



**Walsall Council**

## **Scrutiny Overview Committee**

Meeting to be held on: **15 April 2021 at 6.00 P.M.**

Meeting to be held via: **Microsoft Teams**

Public access to meeting via: [https://youtu.be/c46zFN\\_rvNw](https://youtu.be/c46zFN_rvNw)

**MEMBERSHIP:**

Chair: Councillor Murray  
Vice Chair: Councillor Nawaz

Councillor S. Ditta  
Councillor Ferguson  
Councillor Harrison  
Councillor Hussain  
Councillor Jeavons  
Councillor Rasab  
Councillor Samra  
Councillor Shires  
Councillor M. Statham

**LEADER OF THE COUNCIL:**

Councillor Bird

**PORTFOLIO HOLDERS:**

All

## **ITEMS FOR BUSINESS**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies</b> To receive apologies for absence from Members of the Committee.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Substitutions</b> To receive notice of any substitutions for a Member of the Committee for the duration of the meeting.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Declarations of interest and party whip</b> To receive declarations of interest or the party whip from Members in respect of items on the agenda.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)</b> To agree that the public be excluded from the private session during consideration of the agenda items indicated for the reasons shown on the agenda (if applicable).	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Minutes</b> To approve and sign the minutes of the meetings held on 2 February and 1 March 2021.	<u>Enclosed</u>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Covid-19 Update</b> To give an overview of the Covid-19 management response in Walsall.	<u>Enclosed</u>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Policing in Walsall</b> Chief Superintendent Andy Parsons is attending to answer questions from Members.	<u>Verbal</u>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Section 106 Planning Obligations</b> To explain the role and purpose of section 106 planning obligations and how it is allocated.	<u>Enclosed</u>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Public Sector Equality Duty</b> To understand the Public Sector Equality Duty.	<u>To Follow</u>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Scrutiny good practice and benchmarking</b> The Council has continually reviewed its scrutiny process and sought to make improvements over recent years. This report consider recent research and benchmarking to reflect on the way that scrutiny could be further evolved in Walsall, identify good practice and opportunities for new ways of working.	<u>Enclosed</u>
<b>11.</b>	<b>Feedback from Overview and Scrutiny Committees</b> This report provides a short summary of the activity of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees.	<u>Enclosed</u>
<b>12.</b>	<b>Areas of Focus</b> For the Committee to consider and agree its areas of focus for the municipal year and the Forward Plans for Walsall Council and the Black Country Executive Committee.	<u>Enclosed</u>
<b>13.</b>	<b>Date of next meeting</b> To note that the date of the next meeting will be agreed at Annual Council.	

## The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012

### Specified pecuniary interests

The pecuniary interests which are specified for the purposes of Chapter 7 of Part 1 of the Localism Act 2011 are the interests specified in the second column of the following:

Subject	Prescribed description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	<p>Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by a member in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of a member.</p> <p>This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Regulations (Consolidation) Act 1992.</p>
Contracts	<p>Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</li> <li>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</li> </ul>
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	<p>Any tenancy where (to a member's knowledge):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) the landlord is the relevant authority;</li> <li>(b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.</li> </ul>
Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) that body (to a member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and</li> <li>(b) either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</li> <li>(ii) if the share capital of that body is more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## **Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended)**

### **Access to information: Exempt information**

#### **Part 1**

#### **Descriptions of exempt information: England**

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes:
  - (a) to give any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
  - (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.
8. Information being disclosed during a meeting of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee when considering flood risk management functions which:
  - (a) Constitutes a trades secret;
  - (b) Its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the risk management authority);
  - (c) It was obtained by a risk management authority from any other person and its disclosure to the public by the risk management authority would constitute a breach of confidence actionable by that other person.

## **SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday 2 February 2021 at 6.00 pm**

### **Virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams**

Held in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020; and conducted according to the Council's Standing Orders for Remote Meetings and those set out in the Council's Constitution.

**Committee Members present:** Councillor J. Murray (Chair)  
Councillor A. Nawaz  
Councillor S. Ditta  
Councillor K. Ferguson  
Councillor L. Harrison  
Councillor K. Hussain  
Councillor L. Jeavons  
Councillor W. Rasab  
Councillor S. Samra  
Councillor I. Shires  
Councillor M. Statham

**Portfolio Holders present:** Councillor M. Bird - Leader  
Councillor A. Andrew – Deputy Leader and Regeneration  
Councillor G. Perry – Deputy Leader and Resilient Communities  
Councillor B. Chatta – Personnel and Business Support  
Councillor S. Craddock – Health and Wellbeing  
Councillor C. Towe – Education & Skills

**Officers present:** Deborah Hindson - Executive Director – Resources & Transformation  
Stephen Gunther – Director of Public Health  
Vicky Buckley – Interim Director of Finance, Corporate Landlord and Performance  
Geraint Griffiths-Dale – Walsall Managing Director, Black Country and West Birmingham CCGs  
Emma Thomas – Public Health Intelligence Manager  
Craig Goodall - Senior Democratic Services Officer

## **WELCOME**

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone, and explaining the rules of procedure and legal context in which the meeting was being held. He also directed members of the public viewing the meeting to the papers, which could be found on the Council's Committee Management Information system (CMIS) webpage.

Committee Members confirmed that they could see and hear the proceedings.  
293/21 **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

294/21 **SUBSTITUTIONS**

There were no substitutions.

285/21 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP**

There were no declarations of interest or party whip for the duration of the meeting.

295/21 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985  
(AS AMENDED)**

There were no items of business that required the exclusion of the public.

296/21 **MINUTES**

**Resolved** (by roll call):

**That the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2020, a copy having previously been circulated, be approved and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record subject to the inclusion of Councillor L. Harrison as in attendance and the deletion of Councillor G. Perry who was listed as in attendance twice.**

297/21 **DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET AND DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME  
2021/22 TO 2023/24**

The Committee were informed of the draft revenue budget and capital programme for 2021/22 – 2023/24.

The Leader provided an update on the draft revenue budget highlighting changes that had taken place since it was presented to the Committee in December. He reported that the Government settlement had been received including an additional £10m in one off grants. He also highlighted new investments in planning enforcement and hybrid meeting technology. A Council Tax rise of 4.99% was proposed with 3% ring-fenced for adult social care. These changes had reduced the funding gap and savings required for future years.

The Leader, Deputy Leader for Regeneration, Deputy Leader for Resilient Communities and Portfolio Holder for Personnel and Business Support presented capital programme proposals in their remits. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairs presented feedback from their meetings that had considered the capital programme.

**Resolved** (by assent):

**That the report be noted.**

## **298/20 COVID-19 UPDATE**

The Committee were provided with an update on the Covid-19 management response in Walsall.

The Portfolio Holder (Health and Wellbeing) provided Members with an overview of the latest figures for the borough. He noted that the case rate had declined since the publication of the report to 515 cases per 100,000 people. Willenhall currently had the highest case rates and there were currently two outbreaks in care homes. The majority of cases were in 18-39 and 39-49 age brackets. Care home staff had been offered the vaccine and take up by care home residents was high. He thanked all medical staff and volunteers for their work at vaccination centres.

He continued to explain details of surge testing that was taking place after a case of the South African Covid-19 variant was found in the WS2 area of Walsall. It was thought this variant was more infectious than other Covid-19 variants therefore additional testing had been provided to the area. All adults in the WS2 area and some surrounding postcodes were being asked to undertake a test to understand if the new variant had spread.

Following questions the Portfolio Holder confirmed that the surge testing was for over 18's only and that residents in the affected area could still travel for work purposes. A Ward Member in the surge testing area was informed that the testing had been established at short notice and information for residents provided online.

The Walsall Managing Director provided an update on the vaccination programme. He outlined that vaccinations had begun in December via the hospital and GP operated sites. Two vaccines were being used from Pfizer and AstraZeneca. By 15 February all over 70s and those deemed to be clinically extremely vulnerable would have been offered a vaccine. Work was taking place to engage those that declined a vaccine and mobile clinics were being established for hard to reach groups.

Following questions the Walsall Managing Director reported that the refusal rate for vaccines was up to 20% but the majority of appointments that were booked were used. Reserve lists were in place to prevent wastage. Those who refused a vaccine received follow up calls. The highest levels of refusals were in the south of the borough. Mobile clinics had visited faith buildings to engage those who may be reluctant to take a vaccine for religious reasons. It was believed that existing vaccines would provide protection against the South Africa variant. Vaccination centres were spread across the borough to assist access. If supply was available up to 10,000 vaccines a day could be delivered.

**Resolved:**

**That the report be noted.**

## 299/20      **FEEDBACK FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

The meeting received feedback from recent meetings of the remaining Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

### **Resolved:**

**That the report be noted.**

## 300/20      **AREAS OF FOCUS**

The Committee considered its work programme and the Forward Plans of Walsall Council and the Black Country Joint Executive Committee.

Following a discussion the Committee agreed that it should lead on receiving data updates on Covid-19 and that the remaining Overview and Scrutiny Committees should focus on the impact of Covid-19 for areas within their remits.

The following items were identified for the next meeting of the Committee:

- Equalities;
- Section 106;
- Discussion with the Police.

### **Resolved (by assent):**

**That the Areas of Focus and Forward Plan be noted.**

## 301/20      **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on 15 April 2021.

There being no further business, the meeting terminated at 8.15 p.m.

Chair.....

Date.....



## **SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

**Monday 1 March at 6.00 pm - Virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams**

Held in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020; and conducted according to the Council's Standing Orders for Remote Meetings and those set out in the Council's Constitution.

**Committee Members present:** Councillor J. Murray (Chair)

Councillor A. Nawaz  
Councillor S. Ditta  
Councillor K. Ferguson  
Councillor L. Harrison  
Councillor K. Hussain  
Councillor N. Gultasib  
Councillor W. Rasab  
Councillor S. Samra  
Councillor I. Shires  
Councillor M. Statham

**Portfolio Holders present:**

Councillor M. Bird - Leader  
Councillor A. Andrew – Deputy Leader and Regeneration  
Councillor G. Perry – Deputy Leader and Resilient Communities

**Other Members present:**

Councillor M. Follows  
Councillor N. Gultasib  
Councillor P. Kaur  
Councillor H. Sarohi  
Councillor G. Singh-Sohal  
Councillor M. Ward

**Officers present:**

Simon Neilson - Executive Director – Economy, Environment and Communities  
Dave Brown – Director – Place and Environment  
Neil Taylor – Director – Regeneration and Economy  
Paul Gordon – Director – Resilient Communities  
Katie Moreton – Head of Highways and Transport  
Craig Goodall - Senior Democratic Services Officer

**Witnesses present:**

Abiline McShane – Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community Representative  
Valerie Vaz – Member of Parliament for Walsall South  
Siobhan Spencer – Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group  
Dr. Abdalle Hesham – Consultant Paediatrician  
Lynne Cherry – Head teacher, Hillary Primary School  
Hamza Mahmood - Business owner  
Iman Ali Akbar – Minhaj Quran  
Shakil Younis – Pleck resident

## **WELCOME**

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone, and explaining the rules of procedure and legal context in which the meeting was being held. He also directed members of the public viewing the meeting to the papers, which could be found on the Council's Committee Management Information system (CMIS) webpage.

Committee Members confirmed that they could see and hear the proceedings.

### **302/21 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jeavons.

### **303/21 SUBSTITUTIONS**

Councillor Gultasib substituted for Councillor Nawaz.

### **304/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP**

There were no declarations of interest or party whip for the duration of the meeting.

### **305/21 LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 (AS AMENDED)**

There were no items of business that required the exclusion of the public.

### **306/21 CALL-IN OF CABINET DECISION: 'OPTIONS FOR A TRANSIT SITE WITHIN WALSALL'**

The Committee reviewed the Cabinet decision taken on 10 February that identified a site in Narrow Lane, Walsall as a preferred site for a transit site for the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) communities. The decision was called in by five members of the Council on 17 February 2021.

The Chairman set out the structure of the meeting as follows:

1. Call-in members to explain the reasons for the call-in and what they would like the Cabinet to do differently from what is proposed in the decision;
2. Witnesses called by call-in members;
3. Followed by any questions for clarification from the Scrutiny Committee Members (if required);
4. Senior officer to provide a briefing on why that the current site was identified;

5. Invite the Portfolio Holder to respond to the 'call in';
6. Questions to the Cabinet;
7. Debate by the Scrutiny Committee and the formulation of any conclusions/recommendations to be submitted to the Cabinet.

#### *Call-in Members*

The Chair invited the call in members to set out their reasons for the call-in of the decision. They explained that their issues were related to the process for making the decision and the site not the GRT community. Further to the reasons set out in the call-in notice (see annexed) the principal concern was around the lack of consultation with the local community on the proposed site. It had been a recommendation of the former Unauthorised Encampments Working Group (UEWG) for consultation to take place on potential sites. Further concerns were expressed about the proposed site being located in an area of deprivation, with low attainment and suffering from challenges with anti-social behaviour. It was questioned whether the site was large enough and the potential impact of air pollution on GRT children due to it being located next to a busy road. It was also questioned if the site had been chosen for political reasons as the area had three Labour Councillors and a Labour MP.

#### *Valerie Vaz MP for Walsall South*

Mrs Vaz highlighted that she felt the Cabinet decision failed the tests set out in the Nolan Principles. She noted the Site Allocation Document (SAD) included Dolphin Close as a potential GRT transit site. This site was near to settled members of the GRT community, which made it more suitable than Narrow Lane. Further to this extensive consultation had taken place to inform the SAD. She felt that the report should have included further information on the impact on children and families and air quality. She also questioned whether the site had been chosen for political reasons due to the area's Labour representation.

Mrs Vaz questioned whether the Deputy Leader for Regeneration was employed for MP Eddie Hughes. After a discussion on the details contained within his Register of Interest Form the Deputy Leader for Regeneration clarified that he no longer worked for Eddie Hughes MP.

#### *Members of the Unauthorised Encampments Working Group (UEWG)*

Councillor Harrison, Lead Member for the former UEWG, provided details of the recommendations made by the WG.

#### *Abiline McShane – Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Community Representative*

Ms McShane highlighted that the GRT community faced opposition wherever they went. She noted that a transit site would be opposed no matter where it was proposed to be located. She reported that Narrow Lane was a good site and a suitable size and large encampments were uncommon. It was likely that travellers would only stay there for a few days before moving on. This meant that any concerns on the impact of schools and other services would not materialise. She stated that if consultation had

taken place prior to the Cabinet report it would have allowed engagement to take place with the local community to allay their concerns.

*Siobhan Spencer – Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group*

Ms Spencer reported that Narrow Lane was a good size for the majority of GRT encampments. She noted that it was unlikely that local services, such as GPs, would have additional demands placed upon them. She noted that GRT community members would often travel to see a Doctor that they liked. She noted that many of the objections being given this evening regarding traffic and pollution would be dealt with through the planning process.

*Dr. Abdalle Hesham – Consultant Paediatrician*

Dr. Hesham explained that poor air quality was linked to health conditions and a contributing factor in deaths in children and adults. For children with respiratory conditions the impact of air pollution could be significant.

*Paul Gordon – Director of Resilient Communities*

Mr. Gordon reflected on the need to reconcile the local community and consult with it in a constructive way during the planning process. He noted the cohesiveness of the local community and the number of high performing community groups in the area. He noted that there was support for a transit site in Walsall and choosing its location would be challenging.

*Lynne Cherry – Head Teacher, Hillary Primary School*

Ms Cherry reported that Hillary was a diverse school where over 50 languages were spoken. Any children from GRT communities would be welcomed and any needs they had would be catered for. She did question the suitability of the site for children located near to a main road and asked if there would be room for children to play.

*Hamza Mahmood – Business Owner*

Mr. Mahmood reported that he was a business owner on Pleck Retail Park. He felt that the site was unviable for financial and social reasons. The lack of consultation was disappointing. Particularly as it could have an impact on the potential for future canal side developments.

*Iman Ali Akbar – Minhaj Quran*

Iman Akbar expressed concern about the lack of consultation and impact of the site in a deprived area. He explained that three GP surgeries were being merged into one and it was already challenging to get an appointment. He noted traffic problems in the evenings around the site. He stated that schools would require support to access training on how to support GRT communities.

*Shakil Younis – Pleck resident*

Mr Younis expressed concerns about the lack of consultation and highlighted other schemes that were consulted on. He felt there was a lack of transparency which was causing anger with Walsall Council. He noted that the roads around the site were some of the worst in the borough. Problems with congestion caused air pollution.

#### *Questions to call-in Members*

Following a question from a Member of the Committee, the call-in members confirmed how they had heard the news that Narrow Lane had been selected as a transit site. Three had heard through the local media who then subsequently informed the others. The point was made that even local ward members were unaware of the proposal.

It was confirmed that an Equality Impact Assessment had taken place for the Cabinet report.

#### *Martin Lynch – Pleck resident*

Mr Lynch stated that the consultation had been woefully inadequate. However, he did not object to the site and felt that if a housing development was proposed for the site then the same objections would not be expressed. He felt Pleck was an inclusive and welcoming place to live where the GRT community would be welcomed.

A call-in member noted that he had previously opposed HMOs and housing development in the area.

#### *Senior Officer explanation on the selection of Narrow Lane*

The Executive Director (Economy, Environment and Communities) explained that the Council had been seeking a site for a number of years. He highlighted that a site in private ownership had been identified as the preferred site but subsequently ruled out due to legal reasons. The Council currently had a number of injunctions to prevent unauthorised encampments on a number of sites in the borough.

The Director of Place and Environment reported that he joined the Council in January 2021 after Narrow Lane had been selected. He outlined the need to treat the GRT community equitably and took the Committee through the options in the Cabinet report, highlighting the risks, finances and EQIA.

Following a question the Executive Director confirmed that the transit site would be available for general use by the GRT community not just in emergencies.

#### *Response to call-in*

#### *Deputy Leader and Regeneration*

The Deputy Leader responded by explaining that Cabinet had made a policy decision to identify the site as a potential location for a transit site subject to planning permission being granted. The planning process would include a consultation process that would cover the issues being raised as part of the call-in process. The Planning

Committee would then be able to make the decision on whether the site was suitable with all the facts and analysis was presented to them.

He explained that Dolphin Close had been proposed as a permanent site; unlike Narrow Lane which was going to be temporary. £1m had been proposed for 10 pitches but this was opposed.

In response to allegations of political bias he outlined recent investment in the Pleck Ward and immediate surrounding area.

#### *Leader*

The Leader explained that there was another site in private ownership had been considered but this had been considered unviable. Therefore, the Council had chosen a site within its ownership to take forward. If built, the transit site would assist the Council in managing unauthorised encampments. This was pertinent as the UE injunctions that the Council had on existing sites were due to be reviewed. He highlighted work that has taken place previously to tackle the challenges of unauthorised encampments and noted a notice of motion to Council that requested a transit site be provided in the borough. With regards to traffic he felt that six caravans would not have a significant impact on local congestion.

#### *Deputy Leader for Resilient Communities*

The Deputy Leader noted that this was a challenging issue that required everyone to work together, as well as a need to challenge local communities. There was significant concern regarding unauthorised encampments in Walsall and a transit site was a way of managing this by working with GRT communities. He noted the recommendations of the UEWG and how many of their recommendations had been taken into account.

#### *Questions to Cabinet*

A number of questions were asked of the Leader and Deputy Leaders. The following is a summary of the points made and answers provided:

- Each Council was required to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable GRT sites;
- Consultation on the site would take place with the local community as part of the planning process. It was likely that temporary permission, if granted, would be for no longer than three years;
- A Member called for an unauthorised encampments strategy to be drafted as recommended by the UEWG. The Leader noted that the transit site was a first step in developing a holistic approach to unauthorised encampments;
- The Council had considered 583 potential sites which had been whittled down to 4. Narrow Lane was the only site in the Council's ownership in the final 4;
- The provisions on the site could be discussed and agreed with the GRT community.

*The meeting adjourned at 8.50 p.m.*

*The meeting reconvened at 9.00 p.m.*

*Debate by the Committee*

The Committee held a long discussion with some Members focussing on the lack of consultation. Given the significance, it was argued that the Cabinet decision could be paused to allow consultation to take place. This would allow a more informed decision to be taken. It was acknowledged that consultation on the site would take place as part of the planning process, however, concerns were expressed that this would be limited to planning matters and not take into account wider factors. Further reflections on the evidence provided by witnesses took place including the potential impact of air pollution. Other Members argued that due to favourable comments from some witnesses they supported the proposed transit site. This support was increased by using a site in the Council's ownership.

Ms. McShane offered to undertake community engagement work in Pleck to reassure the local community about the transit site and its likely impact.

It was **moved** and formally **seconded** that:

*This Scrutiny Committee asks Cabinet to reverse its decision to locate the GRT transit site in Narrow Lane, Pleck. There has been a lack of consultation, assessment of impacts and transparency as to which other sites met the requirements of a transit site. Taking this into account we feel the decision to recommend and decide on one site in Pleck was not fully informed. Furthermore, we ask Cabinet to instruct officers to carry out more detailed work in a transparent, open and fair manner, to consider and take on board the recommendations of the UE working Group and to come forward with a number of sites across the borough for cabinet to consider.*

On being put the vote via **roll call** that motion was declared lost.

**Resolved** (by assent):

**That the report be noted.**

**307/21      DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on 15 April 2021.

There being no further business, the meeting terminated at 9.53pm.

Chair.....

Date.....

15<sup>th</sup> April 2021

## Covid-19 Update

Ward(s):

Portfolios: Cllr Craddock

### 1. Aim

To give an overview of Covid-19 management response in Walsall.

### 2. Recommendations

That colleagues play their part in the Local Authority and Partner management response to Covid-19 in Walsall and support the government messages.

### 3. Report detail

There are a number of action areas in relation to the response to the Covid-19 pandemic in Walsall to date. This report will cover several of these including:

- Barometer (7 key performance indicator overview)
- Outbreaks
- Testing / access to
- Vaccinations
- Schools / care homes
- Hospital situation

The **barometer** offers an overview of the current situation based on five key performance indicators and their RAG ratings (the defined parameters agreed regionally).

As of 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2021, the KPIs pertaining to the incidence of infection is rated as **RED** due to the high number of residents testing positive for Covid-19. . Although this has decreased significantly in recent weeks, the rate of decline has stabilised

However, the 7-day rolling case rate per 100,000 of the population is now rated as **GREEN** (as at 31/03/21), and is currently at 70 per 100,000. In addition, the proportion of tests returning a positive result is now at 3.4%, which is similar to the West Midlands regional rate, but still higher than the national average for England (2.6%) This metric is now also marked as **GREEN**.

As at 31/03/21, the exceedance of positivity is currently rated as **AMBER**. An exceedance means that an area has a greater than expected rate of infection compared with the usual background rate for that location. This is a way of assessing a recent change in incidence in that area. This is assessed by PHE

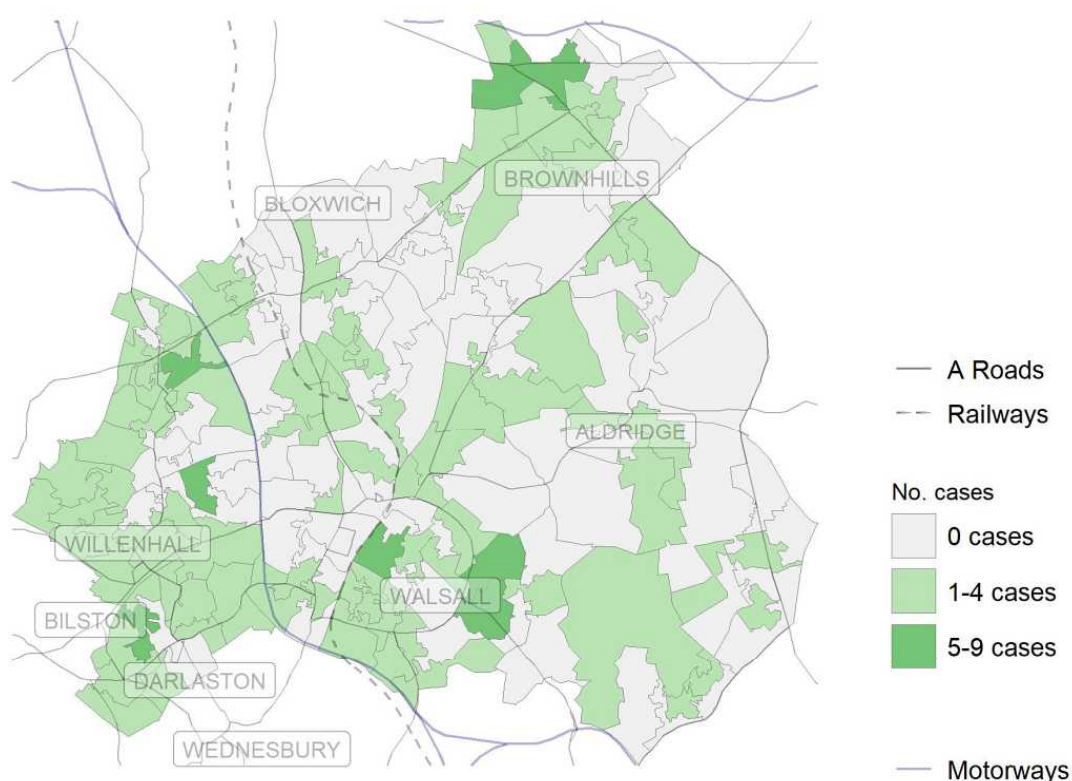




The **outbreaks** / exposures currently occurring in Walsall continue to suggest a large proportion of residential dwelling transmission which the local Test & Trace team act upon as soon as data is received.

Mapped positive case data is monitored daily, at LSOA level to demonstrate the impact across the borough.

**Figure 2. Map of new Covid-19 cases from Pillar 1 and 2 testing by LSOA overlayed with new outbreaks / clusters in Walsall (past 7 days 23<sup>rd</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> March 2021).**

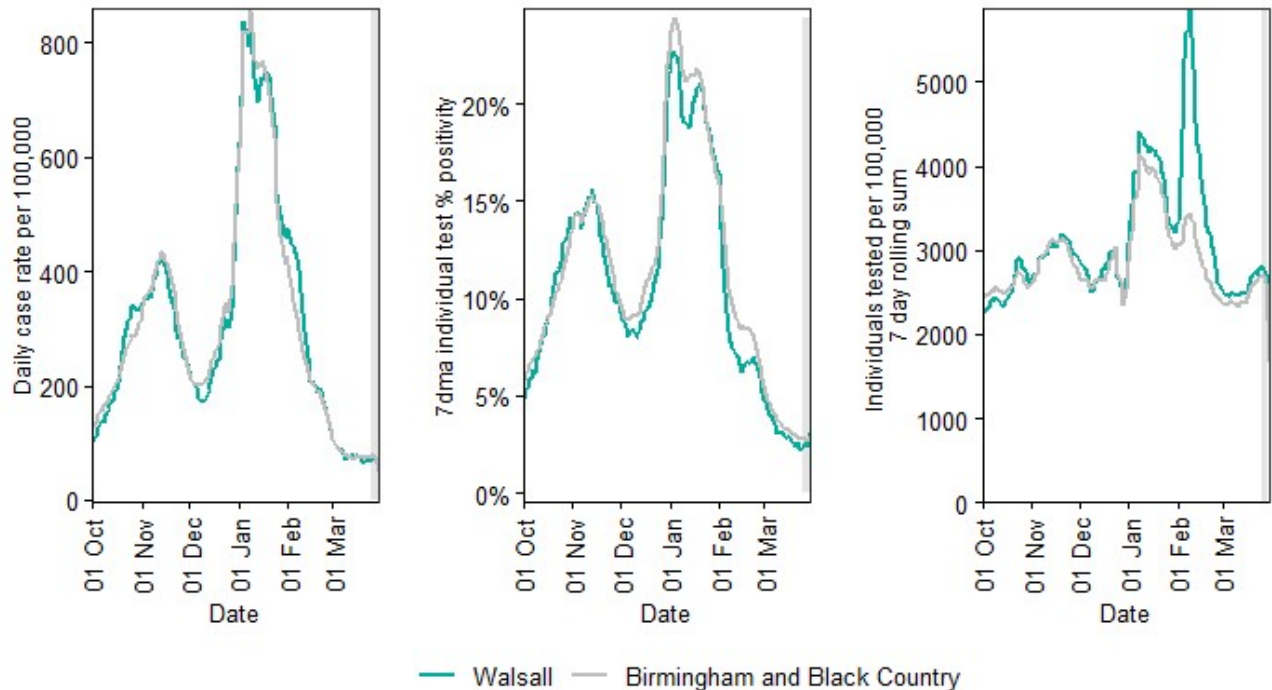


Produced by Outbreak Surveillance Team, PHE  
Contains National Statistics data Â© Crown copyright and database right 2021  
Contains Ordnance Survey data Â© Crown copyright and database right 2021

Source – PHE Daily LA report

Covid-19 cases have occurred all across the borough. ***It is clear that no area has been untouched by the pandemic.***

**Figure .3 Persons PCR tested and cases diagnosed per 100,000 population, and PCR positivity per week in Walsall, West Midlands, and England**



The testing data shown above is based on PCR testing only.

As previously noted, positive cases have decreased in Walsall, but are still higher than the national rate. The rate of positivity has also decreased, but again, is still higher than national rates.

However, the number of tests performed per 100,000 population has increased in recent weeks, with Walsall's testing rate (2,282) is now higher than both the Birmingham and Black Country average (2,167) and the National average for England (2,093).

### **Testing**

There are currently three 'local testing sites' for those with Covid-19 symptoms within the borough located at:

- Walsall Town Hall,
- Darlaston Community Centre and
- University of Wolverhampton campus.
- Additionally, a 'mobile testing unit' currently located at Wakes Ground Car & Lorry Park in Willenhall.



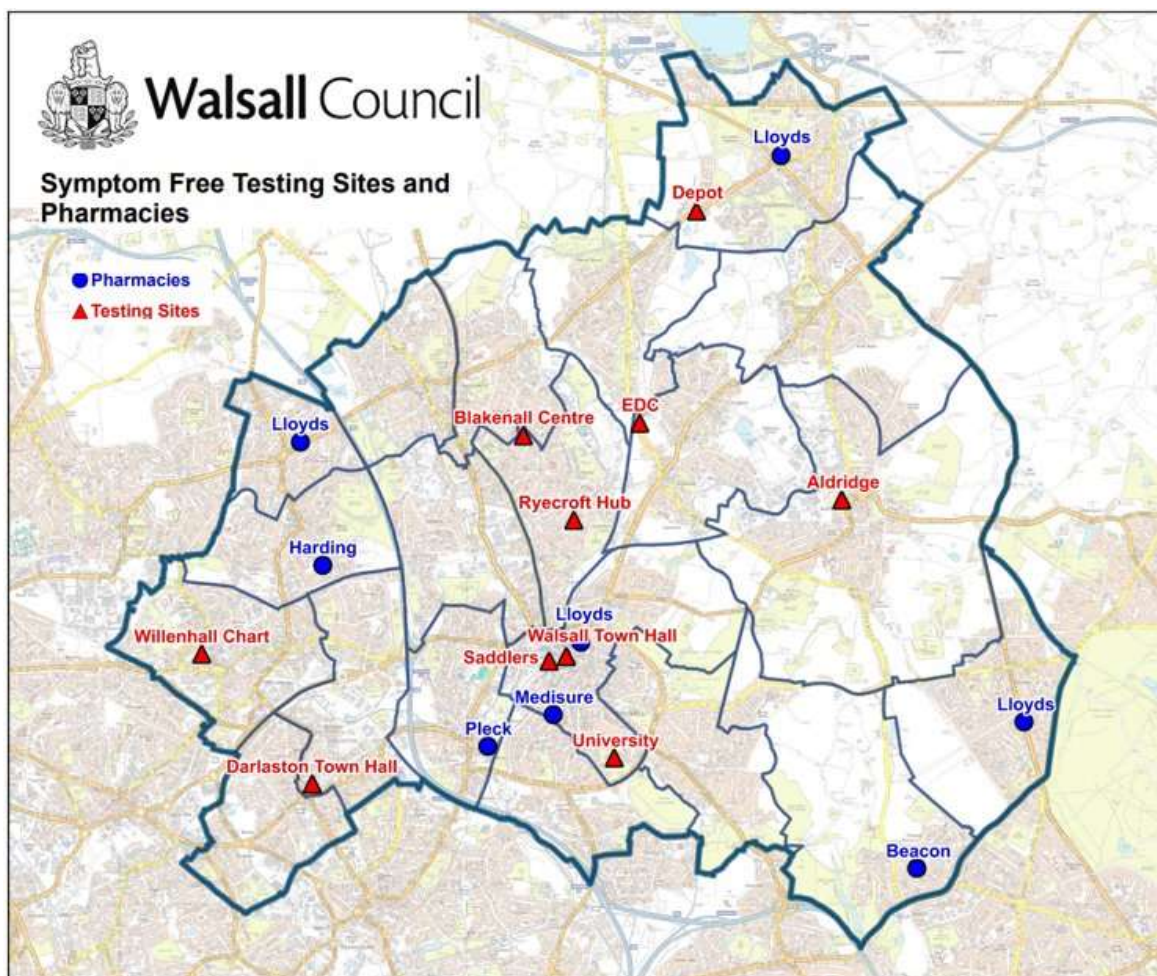
## **Lateral Flow Rapid Testing**

In addition, symptom free testing (lateral flow testing (LFT)) has been rolled out to key workers across Walsall. The testing prioritisation process for accessing testing sites, including critical key workers, as well as businesses that are critical to COVID-19 response or EU transition process as defined by DHSC.

There are now 10 LFT testing sites throughout the borough (see Figure 4). In addition 8 pharmacy sites also went live on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March, further increasing geographical coverage across Walsall.

In addition to critical workers and the priority groups originally defined by DHSC, school and college children and members of their households are now also invited to take twice weekly LFT tests. Home testing kits can now also be collected from the community testing sites (except The Depot and The Town Hall), and a [booking site now available and live on Council website for those that meet the criteria to book a testing slot at any testing site](#).

**Figure 4. Map of Community Testing Sites in Walsall.**



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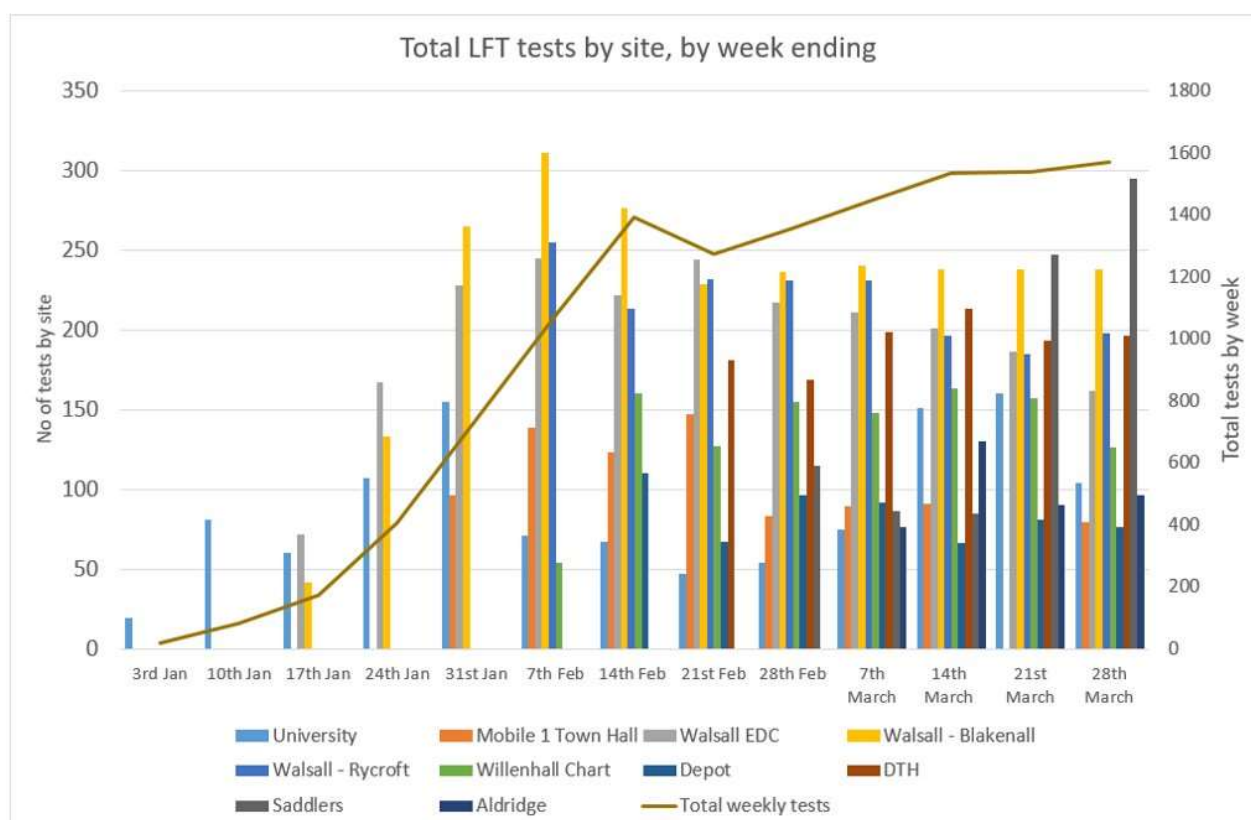
### Lateral Flow Testing over the last week

- No. of weekly tests completed (w/c 22/03/2021): 1,570
- **Positive tests: 6; Positivity rate: 0.4%; Void tests: 9**
- Weekly testing capacity: 12,000

### Testing since 4<sup>th</sup> January

- No of tests completed up to 01<sup>st</sup> March: 12,557
- **Positive tests: 54; Positivity rate: 0.43%**

**Figure 5. Numbers of Lateral Flow Tests Performed at Community Testing Sites in Walsall.**



### **Vaccination**

The vaccination roll-out has continued at the Manor Hospital site and the six PCN sites: Oak Park Leisure Centre; Bloxwich Active Living Centre; Sycamore House Surgery/Birmingham Rd; Keys Surgery/Willenhall; Darlaston Medical Centre; and Forrester Street Surgery/Pleck.

The Saddlers Centre site started from 15 March 2021. There are also two pharmacy sites, one at Moxley and one at Bloxwich. The delivery of the vaccination programme is a major undertaking and the CCG has been working with a wide variety of partners to ensure the vaccine can be delivered as quickly as possible.

Ward level coverage is shown on the following illustration.

Electoral Ward Uptake % for All Ethnic Group(s) and 50 to 59, 60 to 69, 70 to 79 and 1 more Age Group(s)  
(updated 01/04/2021 10:08:43)



- **Figure repeated at end of document in larger format**

The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust is leading the Workforce Bureau and is committed to establishing a workforce model for the vaccination programme, which doesn't impact adversely on the capacity of the acute providers, particularly given the significant challenges and pressures of COVID-19.

One Walsall has been working in partnership with Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust to ensure there is a rota of volunteers in a marshalling role on each site.

The total programme will offer vaccinations to a total of 211,228 adults, with each person receiving 2 vaccinations. The focus to-date has been to maximise the uptake in cohorts 1 to 9 (see table below).

Cohort	Sub Group	Qty
RC	Residents	1354
	Workers	3401
80+	80+ Housebound	1794
	Non Housebound	11082
DE	All Detained Estates	1
HCW	NHS Trust	6106
	GP Staff	884
	Community Pharmacy	450
	Dentists	442
	Optometrists	67
	Other	0
SCW	Day Care	151
	Domiciliary Care	4130
	Community Care	1105
75-79	Housebound	1258
	Non Housebound	7961
70-74	Housebound	678
	Non Housebound	11473
65-69	Housebound	608
	Non Housebound	11689
High Risk	Housebound	0
	Non Housebound	1185
Mod. Risk	Housebound	850
	Non Housebound	22596
60-64	Non Housebound	9076
55-59	Non Housebound	10943
50-54	Non Housebound	13070
Key Worker	Education and Childcare	5238
	Food and Necessary Goods	3353
	Not At Risk Key Public Services	1030
	National and Local Government	341
	Public Safety and National Security	1192
	Transport	1747
	Utilities and Communication	3772
18-49	BAME Non Housebound	12434
	Non BAME Non Housebound	59767

It is recognised that there has been a lower level of uptake in the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities, and the Walsall Community Champions Programme has been implemented to help address this. The programme is primarily aimed at supporting residents from our (BAME) communities, people with disabilities and others who are most at risk of COVID-19.

Funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, the role of [Community Champions](#) is:

- to help increase vaccination uptake
- to prevent the spread of COVID 19
- to tackle the spread of misinformation around COVID and the vaccine



- to reduce the impact of the virus on families, neighbourhoods and wider communities

The aim is to create a diverse network of COVID-19 'Community Champions' and community, faith leaders and respected voices; who can help address barriers, misconceptions, myths and amplify truths around the virus and the protection the vaccine offers.

As part of the response / management of Covid-19, schools and care homes have been a particular focus. The Public Health On-Call Cell has been operational since the summer 2020, 7 days a week, 12 hours a day and has supported, advised and guided over 5,700 contacts, with the majority being from care homes and schools. Additional resource has been taken on to continue this dedicated service.

**Contact details for this service:** [walsall.healthprotection@nhs.net](mailto:walsall.healthprotection@nhs.net) (01922) 658065.

Finally, the impact that Covid-19 has / is having from an acute (**hospital**) perspective. The KPIs on inpatients and critical care bed occupancy have increased throughout January, emphasising that the need for the national lockdown was essential in order to help protect the NHS.

As a Local Authority, collaborative joint working will continue to ensure the best possible outcomes for Walsall residents.

#### **4. Financial information**

Funding for response to the Covid-19 pandemic is supported by a grant of £1.3m. Further funding is also provided by government for those residents who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEVs).

#### **5. Reducing Inequalities**

The impact on Walsall residents as well as staff Covid-19 continues, however there will come a time where it will diminish and the learning from this pandemic can be put into perspective. Some of this work, such as the recent resident survey and the enablement of remote working is already taking place.

In addition to responding to this pandemic, the organisation continues to work hard on reducing inequalities in Walsall, be that through the refresh of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) to identify focussed priorities; through other corporate strategies such as the Corporate Plan and through the transformation work.

#### **6. Decide**

Response to the pandemic continues with a Partnership approach. The pace of increased cases at present (locally within Walsall, but across the country as a whole) has led to a management approach as opposed to a containment approach. Those key organisations and Partners continue to meet weekly as part of IMT to work collaboratively and will continue to do so at present.

There are also weekly Outbreak Plan meetings involving a broad range of colleagues across the Local Authority and Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust. These



meetings have a core agenda and cover - Business insight, risks, schools, local businesses, care homes, regulatory services, local test and trace and communications. Regular meetings across the region also assist with future decision-making.

## **7. Respond**

As individuals, we all have a responsibility and can do our part, however small. The message of “hands, face, space” is imperative.

The Local Outbreak Engagement Board (LOEB) (a sub group of the Health and Wellbeing Board) meets regularly to discuss core Covid-19 related matters and questions are encouraged from members of the public. The meeting can also be watched live through YouTube. The next one is 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

## **8. Review**

Covid-19 is reviewed regularly through a vast number of avenues and throughout the hierarchy of the organisation. Key general information is available on the Walsall Council website - [HERE](#) with subsections covering FAQs as well as weekly refreshed data.

## **Background papers**

Key links to Covid-19 related intelligence include:

- [Walsall Council](#)
- [gov.uk website](#)
- [www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-mental-health-and-wellbeing-surveillance-spotlights/ethnicity-covid-19-mental-health-and-wellbeing-surveillance-report](#)

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	KPI	Latest Data	Comments	Source
1	7 day incidence	201 Cases (23 <sup>rd</sup> Mar to 29 <sup>th</sup> Mar)	Walsall's case reduction has slowed down recently	PHE Line List (last refreshed 31 Mar) <i>Note the last 4 days are subject to reporting delays</i>
2	7 day rate trends	 <p>Rate per 100,000</p> <p>Week ending date</p>	<p>The rate is currently at 70 per 100,000 population (a 2% reduction compared to the previous week). Walsall ranked 67/314 English LTLA.</p> <p>(Each bar represents a rate for positive cases over 7 days; the date range for the rate is always earlier than for the case count in KPI 1 due to reporting delays)</p>	PHE Daily Report (last refreshed 31 Mar)
3	Exceedance RAG rating	<div>24/03/21 25/03/21 26/03/21</div> <div>27/03/21 28/03/21 29/03/21 30/03/21</div>	<p>Walsall is flagged <b>RED</b> in 4 out of the last 7 exceedance reports.</p> <p>NOTE: Daily exceedance should be considered alongside other available indicators.</p>	PHE Daily Exceedance Report (last refreshed 31 Mar)
4	PCR Positivity rate in last 7 days (pillars 1 & 2)	<p>Pillar 1 = 0.9%</p> <p>Pillar 2 = 3.4%</p> <p>Pillar 1 &amp; 2 = 2.7%</p>	<p>Pillar 2 for Walsall is 3.4%, compared with B&amp;BC (3.3%) and England (2.6%).</p> <p>NOTE: Positivity are based only on PCR testing. B&amp;BC covers Birmingham &amp; Black Country</p>	PHE LA Report (last refreshed 31 Mar)
5	Situation Awareness	AMBER	There continues to be community transmission but very few exposures / outbreaks across the borough	Daily PHE line list mapping / PHE outbreaks & issues / PHE LA Report (last refreshed on 31 Mar)
6	Walsall Hospital NHS Trust Inpatients	 <p>Trust: BLACK COUNTRY, SANDWELL AND THE DUCKLEY, THE ROYAL, WALSALL HEALTH, TOTAL</p>	30 confirmed COVID-19 inpatients	Daily Trust Sitrep (last refreshed on 31 Mar)
7	HDU/ITU Occupancy	 <p>Trust: Sandwell and West Bir., The Dudley Group Plc, The Royal Wolverhampton, Walsall Health, Total</p>	7 HDU/ITU beds being occupied due to COVID-19.	Daily Trust Sitrep (last refreshed on 31 Mar)

Electoral Ward Uptake % for All Ethnic Group(s) and 50 to 59, 60 to 69, 70 to 79 and 1 more Age Group(s)  
(updated 01/04/2021 10:08:43)



**15 April 2021**

**S106 Planning Obligations**

**Ward(s):** All affected.

**Portfolios:**

Councillor A Andrew – Deputy Leader of the Council, Regeneration

Councillor C Towe – Education & Skills

Councillor O Butler – Clean & Green

**1. Aim**

- 1.1 S106 Planning Obligations are legal obligations entered into to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal. Planning Obligations are primarily negotiated as part of the determination of planning applications in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF), Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (Regulation 122)(as amended), policy DEL1 of the Black Country Core Strategy, policy GP3 of Walsall Unitary Development Plan and adopted Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 1.2 Planning obligations assist in mitigating the impact of unacceptable development to make it acceptable in planning terms. Planning obligations may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission if they meet the tests that they are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. They must be:
  - Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
  - Directly related to the development; and
  - Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development
- 1.3 They seek to secure contributions from developers to offset the impact that their scheme may have on a local community. These contributions can ensure essential infrastructure is provided by developers at the time that their development is brought forward rather than place a reliance on the Local Authority to fund the improvements or to leave the communities without the necessary infrastructure to cater for the need generated by the development.
- 1.4 This report seeks to deliver the following information:
  - i) To advise Members of the completed Planning Obligations (section 106 agreements/unilateral undertakings/ supplemental deeds of variation) that have been negotiated with planning permissions during the period specified.

- ii) To show a breakdown of the number of affordable houses negotiated and the level of contributions collected and due to be collected subject to the commencement of developments related to education, open space, health and other requirements.
- iii) To advise Members on how the planning obligations are negotiated and contributions allocated and Members role in this process.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That committee notes the report on infrastructure secured through S106 Planning Obligations during the period from the start of Q3 in 2019/20 (October – December 2019) to the end of Q4 2019/20 (January – March 2020) including details of committed/spent funding and infrastructure secured.
- 2.2 That committee endorses the procedure for securing necessary infrastructure through S106 Planning Obligations and the role of Members in the process.

## **3. Report detail – know**

- 3.1 Updates on the completion and processing of S106 agreements are provided to the Planning Committee. The latest report was presented to the Planning Committee on the 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and covered the period from the start of Q3 in 2019/20 (October – December 2019) to the end of Q4 2019/20 (January – March 2020). It provided a summary of all Planning Obligations that have been secured as part of the determination of planning applications in accordance with adopted policies of the Council. These details are set out in the attached appendix 1 and Members will note that the information has been broken down into the various types of contributions.
- 3.2 In considering the S106 Planning Obligation Update Report at their meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021 the Planning Committee resolved that; *a report be presented to a Scrutiny Committee to see how Members are engaged on the spending of monies collected and report to include details of all service area expenditure on specific projects. All elected Members to receive a copy of the report in advance of reporting to a Scrutiny Committee.* As a consequence this report now updates the information provided to Planning Committee to include further information in the appendix relating to service area spend and commitment towards specific projects and to include a detail on process of Member involvement.
- 3.3 In accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations any authority that receives a contribution from development through the levy or section 106 planning obligations must prepare an Infrastructure Funding Statement. The Infrastructure Funding Statement is an annual report, published by the Council to provide a summary of all financial and non-financial developer contributions relating to Section 106 agreements within the district. This S106 Planning Obligations update report forms the basis of the

infrastructure funding statement and covers the financial period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

- 3.4 Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 enables developers to submit unilateral undertakings, or local authorities to reach agreements with developers, for certain works to be carried out in association with a development. The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (Regulation 122) sets out a statutory requirement that Planning Obligations must be necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms; relevant to planning; and directly related in scale and kind to the proposed development. They must also be reasonable in all other respects.
- 3.5 The need for securing infrastructure through a S106 Planning Obligation is triggered by the scale and nature of a proposed development. Planning Obligations provide a means of ensuring that developers contribute towards the infrastructure and services that Walsall Council deem necessary to facilitate proposed developments in accordance with local and national planning policy. They are generally, although not always, triggered by the need to provide for infrastructure to accommodate major developments e.g. residential developments of 10 dwellings or more or new buildings where the floor space created exceeds 1000m<sup>2</sup>.
- 3.6 The Council is required to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019, Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended), policy DEL1 of the Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) and policy GP3 of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) when seeking developer contributions. The NPPF encourages Local Planning Authorities to be flexible when seeking Planning Obligations to prevent development being stalled, an approach that Walsall Council's Development Management service has already been taking over the last few years to facilitate development in the Borough and will continue to do so where necessary.
- 3.7 The Government views planning obligations as useful instruments where they are necessary to a proposed development to overcome obstacles that would otherwise result in the refusal of planning permission. They must not be used to effectively buy planning permissions.
- 3.8 *Process and Consultation* - Where it is established that a planning proposal triggers the need for a S106 Planning Obligation to secure provision of infrastructure this is calculated in accordance with the adopted Development Plan policies and Supplementary Planning Documents. At this point during the determination of an application the local planning authority notify the developer of the requirement and carry out consultations with the service areas to determine the level of provision required and where contributions could be utilised. This must consider the tests set out in Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 i.e. they must be necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms; relevant to planning; and directly related in scale and kind to the proposed development as well as reasonable in all other respects.



- 3.9 Any planning application where it is proposed to require a S106 Planning Obligation is reported to Planning Committee for their determination. The officers' report seeks a delegation from the Committee to negotiate and complete the S106 Planning Obligation and if agreed then engagement with Members follows. Whilst the specifics in regard to the level of provision is fixed by the policy framework there is some flexibility as to where any contributions are spent (bearing in mind the tests in Regulation 122). Once Planning Committee has determined that a S106 Planning Obligation is to be secured the planning officers will engage with ward members and officers in service areas to explain the level of contributions available and negotiate specific provisions to be included in the S106 Planning Obligation.
- 3.10 As officers cannot predetermine the outcome of a decision by Planning Committee it is usual practice to engage with ward members once a decision to secure a S106 Planning Obligation has been resolved by Planning Committee. For consistency it is proposed that planning officers' co-ordinate negotiations between the ward members and service area teams responsible for the expenditure to ensure that any agreement reached in regard to expenditure is allocated in accordance with the policy and legislation and accordance with Regulation 122. Officer training and procedures will be reviewed and updated to ensure members are involved as appropriate and ensure consistent delivery of the process.
- 3.11 Provision of infrastructure is also subject to development viability. As part of the consideration of planning applications developers often submit a Financial Appraisal which is reviewed on behalf of the local planning authority to determine whether the full policy compliant level of infrastructure/contributions can be secured. Often this results in lower levels of provision able to be secured but again, this will be determined by Planning Committee who ultimately resolve whether to accept the level of contributions offered before negotiations with ward members.
- 3.12 Of the £3.4m received in contributions as at 31 March 2020, approximately 59% has been spent or committed and 41% remains unspent. The majority of the remaining balance comprises of a series of contributions for development that has either recently been approved or the target dates for expenditure are yet to be reached.
- 3.13 A summary of all expenditure is provided below.

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>S106 Contribution received as at 31/03/2020</b>	<b>Spent to 31/03/2020</b>	<b>Committed/ Allocated</b>	<b>Balance Remaining</b>
Affordable Housing	£1,539,078	£0.00	£254,801	£1,284,277
Children's Services	£275,505	£0.00	£275,505	£0.00
Clean & Green	£1,616,973	£823,109	£660,392	£133,472

TOTAL	£3,431,556	£823,109	£1,190,698	£1,417,749
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- 3.14. The latest expenditure of received contributions is provided in the attached tableAppendix 1.

#### **4. *Financial information***

- 4.1 The briefing of members as to the outcome of individual Planning Obligations together with the total sums collected within the year will help inform and assure Members of the accounting probity and monitoring that is being followed by officers.

#### **5. *Reducing Inequalities***

- 5.1 Through the careful use of Section 106 monies and the policies which lead to contributions being made, the Council can seek to ensure that new development can support individuals, families and communities and reduce health inequalities primarily through the delivery of affordable housing, new education provision and new open space facilities for children and adults. These outcomes accord with the aims of the Marmot Review.

#### **6. *Decide***

- 6.1 Whilst the level of infrastructure provision/contributions collected is determined in accordance with national and local policy there is an important role for members in helping to determine where such resources should be prioritised.
- 6.2 At present, officers from the various service areas advise the local planning authority on where provision is required and where contributions ought to be spent in line with existing Council priorities. It is considered that consultation with ward members once it has been resolved by Planning Committee that a contribution is necessary, will enable consistency of approach to ensure that policy and legislation is followed and the needs of the affected community are addressed.
- 6.3 Planning Committee has more recently resolved to accept partial contributions on the basis of development viability but to require a review mechanism within the S106 Planning Obligation in the event that viability improves over the course of the build. Committee may wish to consider adopting this approach to all schemes where a viability review has been carried out at the time of application to ensure consistency and more certainty for developers.

#### **7. *Respond***

- 7.1 On a case by case basis, officers will engage with ward members about new developments where the Planning Committee has resolved to secure a S106 Planning Obligation to determine where any contributions will be utilised to ensure greater transparency.



## **8. Review**

- 8.1 It is intended that twice yearly reports continue to be provided to Planning Committee to update members on what monies have been secured through S106 Planning Obligations, how that has been invested to date and what monies, if any, remain outstanding.
- 8.2 Through this process, officers, members, the public and developers should be able to understand the value of the S106 process and how any contributions have been used to offset the impact of new developments.

### **Background papers**

Section 106 Planning Obligations Update Report to Planning Committee of 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

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## Appendix 1

Application Number	Site Address	Ward	Service Area	Description of obligations	Expiry Date	S106 Contribution Received	Spent to date	Committed (Allocated)	Details of Spent to date	Details of Committed (Allocated)	Balance Remaining
10/1593/FL	Silver Street, Brownhills	Brownhills	Affordable Housing	Within Walsall within the locality	30/04/2019	£58,294	£0	£58,294		Part contribution to the purchase of 2 long term empty houses that have been through the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) process. The 2 homes are being used as affordable temporary accommodation.	£0
11/0516/FL	Victoria Avenue, Bloxwich	Bloxwich East	Affordable Housing	Within Walsall within the locality	N/A	£246,250	£0	£0			£246,250
05/1566/OL/W3 & 07/0151/FL/W3	The Junction, Willenhall	Willenhall South	Affordable Housing	Within Walsall within the locality	N/A	£65,000	£0	£0			£65,000
12/1486/FL	Former St Margarets Hospital,	Pheasey Park Farm	Affordable Housing	Within Walsall within the locality	N/A	£196,508	£0	£196,508		Part contribution to the purchase of 2 long term empty houses that have been through the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) process. The 2 homes are being used as affordable temporary accommodation.	£0
16/1669	Rushall Mews, Lichfield Road	Rushall-Shelfield	Affordable Housing	Within Walsall within the locality	N/A	£224,088	£0	£0			£224,088
15/1268	41 Leighswood Road	Aldridge Central & South	Affordable Housing	Within Walsall within the locality	30/01/2025	£146,075	£0	£0			£146,075
17/0195	Adj 16 and car park R/O 16-22 High Street Aldridge	Aldridge Central & South	Affordable Housing	Within Walsall within the locality	27/06/2022	£216,700	£0	£0			£216,700
17/1447	Adj 16 and car park R/O 16-22 High Street Aldridge	Aldridge Central & South	Affordable Housing	Within Walsall within the locality	23/02/2025	£11,712	£0	£0			£11,712
19/1514	Victoria Road/Slater Street, Darlaston	Bentley & Darlaston North	Affordable Housing	Within Walsall within the locality	17/03/2030	£279,248	£0	£0			£279,248
18/0072	Heathfield Lane West	Darlaston South	Affordable Housing	Within Walsall within the locality	N/A	£95,206	£0	£0			£95,206
<b>Affordable Housing Total</b>						<b>£1,539,078</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£254,801</b>			<b>£1,284,277</b>
11/1364/FL	Norfolk Place	Birchills Leamore	Clean & Green	Open space within wider area of the site.	03/09/2017	£185,753	£176,122	£0	CFR 898 Reedswood Park, Arboretum waterplay, Birch Street cricket carpet,	Reedswood Cycling project	£9,632

									Reedswood bio-diversity project ERDF match. Hadley Road fence, Bentley West seat, benches, King George 5th park paths, carpark, trees		
11/0516/FL	Victoria Avenue	Bloxwich East	Clean & Green	Towards open space within the wider vicinity of the site.	16/04/2018	£82,316	£77,434	£4,873	Maintenance topslice 15%, KG5 trim trail, Reedswood ERDF match, Barnsley bins. Bloxwich fountain/ fencing, Pat Collins clock, bench and gate. Leamore Park fence, Bloxwich flower beds, Leamore CCTV Reedswood footpath, fencing.	KG5 accessible play equipment	£10
10/1593/FL	Watermead Grange	Brownhills	Clean & Green	Towards open space	29/11/2018	£103,119	£100,801	£2,318	Maintenance topslice 15%. Holland Park ground reinforcement, Clayhanger PF drainage, Holland Park Drainage, signs, shelter, footpath. Clayhanger paths, fencing. Capital project 18/19.	Holland Park car park marking/ skate park	£0
12/0736/FL	Former St Johns School	Aldridge North & Walsall Wood	Clean & Green	Towards providing, servicing and maintaining public open space within vicinity of development	10/06/2021	£29,745	£7,068	£22,677	Maintenance uplift 15%	Anchor meadows Park improvements/ Walsall wood open space improvements	£0
10/1706/FL	Redhouse School	Aldridge Central & South	Clean & Green	Towards compensatory sports pitch provision	13/11/2020	£78,800	£11,854	£0	Maintenance uplift 15%		£66,946
13/1529/FL	Park Tavern	St Matthews	Clean & Green	Open space contribution	21/04/2022	£29,496	£26,097	£3,399	Maintenance uplift 15%. Chuckery pocket park, Reedswood Park rethinking project match funding	Arboretum match funding Towns fund projects	£0
09/0215/FL	Leve Lane Willenhall	Willenhall South	Clean & Green	Provision of Open space within the wider area of the site	27/06/2024	£16,383	£9,321	£7,061	Maintenance uplift 15%. Willenhall park bins	Willenhall park improvements	£0
16/1241	Teddesley Street	St Matthews	Clean & Green	Urban Open Space contribution towards the maintenance or enhancement of habitats and provision of public access, public information boards and measures to combat anti-social behaviour at the urban open spaces at Mill Lane Nature Reserve and the area of land to the east of Mill Lane and north of Borneo Street	25/09/2022	£55,239	£8,286	£46,953	Maintenance uplift 15%	Mill lane LNR and Borneo street north improvements	£0

				Walsall and for no other purpose whatsoever.							
15/1268	Leighswood Road	Aldridge Central & South	Clean & Green	Leighswood and The Croft Open Spaces	31/01/2025	£58,138	£18,619	£39,519	Maintenance uplift 15%	Play area skate park, access and habitat works at Leighswood and The Croft O.S.	£0
15/1606	Bulls Head Bloxwich	Bloxwich East	Clean & Green	KGV maintenance. Provision of open space improvements and works within Poplar Avenue, Old Hall Pool and Wilkes Avenue	22/03/2023	£9,446	£1,417	£8,029	Maintenance uplift 15%	KG5 accessible play equipment	£0
18/0072	Land at Heathfield Lane West, Darlaston	Darlaston South	Clean & Green	Healthy walking/trim trail, landscaping and enhancement works Darlaston Rec Centre, Hall Street. Enhancement of facilities including construction of fishing platforms at Heathfield Lane fishing pool. Public information boards/signage at 5 locations and access improvements at 3 locations.	31/01/2024	£192,739	£28,911	£163,828	Maintenance uplift 15%	Park improvements at George Rose, Kings Hill Park, Victoria Park, Heathfield Road fishing pool and Walsall canal. Bio-diversity improvements ERDF match funding	£0
17/0195	16-22 High Street Aldridge	Aldridge Central & South	Clean & Green	Towards provision, upgrading/maintenance of open space in the locality	27/10/2022	£61,519	£9,228	£0	Maintenance uplift 15%		£52,291
17/1447	R/o 16/22 High Street Aldridge	Aldridge Central & South	Clean & Green	Open space provision upgrading or maintenance at Anchor Meadow		£945	£142	£0			£803
04/0845/OL/W3	Former Derby Arms, Raleigh Street	Pleck	Clean & Green	Towards improvement of open space facilities in the wider area.	2012/13	£2,000	£1,160	£840	Maintenance topslice (15%). Reedswood - Replace bench slats. Take out dog waste bin, - anti slip painting of skate park.	Reedswood Park	£0
03/1308/FL/E4	Stackhouse Drive	Pelsall	Clean & Green	Towards provision of open space.	2013/14	£2,758	£699	£0	Maintenance topslice (15%). 6" tracked chipper additional one week hire. 6" tracked chipper additional one week hire		£2,059

03/1853/FL/E6	Hawbush Rd former Welcome Stranger	Blakenall	Clean & Green	Towards provision of off- site recreational facilities.	2013/14	£3,549	£2,550	£0	Maintenance topslice (15%). Leamore Park relocate bench and bin. Thorns. Leamore Park pavilion. Fire doors and frames. Remove redundant benches, pegs Decorate 2 rooms and make good	Access barriers in Goscote Valley	<b>£999</b>
02/1494/FL/E2	Field Road(Industrial Est) Bloxwich	Bloxwich East	Clean & Green	Towards the enhancement of off-site open space	2014/15	£5,516	£827	£0	Maintenance topslice (15%)	Bins at Wallington Heath pool	<b>£4,689</b>
02/1983/FL/W3	Providence Close/Leamore Lane	Birchills Leamore	Clean & Green	To be used towards improving public open space facilities in the wider area.	2016/17	£1,462	£219	£0	Maintenance uplift 15%	Leamore Park story telling garden	<b>£1,243</b>
BC64477P	Brewers Drive	Pelsall	Clean & Green	Maintenance of open space.	2017/18	£40,000	£6,000	£0	Maintenance uplift 15%		<b>£34,000</b>
06/2209/OL/E9	Shire Oak Reservoir	Aldridge North & Walsall Wood	Clean & Green	If so it should be used towards provision of urban open space.	2018/19	£61,070	£39,761	£21,309	Shire Oak LNR car park, footpaths. Oak park paths	Shire oak park footpaths	<b>£0</b>
13/1056/FL	Former Jebron works	Darlaston South	Clean & Green	Towards urban open space, in particular Kings Hill Park	2019/20	£49,250	£47,513	£1,737	Broadwater PF, reinstatement, George Rose Park trim trail, Kings Hill Park trim trail/ PA matting	Goal posts Great bridge road PF, Charnwood Close trees	<b>£0</b>
07/2731/FL/E11	Lichfield Road Rushall	Rushall- Shelfield	Clean & Green	Open space in the wider area of the site	2020/21	£56,559	£30,730	£25,829	Maintenance uplift 15%, Rushall skate park, planting, carpark. High Heath park drainage, cctv, fence	Shelfield Park footpath, Swan pool improvements	<b>£0</b>
15/0238/FL	Clothier Street School (Harry Perks Street)	Willenhall South	Clean & Green	Open space Willenhall area	2020/21	£72,356	£67,323	£5,033	Maintenance uplift 15%, Rethinking Willenhall park match funding, Willenhall growing area, Friends, noticeboard, cctv, ecosurveys, splash pad.	Willenhall Park improvements	<b>£0</b>
15/1744	Park Lane/Wood Street	Bentley & Darlaston North	Clean & Green	Park Lane/Cook St open space	2021/22	£60,752	£21,113	£39,639	Maintenance uplift 15%, Rethinking Kings Hill Park match	Bentley Lane greenway	<b>£0</b>
15/1683	Land at Wilkes Avenue Bentley	Bentley & Darlaston North	Clean & Green	Public Realm in the locality - Poplar Avenue, Old Hall Pool and Wilkes Avenue open space	2021/22	£53,243	£27,486	£25,757	Maintenance uplift 15%, Rethinking Reedswood park match, Bentley greenway	Bentley Lane Green way	<b>£0</b>
16/1233	Daw End School Rushall	Rushall- Shelfield	Clean & Green	Open space provision and maintenance in the wider area of the site	2022/23	£106,262	£53,153	£0	Maintenance uplift 15%, Rethinking match Arboretum and airport, Highheath paths drainage.		<b>£53,109</b>
14/1345/FL	Former Coalpool Clinic	Blakenall	Clean & Green	Towards provision, upgrading/maintenance of open space in the	2022/23	£8,097	£4,515	£3,582	Maintenance uplift 15%, Leamore Park toilet	Improvements Goscote Valley	<b>£0</b>

				vicinity of the site							
16/1669	Rushall Mews - Open space	Rushall-Shelfield	Clean & Green	Cartbridge Lane allotments, Radley Play Area and Park Lime Pits	2023/24	£72,841	£26,782	£46,059	Maintenance uplift 15%, Cartbridge lane allotments fencing, gate.	Radleys play area, Park Lime pits footpaths	£0
16/1669	Rushall Mews - tree planting	Rushall-Shelfield	Clean & Green	New tree planting at Rushall Skate Park	2023/24	£11,820	£2,108	£9,712	Maintenance uplift 15%, tree stakes	Tree Planting Rushall PF	£0
17/0443	100 and 101 Union Street WV13 1PA	St Matthews	Clean & Green	Upgrading and/or maintenance of Fibbersley Nature Reserve and Willenhall Memorial Park	2024/25	£7,509	£1,126	£6,382	Maintenance uplift 15%	Improvements Fibbersley LNR	£0
14/1554/FL	Former Pelsall Labour Club (1 And 2)	Pelsall	Clean & Green	Provision, upgrading/maintenance of open space in the vicinity of the development	2024/25	£19,700	£2,955	£0	Maintenance uplift 15%		£16,745
15/0612/FL	BRICO - Stubbers Green Road, Aldridge	Aldridge Central & South	Clean & Green	Open space provision or maintenance in the wider area of the site	2019/20	£22,714	£3,407	£0	Maintenance uplift 15%		£19,307
16/1675	145-147 Lichfield Street Walsall (St Matthews Ward)	St Matthews	Clean & Green	Enhancement/maintenance of open space in the locality of the site	2021/22	£8,286	£1,243	£0	Maintenance uplift 15%		£7,043
16/0148	Springside, 2 Spring Lane Pelsall	Rushall-Shelfield	Clean & Green	Open space in locality	2021/22	£8,191	£1,229	£0	Maintenance uplift 15%		£6,963
14/1554/FL	Former Pelsall Labour Club (3)	Pelsall	Clean & Green	Provision, upgrading/maintenance of open space in the vicinity of the development	2024/25	£19,700	£2,955	£0	Maintenance uplift 15%		£16,745
14/1554/FL	Former Pelsall Labour Club (4)	Pelsall	Clean & Green	Provision, upgrading/maintenance of open space in the vicinity of the development	2024/25	£19,700	£2,955	£0	Maintenance uplift 15%		£16,745
			Clean & Green	Maintenance of open space		£0	£0	£175,856			-£175,856
<b>Clean &amp; Green Total</b>						<b>£1,616,973</b>	<b>£823,109</b>	<b>£660,392</b>			<b>£133,472</b>
09/1695/FL	Bell Lane, Bloxwich	Bloxwich West	Education	To be used towards provision of Secondary School education in accordance with UDP Policies GP3 (Planning Obligations) and 8.8 (Use of S106 for new / improved education facilities).	16/08/2017	£44,562	£0	£44,562	To part fund expansion scheme at Mary Elliot Special School		£0

06/2209/OL/E9	Shire Oak Reservoir, Chester Road	Aldridge North & Walsall Wood	Education	Towards provision of primary education facilities within 2 miles radius and secondary education facilities within 3 miles radius of the site in accordance with UDP Policies GP3 (Planning Obligations) and 8.8 (Use of S106 for new / improved education facilities) and Education SPD 2007.	N/A	£108,350	£0	£108,350	To part fund expansion scheme at Oakwood Special School		£0
05/2039/FL/E4	Binary House, Boatmans Lane	Aldridge North & Walsall Wood	Education	As part of a residential development at Binary House on Boatmans Lane, a Section 106 agreement was signed on 20th January 2006. There is no set location and the Council is under no obligation to spend these funds within a set time limit.	N/A	£45,046	£0	£45,046	To part fund the New Leaf PRU relocation		£0
06/0344/FL/E3	2 Coppice Road, Walsall, WS9 9BL	Aldridge North & Walsall Wood	Education	As part of a residential development on Coppice Lane, Walsall, a Section 106 agreement was signed on 16th June 2006. The agreement does not specify location or type of education facility. Also, the Council is under no obligation to spend these funds within a set time limit.	N/A	£29,021	£0	£29,021	To part fund the New Leaf PRU relocation		£0
06/0641/FL/E9	The Stag, Field Road	Bloxwich East	Education	As part of a residential development near The Stag on Field Road, a Section 106 agreement was signed in October 2006. The Council is under no obligation to spend these funds within a set time limit.	N/A	£3,625	£0	£3,625	To part fund the New Leaf PRU relocation		£0
07/2731/FL/E11	Land to the rear of 201-217 Lichfield road Rushall	Rushall-Shelfield	Education	As part of a residential development near Lichfield Road, a Section 106 agreement was signed on 14th April 2008. There is no set	17/12/2025	£44,901	£0	£44,901	To part fund the New Leaf PRU relocation		£0

				location however the Council is under obligation to spend these funds by 17th December 2025.							
Education Total						£275,505	£0	£275,505			£0
TOTALs						£3,431,556	£823,109	£1,190,698			£1,417,749



## Scrutiny Overview Committee

15 April 2021

### Scrutiny Good Practice and Benchmarking

**Ward(s):** All

**Portfolios:** All

#### 1. Aim

- 1.1 The role of good governance and scrutiny is critical to public trust and confidence in decision-making. In times of uncertainty and significant change, it is important that decisions are made in a way that is transparent, involves others and holds to account those responsible for implementation.
- 1.2 The Council has continually reviewed its scrutiny process and sought to make improvements over recent years.
- 1.3 For example during March and April 2015 Professor Steve Leach of De Montfort University undertook a review of the overview and scrutiny function at Walsall Council. Following the review, a report was produced detailing the findings. This included a series of recommendations for the future operation of the scrutiny function. Further to this, Council approved a new scrutiny structure at its meeting held on 3 June 2015
- 1.4 Further to this the Scrutiny Overview Committee led on implementing the new guidance for overview and scrutiny which was released by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government in May 2019. It provided advice for senior leaders, overview and scrutiny committee members and support officers. To take the guidance forward Scrutiny Overview Committee undertook an all member event to seek their views on how to proceed. This informed the Councils response to the guidance and helped to develop the scrutiny function and led to the following:
  - External training from the LGA attended by over 30 elected members;
  - The development of Scrutiny-Cabinet Protocol drafted by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the SOC and Leader and Deputy Leader;
  - A co-option scheme for scrutiny;
  - Amended sections of the Constitution regarding Member interests and scrutiny for feedback and recommendation to Council for approval;
  - Report writing and presentation guidance for officers;
    - o An updated and simplified scrutiny report template.
- 1.5 Further to this work and to seek how to develop scrutiny recent research and benchmarking has taken place to reflect on the way that scrutiny could be further evolved in Walsall, identify good practice and opportunities for new ways of working.

- 1.6 In addition to this a review of recent best practice has taken place and these findings are summarised in the report.

## **2. Recommendations**

**That:**

- 1. subject to the views of Members, a Member survey on how to improve the scrutiny process be undertaken in the new municipal year.**
- 2. The outcome of this survey be reported to the Scrutiny Overview Committee for Members.**

## **3. Report detail – know**

### **Context**

- 3.1 Varying pieces of legislation require local authorities to have in place specific structural processes in order to carry out its overview and scrutiny role. The Localism Act 2011 sought to consolidate a number of provisions, which are still formally located in the 2000 Act. This incorporates powers originally brought in through measures such as the Health and Social Care Act 2001, Local Government Act 2003, Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. Powers to scrutinise community safety partnerships can still be found in the Police and Justice Act 2006.

The pre-requisite requirements for local authority scrutiny are:

1. At least one overview and scrutiny committee that is politically proportionate (Local Government Act 2000);
2. A requirement to have education co-opted members on overview and scrutiny committees that deal with education matters (Local Government Act 2000 and Parent Governor Representations Regulations 2001);
3. A requirement to have an overview and scrutiny committee to consider health service matters (Health and Social Care Act 2001) including the requirement to respond to consultations that constitute a substantial variation in service (Local Authority (Overview and Scrutiny Committees Health Scrutiny Functions) Regulations 2002);
4. A requirement to have an overview and scrutiny committee to consider crime and disorder matters at least once every 12 months (Police and Justice Act 2006 and Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009).
5. A requirement to have an overview and scrutiny committee to consider flood risk management functions that may affect the local authority's area (Flood Risk Management Act 2010).

## Models of scrutiny

- 3.2 CfGS states 'There is no right approach' to the structure of scrutiny committees and equally there is no one right approach to chairing or any agreement about what 'adequate' resourcing of scrutiny looks like. The CfGs also stated that it is difficult to compare the committee structures due to the different circumstances of each authority. It notes that scrutiny structures are often a reflection of the culture in which it operates and it's agreed role. Form should follow function, and it is only when members and officers have a clear sense of the role of scrutiny, its approach to work programming and impact, that the structure to support the work can be properly evaluated.
- 3.3 The model of scrutiny currently utilised at Walsall is one that has evolved based on a model recommended by Professor Steven Leach following his review of scrutiny in Walsall in 2015:

### Commissioning model

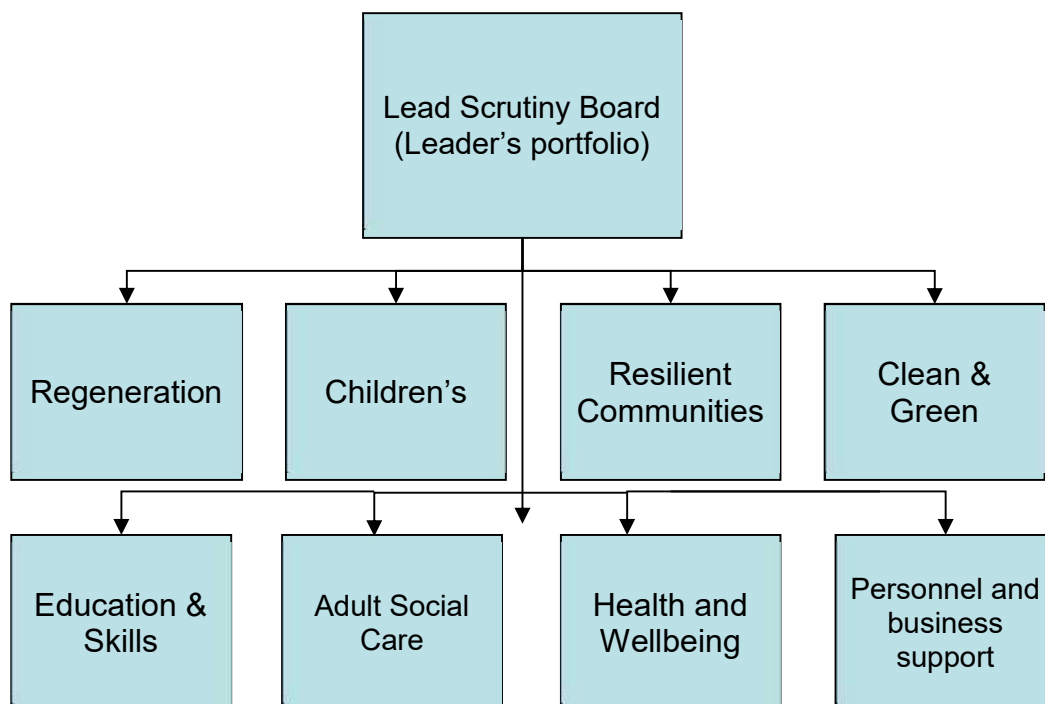
- 3.4 The commissioning model is one that Professor Leach thought Walsall could work towards introducing. Here a single overview and scrutiny committee has all the statutory functions vested in it. Members then engage through a combination of committee work and numerous task and finish groups that produce reports and recommendations to the Commissioning Committee. Tameside, and Bury carry out scrutiny in this way.



<p><b>Advantages</b></p> <p>Streamlined approach.</p> <p>Increase member capacity to deal with detailed issues as task and finish groups.</p> <p>Officer resources realigned away from heavy concentration on administrative role to increased policy focus supporting task and finish groups.</p>	<p><b>Disadvantages</b></p> <p>Cultural change required by Members and Officers.</p> <p>Some areas of work could be neglected without a structured approach to what is covered and by whom.</p> <p>Question over handling of health and crime and disorder roles.</p> <p>Cuts across Executive Director roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>Where would Call-in's and petitions be reported?</p> <p>How would special responsible allowances be distributed?</p> <p>May require increased senior officer time if several pieces of work are commissioned within their area / alternatively may reduce senior officer time if less work is commissioned in their area.</p> <p>Unclear how successful this model is in operation at a council of this size.</p>
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### Portfolio model

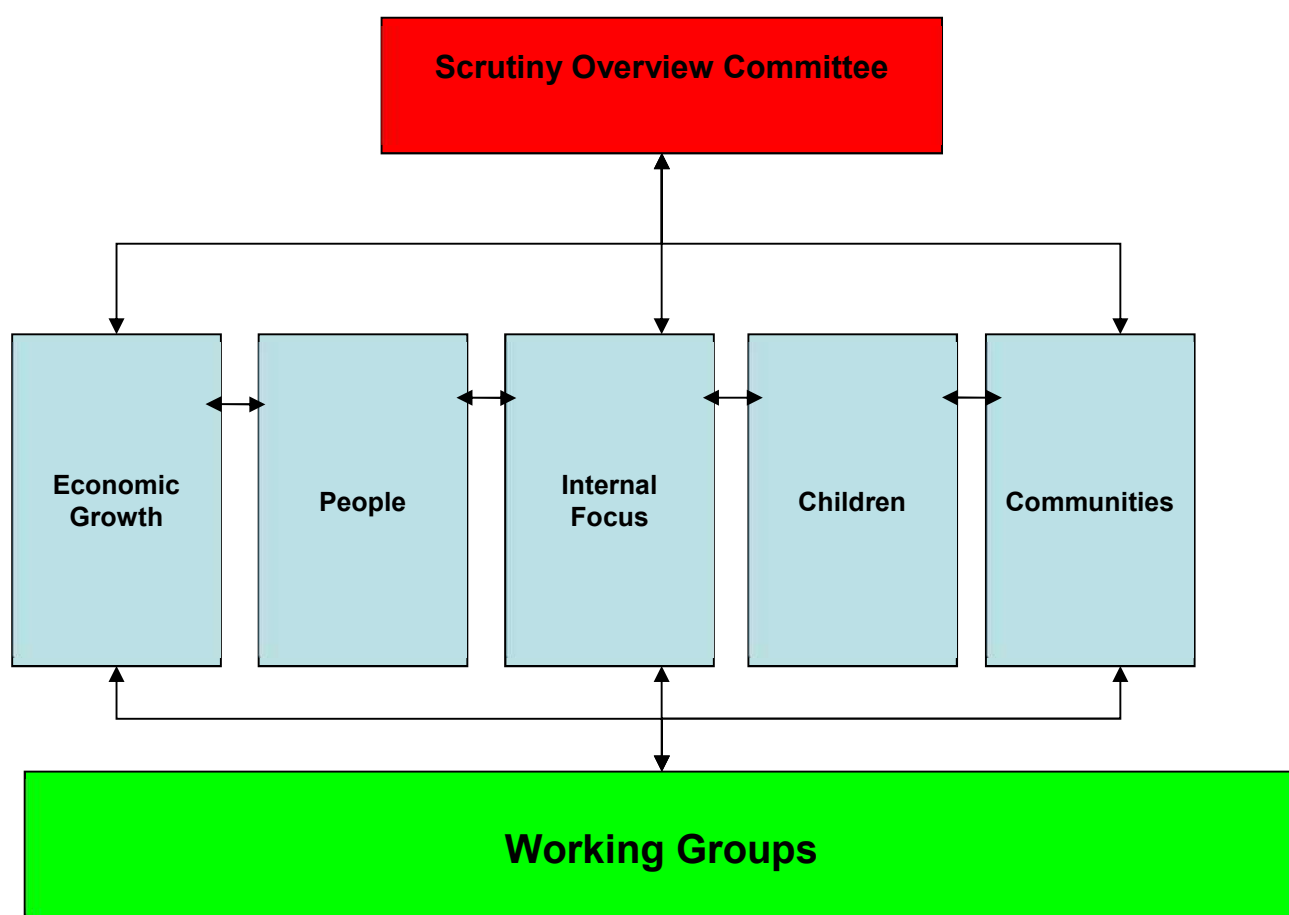
- 3.5 Another scrutiny model could be an overview and scrutiny committee per Cabinet portfolio. Coventry and Birmingham Council describe their model as Portfolio based with Birmingham feedback that this model can create cross over with agenda items. This could be as follows:



Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Clear link between portfolio and Scrutiny remit</p> <p>Scrutiny remit would be clear and in most cases smaller than the current directorate focussed model.</p> <p>Health and Crime and Disorder scrutiny would fall simply under the portfolio that held those responsibilities.</p>	<p>9 Portfolios (currently) to cover makes implementing and maintaining this option very resource heavy. Officer and Member capacity limited.</p> <p>Scrutiny work programme could mirror cabinets at the expense of other important non related cabinet issues.</p> <p>Inward focus, lack of external scrutiny</p> <p>Refresh of scrutiny remits would be required on changes to portfolio remits.</p>

### Strategic Plan Model

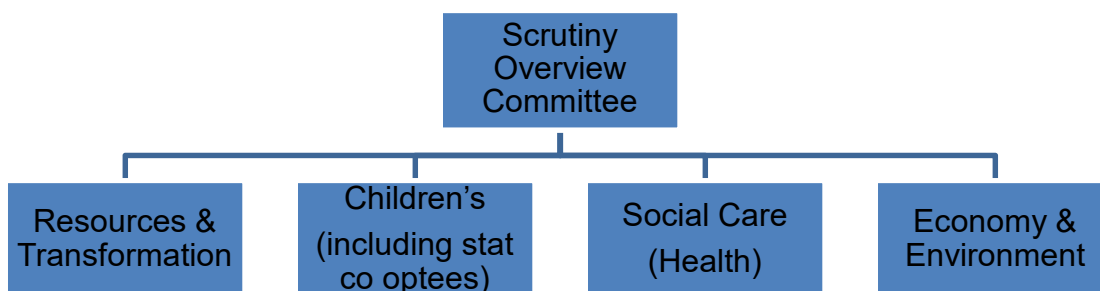
- 3.6 Alternatively, a model that was based on the five strategic priorities for the borough as set out in the Corporate Plan could be adopted. Sandwell, Solihull, Gateshead, and Wakefield adopt the strategic plan approach. Under this model, the structure could look like this:



<b>Advantages</b> Lends well to external scrutiny. Focus on delivery of priorities by partners rather than Council focussed.  Increased ability to deal with cross cutting issues.  More outward focus.  Potentially easier to engage partners with remits.	<b>Disadvantages</b> Potential difficulties with remits being understood.  More reliant on partner buy-in.  Question over where Health and Crime and disorder would sit – as separate committee or as part of Walsall Plan perspective?  Would take time and resource to embed.  Cuts across Executive Director roles and responsibilities.
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### Directorate focussed model

- 3.7 Dudley, Bradford, and Rochdale take a directorate based approach. In this model the Scrutiny Overview Committee would act as a lead panel to coordinate cross cutting issues.



<b>Advantages</b>  A straightforward model.  Any carry over items and working groups can be easily transferred from year to year.  Clear accountability i.e. Executive Director for each directorate reports to 1 Scrutiny Committee.	<b>Disadvantages</b>  Directorate structures change, therefore Panel remits become misaligned to directorate.  Potentially inefficient in the scrutiny of partnership issues.  Not enough outward focus as tendency could be to focus on Council issues.  Perception that the large areas of Social Care and Health Scrutiny has a diminished status as part of a Panel with a larger remit.
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## **Summary of benchmarking findings**

- 3.8 As part of a benchmarking exercise, Walsall's nearest and statistical neighbours<sup>1</sup> were contacted to determine their scrutiny arrangements – fifteen Local Authorities were contacted. They were asked about their structure, financial scrutiny arrangements, statutory scrutiny officer, scrutiny leads and their working group support. A summary of the findings can be found below. A full breakdown can be found in Appendix 1.
- 3.9 Out of fifteen Authorities who responded, five were broadly directorate based, four were priority/vision based, two were portfolio based, two were a task and finish / Management coordination Board model, one was a mixture and one was a policy/performance split.
- 3.10 The majority of Authorities did not have a dedicated finance scrutiny committee, with most reporting that this was considered by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee or the Management Board. Birmingham was the only authority with a dedicated finance committee.
- 3.11 Most scrutiny committees were not chaired by opposition members, eleven out of fifteen authorities had chairs from the ruling group, with just one authority having all opposition chairs (Bolton). Four authorities had a mix of opposition and ruling group chairs. Out of seventy committees (across all fifteen local authorities), nine committees were chaired by opposition members (13%).
- 3.12 The majority of Authorities appeared to have assigned this role to the Democratic Services Manager (the grade of the DSM may differ across authorities), with others assigning this to a service Director.
- 3.13 Most authorities did not have dedicated support to scrutiny, and the committee lead role was mostly taken by Directors, with one Council noting that Directors supported Cabinet and Assistant Directors supported scrutiny. It was reported that Service Managers commonly supported working groups.
- 3.14 At least one third of the Councils canvassed stated that they had a review of scrutiny planned indicative that similar conversations are happening in many authorities.

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<sup>1</sup> Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Wolverhampton, Bolton, Bradford, Bury, Gateshead, Oldham, Rochdale, Tameside, Wakefield, Wigan.

## **CfGS –The Good scrutiny guide (June 2019)**

- 3.15 This guidance, reflects the “four principles” of good scrutiny developed by CfGS in 2003 which remain relevant today. These are that effective overview and scrutiny should:
- Provide constructive “critical friend” challenge;
  - Amplify the voices and concerns of the public;
  - Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role;
  - Drive improvement in public services.
- 3.16 CfGS states there are three further components of good scrutiny and good governance, which support and reinforce these principles. These components are necessary in order for democracy at a local level to be participative; they are necessary for good scrutiny to thrive. These are:
- Accountability – an environment where responsibility for services and decisions is clear and where those holding responsibility can and are answerable for success and failure;
  - Transparency – the publication, proactively, of information relating to services and decisions to allow local people, and others, to hold policymakers and decision-makers to account;
  - Involvement – rules, principles and processes whereby a wide range of stakeholders (including elected representatives) can play active roles in holding to account, and influencing and directing the development of policy.
- 3.17 Effective scrutiny depends on the organisational culture, behaviours and attitudes of an authority. It is important that the environment conducive to effective scrutiny is led and owned by members.
- 3.18 The value in drafting an ‘executive-scrutiny protocol’ often derives from the conversations that precede its agreement, rather than the document itself.
- 3.19 CfGS recommend that councils have an area of focus, scrutiny should focus its work on what can add most value (rather than generalised oversight). There are several ways to investigate a topic, including
- Scrutiny reviews or task and finish reviews.
  - Ordinary committee meetings.
  - Single issue committee meetings.
  - Single issue informal meeting.
  - Short scrutiny review.
  - More traditional longer scrutiny review.
  - Time limited committee.
- 3.20 CfGS suggests that pre-decision scrutiny gives scrutiny an important means to influence decisions, and improve them. This can be done shortly before a decision is made or several months before a planned decision. Post decision scrutiny can be achieved through call-in or post decision review of performance and finance information.

- 3.21 Scrutiny should always be informed by evidence, although this is subject to interpretation. It is important to understand what evidence does and does not tell us. Although it is acknowledged that, there are challenges in obtaining information in the first place, receiving too much information, duplication of work carried out by others.
- 3.22 The guide sets out expectations and the skillset and capability of chairs and committee members. Councils may wish to think further about how they articulate the qualities of a good chair, and provide assurance that the attributes are being taken into account. Also notes that other members, as well as officers, have a responsibility to support and assist the chair.
- 3.23 The guidance also highlights three particular models of scrutiny support. These are explained below.
1. Specialist – ‘dedicated scrutiny officer’
  2. Integrated – a single officer provides administrative and policy support to a committee
  3. Committee – Democratic services officers administer committee meetings and support from within council service departments.
- 3.24 To support the scrutiny function and to promote it within the organisation. The need for the support of senior statutory officers is highlighted. Ultimately, it is up to the council to decide who to designate to carry out this role. Some choose senior officers some select more junior officers (advantages and disadvantages of this described).

### **Key findings of 2019 CfGS annual scrutiny survey 2019**

- 3.25 In 2019, the Centre for Public Scrutiny carried out a comprehensive annual survey of overview and scrutiny in local government (62% response rate). Overall, the results reflect trends identified throughout the 2010s a gradual fall in the level of officer support for scrutiny and worries about effectiveness tied up with those about resourcing.
- 3.26 Resourcing
- Average number of FTE scrutiny officers per authority falls again;
  - Most common support arrangement for scrutiny is now one where democratic services officers provide some policy support to committees alongside other duties;
  - Respondents suggest a steady state to scrutiny support in the near future – no big drops expected, but no improvements either;
  - Drop in resources continues to have an impact on effectiveness, although the model of scrutiny support less so;
  - Concept of “discretionary budget” for scrutiny has loosened significantly as a result of changes in support arrangements

### 3.27 Impact and influence

- Councils with a dedicated scrutiny officer resource tend to be more effective at scrutiny;
- The quality of the scrutiny/executive relationship – and the presence of an scrutiny/executive protocol – makes a difference to effectiveness;
- There continues to be a perception that scrutiny makes an impact on the council and the lives of local people;
- Most councils are fairly systematic when it comes to selection of topics for the work programme;
- Most scrutiny recommendations are accepted and implemented – but methods for measuring this are not as robust as they could be;
- More councils look at performance and finance information more effectively than in the past, although a small majority do not do this by way of an information digest;
- Councils' approaches to scrutiny of finance (in particular, the budget) needs improvement, although there is evidence of improving practice here;
- The structure and number of scrutiny committees does not make much of a difference to the proportion of scrutiny recommendations successfully implemented;
- Where chairs are assigned politically proportionately, scrutiny tends to be more effectively.

### 3.28 Councillors and politics

- Political balance in chairing tends to make scrutiny more effective;
- Scrutiny is more effective in councils which take member support and development more seriously;
- The political contestability of councils (i.e. whether the political party holding the majority of the seats changes frequently) does not make much difference to scrutiny's effectiveness;
- Most respondents felt that scrutiny was able to take a positive, cross-party approach.

### 3.29 What councils could do differently (CfGS)

- Ensure that there are proper systems in place for making good recommendations and then being able to monitor them;
- Address executive/scrutiny relationships – a job as much for the executive itself as scrutiny. Put in place an executive/scrutiny protocol;

- Tighten up work programming. This does not necessarily involve the use of detailed scoring criteria but reflection and self-criticism on topic selection does need to improve;
- Think seriously about a more systematic approach to budget scrutiny and to the use of performance and finance information – this may involve the use of an information digest to share key data with members;
- Pilot arrangements to introduce more political balance to chairing arrangements.

*Further detail CfGS annual survey (2019).*

<https://www.cfgs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/CfPS-Annual-Survey-2019-WEB-1.pdf>

### **CIPFA financial scrutiny practice guide**

- 3.30 From CfGS research and discussion with scrutiny members it is apparent that high quality and effective financial scrutiny is not the norm. CfGS's 2017 annual survey of overview and scrutiny in local government revealed that 51% felt that they did not carry out scrutiny of finance issues effectively. Much budget scrutiny focuses on review, in committee, of a draft budget a matter of weeks (or days) before it is submitted to full council for approval – this is not an effective way to conduct oversight. Scrutiny of council finances 'in year' (rolling oversight of spending) is often ad hoc, and often focuses on the review of scorecard data rather than an understanding of how spending impacts on local people's lives. Financial issues can be conspicuous by their absence when scrutiny investigates other issues – there is sometimes a sense that finance is too difficult to address as part of a substantive scrutiny review, or that members struggle to 'find a way in'. Financial scrutiny can take many forms but there are four fundamental areas where effective scrutiny can add value. The four areas are:

a. Reviewing how resources are allocated:

Monitoring how they are used, and examining their impact. This is about following through from budget development and planning to the delivery of a budget, and oversight over that budget in-year. It links to the way that scrutiny selects and prioritises its work.

b. Reviewing the integration between financial and service planning:

What is the level of integration between corporate and service planning and performance and financial management?

c. Testing out and making explicit whether the council is directing its resources effectively

To meet its priorities and demonstrating whether it is achieving value for money, equity and social value.

d. Providing, through scrutiny in a public forum, challenge to the executive's management of the council's finances, and a different perspective on challenges.

This is about scrutiny having a clearly defined role, and bringing something unique to the table in how it goes about its work.

3.31 As a start, members will want to look for information presented as follows:

- Summary tables, rather than lengthy information,
- Contextualised information (scrutiny's triangulation of financial information with other data will help here). This will include present budget monitoring reports alongside service monitoring reports and performance indicators,
- Reporting by exception or at least highlighting areas of most concern
- A plain language summary of the budget estimates book produced for the public and councillors, in hard copy or online.

3.32 Agreement between the cabinet and scrutiny about the timing of papers so that sufficient time is allowed for effective scrutiny and challenge, set out in a timetable or in a more formal protocol which also confirms what information scrutiny should expect to receive. Reports checked for overuse of jargon and financial technical terms – where this is unavoidable, they should be clearly defined in plain language.

3.33 Member development on financial scrutiny matters is likely to integrate with members' wider development needs. In so doing, it will recognise that separate training sessions – divorced from scrutiny members' wider work – are unlikely to ensure engagement. Training designed to be integrated with members' substantive work is likely to deliver the greatest impact. In practice, this means:

- Use of member induction (at the beginning of a councillor's term) to introduce basic financial concepts.
- Frequent workshops at which ongoing financial issues – in-year performance, budget development and so on – are discussed with members. This will form important background that members can use to escalate matters to committee, as appropriate.
- Reports drafted to limit the use of unnecessary jargon, and where possible, to provide contextual information.
- Councillors themselves are likely to be best placed to understand where their needs lie; a survey of councillors on whether the financial information they get is adequate will provide a good baseline, allowing mutual expectations to be explored and potentially allowing scrutiny's overall role (see below) to begin to be discussed.

### **Case studies of ineffective scrutiny**

3.34 **Croydon Council** has experienced a deteriorating financial position and unsustainably low-level reserves over a number of years. The Council's external auditors issued a public interest report, reporting that the Council needed to urgently address the underlying pressures on service spends and build a resilient financial position. The report made a number of high priority recommendations and two of these related to scrutiny, which were:



- The Council (including Cabinet and Scrutiny and Overview Committee) should challenge the adequacy of the reserves assessment, which should include a risk assessment before approving the budget.
  - The Council (including Cabinet and Scrutiny and Overview Committee) need to show greater rigor in challenging underlying assumptions before approving the budget including understanding the track record of savings delivery.
- 3.35 It was found that the level of scrutiny and challenge by Members in respect of significant expenditure was not good enough in terms of challenging decisions that were high risk in the context of the Council's financial position. As part of approving the budget, external auditors stated that they would expect challenge from Members on whether a significant savings plan was deliverable. The Council's governance over the setting of the original 2020/21 budget was considered inadequate. An example of this was that it was found that the Scrutiny Overview Committee raised pertinent questions in relation to the financial position but chose not to refer the reports back to Full Council when the seriousness of the financial position would have warranted a Full Council discussion.
- 3.36 The **Francis Inquiry** report was published on 6 February 2013 and examined the causes of the failings in care at Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust between 2005 and 2009. The report made 290 recommendations. The Inquiry found that the local authority scrutiny committees did not detect or appreciate the significance of any signs suggesting serious deficiencies at the Trust. The Francis Report concluded that the Staffordshire County Council Scrutiny Committee appeared to have been wholly ineffective as a scrutineer of the Trust.
- 3.37 These case studies are indicative of the importance of effective scrutiny and examples of when weak scrutiny was identified when another part of a system had failed.

### **Summary of recommendations from the Leach review of scrutiny**

- 3.38 Professor Leach completed a review of scrutiny in 2015. This led to a series of recommendations the majority were implemented. Set out below is a summary of the Leach Review's main recommendations and a short commentary on the action taken in the preceding years. In each case, the paragraph from the Leach Review, which justifies and elaborates on each recommendation, is noted, for ease of 'reference back' purposes.
- 3.39 **(1) The Children's Services and Social Care and Health Scrutiny and Performance Panels should be retained with their existing remits. The former should be re-titled the Education and Children's Services Panel.**
- This recommendation was implemented. In 2018, the Education and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee split into two committees following a recommendation from a LGA Peer Reviewer. Elected Members accepted the recommendation to allow more focus on the scrutiny of education matters.
- 3.40 **(2) The remits of the Neighbourhoods and Business, Employment and Economy Panels should be combined in a new Panel entitled 'Strategic**

**Policy and Planning. This panel should also have responsibility for overview and scrutiny work associated with the Council's corporate priorities, which are not covered by the two retained panels. (see 3.2 and 3.3)**

- 3.41 **(3) This new panel should operate in a different way from the other panels, with a more selective approach to agenda content, and a greater emphasis on delegating work to small task-and-finish groups (see 3.4)**

This recommendation was implemented through the creation of the Corporate and Public Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee. By virtue of its remit, the Committee focussed on significant issues at each of its meetings. However, there was a perception that its remit was too large. This Committee was dissolved in 2018/19 with the remit being split between the Scrutiny Overview Committee and a newly created Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

- 3.42 **(4) In the medium term, depending on experience with the new panel, consideration should be given to the establishment of a single scrutiny panel operating on a similar basis to the proposed new panel (see 3.4).**

This recommendation has not been taken forward and is still a potential option for the future, subject to the agreement of elected members.

- 3.43 **(5) The size of each panel should be reduced to ten members. However, all non-executive members of the Council should be eligible to take part in any of the task-and-finish groups set up by any of the panels, to maximise the use of members' experience and motivation.**

Overview and Scrutiny Committees have been reduced from 12 to 11 Members. With regard to working groups, these often invite other Members to join where it is felt they could add value. Typically, this is fulfilled by inviting members from other scrutiny committees to join a working group that is considering a cross-cutting issue.

- 3.44 **(6) A Scrutiny Co-ordination Group should be established, comprising the chairs and vice-chairs of each of the three panels, plus two additional members to ensure political balance. It should operate on an informal basis and undertake the three functions set out in 3.6 above.**

The Scrutiny Overview Committee was established as a formal committee. At first its remit focussed on co-ordination and improving the function of scrutiny within the Council. Latterly this remit has been extended to cover issues relating to the Resources and Transformation Directorate and several corporate priorities.

- 3.45 **(7) Chairs and vice-chairs should continue to be allocated among the parties represented on the Council, on a proportionate basis (ideally using the criterion of the 'best person for the job')**

The appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs is undertaken annually at the start of each municipal year and it continues to be shared between the political parties on a proportionate basis.

- 3.46 **(8) The role of portfolio holders at scrutiny panel meetings should be clarified, with attendance required only for items in which the portfolio holder has specific responsibilities, where he or she, rather than the relevant officer should play the dominant role in responding to questions and comments from the panel (see 3.7).**

The role of portfolio holders at meetings has been enhanced since the Leach review. Portfolio holders attend meetings where there are agenda items concerning their portfolio, and they present reports and answer questions. Some Portfolio Holders attend every overview and scrutiny committee that covers their portfolio. The role of portfolio holders at meetings has been further outlined in the Scrutiny-Cabinet Protocol that was drafted by the Scrutiny Overview Committee in collaboration with the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader.

- 3.47 **(9) The balance between agenda items for information and items for action should be changed, with a greater emphasis on the latter, where the panel can actually ‘add value’ (see 3.8 and 3.9)**

Focussed agendas are encouraged but agendas can still become large if there are unavoidable timing issues. Special meetings can be added to assist with scheduling.

The number of finance monitoring reports has been reduced from quarterly updates to a six-month update and end-of-year reports. Members still receive quarterly updates but these are sent via email.

- 3.48 **(10) Where feasible, attempts should be made to provide settings and seating arrangements which are more conducive to effective scrutiny than the current venues and procedures. The traditional service committee ways of working are generally much less appropriate for the scrutiny function (see 3.10)**

**(11) For high-profile issues (e.g. a major policy failure) the ‘select committee’ format should be used, with appropriate seating arrangements and pre-meeting preparation (see 3.11)**

Select Committee layouts were piloted for one municipal year by all overview and scrutiny committees. There was mixed feedback on their effectiveness. Some committees continued to use the select committee layout in future municipal years; however, it has fell out of use. Seating plans are arranged to keep committee members and portfolio holders separate. Portfolio Holders sit together at the table for clarity to the public that they are separate from the committee.

During remote meetings introductions are made to ensure clarity between the different roles.

- 3.49 **(12) The criteria to be used in selecting and prioritising topics for in-depth study by task-and finish groups should be clarified and assiduously applied. This process should be set in motion at the start of each municipal year at a meeting convened by the Scrutiny Coordination Group, with directors, cabinet representatives and the scrutiny team present to advise and respond (see 3.12).**

At its first meeting of the municipal year, all Cabinet Members and Directors are invited to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that covers their portfolios. They are requested to set out their priorities for the year and highlight any issues on which they would welcome the input from that committee.

Working groups are prioritised to focus on those areas where the most value can be added. Overview and Scrutiny Committees operate one working group at a time, which requires robust prioritisation by elected Members.

### **Opportunities for new ways of working:**

3.50 The Covid-19 pandemic has provided opportunities for new ways of working, and function. Online streaming of meetings, via You Tube, has increased viewing figures in comparison to the number of people that physically attended scrutiny meetings.

3.51 It could also be argued that traditional barriers have been removed; digital meetings are not dependent on room availability, or refreshment bookings. The removal of travel time appears to increase the number of witnesses that can be invited to meetings and are able to attend. For example, the Covid-19 Working Group heard evidence from thirty separate individuals / seventeen separate organisations over a period of two - three months. This increased collaboration and created better outcomes for the working group.

## **4. Financial information**

None directly related to this report.

## **5. Reducing Inequalities**

None directly related to this report.

## **6. Decide**

Members are asked to consider the information within the report to ensure that the future of the scrutiny function, in Walsall, is as effective as possible, and capitalises on the opportunities for new ways of working.

In order to gain further insight on how scrutiny in Walsall could be improved it is suggested that a Member survey on scrutiny and how it could be improved is undertaken in the new municipal year.

## **7. Respond**

Subject to the views expressed in the member survey it may be considered valuable to undertake further self-reflection on how to improve the scrutiny process in the next municipal year. This could include internal review work such as a member survey or a working group. Alternatively, a further external review could take place, for example, Professor Lech could be invited back to understand how the Council has developed since his previous report in 2015.

## **8. Review**

Subject to the agreement of the next steps regular reports will be provided as required.

### **Background papers**

Leach review of scrutiny

Centre for Governance and Public Scrutiny – Annual Survey & Good Scrutiny Guide

CIPFA financial scrutiny good practice

Francis report

Croydon Council Public Interest report

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**15 April 2021**

**Feedback from Overview and Scrutiny Committees**

**Portfolios:** All

**Wards:** All

**1. Summary of report**

This report provides a short summary of the activity of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

**2. Recommendation**

**That, subject to any comments Members may wish to make, the feedback from Overview and Scrutiny Committees be noted.**

**3. Report**

*Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee*

The Committee met on 15<sup>th</sup> March and received a partnership update on exploitation including issues relating to child exploitation including child sexual exploitation (CSE) and criminal exploitation; including children involved in the supply of drugs "county lines". Partners in attendance included the Police, Street Teams, Mental Health, Independent Safeguarding Chair, Walsall Health Care Trust, and the Violence Reduction Unit. The Committee also received the Walsall Safeguarding Annual Report, which provided assurance that partnership activity was effective in relation to the safeguarding of children and young people. Finally, Members received a report on the Black Country Family Drug and Alcohol Courts (FDAC) Programme, this is an alternative approach to working with families to support them to keep their children within their care and is part of the Walsall Right for Children Transformation Programme.

*Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee*

The Committee met on 11 March 2021 and received and noted a report that provided an update on Covid 19 guidance for schools (including testing), attendance and opening of schools, remote learning and digital devices, and data on Covid cases in schools. The Committee was also advised on developments since the report was written, including testing arrangements for pupils, families and teaching staff, return to school arrangements and attendance rates.



The Committee received and noted the activity in place and the progress made to date to address the 6 recommendations of the Access and Inclusions Working Group's report. The Committee noted the responses in respect of the recommendations regarding the Authority's local offer to schools, the rolling out of training to schools, the adoption of the Fair Access Protocol by head teachers, but was especially pleased to note that the backlog of EHCPs had been cleared.

The Committee received and noted the report, which summarised the role of the School Organisation Service, provided an update on pupil place planning for primary and secondary education in Walsall, and provided background information in capital funding and school expansion schemes. The Committee noted the steps being taken to ensure that the number of pupil places is viable and sustainable, whilst supporting and challenging schools to make sure that they are delivering, and whilst accounting for the local and national trends regarding the size of the school population.

The Committee received and noted a report on the Council's strategy for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), which set out its vision, principles and the provision of integrated services across education, health and social care work. The Committee noted the emphasis on supporting early intervention and prevention, to allow support to be given in a timely manner and ensuring that the needs of children and young people are met, and by working with them and their families, parents and carers to achieve this.

The Committee received and noted a progress report on the WR4C Transformation Programme and plans for further development over the next 3 years in line with the PROUD programme transformation benefits. The Committee noted the 3 strategic priorities of reducing demand, developing a highly skilled/stable workforce, and co-ordinating and influencing the establishment of a mature WR4C partnership platform to drive the delivery of the WR4C vision.

### *Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee*

The Committee considered a petition in regards to traffic management proposals on Barns Lane, Rushall. The Lead Petitioner addressed the Committee informing the Committee of the history of road incidents on Barns Lane and the lack of progressed made on speed enforcement.

Members debated the petition and asked numerous questions on previous actions taken by the Council to improve Barns Lane. There were concerns from Members on the lack of Police engagement with speed enforcement in Walsall.

The Committee agreed several recommendations including the installation of dragon teeth gateway, additional signage and engineering works and a review of traffic calming measures. Members also wished to invite the Police to a future meeting to discuss speed enforcement in the borough.

The Committee considered a presentation from Sarah Middleton, Chief Executive of the Black Country Consortium. The Committee considered an update on the membership of the LEP Board, structure, current risks in the BC and Walsall Economy and update on investment.

#### *Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee*

The Committee is scheduled to meet on 8 April 2021. Items on the agenda include:

- Walsall Together Update
- Community Stroke rehabilitation
- Diabetic Eye Screening Procurement

A verbal update on the meeting will be provided at the meeting.

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## **FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**

**Council House,  
Lichfield Street,  
Walsall, WS1 1TW**  
[www.walsall.gov.uk](http://www.walsall.gov.uk)

**6 April 2020**

## FORWARD PLAN

The forward plan sets out decisions that are termed as “key decisions” at least 28 calendar days before they are due to be taken by the Executive (Cabinet). Also included on the plan are other decisions to be taken by the Cabinet (“non-key decisions”). Preparation of the forward plan helps the Council to programme its work. The purpose of the forward plan is to give plenty of notice and an opportunity for consultation on the issues to be discussed. The plan is updated each month with the period of the plan being rolled forward by one month and republished. Copies of the plan can be obtained from Democratic Services, Walsall MBC, Council House, Walsall, WS1 1TW [helen.owen@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:helen.owen@walsall.gov.uk) and can also be accessed from the Council’s website at [www.walsall.gov.uk](http://www.walsall.gov.uk). The Cabinet is allowed to make urgent decisions which do not appear in the forward plan, however, a notice will be included on the agenda for the relevant Cabinet meeting which explains the reasons why.

Please note that the decision dates are indicative and are subject to change. Please contact the above addressee if you wish to check the date for a particular item.

Cabinet responsibilities are as follows

- Leader of the Council – Councillor Bird
- Deputy Leader, Regeneration – Councillor Andrew
- Deputy Leader, Resilient Communities – Councillor Perry
- Adult social care – Councillor Martin
- Children’s – Councillor Wilson
- Clean and green – Councillor Butler
- Education and skills – Councillor Towe
- Health and wellbeing – Councillor Craddock
- Personnel and business support – Councillor Chattha

The Cabinet agenda and reports are available for inspection by the public 7 days prior to the meeting of the Cabinet on the Council’s website. Background papers are listed on each report submitted to the Cabinet and members of the public are entitled to see these documents unless they are confidential. The report also contains the name and telephone number of a contact officer. These details can also be found in the forward plan.

Meetings of the Cabinet are open to the public. Occasionally there are items included on the agenda which are confidential and for those items the public will be asked to leave the meeting. The forward plan will show where this is intended and the reason why the reports are confidential. Enquiries regarding these reasons should be directed to Democratic Services ([helen.owen@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:helen.owen@walsall.gov.uk)).

“Key decisions” are those decisions which have a significant effect within the community or which involve considerable expenditure or savings. With regard to key decisions the Council’s Constitution states:

(1) A key decision is:

is, or the

- (i) any decision in relation to an executive function which results in the Council incurring expenditure which making of savings which are, significant, having regard to the Council’s budget for the service or function to which the decision relates or
- (ii) any decision that is likely to have significant impact on two or more wards within the borough.

(2) The threshold for “significant” expenditure/savings is £250,000.

(3) A decision taker may only make a key decision in accordance with the requirements of the Executive Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.

### **Dates of meetings**

2020 28 October  
9 December

2021 10 February  
17 March  
21 April

**FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS  
MAY to AUGUST 2021 (6.4.21)**

1 7	2	3	4	5	6	
Reference No./ Date first entered in Plan	Decision to be considered (to provide adequate details for those both in and outside the Council)	Decision maker	Background papers (if any) and Contact Officer	Main consultees	Contact Member (All Members can be written to at Civic Centre, Walsall)	Date item to be considered
26/21 (6.4.21)	<b>Resetting through Walsall Proud Programme:</b> To agree the principles, priorities and future ways of working for the resetting of business post Covid-19 lockdown, linked to the Council's Proud programme of transformation	Cabinet  Non-key decision	Reset Cabinet report May 2020  <a href="mailto:Andrea.potts@walsall.gov.uk">Andrea.potts@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal services	Leader of the Council	June 2021
21/21 (8.3.21)	<b>Pre-Audit Outturn 2020/21:</b> To inform Cabinet of the pre-audit revenue and capital financial outturn position for 2020/21 after revenue and capital carry forwards into 2021/22 and financial and treasury indicators for 2020/21.	Cabinet  Non-key decision	Vicky Buckley 01922 652326 <a href="mailto:Vicky.buckley@walsall.gov.uk">Vicky.buckley@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal services	Leader of the Council	June 2021
13/21 (8.3.21)	<b>Restart Scheme:</b> To note an overview of the new government Restart scheme and accept a sub-contract with the approved DWP Tier 1 Prime Provider for the Central West region.	Cabinet  Key decision	Jane Kaur-Gill <a href="mailto:Jane.kaur-gill@walsall.gov.uk">Jane.kaur-gill@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal services	Portfolio Holder for Regeneration	June 2021
14/21 (8.3.21)	<b>Willenhall Masterplan: Strategic Land Acquisitions</b> – in principle approval for	Cabinet	Willenhall Masterplan: Strategic Land	Internal services	Portfolio Holder for	June 2021



	the use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers. <i>Contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person</i>	Key decision- Private session	Acquisitions. <a href="mailto:Joel.maybury@walsall.gov.uk">Joel.maybury@walsall.gov.uk</a>		Regeneration	
43/18 (8.10.18)	<b>Lighting Invest to Save:</b> To consider proposals for a major investment in the highway lighting infrastructure by replacing all existing lighting with energy efficient LED lighting	Cabinet  Key decision	Paul Leighton 07831 120871 <a href="mailto:Paul.leighton@walsall.gov.uk">Paul.leighton@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Public, Walsall Public Lighting Ltd, industry companies, internal services.	Portfolio holder for Regeneration	June 2021
22/21 (8.3.21)	<b>Walsall Council Housing Allocations Policy:</b> To update the policy which sets the principles for the allocation of affordable housing	Cabinet  Key decision	Neil Hollyhead 07943 500394 <a href="mailto:Neil.hollyhead@walsall.gov.uk">Neil.hollyhead@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Public, Housing Associations, Internal Services	Portfolio holder for Regeneration	June 2021
23/21 (8.3.21)	<b>Corporate Financial Performance 2021/22, Covid-19 update and Budget Framework 2022/23 to 2024/25:</b> To report the financial position based on 2 months to May 2021, impact of Covid-19, and the budget framework for 2022/23 to 2024/25.	Cabinet  Non-key decision	Vicky Buckley 01922 652326 <a href="mailto:Vicky.buckley@walsall.gov.uk">Vicky.buckley@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal services	Leader of the Council	July 2021
24/21 (8.3.21)	<b>Phoenix 10 Project</b> To seek authority for the award of a contract for Environmental Impairment Liability Insurance to support delivery of the project.  <i>Contains commercially sensitive information</i>	Cabinet  Key decision – private session	Joel Maybury <a href="mailto:Joel.maybury@walsall.gov.uk">Joel.maybury@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal services	Portfolio holder for Regeneration	July 2021

**BLACK COUNTRY EXECUTIVE JOINT COMMITTEE**  
**FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**  
**Published up to August 2021 (for publication 06/04/2021)**

Date first entered into the plan	Project Name	Key Decision to be considered (to provide adequate details for those both in and outside of the Council)	Background papers (if any) and Contact Officer	Main consultees	Date Item to be considered
04/01/2021	Black Country LEP Assurance Framework	Approval of the revised Black Country LEP Assurance Framework, included as an interactive Attachment 1 to this report	Papers TBC – Simon Neilson <a href="mailto:Simon.Neilson@walsall.gov.uk">Simon.Neilson@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Walsall Council	28/04/2021
01/03/2021	Growth Hub – Peer Networks Programme	Approval for the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) to enter into a Grant Agreement with the Black Country Consortium Ltd to deliver the Growth Hub Peer Networks Programme for 2021/22.	Papers TBC – Simon Neilson <a href="mailto:Simon.Neilson@walsall.gov.uk">Simon.Neilson@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Walsall Council	28/04/2021
01/03/2021	Growth Hub  Grant Funding Agreement Approval 2021/22	Approval for the Accountable Body for the Black Country Growth Hub (Walsall Council) to proceed to a Grant Agreement, with the Black Country Consortium Ltd, to deliver the Black Country Growth Hub Funding for 2021/22.	Papers TBC – Simon Neilson <a href="mailto:Simon.Neilson@walsall.gov.uk">Simon.Neilson@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Walsall Council	28/04/2021
01/03/2021	Parallel 9/10  <b>PRIVATE SESSION - Not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act1972 (as amended)</b>	Approval for Walsall Council to enter into a Grant Agreement with Cayborn Limited to deliver the Black Country Enterprise Zone (BCEZ) funded elements for the Parallel 9/10 project, with delivery to commence in the 2021/22 financial year.  Approval that business rates from the wider BC EZ can be utilised by Walsall Council to repay borrowing costs, with Parallel 9/10 to be confirmed as the next priority project in respect of the allocation of business rates, after Categories 1 – 6 as set out in the BCJC Collaboration Agreement.	Papers TBC – Simon Neilson <a href="mailto:Simon.Neilson@walsall.gov.uk">Simon.Neilson@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Walsall Council	28/04/2021

**BLACK COUNTRY EXECUTIVE JOINT COMMITTEE**  
**FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**  
**Published up to August 2021 (for publication 06/04/2021)**

Date first entered into the plan	Project Name	Key Decision to be considered (to provide adequate details for those both in and outside of the Council)	Background papers (if any) and Contact Officer	Main consultees	Date Item to be considered
06/04/2021	<p>LGF programme changes</p> <p>Dudley Advanced Construction Centre</p> <p>Hub to Home Transport Innovation Centre and Test Track Project: Very Light Rail and Autonomous Technologies – Test Track 1 Project</p> <p>Bilston Urban Village</p> <p>Goscote Lane Corridor</p>	<p>Approval for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with Dudley College, to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) funded elements of the Dudley Advanced Construction Centre project with delivery to continue in the 2021/22 financial year.</p> <p>Approval for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with Dudley Council to deliver the Local Growth Deal Fund (LGF) funded elements of the Hub to Home Transport Innovation Centre and Test Track Project: Very Light Rail and Autonomous Technologies – Test Track 1 project with delivery to continue in the 2021/22 financial year.</p> <p>Approval for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with Wolverhampton City Council, to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) funded elements of the Bilston Urban Village project with delivery to continue in the 2021/22 financial year.</p> <p>Approval for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with Walsall Housing Group Limited, to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) funded elements of the Goscote Lane</p>	<p>Papers TBC – Simon Neilson  <a href="mailto:Simon.Neilson@walsall.gov.uk">Simon.Neilson@walsall.gov.uk</a></p>	Walsall Council	23/06/2021

**BLACK COUNTRY EXECUTIVE JOINT COMMITTEE**  
**FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**  
**Published up to August 2021 (for publication 06/04/2021)**

Date first entered into the plan	Project Name	Key Decision to be considered (to provide adequate details for those both in and outside of the Council)	Background papers (if any) and Contact Officer	Main consultees	Date Item to be considered
	IT Digital Skills and Innovation	Corridor project with delivery to continue in the 2021/22 financial year.  Approval for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with PTP Ltd, to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) funded elements of the IT Digital Skills and Innovation project with delivery to continue in the 2021/22 financial year.			
06/04/2021	Constitution and timetable of meetings 2021/22	Approve the timetable of meetings for 2021/22.  Approve the amendments to the BCJC Constitution and Terms of Reference.  Approve the amendments to the BCJC Working Protocols.	Helen Paterson ChiefExecutive@walsall.gov.uk	Dudley MBC Sandwell MBC Walsall MBC City of Wolverhampton Council	23/06/2021

## WEST MIDLANDS COMBINED AUTHORITY FORWARD PLAN: JUNE 2021 - SEPTEMBER 2021

Title of Report	Description of Purpose	Date of Meeting	Key Decision (Y/N)	Lead Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	Confidential	Category
<b>Commonwealth Games Transport Plan</b>	To approve a draft plan for consultation purposes.	11 June 2021	Yes	Cllr Ian Ward	Laura Shoaf	No	Transport
<b>Annual Plan 2021/22 Approval</b>	To approve the 2021/22 WMCA Annual Plan.	23 July 2021	Yes	n/a	Deborah Cadman	No	Governance
<b>Appointment of Audit, Risk &amp; Assurance Committee Independent Member</b>	To appoint a new independent member to chair ARAC.	23 July 2021	Yes	n/a	Tim Martin	No	Governance
<b>West Midlands Rail/Department for Transport Collaboration Agreement</b>	To seek approval to enter into a new collaboration agreement.	23 July 2021	Yes	Cllr Ian Ward	Laura Shoaf	No	Transport



Title of Report	Description of Purpose	Date of Meeting	Key Decision (Y/N)	Lead Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	Confidential	Category
Local Transport Plan Consultation Approval	To approve the draft local transport plan proposals for consultation.	17 September 2021	Yes	Cllr Ian Ward	Laura Shoaf	No	Transport

## Scrutiny Overview Committee – Area of Focus – 2020-21

	28 July 2020	25 August 2020	8 Oct 2020	1 Dec 2020	2 February 2021	15 April 2021
<b>Economic Growth, for all people communities and businesses</b>  <i>Lead OSC: Economy &amp; Environment</i>		C-19 working group.  C-19 & Business Compliance				S106
<b>People have increased independence, improved health and positively contribute to their communities</b>  <i>Lead OSC: Social Care &amp; Health</i>		C-19 Data	C-19 Data		C-19 Data, vaccinations and BAME impact	Covid-19 data
<b>Internal focus, all Council services are efficient</b>  <i>Lead OSC: Scrutiny Overview Committee</i>	Financial outturn 19/20 ( <i>Cabinet on 17/6</i> )  Q1 (budget monitoring) ( <i>Cabinet on 15/7</i> )		'Getting the basics right' Member comm review	Draft revenue and capital budget 2021-22  Budget monitoring  Corporate Plan Monitoring	Revenue Budget and Capital Programme	Scrutiny Good Practice and benchmarking
<b>Children have the best possible start and are safe from harm, happy, healthy and learning well</b>  <i>Lead OSCs: Children's &amp; Education</i>						
<b>Communities are prospering and resilient with all housing needs met in safe and healthy places that build a strong sense of belonging and cohesion</b>  <i>Lead OSC: Scrutiny Overview Committee</i>	Resilient communities working group outcome	Unauthorised encampments	Remembrance Day Parades			Public Sector Equality Duty  Policing

Notes: Corporate Plan themes can be cross cutting for all Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Lead Overview and Scrutiny Committees identified for reference



## **Scrutiny Overview Committee – Area of Focus – 2020-21**

### **Items to be scheduled**

Local and Regional COVID-19 recovery plans and how they integrate.

'Getting the basics right' Member comm review

Notes: Corporate Plan themes can be cross cutting for all Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Lead Overview and Scrutiny Committees identified for reference