

Cabinet



Walsall Council

Wednesday 19 March 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting venue: Conference Room 2, Council House, Lichfield Street, Walsall.

[Livestream Link](#)

Portfolios

Councillor G. Perry,
Leader of the
Council



Councillor A.
Andrew,
Associate Leader
Economic Growth
and Regeneration



Councillor M.
Statham, Deputy
Leader and Finance



Councillor G.
Flint,
Health and
Wellbeing



Councillor K.
Pedley, Adult Social
Care



Councillor E. Lee,
Internal Services



Councillor S. Elson,
Children and Young
People



Councillor P.
Kaur,
Education and
Skills



Councillor K.
Murphy, Street
Pride



Councillor A.
Garcha, Resident
Access and
Housing Support



Quorum 4 members

Democratic Services, The Council House, Walsall, WS1 1TW
Contact name: Craig Goodall Telephone: 01922 654765 Email:

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[Walsall Council Website](#)

**If you are disabled and require help to and from the meeting room,
please contact the person above**

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> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
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> <p>(a) the landlord is the relevant authority;</p> <p>(b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.</p>
Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:</p> <p>(a) that body (to a member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and</p> <p>(b) either:</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities</p>

	<p>exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(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.</p>
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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 a Scrutiny and Performance Panel 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.

Part 1 – Public session

1. Apologies

2. Minutes – 15 February 2025

(Enclosed)

3. Declarations of interest

4. Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended):

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.

5. Petitions

(Note: For advice on how to submit petitions, contact Democratic Services. Contact details on the front page of the agenda).

6. Questions

(30 minutes will be allowed for pre-submitted questions from non-executive members and the public. All questions will have been submitted at least 7 clear days before the meeting. Answers will be provided at the meeting - no supplementary questions will be allowed.)

7. Forward Plan

(Enclosed)

Associate Leader, Economic Growth and Regeneration: Councillor Andrew

Key Decision

8. Warm Homes: Local Grant (WHLG) Housing Retro-fit – Appointment of Contractor

(Enclosed)

9. West Midlands Local Transport Plan Settlement and Transport Capital Programme 2025/26

(Enclosed)

Education and Skills: Councillor Kaur

Key Decision

10. Proposed High Needs Local Funding Formula 2025/26

(Enclosed)

Internal Services: Councillor Lee

Key Decision

11. Public Sector Equality Duty – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2024/25

(Enclosed)

Adult Social Care: Councillor Pedley

Key Decision

12. Provision of Adults' and Children's Social Care Management System

(Enclosed)

Feedback from Overview and Scrutiny:

13. Feedback from the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding implications of funding changes on the Employment and Skills service

(Enclosed)

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Cabinet

Wednesday 12 February 2025

**Minutes of the meeting held in Conference Room 2 at the Council House,
Lichfield Street, Walsall at 6pm.**

Present

Councillor Perry	Leader of the Council
Councillor Andrew	Associate Leader – Economic Development and Regeneration
Councillor M. Statham	Deputy Leader – Finance
Councillor Elson	Children and Young People
Councillor Flint	Health and Wellbeing
Councillor Garcha	Resident Access and Housing Support
Councillor Kaur	Education and Skills
Councillor Lee	Internal Services
Councillor Murphy	Street Pride

In attendance

E. Bennett	Chief Executive
K. Allward	Executive Director – Adult Social Care
J. Greenhalgh	Executive Director – Resources and Transformation
C. Male	Executive Director – Children’s Services
S. Darcy	Director – Finance and Assurance
S. Tranter	Director – Regeneration and Economy
S. Portman	Head of Law
C. Goodall	Principal Democratic Services Officer
E. Cook	Democratic Services Officer

Part 1 – Public Session

4326 Welcome

Councillor Perry opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and explaining that the Cabinet was meeting that evening in person and that the agenda and reports for this meeting were available on the Council’s website. He explained that voting would be by way of a show of hands which would be witnessed and recorded by the Democratic Services officer in attendance.

4327 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Pedley.

4328 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2025 were submitted.

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2025, a copy having been sent to each member of the Cabinet, be approved and signed as a correct record.

4329 Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were received.

4330 Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985

Resolved

That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the items set out in the private part of the agenda for the reasons set out therein and Section 100A of the Local Government Act, 1972

4331 Petitions

No petitions were received.

4332 Questions

No questions were received.

4333 Forward Plan

The forward plan as of February 2025 was submitted:

(annexed)

Resolved

That the forward plan be noted.

4334 All Age Carers Strategy 2024-2027

Councillor Elson introduced a report which presented a strategy designed to support all Walsall Carers by improving their the quality of life and enabling them to live a healthy and fulfilling life outside of their caring role.

(annexed)

Aman Rai, an adult carer, and Lexi Chew, a young carer, were welcomed and addressed Cabinet, sharing their lived experiences and providing external perspectives on the Strategy.

It was **moved** by Councillor Elson and **seconded** by Councillor Flint and it was;

Resolved (unanimously)

1. **That Cabinet acknowledge the Walsall All Age Carers Strategy 2024-2027 is a joint and collaborative strategy across Adult and Children's Services.**
2. **That Cabinet approve the Walsall All Age Carers strategy 2024-2027.**

4335 **Provision of Operational Technical Advisors for Capital Construction Projects**

Councillor Andrew introduced a report which sought to ensure the council had appropriate technical resources for a wide-ranging scope of construction projects.

It was **moved** by Councillor Andrew and **seconded** by Councillor Elson and it was;

Resolved (unanimously)

1. **That Cabinet approve the appointment of AtkinsRealis Limited, via the Pagabo Framework as the Professional Services Provider for Capital Construction Projects for a maximum period of up to 3 years (2+1) subject to satisfactory performance and delivery.**
2. **That authority be delegated to the Executive Director for Economy Environment and Communities to enter into the contract, and to subsequently authorise the sealing, signing or variation of any deeds, contracts or other related documents for such services**

4336 **Corporate Budget Plan 2025/26 – 2028/29, incorporating the Capital Strategy and the Treasury Management and investment Strategy 2025/26**

Councillor Statham introduced a report, including information contained within the supplementary paper, which set out the proposed Revenue Corporate Budget Plan and Capital Programme and various statutory determinations.

It was **moved** by Councillor Statham and **seconded** by Councillor Perry and it was;

Resolved (unanimously)

That Cabinet note:

- a. That at the time of dispatch of this report, the final local government settlement for 2025/26 is awaiting the final parliamentary debate and vote to take place on 5 February. Any changes arising from this, will be included within the final papers to Council on 26 February 2025.
 - b. That at the time of despatch of this report, the precepting authorities (fire and police) had not formally notified the authority of their final council tax precept levels for 2025/26. Draft figures have been included. Final figures will therefore be provided prior to or at the Council meeting of 26 February 2025 should they change.
 - c. That at the time of despatch of this report, the levy authorities, (Environment Agency and West Midlands Combined Authority - Transport Levy) had not formally notified the authority of their final demand for 2025/26. Estimates have been used for the Transport Levy based on informal communication. (The final Transport Levy is expected to be approved early February and will be included within the final papers to Council).
 - d. That the council tax base, set by the S151 Officer under officer delegations, is 74,375.36 for 2025/26.
 - e. The amendments to the revenue budget arising from the provisional settlement, including changes to savings and investment proposals identified since the October Cabinet report, as set out in section 4.25 and Table 1.
 - f. That Members must have due regard to consultation feedback and the public sector equality duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) when making budget decisions.
1. That Cabinet approve:
- a. That delegated authority be given to the S151 Officer to make any necessary amendments, after consultation with the Leader of the Council, to take account of the final local government settlement, final levies and precepts, final grant allocations and final technical guidance or legislation on the budget; and to make any necessary amendments to the statutory determinations and council tax bands to take account of those changes and the resulting final analysis of the budget and for these amendments to be submitted and therefore recommended to Council at its meeting on 26 February 2025.
 - b. Approve the policy service changes as set out in Appendix 3 Section A of this report.
 - c. That delegated authority be given to the S151 Officer, after consultation with the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive, to agree the council's final contribution to the West Midlands Combined Authority.
- 3.3 That Cabinet approve and recommend to Council, the following:

3.3.1 Revenue

- a) The financial envelope of resources for 2025/26 as set out in **Section B - Part 1** "The Revenue Corporate Budget Plan and Capital Programme".
- b) A Walsall Council net council tax requirement for 2025/26 of £162.78m and a 2.99% increase in council tax, plus a further 2% increase for Adult Social Care precept (total council tax increase of 4.99%).
- c) That the recommendations of the S151 Officer in respect of the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the budget calculations and the adequacy of reserves **be approved**, including the levels of central contingency and reserves and an opening general reserve of not less than £24.12m, as set out in the S151 Officer Section 25 statement in **Annex 12** of the Budget Plan.
- d) The (estimated) levies below for outside bodies and Cabinet **approve** that the final figures **be substituted** for these provisional ones once they are available at the Council meeting on 26 February 2025. (An estimate has been used within this report based on informal notification from the authorities).

LEVY	AMOUNT (£)
West Midlands Combined Authority Transport Levy	11,907,647
Environment Agency	89,530

- e) The following statutory determinations (references are to the Local Government Finance Act, 1992 as amended), and subject to any final changes arising from receipt of final precepts and levies, receipt of final grant allocations, technical/legislative guidance and final specific grant allocations, **and Cabinet approve that these will be substituted** at the Council meeting on 26 February 2025 for the final figures once received:
 - I. **£849,006,475** being the aggregate gross expenditure, which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Act.
 - II. **£686,230,084** being the aggregate income which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Act.
 - III. **£162,776,391** being the amount, by which the aggregate at (e) (I) above exceeds the aggregate at (e) (II), calculated by the council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year.
 - IV. **£2,188.58** being the amount at (e) (III) above, divided by the council tax base of 74,375.36, calculated by the council in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (average council tax at band D).
 - V. Valuation bands

Being amounts given by multiplying the amount at (e) (IV) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5 (1) of the Local Government Act 1992, is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the council in accordance with Section 30 and 36 of the Act as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwelling listed in different valuation bands.

A	B	C	D
1,459.05	1,702.23	1,945.40	2,188.58
E	F	G	H
2,674.93	3,161.28	3,647,.63	4,377.16

- f) The draft precept from the Fire and Rescue Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner, issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, for each of the categories of dwelling shown below and Cabinet **approve** that the final figures **be substituted** once they are available at the Council meeting on 26 February 2025.

PRECEPTING AUTHORITY	VALUATION BANDS			
Police And Crime Commissioner	A	B	C	D
	153.00	178.50	204.00	229.50
	E	F	G	H
	280.50	331.50	382.50	459.00
Fire & Rescue	A	B	C	D
	53.46	62.37	71.28	80.19
	E	F	G	H
	98.01	115.83	133.65	160.38

- g) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (e) (v) and (f) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts of council tax for 2024/25 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below and Cabinet **approve** that the final figures **be substituted** once the final precepts are available at the Council meeting on 26 February 2025.

A	B	C	D
1,665.51	1,943.01	2,226.8	2,498.27
E	F	G	H
3,053.44	3,608.61	4,163.78	4,996.54

- h) That notice **be given** of the council tax within twenty one days of it being set

by publishing details of the same in the “Express and Star” newspaper circulating in the Authority’s area.

- i) That the S151 Officer **be instructed** to take all necessary action in relation to council tax, community charge and national non-domestic rates, including, where appropriate, the signing of all documents, billing, the giving of notices and the taking of necessary steps to ensure collection thereof.
- j) That the S151 Officer **be delegated authority** to make transfers to and from reserves in order to ensure that reserves are maintained as necessary and in particular, adjusted when reserves are no longer required, or need to be replenished.
- k) That, pursuant to Section 52ZB and 52ZC of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the relevant basic amount of council tax for the Council is not excessive in relation to determining whether a referendum is required.

3.3.2 Capital

- a) The allocation of capital expenditure plans as set out in **Part 1** “The Revenue Corporate Budget Plan and Capital Programme” and that the capital and leasing programme as set out in **Annex 10 be approved** bearing in mind the principle that unless affordable from within current resources, specific projects funded by borrowing will not be commenced until a payback agreement is in place. Schemes funded from grant will commence when final allocations are published.
- b) That the S151 Officer **be delegated authority** to determine how each source of finance is used to fund the overall capital programme and to alter the overall mix of financing as necessary, to maximise the flexibility of capital resources used and minimise the ongoing costs of borrowing to the council.
- c) That the S151 Officer, after consultation with the Deputy Leader of the Council (Portfolio Holder for Finance), **be delegated authority** to release capital resources held back for any contingent items that may arise (earmarked capital receipts for essential or emergency spend), and also for any match funding requirements that may be required of the council in order to secure additional external capital funding (e.g. bids for government or other funding).
- d) That the S151 Officer **be delegated authority** to determine the use of capital receipts in relation to the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts to ensure that they meet the requirements set out by the Secretary of State.
- e) The Capital and Investment Strategy set out in **Annex 7** of the Budget Plan **be approved**.
- f) The Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy set out in **Annex 11** of the Budget Plan **be approved**.

3.3.3 Treasury Management

- a) **Part 2A** – The Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2025/26 onwards, including the council’s borrowing requirement, borrowing limits, and the adoption of the prudential indicators, **be approved**.
- b) That decisions to effect movements between conventional borrowing and other long term liabilities, such as leases, **be delegated** to the S151 Officer.
- c) That decisions to use capital receipts or borrowing within the framework of approved prudential indicators **be delegated** to the S151 Officer.

Part 2B – Treasury Management Policies, **be approved**.

4337 **Corporate Financial Performance 2024-25**

Councillor Statham introduced a report which reported on the forecast corporate financial position for 2024/25, and actions being taken to ensure the council out-turned on budget.

It was **moved** by Councillor Statham and **seconded** by Councillor Flint and it was;

Resolved (unanimously)

That Cabinet:

1. **Note potential forecast revenue spend above budget of £6.75m, noting that further actions are being taken to address this position including the release of £4.30m of service earmarked reserves no longer required based on the focused review carried out.**
2. **Approve the release of service earmarked reserves totalling £4.30m as detailed in Appendix 4. These reserves are no longer required for the purposes for which they were originally created and therefore can be released to general reserves to support funding the current reported overspend position.**
3. **Note that there are additionally high risks of £3.80m to the revenue forecast identified within services as set out in Appendix 2. These risks are actively being monitored and action is being taken to reduce / eliminate them where possible.**
4. **Note the progress on savings approved for 2024/25 as detailed in section 4.14 and 4.15 within the report.**
5. **Note the ongoing mitigations identified to partially offset the savings deemed undeliverable as detailed in Appendix 5.**
6. **Note the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) financial position as detailed in sections 4.16 to 4.21**

7. **Approve amendments to the capital programme as set out in section 4.22, including the rephrasing of capital programme to 2025/26 at Appendix 8.**
8. **Note that the forecast for the capital programme is predicted to be an underspend of (£2.29m).**
9. **Note financial health indicator performance as set out in sections 4.26 to 4.31 and Appendix 9.**
10. **Note the prudential indicators as set out in section 4.32 to 4.34 and Appendix 10.**
11. **Approve the write-off of debt as detailed in section 4.35.**

4338 Walsall Net-Zero Climate Change Strategy

Councillor Flint introduced a report setting out a new Climate Change Strategy, which identified key priorities and actions necessary to eliminate the borough's carbon emissions and adapt to the consequences of climate change.

It was **moved** by Councillor Flint and **seconded** by Councillor Statham and it was;

Resolved (unanimously)

1. **That the Cabinet approve the content of the Walsall Net Zero 2041 Strategy.**
2. **That the Cabinet approve the Walsall Council Net Zero Action Plan.**
3. **That the Cabinet approve the establishment of a Walsall Net Zero Partnership.**

4339 Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy

Councillor Flint introduced a report which sought approval for a new Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy (PPOSS).

It was **moved** by Councillor Flint and **seconded** by Councillor Statham and it was;

Resolved (unanimously)

1. **That Cabinet adopt and publish:**
 - a. **The updated Walsall PPOSS – strategy and assessment report.**
 - b. **The Black Country PPOSS Overarching Strategic Framework.**
 - c. **The Stage E assessment report, which provides a 2024 update on the assessment report detailed in 3.1.a.**

2. That authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Economy, Environment and Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing and the steering group, to update the strategy to ensure that the document is updated and kept current regarding the supply and demand of the various types of provision.

4340 **Walsall Housing Allocations Policy**

Councillor Garcha introduced a report which sought to ensure that the Council met its statutory obligation by having in place a housing allocations scheme that administered all housing nominations to housing associations in Walsall in accordance with relevant legislative requirements.

It was **moved** by Councillor Garcha and **seconded** by Councillor Perry and it was;

Resolved (unanimously)

1. That Cabinet approve the revised Housing Allocations Policy attached as Appendix A.
2. That authority to make any future amendments to the Walsall Housing Allocations Policy be delegated to the Director of Customer Engagement, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resident Access and Housing Support.

4341 **Determination of the Scheme for coordinated admissions and the Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary Schools for the 2026/27 academic year**

Councillor Kaur introduced a report which sought to ensure that Walsall Council met its statutory duty to offer a school place to all Walsall resident children and to determine the admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools.

It was **moved** by Councillor Kaur and **seconded** by Councillor Elson and it was;

Resolved (unanimously)

That Cabinet approve and determine the Walsall admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled primary schools for the academic year 2026/27 as per Appendix A.

4342 **Early Years Funding Formula 2025/26**

Councillor Kaur introduced a report which sought approval for the proposed Early Years Funding Formula for 2025/26.

It was **moved** by Councillor Kaur and **seconded** by Councillor Elson and it was;

Resolved (unanimously)

That Cabinet approve the proposed Local Early Years Funding Formula as set out in Appendix A.

4343 Recommendations from the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the utilisation of Council assets

Councillor Andrew introduced a report which reported recommendations from the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the utilisation of Council assets.

It was **moved** by Councillor Andrew and **seconded** by Councillor Elson and it was;

Resolved (unanimously)

- 1. That it be noted that a review of council assets was currently underway, once complete this information would be used to inform the future of the estate. Whilst desirable to establish a dedicated team to promote the use of Council buildings and district town halls this was not achievable within existing financial resources.**
- 2. That it be noted that the Council provided guidance on historic building maintenance and supported local groups wishing to nominate buildings for listing and protection.**
- 3. That the Council engage more closely with external bodies to help to promote the safeguarding of listed buildings.**

4344 Recommendations from the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding grass cutting

Councillor Murphy introduced a report which reported recommendations from the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding grass cutting.

It was **moved** by Councillor Murphy and **seconded** by Councillor Perry and it was;

Resolved (unanimously)

That:

- 1. Due to financial constraints it was not possible to reinstate the 2023 grass cutting programme, however, it should be noted that the revised programme would take into account feedback from residents and elected members.**

2. Investment in highway improvements was prioritised based on safety and ensuring the efficient operation of the highway network. In the event that verge parking was creating a road safety issue, investment was prioritised.
3. The financial constraints which the council was currently working within mean that there was limited scope to alter the existing maintenance standards within each ward.
4. The suggested realignment of portfolio responsibilities be noted.

Part II – Private Session

Whilst the following decisions were taken in the private session, the following is a full account of the decisions taken.

4345 Private Rented Sector Offer to Landlords

Councillor Garcha introduced a report which sought approval for a financial and lease structure model for securing temporary accommodation units through leasing properties from private landlords.

It was **moved** by Councillor Garcha and **seconded** by Councillor Statham and it was;

Resolved (unanimously)

1. That Cabinet approve the lease structure model for temporary accommodation set out in paragraph 4.11 of the report and delegate authority for the approval of the terms of leases within this model to the Executive Director for Economy, Environment and Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth & Regeneration noting that it is likely that the rent payable will exceed £50,000 per annum, on the proviso that:
 - a) legal due diligence undertaken by the council's legal advisers ensures that the agreed lease terms are appropriately documented;
 - b) the terms agreed fall within the parameters of the approved model; and
 - c) there is a demonstrable requirement for the property.
2. That Cabinet approve the financial incentive model for securing the provision of housing units via private landlords set out in paragraph 4.15 of the report and delegate authority for the approval of the final terms of such agreements to the Executive Director for Economy, Environment and Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth & Regeneration.

There being no further business, the meeting terminated at 7:06pm.

Chair:

Date:



Walsall Council

FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

**Council House,
Lichfield Street,
Walsall, WS1 1TW**
www.walsall.gov.uk

3 MARCH 2025

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 Craig.Goodall@walsall.gov.uk and can also be accessed from the Council’s website at 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.

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 (Craig.Goodall@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:
 - (i) any decision in relation to an executive function which results in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the 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 £500,000.
- (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.

**FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS
APRIL 2025 TO JULY 2025 (03.03.2025)**

7	1	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
3/25 (6.1.25)	West Midlands Local Transport Plan Settlement and Transport Capital Programme 2025/26: To seek approval of the West Midlands Local Transport Plan Settlement and Transport Capital Programme 2025/26, to support the delivery of transport capital projects including the West Midlands Local Transport Plan (LTP).	Cabinet Key Decision	Kathryn Moreton Kathryn.Moreton@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	19 March 2025
7/25 (3.3.25)	Hospital Street Traffic Scheme: To consider options for a Traffic Scheme on Hospital Street to ensure a safe and efficient road network for all users.	Cabinet Non-key Decision	Kathryn Moreton Kathryn.Moreton@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	19 March 2025
8/25 (3.3.25)	Warm Homes Local Grant Housing Retro-fit - Appointment of contractor: To appoint a contractor for the delivery of the Warm Homes Local Grant to improve the energy efficiency of	Cabinet Key Decision	Elise Hopkins Elise.Hopins@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	19 March 2025

	<p>dwelling in the borough and help tackle fuel poverty and domestic carbon emissions.</p>					
<p>74/24 (4.11.24)</p>	<p>High Needs Funding Formula 2025/26:</p> <p>To approve the proposed High Needs Funding Formula for 2025/26.</p>	<p>Cabinet Key Decision</p>	<p>Sharon Kelly</p> <p>Sharon.Kelly@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Internal Services Schools Forum</p>	<p>Cllr Kaur</p>	<p>19 March 2025</p>
<p>5/25 (6.1.25)</p>	<p>Public Sector Equality Duty Report 2024/25:</p> <p>To note the Public Sector Equality Duty annual report which will be published in March 2025 in accordance with our obligations with the Equality Act 2010.</p>	<p>Cabinet Non-key Decision</p>	<p>Keith Beech</p> <p>Keith.Beech@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Internal Services Corporate Equality Group</p>	<p>Cllr Lee</p>	<p>19 March 2025</p>
<p>75/24 (4.11.24)</p>	<p>Adult Social Care and Children's Services Case Management System:</p> <p>To approve the renewal of the contract for Mosaic. The current contract ends on 31/07/2025.</p>	<p>Cabinet Key Decision</p>	<p>Andrew Osborn</p> <p>Andrew.Osborn@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Internal Services External Stakeholders</p>	<p>Cllr Pedley Cllr Elson</p>	<p>19 March 2025</p>
<p>9/25 (3.3.25)</p>	<p>Transformation Programme:</p> <p>To update Cabinet on progress of the Council's transformation programme and how this supports delivery of the Council plan. This report outlines the strategic initiatives and expected outcomes of the transformation programme.</p>	<p>Cabinet Non-key Decision</p>	<p>Carol Williams</p> <p>Carol.Williams@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Internal Services</p>	<p>Cllr Perry</p>	<p>16 April 2025</p>

10/25 (3.3.25)	Black Country Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Plan: To review and adopt the Black Country Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Plan.	Cabinet Key Decision	Kathryn Moreton Kathryn.Moreton@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	16 April 2025
11/25 (3.3.25)	Introduction of Mandatory Food Waste Collections: To approve the introduction of weekly food waste collections and how the service will be delivered.	Cabinet Key Decision	Kathryn Moreton Kathryn.Moreton@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Murphy	16 April 2025
6/25 (6.1.25)	Provision of HWRC Skips and Associated Plant Equipment: To award a contract for the provision of skips and associated equipment for the Middlemore Lane HWRC.	Cabinet Key Decision	Kathryn Moreton Kathryn.Moreton@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Murphy	16 April 2025
12/25 (3.3.25)	Community Reablement Service Phase 2: To delegate authority to award a contract for the provision of support to the community reablement service.	Cabinet Key Decision	Kerrie Allward Kerrie.Allward@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Pedley	16 April 2025
65/24 (7.10.24)	Walsall Place Based Strategy: That Cabinet approve the Walsall Place Based Strategy (PBS) that sets the vision and delivery plan for the Single Settlement.	Cabinet Key Decision	Simon Tranter Simon.Tranter@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Perry	July 2025

46/24 (5.8.24)	Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): To seek approval of a draft Planning Obligations SPD for consultation with key partners, stakeholders, infrastructure providers and the general public. The document will be consulted on a 6-week consultation.	Cabinet Key Decision	Simon Tranter Simon.Tranter@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	July 2025
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Cabinet – 19 March 2025

Warm Homes: Local Grant (WHLG) Housing Retro-fit - Appointment of contractor

Portfolio: Councillor Andrew – Associate Leader, Economic Growth & Regeneration

Related Portfolios: Councillor Garcha – Resident Access and Housing Support
Councillor Flint – Health and Wellbeing

Service: Customer Engagement

Wards: Borough Wide

Key decision: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

1. Aim

To ensure the council can use time limited Warm Homes Local Grant (WHLG) funding to improve the energy efficiency of dwellings in the borough and help tackle fuel poverty and domestic carbon emissions.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The Council secured government funding (£2.6M) from the Warm Homes Local Grant (WHLG) January 2025 to help a range of property owners and tenants improve the insulation of their home and or help with micro-energy generation. The outcome will be a reduction in the levels of fuel poverty. As at 2023 (the most up to date data), Walsall was the 9th (in 2020 it was 10th) highest of all English local authority areas for fuel poverty with a rate of 19.7%, compared to a West Midlands rate of 18.5% and England rate of 13.2%.
- 2.2 Procurement, in conjunction with the Service Area, have considered various frameworks compliant with PCR 2015 and have identified the Healthy Homes Framework operated by Communities & Housing Investment Consortium (CHIC) which delivers value for money and also meets the requirement of the scheme for owner occupied and private rented dwellings under (WHLG) which has very short grant delivery timescales.
- 2.3 The CHIC Framework is split into 3 Lots with each Lot including several workstreams. It is proposed that we carry out a further competition under Lot 2 (works and services) workstream 3 (Turnkey Solutions (Principal Economic Operator for Retrofit Projects) of the framework and award to the supplier that offers the most economic

advantageous offer based on price, quality and social value. This process will encourage the successful contractor to use both local labour and local supply chains. The successful contractor will be awarded the contract for an initial period of 12 months with two potential extensions of 12 months each based on the contractor's previous year's performance. This will enable the timely delivery of the grant funding and continuity of service for the residents. This is a key decision as the overall expenditure will be over £0.5M.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That Cabinet delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources & Transformation to enter a contract with the successful contractor for Energy Efficiency Works to homes in Walsall, for a maximum period of 3 years or by March 2028.
- 3.2 The anticipated value of the contract over the 3-year period is estimated at £2,385,928 including VAT where applicable after deduction of administration and ancillary (A&A) costs. These costs refer to the use of the Grant to fund administrative costs and ancillary works to support the delivery.
- 3.3 That Cabinet delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources & Transformation to sign the relevant agreements with the Framework provider and successful contractor on behalf of the Council and to subsequently authorise signing of any associated contracts, deeds, or other related documents.
- 3.4 That Cabinet delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources and Transformation, to authorise any variations to the contractual arrangements or other related documents for such services should this be required throughout the duration of the term of any contracts and provided they are in line with the Council's Contract Rules and any relevant legislation, including Public Contract Regulations 2015.

4. Report detail

Context

Warm Homes Local Grant

- 4.1 The Warm Homes: Local Grant (WHLG) programme is part of the government's Warm Homes Plan to upgrade five million homes over the next five years to cut bills for families and deliver warmer homes to reduce fuel poverty.
- 4.2 As a key part of the Warm Homes Plan, the Government has committed to partnering with combined authorities, local and devolved governments to deliver insulation measures and other improvements such as solar panels, batteries, and low carbon heating to cut bills for families, slash fuel poverty, and reduce carbon emissions in support of the net zero by 2041 target.
- 4.3 Landlords who have works to more than 1 rented property will be required to contribute 50% of the cost to second and subsequent homes.

- 4.4 Local Authorities are to set up their projects for delivery. This includes resourcing internal teams, procuring delivery partners and installers, resourcing a retrofit team, commencing the search for eligible households, and conducting retrofit assessments to prepare households for retrofits. We have already identified a pipeline of net zero projects representing individual streets within the Walsall Growth Corridor. We intend to set aside 20% of the allocation to fund eligible works on properties located outside of the Growth Corridor.
- 4.5 The scheme will be delivered by the Energy Team led by our Retrofit Project Manager. The team will manage project oversight, customer liaison and organise resident engagement and promotion events. Our energy advisors will assist with gathering eligibility evidence for our most vulnerable residents and will also offer support, including resolving contractor issues and aftercare advice/support.

Accessing a compliant Framework

- 4.6 Having access to a framework agreement in place such as CHIC delivers many benefits; the primary one being a route to market that ensures compliance with all public sector procurement regulations – this means that purchasing energy efficiency goods and services can be carried out efficiently and without the need to undertake time consuming and costly tendering exercises.
- 4.7 Making an award using further competition is provided for in the CHIC Framework.

Council Plan priorities

- 4.8 In terms of acting in the best interest of residents and communities throughout the borough, and improving the health and wellbeing of our residents, the WHLG programme will further the Council's efforts to alleviate fuel poverty and increase availability to affordable warmth.
- 4.9 In respect of responding to the climate emergency and doing all we can locally to contribute to national carbon reduction targets, this work will assist in fulfilling the aim to becoming a net zero carbon authority by 2041 and support measures to adapt to the impact of climate change.
- 4.10 The project will support the councils' ambition of a well and healthy borough in line with our Council Plan for 2025 – 2029.

Risk management

- 4.11 The risks associated with entering this contract are minimal; as per the Framework's Conditions, the Council does not have to use the contract at all, it can choose to use different routes to market at any time.
- 4.12 A project of this size and complexity does present risk for the Council. However, previous experience of delivering housing retrofit projects has enabled us to understand the mitigations required to limit these risks. The risks include
- **Identification of suitable target areas** with the required EPC/property type/income requirements to meet project eligibility parameters. We currently have a pipeline of eligible properties which will be utilised to enable early delivery while targeted

marketing is undertaken.

- **Inability to procure or delayed procurement of supply chain:** Past projects have highlighted lengthy timescales in procuring suitable contractors to deliver such schemes in what has become a crowded retrofit market. We are already consulting with Procurement to appoint contractors using a framework agreement.
- **Energy Team delivery and capacity:** The delivery process is complex, but the Energy team has experience in delivering grant-funded retrofit schemes.
- **Delivery within the project timescale:** Ensuring the capacity of the supply chain to carry out the required volumes of surveys or installations within project timescales is crucial. Robust supply chain management will be necessary to ensure the installation pipeline/schedule is delivered according to the project plan.

Financial implications

- 4.13 The Council's 2025/26 grant allocation is £606,975. Local Authorities will receive an upfront payment at the start of each financial year of the Grant, consisting of up to 20% of the Grant allocation for that year. This upfront payment includes the 10% Administration & Ancillary (A&A) allocation for that financial year, with the remaining 10% allocated for capital funding. Unlike the funding available for social housing (Warm Homes: Social Grant) The Council will not be required to contribute any match funding, and it is not anticipated that any match funding by the Council will be required

Legal implications

- 4.14 The new contract will be evidenced by a written contract / agreement in a form required by the framework provider CHIC, which will be checked and approved by Legal Services in accordance with the Council Contract Rules.
- 4.15 The CHIC Framework and the contract which the Council calls off from it will continue to be subject to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended) notwithstanding that the Procurement Act 2023 came into force on 24 February 2025.
- 4.16 The contracts, which will be signed between the Council and the successful contractor, contain fixed terms and conditions, which CHIC have already negotiated; the contracts will be executed in accordance with the Council's Contract Rules.
- 4.17 Walsall Council's allocation of the grant will be through the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA). Prospective grant recipients must sign the requisite MoU, a Data Sharing Agreement, and a Non-Disclosure Agreement to participate and access grant funding under WHLG.
- 4.18 Walsall Council will be responsible for ensuring that its use of the WHLG funding is compliant with the subsidy control requirements in the Subsidy Control Act 2022 and its associated statutory guidance.

Procurement Implications/Social Value

- 4.19 Ongoing advice and guidance has been given by the Procurement team throughout this process. This sourcing exercise, which the Council is conducting, has been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations

2015, considers social value in line with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, and complied with the Council's Contract Rules.

Property implications

- 4.20 There are no direct Council properties implications as the Council retains no housing stock which is eligible under this project. It is however understood that our Asset Management colleagues can apply separately under the social housing (WHF: Social Grant), to fund similar improvements to Council owned properties used to provide homeless accommodation

Health and wellbeing implications

- 4.21 Improving the energy efficiency of dwellings can directly tackle fuel poverty and excess winter deaths. The 2018/19 excess winter death data shows that Walsall had a higher rate (18) compared to the rate for England (14.6) and West Midlands (13.8) and within the region was only surpassed by Coventry (20.9). Improving the insulation and heating of homes especially for the vulnerable is beneficial in addressing issues of poor health and housing.
- 4.22 Energy security and costs currently present a significant challenge, particularly to residents in the worst quality EPC band D-G homes in the borough. Providing energy efficiency measures would directly address these issues, decrease heating costs, and improve quality of life for eligible residents.

Staffing implications

- 4.23 The project will be overseen by our Retrofit Project Manager. The funding includes a revenue element for project management, and this will assist in the continuation of staff funding for the Energy Team staff.

Reducing Inequalities

- 4.24 There are no specific equality implications to report. The WHLG will provide grants for energy performance upgrades and low carbon heating to low-income households living in the worst quality owner occupied and privately rented homes.
- 4.25 The impact on health is exacerbated for vulnerable individuals and the colder the temperature the greater the risk of harm. The WHLG eligibility criteria includes people drawing on benefits and households where a person is considered to be vulnerable to the cold, people with disabilities, people over the age of 65, pregnant women and households with young children may be more likely to be positively impacted.

Consultation

- 4.26 Internal consultation is taking place through the Place Based Strategy group meetings, which is a cross-directorate group to ensure officer engagement. Relevant Council services have been consulted appropriately.

5. Decide

- 5.1 There is clearly an ongoing need to support low-income residents with improving the energy efficiency of their home and to reduce fuel bills. This scheme enables this whilst simultaneously assisting the national and local effort to meet the Council's Net Zero obligations.
- 5.2 That Cabinet authorises the above-mentioned recommendations 3.1 and 3.3. That doing so will enable officers to make timely decisions that will facilitate mobilisation of the project in time for the planned commencement date of June 2025.

6. Respond

- 6.1 Officers will continue to prepare for delivery of the WHLG to help improve dwellings within the borough.

7. Review

- 7.1 The Housing Standards and Improvement service continues to review progress on tackling fuel poverty and updates the corporate Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) Action Plan.
- 7.2 In line with WHLG funding criteria, regular monitoring reports will be submitted to government.

Background papers

None

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Signed



Judith Greenhalgh
Executive Director – Resources & Transformation

19 March 2025

Signed



Cllr Adrian Andrew
Portfolio Holder – Economic Growth & Regeneration

19 March 2025

Cabinet – 19 March 2025

West Midlands Local Transport Plan Settlement and Transport Capital Programme 2025/26

Portfolio: Councillor Andrew – Associate Leader, Economic Growth & Regeneration

Related portfolios: None

Service: Place & Environment (Highways, Transport & Operations)

Wards: All

Key decision: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

1. Aim

- 1.1. The delivery of a programme of transport capital projects in 2025/26 that supports the implementation of the West Midlands Local Transport Plan (LTP), City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS), and Active Travel Fund (ATF) objectives in various locations across Walsall.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The Department for Transport (DfT) awards transport capital grant funding to the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) to help deliver regional transport objectives. The WMCA then distributes this grant funding to the component metropolitan districts to be used to implement the LTP and CRSTS in their area.
- 2.2 Walsall Council utilises the grant funding it receives to deliver the highway maintenance programme and the Local Network Improvement Plan (LNIP) programme comprising three main sub-programmes: major scheme development; strategic transportation; and road safety and active travel. WMCA holds Walsall Council to account for how this funding is utilised.
- 2.3 This report sets out the proposed LNIP capital programme for 2025/26 based on a Cabinet approved (12 December 2012) prioritisation process.
- 2.4 Highway maintenance funding is used in accordance with the council's highway asset management framework. The programme aims to use a combination of preventative maintenance and structural repairs to maximise the lifespan of the highway network. The highway maintenance programme is determined on an

annual basis using a Cabinet approved (18 March 2015) scheme prioritisation matrix. The 2025/26 highway maintenance programme will be agreed with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration in March 2025, based on advice from the Director – Place & Environment.

- 2.5 In view of the recommendations below, Cabinet is asked to note the West Midlands 2025/26 capital grant allocations for highway maintenance and LNIP programmes as set out at Table 1 in Section 4 of this report and the grant funding awards for the development of CRSTS and ATF projects as also set out at Section 4. Further, Cabinet is asked to note that the £120k Promotion of Community Health and Safety council-funded budget is part of the capital programme for 2025/26 to 2028/29 approved at a meeting of Full Council on 26 February 2025, and that these funds are allocated to individual highway schemes within the transport capital programme as set out in this report.
- 2.6 As the transport capital programme for 2025/26 will have a significant impact on two or more wards within the borough, the recommendations below constitute a key decision.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That Cabinet approves the Walsall Council Transport Capital Programme 2025/26 funding of £6.528m as set out at Table 2 in Section 4 of this report.
- 3.2 That Cabinet approves the utilisation of the Local Network Improvement Plan element of the grant funding for 2025/26 (£1.563m) as described in paragraphs 4.41 and 4.42 of this report and **Appendices A to F**, including the provisional allocation of carry forward from 2024/25 to the 2025/26 programme.
- 3.3 That Cabinet approves the utilisation of the Promotion of Community Health and Safety – council capital funding for 2025/26 (£0.12m) as set out in **Appendix A**, including the provisional allocation of carry forward from 2024/25 to the 2025/26 programme.
- 3.4 That Cabinet delegate authority to the Executive Director for Economy, Environment & Communities, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, to manage any required changes to the 2025/26 Local Network Improvement Plan and Promotion of Community Health and Safety capital programme, including amending individual scheme budgets (within the overall programme budget); adding new projects (to replace or part-replace other projects that can no longer be delivered); and managing carry forward, to maximise the use of the grant.
- 3.5 That Cabinet delegate authority to the Executive Director for Economy, Environment & Communities, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, to negotiate on its behalf with the West Midlands Combined Authority and government departments to maximise the values of future financial resources allocated to the council in pursuit of its transport priorities, including signing relevant agreements and contracts for schemes which are approved within the Walsall LNIP transport capital programme 2025/26.

4. Report detail – know

Context

- 4.1. The West Midlands LTP sets out the transport strategy for the metropolitan area. The LTP is currently being refreshed by Transport for West Midlands (TfWM). The core strategy was approved at WMCA Board in February 2023; six 'big moves' were approved for public engagement at the same time; and area strategies (including a Black Country area strategy) are currently being developed and are expected to be finalised in 2025.
- 4.2. The Walsall Transport Strategy '*Transport in Walsall*' was approved by Cabinet in September 2017 and will help to deliver the LTP by focusing public and private funding towards areas/schemes which require it most. This local strategy will be updated to reflect the LTP area strategy for the Black Country once that document has been developed and approved later in 2025.
- 4.3. Combined authorities are designated as the 'accountable bodies' for local transport plans and the government funding allocated to deliver them. The DfT allocates transport capital grant funding to implement the LTP. Since April 2022 this has been through a five-year capital settlement to March 2027 (CRSTS) aimed at supporting the region in delivering a sustainable transport investment programme. The fund is overseen by DfT and provides an opportunity to plan transport investment over a longer time horizon than has previously been possible.
- 4.4. Funding of £1.050billion was confirmed in April 2022 and a five-year programme (2022-27) was subsequently approved in July 2022. In 2023 the DfT gave all mayoral combined authorities receiving CRSTS funding the opportunity to make changes to their approved CRSTS capital programme, in recognition of the effects of high levels of inflation in recent years. Amendments to the CRSTS programme were approved by WMCA Board in September 2023 and subsequently by the DfT.
- 4.5. The re-baselined CRSTS programme extends the original £1.05billion programme to a £1.21billion programme, because DfT have allowed overprogramming to be included to cover the risk of some projects failing to draw down all allocated CRSTS funding by the end of the 2022-27 settlement period.
- 4.6. CRSTS is the only significant source of capital transport funding for the region until March 2027. Each named scheme that is brought forward through the CRSTS programme must demonstrate as appropriate: -
 - Alignment with the LTP and national CRSTS funding objectives
 - Direct benefits to cycling and active travel (including consideration of Local Transport Note 1/20)
 - Direct benefit to public transport and in particular bus travel

- Support measures for behaviour change, road safety and network resilience
- 4.7. The CRSTS fund is operated through, and fully compliant with, the WMCA Single Assurance Framework (SAF). However, WMCA have implemented a simplified approval process for highway maintenance and Local Network Improvement Plan (LNIP) funding.
 - 4.8. Highway maintenance capital grant is a five-year funding component of CRSTS, which is delivered by the local highway authorities (LHAs). An annual allocation is confirmed by the WMCA Board in-line with the overall five-year programme allocation.
 - 4.9. LNIP transport capital grant funding is used to develop and implement a variety of transport schemes by LHAs. Delivery must align to the LTP and CRSTS objectives. An annual allocation is confirmed by the WMCA Board in-line with the overall five-year programme allocation.
 - 4.10. The WMCA monitors each district's transport capital programme to ensure that they are using funds to deliver the aims and objectives of the West Midlands LTP and CRSTS, and that funding is used in line with government grant conditions. In response to this, the council has prioritised its proposed 2025/26 LNIP programme against LTP objectives in line with its adopted appraisal and prioritisation process.
 - 4.11. In addition to DfT funding, the council directly fund a further £1.1million of council capital in highway maintenance. Investment is prioritised in accordance with the council's highway asset management framework, which is reviewed on an annual basis and due to be refreshed in 2025/26. Further ad hoc highways and transport investment is secured through the following mechanisms: -
 - Section 278 agreements, which allow third parties to fund works to the existing public highway, usually as part of a new development.
 - Section 38 agreements, which have been used more recently to secure funding from developers to complete outstanding highway works on unfinished developments.
 - Section 106 agreements, which can be used to secure developer contributions to improve highways and transport infrastructure.
 - 4.12. Although rare, the council also considers offers from third parties to fund or jointly fund highway improvements. These are assessed on case-by-case basis to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the road network and that the council is not impacted financially or otherwise, such as costly maintenance liabilities.
 - 4.13. Key achievements delivered through, or supported by, the LNIP and highway maintenance capital programme in 2024/25, include: -

- Completion and handover of a congestion-busting scheme at M6 junction 10, with scheme delivery undertaken by a contractor employed by National Highways (the council's project partner).
 - Further progress relating to the re-opening of the Walsall to Wolverhampton rail line, which includes two new stations at Darlaston (James Bridge) and Willenhall. Also, development of projects to support local highway access to these new station sites, particularly for pedestrians, cyclists and bus users.
 - Continued engagement with the West Midlands Rail Executive relating to the re-opening of the Walsall – Aldridge rail line, including work to prepare an outline business case.
 - Walsall's CRSTS highway maintenance grant allocation, together with the CRSTS pothole funding and the council capital budget for highways maintenance, supported with funding through the Strategic Investment Board, plus some Network North funding has been used to deliver 3 miles of footway resurfacing and reconstruct 16 miles of carriageway, this will include a sizeable section of the A461 Lichfield Road. In addition to this, the council will have delivered 28,000m² of micro-surfacing on footways and 89,000m² of preventative maintenance on carriageways, including works on A4148 Broadway North and A4038 Darlaston Road.
- 4.14. Highway projects that are currently being developed by Walsall Council for anticipated future delivery with CRSTS funds include (all projects are subject to business case and other approvals): -
- A41/A4038 Moxley to Walsall Town Centre Walk, Cycle and Bus Corridor
 - A454 Walsall to Wolverhampton Walk, Cycle and Bus Corridor
 - Bus, Cycle and Walk Access: Darlaston and Willenhall Train Stations
 - Bus, Cycle and Walk Access: Walsall Town Centre Interchange (initial scheme development only during the 2022-27 programme)
- 4.15. Other projects led by TfWM include new train stations at Willenhall, Darlaston and Aldridge, and A34 SPRINT Phase 2. There are also area-wide schemes being developed and delivered in conjunction with TfWM and neighbouring councils, including the Black Country walking, wheeling and cycling programme (a longer term plan for a fully connected walking and network, which aligns with the We are 2040 outcome of 'by 2040 Walsall will be a cycling borough with a network of cycling routes') and a regional programme of electric vehicle charging.
- 4.16. The A41/A4038 Moxley to Walsall Town Centre Walk, Cycle and Bus Corridor scheme has a strategic outline case (SOC) approved by WMCA, and an outline business case (OBC) has now been prepared and will be submitted to WMCA for approval this month. If the OBC is approved as expected, the scheme will move to full business case preparation and Cabinet will be asked to review the proposed plans and full business case later in the year.

- 4.17. The council has secured Active Travel Fund Tranche 4 (ATF4) for a new cycle route and pedestrian/public realm improvement scheme, which includes a segregated and shared use cycleway between Pinson Road and the Rose Hill/Bilston Lane junction and pedestrian infrastructure improvements. The cycle route will link in with a wider plan to make a dedicated cycle route between Wolverhampton city centre and Walsall town centre.
- 4.18. Following a public and stakeholder consultation exercise in autumn 2024, officers are now working closely with external consultants to produce the final detailed designs for the scheme, which will be constructed in the period to January 2026. The route will complement other transport investment including the new Willenhall Rail Station, the Noose Lane to Pinson Road cycle scheme (cross-boundary scheme with City of Wolverhampton Council included within the ATF3 programme and currently being constructed) and the Rose Hill/Bilston Lane junction improvements (included within the Levelling Up Fund Tranche 2 – Willenhall City Garden programme).

Delivering a 2025/26 Local Network Improvement Plan programme

- 4.19. Table 1 in Section 4 of the report sets out the budget allocations for transport capital funding available to the West Midlands metropolitan districts and TfWM in 2025/26.
- 4.20. Table 2 in Section 4 of the report sets out the budget allocations for transport capital funding available to the council in 2025/26.
- 4.21. The proposed split of funding as per Table 3 in Section 4 of the report will allow the council to support the development of future major scheme business cases to give the council the best opportunity to attract implementation (delivery) resources; and allow the council to continue to deliver a robust road safety and sustainable travel programme that addresses local transport needs and concerns.
- 4.22. The Strategic Transportation Team utilise their proportion of LNIP transport capital funding to develop and deliver ‘major’ and ‘strategic’¹ schemes which meet the aims and objectives of the LTP and bring benefit to transport networks in Walsall.
- 4.23. Determining which strategic schemes are selected for development and delivery in Walsall is based on the output of a spreadsheet-based tool which scores potential schemes against the LTP aims and objectives, therefore making the selection non-subjective. This method of prioritisation was approved at Cabinet in December 2012.
- 4.24. **Appendix A** sets out the proposed LNIP transport capital programme for 2025/26, together with any confirmed complementary transport capital funding.

¹ ‘Major schemes’ have traditionally been defined as those schemes over £5m in value (although post-2015 this threshold was removed). In this context, ‘strategic schemes’ are significant schemes, but below the £5m threshold e.g. large junction improvement schemes.

Appendix B sets out the appraisal results for the strategic schemes proposed for inclusion in this programme.

- 4.25. The Road Safety and Sustainable Travel Team use an agreed appraisal methodology to rank and determine which schemes are delivered from their allocation of LNIP funds. This methodology relies upon the use of collision data records provided by West Midlands Police. This is supplemented with a range of additional locally determined data (e.g. road speeds) providing the council with a strong basis to rationalise their decision-making and provide confidence to the WMCA and DfT that the capital funding resources are being used appropriately.
- 4.26. Funding for local safety schemes and sustainable travel schemes will be awarded on a priority basis as set out in **appendices C to F**. It will not be possible to fund all the schemes detailed during 2025/26. Schemes have been prioritised, and the identified reserve schemes will be considered for any funding which becomes available during the year.

Essential specialist services

- 4.27. As part of the development of major and strategic transport schemes, it has been identified that essential specialist services such as structural engineering, land acquisition, environmental impact assessment or traffic modelling services may be required, where there is no current availability in-house or via existing shared services with other local authorities.
- 4.28. At times it may be necessary to utilise appropriate authorised frameworks in line with the council's contract rules. It is proposed that use of these framework contracts is an efficient way of procuring the necessary specialist support services to help the delivery of future major transport schemes.

Council Plan priorities

- 4.29. LNIP transport capital grant funding is allocated to the council to deliver the LTP, which in turn supports the Walsall Council Plan 2025-29 ambition for the borough to be: -
- thriving and happy
 - healthy and well
 - prosperous and innovative
 - proud of our borough
- 4.30. A capital programme of transport investment will significantly contribute to the achievement of the council plan ambitions by enhancing connectivity, reducing congestion, and promoting sustainable travel options. By improving the quality and condition of road networks, the programme will facilitate safer and more efficient travel, aligning with the plan's ambition for safer streets and thriving communities. Investment in public transport infrastructure, such as new railway stations and cycling routes, will support the goal of creating a healthy and well borough by encouraging active travel and reducing reliance on cars.

Additionally, the development of electric vehicle infrastructure will contribute to the plan's sustainability objectives, helping Walsall achieve its net zero carbon target by 2041. Overall, these transport investments will drive economic growth, improve accessibility to services, and enhance the quality of life for all residents, thereby supporting the overarching vision of a continuously improving, prosperous, and innovative borough.

- 4.31. Improving the safety of the transport network and the security of people using the network are important considerations in the development and delivery of transport schemes and the overall composition of the capital programme. To date the council has performed well, when compared to others nationally, in reducing the numbers and severity of accidents on the borough's roads.
- 4.32. Environmental and safety factors are considered in the development and delivery of transport schemes. Care will be taken in the detailed design of schemes to minimise direct impacts on the local environment, and where appropriate schemes will be subject to an environmental impact assessment. The LTP has been subject to a strategic environmental assessment. As future schemes are progressed, the council will be identifying good practice for adapting to, and mitigating the effects of, climate change and promoting environmental and economic sustainability.

Risk management

- 4.33. The principal risk to council is that if the LNIP transport capital grant funding allocated from WMCA is not spent or committed within the financial year there is a risk that any under spend may be 'clawed back' or future year allocations reduced. Utilising the Cabinet-approved prioritisation process allows better management of the programme and provides accountability at a regional level for those schemes selected for development and delivery.
- 4.34. There is a risk that if future grant funding is significantly reduced or removed altogether, it will be necessary to undertake a review of the Highways, Transport & Operations service. Continued evidence of delivery of the transport capital programme helps to mitigate against this risk, as does the greater certainty brought about through the multi-year CRSTS award.
- 4.35. A further risk is that of the continued failure to increase revenue funding to support the maintenance and operating costs of capital investment. This has been a concern raised by the DfT in previous years and has not been addressed due to the severe financial pressures on council revenue budgets. It is possible that DfT may reduce future capital settlements if it cannot be demonstrated that the council has appropriate procedures and resources for future maintenance of transport assets.
- 4.36. There is a risk that if any spend on the projects within the proposed Walsall LNIP transport capital programme 2025/26 become abortive and do not meet the criteria for capitalising spend, then that element of cost may have to be repaid to the programme by the council from revenue funding, for which there is no existing budget. This is a risk associated with all multi-year capital funding

programmes, but without taking such a risk there would be no ability to develop the necessary programme of transport projects. This risk is mitigated by the fact all schemes in the plan are aligned to the LTP and have been assessed as having a remote risk of becoming abortive, although Cabinet should note that this risk cannot be removed completely.

- 4.37. The way CRSTS and other transport funding is allocated by government and WMCA impacts on the council's ability to deliver the priorities set by Cabinet. The council risks losing out on resource allocations if it is not successful in lobbying and negotiating a favourable position. Officers of the council will seek to secure the position of our agreed transport priorities within both the government's and the WMCA's programmes, together with the appropriate funding.

Financial implications

- 4.38. It is expected that the LNIP transport capital grant funding and highway maintenance grant funding will be received in advance from WMCA i.e. annual payment to be made each April. This is a capital grant, and all spend incurred must meet the eligibility criteria for capital accounting.
- 4.39. The capital grant funding settlement is a final determination confirmed by the DfT and WMCA Board acceptance and approval. This is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – West Midlands LNIP and Highways Maintenance Allocations 2025/26

Capital Budget	WMCA budget allocation 2025/26 (£000s)
Core CRSTS1 Local Network Improvement Plan (LNIP) Allocation *	21,500
CRSTS1 Highways Maintenance Allocation *	24,080
CRSTS1 2025/26 Highways Maintenance Capital Grant Uplift **	8,610
Total	54,190

- 4.40. Further to this, the WMCA confirmed the allocation per metropolitan district after 'top-slicing' for West Midlands joint initiatives. The council's 2025/26 transport capital programme is set out in Table 2.

Table 2 – Walsall Transport Capital Programme 2024/25 and 2025/26

Capital Budget	Carry forward from 2023/24 (£000s)	Budget allocation 2024/25 (£000s)	Total budget 2024/25 (£000s)	Spend to date 2024/25 (£000s)	Forecast carry forward* (£000s)	Budget allocation 2025/26 (£000s)
Local Network Improvement Plan capital grant	520	1,563	2,083	933	536	1,563
Promotion of Community Health and Safety - council capital funding	159	120	279	198	0	120
Highways maintenance capital grant	21	1,732	1,753	1,220	0	1,732
2025/26 Highways maintenance capital grant: uplift**	0	0	0	0	0	1,276
Bridge strengthening capital grant	14	239	253	97	0	239
Pothole capital grant	7	1,598	1,605	1,405	0	1,598
Highways maintenance capital grant: Network North***	7	383	390	390	0	0
Total	729	5,635	6,364	4,243	536	6,528

*Final carry forward will not be confirmed until early in the 2025/26 financial year. Carry forward from 2024/25 is required to support the ongoing delivery and management of risks for multi-year, multi-funded schemes (e.g. York's Bridge).

** allocation subject to agreement by WMCA Board before 31 March 2025

***awarded in 2024/25 following the cancellation of HS2 Phase 2.

Allocation of transport capital grant funding

- 4.41. Walsall's LNIP transport capital grant funding is split between three headline programmes: -

- Major scheme development and delivery programme (managed by the Strategic Transport Team in the Highways, Transport & Operations service)
- Strategic transportation programme (managed by the Strategic Transport Team in the Highways, Transport & Operations service)
- Road Safety and Sustainable Travel Programme (managed by the Road Safety Team in the Highways, Transport & Operations service)

Table 3 – Current and proposed capital allocations by sub-programme (excluding carry forward)

	2024/25 (£000s)	2025/26 (£000s)
Major Scheme Development & Delivery Programme	235	235
Strategic Transportation Programme	528	528
Road Safety & Sustainable Travel Programme	800	800
Total	1,563	1,563

- 4.42. **Appendix A** sets out the proposed overall LNIP transport capital programme for 2025/26, together with any confirmed complementary transport capital funding. **Appendix B** sets out the appraisal results for the strategic schemes proposed for inclusion in this programme. **Appendices C to F** provide details of how the component local safety schemes and active travel schemes have been appraised and prioritised for development and delivery within this programme.

West Midlands and Black Country transport programme

- 4.43. Whilst it is anticipated that LNIP transport capital funding resources will be available to develop and implement capital transport schemes until 2026/27 (grant determination confirmed) and beyond, there is always a small risk that these resources will not be available e.g. should a government emergency budget rescind these commitments. This would impact on staff in the Strategic Transport Team; Road Safety Team; and Major Projects & Minor Improvements (all Economy, Environment & Communities Directorate), some of whose activities in developing and implementing projects are legitimately capitalised through engineer assistants' time (EAT). If sufficient grant funding were not made available to the council by the DfT and WMCA, relevant council services would need to be reorganised with the risk that a small number of redundancies may be necessary. This would require the council to consider how it would deliver its statutory duties in the absence of this funding.
- 4.44. If government and/or WMCA increases or reduces future LNIP transport capital funding allocations beyond 2026/27 for the council, the allocation of resources to programmes and projects will be reviewed accordingly. Financing major scheme implementation costs in line with agreed funding profiles will have priority.

Legal implications

- 4.45. The council has various options by which to procure services, including calling off civil engineering frameworks, using the highways maintenance term contract or a council-run procurement exercise to engage contractors to carry out work required in the implementation of the capital programme. All works will be evidenced by a written contract in a form approved by the Director of Governance or by a call-off from a suitable framework and shall be made and executed in accordance with the council's contract rules. This may require the council to engage external legal support. Should any legal implications arise during any procurement process, they will be considered and reported to the Transport Capital Programme Delivery Board and managed in accordance with the agreed delegations to officers.
- 4.46. In its role as highway authority, the council has a statutory duty to identify and implement measures to address congestion and road safety concerns on the local highway network and to maintain the network in a safe condition. LNIP and highways maintenance grant funding is used in part to address these obligations.
- 4.47. Where any specific project requires the acquisition of land (by agreement or compulsorily) the council's Legal Services Team will work with Highways, Transport & Operations officers and there may be a need to engage external legal support if compulsory acquisition of land is necessary.

Procurement implications/social value

- 4.48. Any contractual arrangements must be procured in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (if applicable), the Procurement Act 2023 and the council's contract rules. The council's Procurement & Contract Management and Legal Services Teams will work with Highways, Transport & Operations officers to ensure that further competition and call-offs from any frameworks are conducted in compliant ways and that all contracts for schemes procured under this capital programme will be validly entered into before any services are provided to the council.

Property implications

- 4.49. All projects contained within the programme will either be delivered on land and assets already owned and managed by the council, or on land acquired (by agreement or compulsorily) for the purpose of project delivery. Where necessary, agreements will be in place for the use or enhancement of third-party land.
- 4.50. Each project will assess the implications on land and assets and a view will be taken by either the highways authority or the asset management function of the council as to how any proposed enhancements or scheme designs impact on the council's land portfolio, and how any impacts can be mitigated or managed.

Health and wellbeing implications

- 4.51. The programme aims to make sustainable travel – cycling, walking and public transport – available to all residents and stakeholders, and ultimately seeks to align with the Walsall Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2022 to 2025) and objectives. For example, a transport system that is accessible, reliable and affordable contributes to mental wellbeing. It provides access to work, friends and family, as well as health-promoting facilities such as schools, parks and green spaces, libraries and health centres.
- 4.52. The programme also aligns with the aspirations of the town centre master plan to promote the town centre as a healthy location that can be enjoyed by all people across Walsall.

Reducing inequalities

- 4.53. As part of the delivery of the LTP consideration has been given to ensuring that the needs of all sections of the community are considered in transport projects. Further, the LTP was subject to an equalities impact assessment, which informed the final published core strategy document.
- 4.54. The transport capital programme will assist in improving facilities for all modes of transport; plans will focus on improving access to key services and facilities such as education, job opportunities and health care facilities.

Staffing implications

- 4.55. There are no intended implications on staffing by prioritising projects in the manner described in this report. However, it should be noted that LNIP transport capital funding helps support existing posts in the Highways, Transport & Operations service because work programmes are managed by the Strategic Transportation Team and Road Safety Team. A significant proportion of legitimate scheme development (e.g. design and business case work) and supervision costs (i.e. managing contractors delivering improvements on behalf of the council) are also incurred by transport planners and engineers via a timesheet management system.
- 4.56. As set out above (paragraph 4.43), if future grant funding is significantly reduced or removed altogether, it will be necessary to undertake a review of the Highways, Transport & Operations service. This could result in a small number of staff that currently deliver statutory duties being potentially 'at risk' of redundancy. Delivery of statutory duties by the council are prescribed by legislation and must be delivered irrespective of any budgetary constraints.

Climate impact

- 4.57. Tackling and responding to climate change are at the heart of the LTP. To address the big social, economic and environmental issues we face, the objectives in the LTP core strategy are framed around five 'motives for change' where changing transport could help better support inclusive growth by

providing a transport system that is fair to everyone and minimises the impacts on the environment.

- **Sustaining economic success:** Support the building of an inclusive and green West Midlands economy, through better use of existing infrastructure, land, technology and sustainable transport options.
- **Tackling the climate emergency:** Changes to where people travel to / from, reducing the frequency of travel and changing the vehicles we use to travel.
- **Creating a fairer society:** How land is used, the availability and affordability of transport and the experience and usability of transport.
- **Supporting local places and communities:** Re-imagining local neighbourhoods, reducing dominance of transport and providing quick and easy access to key local services.
- **Becoming more active:** Enable safe, convenient and accessible walking and cycling opportunities and increase active travel for journeys.

4.58. The LTP consequently states that there are three key changes needed in our transport system: -

- **Improve accessibility**, particularly for those without access to a car.
- **Reduce traffic** thereby supporting economic and environmental objectives.
- **Electrify the transport system** and enable the utilisation of less polluting vehicle technologies.

4.59. Six 'big moves' are the basis for realising these changes: -

- **Behaviour change for the better** e.g. improving pedestrian and cycling infrastructure that will encourage people to undertake short journeys by active modes.
- **Growth that helps everyone** e.g. ensuring the highway network maintains access for all road users thereby helping to promote and sustain economic growth.
- **Safer streets to walk and wheel** e.g. improving footways, cycle routes and street lighting promotes road user safety.
- **Public transport that connects people and places** e.g. reliable and frequent bus and train services to connect people to jobs, healthcare, shops, leisure and other opportunities across Walsall and the wider West Midlands.
- **A resilient transport network** e.g. the maintenance and safe operation of highway assets that enables resilience in the transport network for all road users.
- **Delivering a green revolution** e.g. delivering transport infrastructure and services that help promote more sustainable opportunities for travel and support the local green economy.

4.60. To complement capital investment, it is acknowledged that there needs to be an alignment of revenue funding for activation of new assets i.e. cycling and walking infrastructure, and to enable and influence people to use this infrastructure. Developing active travel infrastructure must therefore be

alongside targeted support, promotion, and changes in policy to ensure it is used by those that partners want to reach e.g. those who are inactive.

- 4.61. Efforts to reduce carbon dioxide emissions include encouraging the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles through the provision of charging infrastructure (charge points and transit stations) and promoting sustainable transport modes (walking, cycling and public transport) with appropriate infrastructure, services and promotional activity.
- 4.62. The five-year capital settlement (CRSTS) from the DfT further incentivises local authorities to actively promote sustainable modes by only funding capital schemes that can demonstrate that they are placing the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and bus users ahead of other road users. Guidance to local authorities published in July 2021 highlights the importance of carbon reduction, the need to develop schemes in accord with Local Transport Note 1/20 - Cycle Infrastructure Design, and the importance of helping deliver against the objectives set out in the National Bus Strategy ('Bus Back Better').

Consultation

- 4.63. The LTP has been the subject of wide consultation with partners and stakeholders. A consultation paper ('green paper') was published in summer 2021; the core strategy was consulted on in 2022; the six 'big moves' were consulted on in 2023; and area strategies are now being prepared. Partners and stakeholders are consulted with respect to individual transport projects.
- 4.64. The West Midlands authorities have been commended for the comprehensive nature of involvement in developing previous LTP strategies and when consulting on transport schemes.
- 4.65. Local consultation always takes place as part of individual scheme development.

5. Decide

- 5.1 The options for the make-up of the LNIP transport capital programme have been considered as part of the assessment of potential projects/programmes as set out in Section 4 above. The output of the appraisal of the various project ideas and suggestions is reported in **Appendices B to F**. The projects that are selected are those that have the best alignment with the LTP objectives and emerging area strategy for the Black Country; are supported locally; are affordable (or have the potential to lever-in other implementation funding, such as government grants); and are deliverable.
- 5.2 The appraisal processes utilised in the development of the programme ensure that it is compiled objectively and maximises the impact of limited transport capital funding by seeking to attract implementation funding from various other sources.

- 5.3 The proposed programme has been consulted upon amongst council officers who are responsible for various technical disciplines and has been developed in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration.

6. Respond

- 6.1 The delivery of the agreed programme will be taken forward by project and programme managers within the council's Highways, Transport & Operations service in the Economy, Environment & Communities Directorate.
- 6.2 The LNIP transport capital programme is a rolling programme of activity that supports the delivery of the LTP within the borough of Walsall, and many projects and programmes operate across several financial years and have multiple funding arrangements. Some key projects span different local authority boundaries e.g. corridor-based programmes and are delivered in partnership with relevant stakeholders e.g. Transport for West Midlands, Network Rail, West Midlands Rail Executive, National Highways, Canal & River Trust, West Midlands Trains, bus operating companies, and neighbouring local authorities.
- 6.3 Officers of the council attend various regional meetings and technical groups to ensure that projects are delivered in a coherent and consistent manner across the West Midlands Metropolitan Area.

7. Review

- 7.1 The LNIP transport capital programme is monitored by a group of council officers that meet at least every two months to review progress and consider any recommendations to be put forward to the Transport Capital Programme Delivery Board, which is made up of senior officers and the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration.
- 7.2 The Transport Capital Programme Delivery Board meets at least every two months (aligned to the officer meetings) and considers performance against intended progress at regular intervals throughout the financial year. The board can make decisions about remedial action; budget virements; and project full or partial completion.
- 7.3 The effectiveness of projects and programmes is monitored on an ongoing basis and is reflected in key data e.g. traffic counts; public transport patronage figures; air quality monitoring. The council's monitoring activity is also supported by regional monitoring and reporting undertaken by the WMCA.

Appendices

Appendix A – Walsall Council Local Network Improvement Plan Transport Capital Programme 2025/26

Appendix B – Strategic Scheme Appraisal Results 2025/26

Appendix C – Local Safety Scheme Ranking 2025/26

Appendix D – Promotion of Community Health and Safety Scheme Ranking 2025/26

Appendix E – Safer Routes to School Scheme Ranking 2025/26

Appendix F – Measures to Encourage Walking Scheme Ranking 2025/26

Background papers

- Walsall Transport Strategy 'Transport in Walsall' 2017
- City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement Submission, West Midlands Combined Authority Board report, 14 January 2022
- City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement, West Midlands Combined Authority Board report, 18 March 2022
- West Midlands Local Transport Plan 'Reimagining Transport in the West Midlands' – Final Core Strategy and draft Big Moves and draft Area Strategy Guidance, West Midlands Combined Authority Board report, 10 February 2023
- City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement re-base proposal, West Midlands Combined Authority Board report, 15 September 2023

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Dave Brown
Executive Director

07 March 2025



Councillor Adrian Andrew
Portfolio holder

07 March 2025

Walsall Council Local Network Improvement Plan Transport Capital Programme 2025/26

Baseline: For approval at Cabinet 19/03/25

Scheme	DRAFT Carry Forward (2024/25 to 2025/26)	Budget Allocation 2025/26	Total Budget
Major Highway Scheme Development & Delivery Programme			
Significant Projects			
M6 Junction 10 - Post-Opening Monitoring & Evaluation / Part 1 claims	£ -	£ 75,100.00	£ 75,100.00
DSDA Access Project - Post-Opening Monitoring & Evaluation	£ -	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00
A41 / A4038 Walk, Cycle & Bus Corridor	£ -	£ 60,000.00	£ 60,000.00
A454 Walk, Cycle & Bus Corridor	£ -	£ 145,000.00	£ 145,000.00
Future Major Scheme Development Programme	£ 108,000.00	£ 85,000.00	£ 193,000.00
York's Bridge	£ -	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00
TOTAL	£ 108,000.00	£ 375,100.00	£ 483,100.00
Strategic Transportation Programme			
Public Transport Programme			
Darlaston Rail Station - Walk, Cycle & Bus Access	£ -	£ 40,000.00	£ 40,000.00
Willenhall Rail Station - Walk, Cycle & Bus Access	£ -	£ 40,000.00	£ 40,000.00
Walsall Town Centre Interchange - Walk, Cycle & Bus Access	£ -	£ 60,000.00	£ 60,000.00
Aldridge Rail Station - Highways Infrastructure Development	£ -	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00
Sub-Total	£ -	£ 145,000.00	£ 145,000.00
Improvement Scheme Programme			
Sustainable Transport Package - Walsall Towns Fund	£ -	£ 16,000.00	£ 16,000.00
Wolverhampton Street, Walsall - Walk & Cycle Access	£ 205,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 210,000.00
Black Country Walk & Cycle Programme	£ -	£ 25,000.00	£ 25,000.00
Willenhall - Walk & Cycle Access (ATF4)	£ -	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00
A461 Walk, Cycle & Bus Corridor	£ -	£ 20,000.00	£ 20,000.00
Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Programme	£ -	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00
Public Rights of Way Programme	£ -	£ 65,000.00	£ 65,000.00
Sub-Total	£ 205,000.00	£ 166,000.00	£ 371,000.00
Highway Efficiency Programme			
Highway Efficiency Measures Programme	£ -	£ 65,000.00	£ 65,000.00
Sutton Road / Longwood Lane Junction - development	£ 16,000.00	£ 12,000.00	£ 28,000.00
Sub-Total	£ 16,000.00	£ 77,000.00	£ 93,000.00
TOTAL	£ 221,000.00	£ 388,000.00	£ 609,000.00
Road Safety & Active Travel Programme			
Local Safety Programme			
Local Safety Scheme: A34 Bloxwich High Street	£ 67,000.00	£ 133,000.00	£ 200,000.00
Local Safety Scheme: B4210 Bloxwich Road / Stafford Street	£ 49,000.00	£ 100,000.00	£ 149,000.00
Safer Routes to School: Support for A*STARS	£ -	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00
Safer Routes to School: King Charles, Wilkes Avenue, WS2	£ -	£ 1,000.00	£ 1,000.00
Safer Routes to School: Blackwood Primary / St Annes, Blackwood Road, B74	£ -	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,000.00
Safer Routes to School: Bentley West Primary, Monmouth Road, WS2	£ -	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00
Safer Routes to School: Castlefort JMI School, Castlefort Road, WS9	£ -	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00
Safer Routes to School: Barcroft Primary School, Barcroft, WV13	£ -	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00
Safer Routes to School: Rivers Primary Academy, Livingstone Rd, WS3	£ -	£ 12,000.00	£ 12,000.00
Safer Routes to School: Rowley View Nursery, Dangerfield Lane, WS10	£ -	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00
Promotion of Community Health & Safety: Network performance	£ -	£ 60,000.00	£ 60,000.00
Promotion of Community Health & Safety: Safety related requests	£ -	£ 40,000.00	£ 40,000.00
Promotion of Community Health & Safety: Speed management	£ 91,000.00	£ 143,000.00	£ 234,000.00
Promotion of Community Health & Safety: Leighswood Road / Stubbers Green Road	£ -	£ 59,000.00	£ 59,000.00
Sub-Total	£ 207,000.00	£ 586,000.00	£ 793,000.00
Active Travel Programme			
Measures to Encourage Walking: Upgrade of pedestrian crossing routes	£ -	£ 139,000.00	£ 139,000.00
Measures to Encourage Walking: Wolverhampton Road / Livingstone Road	£ -	£ 20,000.00	£ 20,000.00
Measures to Encourage Walking: Walsall Road / High Street (Walsall Wood)	£ -	£ 15,000.00	£ 15,000.00
Measures to Encourage Walking: Stephenson Avenue / Stephenson Square	£ -	£ 40,000.00	£ 40,000.00
Sub-Total	£ -	£ 214,000.00	£ 214,000.00
TOTAL	£ 207,000.00	£ 800,000.00	£ 1,007,000.00
LOCAL NETWORK IMPROVEMENT PLAN TOTAL	£ 536,000.00	£ 1,563,100.00	£ 2,099,100.00
Promotion of Community Health and Safety - Council Capital Funding			
Promotion of Community Health & Safety: Camden St / Black Cock Bridge / Green Lane	£ -	£ 120,000.00	£ 120,000.00
COUNCIL CAPITAL TOTAL	£ -	£ 120,000.00	£ 120,000.00
GRAND TOTAL	£ 536,000.00	£ 1,683,100.00	£ 2,219,100.00

Project Name	Project Overview	Overall Cost	Score	Score as %	Included	Comments
Darlaston Rail Station - Walk, Cycle & Bus Access	Development of highways infrastructure around station	£ 40,000.00	39	81%	Yes	
Willenhall Rail Station - Walk, Cycle & Bus Access	Development of highways infrastructure around station	£ 40,000.00	39	81%	Yes	
Aldridge Rail Station - Highways Development	Development of highways infrastructure around station	£ 5,000.00	39	81%	Yes	
Walsall Town Centre Interchange - Walk, Cycle & Bus Access	Development of public transport interchanges	£ 60,000.00	38	79%	Yes	
Sustainable Transport Package - Walsall Towns Fund	Delivery of measures to promote active travel	£ 16,000.00	37	77%	Yes	
Wolverhampton Street, Walsall - Walk & Cycle Access	Development of measures to promote active travel	£ 5,000.00	37	77%	Yes	
Black Country Walk & Cycle Programme	Development of measures to promote active travel	£ 25,000.00	37	77%	Yes	
Willenhall - Walk & Cycle Access (ATF4)	Delivery of measures to promote active travel	£ 5,000.00	37	77%	Yes	
A461 Walk, Cycle & Bus Corridor	Multi-modal corridor improvements development	£ 20,000.00	36	75%	Yes	
Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Programme	Delivery of infrastructure to promote electric vehicle usage	£ 30,000.00	33	69%	Yes	
Public Rights of Way Programme	Improvements to public rights of way	£ 65,000.00	33	69%	Yes	
Highway Efficiency Measures Programme	Rolling programme of TRO and UTC improvements	£ 65,000.00	29	60%	Yes	
Sutton Rd/Longwood Lane Junction (Design development)	Design development of highway improvements	£ 12,000.00	26	54%	Yes	
Commonwealth Way / A34 Cycle Route (Deliver Works)	Delivery of cycle route improvements	£ 1,038,682.00	34	71%	No	Cost exceeds total budget
Aldridge Station - Highway Improvements (Deliver Works)	Delivery of highway improvements	£ 700,000.00	33	69%	No	Cost exceeds total budget
Anson Junction Access	Surveys to inform design development for highway works	£ 666,500.00	27	56%	No	Cost exceeds total budget
Lindon Road Jct (Deliver works)	Delivery of highway improvements	£ 237,600.00	26	54%	No	Not affordable
Sutton Rd/Longwood Lane Junction (Deliver Works)	Delivery of highway improvements	£ 661,465.00	26	54%	No	Cost exceeds total budget
A4031 Gateway (Design & Deliver Works)	Delivery of highway improvements	£ 648,000.00	21	44%	No	Cost exceeds total budget
		Total Cost of Proposals	£4,340,247.00			
		2025/26 Budget	£ 388,000.00			
		Balance (Unfunded)	-£3,952,247.00			

APPENDIX C

Local Safety Schemes 2025/26

Refer to RS12a - Procedure for assessing Local Safety Schemes and Walsall Road Safety Strategy

Completed schemes are still included within the overall ranking of the Local Safety Scheme as a) they have been completed recently and collision data from the previous 3 years is used to inform the programme and b) despite a LSS being introduced the route may still feature within the rankings and c) we continually monitor the routes.

Rank	Route	Section	Overall Score	Star Rating	Economic cost of collisions	Key Issues	Scheme description	Scheme cost	FYRR (Calculated 40% reduction)	Comments	Status
1	A34 Green Lane - Somerfield Rd - High St	Whole	71.05	2 Star	£4,223,976	Medium collision rates, High vulnerable road user rates for All cyclists, child casualties, pedestrians, child pedestrians 5-19, and car passengers 15-24; Medium rates for Drivers 20-29;	Improvements to pedestrian facilities and walking routes along Bloxwich High Street, including Wolverhampton Road junction. With an additional £67,000 carry forward from 24/25	£133,000	423%		In progress
2	Leamore Lane, Leamore	Darwin Road to West Street	69.97	2 Star	£884,088	Overall medium collision rate. High vulnerable road user rates including pedestrians	Darwin Road to West Street. Central refuges and improved pedestrian facilities	£89,183	132%		Completed 2024/25
3	B4210 Bloxwich Road / High Street	Day Street to A34	65.50	2 Star	£5,206,296	High collision rates, High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates - all groups;	Improve pedestrian facilities, junction improvement, build outs, improved lining, signing, possible removal of unenforced bus lane. With an additional £49,000 carry forward from 2024/25	£100,000	694%	Review maintenance programme to link in with resurfacing programme Consider as phased implementation	In progress
4	Redhouse Lane, Aldridge	B4154 Bosty Lane to A454 Aldridge By Pass	58.14	3 Star	£884,088.00	RTC's at Redhouse Lane / Dumblederry Lane junction. High collision rates.	Mini roundabout at junction with Dumblederry Lane and Station Road. Junction treatment and speed tables along route.	£92,978	127%		Completed 2024/25
5	A4148 Littleton Street (Various)	Lichfield St to Pleck Road	57.21	3 Star	£3,241,656	High vulnerable road user rates for P2W's, cyclists, pedestrians, child pedestrians, Drivers 20-29 and Passengers15-24; RTC's at the following junctions: Pleck Rd, Birchills St, Green La, Hatherton St and The Arboretum;	Pedestrian countdown timers introduced. junction improvements; yellow boxes; increased capacity at Hatherton St Jct completed.	£237,000	182%	NPIF2 route improvements completed 2019/20. Further improvements to key connections across the ring road required as part of the ongoing town centre masterplan	Further measures to be included as part of Town Centre Masterplan
6	B4152 Salters Road Northgate	Whole	55.66	3 Star	£1,473,480	Programme to be developed	LSS introduced in 2023/23, central hatching, warning signs , improvements to mini-roundabout at Sussex Avenue				Completed
7	A462 - Darlaston Rd	Walsall Rd to Borough Boundary	54.70	3 Star	£392,928	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
8	A4031 West Bromwich Road	Broadway to Borough Boundary	54.50	3 Star	£1,178,784	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed			TWM corridor scheme as part of CRSTS 2 funding	Future programme
9	Wednesbury Road, Caldmore	A4148 Bescot Road to Bridgeman Street	51.56	3 Star	£2,259,336.00	Programme to be developed	LSS introduced in 2016/17 between Bescot Crescent and Milton Street and 2021/22 between Bradford Street and Corporation Street			Continue to monitor	Completed
10	B4155 Lichfield Road	Canal bridge to Boundary	51.29	3 Star	£392,928	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
11	B4154 Beacon Road(2)	Old Hall Lane to Queslett Road	50.83	3 Star	£491,160	Programme to be developed Excessive speed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
12	Lower Rushall Street, Walsall	A4148 Broadway North to Ablewell Street	50.00	3 Star	£687,624.00	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
13	A4148 Broadway west	Whole	49.82	3 Star	£982,320	Medium collision rates, High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates for child casualties, pedestrians, and pedestrians 5-19. RTC's at the following junctions: Bescot Cresc	Junction upgrade at Bescot Cres completed Mar 2020 as part of NPIF2. Currently no pedestrian facilities provided within the signal upgrade.	£250,000	52%	Bescot Crescent junction redesigned as part of NPIF 2 - Mar 2020	Completed
14	A454 Wolverhampton Road	M6 J10 to 100m west Pleck Road	49.15	3 Star	£2,750,496	High collision rates, High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates - cyclists, child casualties, Pedestrians, Pedestians 5-19, and Drivers 20-29; RTC's at the following junctions: Tempus Dr, Lane Ave, Alumwell Rd and Raleigh St;	Review pedestrian movements and guardrail provision at Lane Ave & Alumwell Rd, signing and lining	£148,720	247%	Linked to Major Scheme development for M6 Jct 10 & Blox La/Tempus Dr; Crossing at Raleigh Street upgraded through NPIF2 in Feb 2020	Completed
15	A4148 Bescot Road / Wallows Lane	Whole	49.14	3 Star	£1,669,944	High collision rates, High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates for P2W's, children, pedestrians, young pedestrians, and Drivers 20-29;	Warning VAS on each approach to roundabout; upgrade chevron signs; build-out kerb line on Wallows Lane approach; Review signal operation at Dickenson Ave	£70,785	315%	Traffic Signal junction at Dickenson upgraded as part of NPIF2 2018	Future programme
16	Weston Street, Caldmore	A4148 Broadway West to West Bromich Street	48.77	3 Star	£687,624.00	Programme to be developed	LSS introduced in 2021/22			Continue to monitor	Completed
17	A454 Walsall Road / Aldridge By Pass	B4154 Bosty Lane to Leighswood Road	48.69	3 Star	£392,928	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
18	A4038 - Darlaston Rd	Park Lane to Old Pleck Road	48.13	3 Star	£1,866,408	Medium collision rates, High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates - All P2W, child casualties, and Pedestrians 5-19; RTC's at the following junctions: Old Heath Rd, east Cemetery Rd, Reservoir Pl, Scarborough Rd and Wellington St	Centre hatching and pedestrian refuges introduced in 2022/23 (New signal junction Reservoir Pl, new arm at Cemetery Rd Jct and new signal junction near The Globe Inn)	£75,900	328%	Linked to several developments:Railway station, Boxpool, St Francis group, Gas holder site, and Spark development;	Completed
19	A452 Chester Road / Brownhills High Street	Coppice Lane to A461 Lichfield Road	48.09	3 Star	£1,178,784	High collision rates. High vulnerable user rates, including pedestrians and young drivers. Section to include from the Miners Island to Lindon Road.	Improve pedestrian facilities, junction improvement, build outs, improved lining, signing, possible removal of unenforced bus lane. With an additional £49,000 carry forward from 2024/25	£100,000	157%		In progress
20	B4210 Sandbank & Elmore Green	Whole	47.33	3 Star	£982,320	High collision rate, High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates for P2W, child casualties, pedestrians, child pedestrians 5-19, Drivers 20-29 and car passengers 15-24; RTC's at the following junctions:Alfred St, Station St	Junction improvement at Station St, and Church Moat Way, route treatment measures incorporating centre hatch, traffic splitter islands	£45,210	290%		Future programme
21	A4148 Pleck Road	A4038 to A454	45.33	3 Star	£2,357,568	High collision rates, High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates for P2W's, children, pedestrians and Drivers 20-29. Excessive speed and anti-social behaviour	2no. Watchman ANPR signs introduced, guardrail near Hospital entrance, pedestrian refuges. Improved warning and directional signs. One way system introduced at Jct with St Johns Rd and Vicarage Terrace in 2018/19 Targeted education campaign	£201,650	156%	Treated as part of LSS programme 2018/19 & WMCA Congestion Management and Road Safety fund; Implemented October 2019.	Completed
22	B4464 - Somerford Pl / New Road	Whole	44.63	3 Star	£589,392	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed			ATF3 Noose Lane to Pinson Road cycle scheme. Between Portobello roundabout and mini roundabout New Street.	Future programme
23	B4464 - Wolverhampton Road west	Whole	44.06	3 Star	£1,669,944	High collision rates, High vulnerable road user rates for P2W, child casualties, and car passengers 15-24; RTC's at the following junctions:Churchill Rd, Warwick Ave, The Crescent	Major scheme development.Improvements to traffic signal junction at Bentley Road North, as part of connecting Bentley phase 2			Linked to major sustainable transport corridor improvements CWC/Walsall	Other development
24	A4148 Broadway north	Whole	43.24	3 Star	£2,652,264	Medium collision rates, High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates for P2W's, children, pedestrians, young pedestrians Drivers 20-29, and Passengers 15-24; Excessive speed and anti-social behaviour	Introduction of Average Speed Enforcment Spring 2020 Publicity	£47,481	745%		Completed
25	B4154 Norton Road(2)	Canal Bridge to Vicarage Road	42.77	3 Star	£1,473,480	Medium collision rates, High KSI rate, Medium vulnerable road user rates for P2W's, Cyclists, Child casualties, pedestrians and Drivers 20-29; RTC's at the following junctions:Vicarage Rd, High St	Signal operation at Vicarage Rd Jct changed in off-peak period 2020, Upgrade extg pedestrian refuge near Sation St to controlled crossing, review highway layout near Station St, improve road markings and road signs	£102,630	191%	Linked to Yorks Bridge improvements; Changes to signalscompleted at Vicarage Rd Mar 20	Completed
26	B4154 Daw End Lane	A461 Lichfield Rd to A454 Walsall Rd	42.76	3 Star	£392,928	Programme to be developed Excessive speed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
27	B4464 - Walsall Street / Walsall Road	Whole	42.50	3 Star	£1,473,480	High collision rates, High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates for all casualties and Passengers15-24; RTC's at the following junctions: Gypsy La, Bham St, Fletchers La and The Crescent	Upgrade zebra near St Giles, Upgrade zebra near Fisher Street, Junction improvement at Bham St, Junction improvement at Gypsy Lane, signing and lining, build outs, Review signals at The Crescent and usage of Walsall Rd near Guru Nanak	£98,670	199%	Linked to Major scheme for Sustainable Travel corridor linking Walsall to Wolverhampton	Future programme
28	A4038 - Walsall Rd	Darlaston Road to B4200 Park Lane	41.75	3 Star	£1,473,480	High collision rates, High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates for P2W's, child casualties, pedestrians, pedestrians 5-19 and Drivers 20-29. RTC's at the following junctions: Salisbury St, Old Park Rd, Darlaston Rd	Introduce ghost right turns with traffic islands at Salisbury & Old Park Rd; review signal timings, signing and road markings	£76,560	257%		Completed

29	Leamore Lane, Leamore	Croxstalls Road to Bloxwich Lane	41.09	3 Star	£491,160.00	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
30	B4138 - Thornhill Road	Whole	40.44	3 Star	£294,696	Programme to be developed Excessive speed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
31	A4038 - Moxley Rd	Moxley junction to A462 Darlaston Rd	39.91	4 Star	£1,375,248	High collision rates, High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates for P2W's, cyclists, children, pedestrians, young pedestrians and Drivers 20-29. RTC's at Wolverhampton St and Dangerfield La jcts; single vehicle collisions;	Improve signing, lining, HFS, Improvments to pedestian crossing near Pinfold Primary completed in 2022/23. VASS introduced on Pinfold St Targeted education campaign	£144,200	127%	Additional budget required to support wider scheme linked to Iron Park development	Completed
32	B4154 Barr Common Road	Whole	39.71	4 Star	£98,232	Programme to be developed Excessive speed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
33	A4041 Queslett Road	Whole - Walsall side only	39.54	4 Star	£1,080,552	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
34	A34 Stafford Road	Whole	39.44	4 Star	£491,160	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
35	A4148 Broadway	Whole	39.43	4 Star	£884,088	Medium collision rates, High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates for P2W's, child KSI, child casualties, child pedestrians, Drivers 20-29 and Passengers 15-24; RTC's at the following junctions: West Brom Rd	Improvements to controlled pedestrian crossing facilities across Broadway near Weston Rd widen central reservation	£88,440	133%		Future programme
36	A4124 - Lichfield Road / Near Academy	Bloxwich	39.29	4 Star	£196,464	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
37	A4124 - Lichfield Road / Pelsall Road	B4154 Norton Road to Clayhanger Lane	39.29	4 Star	£2,259,336	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
38	A41 High Street	Moxley junction to Borough Boundary	39.00	4 Star	£589,392	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
39	B4151 Sutton Road West	Broadway to Daffodil Road	38.50	5 Star	£98,232	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
40	B4151 Foley Road east	Whole	38.50	4 Star	£196,464	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
41	B4155 Lichfield Road	High Street to Ogley Road	37.65	4 Star	£98,232	Programme to be developed Excessive speed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
42	B4484 - Rose Hill	Whole	37.43	4 Star	£392,928	High collision rates, High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates for cyclists and pedestrians; Longacre junction RTC cluster and junction with Walsall Road; Parking issues along route	Remark carriageway, introduce mini island at Longacre, VASS, formalise on street parking, review kerbing and guardrail at Walsall Road junction	£80,800	65%	Proposed improvements linked to Willenhall Station proposal	Future programme
43	B4154 Pelsall Lane	Whole	37.31	4 Star	£196,464	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
44	B4484 Pinson Road / Field Street	Sommerford Place to Moat Street	37.00	4 Star	£98,232	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
45	A462 - The Green	Midland Rd to Pinfold St	36.50	4 Star	£589,392	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
46	A34 Birmingham Road	A4148 Broadway to Bell Road	36.00	4 Star	£589,392	Medium collision rates, High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates for P2W's, children, pedestrians, young pedestrians Drivers 20-29, and Passengers 15-24;	Introduction of Average Speed Enforcement Spring 2020 Publicity	£33,691	233%		Completed
47	A462 - Midland Rd	Bilston Lane to The Green	35.34	4 Star	£687,624	Programme to be developed	LSS introduced in 2012/13. Central hatching with pedestrian refuges, VASS			Continue to monitor	Completed
48	A462 - Sandbeds Rd / Clarkes Lane	Bentley Lane to B4464 Wolverhampton Road west	35.10	4 Star	£3,143,424	High collision rates, High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates for children casualties, child pedestrians 5-19, and Drivers 20-29; RTC's at the following junctions:Stroud Ave	VASS near jct with Stroud Ave	£20,000	2096%		Future programme
49	B4151 Sutton Road	Daffodil Road to Skip Lane	35.00	4 Star	£294,696	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
50	B4154 Longwood Road	Whole	34.00	4 Star	£294,696	Programme to be developed Excessive speed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
51	A454 Aldridge Road	Fernleigh Road to Longwood Lane	34.00	4 Star	£392,928	Programme to be developed Excessive speed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
52	A454 Little Aston Road Section 2	Branton Hill to A452	33.91	4 Star	£98,232	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
53	B4590 Bilston Lane	The Keyway to Owen Road	33.00	4 Star	£392,928	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
54	A4124 - Lichfield Road / Sneyd Lane	Borough Boundary to A34 High Street	32.55	4 Star	£1,375,248	High collision rate, High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates for P2W, Child KSI, children casualties, child pedestrians 5-19, Drivers 20-29 and car passengers 15-24; RTC's at the following junctions:The Gate Island, Sandringham Ave	Scheme details to be confirmed	£5,000	3667%		Future programme
55	A5 Watling Street	Whole	32.33	4 Star	£1,178,784	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
56	B4152 Brownhills Rd Lindon Road	Whole	32.24	4 Star	£491,160	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
57	A4098 Great Bridge Road	Whole	32.11	4 Star	£98,232	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
58	A461 Lichfield Road Section 1	Broadway to Daw End Lane	32.09	4 Star	£1,964,640	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
59	B4154 Bosty Lane	A454 Walsall Road to Barr Common Road	32.00	4 Star	£196,464	High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates for Drivers 20-29. RTC's at the following junctions: Barr Common Rd; Excessive speed	Centre hatching, 2 x watchman, improve road markings and signs	£89,100	29%		Future programme
60	A4124 - Lichfield Road / Wolverhampton Road	Whole	31.93	4 Star	£1,178,784	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
61	Stroud Avenue, Bentley	Whole	31.88	4 Star	£589,392.00	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
62	A462 - Cannock - Straight Rd	A4124 Lichfield Road to Bentley Lane	31.78	4 Star	£196,464	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
63	A452 Chester Road urban	50m north of Raglan Close to Borough Boundary	31.70	4 Star	£1,277,016	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
64	A34 Birmingham Road	Bell Road to Borough Boundary	30.58	4 Star	£982,320	High collision rates, High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates for Drivers 20-29. Excessive speed and anti-social behaviour	Introduction of Average Speed Enforcement introduced Spring 2020 Publicity	£33,691	389%		Completed
65	Harden Road, Harden	B4210 Bloxwich Road to A461 Lichfield Road	30.39	4 Star	£1,277,016.00	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
66	A461 Lichfield Road Section 3	100m east Chester Road to boundary	30.00	4 Star	£196,464	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
67	B4151 Foley Road west	Whole	29.49	4 Star	£98,232	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
68	A454 Little Aston Road Section 1	Leighswood Road to Branton Hill	28.50	4 Star	£294,696	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
69	B4154 Norton Road	Canal Bridge to Borough Boundary	27.75	4 Star	£98,232	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
70	A452 Chester Road (2)	Castlehill - Back Lane	26.56	4 Star	£294,696	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
71	B4484 - Various (Fibbersley)	Moat Street to Borough Boundary	26.46	4 Star	£98,232	Programme to be developed Excessive speed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
72	A4124 - Pelsall Road	B4154 Clayhanger Lane to A452 High Street	24.13	4 Star	£687,624	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
73	A454 Mellish Road	A461 Lichfield Road to Fernleigh Road	24.00	4 Star	£294,696	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
74	B4154 Walsall Road	Whole	24.00	4 Star	£392,928	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
75	A462 - Bilston Lane	Wolverhampton Rd West to Owen Rd	24.00	4 Star	£884,088	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
76	A463 Black Country Route - section 1	Borough Boundary - Midland Road	23.83	4 Star	£687,624	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
77	A462 - Essington Road	Sneyd Lane to A4124 Lichfield Road	23.46	4 Star	£687,624	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme

78	A461 Lichfield Road Section 2	Daw End Lane to Chester Road / High Street	22.77	4 Star	£2,554,032	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
79	A454 The Keyway	Portobello Island to BCR Island	21.67	4 Star	£982,320	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
80	A452 Chester Road (3)	Back Lane to 50m north of Raglan Close	21.53	4 Star	£98,232	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
81	B4210 Broad Lane	Whole	21.00	4 Star	£884,088	High collision rates, High KSI rate, High vulnerable road user rates for children casualties, child pedestrians 5-19, and Drivers 20-29; RTC's at the following junctions: Baytree Rd	Introduce centre hatch, improve road signs, VASS, pedestrian refuge	£53,460	220%		Future programme
82	B4151 Sutton Road East	Skip Lane to Beacon Road	19.00	5 Star	£785,856	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
83	A41 Black Country New Road	Moxley junction to Borough Boundary	19.00	5 Star	£98,232	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
84	A452 Chester Road north	A5 Watling Street to Coppice Lane	19.00	5 Star	£98,232	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
85	B5011 Ogley Road / Chase Road	Whole	17.00	5 Star	£196,464	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
86	A454 Black Country Route - section 2	Midland Road - M6 J10	16.50	5 Star	£785,856	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
87	A452 Chester Road (1)	200m south east of A461 Lichfield Rd to Castlehill	16.00	5 Star	£196,464	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
88	B4151 Beacon Hill	Whole	14.00	5 Star	£0	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
89	A4444 Black Country New Road	Borough Boundary - Moxley junction	14.00	5 Star	£98,232	Excessive speed and anti-social behaviour	Introduction of Average Speed Enforcement introduced Spring 2020 Publicity	£43,893	30%		Completed
90	B4154 Beacon Road	Beacon Hill to Old Hall Lane	14.00	5 Star	£294,696	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme
91	A454 Walsall Road	Longwood Lane to B4154 Bosty Lane	14.00	5 Star	£0	Programme to be developed	Scheme details to be confirmed				Future programme

APPENDIX D
Promotion of Community Health and Safety 2025/26

Refer to RS19 - Procedure for assessing sites of Community Health & Safety

Safety related requests	£40,000.00	To address urgent minor road safety concerns within the Borough	
Speed Management	£143,000.00	Review of 20mph speed limit areas: Network Performance Management	Slippage from previous years; Implementation in line with Walsall Road Safety Strategy
Network Performance	£60,000.00	Implementation of route management systems	Links to delivery of Congestion Management Plan & Network Management Plan
Total budget to complete schemes	£243,000.00		

			AREA					REQUEST			ACCIDENTS (Sept 2021 - Sept 2024)			AMENITIES			ASSESSMENT		
	LOCATION	AREA	Length of Road (m)	Average width of Road (m)	No of Properties directly Affected	No of properties indirectly Affected		No of people who signed the Petition	Request by resident first name on petition and supported by relevant ward councillors	Date Received	No of Accidents in last 3 years	Fatal	Serious	Schools	Shops	Open Space	Property / £1000	Accident and Amenities Score	SCORE
1	Leighswood Road/Stubbers Green Road	Aldridge	1500	7.0	101	150		0	Mrs Done	Jul-20	5	0	4	0	0	1	0.6	10	10.56
2	Camden Street / Black Cock Bridge / Green Lane	Walsall Wood	100	5.0	100	50		0	Amanda Butler Amanda Bull / Cllr Chapman and Wendy Moreton MP/ Liz McLachlan / Cllr Wilson	Apr-24	2	0	0	0	0	0	8.3	2	10.33

3	Stephenson Avenue	Beechdale	1100	9.2	320	100		0	Cllr Gaz Ali	Aug-24	4	0	2	0	1	1	1.2	8	9.22
4	Bosty Lane	Aldridge	2400	7.3	100	20		0	Lyndsey Handley	May-24	6	1	0	0	1	0	0.2	9	9.21
5	Alumwell Road/Moat Road	Pleck	1000	7.0	250	100		0	Indy Kaur	Oct-24	4	0	3	0	0	0	1.4	7	8.43
6	Erdington Road	Aldridge	2485	7.2	140	80		0	Mrs Cartwright	Apr-15	5	0	1	1	1	0	0.3	8	8.34
7	Bewley Road, (Calstock Rd / Binbrook Rd / Darvel Rd)	Bentley	197	6.0	70	92		0	Cllr Barker	Aug-17	3	0	1	0	0	1	3.3	5	8.27
8	Wimperis Way / Bonnington Way / Romney Way	Pheasey	1280	6.5	202	10		170	Mr Sadler, Councillors: Andrew, Burley,	Nov-02	4	0	1	1	0	1	0.8	7	7.83
9	Mill Road/Fordbrook Road, Pelsall	Pelsall	627	6.0	200	0		0	n/a	Jul-13	3	0	1	1	1	0	1.8	6	7.77
10	Hospital Street	Walsall	368	7.2	170	84		0	Cllr Ali	Jan-24	3	0	1	1	0	0	2.7	5	7.66
11	Whetstone Lane	Aldridge	980	6.3	151	116		0	Mr Martin	Mar-17	4	0	0	1	1	0	1.1	6	7.13
12	Ogley Road	Brownhills	950	6.7	160	40		0	Danni	Jul-24	2	0	1	1	1	1	0.9	6	6.94
13	Leighswood Road / Middlemore Lane Jnc	Aldridge	500	6.7	70	200		0	Kirstie Pearl	Feb-23	1	0	1	0	3	0	1.7	5	6.69
14	Bentley Lane, (A462 High St - Harvester Road)	Short Heath	330	6.0	50	100		0	Cllr Garcha + residents	Oct-23	2	0	1	1	0	1	1.7	5	6.68
15	Hall Lane, Mouse Hill	Pelsall	500	6.0	50	0		0	Wendy Morton MP	Apr-18	2	0	1	1	1	1	0.6	6	6.56
16	Coppice Farm Way	Willenhall	1390	8.0	1121	0		0	Cllr Shires	Dec-10	2	0	0	0	0	1	3.4	3	6.36
17	The Crescent, Willenhall	Willenhall	500	9.0	30	20		0	Eddie Hughes MP	Jun-18	4	0	1	0	0	1	0.3	6	6.30
18	Dovedale Avenue	Short Heath	450	5.2	101	104		0	Mr Adrian Anderson	Apr-10	2	0	1	0	0	1	2.2	4	6.18
19	Stafford Road	Darlaston	500	7.3	100	39		0	Cllr Botts	Jan-24	3	0	1	0	1	0	1.1	5	6.09
20	Hollemeadow Avenue		480	5.7	80	10		0	Martyna Nowicka	Jun-24	3	0	2	0	0	0	1.0	5	6.04
21	Green Lane Sheffield	Sheffield	845	6.8	138	80		0	Mrs Cotton/ Mrs Carol Stone Aug 15	May-14	2	0	1	1	1	0	1.0	5	6.03
22	Leamore Lane/ Fryer Rd	Leamore	300	9.3	50	60		0	n/a	Feb-19	2	0	0	1	1	1	1.0	5	5.96
23	Old Park Road	Kingshill	396	7.3	68	180		0	Mohammed Perager	Aug-13	2	0	0	1	0	1	1.8	4	5.82
24	Stephenson Avenue, Beechdale	Beechdale	500	7.5	60	50		0	Mr Williams	Jun-18	2	0	1	1	1	0	0.8	5	5.76
25	Somerfield Road	Bloxwich	740	11.8	136	0		71	Cllr Jones	Nov-15	2	0	1	1	1	0	0.5	5	5.52
26	Delves Green Road		640	7.6	70	10		0	John Naylor & Jill Shuck	Jun-24	2	0	1	0	1	1	0.5	5	5.51
27	Birmingham Street	Willenhall	317	6.0	84	110		0	Ms Simone Jarvis	Oct-15	2	0	1	0	0	0	2.4	3	5.44
28	Catshill Road / Fullelove Road	Brownhills	1280	5.1	231	16		132	J. Lees, Councillors :- Alan Paul, Dave Turner & J. Bird	Dec-02	1	0	1	1	0	1	1.2	4	5.22
29	Bridgeman St/ Jerome Business Pk	Palfrey	100	7.3	0	0		0	n/a	Nov-19	2	0	1	0	1	1	0.0	5	5.00
30	Odell Road	Leamore	327	5.3	29	44		0	Mr R. Lewis	Mar-13	2	0	0	1	0	1	1.0	4	4.98
31	Providence Lane	Leamore	270	7.6	114	0		44	Mr D. Coley, Councillors:- Oliver and Barton	Dec-02	1	0	1	0	1	0	1.9	3	4.85
32	Noose Lane (A454 Willenhall Road to Watery Lane)	Willenhall	750	7.5	80	100		0	Cllr Cheema	May-23	2	0	0	0	1	1	0.8	4	4.77
33	Slater Street / Victoria Road Bull Street junction	Darlaston	227	7.3	32	0		78	J. Walker, Councillor:- Madeley	Apr-05	2	0	1	0	0	1	0.6	4	4.64
34	Fordbrook Lane/Mill Lane	Pelsall	1000	6.3	100	0		0	Richard Hartshall	Mar-18	3	0	1	0	0	0	0.5	4	4.53
35	Thornhill Road	Streety	1967	6.8	107	176		0	Mrs Daviedi	Jun-07	3	0	0	0	0	1	0.5	4	4.49
36	Turnberry Road,	Bloxwich	1137	7.3	17	1144		0	Jayne Price	Oct-13	1	0	0	0	1	0	2.4	2	4.36
37	Collingwood Drive, Pheasey	Pheasey	450	7.4	100	50		0	Alana / Cllr Andrew	Nov-24	2	0	0	0	1	0	1.3	3	4.25
38	Delves Rd / Highgate Rd/ / Sandwell St	Palfrey	75	9.0	25	0		0	Cllr Coughlan	Nov-17	1	0	0	1	1	0	1.2	3	4.23
39	Attlee Road	Bentley	640	6.6	125	50		0	Julie Sheridan Richards	Jul-24	1	0	0	1	0	1	1.2	3	4.18
40	Brookland Road	Aldridge	521	5.8	86	35		0	Mrs Donna Parkes	Feb-10	2	0	0	0	0	1	1.1	3	4.14
41	Daw End Lane	Rushall	910	7.6	12	0		0	N/A	Feb-14	2	0	1	0	0	1	0.1	4	4.06
42	Castle View Road	Moxley	420	5.1	66	0		0	Bill Bilts	Jul-09	1	0	0	0	1	1	1.0	3	4.03
43	Walsall Wood Road	Aldridge	1985	7.5	406	65		0	Miss Louise Connor	Mar-15	1	0	0	0	1	1	1.0	3	3.98
44	Allens Lane	Pelsall	970	6.5	110	150		0	Cllr Perry	Apr-22	1	0	0	1	0	1	1.0	3	3.98
45	Highfield Road	Pelsall	360	6.0	26	61		0	M Page	Mar-11	0	0	1	1	0	1	0.9	3	3.87
46	Furzebank Way		640	5.6	50	85		0	Katie Jones & 7 other parents	Jun-24	2	0	0	1	0	0	0.9	3	3.86
47	Selmans Hill/Stoney Lane	Bloxwich East	442	6.9	167	0		0	N/A	Dec-13	1	0	0	0	1	0	1.8	2	3.82
48	Ravenscroft Road	Willenhall	371	5.0	117	66		0	MrH Reeves	Apr-10	0	0	0	0	0	1	2.7	1	3.70
49	Rosamond St/ Truda St	Palfrey	100	7.0	20	30		0	n/a		1	0	1	0	0	0	1.7	2	3.67

50	Heathfield Lane West	Darlaston	480	5.7	120	30		0	Libby Woolley <woolleglibby63@gmail.com>	Aug-24	1	0	0	0	1	0	1.6	2	3.64
51	Barns Lane & Westgate	Rushall	3020	6.0	270	115		0	Cllr Worrall	Aug-12	2	0	0	0	1	0	0.6	3	3.60
52	Hayley Street	Willenhall	240	6.0	60	100		0	Mr Springthorpe	Aug-21	0	0	0	0	0	1	2.5	1	3.55
53	Station Street	Darlaston	922	7.0	97	0		0	Mr S Stuart via LNP	Jan-06	2	0	0	1	0	0	0.5	3	3.50
54	Fleming Road	Walsall	340	5.1	63	24		47	Mr & Mrs Round, Councillors:- Joan Barton	Oct-04	0	0	0	1	0	1	1.4	2	3.44
55	Four Crosses Road	Shelfield	221	6.2	17	0		0	Miss J O'Brien	May-14	1	0	0	1	0	1	0.4	3	3.41
56	Slaney Road	Pleck	270	5.8	66	0		0	Mr A Jenkins	May-14	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.4	2	3.40
57	Foley Road East/ Middleton Road/Fetherston Road - crossroads	Streety	200	7.0	7	20		0	Dr Salman Hashmi	Jun-23	2	0	0	1	0	0	0.4	3	3.40
58	Lichfield Rd, Sandhills	Brownhills	1010	7.3	76	0		0	Gareth Pulman	Sep-13	2	0	0	0	0	1	0.3	3	3.34
59	Well Lane/ Shakespeare Cresc	Leamore	100	6.5	50	30		0			0	0	0	0	0	0	3.3	0	3.33
60	Frederick William St/ Albion Rd	Spring Bank	100	7.5	20	20		0	n/a		2	0	0	0	0	0	1.3	2	3.33
61	Old Town Lane	Pelsall	477	6.5	70	100		0	Cllr Lee	Jun-21	0	0	0	1	0	1	1.3	2	3.29
62	Millfield Avenue	Pelsall	200	7.3	30	50		0	Mr Cartwright	Aug-18	0	0	0	1	0	1	1.3	2	3.26
63	Temple Road, Willenhall		450	7.4	110	30		0	Mandy Smith	May-24	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.3	2	3.25
64	Castlefort Road	Aldridge North & Walsall Wood	600	4.8	86	42		178	Mr Thomas Davis	Oct-09	0	0	1	1	0	0	1.2	2	3.24
65	New Forest Road	Blakenall	300	5.5	50	20		0	request as part of Blakenall ward walk	Aug-24	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.2	2	3.21
66	Coronation Road	Pelsall	650	6.9	139	22		0	Ms C Brennan	Jun-14	0	0	0	1	1	0	1.1	2	3.11
67	Greaves Avenue	Park Hall	690	6.9	69	172		0	Cllr Martin	Oct-10	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.1	2	3.09
68	Little Aston Road	Aldridge	1165	7.4	18	8		0	Mrs Doyle	Dec-08	3	0	0	0	0	0	0.1	3	3.09
69	Castle Drive	Willenhall	230	4.8	35	0		109	A. Anslow, Councillor:- Shires	Oct-05	0	0	0	1	1	0	1.1	2	3.07
70	Alexandra Road	Bescot	276	8.3	72	0		0	Mrs Matthews	May-12	1	0	0	1	0	0	1.0	2	3.04
71	Lowe Avenue	Darlaston	1165	5.5	172	51		0	Mr Johnson	Nov-14	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.0	2	3.03
72	Hardwick Road	Streety	661	6.3	68	365		0	unknown	Jul-08	0	0	0	0	1	0	2.0	1	3.01
73	Parker Street inc Sandhill Street	Bloxwich	500	7.4	108	0		0	Nicola Denny 01922 710937	Apr-10	0	0	0	1	1	0	1.0	2	2.97
74	Gipsy Lane	Willenhall	560	6.5	91	25		0	Mrs Francis Foster	Feb-13	2	0	0	0	0	0	0.9	2	2.95
75	Whitton Street	Darlaston	158	7.0	31	0		0	Mr Abassi	Aug-14	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.9	2	2.93
76	Chapel Street, Pelsall	Pelsall	464	6.0	71	9		0	Cllr Longhi/ Andy Capp	Jan-18	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.9	2	2.90
77	Park Farm Road	Park Farm	495	5.4	125	212		0	Laura Kelly	Aug-13	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.9	0	2.88
78	Harrison Street/ Harrison Close/ Revival Street	Bloxwich	848	7.3	157	0		0	Cllr Shires	Jul-09	1	0	1	0	0	0	0.8	2	2.85
79	Straight Road	Willenhall	261	6.9	123	62		0	Mrs Attwell	Aug-15	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.8	0	2.83
80	Gower St	Pleck	465	8.4	91	0		0	n/a	Nov-13	1	0	0	0	1	0	0.8	2	2.78
81	Spring Lane	Willenhall	425	5.2	41	14		0	Cllr Shires	Feb-10	2	0	0	0	0	0	0.7	2	2.72
82	Park Hall Road	Paddock	1581	6.4	123	135		0	Mr Harris	Nov-08	1	0	0	1	0	0	0.6	2	2.63
83	Vicarage Road / New Road / Church Road	Brownhills	990	5.8	81	52		52	Glyn Holloway, Councillors:- Turner, Bird and Paul	Nov-03	1	0	0	1	0	0	0.6	2	2.62
84	Allens Lane	Pelsall	190	7.5	25	0		0	Cllr Perry	Oct-14	1	0	0	0	1	0	0.6	2	2.58
85	Chantry Ave	Blakenall	830	5.0	185	17		unknown	Cllr Young, Petition	Apr-14	1	0	0	0	0	0	1.6	1	2.55
86	Sadler Road		550	5.5	90	100		0	Cllr Murray	Jul-21	1	0	0	0	0	0	1.5	1	2.54
87	Noddy Park Road	Aldridge	250	5.5	11	20		0	Cllr Wilson/Paul Leighton	Jun-23	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.5	2	2.51
88	Springvale Avenue/Barry Road	Walsall	430	5.3	34	0		34	Mr Baker, Councillors:- Ali, Martin and Sanders	Oct-03	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.5	2	2.50
89	Leighton Road	Darlaston	208	7.0	14	15		0	Valerie Vaz MP	Mar-15	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.5	2	2.49
90	Knights Hill		371	5.5	30	0		0	Cllr Wilson		1	0	0	0	0	1	0.5	2	2.49
91	Little Hardwick Road, Sunny bank Close to Chester Rd	Aldridge	500	7.4	150	30		0	Helen Gould	Apr-24	0	0	0	0	1	0	1.5	1	2.49
92	Spring Lane Estate	Willenhall	413	5.1	154	0		0	Cllr Cook	Apr-12	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.4	0	2.44
93	Station Street	Bloxwich	163	7.0	66	33		0			0	0	0	0	0	0	2.4	0	2.41
94	Heathfield Lane West	Darlaston	321	6.1	80	0		0	Cllr Bott	Jan-07	1	0	0	0	0	0	1.4	1	2.36
95	Tyndale Crescent	Pheasey	886	6.4	231	0		179	Peter Bonham. Councillors:- Martin Harrower, Rose Burley,	Aug-02	0	0	0	0	1	0	1.4	1	2.36
96	Laurel and Laburnum Road	Delves	318	5.1	16	0		0	N/A	Feb-14	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.3	2	2.33
97	Millfield Avenue Pelsall	Shelfield	315	5.5	44	48		30	Mrs P Cartwright	Jun-14	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.3	1	2.31
98	St Annes Road	Willenhall	532	7.0	106	80		0	Mr Garbett	Dec-15	0	0	0	0	1	0	1.3	1	2.31
99	Abbey Drive / Charles Crescent	Pelsall	675	5.6	120	48		15	Cllr G Perry	Nov-06	1	0	0	0	0	0	1.3	1	2.27
100	Mount St/White Street	Caldmore	337	5.4	62	0		0	n/a	Nov-13	0	0	0	0	1	0	1.1	1	2.15
101	Booth Street, Darlaston	Darlaston	429	7.5	74	64		0	Mrs Brown	May-05	0	0	1	0	0	0	1.1	1	2.10
102	Hardy Road	Walsall	305	6.0	60	0		57	W. Williams, Councillors:- Robertson	Apr-05	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.1	1	2.09
103	Sandringham Avenue	Willenhall	850	5.8	160	0		100	Mr Mildoon 2 Sandringham Ave via Cllr Shires	Apr-09	1	0	0	0	0	0	1.1	1	2.08
104	Doe Bank Lane/Bridle Lane	Streety	2500	5.5	29	0		880	Mrs Bullock	Sep-20	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.1	2	2.07
105	Chepstow Road	Bloxwich	510	5.1	161	0		89	Residents Association	Ap-06	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.1	0	2.06
106	William Street	The Butts	185	8.5	50	0		0	Cllr Narwaz	Jan-21	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.1	1	2.06
107	Castlevieview Road	Moxley	500	5.5	60	50		81	Cllr Bott	Jul-18	1	0	0	0	0	0	1.0	1	2.03
108	Walsall Road near Sikh Temple	Willenhall	145	8.3	1	0		0	David Winnick MP	Dec-13	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.0	2	2.03
109	B4464 Walsall Rd, Shepwell Green	Bentley	150	8.5	1	0		0	Cllr Coughlan	Sep-17	1	0	0	0	1	0	0.0	2	2.03
110	Gretton Crescent	Aldridge	300	5.5	50	0		0	Zoe Dodd	Mar-18	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.0	1	2.01
111	Holly Lane & Wolverson Road	Walsall Wood	275	5.8	80	29		74	Mrs J. Hikins	Oct-02	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.0	0	1.97
112	The Hayes (Lucknow to Castle Drive)	Willenhall	200	6.0	26	16		0	Cllr I shires	Jan-13	0	0	0	1	0	0	0.9	1	1.94
113	Lowlands Avenue	Streety	754	6.5	138	0		0		Oct-06	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.9	1	1.94
114	Victoria Avenue (Field Road to Blakenall)	Blakenall	500	7.7	80	50		0	Mr Blair	Aug-20	0	0	0	0	1	0	0.9	1	1.91
115	Hundred Acre Road	Streety	1000	6.2	160	0		0	Wendy Morton MP	Mar-18	0	0	0	1	0	0	0.9	1	1.86
116	New Mills Street	Pleck	250	7.6	103	0		0	M Babul	Oct-12	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.8	0	1.81
117	Hannah Road	Darlaston	370	5.0	85	30		0	Cllr Bott	Dec-12	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.8	0	1.80
118	Blay Avenue	Pleck	253	5.9	34	4		0	N/A	Jan-14	0	0	0	1	0	0	0.8	1	1.80
119	Green Lane, Pelsall	Pelsall	415	6.0	50	10		0	Mr Gill		0	0	0	0	0	1	0.7	1	1.74
120	Castle Hill Rd	Streety	870	5.0	38	109		0	Glyn Barratt, 212 Castl Hill Rd	Aug-15	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.7	1	1.71
121	Liskeard Road	Park Hall	350	6.9	51	0		0	Cllr Martin	Oct-10	0	0	0	0	1	0	0.7	1	1.70
122	Crab Lane / Sneyd Lane	Willenhall	1424	5.5	118	71		0	Mrs Pagett Bunce	Apr-14	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.7	1	1.65
123	Abingdon Way	Mosseley	150	4.9	35	0		0	Cllr Fellows	Sep-15	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.6	0	1.59
124	Nightingale Crescent	Willenhall	400	5.7	53	111		0	Cllr Shires	Feb-10	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.6	0	1.59

125	Gility Avenue	Park Hall	740	6.3	69	23		0	Cllr Martin	Oct-10		0	0	0	0	1	0	0.6	1	1.58
126	Lake Avenue	Park Hall	480	6.9	51	7		0	Cllr Martin	Oct-10		0	0	0	0	0	1	0.5	1	1.55
127	New Street J/W Lichfield Road	Sheffield	263	7.0	16	136		0	Mr Sid Yates	Aug-09		0	0	0	0	0	0	1.5	0	1.52
128	Edinburgh Avenue	Bentley	600	6.6	114	132		n/a	Mr G Taylor	Sep-14		0	0	0	0	0	0	1.5	0	1.52
129	Shire Ridge	Aldridge North & Walsall Wood	700	7.0	220	0		0	Mr Hodges; Mr R Shephard MP	Sep-09		0	0	0	0	0	0	1.5	0	1.50
130	Peolsford Road	Pelsall	130	6.2	36	0		0	Andrew Dyke, 1 Peolsford Road	Feb-11		0	0	0	0	0	0	1.5	0	1.49
131	Cornwall Road	Park Hall	180	5.3	42	0		0	Cllr Martin	Oct-10		0	0	0	0	0	0	1.5	0	1.47
132	Windsor St	Palfrey	111	7.8	38	0		0	Sojourner Dawson	Feb-14		0	0	0	0	0	0	1.5	0	1.46
133	Pool Street / Bank Street Chuckery		320	6.0	20	10		0	Adrian Clarke via traffic management	May-24		0	0	0	0	1	0	0.4	1	1.43
134	Bridge Road	Rushall	222	5.0	42	0		0		Aug-13		0	0	0	0	0	0	1.3	0	1.26
135	Commonside	Pelsall	430	5.3	17	0		34	Mrs C. Miles, Councillors:- Marco Longhi	Feb-05		0	0	0	0	0	1	0.2	1	1.25
136	Fallowfield, Daisy Bank	Daisy Bank	800	6.0	100	150		0	Mrs Medza	Aug-18		0	0	0	0	0	0	1.2	0	1.22
137	Silver Street (Miners Island to one way)	Brownhills	300	6.0	15	100		0	Cllr Murphy	Sep-23		0	0	0	0	0	0	1.2	0	1.20
138	Manor Road	Aldridge	670	5.5	104	40		0	Cllr Samra	Sep-23		0	0	0	0	0	0	1.1	0	1.12
139	High Street	Clayhanger	320	5.2	50	10		0	Scott (Scott.bskyb@hotmail.co.uk)			0	0	0	0	0	0	1.1	0	1.10
140	Woodcutter Close	Walsall Centre	160	6.7	34	0		0	Higgysgirl88@gmail.com	Oct-24		0	0	0	0	0	0	1.1	0	1.06
141	Old Hall Lane	Pheasey	475	4.0	2	2		0	Helen OBrien	Apr-24		0	0	0	1	0	0	0.1	1	1.05
142	Hobs Hole Lane	Aldridge	1941	3.6	6	0		0	Cathy Cash	Jun-15		0	0	0	0	0	1	0.0	1	1.03
143	Wood Lane, Streetly	Streetly	630	6.0	81	50		0	James Vickers	Mar-16		0	0	0	0	0	0	0.9	0	0.93
144	Ashtree Road	Pelsall	450	5.5	65	0		0	Mr Povey 40 Ashtree Road WS3 4LR	Feb-09		0	0	0	0	0	0	0.9	0	0.88
145	Barr Common Road	Aldridge	430	6.0	54	24		0	Mr Shipley	Jul-09		0	0	0	0	0	0	0.9	0	0.85
146	Calthorpe Road / Woodside Road	Park Hall	366	5.4	49	0		0	N/A	Jan-14		0	0	0	0	0	0	0.8	0	0.83
147	Leigh Road & Harpur Road	Walsall	680	8.3	84	95		0	Cllr Azam	Jun-13		0	0	0	0	0	0	0.8	0	0.78
148	Morris Avenue	Bentley	620	7.5	105	0		0	Mrs Madelen von Tourtchaninoff	Sep-14		0	0	0	0	0	0	0.8	0	0.75
149	Broadstone Avenue		230	10.0	40	20		0	Cllr Ward			0	0	0	0	0	0	0.72463768	0	0.72
150	Bealeys Lane	Bloxwich	572	5.0	55	12		0	Cllr Shires	Jul-10		0	0	0	0	0	0	0.7	0	0.71
151	Mill Lane	Willenhall	460	7.0	58	0		25	Cllr Shires	Mar-11		0	0	0	0	0	0	0.6	0	0.60
152	Pelsall Road (Service Lane)	Clayhanger	200	5.3	19	0		0	Dennis Devine, Councillor:- Paul	May-05		0	0	0	0	0	0	0.6	0	0.60
153	Midland Road	St Matthews	420	8.4	42	38		63	Cllr Arif	Feb-16		0	0	0	0	0	0	0.6	0	0.58
154	Sneyd Hall Road jcn Sneyd Lane	Bloxwich	194	6.2	8	18		0	N/A	Jan-14		0	0	0	0	0	0	0.5	0	0.48
155	Bosty Lane/Barr Common Road		150	6.0	7	0		0	N/A			0	0	0	0	0	0	0.3	0	0.26

APPENDIX E
Safer Routes to School 2025/26

School	Requested by school	No of accidents within 500m radius (Sept 2021 - 24)	child accidents within 500m radius (Sept 2021-24)	Description						Assessment							Comments
					A*STARS school (2) Engaging(5)	Completed previous year A*STARS Action Plan	Cycle storage at school	Pedestrian training 23/24	Bikeability training 23/24	estimated cost of scheme (£)	No of pupils on roll	No of pupils that walk / scoot	No of pupils that cycle	No of pupils / £1000	SCORE		
King Charles	1	23	2	Parking restrictions on Mountbatten Road at school ped access to prevent double parking at drop off and collection	5	1	1	1	1	1,000	328	139	13	152.0	97.0	Renew guard rail. Request Traffic Management to install parking restrictions	
Blackwood Primary / St Annes	0	3	1	School Zone Hazelwood Rd / Cedar Drive	5	1	1	1	1	3,000	700	361	11	124	81		
Bentley West Primary	1	6	4	No entry signs required at start of one way (Monmouth Road)	5	0	1	0	1	5,000	487	158	4	32.4	35.2		
Castlefort JMI School	1	3	1	Cycle/Scooter shelter improvements	5	1	1	1	1	5,000	225	85	8	18.6	29.3		
Barcroft	1	12	1	Cycle Shelter Improvements	5	1	1	1	1	5,000	473	87	2	17.8	28.9		
Rivers Academy	1	2	2	Review of restrictions around school	5	0	1	1	1	12,000	303	144	3	12.25	25.125	Guard rail, restrictions MerseyRd & poss Livingstone Rd, ped survey Livingstone Rd. Poss Green Rock Rd bollards	
Rowley View Nursery	1	7	0	School Warning Sign, guard rail, bollards to prevent pavement parking	5	1	1	1	1	10,000	128	100	0	10	24	Unable to participate in Bikeability due to age, but engaging well in other areas	
Support for A*STARS (minor works)				Minor schemes to support encouragement of sustainable travel	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	10,000	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Support encouragement of active travel	
Total budget to complete identified schemes										£51,000							

Safer Routes Schemes - Reserve List

Phasey Park Farm School	1	5	5	Double yellow lines / extension	5	1	1	1	1	2,000	638	294	2	148	98	
Delves Junior School	1	7	3	Bollards on the Common to avoid parents parking & 20mph speed limit on Bell Lane	5	1	1	1	1	30,000	346	211	6	7.2	25.6	
St Johns CofE School	1	12	3	A zebra crossing on Brookland Road from the car park	5	1	1	1	1	40,000	380	117	7	3.1	23.6	
St Francis Catholic Primary	1	8	3	Four Crosses Staggered jcn improvements	5	1	1	0	0	10,000	202	53	2	5.5	20.8	
Alumwell Infants	1	30	3	Parents ignoring double yellow lines and no parking signs	2	1	1	1	0	5,000	266	57	1	11.6	19.8	
St Giles	1	21	1	Cycle storage (extending) & School Zone on Walsall Rd	2	1	1	0	0	5,000	220	87	3	18.0	19.0	
Manor Primary School	0	12	1	Foley Road East - Footpath link to Briar Avenue	5	1	1	0	0	30,000	400	223	4	7.6	18.8	
Manor Primary School	0	12	1	Parking Restictions / junction protection onThorney Rd	5	1	1	0	0	35,000	400	223	4	6.5	18.2	
St Josephs Catholic School	1	8	4	Cycle storage (extending)	2	1	1	1	1	5,000	0	0	0	0.0	17.0	
Brownhills West Primary	1	2	0	Parents parking outside school gates and driving into school site	5	1	1	0	1	20,000	184	0	0	0.0	17.0	
Bloxwich Academy (ex. Mirus Academy)	0	9	3	Willenhall Lane / Leamore Lane - School safety zone & pedestrian improvements	5	1	1	0	0	25,000	420	0	0	0.0	17.0	
Fibbersley Park	1	7	1	20mph Speed Limit / Additional TC	0	1	1	0	0	7,000	628	78	1	11.3	11.6	
Shire Oak Academy	1	10	4	Zebra crossing north of Friezeland Lane	2	0	1	0	0	40,000	0	0	0	0.0	11.0	
Shire Oak Academy	1	10	4	Chester Road - Toucan crossing & segregated footway / cycleway	2	0	1	0	0	90,000	0	0	0	0.0	11.0	
Whetstone Field Primary	0	2	2	20 mph speed limit zone	2	0	1	0	0	30,000	230	0	0	0.0	8.0	
Aldridge Academy	0	15	5	Tynings Lane (possible one-way system)	0	0	1	0	0	15,000	0	0	0	0.0	7.0	
Walsall Academy	0	9	5	Better school warning signs on Lichfield Rd	0	0	0	0	0	2,000	0	0	0	0.0	5.0	
West Walsall E-Act Academy	0	29	2	Primley Avenue - Shared-use footway / cycleway	0	0	1	0	0	50,000	0	0	0	0.0	4.0	
Sheffield Ormiston Academy	0	2	1	Footway along Slacky Lane Ped warning signs	0	0	1	0	0	100,000	0	0	0	0.0	3.0	
Total budget to complete identified schemes										£253,000						

APPENDIX F

Measures to Encourage Walking - Pedestrian crossing facilities 2025/26

Refer to RS04 - Procedure for assessing Measures to Encourage Walking

Pos	Type of facility requested	Location	Estimated Cost (£)	Request by	Date request received	Date of survey	Vehicles (Average four peaks)	Pedestrians (Average four peaks)	% criteria	85th %ile	Road Width (m)	Public amenities	School	Open space	Existing facility	Collisions Sept 2021 - Sept 2024 ALL RTC PEDS	FYRR	Accident and Other Score	Comments		
N/A	N/A	Upgrade pedestrian crossings	£139,000.00	Improvements to pedestrian crossings to facilitate safer walking routes																	
1	Refuge	Wolverhampton Road, Livingstone Road	£20,000.00	Ms Jennings	06/12/2019	25/01/2025	2338	57	312	29.7	9.2	1	1	0	1	1	50	65.02			
2	Informal pedestrian facility	Walsall Road / High Street (Walsall Wood)	£15,000.00	Graham Miller	01/07/2021	15/07/2023	1745	26	79	27.6	7.3	1	0	0	1	1	2	134	51.67		
3	Refuges	Stephenson Avenue / Stephenson Square	£40,000.00	Cllr Gaz Ali	11/08/2024	25/01/2025	494	49	12		9.2	1	1	0	0	2	1	25	32.294883		
		Scheme Total	£214,000.00																		

Reserve schemes

Pos	Type of facility requested	Location	Comparative Cost (£)	Request by	Date request received	Date of survey	Vehicles (Average four peaks)	Pedestrians (Average four peaks)	% criteria	85th %ile	Road Width (m)	Public amenities	School	Open space	Existing facility	Collisions Sept 2021 - Sept 2024 ALL RTC PEDS	FYRR	Accident and Other Score	Comments	
4	Zebra	Wellington Place - SCP Site 117 (Fibbersley Park Primary)	£57,000.00	Facilities Management	Oct-24	Feb-23	856	105	77	32.1	7.5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	50.77	Not suitable for zebra due to road width & on street parking
5	light controlled crossing	Queslett Road East / Aldridge Rd outside The Queslett pub	£100,000.00	Charlete Murcott - charlewood281990@hotmail.com	13/05/2024	25/01/2025	2001	21	84	44.5	7.4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	43.633608	For future consideration requires liaison with Birmingham City Council
6	light controlled crossing	Queslett Road East / Aldridge Rd outside business centre	£100,000.00	Charlete Murcott - charlewood281990@hotmail.com	13/05/2024	25/01/2025	2156	16	74	44.5	7.4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	39.74935	For future consideration requires liaison with Birmingham City Council
7	ped facility /phase	Lichfield Rd / Station Road Rushall	£57,000.00	Francesca Ball <francesca_ball@hotmail.com>	21/03/2024	09/05/2024	498	20	5		7.4	0	0	0	1	1	5	88	35.797287	Part of a larger Rushall junction upgrade
8	Zebra	Hundred Acre Road	£57,000.00	Lynne Wearing	01/05/2012	25/01/2025	308	355	34		7.3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	33.47	
9	Upgrade zebra to light controlled	Great Bridge Road	£100,000.00	harb_kaur@hotmail.co.uk	01/11/2024	25/01/2025	1079	49	57	32.3	7.8	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	32.819124	Existing zebra
10	Refuge	New Road, Willenhall	£17,000.00	Alison Yates	21/12/2019	17/01/2020	842	25	18	30.8	7.4	1	0	0	0	1	1	59	28.00	Crossing to Lidl; S106 funding link to district centre - current ATF4 scheme / waiting on update
11	Refuge	St Lawrence Way , Nr Cramp Hill	£15,000.00	Cltlr Burley	15/10/2021	01/11/2022	386	20	3	31	7	1	1	0	0	1	1	67	27.89	
12	Zebra	Foley Road West - SCP site 85 (Blackwood & St Annes)	£57,000.00	FM Cltr Samra	Oct-24	Feb-23	758	51	29	34	6.5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	26.72	
13	Zebra	nr 99 Wolverhampton Road, Pelsall	£57,000.00	Sarah Hodgkiss sarahhodgex@hotmail.co.uk	Jul-24	25/01/2025	1364	21	39	32.4	6.1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	25.628166	
14	Zebra	Bentley Lane - SCP site 72 (Lodge Farm JMI)	£57,000.00	FM	Oct-24	Feb-23	865	30	22	29.3	6.5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	23.98	
15	Refuge	Watery Lane/Noose Lane	£15,000.00	Ms Worton	25/05/2021	01/11/2022	259	50	3	37.6	7.2	0	1	1	0	3	0	0	21.34	
16	Zebra	Ogley Road - SCP Site 126 (St James Primary)	£57,000.00	FM	Oct-24	Feb-23	649	36	15	35.2	6.7	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	21.07	
17	Zebra	Foley Road East/Carlton Avenue, Streetly	£57,000.00	Dr Darley / Sarah Harris Darley / Iqbir Kaur Sangha	25/03/2019 - 16/12/2022 - 05/06/2024	25/01/2025	506	9	2	34.3	7.3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	20.92	
18	Zebra	Highfield Rd, Pelsall	£57,000.00	Cltlr Perry	05/10/2019	03/12/2019	238	34	2	24	6.9	1	1	1	1	2	0	0	20.77	Extensive footway work reqd. links to Pelsall Village Centre

Cabinet – 19 March 2025

Proposed High Needs Local Funding Formula 2025/26

Portfolio: Councillor Kaur – Education and Skills

Related portfolios: Councillor Perry – Leader of the Council

Service: Children's Services: Education

Wards: All

Key decision: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

1. Aim

- 1.1 Cabinet approved the bandings used in the current Local High Needs Funding Formula on 16 February 2021. This model was developed by schools and approved by Schools Forum in 2020. The formula provides a fair, needs led and child centred approach to allocating funding for school aged children with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) and was implemented from 1 April 2021.
- 1.2 This report provides Cabinet with an update for 2025/26, setting out the proposal to keep top-up rates across all provisions in line with the rates paid in 2024/25 as per the 2025/26 High Needs operational guidance.

2. Summary

- 2.1 High Needs Funding is provided to Local Authorities through the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) enabling them to meet their statutory duties under the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Education Act 1996. Local Authorities must spend the High Needs Funding in line with [DSG: conditions of grant](#) and [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations](#).
- 2.2 Local authorities' high needs funding allocations through the DSG cover:
 - allocations of funding to schools and colleges, including place funding which forms part of schools' and colleges delegated annual allocation, and top-up funding
 - funding for high needs services delivered directly by the local authority, or under a separate service level agreement with a school or college. The latter can include funding devolved to schools and colleges, for them to spend within limits specified in the agreement

- 2.3 As the High Needs Local Funding Formula will result in the Local Authority allocating funds to individual providers, and those providers utilising this for expenditure which will be significant (greater than £500,000), the approval of the formula is a key decision.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That Cabinet approves the proposed Local High Needs Funding Formula for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix A.

4. Report detail – know

Context

- 4.1 High Needs funding is allocated to Local Authorities through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) using a High Needs National Funding Formula. The Local Authority then allocates the High Needs Funding received to providers to support children with additional needs across the Borough.
- 4.2 A revised High Needs Funding Formula was approved and implemented in 2021/22, which saw the introduction of a new bandings model to support all pupils with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP's). This was in line with the Walsall Right 4 SEND guidance document, which was written following the formation of the High Needs Working Group working alongside SEND officers. This banding model is based on the different areas of primary need, which correlate to the SEND Code of Practice. The use of these bandings and proposed funding formula have been reviewed and agreed by Schools Forum annually for recommendation to Cabinet for approval. The top-up rates are set out in detail in Appendix A of this report.
- 4.3 The proposed banding rates included within this report are in line with the rates set in 2024/25 and no changes are proposed for the 2025/26 Local High Needs Funding Formula.

Minimum Funding Guarantee

- 4.4 High Needs operational guidance for 2025/26 requires a Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) of 0% to be applied to specialist provision (i.e. Special Schools, PRU's, AP Free Schools etc) in the Local High Needs Funding Formula. The revised rates included with Appendix A include a proposed MFG for Walsall of 0% for 2025/26. This means that no special school will receive less funding per pupil in 2025 to 2026 on a like-for-like comparison with their pupil cohort in 2024 to 2025.

Passthrough of Additional Grant funding

- 4.5 A new one-off Additional Grant for special schools, pupil referral units and alternative provision free schools was provided to local authorities in 2023/24. This is now included in the 2024/25 baseline data used by the DfE to calculate the 2025/26 High Needs funding allocation and therefore local authorities must continue to pass this funding to eligible schools. The conditions associated with this require the funding to be used to provide an allocation equivalent to 3.4% per

place, based on place funding of £10,000 per place plus the average top-up funding for a pupil placement in financial year 2025/26.

- 4.6 The Additional Grant funding allocation is required to be paid as a separate allocation to place and top-up funding in 2025/26. Final proposed Additional Grant allocations are set out at Appendix A.

DSG Deficit Position and Management Plan

- 4.7 Nationally a significant number of authorities are experiencing difficulties managing the increasing demand for high needs support against the funding that is available within the High Needs block of DSG. This has resulted in financial pressures for those authorities and the need to develop DSG Management Plans to set out how a financially viable position will be achieved over the medium term.
- 4.8 In summary a DSG Management plan covers a rolling 5 year period (current financial year plus the next 4 financial years) and sets out the estimated High Needs funding that the authority will receive over that period, the likely demand for high needs support and estimated cost of providing that, and whether that is affordable within the funding that will be available. Where it is not affordable actions to mitigate this position need to be identified and implemented.
- 4.9 As at the end of 2022/23, Walsall's DSG reported deficit provision was £0.53m increasing to a deficit of £6.87m in 2023/24 (total cumulative deficit of £7.40m). Due to the deficit position for Walsall, a DSG management plan was embedded in 2023/24 which identified a number of mitigating actions to ensure spend and growth remain under control where possible.
- 4.10 The 2024/25 forecast against the High Needs Block of DSG is currently an overspend of circa £24m increasing the cumulative deficit position to £32m. This is in line with the mitigated position of the latest DSG management plan.
- 4.11 Nationally high needs allocations have been distributed on a formula basis using a number of demographic factors since 2018/19 which includes a 50% funding factor based on historical spend.
- 4.12 Walsall's historical high needs spend prior to 2018/19 was low compared to other authorities which has caused a negative impact on subsequent annual allocations due to the 50% funding factor. Growth in EHCP requests and complexity of need have outweighed the annual increase in funding.
- 4.13 Since 2014, Walsall's High Needs Block allocation has increased by £30m however this is a real time cut of 45% due to the increase in EHCPs from 1,200 to over 4,700 in the same period. Of this funding, 94% is passported directly to schools and providers. The remaining 6% is retained within the LA to support the costs of providing support services to schools including children with visual and hearing impairments and school inclusion.
- 4.14 As a result of an increasing number of authorities with significant deficits on their DSG reserves the DfE introduced two support schemes, Delivering Better Value and The Safety Value as well as extending the statutory override which allows the exclusion of the deficit from the council's main revenue budget.

- 4.15 In December 2024 the government published the consultation on the provisional local government finance settlement for 2025-26 which included the following:

“1.3.2 The government intends to set out plans for reforming the SEND system in further detail next year. This will include details of how the government will support local authorities to deal with their historic and accruing deficits and any transition period from the current SEND system to the reformed system. This will inform any decision to remove the statutory override.”

- 4.16 Walsall will continue to review and update the DSG management plan on an annual basis. This will be shared with the DfE to evidence how the management plan has impacted on the demand and costs of High Needs provision.

High Needs Working Group

- 4.17 A new High Needs Working group was established by the Schools' Forum on 5th March, 2024 with the aim to re-evaluate the current High Needs banding model as approved in 2021/22 to review its effectiveness and identify any amendments that would ensure that the available resource, is put to the best possible use in the fairest possible way, following a needs led approach.
- 4.18 As per the High Needs 2025 to 2026 operational guide, local authorities must ensure any changes to SEND provision and high needs funding arrangements are made in close consultation and co-production with the schools and colleges which will be affected. In Walsall, this is done via Schools Forum meetings. To allow sufficient time for these activities, the working group have recommended the current banding model remains in place for 2025/26 which is in line with the recommendations of this report.

Council Plan Priorities

- 4.19 The Council Plan 2025-29 sets out the Council's vision and priorities for the next four years, where resources will be prioritised and how the Council will deliver these against the We Are Walsall 2040 vision. Ensuring that a local High Needs Funding Formula is equitable and transparent to those who have been consulted with, such as Schools Forum, when setting the formula directly links to the Council's priorities for outcomes linked to providing a child friendly borough including ensuring working with education providers to ensure young people have the right pathway to education. Specifically, the allocation of High Needs Funding should ensure that children identified as having SEND have the right support at the right time to ensure they access their entitlement to a full time education and can make good academic progress and achieve their potential.

Risk management

- 4.20 There continues to be a risk that future demand on High Needs funding increases over and above that expected. The DSG management plan aims to identify actions to reduce these risks.

Financial implications

- 4.21 The financial implications of this report are included within the body of the report.

Legal implications

- 4.22 The Department for Education (DfE) has prescribed the way in which schools should be financed for the 2025/26 financial year. These guidelines are set out in the High Needs Funding 2025/26 operational guide. The purpose of these arrangements is to help secure greater consistency in the way in which high needs funding is distributed to schools. The Council is bound to adhere to the rules issued by DfE.

Procurement Implications/Social Value

- 4.23 Schools are required to comply with the Council's procurement rules and policies in conducting their business.

Property implications

- 4.24 There are no property implications arising from the proposals in this report.

Health and wellbeing implications

- 4.25 The expectation remains that the current model for High Needs Funding will support the Marmot objectives of:
- Give every child the best start in life
 - Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
- 4.26 This will be achieved by ensuring that the approach to funding ensures children have access to the right support at the right time to promote their development, educational outcomes and prepare them for adulthood.

Staffing implications

- 4.27 There are no staffing implications arising from the proposals in this report.

Reducing inequalities

- 4.28 A full Equality Impact Assessment was completed as part of the complete review and update of the High Needs Funding Formula in 2020/21 and the content has been reviewed in line with the changes proposed in this report which has confirmed that it remains current.
- 4.29 The overall aim of the model is to ensure a fair and equitable approach to the allocation of High Needs Funding. This will reduce inequalities and ensure that children with SEND have access to the provision required to meet their needs, ensure access to their entitlement to fulltime education and to address the gap in outcomes between those with SEND and those without.

Climate change

- 4.30 There are no climate change implications arising from proposals in this report.

Consultation

- 4.31 Consultation has been undertaken with Schools Forum, which is made up of representatives of maintained schools and academies within Walsall and representatives from the private sector for early years providers, on 4 March 2025. Any relevant comments or feedback has been incorporated into the final version of this report prior to circulation to Cabinet.

5. Decide

- 5.1 Cabinet are recommended to approve the proposed Local High Needs Funding Formula that was recommended by Walsall's Schools Forum at their meeting on 4 March 2025.

6. Respond

- 6.1 Once approved by Cabinet, the Local High Needs Funding Formula for 2025/26 will be communicated with schools, alongside the provision of indicative high needs budget allocations for special schools and Pupil Referral Units, which will be used to inform each school in setting their budget for the year.

7. Review

- 7.1 The approach to High Needs funding is subject to a review currently being undertaken by the High Needs Working group. The current funding model and the allocation of funding will be reviewed alongside an analysis of the changing need reported through the SEN audit process and pupil place planning. The DSG Management Plan will be subject to ongoing (at least annual) review and update and in-year reporting.

Background papers

- Walsall Right 4 SEND guidance document
- Schools Forum report 4 March 2025
- High Needs Funding 2025/26 Operational Guidance

Author

Tanya Collier

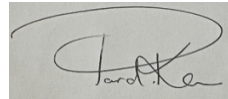
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Colleen Male
Executive Director
10th March 2025



Councillor Kaur
Portfolio Holder
10th March 2025

APPENDIX A - Proposed High Needs Top-up Rates 2025/26

SEND Band	Special Schools High Needs Top-up Rates 2025/26 £	Mainstream Schools High Needs Top-up Rates 2025/26 £
SEMH Band 1,2 & 3 – funded by school budget	n/a	n/a
SEMH Band 4	n/a	4,181
SEMH Band 5	n/a	6,847
SEMH Band 6	17,100	10,392
SEMH Band 7	22,217	17,075
C&L Band 1,2 & 3 – funded by school budget	n/a	n/a
C&L Band 4	n/a	3,095
C&L Band 5	n/a	4,611
C&L Band 6	6,373	11,800
C&L Band 7	14,935	15,312
C&L Band 8	25,853	20,388
SLCN Band 1,2 & 3 – funded by school budget	n/a	n/a
SLCN Band 4	n/a	3,326
SLCN Band 5	n/a	6,891
HI Band 1,2 & 3 – funded by school budget	n/a	n/a
HI Band 4	n/a	4,611
HI Band 5	n/a	6,847
HI Band 6	10,503	9,923
HI Band 7	14,936	14,471
VI Band 1,2 & 3 – funded by school budget	n/a	n/a
VI Band 4	n/a	5,375
VI Band 5	n/a	8,407
VI Band 6	n/a	15,006
VI Band 7	n/a	17,432
MSI Band 1,2 & 3 – funded by school budget	n/a	n/a
MSI Band 4	n/a	6,216
MSI Band 5	n/a	10,764
MSI Band 6	21,630	16,643
MSI Band 7	36,990	18,159
Physical Band 1,2&3 – funded by school budget	n/a	n/a
Physical Band 4	n/a	3,791
Physical Band 5	n/a	6,745
Physical Band 6	20,512	13,718
Physical Band 7	24,150	18,432

Small Special School Top-up:

A top-up to be applied only to specials schools with less than 50 pupils to support fixed costs.

Small special school	£1,948 per pupil pro rata to week attending
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Top-Up Rate for Pupil Referral Units:

	2025/26 £PA
New Leaf	10,255
Shepwell	8,933

Top-Up Rates for Additionally Resourced Provision (ARP) / Specialist Resource Provision (SRP) in Mainstream Schools – 2025/26 for places filled / unfilled on October 2024 census:

	Filled Places 2025/26 £PA	Unfilled Places 2025/25 £PA
Speech & Language -primary	3,171	2,909
Speech & Language -secondary	1,441	2,909
Dyslexia - secondary	1,436	2,904
Visual Impaired - primary	14,380	14,118
Physical Disability - primary	10,022	9,760
Physical Disability - secondary	8,291	9,760
Autism - primary	9,832	9,570
Autism - secondary	8,102	9,570

Teachers' Pay & Pension historic costs – rates for Alternative Provision Free Schools

Funding	Period	Rate per place
Teachers' Pay	April to August	£72.91
	September to March	£102.08
Teachers' Pension	April to August	£202.06
	September to March	£282.89

Payments will be based on the actual published place number for the relevant period, less any places already being paid by the authority via top-up.

**Additional Funding for Special Schools, Pupil Referrals Unit and AP Free Schools
2025/26**

Provision Type	School Name	Additional Grant Funding 2025/26 £
Special Schools:	Castle	137,914
	Elmwood	78,344
	Jane Lane	117,009
	Mary Elliot	140,889
	Oakwood	174,790
	Old Hall	128,027
	Phoenix	45,552
PRU's:	New Leaf*	29,498
	Shepwell*	50,635
AP Free School:	The Ladder School*	45,579
TOTAL		948,087

* To note, the additional funding for pupil referral units and AP free schools are currently estimated. These will be updated when the final place numbers are confirmed by the DfE.

Cabinet – 19 March 2025

Public Sector Equality Duty – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2024/25

Portfolio: Councillor Lee – Internal Resources

Related portfolios: All

Services: Council Wide

Wards: All

Key decision: No

Forward plan: Yes

1. Aim

- 1.1 The report presents the draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual report for consideration and approval in compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty places a requirement on Councils to publish their equality objectives and outline the work and activities being undertaken to demonstrate their compliance with the Equality Act 2010. The report highlights the progress made over the last year in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion showcasing best practice, and case studies from services across the authority and work with our communities. It also highlights the development of the new Ensuring Equity: Walsall's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2029 and our key ambitions for 2025/26 for improving EDI across workforce, policy, services and community over the next year.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. That Cabinet approve the Council's Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Annual report.
- 3.2. That Cabinet note the successes and future plans to strengthen equality and diversity highlighted in the Annual Report.

4. Report detail - know

- 4.1 The Council has a statutory duty to ensure that equality and diversity are considered and embedded across our services and functions. This is required by the Equality Act 2010 which legally protects people from discrimination in society and within the workforce.
- 4.2 The Equality Act is supported by the Public Sector Equality Duty which requires that public bodies such as Councils consider how people will be affected by decisions and services and to ensure that public services meet the needs of all different groups of people.
- 4.3 Under the Equality Act Councils also have specific duties and must:
- publish information to demonstrate their compliance with the Equality Duty annually. This information must include information relating to employees.
 - prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives (at least every four years) which will help us further any of the aims of the Equality Duty.
- 4.4 The report highlights the refreshed equality objectives set out in the new overarching Ensuring Equity: Walsall's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2029 and includes case studies highlighting how the Council has fulfilled its obligations under each of the equality objectives. In addition, The Cabinet Portfolio for Internal Resources now has responsibility for Corporate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – equality is included as a key functional area within the Cabinet portfolio of Cllr Lee. Workforce data is in preparation concurrently and will be published alongside this report on the Council website to ensure full compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 4.5 The report articulates the work across workforce, policy, services and community for each of the refreshed objectives set out in the new EDI Strategy developed this year. The new equality objectives are aligned to the Local Government Association Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) to ensure EDI is at the heart of our service design, delivery, workforce, and strategic decision-making. In addition, the refresh of EDI governance will ensure that services and customers have a clear role in shaping EDI work across the Council.

The new equality objectives are:

- **Communities:** To work in partnership with our communities to build a borough where people belong and thrive.
 - **Leadership:** To embed equitable and inclusive policy and decision making at the heart of the organisation.
 - **Services:** To design and deliver accessible services that meet the needs of our diverse population.
 - **Workforce:** To be an inclusive organisation with staff at all levels who represent the diversity of our borough.
- 4.6 Some of the highlights from the Annual report include:

- The development of the new overarching Ensuring Equity: Walsall's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2029 and refreshed equality objectives.
- The development of the new Council Plan, Pursuing Excellence: Our Council Plan 2025-2029 with 'ensuring equity' as one of its cross-cutting principles.
- Expansion of We Are Walsall 2040 Partnership, with new partners from the community, business and education sectors joining the We Are Walsall 2040 Partnership to expand its breadth and depth.
- The significant progress made in improving digital accessibility through new translation technology, Chatbot (WALIS) updates, live webchat, and MS CoPilot, all accessibility software that has enhanced efficiency and inclusivity for users.
- Walsall Works actively leveraging social value from major contracts to benefit our residents, local businesses, communities, and schools.
- Walsall Works developing skills and creating job opportunities for our residents.
- The six new Corporate Staff Networks now available to staff, thus creating safe spaces for connection and dialogue.
- Walsall Council, in partnership with NHS Black Country Integrated Care Board (ICB), this year launching a new locality-based model of support for Walsall's voluntary and community organisations across the borough to provide more locality-based support to the voluntary and community sector.
- The new Transgender & Non-binary Equality Policy.
- The Walsall Community Cohesion Strategy 2025-2035, a 10-year strategy driven by the priorities that are most important to the communities and residents to make social cohesion a foundational policy that creates a 'sense of belonging' for all our residents.
- Behavioural insight has been used through research with expectant and new mums to understand local barriers to choices, attitudes and experiences around infant feeding. This insight gained from the behavioural science work has helped inform the Walsall Infant Feeding strategy.
- The Equality Champions programme now includes 73 Equality Champions across the Council. Champions are trained and supported to act as ambassadors for EDI within their directorates.

4.7 Our key ambitions for 2025/26 highlighted in this report are:

- We will begin to understand the rich equality data and information we have across the Council and look at how we use it to make better service design and delivery decisions.
- We will look at our processes around commissioning and procurement to ensure we meet our social value policy.
- We will continue to develop our Lived Experience programme ensuring that real voices from our communities can be heard to inform decisions and services.

- We will assess and improve staff exit data to include protected characteristics (where available) to allow identification of patterns/trends in relation to the reasons for leaving that can be used to inform targeted actions.
- We will continue our engaging workforce equalities programme, piloting a reverse mentoring scheme, hosting inspirational talks, supporting our staff networks and including Equality champions on recruitment panels.
- We will leverage our partnerships and relationships with the VCSE to ensure all key decisions within the council are inclusive and collaborative.
- We will undertake more staff engagement including a council wide staff survey to hear from all our staff and ensure their views shape the culture of the Council.
- We will develop a clear EDI performance framework to ensure we monitor and track the implementation of our new EDI strategy.
- We will continue to work with partners across the community to promote cohesion and integration and support community events and activities for all.
- We will look at a consistent approach to the inclusion of equality objectives in our service planning and strategy development across the Council.

Risk management

- 4.8 There are no significant risks associated with the EDI Annual report.

Financial implications

- 4.9 There are no direct financial implications related to the report.

Legal implications

- 4.10 This fulfils our legal requirements under the general and specific legal duties of the Equality Act 2010 supported by the Public Sector Equality Duty which requires that public bodies such as Councils consider how people will be affected by decisions and services and to ensure that public services meet the needs of all different groups of people. The new EDI strategy is developed and sets out our refreshed equality objectives. A clear EDI performance framework is under development to ensure we monitor and track the implementation of our new EDI strategy to ensure compliance.

Procurement Implications/Social Value

- 4.11 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

Property implications

- 4.12 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

Health and wellbeing implications

- 4.13 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

Staffing implications

- 4.14 There are no direct staffing implications from this report. The workforce equality data is being prepared for concurrent publication by end of March in line with our obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Reducing Inequalities

- 4.15 Our EDI activities highlighted in this report strengthen the delivery of Our Council Plan 2025-2029 and We are Walsall 2040 borough plan, which both have reducing inequalities and addressing social justice at their heart.
- 4.16 The new EDI strategy is aligned to the new Council Plan with EDI as a core foundational principle to ensure we remain focussed on reducing inequalities.

Climate Change

- 4.17 There are no direct implications from this report.

Consultation

- 4.18 The PSED report is not consulted upon externally. It is produced collaboratively through extensive collation of good practice case studies from staff and services across Walsall Council. The EDI strategy has been shaped using the new Community Cohesion and Integration Plan co-produced by Walsall Council and Walsall For All and using the feedback obtained from our communities, partners and staff through varied engagement and consultation opportunities held during April to October 2024.

5. Decide

The report presents a draft Equalities annual report for consideration and approval by Cabinet.

6. Respond

Significant progress has been made over the year including the development of the new EDI strategy and associated equality objectives. The Council will continue with its current and planned work and focus on developing an EDI performance framework to strengthen our EDI approach across the Council.

7. Review

The EDI report is an annual document highlighting our progress towards our equality objectives. Throughout the coming months we will be reviewing and mapping gaps in delivery against the new EDI strategy to inform a clear EDI performance framework and action plan for 2025/26.

Background papers –

None.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Final Draft PSED Equality Annual Report 2024-25

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Signed



Judith Greenhalgh
Executive Director – Resources & Transformation

19 March 2025

Signed



Cllr E Lee
Portfolio Holder – Internal Resources

19 March 2025

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Annual Report 2024/25



Walsall Council

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Annual Report 2024-2025

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Introduction: Our Commitment to Ensuring Equity

I am delighted to present our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report highlighting the significant progress that has been made to strengthen our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion over the last year.

One of our key achievements this year includes the development of our new overarching *Ensuring Equity: Walsall's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2029* and refreshed equality objectives, reinforcing our commitment to promoting equality, tackling inequity, and fostering good relations through involving residents, community groups, and staff to recognise and address EDI challenges through our borough-wide operations and decision-making.

Recognised by the 2023 LGA Corporate Peer Challenge, the strategy aligns with the *Council Plan 2025-2029, 'Pursuing Excellence'*, and builds on the *We are Walsall 2040* vision. It is underpinned by the cross-cutting principle of 'Ensuring Equity' and reflects our long-term EDI vision and strategic approach in delivering equity within our services, workforce, and communities.

Our borough-wide priorities for delivering EDI have been shaped through intensive feedback from residents, communities and council staff and this report highlights some examples of the great work accomplished over the past year and work that is currently underway to accomplish our EDI priorities.

I am pleased about the significant strides that have been made to support our communities right across Walsall, to support our workforce in better representing the communities we serve, to strengthen our governance around EDI, and to ensure staff voices are heard at all levels.

We remain dedicated to continuing on our journey to reduce inequalities, maximise potential, and improve the health and wellbeing of all Walsall's residents.

Cllr Lee: Cabinet Portfolio Holder Internal Resources

Our Public Sector Equality Duty

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure that equality and diversity are integrated into all our services and functions. The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in society and within the workforce. This Act introduced nine 'protected characteristics' and made it unlawful for people to be discriminated against based on these characteristics.

The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Disability
- Pregnancy/maternity
- Sexual orientation
- Religion or belief
- Marriage/Civil partnership

In addition, from 2024, Walsall Council has adopted additional locally defined protected characteristics that complement our commitment to ensuring equity for all:

- Care experienced
- Armed forces (building on our statutory commitments under the Armed Forces Covenant)

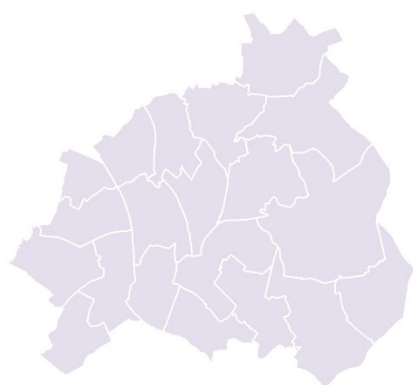
We have also committed to considering health inequalities as part of our equality impact assessment process, reflecting the corporate 'health in all policies' approach.

The Equality Act is supported by the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which requires that public bodies such as local authorities consider how people will be affected by decisions and services and to ensure that public services meet everyone's needs. As a public body, under the Equality Act 2010, the Council must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations between people

Under the Equality Act, councils must publish information on an annual basis to demonstrate their compliance with the PSED. As well as information relating to employees, we must also prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives (at least every four years) which will help us further any of the aims of the Equality Duty. Our objectives are set out in this report, along with the progress we have made over the past year and some of our plans for the future.

Our Walsall Communities



Walsall borough is made up of six towns – Aldridge, Bloxwich, Brownhills, Darlaston, Walsall and Willenhall – and is home to 288,700 residents¹. Each of our twenty wards has its own distinct identity and diverse populations. This brings a vibrant character to the borough, but also means we need to understand the range of needs faced by those living within all our communities.

Deprivation

Walsall borough was ranked as the 25th most deprived local authority in England². Deprivation can be seen as an individual or community's lack of resources, opportunities and ability to live a happy, healthy life. The experience of life in the borough varies for residents across different neighbourhoods. There are pockets of extreme deprivation in some areas and over a quarter of neighbourhoods (44 of 167) are amongst the most deprived 10% in England – an increase since 2015. The wards in the centre, south and west of the borough are typically much more deprived than those to the east, however pockets of deprivation exist even alongside the more affluent parts of the borough.

Inequalities

The geography of deprivation directly maps onto a wide range of inequalities including poor educational attainment, unemployment, ill-health and higher rates of crime with some groups more impacted by the effects than others. For example, Walsall is the authority with the 17th highest levels of income deprivation affecting children out of 317 Local Authorities (IDAC1 2019). Many of the most deprived neighbourhoods are around the town centre, which is also the focus of our newly arrived migrant communities.

Health Inequalities

Health inequalities are avoidable, unjust, and can create systematic disparities in health and wellbeing among different groups of people. These inequalities disproportionately affect individuals with protected characteristics, those in vulnerable and marginalised groups, as well as people living in more deprived communities.

In Walsall, health inequalities significantly impact residents' health outcomes. For example, our most affected communities experience higher rates of obesity, poorer mental health, and lower life expectancy. As well as these direct health outcomes, health inequalities have an impact on an individual's ability to access appropriate health and wellbeing services, leading to a higher prevalence of long-term illnesses and a poorer quality of life.

¹ ONS Mid-year Population Estimates, 2024

² MHCLG, English Indices of Deprivation, 2019

Resident Characteristics

The information gathered from the 2021 Census has been invaluable for understanding equality and diversity down to a neighbourhood level. The questions asked capture many of the defining characteristics of our population: who we are, how we live and what we do. This is vital for assessing need, setting priorities, and developing strategy. This gives us an opportunity to understand all aspects of our residents' identities, providing a full and timely picture of inter-related protected characteristics. For some protected characteristics (such as gender identify and sexual orientation) this is the first time we have had access to any robust data about how our residents identify themselves. The Census, alongside other data sources, has been used to build up a picture of Our Characteristics in Walsall.

Our Characteristics

Resident Population

- As of mid-2024, Walsall's **resident population** stands at 288,700³ with population expected to increase by 13% in 2040.

Sex

- This resident population consists of 51% (147,200) **women** and 49% (141,600) **men**.

Age

- Walsall's resident population has a median **age** of 38 which is a decrease of one year from the 2011 census.
- Life expectancy in Walsall is 77.9 years for male residents and 81.7 for female residents⁴.
- In Walsall females have a lower healthy life expectancy than males, living in good health until 55.1 years, compared with 56.2 years for males⁵.

Marital Status

- Those who are **married or in a civil partnership** account for 45% of residents (aged over 16) with the proportion who have never been married (38%) increasing.

Sexual Orientation

- 1 in 50 (2%) residents aged over 16 identified in the 2021 census as gay, lesbian, or bisexual – very slightly below the national average.

Ethnic Groups

- Although most people identify their **ethnic group** as being White (71%), this has decreased over the past decade and around 1 in 3 residents are now from a minority ethnic group (i.e. non-White British).
- The second largest ethnic group remains Asian, which has increased to 19%, and residents from Black (5%) and Mixed (3%) ethnic groups have also increased.

Disability

- Approximately 20% of residents identify as **disabled** due to experiencing a long-term condition that limits their daily activities.

Religion

³ Office for National Statistics, Mid-year Population Estimates, 2024

⁴ Office for Health Improvement and Disparities

⁵ Walsall Council, *Healthy and Well: Adding Life to Years in Walsall. Director of Public Health Annual Report 2024*

- Many residents still claim to have a **religious affiliation**, although the proportion with 'no religion' is now close to a third (30%).
- The largest religious group remains Christian (45%), although this has been falling with Muslim (11%) communities the second largest faith community, followed by Sikh (6%) which has increased over the past decade.

Gender and Gender Reassignment

- There are just under 600 residents whose **gender identity** is different to the sex they were registered with at birth.
- Of those providing further detail, around 200 identify as trans men and 200 as trans women.

Care Experienced

- As of January 2025, the total number of **children in care** within Walsall is 590 and the number of **care leavers** is 295. This is line with a national picture of an increase in children entering care over the past decade.

Armed Forces / Veterans

- Around 2.2% of the Walsall population is identified as a **member or veteran of the armed forces**, equating to around 6,500 people – many of whom will also have families who fall within the Armed Forces Covenant.

Carers

- Among Walsall adults, 11.4% **provide unpaid care** for a family member, friend or neighbour who has long-term physical or mental health conditions, or problems related to old age.
- Over half of these unpaid carers (6.3% of all adults) are providing over 20 hours of care a week

Ensuring Equity: Our Walsall Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy 2024-2029

Throughout 2024, we have worked across the organisation and with our partners to develop a new EDI Strategy setting out our refreshed equality objectives. *Ensuring Equity: Our Walsall Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2029*, reflects Walsall Council's commitment to ensuring equity within our services, workforce, and communities. We strive to reduce inequalities and maximise potential across the borough, reinforcing our dedication to fostering an inclusive and fair environment for all.

Our EDI strategy was developed alongside the refresh of *Our Council Plan: Pursuing Excellence (2025-2029)* and so equalities underpin our corporate vision and priorities, with 'ensuring equity' established as a cross-cutting principle of how we work across all our services. Our Council Plan in turn builds upon the strong foundations laid down in the *We are Walsall 2040 Strategy* – the partnership-owned strategic vision and ambitions for the type of borough we want to be in the future.

Our new EDI Strategy has been developed through extensive engagement and consultation feedback from our residents, communities and staff and draws together all the elements of EDI into a coherent set of four objectives that have been developed and aligned to the Local Government Association Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG). This framework outlines key objectives and actions for Councils to consider in fulfilling their Public Sector Equality Duty. The framework is composed of four themes, and we took the decision to align our current and future EDI work to these. This means that we have a clear objective standard against which to set objectives and our monitor progress, and it enables us to benchmark against other local authorities and learn from best practice elsewhere.

Through continuous improvement, we aim to ascend the three Levels of Achievement for each EFLG theme through all our objectives and their associated activities, with an aspiration to reach 'Achieving' level across all elements by the end of 2026. We will then work towards becoming an 'Excellent' EDI Exemplar in local government and the wider public sector.

Our EDI Objectives

The Council's new equality objectives are:

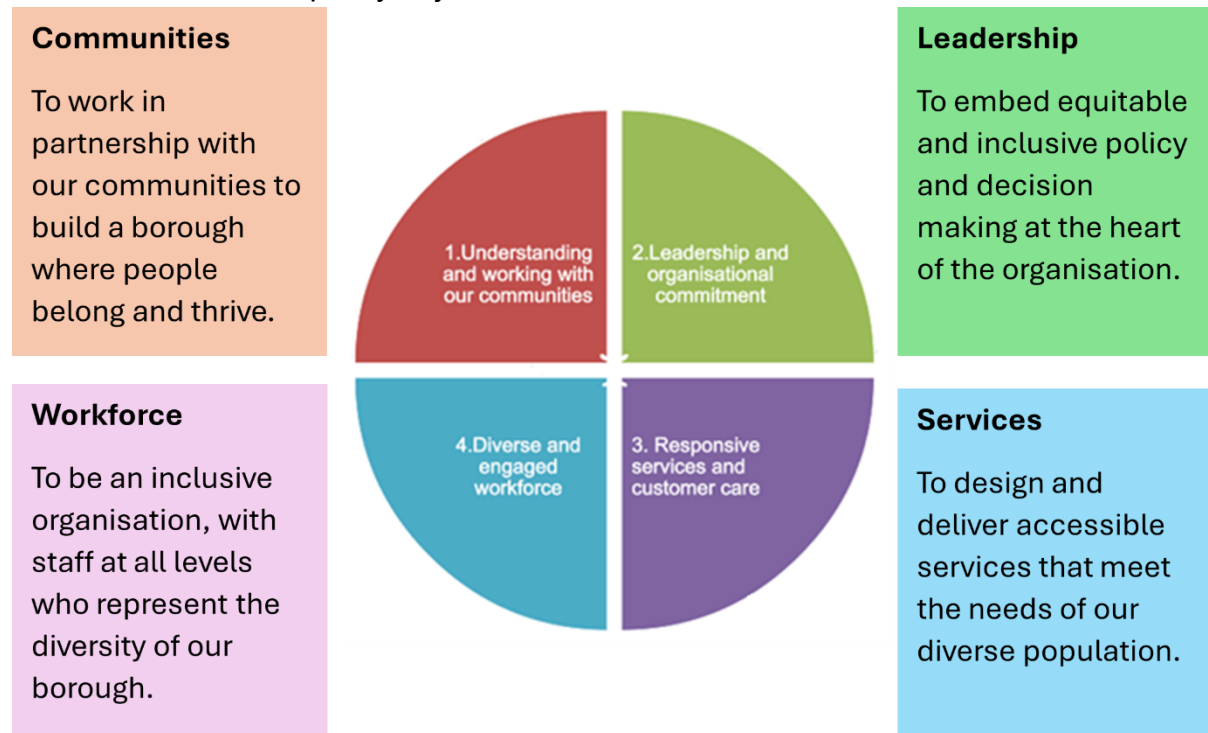
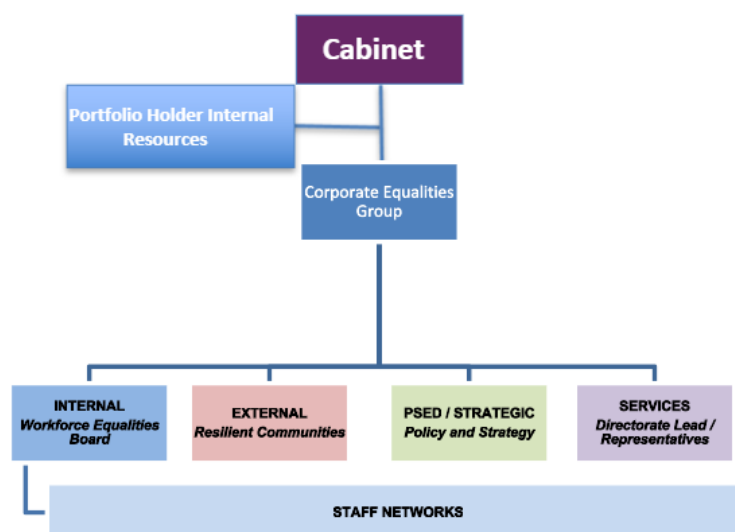


Figure: Walsall Council Equality Objectives 2024-2029

Our Governance



During 2024 we embedded a clear governance structure to ensure the EDI objectives are at the heart of our service design, delivery, workforce, and strategic decision-making. Our Corporate Equalities Group (CEG) governs EDI to ensure that the Council meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, Public Sector Equality Duty, Human Rights Act and to monitor the delivery of the EDI Strategy actions. CEG comprises senior managers and leaders from across the Council with responsibilities for various strands of EDI, ensuring we represent all aspects of our equality objectives with a broad service perspective. CEG reports into the Corporate Management Team (CMT) which is composed of Executive Directors and Directors and is chaired by our Chief Executive - highlighting the emphasis placed on putting this agenda at the heart of our decision-making.

From the start of the 2024/25 municipal year, the Cabinet Portfolio for Internal Resources has included responsibility for Corporate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Councillor Edward Lee has been able to advocate for the importance of ensuring equity at Cabinet, Scrutiny and Council meetings.

Reporting to CEG is the Workforce Equalities Board, which oversees workforce and HR related EDI issues. Supporting this across the Council is a myriad of diverse staff networks that cover a range of equality characteristics. These networks enable staff to have a voice and discuss any workforce issues or concerns and promote opportunities, learning and share diversity. The staff network chairs have a seat at the Workforce Equalities Board to ensure there is a clear route upwards to CEG to flag any issues or concerns.

The EDI Champions play a crucial role within and across services to be the lead eyes and ears for EDI within their teams, services, and directorates. Champions advocate for EDI issues, share knowledge and learning and act as ambassadors for the EDI agenda. Alongside this we also have EDI training for managers and staff to ensure everyone working at Walsall Council understands the importance of an inclusive and diverse workforce and services to meet our community's needs.

Our Achievements

Objective: Communities

To work in partnership with our communities to build a borough where people belong and thrive

We have continued to work in partnership with our communities and partner organisations to understand and address local inequalities and use that knowledge to shape and transform services that drive positive change, especially as Walsall becomes richer in diversity. Our approach supports our *We Are Walsall 2040* ambition that people belong, thrive and are both happy and healthy.

Following on from last year, the Council has worked with its communities and partners to reduce the impact of any inequalities from a social cohesion perspective and provided opportunities to involve diverse communities, young people and partners through providing opportunities for social integration and partnership work. This has enabled everyone in the borough to work together collectively in building a borough where Walsall is not just a place to live, but also a place to belong, thrive and live healthy and fulfilling lives.

Key achievements this year include:

Community Cohesion

Walsall For All

Walsall for All partnership established in January 2019 aims to improve social cohesion and integration in the borough. Members of the partnership include local organisations and groups that work in the voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors, as well as public sector providers (including housing, health and others). Walsall for All works with diverse cultures, faiths and communities and listens to their views and finds solutions to any challenges they may have accessing services and living in Walsall. One of Walsall for All's goals is to promote neighbourhood level partnerships between existing communities and new emerging communities.

Walsall Community Cohesion Strategy 2025-2035

The *Walsall Community Cohesion Strategy 2025-2035*, published in February 2025, is a 10-year strategy driven by the priorities that communities and residents told us are most important to them. The strategy has been developed in partnership between Walsall for All and Walsall Council and the findings have directly informed the new EDI Strategy for Walsall. It merges Walsall for All's vision for Walsall to be a friendly and diverse borough with the Council's vision to make social cohesion a foundational policy that creates a 'sense of belonging' for all our residents. This vision is a crucial part of our joint Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion approach.

Some of the strategic themes which emerged through the consultation last year included cost of living, isolation and loneliness, gender inequality, mental health, and cultural understanding of new and existing communities.

Walsall for All believes that our borough is prepared for a bold vision that will foster a feeling of inclusion and more fairness for everyone in our Walsall communities. The strategy includes a list of actions which will be led by officers and strategic partners. The actions are themed under ten headings and include: Children and Young People, Faith, Race, Hate Crime, Addiction, Cost of Living, Gypsy Traveller and Roma, LGBTQ+, Disability, Gender, Newly Arrived Individuals/Communities and Social Isolation and Mental Wellbeing.

Cohesion and Social Integration: Walsall for All Legacy Project

The Cohesion and Social Integration Team, alongside partner organisations, continued with the Walsall for All Legacy project to work on the key priorities of social mixing between different communities and geographical areas, improving learning English as a Second Language (ESOL), welcoming new communities and tackling hate crime, prejudice, and harmful extremism.

Walsall for All in partnership with Walsall Council continues to lead the Independent Advisory Group for Contest (Walsall Resilience Forum), ensuring representation from diverse faiths and cultures of Walsall. There have been numerous meetings with a focus on a locality.

The Community Cohesion and Integration Service has continued to provide a speedy, professional service in relation to consultations with diverse groups and reducing potential for community tensions. This has been achieved through raising awareness of 'rights and responsibilities' amongst our residents as well as listening.

Railway Club Neighbourhood Project

Walsall's White British communities have been working with ethnically diverse community groups and partners to promote more integration among different groups and communities. The LMRCA Railway Club is a sports and social centre based in the Palfrey area of Walsall and is home to ISSA FC. The club has been a great resource for Walsall communities, opening up opportunities for underprivileged groups, schools, young people, and children, and making sport accessible to those most disadvantaged.

Funding for the club was obtained from Crowdfund Walsall for their 'Grow to Donate' project to grow food in the allotment onsite and donate it to disadvantaged communities, families, and schools. The club is linking with Hillary Primary School and Palfrey Junior School, to allow pupils to visit the allotment to learn how to grow, cook, and eat the food, and to learn about global warming. This opportunity will be taught by two retired and experienced teachers. The allotment area is ready for use, and the schools have agreed to send 20 pupils a week for PSHE lessons.

Emerging Communities

Our community engagement and networking opportunities have allowed us to identify further African communities from Cameroon, Nigeria, Tanzania, Congo, and Rwanda who have settled in Walsall. We have worked closely with Dr Victorine Ngamsha, who has been knighted as a Queen for African tribal communities living in UK and Europe by a tribal King of Cameroon. Dr Ngamsha has been key in connecting and engaging with the African communities across the borough and has supported us through consulting with these communities as part of the inclusion consultation. Dr Ngamsha will be hosting a women's football tournament in Walsall, where we are expecting over 250 people attend from diverse backgrounds and from all walks of life. Victorine's goal is to honour women with sport.

Five hundred African Christians who worship at Manor Farm Community Association were supported to hold Christmas and New Year worship at Central Hall. Most of the group are professionals within health, education, law, and technology, reflecting the new national immigration policy targeting highly skilled professionals to meet national skill gaps.

Libraries and Learning

Community Libraries

Walsall Community Libraries continues to be an accessible service open to all - providing spaces and resources to local communities across the borough. All libraries have information resources that are accessible in a wide range of languages and formats, comprising books, E Books and E-Audio books, newspapers and magazines, local and tourist information. Additionally, libraries are a key player in supporting customers through the Walsall Connected programme, where our staff are on hand to support and refer, enabling customers to access council services. Our Libraries are registered as Warm Spaces, enabling our residents to have a safe space to enter. A successful Libraries Improvement Fund bid in 2024 has allowed improvements in studying facilities and new technology. 2025 will see additional enhancements to our service provision to support us becoming dementia friendly libraries.

The Home Library

The Home Library service provides a vital service to the housebound community in Walsall. The monthly visit carried out by a trusted member of library staff is often the only contact that some residents have and provides an essential link to accessing other services. For the isolated and lonely the regular contact can be a source of comfort or even a lifeline in dark times.

All libraries offer a comprehensive programme of groups and activities to both children and adults, from under 5's sessions and their parents/carers, to Reading Friends groups, supporting inclusion and community cohesion. Our partnership work is starting to grow and expand, engaging with specific groups within the community. For example, Autistic Adults is run in partnership with Autism West Midlands, Zebra Access, ESOL, English and maths classes (at selected libraries) free computer sessions run in conjunction with Walsall College and working with training providers to offer supported internships. The overall aim is of reducing digital exclusion and supporting the vulnerable and isolated within our communities. Our libraries have

continued to participate in the HAF programme, offering enriching activities and free meals to children, and the national Summer Reading Challenge campaign encouraging children's literacy to be maintained through the holidays, additionally working in partnership with Family Hubs to deliver PEEP support to parents.

In 2024, Walsall Community Libraries linked in with supporting the important Knife Angel Legacy by promoting the James Brindley Foundation's mentoring scheme within libraries and are continuing to work with the community safety team to start to install bleed kits and defibrillators at all library sites.

Walsall Skills for Life (ESOL)

The Walsall Skills for Life programme has had over 500 learners accessing provision across the South of the borough. Part of this skill-building included developing English language skills, activities supporting mental health and wellbeing, managing home finances, cultural awareness, and confidence building. Skills for Life embedded numeracy skills in sessions to support with the current cost of living crisis for learners to be able to manage their finances and learn how to budget. Sessions have also included educating learners about the availability of key health check-ups, such as amongst South Asian communities for whom take-up is traditionally low.

Children and Young People

Youth Bus

Walsall Council has launched its own Youth Bus. The bus is fitted with creative media equipment and tours communities in Walsall. The tour ran alongside Youth Work Week during November 2024, an annual celebration week organised by National Youth Agency which celebrates all things youth work. The bus tour provides the council with the opportunity to listen to and understand the views of children and young people about growing up in Walsall, and what they think are the challenges and opportunities young people face.

Shaping Our Tomorrow Project

As part of our work within the Alliance and to continue to listen and respond to our communities, work on the Shaping Our Tomorrow Project has commenced. This long-term project aims to follow the lives of young children now and in the future towards 2040. These children will be adults in 2040. We have chosen a group of families, from different boroughs, communities and from different socio-demographic backgrounds within Walsall. Ongoing, planned engagement and consultation activities with these families will aim to inform the Walsall Right for Children and Young People's Strategic Alliance on key issues, challenges and successes for our families connected to the four ambitions. The initial introduction workshops have taken place in November 2024 and already show clear areas to explore as part of the work of the Alliance.

Youth Justice: Reducing Disproportionality

We have worked with a local organisation to create a documentary about the experiences of Black and mixed heritage boys in the justice system which was premiered in Black History Month at the local cinema. A partnership recommendations report was released to improve outcomes for Black and mixed heritage boys before they enter the justice system, and a dedicated employment pathway was developed for Black and mixed heritage boys involved in the justice system. A mentor for Black and mixed heritage children at risk of entering the secure estate and to improve their resettlement outcomes was commissioned and our Disproportionality Forum for YJS practitioners was continued to explore issues of overrepresentation and drive forward practice improvements.

Family Hubs

Walsall has utilised the implementation of the Family Hubs Programme as an opportunity to build on the strong foundations of our locality model. Our four integrated locality Family Hubs and our ten family community hubs were launched in July 2023. Family Hubs provide a welcoming space where children, young people aged 0-19 and up to 25 for those young people with additional needs, and their families can get advice and support when they need it.

Our Family Hubs are in the heart of vulnerable local communities where services have come together providing one 'front door' access to get help, activities, programmes and to talk to someone in a safe space. The implementation of the Family Hub programme has now met all the minimum expectations of five core service delivery areas. The Family Hubs have co-located partnership services operating from our 4 Integrated Family Hubs.

We are working with partners to decide priorities for The Family Hubs year 4 delivery plan 25-26 focussed on embedding the services against the national expectations and closing the gap on inequalities. We have utilised the recommendations from our December 2024 "Open Lens Media Company" Insights project report commissioned to explore reasons for children and families not engaging with partnership services to produce an inequalities risk reduction plan within the Year 4 activity Delivery plan.

Building community capacity, capability, resilience, and social value has been included in all contracts and policies generated by the programme to enable us to have the right support available to families that is accessible at a locality level and delivered at the earliest opportunity.

Best Start for Life Offer

Our 'Best Start for Life Offer' Website, including a service directory and activity programme, was launched in May 2024 after mapping one hundred local organisations delivering services aligned with our Family Hubs offer. The website is translatable into different languages and has had 9473 views with 1667 active users of walsallfamilyhubs.co.uk.

We have developed support offerings aimed at disadvantaged and seldom heard groups, including fathers and caregivers, who now benefit from additional services provided by the Statutory and Voluntary & Community Sectors. For example,

sessions delivered by an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Midwife and our Parent Infant Emotional Wellbeing Champions.

The programme has 39 active volunteers from a variety of backgrounds to provide a range of timely and high-quality support which complements the delivery of the Early Help offer including support for peer-led parenting, fathers, SEND, healthy eating, and breastfeeding. Our volunteers have offered Family Support to 48 families since October 2023 and have delivered three peer-led “Empowering Parents Empowering Communities” sessions.

Early Language and Home Learning Environment

School Ready Officers Local Authority Delivered Activities have supported 341 children on an early intervention model. Speech & Language Therapy Family Hubs Funded Activity has supported 927 children through programmes to reduce waiting times and has positively impacted school readiness outcomes including confidence by parents to support their child’s language and communication needs.

Health and Wellbeing

Infant Feeding Project

The Council have been using behavioural insights to understand infant feeding behaviours, attitudes, and experiences of mothers in Walsall and how best to support and encourage new mothers who want to breastfeed. We aspire to be a breastfeeding friendly borough and understanding the barriers and challenges to infant feeding choices is important to ensure we can provide the right level of support for expectant women and mothers. Surveys were carried out to better understand the barriers, sources of information about infant feeding, reasons for their chosen method of feeding and the types of support mothers would like to have around infant feeding. Mothers of all age groups and ethnicities were invited to participate in the survey, which was online and through face-to-face Family hub community settings.

The insight gained from the behavioural science work was included in the Walsall Infant Feeding strategy and contributes to actions set within the strategy and taken forward by the infant feeding strand of Family Hubs.

Sexual and Reproductive Health Insights

Work is also underway for the Council to engage with women in different communities to better understand behaviours relating to contraception use and barriers to access. The focus will be on understanding how women make choices when it comes to contraception, attitudes and beliefs, use of long-acting contraception and barriers to accessing and using contraception. This engagement over coming months will help us make better choices around service support and communications.

Cultural Events

Walsall Art Gallery: Equal+Able =Not a Label

The New Art Gallery Walsall held an exhibition 'Equal+Able =Not a Label' first established in 2021. Panel members from the community selected artworks from the Gallery's Permanent Collection that reflect on themes around disability, neurodivergence and mental health. A podcast called 'Voices in Collections' on Spotify was also delivered. This exhibition was part of a Heritage Lottery Fund Dynamic Collections funded project and focussed on what Ableism means to people.

Pride Events

Two Pride events took place this year. The first event was 'Picnic in the Park' during July 2024 and the second event was the annual 'Walsall Pride Festival' during August 2024. Both events were free to attend and included live music and entertainment.

Continental Street Market

The much-loved continental street market returned at the end of May 2024 and there was an array of diverse craft and food stalls representing various cultures and cuisines for everyone to enjoy. It showcased the rich diversity within the local community and provided an opportunity for residents to enjoy a unique cultural experience.

Objective: Leadership

To embed equitable and inclusive policy and decision making at the heart of the organisation.

Following on from last year, the Council has continued to produce some key strategies through co-production, engagement and consultation with residents, staff, and key partners to ensure equitable and inclusive policy and decision making is at the heart of the organisation. Some examples include the new Council Plan 2025-2029 and the new Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2029.

The Corporate Equalities Group's (CEG) Terms of Reference was updated to strengthen the roles and responsibilities and ensure customer and service representation and voice from across the Council. This has provided CEG with a clear remit in taking key decisions around EDI and ensure it is embedded even further in service design, commissioning, and delivery.

The Council's leadership at both an officer and Member level embraces and positively promotes and champions equality, diversity, and inclusion across the borough.

Key achievements this year include:

“Pursuing Excellence: Our Council Plan 2025-2029”

The new Council Plan, *Pursuing Excellence: Our Council Plan 2025-2029*, has been approved at Full Council in January 2025 and is aligned to the *We Are Walsall 2040* Strategy. It has 'ensuring equity' as one of its cross-cutting principles so that it applies across everything we do to enable us to embed and deliver our EDI objectives more effectively. Promoting equalities, tackling inequity, and fostering good relations across our diverse communities is key in reducing inequalities and improving life chances.

Ensuring Equity: Walsall's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2029

This year, we developed our *Ensuring Equity: Walsall's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2029*, alongside the Council Plan. The EDI strategy has been shaped using the new Community Cohesion and Integration Plan co-produced by Walsall Council and Walsall For All and using the feedback obtained from our communities, partners and staff through varied engagement and consultation opportunities held during April to October 2024. The consultation allowed residents, community groups and partners to provide feedback on the draft 'Ensuring Equity' strategy and provide their thoughts on the objectives and the associated 'We Will' statements. Supportive and positive feedback has been gained with the final version of the strategy being approved at Cabinet in December 2024 with a lived experience item.

Renewed Equality and Health Impact Assessment Forms

Over the past year, we reviewed our council's decisions and strategies to ensure they address not only inequalities for those with protected characteristics but also health inequalities. As part of this effort, we updated our Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) to include health inequalities, renaming it to Equality and Health Impact Assessment (EHIA).

The new Equality and Health Impact Assessment (EHIA) forms have been developed as a self-assessment tool to help us determine any likely positive and negative impact that our work could have on residents, communities, partners, and staff regarding equality of opportunity in service design and delivery. A screening form has been developed to help services determine whether a full EHIA is required and two further new EHIA forms have also been developed for proposals that are operational or relating to policy, procedures and services to ensure that we consider any adverse impact our work could have on equality groups and locally protected characteristics. This allows us to ensure we eliminate and minimise any negative consequences for equality groups. The forms have recently been trialled during the budget proposals consultation process and will help strengthen the EDI self-assessment process.

Our equality toolkit and underpinning processes are under review to strengthen how we continue to judge and mitigate impact on all equality groups, including those experiencing health inequalities. We will continue to review and improve these processes to support effective equality analysis to ensure there is no unlawful discrimination for any equality groups from inception. To ensure the council strengthens the consideration of health inequalities in plans, strategies, and decisions, the Public Health team has planned to deliver training for members and officers next year.

Locally defined protected characteristics

We have also incorporated and given due regard to additional duties placed on the Council such as the 'Armed Forces Covenant' and 'Care Experienced' to ensure any adverse impact is considered through equality and health impact assessments. During 2024 Walsall Council adopted additional locally defined protected characteristics that complement our commitment to ensuring equity for all. Cabinet agreed to the inclusion of Care Experienced, Armed Forces and health equity to consider wider health impacts on equality groups.

These local characteristics including health equity have been agreed for inclusion within the renewed 'Equality and Health Impact Assessments.' Our EHIA assessment documents have been renewed to incorporate these additional local characteristics alongside the existing nine statutory ones and the existing local characteristic of care experienced. Inclusion of the Armed Forces as an additional locally defined protected characteristic helps to deliver on our statutory commitments under the Armed Forces Covenant.

The EHIA also incorporates a Health in All Policies (HiAP) approach. This ensures that the effects of strategies and policies on the health outcomes of our diverse communities are thoroughly considered in partnership with our public health officers. Within the EHIA document, factors such as mental and physical health, social and economic inequalities and access to services have been added for further consideration. The HiAP approach has also been integrated into the equality analysis toolkit to prioritise health equity and increase awareness of wider health impacts when developing strategies, policies, or modifying services. This enables us to actively minimise and reduce any adverse impacts on individuals experiencing health inequalities and to consider the impact of our proposals on the wider determinants of health.

Portfolio Holder Responsibility for EDI

Equality is now included as a key functional area within the Cabinet Portfolio for internal Resources. The current Portfolio holder, Councillor Edward Lee, is now kept informed with regular updates and has been able to act as an advocate for EDI-related items at Cabinet, Scrutiny and Council. The EDI strategy will be monitored and reviewed regularly through Corporate Equality Group with regular updates on progress provided to CMT and through the Portfolio Holder briefing process.

Lived Experience

Our Leader of Walsall Council Councillor Garry Perry is passionate about local engagement and empowerment and is dedicated to ensuring that the lived experiences of Walsall's residents continuously inform and improve service delivery. Recently, items for Cabinet have had a lived experience element that has provided an opportunity for Walsall Council to invite people directly impacted to attend Cabinet and provide their true lived experience perspectives to help Walsall Council shape and improve service delivery based on the lived experiences of individuals.

Some examples of recent lived experience items at Cabinet include two of Walsall's care leavers who attended Cabinet during April 2024 to explain some of the everyday challenges and prejudices they face. Lived experience perspectives were also provided on the EDI Strategy item during December 2024 from a Walsall Council staff network member and a member from a partner organisation. The lived experience opportunity has allowed enhanced engagement and the opinions of local people to be valued and heard.

Transgender and Non-binary Equality Policy

The Gender Reassignment guidance has been replaced with a new Transgender & Non-binary Equality Policy which covers the following:

- The provision of further information / support available to transgender and non-binary employees / workers and including preferred use of names and pronouns.
- Recruitment requirements.
- Introduction of a wellbeing support plan and review meetings, to ensure the right support is in place.

Children and Young People's Strategic Alliance

Walsall's Children and Young People's Strategic Alliance was formed in 2022 with key partners and anchor institutions, including health, police, community safety, voluntary and community sector organisations. It is critical to driving new ways of thinking and new ways of working and is driven by the voices of children and young people with a focus on improving the lived experiences of children and young people in Walsall.

The 'Big Conversation' took place in early 2024 to understand the aspirations, concerns and views of children and young people across the borough. In total, over 500 responses were collected, covering varying socio-economic profiles and with fantastic engagement from minority community pupils (48%). Also, as part of the co-production work, a Youth Summit and Youth Debate at Walsall College took place attended by 200 young people alongside Council leaders. The Children and Young People's Strategy was finalised in October 2024 and was presented by our young people at Cabinet.

Walsall Learning Alliance

The Walsall Learning Alliance has been formed with the common purpose of improving the education and wellbeing of children, young people, and families across Walsall through collective accountability. Each sector of the education system is represented on the Walsall Learning Alliance, which acts as the strategic forum for raising and solving system wide issues.

A Belonging Conference, facilitated and hosted by the Walsall Learning Alliance, took place on 26th April 2024. The aim of the event was to challenge system leaders to think differently about children's experiences of learning, and how as a system the outcomes and lived experiences for children and young people can be improved.

170 Leaders attended the event with the full range of education providers represented as well as early years providers, and colleagues from police, health, and the voluntary sector. Delegates heard powerful messages from children across Walsall and young people about what 'belonging' means to them, and some of the issues local Headteachers deal with every day and shared examples about what is working well in Walsall. Delegates were also presented with clear evidence from national experts about the positive impact of belonging, for staff as well as students.

Walsall Right for Children

In December 2023, Children's Services began to review the Walsall Right for Children (WR4C) vision, foundations, and priorities to ensure alignment to the Council Plan and the We Are Walsall 2040 borough-wide plan themes comprising of 'Child Friendly Borough' and 'Feel Safe'. During January and February 2024, our Big Conversation programme took place - a series of activities listening to what 503 individual children and families said about what they think are the important actions to be taken to ensure the best outcomes are secured for children and families in the Borough.

In addition, the voices of young people from two thematic engagement programmes were captured. 'Reformation 2' – the system is a documentary produced with young people in the Youth Justice system setting out the issues around disproportionality and calling on the system to make changes and 'It Takes a Village' is a documentary produced with our young people leaving care which sets out the system change that needs to happen to ensure care experienced young people have better lived experiences and opportunities.

Some of the views of our young people showed that those from deprived areas feel more negative about growing up in Walsall and about future opportunities and felt racism was a part of their everyday lives. Some children identified having good and sustainable networks of support provides them with the foundations for the best start in life, feeling safe and developing into successful adults. It was evident that children are concerned about being safe, their environment, green spaces, good educational opportunities, and the availability of jobs for the future. Children want to be an active part of making change. This feedback has allowed Children's Services to publish their refreshed aspirations, priorities, and foundations to continue to deliver better outcomes whilst ensuring every child's voice is heard.

Expansion of We Are Walsall 2040 Partnership

During this year, new partners from the community, business and education sectors have joined the We Are Walsall 2040 Partnership to expand its breadth and depth. These include Walsall FC Community Foundation, Walsall Community Network, Federation for Small Businesses, Walsall Learning Alliance, and the Multi-Academy CEO Forum.

To strengthen the strategic partnership, joint funding for a Partnership Manager role has been raised by partners to allow a Partnership Manager to commence their role in 2025. A Walsall 2040 Communications Group and Walsall 2040 Delivery Group have also been formed to help delivery of the Partnership's ambitions.

Children and Young People Participation Strategy

As part of our consultation work with children and young people in 2024, work has commenced on developing a Children and Young People Participation Strategy and a Parent and Carer Participation Strategy. Both strategies are at an early stage of development, and we intend to have finalised strategies by the Summer of 2025. Ensuring our children and young people have a voice and are heard is a key element of ensuring equity for all.

Leaders' Responses to national unrest

Walsall Council's senior leadership team has been proactive and committed to ensuring the mental and physical wellbeing of staff and residents. This dedication was evident during the planned protests in August 2024, which targeted minority groups within the borough. The Council's Chief Executive, Executive Directors, and Leader of the Council promptly reassured colleagues and residents, working closely with the police, community, and local groups to provide up-to-date information, dispel any rumours, and implement well-rehearsed plans to protect everyone involved.

Objective: Services

To design and deliver accessible services that meet the needs of our diverse population.

The Council is committed to design and deliver accessible services that meet the needs of our diverse population through a detailed understanding of our residents, service users and their needs. We deliver a range of services and support across the borough. Our approach is aligned to our corporate values, which highlight how the Council works with local communities and businesses and influences choice, behaviours and the ability to access appropriate support and resources.

We want services in the Council to understand what residents want and need to enable us to design and deliver an excellent service user experience, make reasonable adjustments for service users, reduce inequalities and health inequalities, be fair, and provide good customer care for the diverse range of people we serve.

We have carried out extensive work across our services to ensure they are accessible to all customers and are exploring how we leverage social value to ensure our commissioning and procurement provide local opportunities and value to Walsall residents.

Key achievements this year include:

Walsall Connected

Walsall Connected is a collaboration between the Council and its partner organisations to build resilient communities across the borough. The 29 Walsall Connected Centres, created through Walsall Council's partnerships with libraries and community organisations such as Bloxwich Community Partnership, provide essential digital support and training to help residents access council services online. Whether residents need help finding council information, ordering a bigger bin, applying for a blue badge, or learning digital basics, Walsall Connected is there to make digital access simple and local.

We continue to see an increase in individuals accessing connected centres, common inquiry types, Food Banks, Housing register applications, Blue badge applications and the Household Support Fund evidencing the reliance of vulnerable individuals on these hubs.

This year, our Walsall Connected Service has been recognised and won the PENNA (Patient Experience Network National Awards) Award for Patient Care Excellence for our innovative partnership with Walsall Manor Hospital. This is a significant achievement that highlights the remarkable progress we have made in enhancing digital access and delivering better services to the residents of Walsall.

Walsall Works Expo

This year's Walsall Works Expo was a great success and is one of the largest jobs fairs in the West Midlands, with almost 1,000 job seekers able to seek support and advice from 70 employers, recruiters and training providers. Some of the new businesses in attendance this year and offering new job openings and training courses included: Morgan Sindall, Lidl, One Stop, Walsh Funerals & Memorials, Mission Accomplished, Althaus Digital, Titan Recruitment, Tudor Employment, Ibstock, CECOS and Tag Construction.

Walsall Works: developing skills and creating job opportunities for our residents

Walsall Works established in 2012 through an initial Council investment, continues to address high levels of youth unemployment and supports people who are unemployed, economically inactive, are recent migrants and those who face multiple barriers to getting into work or training. Walsall residents are supported to gain skills and qualifications to progress into sustainable employment and apprenticeships. Successfully bidding into multiple external funding streams has helped to spark economic growth in the town and support job creation. Expert guidance is provided along with professional support to enhance our resident's employability skills, create paid work placements, promote training, and connect residents with the right skills for jobs and apprenticeships. Qualified Advisors are co-located in 20 community settings, which include jobcentres, libraries, family hubs and community centres.

During 2024, the demand for our support has continued to be high, with 1,800 residents engaged with our services and over 1,200 positive outcomes for participants, ranging from employment, apprenticeships, part or full-time training, self-employment, and work placements. Demographic data is captured on our participants including age, gender, location, ethnicity, physical disability, learning difficulties and mental health issues including information on their support needs such as social-economic needs and language barriers.

Walsall Works leverages social value

Walsall Works actively leverages social value from major contracts to benefit our residents, local businesses, communities, and schools. This ensures that commitments made through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) are directly linked to those who would benefit most from our services such as our residents. Our proactive approach ensures that social value is not just a checkbox, but a vibrant and impactful part of our business community.

We continue to play a key role in scoring and moderating the social value elements of major public funded procurement, both during and after the contracts are awarded, Walsall Works engages with the contractors to monitor and facilitate contractual commitments and provide further support with innovative ways to positively impact local communities.

Our key focus now and in the future is to retain and grow the Employment and Skills offer and have a positive impact on the lives of our residents. Whilst also making significant reduction on the social and economic challenges faced by participants residing in the borough. Through our energetic and committed efforts, Walsall Works

champions the cause for positive action schemes, to transform the lives of our local communities.

Our Economic Strategy focuses on building a positive future by increasing the number of local businesses, expanding local employment and skills, and leveraging our geographic advantages, connectivity, robust industrial sectors, and collaborative efforts with anchor institutions. Additionally, we are finalising an Employment and Skills Strategy in partnership with local stakeholders to further support this growth aligning with our Place Based Strategy.

Community Advisors

Six community advisors have been recruited from different cultural backgrounds who provide 16 hours each of sessional time per month of cultural competency advice to the public sector, the NHS and the Council to reduce some inequalities faced by the new communities. One of the advisors specialises in working with White British communities in the most deprived areas of Walsall.

Enabling Technology

Digital Inclusion and Accessibility

This year, significant progress has been made in improving digital accessibility as part of our equality, diversity, and inclusion commitments. Following the introduction of WCAG 2.2 legislation, a comprehensive audit of all digital applications has been completed to assess risks and enhance compliance.

Global Accessibility Awareness Day

To support and promote understanding and awareness within the Council, Global Accessibility Awareness Day was marked, using it as an opportunity to engage and educate colleagues about the importance of digital accessibility. We have focused particularly on raising awareness among those managing our digital applications or publishing web content, including PDFs. This work has strengthened our organisational understanding and commitment to creating a more accessible digital environment for all and is making a noticeable improvement for our customers and staff.

Customer Experience Enabling Technology

During 2024, new translation technology has been introduced within the webchat and telephony systems, transforming the way our Customer Experience Advisors engage with non-English-speaking residents. CX Translate is an innovative tool, an app that translates real-time typed message conversations, helping us provide great customer service in any language. The introduction of CX Translate and the enhancements to our chatbot and live chat services have significantly improved our customer interactions, making our services more accessible, inclusive and efficient.

Chatbot (WALIS) updates

Customer feedback has enabled our Chatbot (WALIS) to be updated with new features now available to our residents and staff. Previously, WALIS could only return information on FAQs, and customers had to phone or email for further information. WALIS delivers much more and has expanded FAQs to create a much

larger knowledge base. Initially, over 800 articles were created, and through continuous review, there are almost 1,500 articles now.

Live Webchat

Residents can also connect with one of our Customer Experience Centre (CXC) advisers for real-time interaction through our Live Webchat. Advisers have access to a bespoke knowledge base accessed through a feature called 'Agent Assist,' allowing them to search for information while chatting with residents online, ensuring correct and most up-to-date information is provided. Users have highlighted the convenience and effectiveness of real-time help.

Since August, we have provided enhanced interactions providing ID verification, intent, or knowledge to our customers, as well as handling 1928 'live' chats, 97% of the total amount of requests across services including clean and green, community protection, schools' admission, free school meals, revenues, and benefits. The knowledge base has also grown by 49%, with the number of articles increasing daily. This growth reflects our commitment to continuously improving the resources available to our residents. Initial feedback from residents is positive with some suggested improvements to the chatbot icon, and we are currently testing new designs to enhance user engagement.

Service Channel Management

The introduction of new translation technology within the webchat and telephony systems has transformed the way our Customer Experience Advisors engage with non-English-speaking residents. Below is what some of our advisors had to say about using the technology:

"I used the chatbot to have a conversation with a Polish gentleman. Using the translator made it so much easier for me and less stressful for him—he could express what he needed without struggling to translate it into English. I found the translator very accurate."

This demonstrates how technology can provide a step toward a more inclusive service and enhance our ability to serve all residents, particularly those who may feel isolated due to language barriers.

MS CoPilot

Feedback from users has highlighted that the implementation of M365 Copilot has enhanced efficiency and inclusivity for users with visual impairments and dyslexia, in document creation, meeting summarisation and data analysis. We continue to explore options to expand its use for automating complex workflows and are working with Microsoft to improve accessibility features.

Windows 11

Windows 11 now has accessibility features such as Voice Control, which can open and switch between apps, browse the web, read, and author emails, and more all without a mouse or keyboard. This supports accessibility for those with inclusion needs.

Accessibility Software

DaTS Customer Services are responsible for the installation and support of various pieces of accessibility software such as Dragon Naturally Speaking and Read & Write to fulfil Access to Work requests. The accessibility software is useful for those with accessibility needs.

Tech Enabled Care

DaTs and Adult Social Care are working together to provide a range of digital solutions that will support customers with additional needs or vulnerabilities to live more independently. Initiatives such as 'Ask Sara' will allow citizens to self-serve their immediate needs. The Walsall virtual house will be relaunched to enable residents to virtually explore care solutions in both a TEC and conventional sense. Tools such as Brain-in-Hand in our Learning Disability and Mental Health teams will transition from Pilot into BAU and working with suppliers to deliver Digital assistants to support users through home automation, passive monitoring systems and virtual care visits.

We are also exploring opportunities to use generative AI solutions to assist colleagues to turn around reports and assessments in shorter time frames allowing quicker response to the service user around Care.

New British Sign Language Video Interpreter Service

A new service has been launched to make it easier for users of British Sign Language to access services. Walsall residents can now access an on-demand video British Sign Language (BSL) Service, in which an interpreter will translate a conversation between council staff and the caller. During a call, an interpreter can communicate with a staff member from any of the Council's service areas on the phone, and sign with the BSL user on a live video call. The service is accessible from any internet-connected device with a camera. This has proven to be invaluable as a member of our DaTS team has been able to use the service whilst working as a poll clerk for the General Elections.

Walsall Energy Action Project (WEAP)

The Walsall Energy Action Project is a three year, borough wide partnership initiative, operated in collaboration with Community Hub partners to offer direct support to Walsall residents to not only assess and reduce household energy spending during the cost of living crisis, but also to educate and share knowledge on how we can all play a part in improving our communities and the wider environment through positive climate action. Services include 1-2-1 energy advice sessions, home visits and community events. WEAP is funded by The National Lottery Community Fund.

This year, WEAP has set up pop up Energy Cafés across the borough. These welcoming spaces provide residents with valuable advice on saving energy, reducing carbon footprints, and cutting household costs. The cafés are a one-stop hub for practical, impactful advice and offer residents the opportunity to become more aware of how they can contribute to positive climate action. The cafes have increased engagement with our residents.

Adult Social Care: Pathway to Independence

The Adult Social Care team have now launched the Pathway to Independence initiative. The initiative is based on three core principles with overarching goals and objectives. This initiative aims to support adults who need social care services to achieve their personal goals and live as independently as possible for as long as possible in their own homes. Thirty-two new members of staff have been recruited for this new team and training has taken place.

Following an initial assessment by a Neighbourhood Community Officer, the assessor will work with the individual to identify how their outcomes can be met through the provision of equipment, adaptations and/or assistive technology. There may also be signposting and connecting with local community groups and services to promote community engagement and reduce social isolation. Community Reablement is a hybrid model with the internal and external teams working collaboratively to deliver an outcome-focused approach, aiming to build the individuals confidence and skills to maximise their independence.

Transition and Leaving Care (TLC) Team

The TLC team works with all care experienced children in the borough, supporting them from 17-25 years old, and in some instances beyond. The team operates from the TLC Hub in Pleck, which continues to operate an open-door policy to young people. Hot food and drinks are available as well as laundry facilities, emergency food pantry, free Wi-Fi, plus free sanitary and baby products. The hub fosters a multi-agency approach, with drop ins being hosted by partners such as NHS colleagues, Walsall Works, DWP and Walsall Virtual School, giving care leavers access to specialist advice and support when they need it.

Last year a documentary film was commissioned, 'It Takes A Village' to explore the lived experiences of young people leaving care in Walsall and the barriers they face. This film delivers an honest insight into the daily challenges and focusses on independence, accommodation, and mental health. The film highlights solutions needed for young people as they transition away and celebrates the steps they have taken after leaving the care system. The film has raised awareness about the need for the formation of a Children in Care and Care Leavers Alliance, expansion of the Local Offer for Care Leavers, an increase in social events and opportunities for care leavers to connect and a need for securing funding for a National House Project in Walsall. The team has been recognised for their excellence at the West Midlands ADCS Team Excellence Awards in 2024.

Locality-based Support for Voluntary and Community Organisations including social enterprises

Walsall Council, in partnership with NHS Black Country Integrated Care Board (ICB), this year launched a new locality-based model of support for Walsall's voluntary and community organisations across the borough. This new model aims to provide more locality-based support to the voluntary and community sector, championing them and enabling their voice to be heard.

Organisations can access support, training and advice on policies and procedures and external funding in four locality-based hubs based in Walsall, Bentley, Bloxwich and Rushall. This support ensures that local community and voluntary groups can

continue to grow and flourish providing much needed support to Walsall communities. In addition, the new model brings groups together to help tackle issues such as loneliness and isolation in the elderly, children, and young people.

Pension Credit specialist support for residents

In October 2024, a cohort of low-income pensioner households were contacted to encourage the take up of Pension Credit. They were identified from our LIFT dashboard and advised they could supplement their income and retain their Winter Fuel Payment if they made a claim. This was followed up in November 2024 with more specialist support provided where surgeries were held. Our Housing and Welfare Team provided a telephone support service.

When the Household Support Fund was announced in October last year, we allocated £300,000 to support low-income pensioner households who may have lost their Winter Fuel Payment. Over 700 households have been identified fitting the criteria. Letters are sent to households inviting them to call us and a direct one-off payment is issued of either £200 or £300 dependent on their age where applicable.

Holiday, Activities and Food (HAF) Programme

The Holiday, Activities, and Food (HAF) Programme is a free programme for children and young people aged 5 – 16 who are eligible for benefit-related free school meals. The Department for Education (DfE) funded programme runs over Easter, Summer, and Christmas school holidays.

The programme is centred around several aims which include healthy eating, being active, supporting development and wider educational achievement, being safe and not socially isolated, and greater engagement with school and other local services. The HAF programme has been a valuable mechanism for consulting with residents to inform the design of services and strategies.

The Council works with over 80 activity providers in the borough to offer children and young people, fun, locally based activities, while providing the opportunity for learning and developing new skills or having new experiences. Over the year, the HAF programme has continued to grow, and during summer, more than 6200 individual places were booked onto the programme for the summer holidays of 2024. Eligible families were able to book activities running between 29 July until 22 August 2024, giving many children an opportunity to try to learn and develop new skills. The current round of funding ends on 31st March 2025.

Corporate Parenting

The Corporate Parenting Team is focussing on continuing to extend the Local Offer for Care Leavers alongside realising the potential of the Protected Characteristic status and supporting our first cohort of young people through the National House Project.

The National House Project will involve working with a cohort of 8-10 young people at the age of 16 to equip them with a high level of independence skills, whilst also supporting them to form a community together as they move into their own home. Three members of staff will support this project.

Objective: Workforce

To be an inclusive organisation with staff at all levels who represent the diversity of our borough.

This year we have proceeded with implementing the Workforce Strategy 2023-2026 through ensuring we support and develop our workforce. We continue to ensure staff are seen, heard and included and provided with effective support, training, and development opportunities.

We continue to focus our efforts on recruiting a skilled and diverse workforce that has a sense of safety and belonging, feels valued, recognised, and rewarded for the work that they do. Promoting equitable career progression also remains as one of our key aims. To support this, we have strengthened our governance structure and staff networks and continue to aspire to having a diverse workforce at all levels. The EDI team continues to grow, with a new member of the team recently employed.

Key achievements this year include:

Corporate Staff Networks

Following a review of our previous staff network structure, which included carrying out a whole council staff survey and undertaking additional training from Cherron Inko-Tariah MBE, the experienced civil servant and CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) professional and author of *The Incredible Power of Staff Networks*, we widened the range of networks available by introducing the six new Corporate Staff Networks, thus creating safe spaces for connection and dialogue. These networks reflect the needs and interests of our staff:

- Our LGBTQIA+ Network
- Our Emerging Professionals Network
- Our (Dis)Ability Network
- Our Parents and Carers Network
- Our Ethnically Diverse Network
- Our All-Workers Welcome Network

Network membership has been positive. Over 170 staff members have joined the networks so far. We are seeing and hearing the positive impact these networks are having across the council. The networks connect people that would not normally work together, including those working remotely. As a result of these meetings, there have already been several items and suggestions that have been taken back to CEG for consideration. All networks have an Executive Leadership Team sponsor, ensuring that each network has a direct link with leadership.

Voices From Within Platform

We have launched the Voices From Within platform during June 2024. This is a platform where employees report concerns, ensuring employees' voices are heard and issues are addressed promptly and effectively, fostering trust and transparency across the council. Employees can also speak directly to an Equality Champion.

Concerns raised via the Voices From Within Platform have all been successfully resolved.

Equality Champions

Since the launch of the Equality Champion programme in November 2023, Walsall Council has made significant strides in promoting equality across the organisation. The programme now includes 73 Equality Champions across the Council.

Equality Champions are paving the way within the Council to ensure a culture where everyone is empowered, respected, valued, and listened to. They are equipped with the knowledge and skills to deliver their role through undertaking a six-week training programme.

As a result of the Equality Champions, staff have more confidence to raise concerns and have seen positive actions to resolve them. Champions have provided advice and guidance on how to, for example, access Occupational Health and have supported a vulnerable member of staff facing racial abuse from service users.

The Equality Champions Network supports the positive impact we can collectively make towards fostering a culture of equality, diversity, and inclusion within Walsall and break down barriers to engage with the workforce. There are a range of materials available to promote the champions internally including logos and MS TEAMS backgrounds.

We are also very pleased to have been recognised for our Equality Champions work having been one of the finalists in the LGC Workforce Award 2024 for this initiative.

Organisational Champion Newsletter

Our Organisational Champion Newsletter has been created and delivered to staff on a quarterly basis to keep staff up to date with EDI developments. The newsletter contains information on quarterly champions, upcoming events and training opportunities.

Mental Health - Our Employee Assistance Programme

Our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provider Vivup hosted a live webinar during October 2024 to coincide with World Mental Health Day, focusing upon how the service can support employee wellbeing, and covering a wide range of support on offer.

In addition, the Mental Fitness – “Movement for Wellbeing,” has been promoted where we offer staff a drop-in 1 hour session. This session provides staff with an opportunity to share and listen to other’s experiences, insights and knowledge.

New EDI eLearning

A wider range of EDI courses and resources have been added to our workforce online learning platform, making vital resources accessible to all. The new courses include: ‘Understanding Racism’, ‘A-Z of Anti-Racism’, ‘Understanding Privilege’, ‘Microaggressions’ and ‘Allyship’.

Bespoke Sector Training

This year we have developed and delivered bespoke EDI training identified as a need by senior managers. The themes for the training include Inclusive Language, Transgender Awareness and Inclusive Practices.

Diversity and Inclusion Calendar

Our Diversity and Inclusion calendar is available to all staff to view on the Council intranet. The calendar informs the Council's communication plans in terms of which events to promote, share and include to staff and residents and ensures we have effective planning time. Communication and promotion involve raising awareness, sharing colleagues' voices and stories to demonstrate inclusivity and to educate, inform and provide information on events across the Council and borough.

Celebrating Autism Pride Day: Embracing Neurodiversity

On Autism Pride Day, we came together to celebrate the unique perspectives and strengths of individuals on the autism spectrum. This day was about awareness and pride - pride in the diversity that makes our community and our Council vibrant and strong. By recognising and celebrating the varied experiences of autistic individuals, we foster a culture of acceptance and understanding. It is a day to highlight the importance of inclusion and to advocate for the rights and dignity of all autistic people.

National Inclusion Week 23-29 September 2024: Impact Matters

National Inclusion Week (NIW), founded by Inclusive Employers, celebrated inclusion and work towards building more inclusive workplaces. This year's theme was #ImpactMatters: highlighting the importance of making a tangible difference.

Throughout the week, leaders across the Black Country Integrated Care Board (ICB) hosted a range of events, including live presentations and pre-recorded videos. Key sessions covered topics like compassionate leadership, equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) strategies, and the role of staff networks in advancing equality.

Black History Month Celebration

During Black History month in October 2024, the Council hosted a range of activities and events to share experiences, stories and knowledge about the rich diversity and heritage of our Black communities. During October 2024, 200 people attended the Black History Month Celebration event. Our fostering service and local charity, Walsall's Black Sisters Collective (WBSC), hosted a free event at Walsall Arena with live performances, including singing, dancing, poetry, workshops, talks and a fashion show.

There were two virtual cafes providing a great opportunity to connect with colleagues, share stories, and support one another in creating an inclusive workplace. The focus this year was on using inclusive language in our everyday conversations. This was an opportunity to raise awareness and support for those going through menopause, as well as their colleagues. The day encouraged open conversations and better understanding of the challenges faced by those experiencing this natural phase of life. It also included promotional materials, two-hour awareness sessions for teams, and a training session for managers on promoting positive mental health and drop-in sessions.

Men's Health Awareness Month

November 2024 marked Men's Health Awareness Month, but also International Men's Day which took place on Tuesday 19 November. The theme for this year's Men's Day was Positive Male Role Models. A member of staff shared his story for all council staff to read.

Disability History Month

Disability History Month took place from November to December 2024 and the theme was Disability, Livelihood and Employment and it promoted disabled people's rights and their struggle for equality past and present.

Awareness of Hidden Disabilities

This year, we have worked hard to raise awareness of hidden disabilities within our workforce to ensure greater visibility and support. In total, 91 employees now have sunflower lanyards for their hidden disabilities.

Aspiring to Excellence in Management Programme

As part of the programme, the workforce EDI team has ensured that each cohort of 'Aspiring to Excellence in Management' is both equitable and representative. Waiting lists are not managed on a first-come, first-served basis; instead, they are reviewed comprehensively to ensure a diverse mix of individuals within each cohort.

We continue to analyse data to highlight where specific targeting is required for underrepresented groups within the application process.

In addition to this we are delivering training opportunities for 'Applying for an internal position' and 'Interviewing for an internal position', both of which are open to all staff.

Armed Forces Covenant

The Armed Forces Covenant Induction new eLearning modules are available to all staff to raise awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant. They aim to help staff understand and apply the principles of the Covenant with confidence.

Menopause Awareness

In 2024, significant strides were made in promoting menopause awareness at Walsall Council. We have rolled out a substantial training programme covering topics such as barriers around menopause, coping strategies, and HRT awareness. All training and activities have significantly increased awareness among staff and led to more open conversations. There is a better understanding of the challenges faced by those experiencing menopause. The focus on mental health and wellbeing, particularly during Menopause Awareness Week, has equipped some managers and staff with the tools to support each other effectively. This should contribute to overall staff wellbeing.

In addition, the number of Menopause Champions increased to 43 and Menopause Champions Catch-up Sessions have been delivered to refresh their knowledge and

skills. The Menopause Champions provide a vital support network, offering advice and signposting to additional resources. This should help in creating a more supportive and inclusive work environment.

Our Future Plans

We are proud of our dedication to embed equality, diversity, and inclusion in the way we work and deliver services. We will strive to continue making considerable progress with our equality, diversity, and inclusion work across the Council over the next year. We will move forward with our ambitions in our new Council Plan and new EDI Strategy, which puts equality, diversity, and inclusion at its heart and aligns to driving forward our overarching borough vision for We Are Walsall 2040. We want staff and residents to understand that our Council services are committed to embedding EDI across services that are shaped by feedback and data from our residents and communities.

To support this, our action plans are aligned to each of the four themes of the Equality Framework for Local Government which are pivotal for us to deliver and meet our obligations and duties under the Equality Act. The delivery of the action plans will enable us to identify areas for improvement and growth and implement rigorous performance monitoring and benchmarking processes to assess our efforts in resolving inequalities and delivering a more coordinated and inclusive approach to EDI in the Council. This will continue to be our priority as we strive to consolidate and improve our current position and move beyond 'achieving' as a Council.

We will continue to reinforce our commitment to EDI through reviewing Council governance; strengthening the role and membership of our Corporate Equalities Group and ensuring responsibility for tackling inequality sits at every level across the Council. Collaboration with our partners, residents, community groups and the workforce during this journey is key as these stakeholders play a key role in influencing and shaping the Council's approach to a more inclusive Walsall.

We will also strive to develop our approach centred around fostering a culture of EDI through collaborating with our stakeholders when developing and implementing equitable and inclusive policies whilst addressing inequalities through implementing solutions promptly. An inclusive and person-centred approach will support the Council to understand the drivers of inequality and how to tackle these to sustain our journey in promoting EDI.

Key ambitions for 2025/26 include:

- We will begin to understand the rich equality data and information we have across the Council and look at how we use it to make better service design and delivery decisions.
- We will look at our processes around commissioning and procurement to ensure we meet our social value policy.
- We will continue to develop our Lived Experience programme ensuring that real voices from our communities can be heard to inform decisions and services.
- We will assess and improve staff exit data to include protected characteristics (where available) to allow identification of patterns/trends in relation to the reasons for leaving that can be used to inform targeted actions.
- We will continue our engaging workforce equalities programme, piloting a reverse mentoring scheme, hosting inspirational talks, supporting our staff networks and including Equality champions on recruitment panels.

- We will leverage our partnerships and relationships with the VCSE to ensure all key decisions within the council are inclusive and collaborative.
- We will undertake more staff engagement including a council wide staff survey to hear from all our staff and ensure their views shape the culture of the Council.
- We will develop a clear EDI performance framework to ensure we monitor and track the implementation of our new EDI strategy.
- We will continue to work with partners across the community to promote cohesion and integration and support community events and activities for all.
- We will look at a consistent approach to the inclusion of equality objectives in our service planning and strategy development across the Council.

Cabinet – 19 March 2025

Provision of Adults and Children's Social Care Case Management System

Portfolio: Councillor Pedley – Adult Social Care

Related portfolios: Councillor Elson – Children and Young People

Service: Adults and Children's Social Care

Wards: All

Key decision: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

1. Aim

- 1.1 To enter into a contract for the provision of an electronic case management system, which will enable the Council to fulfil its statutory duties, as set out in relevant legislation (i.e. the Care Act 2014, the Children Act 1989 (as amended) and the Children and Families Act 2014).
- 1.2 To establish a longer-term contractual arrangement which builds on existing infrastructure and enables a partnership-based way of working, which will intrinsically support the delivery of We are Walsall 2040, the Council Plan and the Council's Transformation Programme.

2. Summary

- 2.1 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, this is a 'key decision' due to 'significant' expenditure of more than £500,000.
- 2.2 Walsall Council has statutory responsibilities under the Children and Families Act 2014 and Care Act 2014, which include the need to maintain client level records, linked to vulnerable children, young people and adults. The current electronic case management system mobilised across Adults Social Care and Children's Services is Mosaic, which was procured by the Council in 2014 from CoreLogic Limited (now trading as Access UK Limited).
- 2.3 Since the introduction of Mosaic a number of benefits have been realised including an electronic case management system accessible to both the Council's workforce and third-party service providers as appropriate; greater

system-based oversight of statutory services delivered; greater intelligence across areas of service delivery; increased access to performance and activity reporting; introduction of a financial solution to support brokering care; provider payments and monitoring spend; and the ability to interface across multiple Council electronic systems as a way of delivering more streamlined functions. This contract has also enabled the Council to further benefit from opportunities as detailed in our Technology Framework.

- 2.4 Using a framework agreement to enter into a new compliant contract for the provision of the Mosaic system will therefore ensure there is continuity of service.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That Cabinet approves the award of a contract for the period 01 August 2025 to 31 July 2030, with an anticipated value in the region of £1.4m to Access UK Limited, for the continued provision of the Council's existing case management system for Adult Social Care and Children's Services.
- 3.2 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Executive Director Adult Social Care and Public Health, to enter into a contract and subsequently to authorise the sealing or signing of any associated contracts, deeds or other related documents.
- 3.3 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Executive Director Adult Social Care and Public Health, to authorise any variations to the contractual arrangements or other related documents for such services should this be required throughout the duration of the any contracts and provided that they are in accordance with the Council's Contract Rules and any relevant legislation, including the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Procurement Act 2023, as applicable.

4. Report detail - know

- 4.1 The current contract for the provision of the Mosaic electronic case management system, was awarded for an initial period of 2 years from 1 August 2021, with the ability to extend for 2 years. The extension has been utilised and the contract is therefore due to expire on 31 July 2025.
- 4.2 Since the purchase of Mosaic a considerable amount of time and effort has been invested to build and implement the system; should we have to repeat this, in the event of a change of provider from our incumbent provider this would cause significant resource pressures and cost. Changing the product now would give rise to technical difficulties (compatibility/interoperability) and additional unnecessary costs which would be disproportionate to the whole life cost of the product.
- 4.3 The ongoing availability of a case management, care tracking and finance system is a critical requirement for the provision of social care services.

- 4.4 Four potential options have been considered for the re-procurement of the case management system in a compliant way, which are outlined in the table below.

Options	Description	Implication
1. Do nothing	Allow the contract to expire 31 st July 2025 with no opportunity to renew and no consideration of system replacement	Inability for the organisation to meet its statutory duties
2. Purchase of a new case management system	Embark upon a full procurement process to purchase a new case management system	Does not address immediate requirements of meeting statutory duty through the provision of a live system; costly and is not part of our current technology roadmap or strategy
3. Undertake a re-procurement exercise of the existing case management system	Through representative working group discussions – most appropriate approach has been identified – to deliver a compliant electronic solution in a timely and best value way, meaning the provision of contractual arrangements to cover a 5-year period to be established with appropriate ‘break’ clauses	Opportunity to align to the Council’s Technology Framework and our Transformation programme. Provides continuity of system in a compliant way. Optimises technological advances in system hosting and reduces Council burden. Utilises the skills already developed in the teams supporting the incumbent system
4. Defer the current contract	Utilise regulation 72 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 allowing the Council to negotiate a variation of the contract term and the continuation of the current contract with the existing provider under the existing terms and conditions (except with regard to the contract term)	The ability to significantly remodel the contract would be unavailable; the third-party system provider could decline; this is a short-term approach and could expose the Council to the risk of legal challenge on the basis that the variation is an illegal direct award

Council Plan priorities

- 4.5 The provision of Mosaic contributes to achieving the following Council priorities:

People: have increased independence, improved health and can positively contribute to their communities.

Internal Focus: Internal services deliver quality and adapt to meet the needs of customer facing services.

Risk Management

- 4.6 The risks to awarding this contract are low given that the Council has an established record of utilising this system and working with the provider Access Group. However, due diligence will be undertaken including Data Processing Agreements and Technical Assessments, to provide assurance and governance in delivering our statutory duties.
- 4.7 As detailed within the report, the ongoing availability of an electronic case management system including assessment; support plan; care brokering; payment processes and monitoring of spend is a critical requirement for the ongoing provision of social care services.

Financial implications

- 4.8 The 2024/25 annual cost of delivering this contract is £233k and is funded from existing budgets within Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Digital and Technology Services (DaTS).
- 4.9 The Council is recommended to approve option 3 as detailed in section 4.4.
- 4.10 The lifetime cost of the contract is expected to be around £1.412m over 5 years, with an estimated annual cost of £282k. The cost will be met from existing budget provision and an earmarked reserve during 2025/26. The additional funding required from 2026/27 will be included as part of the budget setting process. The budget will transfer to DaTS going forward. The annual costs for the proposed 5-year contract are detailed below:

Hosted SaaS Solution	Annual £s
Mosaic Adults	35,298.84
Mosaic Children's	62,349.68
CP-IS	1,000.00
Mosaic Portal	45,254.92
Accounts Receivable Interface	8,879.77
Hosting	107,341.27
Single Sign-On	3,793.14
MID PREMIER CSP	15,000.00
CS Recharge Interface	2,320.76
ASC Annual Uplift Financial Assessment	1,102.36
Total Annual Cost	282,340.74

- 4.11 Annual costs (excluding implementation costs) have also been quoted to procure additional optional software modules. Each one of these is unfunded and would require a full Business Case to proceed.

Module	Annual £s
ACG	104,434.43
DaaS	69,622.95
SMART NOTES	69,622.95
CQC	6,962.30
ADAM SOCIAL CARE	133,444.00
TEC	17,405.74
API PACKS	87,028.69
Intellicare/AICP	46,415.30
GIS/OS API	46,415.30
Adam Interface	9,283.06

Legal implications

- 4.12 Walsall Council has a statutory obligation to provide social care for vulnerable Children, young people and Adults in Walsall who meet the relevant thresholds. Being able to record proportionate information is critical in ensuring auditable; proportionate decision making; safety and delivery of timely interventions, as well as compliance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. The electronic social care case management system is the Council's underpinning record tool.
- 4.13 The procurement of the contract with Access UK Limited will be undertaken in accordance with the applicable requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's Contract Rules. Any resulting contract shall be in a form which is approved by Legal Services.

Procurement Implications/Social Value

- 4.14 Procurement input has been sought to evaluate several routes to market and advise on the most appropriate procurement route.
- 4.15 Procurement have advised that the use of the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation Framework (YPO) Software Application Solutions, would be the preferred procurement route to achieve best value, the desired outcomes in the timescales required.
- 4.16 There are several benefits associated with using the YPO Framework – reduced timescales, ease of use, choice of supplier, legality, assured supplier standards, aggregation of spend, pre-defined terms and conditions.

- 4.17 Through the use of the supplier selection tool within the YPO Framework the Council can compliantly shortlist, select and subject to Cabinet approval enter into a compliant contract with Access UK Limited.
- 4.18 The procurement exercise and associated contract award will be completed in accordance the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (the Regulations) or (if applicable) the Procurement Act 2023 which comes into force on 24 February 2025, the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 and Walsall Council's Social Value Policy and Contract Rules. Procurement and Legal Services have coordinated to ensure consistency of advice and to approve the applicable contract terms and conditions as well as the drafting of the Order Form to call-off the contract from the applicable framework agreement.
- 4.19 To fulfil the Council's Social Value Act duty and comply with the Council's Social Value Policy a commitment will be sought from the supplier in relation to the Council's Social Value Policy and Charter prior to contract completion.

Property implications

- 4.20 There are no property implications related to this procurement.

Health and wellbeing implications

- 4.21 The ability to monitor the health and wellbeing of Walsall children, young people and adults receiving support or services from Walsall Council will be compromised without the availability of an electronic case management system.

Reducing Inequalities

- 4.22 An "Initial Screening Form for Equality and Health Impact Assessment (EHIA) Policies, Procedures and Services Form" has been submitted, the result of which is that a full EHIA is not required as this is a re-procurement of an already existing system.

Staffing implications

- 4.23 There are no direct staffing implications associated with this procurement; existing staff are fully trained in the use of the product and full training is provided to new users as and when changes are introduced.

Climate Impact

- 4.24 Mosaic is delivered as Software as a Service (SaaS); Cloud Services, or SaaS Services are incredibly efficient as they have a high utilisation rate, i.e. multiple organisations are using the same infrastructure in one location meaning that the environmental impact is limited, SaaS services can help us to reduce our carbon footprint, and they have enabled remote working. Remote working alone has reduced carbon emissions by 15%.

Consultation

- 4.25 Internal consultation has been undertaken with Procurement, Finance, Legal Services, Children's and Adults Social Care services and DaTS.

5. Decide

Cabinet is requested to approve the recommendations made in section 3 of this report.

6. Respond

Following Cabinet approval relevant parties will ensure that the procurement process is concluded as required by the Council's own working practices and those of the framework operator.

7. Review

- 7.1 Subject to cabinet approval the Council will work in partnership with the vendor to ensure we achieve alignment to the Councils' transformation ambitions and an inclusion linked to social value. The strong partnership will also enable the Council to have greater influence across the vendor's future roadmap of system design priorities.
- 7.2 Stakeholders from across all business areas will be engaged with governance for the system to optimise future system developments, operating benefits and alignment to future service ambitions.
- 7.3 Adult Social Care, Childrens Services and DaTS will develop robust contract management arrangements.

Appendices

None.

Background papers

None.

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Cabinet – 19 March 2025

Recommendations from Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding funding to the Employment and Skills service.

Portfolio: Councillor Kaur – Education and Skills

Related Portfolios: Councillor Andrew – Associate Leader, Economic Growth and Regeneration

Service: Education and Skills

Wards: All

Key decision: N/A

Forward plan: N/A

1. Aim

To receive a recommendation from the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee made on 13 February 2025.

2. Recommendations

That Cabinet considers the recommendations of the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3. Report detail – know

At its meeting on 13 February 2025, the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report regarding post 16 provision. The report provided the Committee with an overview of the post-16 landscape in Walsall and the work of the Post-16 Strategy Group.

Members received information on the Walsall Works programme and its successes. It was noted that the work of Black Country Impact had been able to continue through the Commonwealth Games Legacy funding of £800,000. Concern was expressed that replacement funding was not available at the scale previously received. It was expected that Shared Prosperity Funding would be received at a reduced level than previously planned.

The Committee considered that a reduction in funding would have a negative impact on the capacity and resources available to the Education and Skills service, which may pose a risk to the level of support that can be provided to economically inactive young people.

Resolved:

The Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the cessation of Commonwealth Games Legacy funding alongside a reduction in the amount allocated through the Shared Prosperity Funding. The Committee ask that Cabinet monitor the risks and impact to the Employment and Skills service.

4. Decide

The recommendations of the Committee are set out and the Cabinet could choose to:

1. Accept the recommendations as set out;
2. Reject the recommendations; and/or
3. Choose to receive a report in more depth at a future Cabinet meeting.

5. Respond

Following the decision of Cabinet, the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be advised of the outcome of their recommendation.

6. Review

Subject to the decision of Cabinet, further reports at Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings or Cabinet meetings may be required.

Background papers

None

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