Motion

- 2.1 That the report be noted.

### 3 Background

- 3.1 The Audit Committee is a key component of the Council's governance framework.
- 3.2 The role of the Audit Committee is set out within its terms of reference. Supporting guidance and best practice is provided by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance (CIPFA) within its publication - 'Audit Committees - Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police 2018'.
- 3.3 This guidance recommends the publication of an annual report to account for the work of the Committee.
- 3.4 The attached report, Appendix A, summarises the work of the Audit Committee completed between September 2019 and September 2020, the approval cycle for the Annual Governance Statement (AGS). Publication of the report has been withheld pending the completion of the External Audit on the 2019-20 Final Accounts. The Statement of Accounts was formally approved under Chairs delegation on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

### **Audit Committee Aims**

- 3.5 The Committee's role is to challenge, assess and gather assurance from within the Council and from external agencies, on the level and quality of the internal control and risk management processes in place to ensure that Council objectives are met. The benefits gained from operating an effective committee are that it:
- contributes to the development of an effective control environment including arrangements for management of risk.
  - increases stakeholder confidence in the objectivity and fairness of financial and other reporting by promoting transparency and accountability.
  - reinforces the importance and independence of internal and external audit and any other similar review process and the implementation of audit recommendations.
  - advises on the adequacy of the assurance framework and considers whether assurance is deployed efficiently and effectively to give assurance that business objectives are met.
  - helps the authority to implement the values of ethical governance, including effective arrangements for countering risks of fraud and corruption.

### **Activities Undertaken**

- 3.6 During the year the Audit Committee has considered the following key governance areas and sought assurance on the management of risk and the effectiveness of key controls:
- Review of the Effectiveness of the Audit Committee:
    - Ways of working.
    - Strengthening assurance arrangements.
  - Assurance Statements and Governance:
    - Approving and monitoring the Annual Governance Statement.
    - Receiving Assurance updates.
  - Risk Management:
    - Reviewing the mechanisms for the assessment and management of risk, thereby developing the Council's ability to respond to known and emerging risks.
    - Overseeing the Council's Treasury Management arrangements.
  - Performance Management, Quality Management and Value for Money:
    - Monitoring of, and contribution to, the development of the Council's Statement of Accounts.
    - Reviewed the value money concerns raised by the external auditor.
    - Reviewed the Local Government and Social Care ombudsman annual report ensuring lessons learnt are acted upon.

- Financial Reporting, External Audit, Inspection and Assurance:
  - Maintaining a good working relationship with the external auditor.
  - Approving the response to recommendations and monitoring the action.
- Internal Audit and Counter Fraud:
  - Approving arrangements and monitoring performance of Internal Audit and Counter Fraud.
  - Ensuring internal audit independence and that findings are actioned by managers and consequently help to improve the Council's effectiveness and governance arrangements.

## **Conclusion**

- 3.7 It is recognised that high performing councils develop effective financial and non-financial control mechanisms through the ongoing liaison and development of expertise made available by the establishment of an Audit Committee, meeting on a regular cycle, with terms of reference focussed on the key audit, control and risk management areas critical to the Council's performance.
- 3.8 Having considered the available guidance, the terms of reference and duties of the Audit Committee, and the work undertaken, it is my assessment that the Committee has carried out its roles effectively and provided effective challenge across a range of governance related issues.

## **4 Appendices**

- 4.1 Appendix A, Annual Report - Chair of Audit Committee.





# Annual Report - Chair of Audit

## Committee to City Council

2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021





## Foreword by the Chair

Both Central Government and The Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) promote the view that certain governance related functions are best delivered by an audit committee. Best practice guidelines recommend that Audit Committees publish an annual report to maintain transparency and accountability, account for its performance, explain its work, and set out the assurance that has been drawn.

This report summarises the work of the Audit Committee completed between September 2019 and September 2020. It describes the purpose and core functions of the Council's Audit Committee and summarises the assurance activities undertaken; this includes:

- A Review of the Effectiveness of the Audit Committee:
  - Ways of working.
  - Strengthening assurance arrangements.
- Assurance Statements and Governance:
  - Approving and monitoring the Annual Governance Statement.
  - Receiving Assurance updates.
- Risk Management:
  - Reviewing the mechanisms for the assessment and management of risk, thereby developing the Council's ability to respond to known and emerging risks.
  - Overseeing the Council's Treasury Management arrangements.
- Performance Management, Quality Management and Value for Money:
  - Monitoring of, and contribution to, the development of the Council's Statement of Accounts.
  - Reviewed the value money concerns raised by the external auditor.
  - Reviewed the Local Government and Social Care ombudsman annual report ensuring lessons learnt are acted upon.
- Financial Reporting, External Audit, Inspection and Assurance:
  - Maintaining a good working relationship with the external auditor.
  - Approving the response to recommendations and monitoring the action.
- Internal Audit and Counter Fraud:
  - Approving arrangements and monitoring performance of Internal Audit and Counter Fraud.
  - Ensuring internal audit independence and that findings are actioned by managers and consequently help to improve the Council's effectiveness and governance arrangements.

## **The Purpose of Audit Committees**

The Audit Committee is a key component of the Council's governance framework. Its purpose is to provide those charged with governance with an independent assurance on the adequacy of the:

- risk management framework.
- internal control environment.
- integrity of the financial reporting.
- governance processes.

This assurance helps to drive and support the effective performance and operation of the Council.

The core functions of the audit committee are to:

- be satisfied that the authority's assurance statements, including the annual governance statement, properly reflect the risk environment and any actions required to improve it, and demonstrate how governance supports the achievement of the authority's objectives.
- in relation to the authority's internal audit functions:
  - oversee its independence, objectivity, performance and professionalism.
  - support the effectiveness of the internal audit process.
  - promote the effective use of internal audit within the assurance framework.
- consider the effectiveness of the authority's risk management arrangements and the control environment, reviewing the risk profile of the organisation and assurances that action is being taken on risk-related issues, including partnerships and collaborations with other organisations.
- monitor the effectiveness of the control environment, including arrangements for ensuring value for money, supporting standards and ethics and for managing the authority's exposure to the risks of fraud and corruption.
- consider the reports and recommendations of external audit and inspection agencies and their implications for governance, risk management or control.
- support effective relationships between external audit and internal audit, inspection agencies and other relevant bodies, and encourage the active promotion of the value of the audit process.
- review the financial statements, external auditor's opinion and reports to members, and monitor management action in response to the issues raised by external audit.

## **Committee Aims**

In summary, the Committee's role is to challenge, assess and gather assurance from within the Council and from external agencies, on the level and quality of the internal control and risk management processes in place to ensure that Council objectives are met. The benefits gained from operating an effective committee are that it:

- contributes to the development of an effective control environment including arrangements for management of risk.
- increases stakeholder confidence in the objectivity and fairness of financial and other reporting by promoting transparency and accountability.
- reinforces the importance and independence of internal and external audit and any other similar review process (e.g. providing a view on the AGS) and the implementation of audit recommendations.
- advises on the adequacy of the assurance framework and considers whether assurance is deployed efficiently and effectively to give assurance that business objectives are met.
- helps the authority to implement the values of ethical governance, including effective arrangements for countering risks of fraud and corruption.

## **Membership**

The Audit Committee was made up of 8 non-executive councillors appointed to reflect the political balance of the Council. The current members of the Committee are:

Councillor Fred Grindrod (Chair)  
Councillor Paul Tilsley (Vice Chair)  
Councillor Marje Bridle  
Councillor Simon Morrall  
Councillor Josh Jones  
Councillor Meirion Jenkins  
Councillor Hendrina Quinnen  
Councillor Safia Akhtar

## **Work Undertaken**

A summary of activity categorised by the main topic or source of the assurance is given below. The summary is derived from the reports and presentations set before the Committee in the period, which are detailed in **Appendix A**.

## **Impact of COVID-19**

As with all Committees the recent Pandemic has had an adverse impact on the Audit Committee. In order to ensure the safety of Members and Officers it was necessary to cancel the March 2020 meeting and move to virtual meetings from June 2020.

## **Audit Committee - Work Undertaken September 2019 and September 2020**

### **Audit Committee Effectiveness**

An Audit Committee is central to the provision of effective corporate governance. It is recognised that high performing councils develop effective financial and non-financial control mechanisms through the ongoing liaison and development of expertise made available by the establishment of an Audit Committee, meeting on a regular cycle, with terms of reference focussed on the key audit, control and risk management areas critical to the Council's performance. It is essential that the work of the Committee supports the Council's aim to improve its efficiency and effectiveness.

In order to develop the Committee and ensure its efficiency and effectiveness in fulfilling its terms of reference, as approved by Council, an independent assessment against CIPFA's recommended best practice framework for Audit Committees has been completed.

This assessment identified many areas of good practice, including:

- A clear term of reference which sets out the Audit Committee's purpose.
- Access to all audit reports.
- The ability to request relevant officers attend meetings to explain issues.
- Reviewing the Annual Governance Statement on an annual basis and monitoring progress on key areas of concern.
- Its independence and good relationships with key officers.
- Regular reporting from internal and external audit.
- An action tracker.

Additionally, it set out a number of recommendations to further develop the effectiveness of the Committee, including:

- Production of an annual report to Full Council, setting out the work of the Audit Committee and demonstrating the effectiveness of the Committee.
- Appointment of an independent advisor, to develop and enhance skills
- Seeking assurance from Cabinet Members on the management of key risks and effectiveness of internal controls.
- Introducing greater capacity by increasing the number of meetings.
- Identification of any skill gaps and developing a training programme

These recommendations have been accepted and are being implemented.

## **Assurance Statements and Governance**

### **Annual Governance Statement (AGS)**

Included in this Committee's terms of reference is the core function that it should be "satisfied that the authority's assurance statements, including the AGS, properly reflect the risk environment and any actions required to improve it."

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require the publication of an AGS following an (at least) annual review of the effectiveness of the Council's internal control. In order to produce the AGS an annual timetable is required to ensure key tasks are undertaken to deliver the Statement alongside the Council's Statement of Accounts (SOA). The Committee has delegated authority for the formal approval of the AGS.

The 2016 CIPFA/SOLACE publication "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework" provides the principles by which good governance should be measured. This has been adopted as the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance by the Audit Committee.

The Council's governance arrangements aim to ensure that it sets and meets its objectives and responsibilities in a timely, open, inclusive and honest manner. The governance framework comprises the systems, processes, cultures and values by which the Council is directed and controlled, and through which it engages with, and leads the community to which it is accountable. Every council and large organisation operates within a similar framework, which brings together an underlying set of legislative requirements, good practice principles and management processes.

### **Summary of work**

The AGS reflects the governance framework operating within the Council and its significant partnerships, groups and trusts. The issues identified in the AGS and the consequent plans for their mitigation are used to direct corporate resources, including those of Internal Audit.

The Council's draft Statement of Accounts for 2018-19 including the AGS were reviewed by Committee on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2019. The AGS detailed eight significant governance issues:

- Financial Resilience.
- Major Projects and Partnership Working.
- The Improvement Agenda.
- Homelessness and Safety Implications for Tower Blocks.
- Asset Condition and Sufficiency.
- Commonwealth Games.
- Workforce.
- Contract Management.

Within the letter of representation issued by the then Acting Chief Executive assurance was provided that the AGS fairly reflects the Council's risk assurance and governance framework and we confirm that we are not aware of any significant governance issues that are not disclosed within the AGS. During the year we have continued to monitor progress in addressing these.

The Council's draft Statement of Accounts and AGS for 2019-20 were reviewed by Committee on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

## **Governance of Group Companies**

Good governance of those companies in which the Council has an interest is an integral part of the governance arrangements of the Council as these ventures involve the expenditure of public money and the stewardship of public resources.

### **Summary of Work**

The Audit Committee reviewed the Group Accounts included within the Council's Financial Statements and received assurance that the Cabinet Committee – Group Company Governance have not raised any significant concerns from the yearly "Group Boundary" exercise. This exercise seeks to define which subsidiaries, associates and joint ventures are consolidated with the Council's financial statements to produce the Group Accounts. This exercise includes assurance statements from those companies that meet the criteria for consolidation, or which may meet the criteria in the near future. The assurance statements are broken down into three main areas:

- Company Environment – looking at the governance arrangements of the company.
- The Identification, Mitigation and Reporting of Risk – looking at how the company manages risk.
- Financial Statements – looking at factors that may impact on the company's financial health and financial statements.

## **Risk Management**

The Committee's key risk management role is to provide assurance on the adequacy of the Council's Risk Management Framework (RMF) and the associated control environment by reviewing the mechanisms for assessing and managing risk.

### **Summary of Work**

The Committee has received regular updates in relation to the Council most significant risks. In January 2020 the Committee agreed the revised Risk Management Framework. The previous Risk Register was subject to a fundamental review and risks and opportunity restated using a PESTEL analysis to ensure the strategic issues facing the Council were identified.

During the year the Committee has obtained updates on risks and monitored the control environment, including:

- The Early Years and Wellbeing Contract.
- Travel Assist / Home to school Transport.
- Equal Pay.

### **Treasury Management**

Treasury management is the management of an organisation's borrowings and investments, the effective management of the associated risks and the pursuit of optimum performance or return consistent with those risks.

The Council's treasury management function operates in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice (the TM Code) and Prudential Code. The TM Code requires authorities to nominate a body within the organisation to be responsible for scrutiny of treasury management activity.

### **Summary of Work**

The Committee have reviewed the Treasury Risk Management arrangements including the Council's:

- Treasury Management Strategy and Policy.
- Treasury Management Practices.
- Treasury management reporting and monitoring.

### **Performance Management**

It is essential for the Council to have a performance management framework in place which effectively measures and reports success in delivering the key priorities that have been set.

### **Summary of Work**

The Committee received update from the Leader in September 2020 as part of the first Cabinet Member assurance session on the development of the Council's Delivery Plan. An additional update was provided by the Interim Chief Executive setting out the proposed governance arrangements.

### **Statement of Accounts, External Audit, Inspection and Assurance**

This area of work covers external providers of assurance including external audit, which is the key external provider of assurance for financial stewardship and accountability.

### **Statement of Accounts External Audit**

The Committee has a duty to scrutinise the Council's financial and non-financial performance, to the extent that it affects the Council's exposure to risk and the control environment, and to oversee the financial reporting process. It also has the responsibility to approve the Council's Statement of Accounts (SOA) and to consider



the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports and the report to those charged with governance.

External audit gives an independent view of the stewardship and accountability roles of the Council. The duties and powers of the external auditor are set out in statute and in the Audit Commission's statutory code of practice.

### **Summary of work**

Throughout the year the Committee received reports from the Council's external auditors, detailing their work plans and the progress they had made. The audit plan followed the approach of previous years and the external auditors discussed key audit risks with the Committee. The Committee has monitored and received regular updates on the progress made in discharging any recommendations made by the external auditor.

In January 2020 the Committee reviewed and agreed the accounting policies on which the 2019-20 annual accounts have been prepared.

The Council's External Audit concluded:

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*Grant Thornton's- The Audit Findings Report Year ending 31 March 2019*

*Conclusion We received a good quality set of financial statements on 31 May in line with the statutory deadline. The working papers supporting the accounts have been fit for purpose and we appreciate the support that the Finance Team has given us throughout the audit.*

*Our audit has identified seven adjusted errors. Further details are provided in Appendix C. Our audit has identified two non-material unadjusted errors. Further details are provided within the private section of our Audit Findings Report.*

*We are planning to issue an unqualified opinion on the financial statements. Our enhanced audit report will include an Emphasis of Matter paragraph in relation to the disclosure of the uncertainties surrounding the volume and timing of any future equal pay claims.*

*We are planning to issue a qualified 'except for' Value for Money (VfM) conclusion. This is because, apart from the weaknesses in arrangements which we have identified in relation to Governance and the Waste Service, we are satisfied that, in all significant respects, the Council has put in place proper arrangement for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2019.*

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The 2019-20 draft accounts were signed on 28 August 2020 in line with the revised statutory deadline. The accounts were opened for public inspection on 1 September 2020 for a period of 30 working days, ending on 12 October 2020. Questions on or objections to the accounts may be raised with the external auditor during the period of public inspection. The final accounts were presented at the Committee's November meeting for approval together with the External Auditors Findings Report setting out the findings and conclusions arising from their audit. Whilst the external auditor's fieldwork was substantially complete several queries remained outstanding. These outstanding queries were subsequently resolved, and the Final accounts formally agreed under Chairs delegation on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

Within their Annual Audit Letter, the council's External Auditors identified six key VFM risks within their audit plan for 2018-19:

- Finance.
- Governance and the Waste Service.
- HMMPFI (Highways Maintenance and Management PFI) Contract.
- Commonwealth Games.
- Services for Vulnerable Children.
- Improvement Panel.

They concluded that:

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*Grant Thornton - The Annual Audit Letter for year ending 31 March 2019*

*Overall Value for Money conclusion We are satisfied that, in all significant respects, except for the matter we identified below, the Council put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ending 31 March 2019.*

*We identified in our initial risk assessment that the key risk is that the Council fails to implement adequate governance arrangements. In particular, in relation to the waste dispute in order to minimise potential industrial action.*

*The independent review was originally due to report in September 2019 and the Council intend to wait for this report before making decisions about the future operating model for the Waste service. We therefore did not yet have sufficient information to conclude that this risk had been sufficiently mitigated and concerns still existed over the effectiveness of industrial relations.*

*We concluded that these matters are evidence of weakness in informed decision making: acting in the public interest through demonstrating and applying principles and values of sound governance.*

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### **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman**

Each year all local authorities are provided with a letter from the Ombudsman (LGO) and a report covering their performance with regard to dealing with complaints in the previous financial year.

Complaints need to be used to influence service improvement and therefore to increase customer satisfaction and to highlight areas where controls may be failing.

### **Summary of work**

The Committee received an update on the Ombudsman complaint concerning refuse collection and the improvement work that was already underway. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman found maladministration and injustice in respect to a large number of complaints about missed collections and problems with the service. These complaints were not limited to one particular area but cover the whole of the city. The Ombudsman set out a series of recommendations including the

award of compensation to a number of residents in recognition of the frustration and difficulties the problems have caused.

In January 2020 the Committee also reviewed the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman annual report summarising his work as independent arbiter of complaints about local government administration. Seeking assurance that lessons are being learnt and process improvements made.

### **Internal Audit and Counter Fraud**

One of the Committee's key roles is to review and monitor the work of Internal Audit (IA). The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) set out the requirements for Internal Audit, and the Audit Charter sets out the Council's terms of reference for the service. External and internal assessments of Internal Audit under the PSIAS and its Quality Assurance and Improvement Plan (QAIP) help the Committee assess the performance and effectiveness of the service.

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 state that local authorities must undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance. The PSIAS require that the responsibility for the management of Internal Audit is set with the Board. In practical terms, at the Council, this Board responsibility is vested in the Audit Committee, Section 151 Officer, and Monitoring Officer, who exercise their Board responsibility via the Constitution and the associated policies and procedures.

### **Summary of work**

The service affects the achievement of corporate objectives by bringing a systematic disciplined approach to improve the effectiveness of risk management control and governance processes and is an important part of the Council's governance and control framework.

The Audit Committee agreed:

- the Internal Audit Charter.
- the Internal Audit Annual Workplan.
- performance updates.

In June 2020 the Committee received the Annual Report from the Assistant Director Audit and risk Management. The report gave a reasonable assurance on the core systems of internal controls evaluated. As in any large organisation, a number significant issues that required action were identified. These significant issues have been reported to the appropriate Director and were brought to the attention of the Committee to monitor and ensure the agreed actions were progressed.

Internal Audit continue to coordinate Counter fraud activities in line with the Counter fraud Strategy. Counter fraud activities had made significant contributions and savings to the Council. During the year the Audit Committee received the Internal Audit Annual Fraud Report containing an assurance on the systems for preventing and detecting fraud across the Council.

## **Conclusion**

An Audit Committee is central to the provision of effective corporate governance. It is important that local authorities have independent assurance about the mechanisms underpinning their governance arrangements. It is recognised that high performing councils develop effective financial and non-financial control mechanisms through the ongoing liaison and development of expertise made available by the establishment of an Audit Committee, meeting on a regular cycle, with terms of reference focussed on the key audit, control and risk management areas critical to the Council's performance.

The work of the Committee supports the Council's aim to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. In common with the requirement for Overview & Scrutiny Committees/Panels, and in accordance with CIPFA guidance, the Committee is politically balanced and does not have Executive membership.

Having considered the available guidance, the terms of reference and duties of the Audit Committee, and the work undertaken, it is my assessment that the Committee has carried out its roles effectively and provided effective challenge across a range of governance related issues.

Finally, I offer my thanks and appreciation to all Members of the Committee for their proactive contributions which have continued to facilitate constructive challenge; Officers for their support and help in carrying out our role; and the External Auditor for their constructive engagement, contributions and responses.

**Councillor Fred Grindrod**  
Chair of the Audit Committee

## **Appendix A – List of Reports to Audit Committee by Date**

### **24<sup>th</sup> Sept 2019**

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2018-19  
Report of the Strategic Director for Finance

- Statement of Accounts
- Grant Thornton's Finding Report
- Letter of Representation from the Chief Finance Officer
- Progress against Grant Thornton's Recommendations

AUDIT FINDING REPORT – RESPONSE TO  
RECOMMENDATION  
Report of the Strategic Director for Finance

BIRMINGHAM AUDIT ANNUAL FRAUD REPORT  
2018-19.  
Report of the Assistant Director Audit and Risk  
Management

- Summary on how the risk of fraud is being managed

OMBUDSMAN REPORT CONCERNING A  
COMPLAINT ABOUT REFUSE COLLECTIONS  
Report of the Chief Executive and the Assistant  
Director, Street Scene

- Update on residents' complaints on the Council repeatedly failing to collect household waste, recycling or garden waste.

### **16th Dec 2019**

CORPORATE RISK REGISTER UPDATE  
Report of the Assistant Director Audit and Risk  
Management

- Update on management of risks and issues contained within the Corporate Risk Register

BIRMINGHAM AUDIT HALF YEAR UPDATE  
REPORT 2019-20  
management of risks and issues contained  
within the Corporate Risk Register

- Progress in delivering the Internal Audit Plan and significant findings to date

GRANT THORNTON – ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER  
Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer

- External Audit Annual Findings Letter

GRANT THORNTON – EXTERNAL AUDITOR  
UPDATE

- Redmond Review update

AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS  
– PROGRESS REPORT  
Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer

- Progress against Grant Thornton's Recommendations

### **28th Jan 2020**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE  
OMBUDSMAN'S ANNUAL REVIEW 2018-19  
Report of the Chief Executive

- Summary of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Report

## **Appendix A – List of Reports to Audit Committee by Date**

AUDIT COMMITTEE – FUTURE WAYS OF WORKING Verbal update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussion on future assurance activities</li></ul>
GRANT THORTON – EXTERNAL AUDITOR UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• External Audit progress report and sector update</li></ul>
GROUP COMPANY GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE – INFORMING THE AUDIT RISK ASSESSMENT Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Group company assurance</li></ul>
AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS – PROGRESS REPORT Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Progress against Grant Thornton's Recommendations</li></ul>
REVISED RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK Report of the Assistant Director Audit and Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Revised Strategic Risk Management proposal</li></ul>
EQUAL PAY UPDATE Report of the City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Update on the ongoing liability of the Council in respect of equal pay claims brought under the Equality Act 2010.</li></ul>
EARLY YEARS AND WELLBEING CONTRACT Report of the Director Education and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• update on the Early Years Health and Wellbeing Services contract and progress made against Internal Audit recommendations.</li></ul>
TRAVEL ASSIST Report of the Director Education and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summary of Internal Audits findings and actions taken</li></ul>

### **24th March 2020**

Meeting Cancelled as a result of the COVID pandemic

### **30th June 2020**

TREASURY RISK MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS Report of the Head of Capital and Treasury Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Update on the Council's treasury risk management arrangements as set out in the Treasury Management Policy, Strategy and treasury management practices</li></ul>
BIRMINGHAM AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT 2019 – 20 Report of the Assistant Director Audit and Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summary of Internal Audit work and annual opinion on the effectiveness of the systems of internal control</li></ul>
ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2019 – 20 Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approval of the Annual Governance Statement for inclusion in the 2019/20 Statement of Accounts.</li></ul>

## Appendix A – List of Reports to Audit Committee by Date

ADOPTION OF ACCOUNTING POLICES 2019 – 20 Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approval of the accounting policies adopted for the completion of the Council's accounts for 2019/20.</li> </ul>
FINANCIAL MONITORING 2020 – 21 Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update on the arrangements put established to monitor the Council's budget and the Covid-19 financial impact.</li> </ul>
AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS – PROGRESS REPORT Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress against Grant Thornton's Recommendations</li> </ul>
EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN AND PLAN UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External Audit plan and Value for Money risks</li> </ul>
INFORMING THE AUDIT RISK ASSESSMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External Audit risk assessment</li> </ul>

### **28th July 2020**

Audit Committee – Future Ways of Working Report of the Assistant Director Audit and Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposals for further enhancing the effectiveness of the Audit Committee</li> </ul>
Risk Management Report of the Assistant Director Audit and Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update on the development of a Strategic Risk Register and implementation of the Risk Management Framework.</li> </ul>
AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS – PROGRESS REPORT Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress against Grant Thornton's Recommendations</li> </ul>
EXTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External Audit progress report and sector update</li> </ul>
PROCESS FOR THE EXIT OF SENIOR OFFICERS Report of the Interim City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer and the Director Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The process followed when Senior Officers leave the organisation and to provide assurance around the governance arrangements</li> </ul>

### **29th Sept 2020**

ASSURANCE SESSION – LEADERS PORTFOLIO Verbal STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2019 – 20 Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assurance on key areas within the Leaders portfolio</li> <li>Draft Statement of Accounts for 2019/20</li> </ul>
BIRMINGHAM AUDIT FRAUD REPORT 2019 – 20 Report of the Assistant Director Audit and Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summary on how the risk of fraud is being managed</li> </ul>
EXTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External Audit progress report and sector update</li> </ul>







# Reducing Fly-tipping

## Housing and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Housing and Neighbourhoods O&S Committee has undertaken an in-depth inquiry into fly-tipping, seeking to answer the question "How can the Council reduce fly-tipping in the city?". Members had recognised the persistent problem of fly-tipping in some parts of the city which is blighting streets and public areas and wanted to look at ways to support and challenge the current approach to tackling fly-tipping.
- 1.2 Three evidence gathering sessions have been held, including two very useful meetings with officers from Barking and Dagenham and Nottingham councils, who told Members about their approaches to tackle fly-tipping. Background research was undertaken to understand the extent of the problem in Birmingham and to explore best practice elsewhere.
- 1.3 This report sets out the key findings and recommendations.

### 2 Summary of Recommendations

- 2.1 Following their assessment of the evidence, members of the Committee propose the following recommendations, each of which are discussed in more detail in Section 3.

Ref	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R01	"Naming and shaming" should be introduced in Birmingham, backed up by investment in mobile CCTV cameras. The Cabinet Member is asked to report back on a timescale for implementation to the Housing and Neighbourhoods O&S Committee.	Cabinet Member, Street Scene and Parks	March 2021
R02	The working group on CCTV cameras should consider the evidence from this inquiry with a view to a rapid implementation of the use of CCTV to tackle fly-tipping. The Cabinet Member is asked to bring back a report to Housing and Neighbourhoods O&S Committee on this.	Cabinet Member, Social Inclusion, Community Safety & Equalities Cabinet Member, Street Scene and Parks	March 2021
R03	A review of prosecution strategies for fly-tipping, in particular the use of fixed penalty notices, with a view to adopting the Barking & Dagenham approach, should be undertaken to ensure that this fits what is needed currently.	Cabinet Member, Street Scene and Parks Deputy Leader Chair, Licensing & Public Protection Committee	March 2021



Ref	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R04	That the Cabinet Member considers implementing a model of Community Protection Officers in Birmingham, to meet the council's statutory functions at the first stages of contact. The model should involve other areas of the Council and agencies such as the Police. The aim should be for one CPO per councillor, a total of 101 for Birmingham.	Cabinet Members: Street Scene and Parks, Social Inclusion, Community Safety & Equalities, Transport & Environment, Finance & Resources	March 2021
R05	That a report is brought to the Housing and Neighbourhoods O&S Committee on the impact of the HRC booking system and recommendations on whether this should continue post-Covid.	Cabinet Member, Street Scene and Parks	March 2021
R06	That local community groups that clear rubbish or hold litter picks are supported by their local depot with waste collections and that the Cabinet Member looks at whether community clearance of communal land and back alley ways can also be supported.	Cabinet Member, Street Scene and Parks	February 2021
R07	That the charges on bulky waste are reviewed with a view to removing these charges, or as a minimum removing these for vulnerable groups (including those on low income or with disabilities)	Cabinet Member, Street Scene and Parks	March 2021
R08	Progress towards achievement of these recommendations should be reported to the Housing and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee no later than April 2021. Subsequent progress reports will be scheduled by the Committee thereafter, until all recommendations are implemented.	Cabinet Member, Street Scene and Parks	April 2021

### 3 Findings and Recommendations

- 3.1 In their first evidence gathering session, Members explored the extent of fly-tipping in Birmingham (the data presented at that time is set out in the Appendix) and the Council's approach to tackling it. They heard from Cllr John O'Shea, Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Parks, Cllr Phil Davis, Chair of Licensing and Public Protection Committee, officers from Waste, Environmental Health and Legal Services and the Head of Corporate Information Management.



- 3.2 They described the increase in fly-tipping that has been experienced in recent months, including that in June 2020 alone, 6 months' worth of rubbish was collected from parks, and the costs (up to £700,000 a year to clear fly-tipping). A detailed report from the Waste Enforcement Unit set out the enforcement approach, which is to focus its resources on large vehicle fly-tipping. The extent of large vehicle fly-tipping is considered a strategic pressure for the city, due to the scale of incidents and the costs and the difficulty associated with clean-up. Fly-tipping incidents categorised as likely to be related to large vehicles increased by 91% from 627 in 2016/17 to 1,200 in 2018/19. Exceptionally high levels of vehicle fly-tipping were reported during the COVID-19 'lockdown' period (82 incidents).
- 3.3 In exploring the evidence, the legal and evidential limitations on pursuing fly-tipping was noted, as was the impact of reduced resources. Nonetheless, Members were concerned that an overly cautious approach was being adopted and sought to explore more robust options. This included looking at what other local authorities were doing and as a result spoke to officers from the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Council and Nottingham City Council.
- 3.4 From examination of this data, and from the evidence submitted by witnesses, three themes emerged:
- A more robust response to fly-tipping where we can – proposals include introducing "naming and shaming", and more fixed penalty notices;
  - A more pro-active approach, deploying local officers on the ground to work with residents in identifying, reporting and removing fly-tipping.
  - Greater public involvement obtained through more information and education but also building in opportunities for local people to get involved.

## **A More Robust Response**

- 3.5 In reviewing the approach taken to deal with those caught fly-tipping, Members were of the view that a more robust response was possible and identified three areas for consideration: "naming and shaming", more use of CCTV and more use of fixed penalty notices.

### **"Naming and shaming"**

- 3.6 The first of these is "naming and shaming", an example being the "Wall of shame", introduced in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and now copied by other councils across the country. Officers from the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Council gave evidence to Members about the "wall of shame". In summary, this was introduced in 2018, in response to resident surveys and engagement which consistently highlighted fly tipping and environmental crime as the biggest issues facing local people, and also that the local community wanted to help to take action. CCTV



images from hotspots around the borough, and those selected were put into an [episode<sup>1</sup>](#) on social media backed-up with letter drops in the areas concerned so residents knew what was happening.

- 3.7 The advantages of the scheme were that it clearly engaged members of the public with an average of 6,100 views per episode. Social Media posts have reached 1.9 million people, with 901 shares and retweets, 618 likes, 5.8k clicks. Over 420 different clips have been broadcast, showing people caught in the act – with at least one person caught every episode. The overall impact on fly-tipping incidents has not been demonstrated, though improvement in some areas can be evidenced. However, the project has received lots of positive feedback from residents pleased to see action being taken, as local communities and businesses are actively encouraged to take a stand against the inconsiderate behaviour of a minority of people, whose actions blight a local area.
- 3.8 Concerns have been raised about the legalities and data protection issues of publishing pictures of individuals, but Barking and Dagenham developed a policy<sup>2</sup> to ensure that any action taken was necessary and proportionate with a legitimate purpose. There is a verification process that includes checking with the safeguarding team if any individual is known to them.



<sup>1</sup> [https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/enforcement-wall-of-shame?utm\\_source=Twitter&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=SocialSignIn](https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/enforcement-wall-of-shame?utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=SocialSignIn)

<sup>2</sup> The Report and Appendices can be found here (item 52):  
<https://modgov.lbbd.gov.uk/internet/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=180&MIId=8806&Ver=4>



- 3.9 The Cabinet Member, Street Scene and Parks, confirmed that there had been discussions about Birmingham adopting this “naming and shaming” approach, and they were confident that it can be made to work. Members are therefore urging that this is brought in as soon as possible.

### **Another Look at Mobile CCTV Cameras**

- 3.10 The above approach obviously depends on images of perpetrators being available. The Waste Enforcement Unit (WEU) has 12 CCTV units that are used to target fly-tipping hotspots where the proposed deployment is considered proportionate and necessary and authorised by a court under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act. Requests received for the deployment of CCTV resources are triaged through the WEU and/or through arrangements agreed with the Community Safety Partnership.<sup>3</sup>
- 3.11 Members were informed that there is currently a working group looking at reviewing the policy on CCTV, led by Cllr Cotton, Cabinet Member, Social Inclusion, Community Safety & Equalities. As part of this, the Committee urges the Cabinet Member to consider the approach taken by Barking and Dagenham, who use a pool of re-deployable, relatively inexpensive, cameras on a flexible basis.

### **More Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN)**

- 3.12 Members are also keen to ensure that the Council is using the full breadth of enforcement powers at its disposal. In particular, it was felt that the Council’s approach was too cautious in the issuing of fixed penalty notices (FPNs), focusing on those where there is enough evidence to prosecute should the FPN not be paid. The approach in Barking & Dagenham was somewhat different. They took the view that if an individual is caught, then they are eligible for fines. If the fine is not paid, they are taken to court. The council has not lost a fly-tipping case to date.
- 3.13 The section below sets out the number of FPNs issued in each of the three local authorities:
- 3.14 Birmingham in 2019/20:
- FPNs issued: 211 to businesses for trade waste non-compliances, 54 fixed penalties issued to small-scale fly-tippers;
  - 127 offenders prosecuted for fly-tipping and trade waste offences;
  - The WEU has seized 38 vehicles on suspicion of fly-tipping;
  - 9 offenders have received prison sentences for fly-tipping and linked offences.

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<sup>3</sup> The Birmingham Community Safety Partnership also has 11 re-deployable cameras which can be used to support the reduction of ASB. In April 2020 the Council’s Resilience team took on responsibility for the management and movement of the cameras. A new process has been put in place requiring LPDGs to gather the necessary information and evidence for any request to utilise the cameras. The process also ensures that the usage of the cameras complies with the relevant legislation governing the use of CCTV (Report to Housing and Neighbourhoods O&S Committee, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2020)



### 3.15 Barking and Dagenham:

- **Fixed penalty notices** (these are not exclusively for fly tipping but will include littering, dog fouling and other environmental offences):
  - April 2016-March 2017: FPNs:1534; Income: £94,793
  - April 2017-March 2018: FPNs: 2336; Income: £241,363
  - April 18- March 2019: FPNs: 1690, Income: £205,363
  - April 19-March 2020: FPNs: 1192; Income: £197,371
  - April 2020-October 2020: FPNs: 287; Income: £43,744
- **Prosecutions:**
  - 2016: 9 x Summonses issued; 6 x Successful prosecutions; 3 x Received summons and Elected to settle out of court paying FPN plus costs;
  - 2017: 24 x Summonses issued; 19 x Successful Prosecutions; 5 x Received summons and Elected to settle out of court paying FPN plus costs
  - 2018: 28 x Summonses issued; 2 x Successful Prosecutions; 12 x Received summons and Elected to settle out of court paying FPN plus costs; 2 x Warrants issued; 2 x Acquittals
  - 2019: 38 x Summonses issued; 10 x Successful prosecutions; 3 x Received summons and Elected to settle out of court paying FPN plus costs; 15 x Awaiting deferred hearing dates - COVID
  - 2020: 14 x Summonses issued; 5 x Awaiting summons to be issued; All awaiting deferred hearing dates - COVID

### 3.16 Nottingham

- In terms of the number of fines a year, there are 2,500-3,000 £75 fines a year and just over 100 £300 fines.

3.17 The good work done by the WEU in targeting higher end vehicle-related fly-tipping is welcomed, but there is also a clear need to deter lower level offences. Members therefore ask that a review of prosecution strategies for fly-tipping, in particular the use of fixed penalty notices and warning letters, is reviewed to ensure that this fits what is needed currently.

3.18 In evidence, it was also noted that people are often fearful of becoming witnesses, and work to reassure those in that position should be enhanced, emphasising the message to potential witnesses that there is legislation to protect them and the Police would be involved as necessary.





Ref	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R01	"Naming and shaming" should be introduced in Birmingham, backed up by investment in mobile CCTV cameras. The Cabinet Member is asked to report back on a timescale for implementation to the Housing and Neighbourhoods O&S Committee.	Cabinet Member, Street Scene and Parks	March 2021
R02	The working group on CCTV cameras should consider the evidence from this inquiry with a view to a rapid implementation of the use of CCTV to tackle fly-tipping. The Cabinet Member is asked to bring back a report to Housing and Neighbourhoods O&S Committee on this.	Cabinet Member, Social Inclusion, Community Safety & Equalities  Cabinet Member, Street Scene and Parks	March 2021
R03	A review of prosecution strategies for fly-tipping, in particular the use of fixed penalty notices, with a view to adopting the Barking & Dagenham approach, should be undertaken to ensure that this fits what is needed currently.	Cabinet Member, Street Scene and Parks Deputy Leader Chair, Licensing & Public Protection Committee	March 2021

## A More Pro-active Response

- 3.19 Members of the Committee also wanted to see a more pro-active approach in tackling fly-tipping through greater focus on early intervention and pro-active targeting of areas, premises and people.
- 3.20 The Committee recognised that the Waste Enforcement Unit has had its resources reduced in recent years and has therefore had to focus its activity accordingly (as in paragraph 3.2 above). In 2018 / 2019 the establishment for Enforcement Officers/Investigators was 13.7 FTEs including an additional 2 FTE officers who were separately funded to undertake placarding/fly-posting enforcement. Six posts were being recruited at the time of the evidence gathering. Barking and Dagenham had a similar number: their enforcement team consists of 19 people including the manager and back office support.
- 3.21 Nottingham has taken a slightly different approach. Community Protection Officers (CPOs) were deployed as a response to rising crime and disorder in the city of Nottingham and were part of a major change programme to reduce expenditure by £1.5m from the establishment of the specialist statutory services. CPOs were charged with meeting the council's statutory functions at the first stages of contact (including regulatory and enforcement activity, community engagement and wider demand management for council services such as Adult Social Care) and have become the universal response for a number of council functions. They are adaptable to whatever challenges the City faces (the recent Covid-19 response is a good example of this approach) and reduce demand to wider services through early interventions and enforcement action.
- 3.22 They are a visible uniformed presence on the streets and are co-located with Police counterparts across the city. CPOs are required to use their powers in accordance with the five stage model of



intervention: Ask, Warn, Initial enforcement, Substantive enforcement, Breach. The uniform gives authority to approach people in a clear and authoritative way. Safeguarding vulnerable citizens will always be the first consideration for CPOs.

- 3.23 CPOs are deployed in every ward in the city as well as the City Centre itself. When at the full establishment, there are 100 CPOs in the city, one for every ward and more in the city centre and busier wards (e.g. student areas), plus a number of non-geographical officers and a dog team. They work alongside local councillors – including doing walkabouts with waste officers and the Police and attending fortnightly Neighbourhood Action Meetings. Citizen surveys often identify CPOs as the most valued council service by citizens.
- 3.24 Members of the Committee therefore ask that the Cabinet Member considers implementing a model of Community Protection Officers in Birmingham, bringing together statutory functions and exploring ways to generate some of the resources to fund the introduction of CPOs across the city. This would include exploring working closely with other portfolio holders and agencies such as the Police. They would be particularly valuable in targeting areas where there is persistent fly-tipping, such as back alley ways. Members believe that there should be one CPO per councillor, a total of 101 for Birmingham.

Ref	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R04	That the Cabinet Member considers implementing a model of Community Protection Officers in Birmingham, to meet the council's statutory functions at the first stages of contact. The model should involve other areas of the Council and agencies such as the Police. The aim should be for one CPO per councillor, a total of 101 for Birmingham.	Cabinet Members: Street Scene and Parks, Social Inclusion, Community Safety & Equalities, Transport & Environment, Finance & Resources	March 2021

## Prevention

- 3.25 The final set of improvements that could be made to tackle fly-tipping relate to prevention. This is partly about educating and engaging with local residents, but also about opening up opportunities for involvement.
- 3.26 The education element is about making sure citizens know what the options are for disposing of waste: about the city's [Household Recycling Centres](#) (HRCs), for example, as there is evidence that many people do not know that these are free to use. The [garden waste](#) and [bulky waste](#) collections, or [donations to a reuse charity](#), are other routes residents could use. Members discussed the impact of the booking slots for HRCs, introduced as part of the Covid-19 measures this year, and whether these should continue. Members agreed to ask for a report from the Cabinet Member after this system had been in operation for a period, to assess the impact that this has had and whether it should be continued post-Covid.





- 3.27 As the Barking and Dagenham “wall of shame” showed, keeping residents informed as to what the Council is doing, particularly where fly-tipping will take some time to clear such as on private land (as notice has to be served on the landowner for them to remove it), is very important. Barking and Dagenham do try and let local residents know that they are dealing with it, eg there are stickers they can apply or do letter drops and let local councillors know.
- 3.28 Residents are being engaged through programmes such as the “Love Your Street” initiative and the national [“crime not to care”](#) campaign. This is a national campaign targeted at citizens to care about their streets and the behaviour on them. It encourages people to report fly tippers, be more responsible for their waste and do their best to reduce waste. These have unfortunately been slightly delayed by Covid-19 but work is continuing.
- 3.29 An important part of this is supporting those local community groups that clear rubbish in their areas, for example with waste services picking up the rubbish these groups collect. Anecdotally, it seems this happens in some areas but not others. Members would therefore ask that these groups receive support across the city.
- 3.30 It was noted that community participation has increased during Covid-19 and Members are keen to retain this activity going forward. They would therefore ask that the Cabinet Member looks at whether community clearance of private land can also be supported.

Ref	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R05	That a report is brought to the Housing and Neighbourhoods O&S Committee on the impact of the HRC booking system and recommendations on whether this should continue post-Covid 19.	Cabinet Member, Street Scene and Parks	March 2021
R06	That local community groups that clear rubbish or hold litter picks are supported by their local depot with waste collections and that the Cabinet Member looks at whether community clearance of communal land and back alley ways can also be supported.	Cabinet Member, Street Scene and Parks	February 2021
R07	That the charges on bulky waste are reviewed with a view to removing these charges, or as a minimum removing these for vulnerable groups (including those on low income or with disabilities)	Cabinet Member, Street Scene and Parks	March 2021

## 4 Progress against Implementation and Motion

- 4.1 To keep the Committee informed of progress in implementing the recommendations within this report, the Executive is recommended to report back on progress periodically.



Ref	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R08	Progress towards achievement of these recommendations should be reported to the Housing and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee no later than April 2021. Subsequent progress reports will be scheduled by the Committee thereafter, until all recommendations are implemented.	Cabinet Member, Street Scene and Parks	April 2021

4.2 Full Council is asked to agree the following motion:

**That recommendations R01 to R08 be approved, and that the Executive be requested to pursue their implementation**





## FLYTIPPING DENSITY OF REPORTS

Earliest Report 01 January 2020

Latest Report 18 July 2020

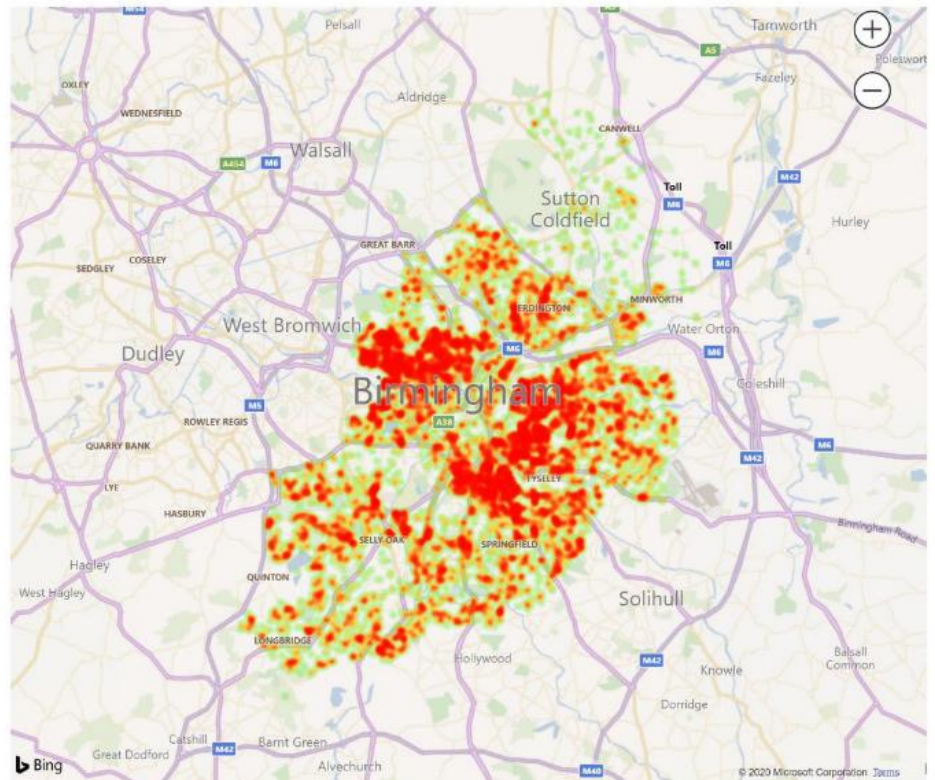
Month / Year

31/12/2019 01/07/2020



### ONSWARDPARISHDESC

- ☐ Select all
- ☐ Acocks Green
- ☐ Allens Cross
- ☐ Alum Rock
- ☐ Aston
- ☐ Balsall Heath West
- ☐ Bartley Green
- ☐ Billesley
- ☐ Birchfield
- ☐ Bordesley & Highgate
- ☐ Bordesley Green
- ☐ Bournbrook & Selly Park
- ☐ Bournville & Cotteridge
- ☐ Brandwood & Kings Heath
- ☐ Bromford & Hodge Hill
- ☐ Castle Vale
- ☐ Druids Heath & Monymhull
- ☐ Edgbaston
- ☐ Erdington
- ☐ Frankley Great Park
- ☐ Garretts Green
- ☐ Glebe Farm & Tile Cross
- ☐ Gravelly Hill
- ☐ Hall Green North



## FLYTIPPING REPORTS RECEIVED PER WEEK BY YEAR

### Reports by Week and Year

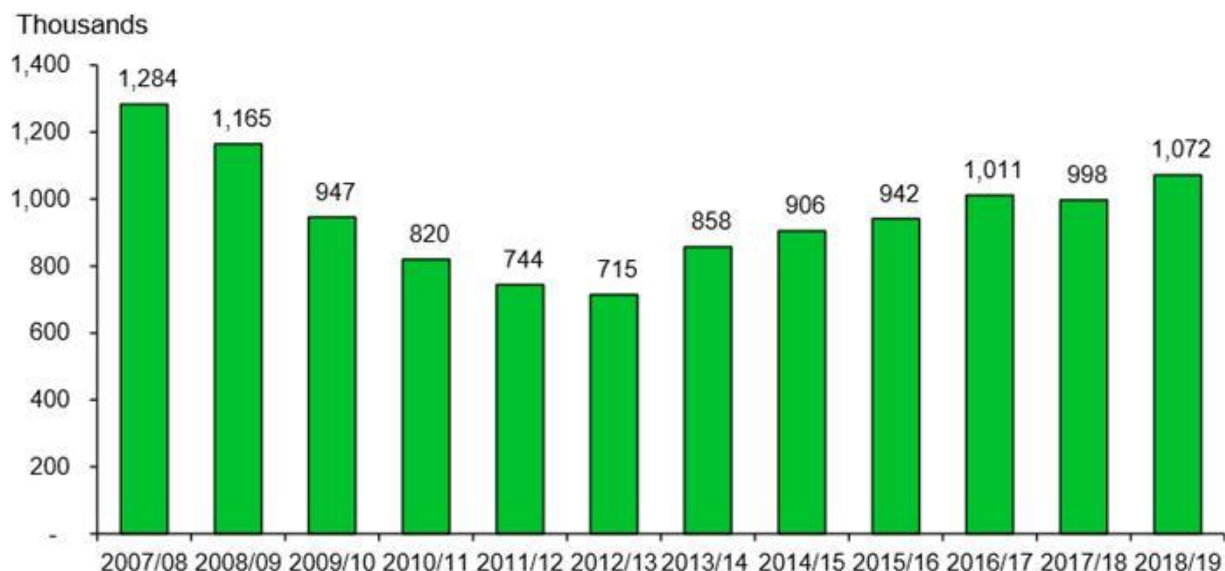
Year ● 2015 ● 2016 ● 2017 ● 2018 ● 2019 ● 2020





Here's the level of weekly reports over a number of years - as you can see, it is broadly similar from year to year. The stray line is this year.

**Figure 1.1. Trends in the total number of fly-tipping incidents in England, 2007/08 to 2018/19**







## A Report of the Housing and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021

### Reducing Fly-tipping - Executive Commentary

I would like to thank the Chair and Members of the Housing and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their time and effort in carrying out this important inquiry.

There is no doubt that fly-tipping is an abhorrent activity that causes distress to local communities. Like many other councils, we are trying to keep pace with the increase in illegal dumping, but we must find a better way to deter it in the first place and prosecute more offenders.

Dumping of waste on any land not authorised to accept it is a serious criminal offence for which the perpetrators can be prosecuted, although compiling the required evidence to support that is complex as is the enforcement legislation and its interpretation and implementation.

The inquiry carried out by scrutiny colleagues has heard from our officers on the activity and measures already in place and has explored additional activity that may help in our efforts to combat fly-tipping including practices adopted by other councils. By way of demonstration of the activity carried out by the Waste Enforcement Unit the table below shows the intervention for the period April 2020 to December 2020 – enforcement action carried out despite the impact of the pandemic on the council's services:

Reports and service requests received and triaged by the WEU	3,463
Duty of Care - proactive compliance inspections/enquiries with businesses over commercial waste disposal arrangements	643
Duty of care enquiries carried out as part of other business statutory inspection programmes	322
Statutory [Section 34] notices issued to businesses over commercial waste disposal arrangements	623
Fixed penalty notices issued to businesses over Section 34 non-compliances (£300)	44
Fly-tipping investigations that necessitated police support [intelligence and/or operational]	187
Fly-tipping and allied waste related investigations yielding sufficient evidence to submit a recommendation for prosecution proceedings to BCC Legal Services	31
Fly-tipping investigations yielding sufficient evidence to support the issuing of a criminal fixed penalty notice for incidents legally defined as 'small-scale' (£400)	44
Fly-tipping investigations with circumstances where a littering fixed penalty notice was determined legally appropriate (£80) as an alternative to a fly-tipping FPN	3

Fly-tipping and waste related offence concluded through Magistrates/Crown court during the period - [The majority of trials scheduled to take place in 2020 were adjourned by the court due to COVID-19] - (£32,187 of fines imposed and 2 conditional discharges)	20
Number of locations subject to surveillance authorised by the magistrates' court under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act	8
Number of fly-tipping offences detected during the course of RIPA authorised surveillance	32

The recommendations set out in the inquiry report will only serve to support the good work we are already doing. Some we will be able to implement quickly whilst others present significant challenges in terms of resourcing. They will need thorough exploration and consideration. If resources can be identified and directed, these proposals could contribute further to our combined efforts to reduce fly-tipping across our city.

Councillor John O'Shea  
Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Parks