



Walsall Council

Economy and Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on: **2 February 2023 AT 6.00PM**

Meeting to be held at: Council Chamber

Public access to meeting via: www.walsallcouncilwebcasts.com

MEMBERSHIP:

Councillor M. Follows (Chair)
Councillor B. Allen (Vice-Chair)
Councillor P. Bott
Councillor C. Creaney
Councillor A. Garcha
Councillor I. Hussain
Councillor P. Kaur
Councillor R. Larden
Councillor A. Nazir
Councillor J. Whitehouse
Councillor R. Worrall

PORTFOLIO HOLDERS:

Councillor M. Bird – Leader of the Council
Councillor A. Andrew – Deputy Leader and Regeneration
Councillor G. Perry – Deputy Leader and Resilient Communities
Councillor K. Murphy – Clean and Green
Councillor M. Statham – Education and Skills
Councillor G. Flint – Health and Wellbeing

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1.	Apologies To receive apologies for absence from Members of the Committee.	
2.	Substitutions To receive notice of any substitutions for a Member of the Committee for the duration of the meeting.	
3.	Declarations of interest and party whip To receive declarations of interest or the party whip from Members in respect of items on the agenda.	
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.	Minutes of the previous meeting To approve the minutes of the meeting on 24 November 2022.	Enclosed
ITEMS FOR SCRUTINY		
6.	Willenhall, Darlaston and Aldridge Railway Stations To provide the Committee with a brief overview of the railways projects planned in Walsall, a summary of the business case and benefits and an update on progress and activities to date.	Enclosed
7.	Corporate Financial Performance 2022/23 – 7-month position ended 31 October 2022 To provide the updated forecast financial position for 2022/23 based on the position to October 2022, as reported to Cabinet on 14 December 2022.	Enclosed
8.	Draft Revenue Budget and Draft Capital Programme 2023/24 – 2026/27 To consult the Committee on the draft revenue and capital budget proposals for services within the remit of this Committee.	Enclosed
9.	Evaluation of Walsall Council Bonfire and Firework Events 2022 To provide the Committee with the details of last year's bonfire and firework events.	Enclosed
ITEMS FOR OVERVIEW		

10.	Areas of focus – 2022/23 To consider the areas of focus for the Committee during 2022/23.	Enclosed
11.	Forward Plans To receive the latest Forward Plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet • Black Country Joint Executive Committee • West Midlands Combined Authority Board 	Enclosed
12.	Recommendation Tracker To consider progress on recommendations from the previous meeting.	Enclosed
13.	Date of next meeting To note the date of the next meeting will be 28 February 2023.	

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 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>

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.

ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
24 November 2022 at 6.00pm held at Walsall Council House, Lichfield Street,
Walsall, WS1 1TW.

Committee Members	Councillor M. Follows (Chair) Councillor P. Bott Councillor C. Creaney Councillor A. Garcha Councillor P. Kaur Councillor R. Larden Councillor A. Nazir Councillor J. Whitehouse Councillor K. Sears Councillor F. Mazhar	
Portfolio Holders	Councillor M. Bird Councillor A. Andrew Councillor G. Perry	Leader of the Council Deputy Leader and Regeneration Deputy Leader and Resilient Communities
Officers Present:	Simon Neilson Paul Gordon Fraz Hussain Sian Lloyd	Executive Director, Economy, Environment and Communities Director, Resilient Communities Lead Accountant, Economy, Environment and Communities Democratic Services Officer
Invited Attendees:	Chief Superintendent Phil Dolby	West Midlands Police

30/22 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Allen, I Hussain and Worrall.

31/22 Substitution

Councillor Mazhar substituted for Councillor Worrall and Councillor Sears substituted for Councillor Allen.

32/22 Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

There were no declarations of interest or party whip.

33/22 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)

There were no items to consider in private session.

34/22 Minutes of the previous meeting

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2022, copies having previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.

35/22 Off-road Bikes

The Portfolio Holder for Resilient Communities advised that this item had been brought to the Committee to demonstrate the seriousness of tackling the issue of off-road biking which 85% of respondents to a survey advised they had experienced across the borough, with 101 locations of activity being identified, some of which were particularly troubled. He highlighted that there were two concerns in relation to off-road bikes; firstly their use on green and open spaces across the borough and secondly their use on roads which may be linked to other criminal activity.

The Director of Resilient Communities underlined the gravity of the problem in Walsall and emphasised efforts to make it more difficult for bikers to access green and open spaces in problem areas. He also showed footage obtained from a trial using drone technology to track and record instances of off-road bike usages. He confirmed that the drones do have the ability to zoom in on the faces and registrations of bike users but as of yet this had not been done as the powers to do so had not been sought. It was acknowledged that the users of these bikes had personal responsibility but demonstrated a disregard for the law and safety of operation and the Director of Resilient Communities suggested that it would be prudent to consider a range of different ways to combat the issue.

Chief Superintendent Dolby added that this activity was completely illegal and completely unacceptable however the Police were duty bound to ensure that any tactical response doesn't lead to injuries either for police officers or those riding off-road bikes. He emphasised that West Midlands Police do not use tactical contact in pursuits and the fact that those riding the bikes often have no formal training on how to ride meant pursuing them would bring its own dangers. The Chief Superintendent stated that the use of stingers was also more difficult with two-wheeled vehicles. He advised that West Midlands Police did have access to drones but this was shared across the region so could not be immediately responsive to incidents reported.

Following discussions the Committee recommended that the prospect of acquiring a drone or drone service for community protection be explored by Cabinet in relation to the cost of purchase and maintenance of a drone, any relevant training and licenses for an operative and partnership working with the Police. Chief Superintendent Dolby advised that drones were subject to specific aviation legislation and specific permissions would be required for their use to investigate alleged crimes but that West Midlands Police would be able and happy to assist in the process of investigating this possibility. A Member of the Committee requested that posters containing the relevant contact information be placed on notice boards in parks so residents could report any instances to the correct people.

Resolved:

That:

- 1. The Committee notes the presentation and its contents;**
- 2. The Committee recommends Cabinet to investigate the acquisition of a drone or drone service for community protection to use in conjunction with West Midlands Police.**

36/22 Corporate Financial Performance – Quarter 2 (August) Financial Monitoring Position for 2022/23

The Lead Accountant for Economy, Environment and Communities presented to the Committee a report which gave specific details of revenue and capital forecast for the financial year-end 2022/23 for the services that fall under the remit of the committee. It was noted that the current net revenue forecast position, after the net use of reserves was an £0.432m underspend and the current net capital position was a proposed £30.699m carry forward. The Lead Accountant also advised the Committee of the allocated reserves for Economy and Environment and the potential risks which totalled £0.168m. He highlighted that if the risks became certainties, they would need to be included in the forecast position as overspends unless alternative action could be identified to mitigate these costs.

Resolved:

That the Committee notes the revenue and capital forecast for the financial year-end 2022/23 for the services that fall under the remit of the committee.

37/22 Town Centre Delivery

The Executive Director for Economy, Environment and Communities provided the Committee with a report and presentation detailing the latest works in relation to town centre delivery following the 2019 Town Centre Masterplan which had identified a number of objectives to enhance the lived experience, built environment and economic performance of the town centre including topics such as housing, jobs and transport improvements. It was noted that there had been a number of changes that had taken place since 2019, not least the effect of the pandemic on footfall which was still reduced by 10% in comparison to pre-covid levels.

The Committee were informed of specific interventions that were made use of during the pandemic to support the recovery of the high street and public health and safety through the Welcome Back Fund and Accelerated Towns Fund. The Executive Director explained that following this key regeneration projects such as the Connected Gateway and Town Deal were prioritised to drive economic regeneration and deliver urban regeneration, skills and enterprise infrastructure and connectivity.

Following questions from the Committee the Executive Director advised that the council had received over 2000 responses to the town centre survey and was committed to ensuring that residents' feedback was taken on board as part of the process. The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration also highlighted that all work on the Town Deal went through the Town Deal Board which also broke down further into

regional groups. He noted that the scheme itself was ambitious with tight timescales so change would start to be seen quite quickly.

Resolved:

That the Committee notes the report and its contents.

38/22 Areas of focus – 2022/23

The Chair of the Committee noted that a date had not yet been scheduled for the report on the Waste Strategy and new HWRC and transfer station and requested that this was considered this municipal year.

Resolved:

That the areas of focus 2022/23 and forward plans be noted.

39/22 Recommendation Tracker

The Democratic Services Officer updated the Committee on the recommendations from previous meetings of the Committee. She advised that all actions had been completed as requested.

Resolved:

That the progress on recommendations from the previous meeting be noted.

40/22 Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting would take place on 17 January 2023.

There being no further business, the meeting terminated 7.21pm.

Signed:

Date:

2 FEBRUARY 2023

Willenhall, Darlaston and Aldridge Railway Stations

Ward(s): _Bentley & Darlaston N, Darlaston S, Willenhall N, Willenhall S, Pleck

Portfolios: Regeneration

1. Aim

This report is to provides the Scrutiny Committee with:

- A brief overview of the railway projects planned in Walsall (Willenhall, Darlaston and Aldridge)
- A summary of the business case and benefits for these projects
- An update on progress and activities to date

2. Recommendations

The committee is requested to:

- **note** of the contents of the Report
- **provide feedback** on options around future engagement activities with local communities

3. Willenhall and Darlaston Stations

3.1 Project Overview

The two stations at Willenhall and Darlaston were closed in 1965 as part of the Beeching cuts that looked to rationalise the rail network. Growth in the wider areas around these stations mean that there is a strong case to deliver new stations in these locations, and this was identified as a priority by the West Midlands Combined Authority and the Mayor of the West Midlands.

These stations sat on the line between Wolverhampton and Walsall which is currently mainly used for freight. The previous station sites have been redeveloped over the past sixty years, and therefore reintroducing services to these communities requires the construction of new stations to modern standards.

The project to re-open these stations (known as 'Rail Package 1') is being taken forward through the West Midlands Rail Programme, a partnership that includes Network Rail as infrastructure owner, and West Midlands Trains as the rail operator.

3.2 Project Scope

Willenhall and Darlaston Station will each have two platforms suitable for 4-car trains. The stations will also have:

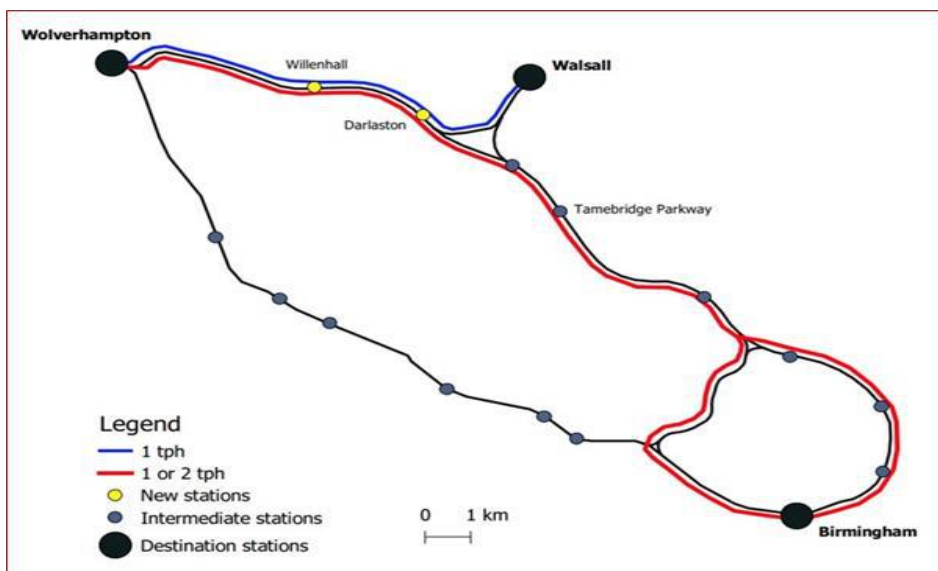
- pedestrian footbridges, stairs and lifts to provide access for passengers with mobility needs
- ticket machines and information systems
- passenger help points on each platform
- secure bike parking
- car parks, accommodating c. 35 cars at Willenhall and c. 300 cars at Darlaston
- flood remediation meadows on previously brownfield land
- a pick-up and drop-off area

No station buildings will be delivered as part of these projects, although there will be space left to futureproof for buildings in future if required.

The two stations are proposed at Willenhall and Darlaston to be served with one hourly service between Wolverhampton and Walsall, delivered by a new shuttle, and one hourly service between Wolverhampton and Birmingham New Street (see figure 1), delivered by diverting the existing Birmingham to Crewe service. This service is already running on the diverted route in anticipation of the stations opening.

The final details of the train service are subject to confirmation as part of on-going timetable development work and wider industry business planning and funding processes.

Figure 1.



3.3 Benefits

We have undertaken analysis of the case for the schemes, including consideration of the impact of COVID-19, and this demonstrates that the investment remains very high value for money, in addition to the wider strategic benefits.

It is estimated that 29,500 residents live within 1.2km of the stations, with car parking at Darlaston providing a wider catchment for the park and ride market. These stations will deliver transformative improvements in connectivity for local communities, dramatically reducing journey times by public transport to key centres of employment, education and leisure.

The estimated journey times to Birmingham New Street compared with existing public transport journey times are:

- 25 minutes from Willenhall, saving 46 minutes
- 22 minutes from Darlaston, saving 53 minutes

The estimated journey times to Wolverhampton are:

- 8 minutes from Willenhall, saving 10 minutes
- 11 minutes from Darlaston, saving 17 minutes

The estimated journey times to Walsall are:

- 8 minutes from Willenhall, saving 10 minutes
- 14 minutes from Darlaston, saving 9 minutes

The impact of these journey time benefits will be further magnified through improved access to HS2 when Curzon Street Station opens.

By providing a viable alternative to travel by road, these stations will also deliver journey time and environmental benefits through reducing congestion on the highway network. This means that benefits will be enjoyed by travellers who do not use the rail network.

As well as the benefits delivered by the scheme on completion, the contractors for the scheme have also made significant social value commitments, including provision of employment and training opportunities for local residents. The scheme is anticipated to generate 120 jobs during construction, aside from the wider economic benefits.

The case for the scheme was underlined during the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) process discussed below. The public interest case for the scheme was a fundamental element of the case for the WMCA CPO, and the planning inspector identified the strong public interest case for these schemes to proceed in his determination.

3.4 Progress to date & risks

Walsall Council granted planning permission with conditions in October 2020, enabling us to move forward with further approvals. WMCA approved the Full Business Case for the project in January 2021, with DfT funding approved in March 2021.

The challenges outlined below meant that further work was required before a contract could be let to our principal contractor, Buckingham Group. To mitigate this impact, we agreed a mechanism to allow for some initial work to take place before the full award. The contracts were signed in Spring 2022, and since then a range of approvals and physical works have taken place, including:

- Diversion of the Birmingham – Crewe West Midlands Trains service to follow the proposed route
- Compound site set up and de-vegetation at Darlaston
- Planning permission (with conditions) granted
- Substantial de-vegetation and Japanese Knotweed Removal in Willenhall
- Survey works including invasive mining surveys/ground investigation works at both sites, required to inform the next stage of designs
- Demolition of buildings at Darlaston

Land

In order to construct the stations, complex and lengthy land negotiations have been required at both Willenhall and Darlaston. We seek to acquire all land through negotiated agreement, and have been successful in doing so in the vast majority of cases, despite challenges including the need for one business owner to secure additional EU permits which delayed completion of a key deal.

Nevertheless, as previously briefed, the project needed to pursue a CPO to secure all the land required. Whilst this introduced some delay, it was essential to ensure that we secured good value for money for the public purse. WMCA agreed to pursue a CPO in November 2021, and we believe this to be the first time a Combined Authority has used its powers in this way. Following an inquiry in July 2022, the CPO was confirmed in September 2022. The rapid confirmation of the CPO underlines the strong case for these schemes.

Further land deals are under negotiation and are dependent on managing the interface between station development and the landowner's development aspirations.

As we develop the designs further, there remains a risk that further land is required. We are mitigating this risk by engaging actively with landowners and Network Rail and assessing a range of design options.

Ground conditions

Ground conditions remain a significant risk to the project. This area of the Black Country was historically highly industrialised with activities including coal mining

and manufacturing. This means ground conditions are challenging because of contamination from industry, and the need to remediate mine workings to address the risk of subsidence and collapse. Although complex this is critical to ensure that the stations can operate safely in the long term.

The main activity required is grouting, a process in which historic mine workings are filled with material to stabilise the ground. The scope had originally been contained to the areas under the new platforms, however re-assessment by Network Rail has led to a significant increase in scope and risk. Now it has been established that we need to grout under the tracks as well as the platforms, and treat deeper mine seams.

The under-track grouting in particular poses further risk as we anticipate it cannot be undertaken during train operations. Currently we are working with Network Rail on a plan for an extended blockade in Spring 2023 which may allow for some of this work to be undertaken.

We are continuing to work on this challenge with our designers and Network Rail to reach a solution which offers the right balance of intervention and benefit.

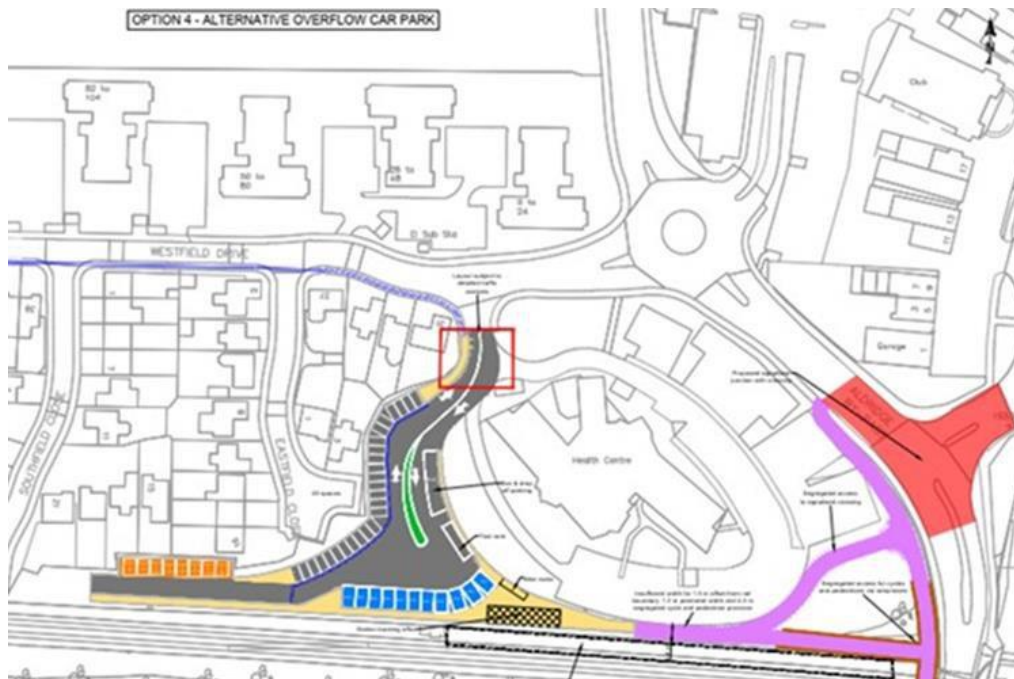
3.5 Next Steps

We have committed previously to target opening dates of early-2024 for Willenhall Station and summer 2024 for Darlaston Station. Work is progressing on these projects with our principal contractors preparing for major works this spring. Like on all projects we are encountering emerging risks and are in the process of working through these.

3.6 Aldridge

The Aldridge project is at a much earlier stage of development than the Package 1 scheme, with a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) currently being revised for approval.

This project will see a new station delivered on the site of the historic Aldridge Station, which was again closed in the 1960s. The proposed scope is for a single platform station with parking and new pedestrian connections into the nearby town centre. Reopening rail services would deliver accessibility improvements for residents who are currently forced to rely on the road network to access key local and regional centres.



Indicative Aldridge Station layout

The line on which Aldridge Station would be located, the Sutton Park Line, is currently not electrified and we have been working with Network Rail to establish how this links with the proposed Aldridge Station project. At the moment any electrification plans would not be complete within the same timescales as the station. We are therefore developing plans to futureproof the station for future electrification.

This also has an impact on the proposed train service. Prior to electrification it is proposed that Aldridge be served by a shuttle to Walsall. This would provide a simple cross-platform interchange at Walsall to allow connections to Birmingham New Street. Following the electrification of the Sutton Park Line, services could run directly between Aldridge and Birmingham New Street.

£30m has been allotted to Aldridge from the DfT City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement. We have prepared a business case to enable us to draw down the first tranche of this funding from DfT to allow the next stage of design to start and we hope to receive approval by Spring.

We aim to complete the project within the lifecycle of the current funding, by March 2027. We are working with DfT and Network Rail to identify lessons learned and opportunities to accelerate project delivery.

4. Financial information

The current estimate for Willenhall and Darlaston Stations is £55.84m.

This is fully funded on the basis set out below:

Funding Source	Rail Package 1 £m
WMCA Investment Programme	16
Walsall MBC	0.2
DfT: Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline	39.7
GRAND TOTAL	55.84

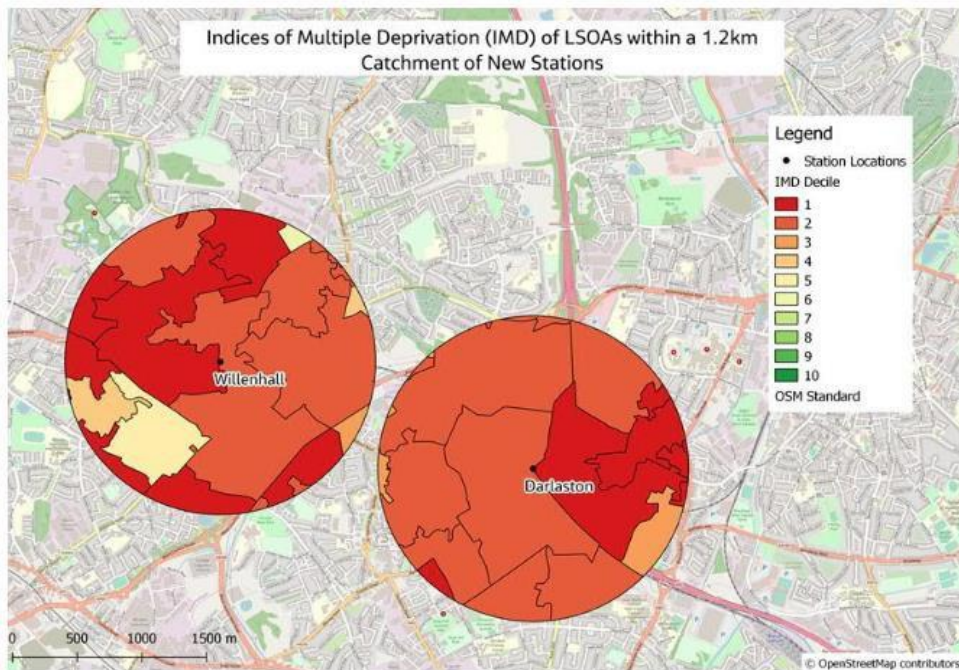
A detailed estimate for Aldridge will be established as part of the next phase of work. However we expect this project to be brought in within the £30m funding envelope identified in CRSTS.

5. Reducing Inequalities

Delivery of the stations at Willenhall and Darlaston delivers strong public benefits to some of the West Midlands' most deprived communities. By delivering a step-change in transport connectivity both in terms of accessibility and connectivity, the scheme will transform people's opportunities to access work, education and leisure, as well as widening about market access for local employers.

The map below shows the high levels of deprivation currently experienced in the areas surrounding the stations. Currently these communities have poor transport connectivity to the West Midlands' major urban centres.

One of West Midlands Combined Authority's priorities is to support inclusive growth, ensuring that economic growth benefits all citizens across the region. By ensuring that the stations we deliver will be accessible to all travellers, meeting stringent requirements for access by people with reduced mobility, the provision of the two new stations will support WMCA's objectives for inclusive growth by enabling more people to travel.



6. Decide

The report is presented primarily for information and noting with no decisions at this juncture.

7. Respond

WMRE are excited by the benefits that these new stations will delivery. WMRE and Walsall Council officers welcome feedback from the Scrutiny Committee about how best to engage with local communities as we take the projects forward.

Background papers

None.

Author

Hayley Bradbury & Liam Brooker
West Midlands Rail Programme

APPENDIX 1: Artist Impressions



Willenhall station



Darlaston station

**Economy and Environment
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

02 FEBRUARY 2023

**Corporate Financial Performance 2022/23 – 7-month position ended
31 October 2022**

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Cllr A Andrew – Deputy Leader and Regeneration
Cllr G Perry – Deputy Leader and Resilient Communities
Cllr K Murphy – Clean and Green

1. Aim

1.1 To inform the Committee of the updated forecast financial position for 2022/23 based on the position to October 2022, as reported to Cabinet on 14 December 2022, to allow the scrutiny of the financial performance of the council, and specifically for the services within the committee's remit.

2. Recommendations:

The Committee are requested to:

2.1 Note the forecast 2022/23 year-end financial position for the council as a whole – a predicted net revenue overspend of £11.33m (an increase of £5.21m since last reported to Cabinet in October 2022), and capital break even position after re-phasing of £92.64m into 2023/24. The section 151 Officer requested that all budgets be reviewed and that services identify mitigating actions to address the revenue position. Following this review, £11.28m of mitigating actions have been identified to address this, resulting in a marginal revenue forecast overspend of £0.05m. Any on-going pressures or undelivered savings not addressed in year will need to be considered as part of the 2023/24 budget process, putting pressure on that process. Officers are confident at this stage, based on known assumptions, that actions being taken will address this and outturn on budget.

2.2 Note and comment on the forecast 2022/23 year-end financial position for services within the remit of this committee – a predicted net revenue under spend of (£1.133m) and net capital break even position after re-phasing of £32.658m into 2023/24, subject to ongoing review.

3. Report detail - Know

3.1 This report summarises the forecast revenue and capital financial position for 2022/23, based on the position to October 2022, for services within the remit of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as reported to Cabinet on 14 December 2022. The full Cabinet report can be accessed by the following link:

Corporate Financial Performance 2022/23 - Cabinet 14 December 2022

3.2 The Quarter 2 financial position was last reported to this Committee on 24 November 2022, with the next Quarter 3 position planned to be circulated to scrutiny members following the report to Cabinet in February 2023. Given the worsening financial position reported to Cabinet on 14 December 2022 based on the October forecast (an increase of £5.21m since last reported to Cabinet in October 2022) and the mitigation to ensure we can outturn within budget by the year end, then it was felt appropriate for each scrutiny to receive this update, along with the impact on services within the remit of their committees.

3.3 The forecast revenue outturn for 2022/23 for services within the remit of this committee as at the end of October 2022, is a net underspend of (£1.133m) against budget, net of the use of earmarked reserves. This represents an increase of (£0.701m) since the position reported to this Committee on 24 November 2022. Further details are shown in **Appendix 1**.

3.4 The forecast capital outturn for 2022/23 for services within the remit of this committee as at the end of October 2022, is expected to be break even after rephrasing of £32.658m into 2023/24. Further details of schemes are shown in **Appendix 2**.

Resource and legal considerations:

3.5 This report represents the forecast revenue and capital outturn as reported to Cabinet on 14 December 2022.

Reducing inequalities:

3.6 Services consider equality issues in setting budgets and delivering services. Irrespective of budgetary pressures the council must fulfil its equal opportunities obligations.

4. Decide

4.1 This Committee is asked to note and comment on the forecast revenue and capital forecast for 2022/23 and consider the recommendations as set out.

5. Respond

5.1 This report is for noting and comment by the Committee as above.

6. Review

6.1 This report is for noting and comment by the Committee as above.

Background papers:

- Various financial working papers.
- Corporate Financial Performance 2022/23, as reported to Cabinet on 14 December 2022.

Contact Officers:

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Simon Neilson
Executive Director, Economy, Environment and Communities

Forecast Revenue position 2022/23
Services within the remit of the Economy and Environment Overview
and Scrutiny Committee

Revenue Forecast

The forecast revenue outturn for 2022/23 for the services under the remit of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee is an under spend of (£1.133m), net of the use of earmarked reserves of £6.332m, as shown in **Table 1**. The forecast revenue outturn shown is based on actual information from the financial system as at the end of October 2022, and discussions with managers regarding year end forecast and achievement of approved savings.

The August forecast position reported to this Committee on 24 November 2022 was an underspend of (£0.432m) net of the use of reserves, therefore a net increase of (£0.701m) underspend over the 2 months.

Table 1: Forecast revenue analysis 2022/23 by Service

Service	Annual Budget	Year End Forecast	Net Use of Reserves	Action Plan	Draft Outturn after use of and transfer to Earmarked Reserves & Action plan	Variance to Budget
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Cultural Service	1.198	1.213	(0.145)	(0.049)	1.019	(0.179)
Planning Services & Building Control	0.798	1.475	(0.486)	(0.019)	0.970	0.172
Regeneration & Development	0.516	0.949	(0.433)	(0.158)	0.358	(0.158)
Programme Management	0.136	0.471	(0.336)	0.000	0.136	0.000
Clean & Green Services	19.316	18.612	(0.255)	(0.028)	18.329	(0.987)
Leisure & Bereavement	(0.645)	(0.691)	(0.060)	(0.011)	(0.762)	(0.117)
Highways & Transportation	9.335	14.084	(4.441)	(0.139)	9.504	0.169
Emergency Planning	0.210	0.169	(0.001)	(0.003)	0.165	(0.045)
Library Services	2.350	2.226	(0.028)	0.000	2.198	(0.152)
Regulatory Services	1.120	1.504	(0.146)	(0.097)	1.261	0.141
EE Management	0.437	0.461	(0.001)	0.000	0.460	0.023
Total Services within remit of Committee	34.771	40.473	(6.332)	(0.504)	33.638	(1.133)

Total earmarked reserves of £30.679m are available for use in 2022/23 (where approval has been given by Cabinet for additional funds for specific services). Within the reported outturn position a total of £6.332m of earmarked reserves are forecast to be used.

The main variances are summarised in **Table 2** below.

Table 2 – Reasons for revenue outturn variance		
Service	Variance £m	Explanation of Year End Outturn
Cultural Service	(0.179)	(£130k) one off staffing underspends due to vacant posts and (£49k) one off action plan.
Planning Services & Building Control	0.172	£191k under recovery of planning applications income and overspend on agency staff and fixed term staff to support demand and (£19k) one off action plan.
Regeneration & Development	(0.158)	(£158k) one off action plan.
Clean & Green Services	(0.987)	(£959k) reduced waste disposals costs partly offset by vehicle fuel overspend (due to cost of living) and (£28k) one off action plan.
Leisure & Bereavement	(0.117)	(£106k) underspend on staffing due to vacant posts one off and casuals and over recovery of bereavement income and (£11k) one off action plan.
Highways & Transportation	0.169	£308k overspend due to contractual inflation and traffic lights electricity costs due to cost of living and (£139k) one off action plan.
Emergency Planning	(0.045)	(£42k) staff underspend due to delay in recruitment and (£3k) one off action plan.
Library Services	(0.152)	(£152k) one off staffing underspends due to vacant posts.
Regulatory Services	0.141	£238k overspend on legal fees for unauthorised Encampments and under recovery of Kingdom enforcement income and (£97k) one off action plan.
EE Management	0.023	Overspend on staffing.
Total Services within remit of this Committee	(1.133)	

Action Plan

Where overspends are predicted within the Directorate, managers are required to identify remedial action that can be made within the service, and to report this as part of an action plan. Work to identify mitigating actions is in progress. It is expected that the majority of the forecast overspends within services will be mitigated in year through efficiencies in the directorate as a whole.

In view of the current overall corporate position, the section 151 Officer requested that all budgets be reviewed and that services identify mitigating actions to address the revenue position.

The resulting one-off action plan of £0.504m for services within the remit of this Committee includes the following to assist in reducing the in-year pressures and to help with the overall financial position of the council:

- £49k Art Council grant reserve.
- £19k Building control reserve.
- £158k Economic growth programme reserve.
- £97k Resilient Communities reserve.

- £39k Clean and Green and Leisure release of underspends on supplies and services.
- £139k Release of underspends & savings from delay in appointing to vacant posts and additional use of reserves.
- £3k Release underspends in service.

Risk

Any risks identified in year will need to be considered and managed from existing resources to ensure they do not adversely affect the councils forecast outturn position.

For the services under the remit of this committee, there are a number of risks totalling £0.304m which have not been included within the above forecast. At this stage the risks are not certainties and as such are not included in the monitoring position. High risks of £0.204m are included in the corporate monitoring report to CMT. If the risks become certainties, they will need to be included in the forecast position as overspends unless alternative action can be identified to mitigate these costs. A summary of the risk assessment is included in Table 3 below.

Risk	Value £k	Ongoing £k	One Off £k	Actions to manage risk
High	204	0	204	Economy and Environment continue to identify possible in year mitigations and review budgets as part of Council's MTFO plan.
Medium	120	0	120	
Low	(20)	0	(20)	
Total	304	0	304	

The main high risk (Red risk) that could negatively impact the current forecast position should it occur is detailed further in Table 4 below.

Service	Reason / explanation of risk	£k
Highways & Transportation	Gully thefts and safety barriers	204
Total High Risks		204

Service Transformation Plan Benefits

Included within the budget for 2022/23 for services within the remit of this Committee are £1.99m of approved savings. **Table 5** gives an update on progress towards implementing these benefits:

Table 5: Delivery of 2022/23 approved savings – services within the remit of this Committee

Saving	Total savings £m	Delivered (Blue) £m	To be delivered by 31/03/23 (Green) £m	Not fully guaranteed (Amber) £m	At High risk of non delivery (Red) £m
OP66 - reset of the Street Cleansing	(0.05)	(0.05)	0.00	0.00	0.00
OP78 - Cost effective procurement of new fitness equipment	(0.04)	0.00	(0.04)	0.00	0.00
OP79 - Bloxwich Active Living Centre landing development	(0.08)	0.00	(0.08)	0.00	0.00
OP103 - Review of existing fees and charges within Place & Environment	(0.03)	0.00	(0.03)	0.00	0.00
P9 - Charge developers for travel plans– alternate savings to be identified	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
OP62/65 - Clean, Green & Leisure restructure and delivery model review	(0.60)	(0.14)	0.00	0.00	(0.46)
OP109/113 PART - 2% increase in bereavement fees and charges.	(0.06)	0.00	(0.06)	0.00	0.00
NEW - Premium bulky waste collection service	(0.02)		0.00	0.00	(0.02)
NEW - Capitalisation of staff working on waste contracts	(0.09)	(0.09)	0.00	0.00	0.00
NEW - Reallocation of highways and transport capital grant to capitalise street furniture and car park resurfacing costs	(0.20)	(0.20)	0.00	0.00	0.00
ALT6 - Capitalisation of wheeled bin stock.	(0.17)	(0.17)	0.00	0.00	0.00
NEW - Use of unallocated bus lane and parking income reserve.	(0.06)	(0.06)	0.00	0.00	0.00
NEW - Holding of posts - Resilience Unit	(0.02)	(0.02)	0.00	0.00	0.00
NEW - Additional vacancy management to freeze non essential post in restructure (OP62 & OP65) and build in 3 month recruitment lag to posts outside restructure.	(0.02)	0.00	(0.02)	0.00	0.00
NEW - Further efficiencies relating to Customer Access Management	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
NEW - Bookable Gyms	(0.03)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.03)
NEW - One off use of Section 38 income	(0.03)	(0.03)	0.00	0.00	0.00
NEW - Street lighting savings	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
NEW - Offer residential gardening service	(0.03)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.03)
OP21 - Capitalisation of posts - maximise external funding	(0.03)	0.00	(0.03)	0.00	0.00
OP74 - Heritage and culture / Arts and events - increase fees and charges	(0.01)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.01)
OP113 - Regeneration & Economy holding of vacancies and one off efficiencies	(0.15)	0.00	(0.15)	0.00	0.00
OP109 - Regeneration & Economy holding of vacancies and one off efficiencies	(0.11)	0.00	(0.11)	0.00	0.00
OP113 - Efficiencies relating to Customer Access Management - Resilient Communities	(0.08)	0.00	(0.08)	0.00	0.00
OP103/104 - Reduction in operational costs within resilient communities	(0.02)	0.00	(0.02)	0.00	0.00
NEW - Review of Libraries management	(0.06)	0.00	(0.01)	0.00	(0.05)
Total approved savings for services within remit of Committee	(1.99)	(0.76)	(0.63)	(0.00)	(0.60)

Each benefit is “BRAG” categorised as follows:

- Blue (delivered);
- Green (on track to be delivered with no issues at year end of 2022/23);
- Amber (not guaranteed at this stage but no major issues expected, some management action needed to ensure delivery) or,
- Red - (at high risk of not being achieved either in part or in full and therefore either alternative actions are required or a plan to ensure delivery is put back on track);

A Walsall proud resource plan has been agreed to provide additional support towards delivery.

Forecast Capital position 2022/23
Services within the remit of the Economy and Environment Overview
and Scrutiny Committee

Capital Summary

The total capital programme budget for the services under the remit of the committee is £78.746m with the current forecast position projected to £46.088m for Period 7 (October) as detailed in Table 6 below. The proposed £32.658m carry forward is split across a number of service areas with the largest carry forward being £9.554m for Middlemore Lane HWRC, which is currently going through the tendering process with construction due to commence in July 2023.

Table 6 – Capital Outturn 2022/23 – Services within the remit of this Committee						
Service	Approved Budget £m	Actual year to date £m	Forecast Outturn £m	Year End Variance £m	Proposed Carry Forward to 2023/24 £m	Variance Over / (Under) £m
Council Funded						
Clean and Green Services	1.265	0.105	0.745	(0.520)	(0.520)	0.000
Leisure, Culture & Operations	0.647	0.344	0.647	0.000	0.000	0.000
Engineering & Transportation	12.479	1.820	7.505	(4.974)	(4.974)	0.000
Regeneration & Development	11.509	1.373	4.452	(7.057)	(7.057)	0.000
Libraries	0.228	0.033	0.228	0.000	0.000	0.000
Programme Management	2.024	0.000	0.000	(2.024)	(2.024)	0.000
Total Council Funded	28.152	3.675	13.577	(14.575)	(14.575)	0.000
Prudential Borrowing						
Clean and Green	16.079	4.131	6.404	(9.675)	(9.675)	0.000
Total Prudential Borrowing	16.079	4.131	6.404	(9.675)	(9.675)	0.000
Externally Funded						
Clean and Green Services	0.473	0.064	0.412	(0.061)	(0.061)	0.000
Leisure, Culture & Operations	2.601	0.591	2.601	0.000	0.000	0.000
Engineering & Transportation	9.999	2.710	6.683	(3.316)	(3.316)	0.000
Regeneration & Development	10.800	6.751	9.379	(1.421)	(1.421)	0.000
Programme Management	10.642	0.438	7.032	(3.610)	(3.610)	0.000
Total External Funded	34.515	10.554	26.107	(8.408)	(8.408)	0.000
Total Capital – Services within the remit of this Committee	78.746	18.360	46.088	(32.658)	(32.658)	0.000

A list of schemes within the remit of this committee is shown in Table 7.

Table 7 – List of Schemes	Approved Budget £m	Actual year to date £m	Forecast Outturn £m	Year End Variance £m	Proposed Carry Forward to 2023/24 £m	Variance Over / (Under) £m
<u>Council Funded Schemes</u>						
Clean And Green Services Capital						
Open Water	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.000
St Peter Church Repairs To Surrounding Wall	0.033	0.000	0.033	0.000	0.000	0.000
Willenhall Memorial Park	0.003	0.000	0.003	0.000	0.000	0.000
Workshop Breakdown Vehicle	0.067	0.065	0.067	0.000	0.000	0.000
Allotment Boundary Improvement Works	0.260	0.000	0.130	(0.130)	(0.130)	0.000
Walsall Arboretum Extension	0.190	0.000	0.190	0.000	0.000	0.000
Barr Beacon Infrastructure Works	0.040	0.000	0.040	0.000	0.000	0.000
Capitalisation Wheeled Bin Stock	0.180	0.038	0.180	0.000	0.000	0.000
Children's Play Equipment	0.490	0.000	0.100	(0.390)	(0.390)	0.000
Total Clean and Green Services	1.265	0.105	0.745	(0.520)	(0.520)	0.000
Leisure Culture & Operations Capital						
Headstone Safety In Cemeteries	0.020	0.020	0.020	0.000	0.000	0.000
Replacement Cemeteries Administration System	0.075	0.000	0.075	0.000	0.000	0.000
Streetly Cemetery Extension	0.405	0.227	0.405	0.000	0.000	0.000
North Walsall Cemetery Flooding	0.105	0.097	0.105	0.000	0.000	0.000
Darlaston Pool Energy Efficiency	0.042	0.000	0.042	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total Leisure, Culture & Operations	0.647	0.344	0.647	0.000	0.000	0.000
Engineering & Transportation Capital						
Community Dropped Crossings	0.020	0.000	0.020	0.000	0.000	0.000
District Town Centre's Public Realm Improvements	0.000	0.006	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Highways Maintenance	2.710	0.888	2.710	0.000	0.000	0.000
Street Furniture	0.197	0.081	0.197	0.000	0.000	0.000
Hatherton Road Car Park	0.211	0.000	0.000	(0.211)	(0.211)	0.000

Promotion Of Community Health & Safety	0.131	(0.028)	0.065	(0.066)	(0.066)	0.000
Replacement Of Obsolete Traffic Signal Control Equipment	0.200	0.013	0.200	0.000	0.000	0.000
Hatherton Road MSCP Structural Maintenance	0.200	0.012	0.150	(0.050)	(0.050)	0.000
Darlaston Strategic Development Area (DSDA)	0.010	0.000	0.000	(0.010)	(0.010)	0.000
M6 Junction 10 Resilience Packages (NPIF)	0.362	0.000	0.362	0.000	0.000	0.000
Transit Site	0.063	0.050	0.063	0.000	0.000	0.000
Lighting Invest To Save	6.975	0.819	3.738	(3.237)	(3.237)	0.000
Yorks Bridge	0.750	0.000	0.000	(0.750)	(0.750)	0.000
Replacement Of Obsolete Analogue Weather Stations	0.000	(0.021)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
M6 Junction 10 Widening Of Bridges	0.650	0.000	0.000	(0.650)	(0.650)	0.000
Total Engineering & Transportation	12.479	1.820	7.505	(4.974)	(4.974)	0.000
Regeneration & Development Capital						
New Homes Bonus	0.077	0.000	0.000	(0.077)	(0.077)	0.000
Regenerating Walsall	0.223	0.000	0.000	(0.223)	(0.223)	0.000
Future High Street Fund	1.416	0.000	0.000	(1.416)	(1.416)	0.000
Enterprise Zones	6.557	1.373	3.452	(3.105)	(3.105)	0.000
Willenhall Masterplan	3.236	0.000	1.000	(2.236)	(2.236)	0.000
Total Regeneration & Development	11.509	1.373	4.452	(7.057)	(7.057)	0.000
Libraries						
Single Library Management System	0.040	0.033	0.040	0.000	0.000	0.000
Darlaston Library Integration	0.061	0.000	0.061	0.000	0.000	0.000
Replacement PC's	0.034	0.000	0.034	0.000	0.000	0.000
RFID Self-Issue	0.093	0.000	0.093	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total Libraries	0.228	0.033	0.228	0.000	0.000	0.000
Programme Management						
Bloxwich Town Deal	1.025	0.000	0.000	(1.025)	(1.025)	0.000
Walsall Town deal	0.999	0.000	0.000	(0.999)	(0.999)	0.000
Total Programme Management	2.024	0.000	0.000	(2.024)	(2.024)	0.000
Total Council Funded Schemes	28.152	3.675	13.577	(14.575)	(14.575)	0.00

Externally Funded schemes						
Clean And Green Services Capital						
Fibbersley Lnr-Enovert	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000
Black Country Blue Network-ERDF	0.054	0.001	0.054	0.000	0.000	0.000
Black Country Blue Network-S106	0.021	0.001	0.021	0.000	0.000	0.000
Barr Beacon Infrastructure Works	0.061	0.000	0.000	(0.061)	(0.061)	0.000
Urban Tree Challenge Fund	0.111	0.062	0.111	0.000	0.000	0.000
Nature Recovery Canal And River Trust	0.211	0.000	0.211	0.000	0.000	0.000
Nature Recovery Canal And River Trust	0.014	0.000	0.014	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total Clean and Green Services	0.473	0.064	0.412	(0.061)	(0.061)	0.000
Leisure Culture & Operations Capital						
Darlaston Pool Energy Efficiency	2.601	0.591	2.601	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total Leisure, Culture & Operations	2.601	0.591	2.601	0.000	0.000	0.000
Engineering & Transportation Capital						
Additional Highway Maintenance Pothole Funding	1.598	1.339	1.598	0.000	0.000	0.000
LTP Including Bridge Strengthening 2010/11	0.393	0.000	0.393	0.000	0.000	0.000
Capital Block Dft Fund	1.732	0.624	1.732	0.000	0.000	0.000
M6 Junction 10 Highway Improvements	2.233	0.094	0.200	(2.033)	(2.033)	0.000
Zebra Crossing	0.005	0.000	0.005	0.000	0.000	0.000
West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan (Stp) 'Movement For Growth'	2.896	0.553	1.744	(1.152)	(1.152)	0.000
Active Travel (Tranche 2)	0.006	0.000	0.006	0.000	0.000	0.000
Flood Alleviation - Bloxwich Road	0.090	0.000	0.090	0.000	0.000	0.000
Ncn5 Veolia Trust	0.003	0.004	0.003	0.000	0.000	0.000
Better Streets - Ncn5 Cycle Route Improvement	0.004	0.000	0.004	0.000	0.000	0.000
Better Street - Hawes Rd Improvement	0.005	0.000	0.005	0.000	0.000	0.000
Electric Vehicle Charging Point Installation	0.254	0.000	0.254	0.000	0.000	0.000
Wolverhampton Street S106	0.073	0.000	0.073	0.000	0.000	0.000

NCN5 Canal & River Trust	0.007	0.000	0.007	0.000	0.000	0.000
Yorks Bridge	0.700	0.096	0.569	(0.131)	(0.131)	0.000
Total Engineering & Transportation	9.999	2.710	6.683	(3.316)	(3.316)	0.000
Regeneration & Development Capital						
Future High Street Fund	3.388	0.265	1.967	(1.421)	(1.421)	0.000
Phoenix 10 Eec Costs	0.000	4.920	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Phoenix 10 Homes England	7.412	1.566	7.412	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total Regeneration & Development	10.800	6.751	9.379	(1.421)	(1.421)	0.000
Programme Management						
Bloxwich Town Deal	1.262	0.230	1.092	(0.170)	(0.170)	0.000
Walsall Town Deal	9.380	0.208	5.940	(3.440)	(3.440)	0.000
Total Programme Management	10.642	0.438	7.032	(3.610)	(3.610)	0.000
Total External Funded Schemes	34.515	10.554	26.107	(8.408)	(8.408)	0.000
<u>Prudential Borrowing</u>						
Clean and Green Capital						
Regional Materials Recycling Facility	5.775	4.061	5.654	(0.121)	(0.121)	0.000
Middlemore Lane HWRC	10.304	0.070	0.750	(9.554)	(9.554)	0.000
Total Clean and Green	16.079	4.131	6.404	(9.675)	(9.675)	0.000
Total Prudential Borrowing	16.079	4.131	6.404	(9.675)	(9.675)	0.000
Total Capital – Services within the remit of this Committee	78.746	18.360	46.088	(32.658)	(32.658)	0.000

**Economy and Environment
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

02 FEBRUARY 2023

Draft Revenue Budget and Draft Capital Programme 2023/24 – 2026/27

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Cllr A Andrew – Deputy Leader and Regeneration
Cllr G Perry – Deputy Leader and Resilient Communities
Cllr K Murphy – Clean and Green

Executive Summary:

The draft budget, as reported to Cabinet on 14 December 2022, includes the latest medium term financial outlook (MTFO) for the four year period from 2023/24 to 2026/27. It also outlines the draft revenue budget for 2023/24 to 2026/27 (including savings proposals for consultation), the draft capital programme for 2023/24 to 2026/27, and sets out the process and timescale for setting a legally balanced budget for 2023/24.

Our MTFO has been updated for all known pressures, including best professional assumptions on the impact of increasing demand and the cost of living on service delivery and finances. The Council is legally obliged to set a one-year balanced budget (2023/24), however a medium term approach is beneficial to allow for sound financial planning and to support future financial stability. This report presents a balanced budget for 2023/24, subject to changes arising from the settlement yet to be received. A number of savings proposals are also included for 2024/25 to 2026/27, with further options being identified to allow for a balanced budget over the period 2024/25 to 2026/27 aligned to the Council Plan and Proud activity.

The Autumn Statement was announced on 17 November 2022 and, whilst it has provided some further detail for 2023/24, the impact on our financial forecasts remains uncertain until we formally receive further policy documents, as referred to in the Statement, and our provisional core grant settlement which is expected in late December 2022, and which will be included in the final budget report to Cabinet and Council in February 2023.

The 2023/24 draft budget assumes a 2.99% general council tax increase. This is in line with Government referendum limits announced in the Autumn Statement on 17 November 2022, with the option to increase by a further 2% for the Adult Social Care Precept, which Cabinet are currently not minded to do, but are consulting on.

The total draft capital programme for 2023/24 is £110.09m. It sets out new capital investment funded from the council's own resources of £66.86m (funded by capital receipts and borrowing) and externally funded schemes of £43.23m (funded by capital grants) and represents a balanced programme for 2023/24. In addition, the report sets out a further three years of indicative proposals to 2026/27. Despite reductions in capital funding in recent years and going forward, the draft capital programme contains significant investment into highways, education, and housing to support vulnerable households through Health through Warmth and provision of aids and adaptations.

This report provides an extract of the Proud draft revenue savings proposals and investments / cost pressures for 2023/24 – 2026/27 by Proud Outcomes, which fall within the remit of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration. It also provides a summary of the draft capital programme for schemes within the remit of this Committee.

Feedback from the Committee on the draft revenue and capital proposals will be reported back to Cabinet on 8 February 2023, to inform the final draft budget to be recommended to Council on 23 February 2023. Any changes to draft revenue and capital budget proposals as a result of equality impact assessments and consultation will also be fed into the final budget report.

Reason for scrutiny:

To enable consultation of the draft revenue and capital budget proposals for services within the remit of this Committee.

Recommendations:

That:

1. The Committee are recommended to consider the draft revenue budget proposals attached that relate to the remit of this committee as shown in **Appendices 1 and 2**, and that feedback will be presented to Cabinet on 8 February 2023.
2. The Committee are recommended to consider the draft capital schemes included in the draft capital programme attached that relate to the remit of this committee as shown in **Appendices 3 and 4**, and that feedback will be presented to Cabinet on 8 February 2023.

Background papers:

Various financial working papers.

Resource and legal considerations:

Cabinet on 14 December 2022 were presented with a list of draft Proud revenue savings proposals for consultation and a list of investment/cost pressures by Proud outcome, along with a draft capital programme over the period 2023/24 to 2026/27.

The full Cabinet report can be accessed at the following link:

[Draft Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Cabinet 14 December 2022](#)

Maximising Outcomes through Budgeting 2023/24 onwards

Our approach to budget setting was established for 2022/23 with overall financial savings expected to be delivered via Proud activity. For 2023/24 Proud work streams will continue to provide the 'enablers' to allow Directorates to deliver through Service Transformation Plans (STP's).

Directors and their Heads of Service were tasked with completion of new STP's linking their current and future service delivery with Council priority outcomes as per the Council Plan. This will allow for identification of potential transformation activity and associated savings for future financial years. Those identified to date are outlined within this report, with the need for further review to close the financial gap from 2024/25 onwards.

The Council Plan direction of travel approach will set out how the budget will be aligned to deliver the desired outcome i.e., through different amounts of delivery, coordination, influencing, signposting or regulating. A review of the current delivery model will be undertaken alongside the direction of travel and re-prioritised where appropriate to maximise value for money and overall delivery of outcomes and ensuring the 2023/24 onwards budget is built and developed on this moving forward.

Investment / cost pressures

Further to the changes in assumptions, the draft budget 2023/24 – 2026/27 includes provision for growth and investment of c£111m (£50.52m of this is in 2023/24). Those investments relating to the remit of this Committee are shown at **Appendix 1** and total £4.67m over 4 years.

Savings proposals

The Proud service transformation plans have identified £9.02m of financial benefit for 2023/24, in addition to the £7.28m identified in the budget report to Council in February 2022. There is also £1.95m identified for 2024/25 (in addition to £1.15m already identified), £854k for 2025/26 and £844k for 2026/27. Benefits / savings are classified into two categories:

1. Policy Proposals - which require an Executive decision to proceed, and which will be referred for public consultation and equality impact assessment. These total £1.16m in 2023/24.
2. Operational Proposals – savings which officers have delegations to implement; examples include restructures, back-office savings, operational efficiencies. These total £15.14m in 2023/24 (£19.94m over the four years).

Some proposals require investment to support delivery which will only be allocated if the relevant saving proposal is included within Cabinet's final budget report in February, once consultation and equality impact assessment has concluded.

Savings proposals outlined in the report to Cabinet on 14 December 2022 will ensure a balanced budget for 2023/24. A gap of £13.85m remains in 2024/25, with a further £12.56m saving requirement for 2025/26 and £8.54m for 2026/27 (after the delivery of the £3.10m saving identified for 2024/25, £854k for 2025/26 and £844k for 2026/27). Directors continue to work on identifying additional options for Members consideration through the STP process, and a further report will be presented to Cabinet outlining further options to balance the budget for 2024/25 onwards. A work stream review of the STP's is taking place to ensure that they maximise opportunities from the Proud ways of working and capabilities, and therefore capture the full benefits; to ensure they capture innovative thinking; and to challenge any opportunities to accelerate identified savings.

Those savings proposals relating to the remit of this Committee are shown at **Appendix 2** and total £3.71m over 4 years.

Net investment / savings

The following summarises the net investment /(savings) by Directorate for 2023/24.

Net Investment/savings by Directorate 2023/24	Investment £m	Savings £m	Net £m
Adult Social Care, Public Health and Hub	8.00	(2.25)	5.75
Children's Services	13.41	(2.68)	10.73
Children's - Customer Engagement	0.45	(0.88)	(0.44)
Economy, Environment and Communities	1.53	(3.43)	(1.90)
Resources and Transformation	2.21	(1.68)	0.53
Central / Capital Financing*	24.92	(5.37)	19.56
Total Net Investments by Directorate	50.52	(16.30)	34.23

*Central investment includes £12.5m of pay and pension costs which will be allocated to services following a detailed review of salary budget requirements, and £6.92m Social Care Grant which will be allocated to support both Adults and Children's Social Care when the allocations are confirmed. Central savings include £4.47m for Customer Access Management which will be allocated to services once plan finalised.

Therefore, when central investments are taken into account, all Directorates will see a net increase in budgets.

Draft Capital Programme

The draft capital programme for 2023/24 is balanced and totals £110.09m. It sets out new capital investment funded from the council's own resources of £66.86m (funded by capital receipts and borrowing) and externally funded schemes of £43.23m (funded by capital grants). In addition, the report sets out a further three years of indicative proposals to 2026/27.

Those council funded schemes relating to the remit of this Committee are shown at **Appendix 3** totalling £93.48m over 4 years, and external funded schemes of £57.11m at **Appendix 4**.

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APPENDIX 1

Summary of New Growth and Investment 2023/24 to 2026/27 aligned to Proud Outcomes relating to the remit of this Committee

Directorate	Ref No	Details of Growth by outcome	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Supporting a dynamic, resilient and diverse economy where businesses invest and everyone has the right jobs and the right housing in the right place						
Economy, Environment & Communities	1	Funding of the delivery and development team following the fall out of grant funding (Economic Growth Programme) which ceases from March 2023 but can be contained from reserves for 2023/24	0	1,013,000	0	0
	2	Town Centre Officer post - to support the regeneration of the high street - funded from Public Health Grant	0	86,315	0	0
Resources & Transformation	3	Funding of the Programme Management team following the fall out of grant funding (Economic growth programme) which ceases from March 2023 but can be contained from reserves for 2023/24	0	885,150	0	0
	4	Black country consortium annual subscription - previously funded from external funding which ceases 31 March 2023 but funded from reserves for 1 year.	0	90,000	0	0
Total Supporting a dynamic, resilient and diverse economy where businesses invest and everyone has the right jobs and the right housing in the right place			0	2,074,465	0	0
Education, training and skills enable people to contribute to their community and our economy						
Economy, Environment & Communities	6	Add capacity to support Collections, Library and Archive Service	27,500	0	0	0
Total Education, training and skills enable people to contribute to their community and our economy			27,500	0	0	0
People are supported to maintain or improve their health, wellbeing and quality of life						
Economy, Environment & Communities	16	Leisure services income shortfall - on-going impact of the pandemic (one-off)	150,000	(150,000)	0	0
Total People are supported to maintain or improve their health, wellbeing and quality of life			150,000	(150,000)	0	0
The people of Walsall feel safe in a cleaner, greener Borough						
Economy, Environment & Communities	52	Economy, Environment and Communities contractual inflation	590,000	590,000	590,000	590,000
	53	Increase in vehicle fuel costs	275,000	(125,000)	(75,000)	0
	54	Capacity to support the councils climate change agenda	100,000	0	0	0
Resources & Transformation	55	Funding of the transport team costs following the fall out of grant funding (Economic growth programme) which ceases from March 2023 but can be contained from reserves for 2023/24	0	33,000	0	0
Total The people of Walsall feel safe in a cleaner, greener Borough			965,000	498,000	515,000	590,000
Total Growth and investment relating to the remit of this Committee			1,142,500	2,422,465	515,000	590,000

Benefits Realisation (Savings) for Proud activity by Outcome 2023/24 to 2026/27 relating to the remit of this Committee

A: Summary of Policy Proposals by Outcome 2023/24 – 2026/27

Directorate	Ref No	Detail of Policy Proposals by Outcome	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	Total £
Education, training and skills enable people to contribute to their community and our economy							
Economy, Environment & Communities	P1	Outsource Mobile / Home Library Service	(155,000)	0	0	0	(155,000)
Total Education, training and skills enable people to contribute to their community and our economy			(155,000)	0	0	0	(155,000)
People are supported to maintain or improve their health, wellbeing and quality of life							
Economy, Environment & Communities	P3	Outsource Outdoor Pursuits Service to a community group	(23,776)	0	0	0	(23,776)
Total People are supported to maintain or improve their health, wellbeing and quality of life			(23,776)	0	0	0	(23,776)
The people of Walsall feel safe in a cleaner, greener Borough							
Economy, Environment & Communities	P4	Increase in bulky waste charges from £10 to £30 for up to 3 items, £50 for 4-6 items and £70 for 7-9 items	(136,000)	0	0	0	(136,000)
	P5	Reduce grass cutting frequencies	(40,000)	0	0	0	(40,000)
	P6	Rewilding of all urban grassed areas - to manage public grassed open spaces and verges for biodiversity rather than visual appearance. Most areas would only receive one cut per year; however pitches, visibility splays, paths and edges would be cut more often.	(352,348)	0	0	0	(352,348)
	P7	Increase resident and business parking permit charges by 20%	(3,300)	0	0	0	(3,300)
	P8	Introduce charge for advisory disabled parking bays [£90 one off to align with Sandwell]	(2,850)	0	0	0	(2,850)
	P9	Part night lighting - reduce energy consumption by 20%	(40,000)	0	0	0	(40,000)
	P10	Garden waste collection - 2 weekly from May-Nov	(100,000)	0	0	0	(100,000)
	P11	Modified winter maintenance service - the same roads will be gritted but split into 5 routes rather than 6	(30,000)	0	0	0	(30,000)
	P12	Parking dispensation charging of £15 per vehicle per day	(19,500)	0	0	0	(19,500)
	P13	Reintroduce staff parking charges – reduction from £45 to £15 per month	(18,000)				(18,000)
Total The people of Walsall feel safe in a cleaner, greener Borough			(741,998)	0	0	0	(741,998)
Total Policy Proposals relating to the remit of this Committee			(920,774)	0	0	0	(920,774)

B: Summary of Operational Proposals by Outcome 2023/24 – 2026/27

Directorate	Ref No	Detail of Operational Proposals by Outcome	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	Total £
Supporting a dynamic, resilient and diverse economy where businesses invest and everyone has the right jobs and the right housing in the right place							
Economy, Environment & Communities	OP1	Income generation review of fees and charges - increase planning development charges by 5%	(1,385)	0	0	0	(1,385)
	Total Supporting a dynamic, resilient and diverse economy where businesses invest and everyone has the right jobs and the right housing in the right place		(1,385)	0	0	0	(1,385)
Education, training and skills enable people to contribute to their community and our economy							
Economy, Environment & Communities	OP4	Regeneration & Economy team review	(260,193)	0	0	0	(260,193)
	OP5	Income generation review of fees and charges - increase library hire and lettings by 5%	(761)	0	0	0	(761)
Total Education, training & skills enable people to contribute to their community & our economy		(260,954)	0	0	0	(260,954)	
People are supported to maintain or improve their health, wellbeing and quality of life							
Economy, Environment & Communities	OP16	Enhancement of Darlaston Pool - implement new water features to improve teaching pool facilities and attract 'new business' - linked to capital investment	(15,000)	0	0	0	(15,000)
	OP17	Development of Oak Park office space to create more functional fitness space to expand classes - linked to capital investment	(50,000)	0	0	0	(50,000)
	OP18	Improvement to Direct Debit collection processes	(10,000)	0	0	0	(10,000)
	OP19	Review of coffee shop operations	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)	0	(30,000)
	OP20	Develop new concessions in more parks	(5,000)	0	0	0	(5,000)
	OP21	Increase rental income from Park Lodges	(5,000)	0	0	0	(5,000)
	OP22	Above inflation increase to fees and charges	0	(20,000)	0	0	(20,000)
	OP23	Income generation review of fees & charges - increase bereavement charges by 5%, registrars & interment fees by 3%	(187,292)	0	0	0	(187,292)
OP24	Income generation review of fees & charges - increase active living by 5%; dry sports by 2%	(52,182)	0	0	0	(52,182)	
Total People are supported to maintain or improve their health, wellbeing & quality of life		(334,474)	(30,000)	(10,000)	0	(374,474)	

Directorate	Ref No	Detail of Operational Proposals by Outcome	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total
Our communities will be more resilient and supportive of each other							
Economy, Environment & Communities	OP53	Income generation review of fees and charges - increase Arts Centre hire and lettings by 12%; bar commission fees by 15%	(7,463)	0	0	0	(7,463)
	Total Our communities will be more resilient and supportive of each other		(7,463)	0	0	0	(7,463)
The people of Walsall feel safe in a cleaner, greener Borough							
Economy, Environment & Communities	OP54	Charge developers for travel plans (this was approved in 2022/23 budget and deferred for 1 year only)	(30,000)	0	0	0	(30,000)
	OP55	Street lighting energy savings	(728,000)	(263,000)	0	0	(991,000)
	OP56	Increase recycling rates and reduce contamination	(452,523)	0	0	0	(452,523)
	OP57	Additional Trade Waste Income	0	(68,350)	0	0	(68,350)
	OP58	Increase domestic dropped crossing charges by 20%	(4,000)	0	0	0	(4,000)
	OP59	Increase s.38 and s.278 fees	(45,000)	0	0	0	(45,000)
	OP60	Increased bus lane/ bus gate enforcement	(50,000)	0	0	0	(50,000)
	OP61	Trade waste income realignment	(130,200)	0	0	0	(130,200)
	OP62	Waste to recycling review	(300,000)	0	0	0	(300,000)
	OP63	Income generation review of fees and charges - increase grounds maintenance, trees and arboretum rents by 5%; domestic waste and street cleansing by 10%; sale of bins by 22%; vehicle testing by 2.16%; vehicle goods and services by 20%	(55,102)	0	0	0	(55,102)
	OP64	Income generation review of fees and charges - increase traffic management by 10%; street naming and numbering and skip permits by 2%	(8,944)	0	0	0	(8,944)
OP65	Income generation review of fees and charges - increase regulatory licences and permits by 28%	(5,155)	0	0	0	(5,155)	
Total The people of Walsall feel safe in a cleaner, greener Borough			(1,808,924)	(331,350)	0	0	(2,140,274)
Total Operational Proposals relating to the remit of this Committee			(2,413,200)	(361,350)	(10,000)	0	(2,784,550)

	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	Total £
Total Savings Proposals					
A - Policy Proposals	(920,774)	0	0	0	(920,774)
B - Operational Proposals	(2,413,200)	(361,350)	(10,000)	0	(2,784,550)
Total Savings Proposals relating to the remit of this Committee	(3,333,974)	(361,350)	(10,000)	0	(3,705,324)

Draft Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2026/27 – Council Funded Schemes relating to the remit of this Committee

Rolling Programme Schemes

Directorate	Capital Scheme	Detail of Capital investment	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
People are supported to maintain or improve their health, wellbeing and quality of life						
Economy, Environment & Communities	Memorial Safety Management in Cemeteries	The continued inspection and making safe of memorials in Walsall cemeteries and to discharge the council's duty of care within the cemeteries. Increased safety of memorials benefits the residents of Walsall by delivering a safer environment within Walsall cemeteries.	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
The people of Walsall feel safe in a cleaner, greener Borough						
Economy, Environment & Communities	Traffic Signals Infrastructure	The council has a statutory duty to maintain all its traffic signal infrastructure. This programme of planned pedestrian crossing replacements will ensure the safe and efficient movement of pedestrians across the borough (Traffic Management Act 2004). Also supports delivery of the council's carbon reduction targets.	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
	Provision of Community Dropped Crossings	These are dropped kerbs at strategic points along footways which permit access for wheelchairs, pushchairs, mobility scooters etc. to cross roads. The investment will allow the council to provide a rolling programme of community crossing points.	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
	Promotion of Community Health and Safety	Ongoing funding of road safety schemes, to address local community concerns, which fail to achieve the strategic priorities associated with the Local Transport Plan funding in terms of casualty reduction. In supporting the delivery of these local schemes it is possible to improve local quality of life and safety creating safer communities.	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
	Highways Maintenance Programme	As Highway Authority the council has a legal responsibility to maintain the highway network. Failure to do so inevitably leads to a deterioration of our roads, increasing the likelihood of accidents and would ultimately expose the council to increased risk of third party claims.	2,800,000	2,800,000	2,800,000	2,800,000
Total Rolling Programme Schemes			3,160,000	3,160,000	3,160,000	3,160,000

Prior Year approval schemes

Directorate	Capital Scheme	Detail of Capital investment	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Supporting a dynamic, resilient and diverse economy where businesses invest and everyone has the right jobs and the right housing in the right place						
Economy, Environment & Communities	Enterprise Zones	Required for the Council to cash-flow borrowing costs associated with capital investment into the Enterprise Zone. Financial modelling forecasts that these costs are expected to be recovered from future business rates generated from within the zone, although the Black Country LEP are the decision making body in relation to where business rates within the zone are invested. Therefore, on the basis that the BCLEP approve that costs on Walsall sites can be recovered through the business rates mechanism, then the Council will only be required to cash-flow these costs.	387,213	6,897,852	2,435,472	0
	Future High Streets Fund	To invest in Walsall to deliver a much-needed boost to our high street at this challenging time (External funding announced by MHCLG (now DLUHC – Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities) on 26 December 2020.). The additional £4.49m has been added from previously reports for the refurbishment of the Saddlers Centre including the transformation of the public realm area from the centre to the bus station with additional works to the train station concourse. This will be part of the transformative investment in Walsall Town Centre around the rail and bus stations. £4.49m increase - £3.471m in 2024/25, £1.02m in 2025/26.	7,517,372	14,657,776	1,020,000	0
Resources and Transformation	Towns Deal	In 2021/22, Walsall and Bloxwich were successful in being awarded £21.3m from DLUHC for each town. Working with the Town Deal Board and partners, a project confirmation table has been submitted for each project, with an underwriting requirement from the Council of £5.48m as the Council's share of the shortfall compared to the awarded allocation.				
		Walsall Towns Deal - council contribution.	780,520	0	0	0
		Bloxwich Towns Deal - council contribution.	1,650,000	425,000	600,000	0
People are supported to maintain or improve their health, wellbeing and quality of life						
Economy, Environment & Communities	Children's Play Equipment	Installation of 6 new outdoor gyms and the improvement of 13 main play sites at a total cost of £1.644m to enhance the quality of play and fitness provision for young people and adults. This will be funded from S106 monies (£229k) and £1.07m council funded and seek to find the remaining fund externally. £580k in 2023/24 is the remaining amount out of £1.07m approved as council contribution.	580,000	0	0	0

Directorate	Capital Scheme	Detail of Capital investment	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
The people of Walsall feel safe in a cleaner, greener Borough						
Economy, Environment & Communities	Yorks Bridge (Top Up)	Yorks Bridge is currently the subject of a 7.5 tonne weight limit. Replacement scheme funded using council capital funding and the Department for Transport Maintenance Block.	750,000	0	0	0
	Waste Management Strategy	Strategic acquisition of property to support the future delivery of the council's waste management strategies.	2,069,970	0	0	0
	Capitalisation of wheeled bin stock	Linked to revenue savings option. Wheeled bin stock capitalisation	180,000	180,000	180,000	180,000
Total Prior Year Approval Schemes			13,915,075	22,160,628	4,235,472	180,000

Development Investment

Directorate	Capital Scheme	Detail of Capital investment	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Supporting a dynamic, resilient and diverse economy where businesses invest and everyone has the right jobs and the right housing in the right place						
Economy, Environment and Communities	High Streets Fund - further match funding	This project was approved by Cabinet 21 April 2021 - To part match fund external/council funds to invest in Walsall to deliver a much-needed boost to our high street. Originally £3,727,171 in 2024/25 and £1,067,476 in 2025/26. Rephased to 2025/26 and 2026/27. Further £315,353 also rephased from 2022/23	0	0	4,042,524	1,067,476
	Willenhall Masterplan	Willenhall Garden City Phase 1 is part of a housing-led regeneration programme with public sector intervention in land assembly and gap funding required to support private sector delivery of new homes.	6,420,927	0	0	0
People are supported to maintain or improve their health, wellbeing and quality of life						
Economy, Environment and Communities	Active Public Places	To deliver the full project scope of public realm works, canal bridge and basin works (approved by Cabinet)	0	1,000,000	744,000	0
The people of Walsall feel safe in a cleaner, greener Borough						
Economy, Environment and Communities	Regional Materials Recycling Facility	Contribution towards the scheme approved by Cabinet on 4 September 2019 - Joint Working Arrangement with 5 partner councils in order to facilitate the delivery stage of a local authority owned Materials Recycling Facility. Approved contribution by Cabinet 17 March 2021.	929,054	0	0	0

Directorate	Capital Scheme	Detail of Capital investment	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Economy, Environment and Communities	HWRC station - Middlemore Lane	This is additional budget required to cover the uncontrollable increased inflationary / construction pressures on the existing project. To provide a new Waste Transfer Station (WTS) and large Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) at Middlemore Lane in Aldridge.	7,599,919	9,775,472	0	0
	Street Lighting	Approved contribution by Cabinet 16 June 2021 - To deliver a modern, energy efficient street lighting solution that provides the ability to finely control light output whilst significantly reducing energy consumption and contributing to the Council becoming carbon neutral by 2050.	4,280,112	0	0	0
Total Development Investment			19,230,012	10,775,472	4,786,524	1,067,476

New Capital Schemes

Directorate	Capital Scheme	Detail of Capital investment	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Supporting a dynamic, resilient and diverse economy where businesses invest and everyone has the right jobs and the right housing in the right place						
Economy, Environment and Communities	Development Team capitalisation of posts	The Development Team structure is currently a Team Leader and 4 officers. Capitalising posts will enable further capacity to be introduced to the team to support delivery of the pipeline.	327,649	327,649	327,649	327,649
Resources and Transformation	Saddlers Project- Car Park/New toilets and other works to support Connected Gateways	Car Park Surfacing works, Electric Vehicle charging, Changing Places and toilets plus further capital works to units during/post connected gateway scheme.	800,000	350,000	150,000	150,000
	Bosty Lane Farm	Remediation works at Bosty Lane Farm to allow disposal.	300,000	0	0	0
Our communities will be more resilient and supportive of each other						
Economy, Environment and Communities	Expansion of Park Hall	Resilient Communities capital schemes including potential expansion of new facility at Park Hall CA by creating another linked classroom on site and modular build at Alumwell.	580,000	0	0	0

Directorate	Capital Scheme	Detail of Capital investment	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
The people of Walsall feel safe in a cleaner, greener Borough						
Resources and Transformation	Pilot Changing Places/Public Toilets	Bloxwich and Willenhall groundworks at £125k each.	250,000	0	0	0
Economy, Environment and Communities	Regional Materials Recycling Facility	Joint Working Arrangement with 8 partner councils in order to facilitate the delivery stage of a local authority owned Materials Recycling Facility. Approved contribution by Cabinet 17 March 2021.	600,000	0	0	0
Total New Capital Schemes			2,857,649	677,649	477,649	477,649
Total Draft Capital Programme – Council Funded Schemes within the remit of this Committee			39,162,736	36,773,749	12,659,645	4,885,125

Development Schemes – consideration and funding subject to business case approval

- **Electric Vehicle charging points installation** - Installation of 844 charging points across Walsall's council owned assets to retain and operate to generate future income stream in conjunction with the removal of new petrol and diesel cars being sold by 2030.
- **Moat Street/Villiers Street** - Phase 1 of the Willenhall Framework Plan comprising the delivery of 111 new homes.
- **Willenhall Framework Plan future phases** - identifies three potential further phases where council intervention may be required to support delivery of new housing given ownership and viability issues.
- **Gasholders** - This Council owned site is located in the Black Country Enterprise Zone and forms a key part of Walsall's employment land supply. Work is being undertaken to provide an up to date site appraisal but previous work has indicated a need to fund a viability gap.
- **Anson Road** - The site is owned by Severn Trent and is not a priority for delivery due to viability and delivery issues. Severn Trent have indicated they are willing to consider disposal. The site forms a key part of Walsall's employment land supply and funding would support acquisition and delivery costs.
- **Walsall Gateway** - The sites are in multiple private ownerships and has been identified as an opportunity to bring forward new residential development in a sustainable location. A Strategic Delivery Plan is due to be prepared to inform future stages which are likely to focus on land acquisition, addressing abnormal costs and procuring a developer.

- **Challenge Block** - A new medical centre is currently being delivered on part of the Challenge Block site and work has commenced to identify the most suitable use for the balance. The council has a significant landholding but funding will be required to undertake land assembly to enable a comprehensive approach to future development.
- **Saddlers Quay** - Public sector intervention likely to be required to bring forward the site for development and address the ongoing issues. "Total Homes" to build 222 flats. Council to balance the viability gap.
- **Station Street Town Centre Living** - The site is in multiple private ownerships and has been identified as an opportunity to bring forward new residential development in a sustainable location. Due diligence work has been undertaken and a proposed delivery approach identified focused on land acquisition, addressing abnormal costs and procuring a developer.
- **Development of Oak Park office space** - To create additional functional fitness spaces to expand classes and generate extra income.
- **North Walsall Cemetery-concrete rafts** - Block installation of concrete foundation rafts at North Walsall Cemetery.
- **Pro-active repair and maintenance of roads and pathways at all cemeteries** - The council has an obligation to minimise health and safety risks for all staff and cemetery users. In addition to that, it is legally required to keep the cemeteries in good condition.
- **New Art Gallery** - Refurbishment works including LED (light emitting diode) and audio recording equipment, solar panel installation, digital infrastructure, footfall monitoring, heating and ventilation works, toilet and library refurbishment in support of external funding.
- **Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC)** - Fryers Road - to provide a new Waste Transfer Station (WTS) and large Household Waste Recycling Centre at Fryers Road.
- **In house operation of HWRC's** - The operating model for HWRCs is being reviewed in parallel with the construction of the new Middlemore Lane site. There may be revenue savings from bringing this contract in house. The council would need to purchase equipment for the site.
- **York Bridge** - review of scheme being undertaken and potential additional requirements to deliver the scheme.
- **Traffic Signals Infrastructure** - additional funding to replace obsolete traffic signals infrastructure. Existing rolling budget £200k.
- **Highways Maintenance** - additional request on top of rolling budget due to current inflationary pressures and increased labour and material costs – in addition to the existing rolling budget as the council has a legal responsibility to maintain the highway network.
- **Creative Industries Enterprise Scheme** - A cultural development funding bid has been submitted to support the additional £3m required and there are other external funding options available but the business case requires approval back to Government prior to any known outcomes and council underwriting, should other external funding not be successful, is required to take this forward.
- **Nottingham Drive Car Park** - Car park improvements on land being purchased by WMBC. Planning permission is in place but construction must commence by January 2023.
- **Brown Jug Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)** - This is a derelict site, with the potential to CPO to facilitate housing (c up to 10-15 units maximum). There is currently no scheme currently to quantify, hence only the land CPO costs have been included plus legal/tax and contingency.
- **Remediation works at the Gasholders site on Darlaston Road to allow disposal**

APPENDIX 4

Draft Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2026/27 – External Funded Schemes relating to the remit of this Committee

Directorate	Capital Scheme	Detail of Capital investment	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Supporting a dynamic, resilient and diverse economy where businesses invest and everyone has the right jobs and the right housing in the right place						
Economy, Environment & Communities	High Streets Fund	To invest in Walsall to deliver a much-needed boost to our high street at this challenging time, as announced by MHCLG (now Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities - DLUHC) on 26 December 2020.	4,783,964	0	0	0
Resources and Transformation	Towns Deal	In 2021/22, Walsall and Bloxwich were successful in being awarded £21.3m from DLUHC for each town. A grant offer has been received, which has been accepted by the signing of a Heads of Terms. Working with the Town Deal Board and Partners, a Project Confirmation Table has been submitted for each project, with an underwriting requirement from the Council of £5.48m as the Council's share of the shortfall compared to the awarded allocation. This is subject to formal completion of a full business case for all of the projects.				
		Walsall Towns Deal - Council contribution.	3,020,316	6,129,952	2,463,731	0
	Bloxwich Towns Deal – Council contribution.	6,356,604	8,662,988	4,929,408	0	
	Changing Places Toilets (CPT)	S31 Funding from DLUHC to invest in Council owned or facilities owned by others. CPTs are disabled toilet facilities for those with complex needs including a hoist.	171,650	0	0	0
The people of Walsall feel safe in a cleaner, greener Borough						
Economy, Environment & Communities	LTP Highway Maintenance Programme	This capital funding, known as the maintenance block, is distributed by the Integrated Transport Authority (ITA). As the Highway Authority we have an extremely high profile duty to maintain our highway network. This money is provided by the Department for Transport via the ITA with the condition that it should be spent on the classified road network. Includes allocation for potholes and bridge strengthening.	3,568,700	3,568,700	3,568,700	3,568,700

Directorate	Capital Scheme	Detail of Capital investment	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Economy, Environment & Communities	Integrated Transport Block Funding	The Government provides each locality with grant funding to help implement the Local Transport Plan in their area. The grant is used for the implementation of small scale capital schemes; development of major capital schemes and to part fund major schemes implementation costs. The programme is designed to address road safety issues, progress the Council's major scheme aspirations; and resource the required 'local contributions' to approved major schemes. (Department for Transport / West Midlands ITA).	1,563,100	1,563,100	1,563,100	1,563,100
	Walsall Urban Tree Challenge Fund	Working in partnership with Trees for Cities - a joint application was made to the Forestry Commission. The project will plant 360 extra heavy standard trees in wide verges or small open spaces. The grant covers 50% of the cost of tree purchase and 50% of maintenance costs.	46,437	15,734	0	0
Total Draft Capital Programme – External Funded Schemes within the remit of this Committee			19,510,771	19,940,474	12,524,939	5,131,800

2 February, 2023

Evaluation of Walsall Council Bonfire and Firework Events 2022

Ward(s): All

Portfolios: Councillor Murphy – Clean and Green
Councillor Flint – Health & Wellbeing

1. Aim

- 1.1. To provide the residents of Walsall with safely organised bonfire night events that are enjoyable, affordable, and as sustainable as possible, whilst meeting the expectation of what a traditional bonfire night celebration should be.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Members review the evaluation and results from the consultation and provide comment to officers planning future events.

3. Report detail – know

- 3.1. For at least 15 years, Walsall Council has operated bonfire and firework displays across the borough. This was extended to include Walsall Arboretum after the Walsall Illuminations ceased in 2011/12. Events in Willenhall, Holland Park and Bloxwich had historically had a far more local focus than the Walsall Arboretum event, which for an additional charge provided entertainment and attracted attendance from across the West Midlands.
- 3.2. In 2019, although the events generally received good feedback, due to very poor weather leading up to and on the night of the events and the considerable increase in price, the Council made a significant loss.
- 3.3. Initially Cabinet had suggested an additional event be held to celebrate Diwali, however, upon closer scrutiny, it was determined that it was very unlikely that number would be achieved for the event to break even. Furthermore, it would be difficult to market this new event, which is very close to, and would be similar to the bonfire events. As people struggle with the cost-of-living crisis, it was felt that it was not a good time to start a new event, when the Council has not made a profit in the past from these large-scale events.
- 3.4. Due to the low site limit at Holland Park and the particularly low numbers in 2019, Cabinet decided to only operate events at the other three sites. Furthermore, a decision was taken to remove the entertainment element at Walsall Arboretum

and focus on promoting three similar traditional bonfire and firework events. All three events were to take place consecutively from Friday 4 until Sunday 6 November. A full evaluation of the 2022 events is provided at **Appendix A**.

- 3.5. Due to the price increase in 2019 and the cost-of-living crisis, the decision was taken to provide early bird tickets at 2019 prices, with only a slight increase after this date. The price charged is comparable to events across the Black Country, however, some of the other Council events offered significantly more entertainment for the money.

Table 1 - Pricing of Bonfires Events across Walsall and Wider Birmingham and Black Country

Area	Location	Prices (£)			
		Child	Adult	Family	Other
Walsall Based Events					
Borough wide Council Events	1. KGV (Bloxwich) 2. Arboretum 3. Willenhall Memorial Park *lower price = online early bird	5* / 5.50 (U16)	7.50* / 8	18* 20	Under 3's free
Aldridge	Aldridge Cricket Club	5 (U12)	8	N/A	Under 5's free
Park Hall	Handsworth Rugby Club (Scouts annual bonfire)	N/A	6.50 / 8 on gate	N/A	Under 3's free
Birmingham and Black Country Based Events					
Wolverhampton	Wolverhampton Racecourse (17,000)	5	7	N/A	Under 3's free
Dudley	Himley Hall (Parking £8)	6 (U16)	11	25	Senior 60+, Under 5's free, +VIP and Premium tickets Free shuttle bus
Sandwell	Dartmouth Park, West Bromwich Events 4 and 5 November	3	5 (U18)	12	Under 2's Free
Birmingham	Edgbaston Cricket Ground	7 (U16)	14	36	Premium seating/ tickets available

- 3.6. Of the three events, the preferred venue continues to be Walsall Arboretum. The event usually takes place on the Saturday closest to bonfire night, and this year bonfire night fell on the Saturday and in turn this event sold out. The Sunday event at Willenhall Memorial Park also sold out, but the site capacity at this venue of just 3,500 means that this still did not cover costs. The Friday evening event at King George V Playing Fields achieved a disappointing 46% turnout, however, it did still cover its costs due to the significantly greater site capacity of 10,000.
- 3.7. There were concerns on the evening at the Arboretum as, although the site capacity is 11,000, the lack of entertainment on the main field meant there was nothing to draw the crowd towards the bonfire. This caused the crowd to swell around the food stalls and fairground. Two food providers didn't turn up on the evening and this caused significant delays with people obtaining food and although the event took place with no health and safety incident, upon review it has been determined that the site capacity needs to be significantly reduced if there is no draw on to the events field.
- 3.8. A consultation exercise was carried out during and after the events, to understand people's views on the events. The new consultation platform 'Common Place' was used. The main reason for people attending the events are that they are close to home, offer good value for money and are family friendly.
- 3.9. In response to questions relating to the community and environmental impacts of the events, it was clear that, although 46% of respondents like the idea of a quiet display 54%, do not state enthusiasm to attend such events. When asking about the environmental impact, the vast majority are indifferent, with only 1 in 10 holding strong concerns. This was again emphasised with the response to whether it was important for there to be a bonfire at the event with 51% expecting to see on and only 17% feeling that it is not important.
- 3.10. Of those attending the events, as expected, KGV had very positive feedback, but both the Arboretum and Willenhall had an even split between positive and negative responses. Both of these events operated at maximum capacity. At Walsall Arboretum the crowd problems, lack of food providers and not enough fairground rides or toilets were the main issues, which the staff also picked up in the debrief session.

4. Financial information

- 4.1. Walsall Council bonfire and firework events have historically run at a loss to the council. This year a small profit was made, however, this does not take in to account the full staffing and event preparation costs. The site attendance limits make it difficult for a profit to be made, however, due to improved weather conditions and, probably the fact that there have been no events for two years due to the Covid pandemic people came out in force with many events taking place across the region on bonfire night selling out.

Table 2: Known attendances and income for Walsall Bonfire and Firework Events 2016 – 2022 (no events in 2020 or 2021 due to Covid).

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2022
Holland Park - Brownhills	(12/Nov) 2,598	(2/Nov) 2,312	(27/Oct) 1,350 (est)	(26/Oct) 493	N/A
Willenhall Memorial Park	(29/Oct) 2,129	(4/Nov) 4,618	(1/Nov) 3,000 (est)	(1/Nov) 1,489	(6/Nov) 3,500 (max)
Walsall Arboretum	(17/Oct) 8,000 (est)	(5/Nov) 10,000 (est)	(3/Nov) 10,000 (est)	(2/Nov) 4,066	(5/Nov) 11,000 (max)
King George V (KGV) Playing Fields Bloxwich	(22/Oct) 2,630	(28/Oct) 3,910	(5/Nov) 8,000 (est)	(5/Nov) 4,536	(4/Nov) 4,639
TOTAL COSTS	£not available	£80,155	£114,210	£118,637	£84,376
TOTAL INCOME	£not available	£57,000	£86,000	£64,942	£97,751
NET	£not available	-£22,000*	-£28,000*	-£53,465*	13,375**

* Net losses were balanced from corporate reserves

** This figure does not include overtime and TOIL of Healthy Spaces Team staff.

NB: As far as possible the income figures are comparable – given different models of delivery and different elements offered each year.

4.2. The bonfire and firework events have an income target of £10,000. The net income achieved in 2022 of £13,375 does exceed this target, however, to be able to deliver the events on consecutive days over the weekend, members of the Healthy Spaces Team received overtime worth a combined sum of £6,000 and the managers received time of in lieu of 207 hours. It should also be noted that these costs only include the time associated with the actual delivery and not that taken up with planning.

5. Reducing Inequalities

5.1. The bonfire and fireworks events are open to all and, as the events are aimed at children, there are reduced ticket prices for families and under three's enter for free.

5.2. The events were provided in three locations across the borough to reduce travelling. Of those that did respond to the consultation, the average distance people travelled to attend was 4-5 miles, with the maximum for Bloxwich being around 9 and 12 for the Arboretum.

6. Decide

- 6.1. Although the events this year made a small profit, there were some problems with the operation of this year's events. The logistics of putting three events on one after the other over consecutive evenings was particularly difficult for the small team that delivers the events. Using the same staff does result in efficiencies however, the team were exhausted with setting up, delivery and take down of the events.
- 6.2. Members should consider whether it is viable to continue with the Willenhall event as the site limit of 3500 people means that this site cannot make a profit (approximate £6K loss at full capacity).
- 6.3. If Walsall continues to provide traditional events, with no additional entertainment at Walsall Arboretum, the site limit for this site needs to be significantly reduced which will impact the ability to make an overall profit (particularly if Willenhall continues).
- 6.4. Looking forward to 2023, members need to decide what form the events should take and whether they should continue to operate at the current three locations.

7. Respond

- 7.1. Feedback on the bonfire and fireworks 2022 events will be used to inform the development and delivery of future events.

8. Review

- 8.1. The Healthy Spaces Team undertakes evaluations and reviews of its activities and events as part of its standard performance monitoring systems.

Background papers

Appendix A – Evaluation of Walsall Council Bonfire and Firework Events 2022

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Evaluation of Walsall Council Bonfire and Firework Events 2022

Healthy Spaces Team



Evaluation of Walsall Council Bonfire and Firework Events 2022

1.0 Purpose and Overview of Report

The purpose of the report is to provide an evaluation of the Walsall Council Bonfire and Firework Events 2022. This will help to inform the future development of this, and other events managed and delivered by Walsall Council. The report will provide a summary of the key aspects (the general approach including pricing and ticketing, staffing, entertainment and catering, sales, and attendance) of managing and delivering the bonfire and firework events and as well as feedback from a survey completed by a sample of attendees.

1.1 Insight

The information that informs this evaluation has been collated from multiple sources including staff feedback, bookings system and business supporting the event.

1.2 The Bonfire and Fireworks Events' Survey

The Council has recently secured Proptech funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to trial a new consultation platform called 'Commonplace'. A bonfire consultation was created to get feedback from attendees to the three events. It was promoted on all Council social media platforms, and, unlike the 2019 survey, it gave people who chose not to attend the opportunity to respond.

The survey asked a range of questions regarding the event including an overall rating of whether they enjoyed it and whether they offered good value for money, how they found out abouts it, how they travelled, and what they thought about the offer. This was to provide insight into attendees' views.

A total of 168 responses were received which is less than 1% of those who attended. The low response rate is typical of an online survey of this nature, however, the general feedback received is in line with what the staff experienced on the evenings. Respondents generally described themselves as female (88%), with an age skew (67% of respondents) of around 25-44 years of age.

Each section of the report below includes relevant data from the survey, with any additional information covered in Section 7. The full survey report is provided at **Appendix 1**.

2.0 Background

2.1 History

For at least 15 years, Walsall Council has operated bonfire and firework displays in different places across the borough. This was extended to include the Arboretum after the Walsall Illuminations ceased in 2011/12. Events in Willenhall, Holland Park and Bloxwich had historically been far more locally focus compared to the larger Arboretum event that attracts attendees from across the West Midlands.

Over the same period, fireworks have become more powerful and firework prices in the UK have risen significantly, costing £10,000 for a single event display in 2022. This reflects increased regulation on the storage and use of high-powered fireworks in crowded places. Since 2014, far more stringent health and safety legislation relating to explosives and public display pyrotechnics has added to the need for increasing precautions on public safety. These were all considered in the 2022 events adding to the complexities and costs of putting on a bonfire and firework display but ultimately providing a safer and more enjoyable experience for members of the public. Over the past five years of operation (not including 2020 and 2021 where there were no displays due to Covid restrictions), the council has run these events at a

loss. Due to several factors, but most notably very poor weather conditions, the loss in 2019 was over £50,000. Cabinet has also agreed a Commercial and Income Policy which looks to avoid such losses.

Further to the significant financial loss in 2019, Members took the decision to not operate the Holland Park event (which had less than 500 attendees in 2019), remove the additional cost associated with the entertainment and radio support at the Arboretum and provide three similar traditional events at the remaining sites. It was also acknowledged that people really wanted to attend on bonfire night (not a week before or after the event). Members took the decision to hold the three events on the consecutive nights of the 4 – 6 Novembers, with KGV being held on Friday 4/11, Walsall Arboretum being held bonfire night itself and Willenhall Memorial Park being held on Sunday 6/11.

2.2 Healthy Spaces Team

From 1st August 2019, Walsall Council further developed the way in which services work to improve healthy living, safe green spaces, and active lifestyles across the borough. To achieve this as well as a council saving target of £500,000, a new Healthy Spaces Team was formed under Public Health through merging the previous Sport and Leisure Development and Environmental Improvement Team. As one of the early priorities, the Healthy Spaces Team picked up the planning for Walsall bonfire and fireworks events. Initial planning discussions took place in August, however, the key work started after the summer holidays due to the team being focussed on the delivery of the holiday and food sessions.

The team is focussed on increasing the usage of our green spaces to encourage communities of all ages to take part in activities beneficial to health and wellbeing. The team's flexible borough-wide structure enables the Council to maximise opportunities for new and existing voluntary groups to grow the number and quality of activities our communities can get involved in. From allotments and community gardens to public events and healthy schools, the Healthy Spaces Team has a range of functions it continues to develop.

2.0 Approach to Management of Bonfire and Firework Events 2022

2.1 Shared Decision Making

A proposal was shared with Cabinet members in March 2022 to request guidance on how many bonfire and firework events were required for 2022. This paper, together with other supporting documents immediately following it, set out the alternative options on price of tickets and numbers of events.

The decision was taken to provide three events, plus a further event for Diwali on Monday 24 October. Following significant changes in the economic situation, the deepening cost of living crisis and numerous concerns relating to marketing and communications, developing a new event when the bonfire events themselves struggle to make a profit, the decision was taken to not continue with the Diwali event.

As there had been a significant price increase in 2019, the decision was taken by Cabinet to maintain prices at the 2019 level and offer cheaper 'early bird' tickets to encourage earlier take up. Although there was a slight uptake, it was not significant, and most people still waited to purchase tickets until the last 24 – 48 hours.

2.2 Summary of feedback from survey (pricing)

Overall, the Walsall events rated as middling in terms of value for money (3 on a scale of 1 – 5), which presumably means that we have the pricing about right.

Table 1 - Pricing of Bonfires Events across Walsall and Wider Birmingham and Black Country

Area	Location	Prices (£)			
		Child	Adult	Family	Other
Walsall Based Events					
Boroughwide Council Events	1. KGV (Bloxwich) 2. Arboretum 3. Willenhall Memorial Park *lower price = online early bird	5* / 5.50 (U16)	7.50* / 8	18* 20	Under 3's free
Aldridge	Aldridge Cricket Club	5 (U12)	8	N/A	Under 5's free
Park Hall	Handsworth Rugby Club (Scouts annual bonfire)	N/A	6.50 / 8 on gate	N/A	Under 3's free
Birmingham and Black Country Based Events					
Wolverhampton	Wolverhampton Racecourse (17,000)	5	7	N/A	Under 3's free
Dudley	Himley Hall (Parking £8)	6 (U16)	11	25	Senior 60+, Under 5's free, +VIP and Premium tickets Free shuttle bus
Sandwell (Dartmouth Park, West Bromwich Events 4 and 5 November	3	5 (U18)	12	Under 2's Free
Birmingham	Edgbaston	7 (U16)	14	36	Premium seating/ tickets available at higher cost

2.3 Break-Even Position

The break-even position was identified as being in the region of 80% ticket sales (19,600) across the three events.

2.4 Ticketing

Online ticket sales had been successful during the 2019 events. Over the next two years, as Covid hit, cash transactions have been discouraged to prevent the spread of disease and the public is now fully accustomed to online payment systems. Ticket sales were only promoted

through this online method. To ensure that people who did wish to pay by cash could, tickets were also offered through the four Active Living Leisure Centres.

At the first event, gate supervisors were issued with cards with QR codes taking people to the ticket source website enabling them to purchase tickets whilst standing in the queue. At one gate there was a member of staff with a laptop to assist with online payments if required, however this was not used, and the staff member was redeployed to assist with scanning people into the venue.

Almost all tickets were sold online, with just over £80 worth being sold through the leisure facilities and due to the second two events being sold out, the QR codes were only used at the first Kings George V event.

Due to connection problems being experienced with the relatively new 'Seaty' platform in 2019, officers reviewed the main systems available, and determined that Ticket Source offered the best solution for the public and for the event staff on the evening for processing payments. Some initial problems were experienced with Ticket Source not responding in a timely manner to email, however, upon investigation, this was due to the Council's security system blocking them. Once this was resolved, there were no further problems with the system. On the evenings staff who used Council mobile phones for scanning did experience problems with the cameras not focussing on the QR code and connection problems resulting in almost all staff opting to download the app and use their personal mobiles.

3.0 Marketing and Communications

Similar to 2019, the 2022 events had a comprehensive and more digital approach than any previous bonfire events. See **Appendix 2** for a copy of the marketing plan. A sum of £766 was incurred through social media promotion which produced the most interaction and prompts to purchase tickets.

Event awareness was also ensured through other promotional materials (press releases, banners, and posters) that were displayed at each venue and other strategic parks. Signage / posters were shown to have an effect in some areas, but as there was less response to those placed in schools and other places of education in 2019, the decision was taken to not repeat at these sites in 2022.

Summary of Survey (Marketing)

- When asked about how people heard about the events, 71% had found out via social media. Relatives, friends, and neighbours was the second highest category, but this also may have been via social media channels.

4.0 Staffing and Security

A full staff plan for each event was created. Following problems being experienced in 2019, the decision was taken to use Healthy Spaces Team staff, invite the casual staff who had worked over the summer holidays on the Council splash pads and if there were any other vacancies, these would be picked up by additional security staff.

The Healthy Spaces Team all offered to work substantial additional hours to make the events a success on the three consecutive nights, with these staff and all the splash pad staff coming forward, there were only a few vacancies picked up by additional security staff.

To enable the events to take place over the three days consecutively, deliveries were taking place at the same time as set ups and take downs. This involved significant coordination by the team to ensure that deliveries could take place and events were set up on time. Due to the

events running on consecutive nights, in the middle, one event was still be closed off, whilst one was being set up for that evening and the third had the bonfire being built. The fact that most of the staff worked each event enabled people to quickly learn what was involved with setting up, events roles on the night and packing down.

5.0 Entertainment and Catering

5.1 Concessions and Fun Fairs

Due to the Showman's Guild guidelines, the decision was taken to message the known providers who operate in Walsall and ask them to submit offers for delivery at the 2022 bonfire events. The value of income was comparable to 2019, when a full tendering process was undertaken.

With the concessions, the opportunity to provide food / drinks at the 2022 events was promoted on the Nationwide Caterers Association website, which is a membership association founded and created for independent caterers. The income and number of concessions on offer were comparable to 2019, however, we were let down by two providers at Walsall Arboretum which did cause significant problems on the evening. The sell-out event at the Arboretum did not have enough food or drink on offer for the number of people present and this was one of the significant complaints on the evening and identified through the consultation.

6.0 Sales and Attendance

The history of pricing for borough-wide bonfire and firework events is detailed in Table 2. It shows that Walsall Council has made a loss in most, if not all years of operation, as costs have grown but ticket prices and regular income have not. In 2019, a significant price increase was introduced, and that was compounded with very poor weather forecast for the three weeks leading up to and on the evening of the events resulting in a very poor overall turnout of 40%. This resulted in a significant financial loss. Furthermore, the events were split over three weeks with the earliest event taking place before Halloween.

Cabinet took the decision to only operate at three sites in 2022, removing the smallest site at Holland Park. It was determined that the three remaining events should take place consecutively from Friday 4 until Sunday 6. Furthermore, the financial risk was reduced by not providing additional entertainment at the Arboretum and the ticket price for the venue was brought in line making promotion of the traditional offer easier.

An 'early bird' ticket price offer was provided online and although there was some take up on this, most sales still took place in the last few days leading up to the events, when people could have more certainty over the weather conditions.

Two of the events, the Arboretum, which took place on Bonfire Night, and the event at Willenhall Memorial Park, which was the day after, both sold out. It should be noted, however, that the site capacity is significantly lower at Willenhall meaning that even at full capacity the event cannot make a profit. KGV only achieved 46% turnout, however, this was enough to cover the costs of staging the event at this venue.

Table 2. Known attendances, and income for Walsall Bonfire and Firework events 2016 to 2022 (no events in 2020 or 2021 due to Covid).

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2022
Holland Park - Brownhills	(12/Nov) 2,598	(2/Nov) 2,312	(27/Oct) 1,350 (est)	(26/Oct) 493	N/A
Willenhall Memorial Park	(29/Oct) 2,129	(4/Nov) 4,618	(1/Nov) 3,000 (est)	(1/Nov) 1,489	(6/11) 3,500 (max)
Walsall Arboretum	(17/Oct) 8,000 (est)	(5/Nov) 10,000 (est)	(3/Nov) 10,000 (est)	(2/Nov) 4,066	(5/11) 11,000 (max)
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TOTAL COSTS	£not available	£80,155	£114,210	£118,637	£84,376
TOTAL INCOME	£not available	£57,000	£86,000	£64,942	£97,751
NET	£not available	-£22,000	-£28,000*	-£53,465*	13,375**

* - Net losses were balanced from corporate reserves.

** - This figure does not include overtime and TOIL of Healthy Spaces Team members.

NB: As far as possible the income figures are comparable – given different models of delivery and different elements offered each year.

6.1 Sales Trends

Data showed that sales climbed approximately 10 days before each event in response to good digital marketing. The clearest indication, however, are the marked peaks of activity on the days of the event themselves, which tells us people were generally making decisions within 24 - 48 hours of each bonfire about whether to attend.

Ticket Sales Graphs



6.2 Weather Impact

Table 4. Weather forecast and actual weather conditions for each event

Date	Location	Weather
Friday 4 November 2019	Bloxwich	Week forecast leading up to the event: Dry. On the day: Evening was dry
Saturday 5 November 2019	Walsall	Week forecast leading up to the event: Mixed, potentially some rain On the day: Evening was dry
Sunday 6 November 2019	Willenhall	Week forecast leading up to the event: Mixed, potentially some rain On the day: Evening was dry

Overall, the weather forecast over the bonfire weekend was much more favourable than it was in 2019, when the Council made significant losses. In the three weeks before, generally it was showing dry, with possible showers for the Saturday and Sunday. Although there were showers during the day, whilst the team was setting up and taking down, on the evening it was dry with little wind for all the events.

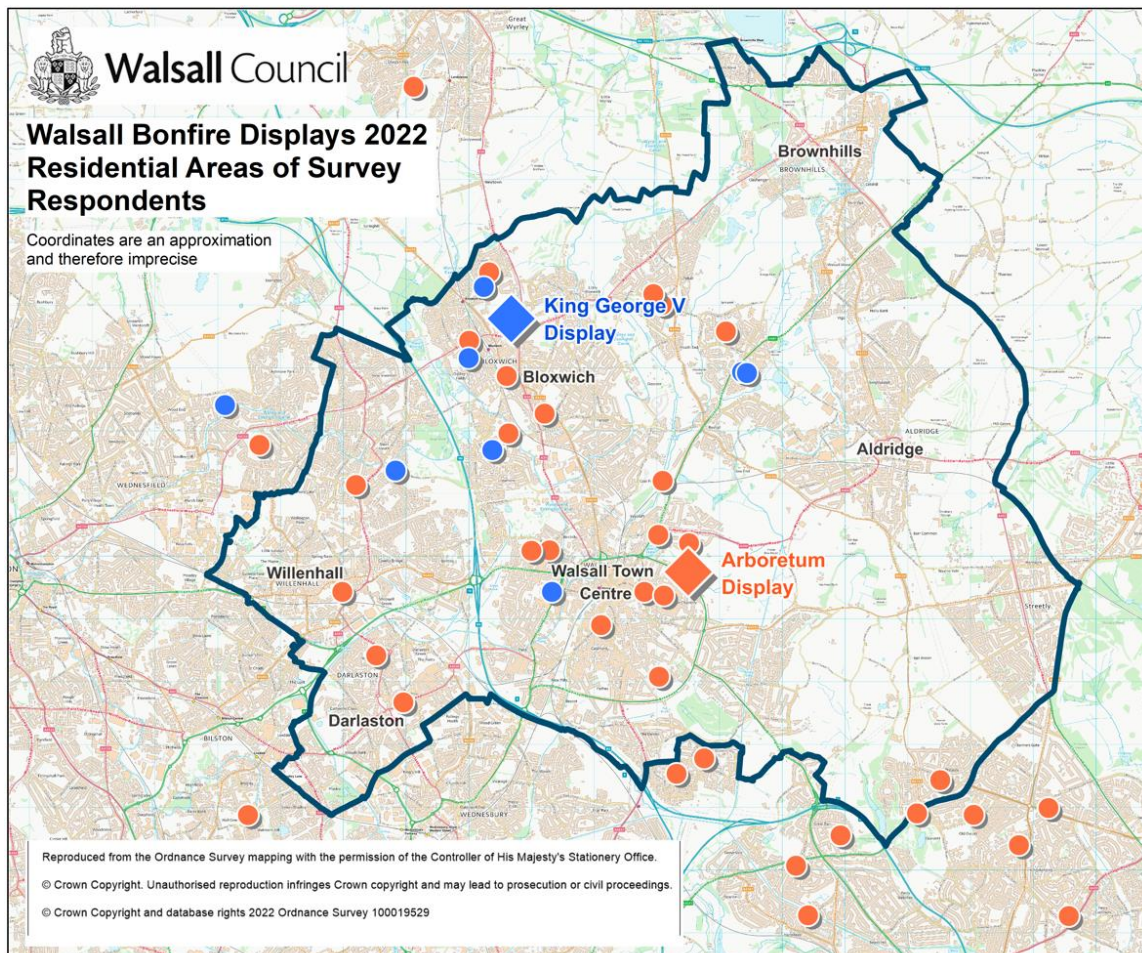
6.3 Attendance spread

Postcodes data was problematic as many respondents did not provide it; therefore, the locations are a fraction of a small subset (survey respondents). Of those that responded, none came from the east of the borough.

However, it does indicate the wider reach / catchment area of the Arboretum event – particularly respondents from North Birmingham (Great Barr, Kingstanding, Old Oscott and Hamstead)

Postcodes displayed here are approximated locations, and therefore not precise

Fig 1: Spread of survey respondents



Source: Attendee Survey 2022, mapped by Public Health Intelligence Team

Summary of Survey (Travel):

- Across the three events, 68% of people travelled by car which is up from 53% in 2019, with only 22% walking, down from 33%. There was a significant difference between sites, with KGV and Willenhall have a higher proportion of people walking (33% and 50% respectively).

7.0 Review and Evaluation

Health Spaces Team Debrief - Following the events, the Healthy Spaces Team held a debriefing session to identify what had gone well and what could be improved.

Topics covered include:

Marketing and Promotion - where the conclusion was that we needed to start slightly earlier and should have included emails for the schools to send out.

Tickets – need to review the pricing structure (including Under 3's being free, car parking charge and the value of the family ticket). There is also a need to emphasise that people who buy group tickets do need to turn up together to enter the venue.

Healthy and Safety- need to review the offer alongside the site limit for the Arboretum as at full capacity the event was overcrowded by the food and fair ground. Furthermore, there were problems with exiting the car park and support may be needed from the Police to move people on and prevent them blocking the road.

Staffing – went really well, however, the team was exhausted from doing three consecutive events and would not wish to repeat this.

The main concerns raised by the staff were those relating to the problems at the Arboretum.

Post Events Survey - A total of 142 people completed the online survey (full report available at **Appendix 1**). The opportunity was taken to see what people thought about providing quieter displays and although 46% would prefer them, the majority 54% do not state any enthusiasm for attending. With concerns about climate change growing, people were also asked if they were concerned about the environmental impact of the events, and the vast majority were indifferent, with only 1 in 10 holding any strong concerns and when asked whether people thought the bonfire was still needed, half of respondents (51%) said they expected there to be one, with only 17% feeling that it is no longer important.

When asking about the events themselves, the most well received event was that at King George V with 92.9 feeling positive or greater and 64% being very positive. Willenhall had a 50% positive response rate; however, the response rate was very low (just 8 people).

The Arboretum had a very mixed reception with 33% being very negative and 32% broadly positive. When looking in more detail, overcrowding was a key issue which meant that queues were too long for food and rides.

Overall (61%), people felt that the Council should organise bonfire and firework displays in the future.

8.0 Summary

Overall, the events were well run, were of good quality, were safe and offered value money. There were issues raised at the Arboretum that will need to be addressed in future years, most notably reducing the site limit, and increasing the food offer.

Staffing of the events worked particularly well, with the Healthy Spaces Team itself staffing all events along with casual staff recruited through Starting Point. The team quickly got to grips with the requirements for setting up, what needed to be done on the evening and taking down the events.

All income from the events was properly routed to Council accounts in good time. The online Ticket Source system worked well and it is clear that the public are now well versed in purchasing online, resulting in there being no need to provide cash sales in future.

Although there was significant competition from events around the region, the fact that bonfire night fell on the Saturday and that there had been very few events for the last two years due to Covid, meant that the public were out in force and almost all Saturday events were sold out. The good weather on the evenings also helped to ensure a good turn out and Walsall Council made a small profit for the first time.

Appendix 1: Bonfire and Firework 2022 Analysis

Appendix 2: Communications Summary of Communications Delivery for Bonfires Events 2022

Communication	Channel of distribution	Notes
Digital		
Website	Walsall Council website.	Updated regularly with link to purchase tickets.
Social media posts and tweets	Regular Facebook posts via Walsall Healthy Spaces Facebook and Walsall Arboretum. Shared from major Walsall Council Facebook accounts.	Boosted posts on Facebook helped to increase the reach of the messages. A total of £766 was spent on boosted posts throughout the promotion of the events.
Printed leaflets & posters		
A4 Posters	Leisure facility specific – identifying tickets available on site	8 produced
Media release		
Media release X2	Released via Council Comms and 'Newsroom' – pushed out to local press, radio, TV etc	The first media release was issued to announce dates, times & locations of events.
Radio		
None		
Outdoor promotion		
Vinyl Banners	Positioned outside parks / around park's hosting events.	14 banners created for the four events.
Correx Board A2 Posters	Posters around the parks on notice boards/ visitors centre etc	44 A2 correx boards produced for display in parks and on gates etc.
Internal Communications		
Internal Communications	Weekly Bulletin – x2 Arboretum promotion screens Newsroom	
Additional items		
QR code cards linking to TicketSource Ltd	To give to people in the queue who haven't purchased tickets.	Given out by gate supervisors on the night of each event (not needed in the end at Arboretum or Willenhall as both sold out)



Bonfire and Fireworks Survey 2022

Summary Analysis

Lee Harley

Public Health Intelligence



Walsall Council

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IMPROVE
outcomes and
customer experience



IMPROVE
employee satisfaction
and engagement



IMPROVE
service efficiency
and performance

Foreword

The Survey was produced through Walsall Council's implementation of CommonPlace.

Total Respondents of 168, split across 3 events:

- Friday 4th November – King George V Playing Fields, Bloxwich (***n = 34***)
- Saturday 5th November – Walsall Arboretum (***n = 93***)
- Sunday 6th November – Willenhall Memorial Park (***n = 11***)
- Did not attend an event or unspecified (***n = 30***)

Analysis has been performed by the Public Health Intelligence, with analysis prepared in R & Power Bi.



Caveats and limitations

Variable Number of Responses:

Please note that the Fireworks Survey undertook a new form of survey that is being experimented with. Not every question required an answer, therefore each question can have variable numbers of responses i.e. Question A may have 100 responses whereas Question B, just 65.

Willenhall feedback:

Willenhall Memorial Park's event received very little feedback: 11 responses total. Therefore when it is displayed here, those numbers are of limited use: it is purely for interest of the metrics aggregated across all events.

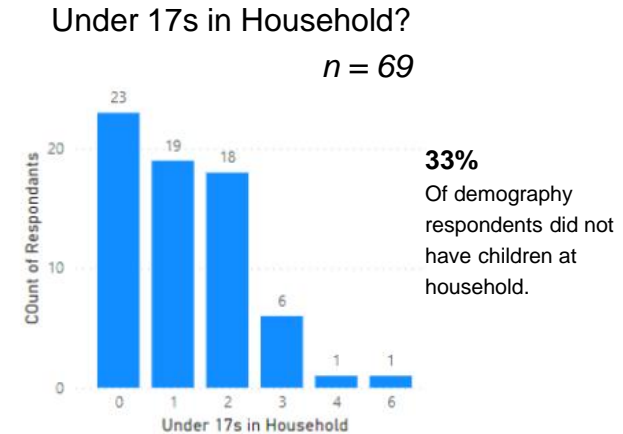
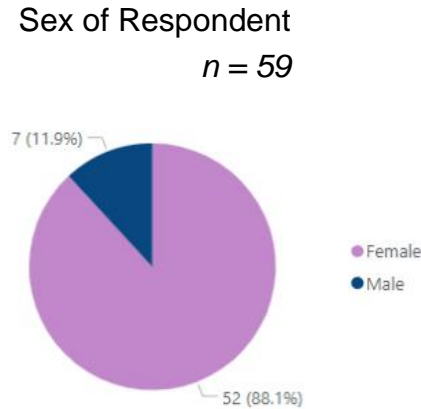
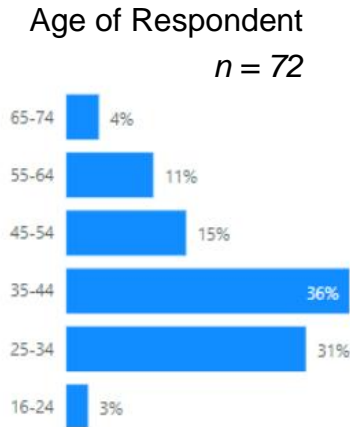
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Demography

Demographic data recorded was limited:

Just 35% of respondents (59 out of 168) filled out demographic data, largely incompletely, despite completing the main survey.

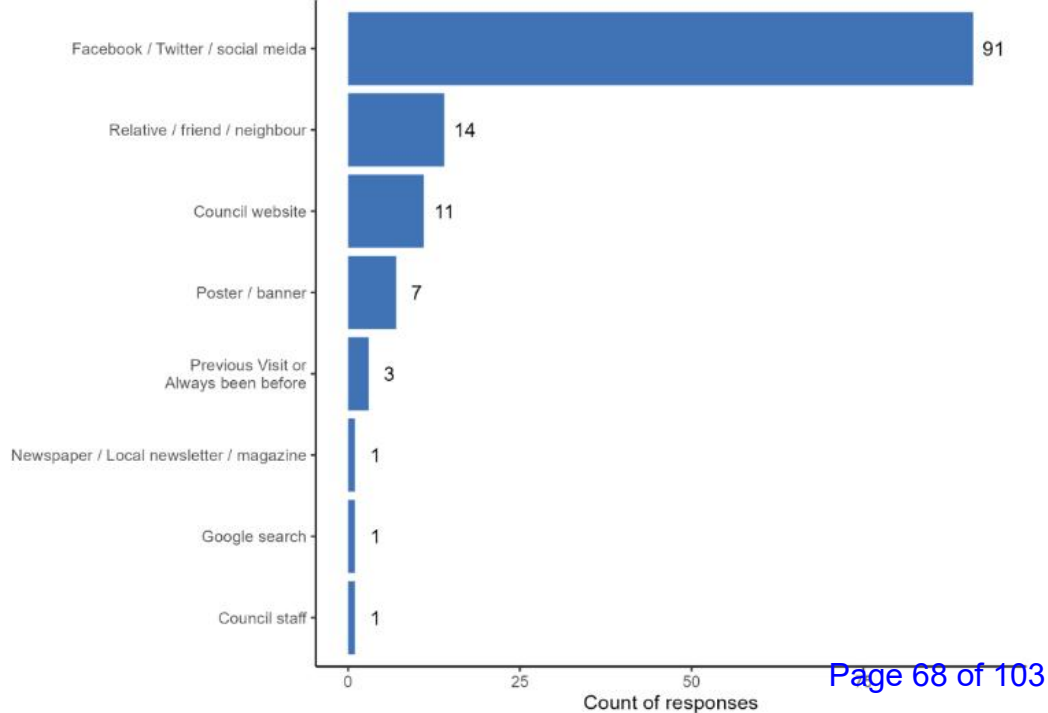
Suggested possible data-entry flow issue, hesitance to sign up for an account or general resistance to recording/anonymity (?)



Potential bias here however: possibly more representative of those who would be more likely to submit online feedback

Q: Where did you hear about the event?

Q: How did you find out about the event you attended?
Walsall Fireworks Survey - All Events 4th-6th November 2022



71% $n = 129$

Of respondents learned about events through Social Media.

Whilst Arboretum accounted for the bulk of these, Bloxwich and Willenhall also gained most of their attention through social media channels.

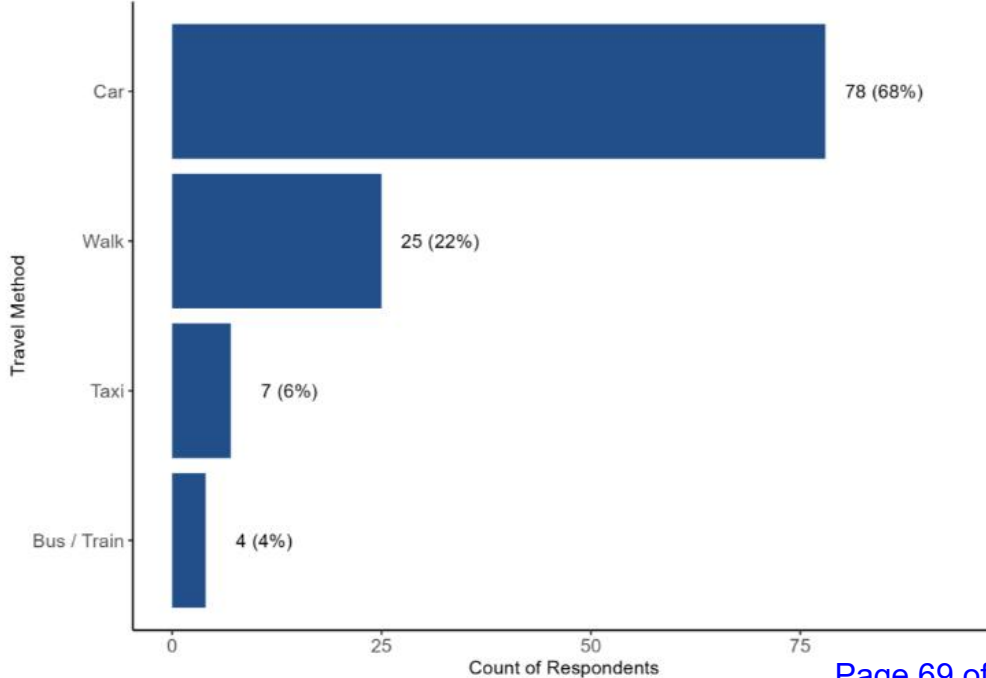
Within this survey, Social Media looks to be the most effective means of advertising events. It also potentially influenced other channels:

i.e. Relative/friend/neighbour, 2nd highest, could be partially derivative from the Social Media campaign.

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Q: How did you travel to the event?

Q: How did you travel to the bonfire and firework display?
Walsall Fireworks Survey - All Events 4th-6th November

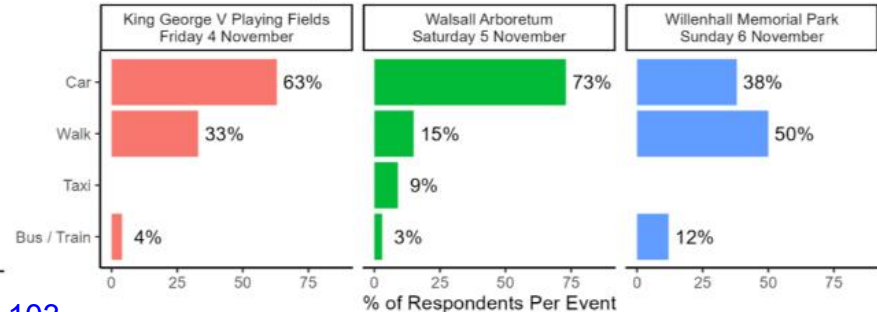


68%

Of respondents Travelled by Car, with the highest proportion of those journeys to the Arboretum.

Walking had greater relative popularity at the smaller Parks/events.

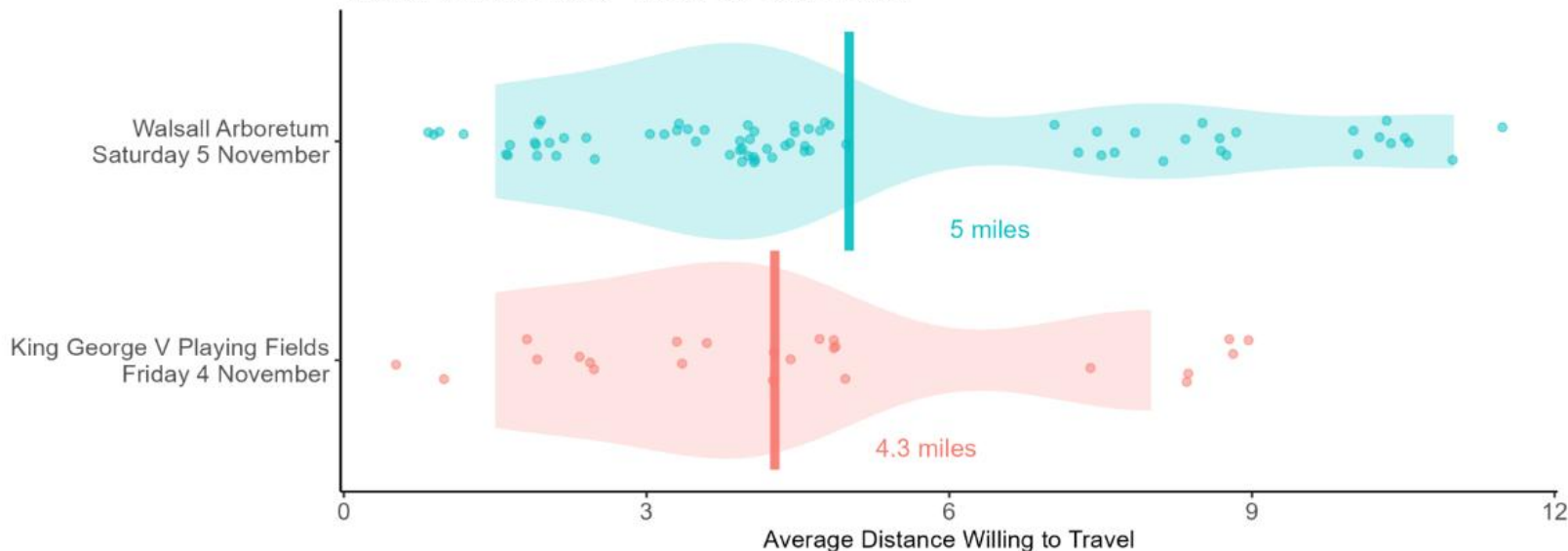
Q: How did you travel to the bonfire and firework display?
Walsall Fireworks Survey - All Events 4th-6th November



Q: Distance willing to travel to events?

Q: How far would you be willing to travel to attend a large organised fireworks display?

Walsall Fireworks Survey - Events 4th-6th November



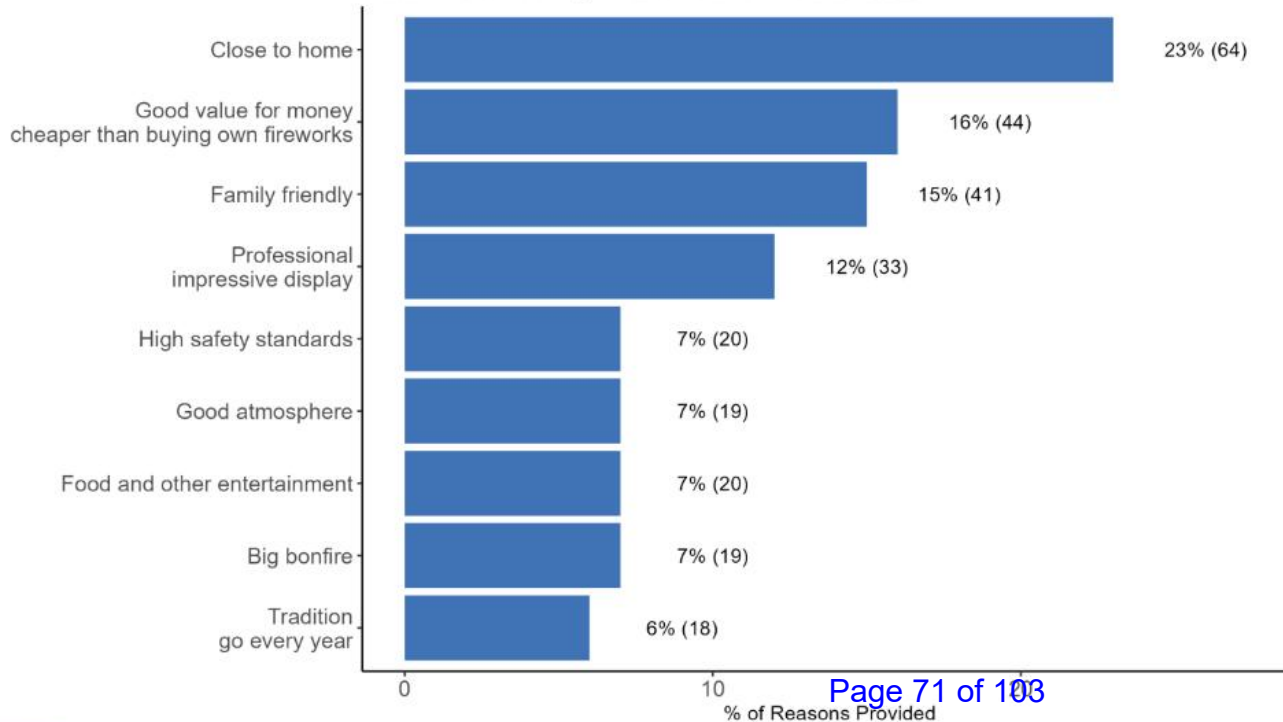
3-5 miles (up to 5 miles) is the mean distance respondents were willing to travel to events, with the arboretum having a wider reach, potentially due to it being the larger, more widely known venue.

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Q: What are the main reasons you attended the council organised bonfire and fireworks display this year?

Q: What are the main reasons you attended the council organised display this year??

Walsall Fireworks Survey - All Events 4th-6th November 2022



Local, family friendly events that are value for money / better than could be achieved at home.

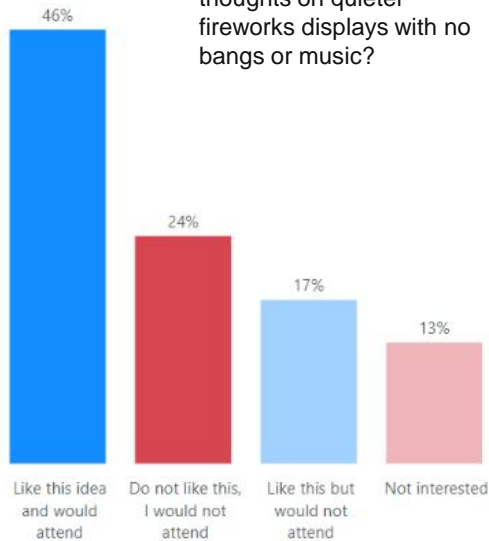
This was the same message across all individual events

Wider Impact Concerns

Quieter Displays

n = 139

Q: Considering the negative impact fireworks can have on some people and animals, what are your thoughts on quieter fireworks displays with no bangs or music?

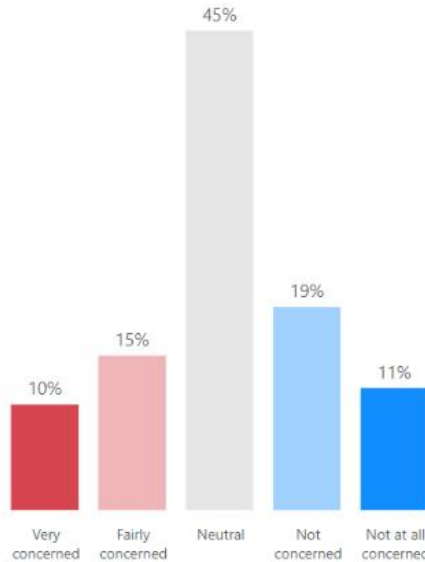


46% would prefer quieter displays, although the majority (54%) do not state enthusiasm to attend such events.

Environmental Impact

n = 131

Q: How concerned, if at all, are you about the impact bonfires / fireworks have on the environment?

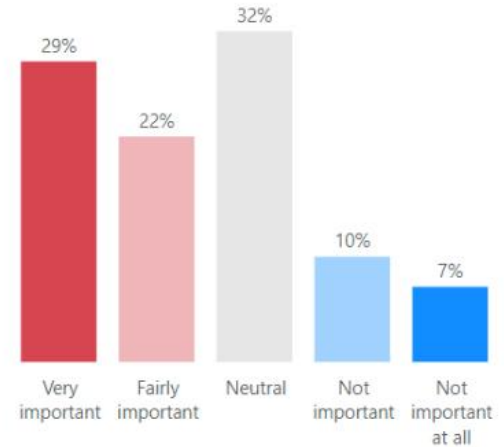


Largely indifferent. Only 1 in 10 hold strong environmental concerns.

Bonfire Necessary?

n = 138

Q: In terms of your enjoyment, how important or not is it to you that a bonfire is lit at fireworks display?



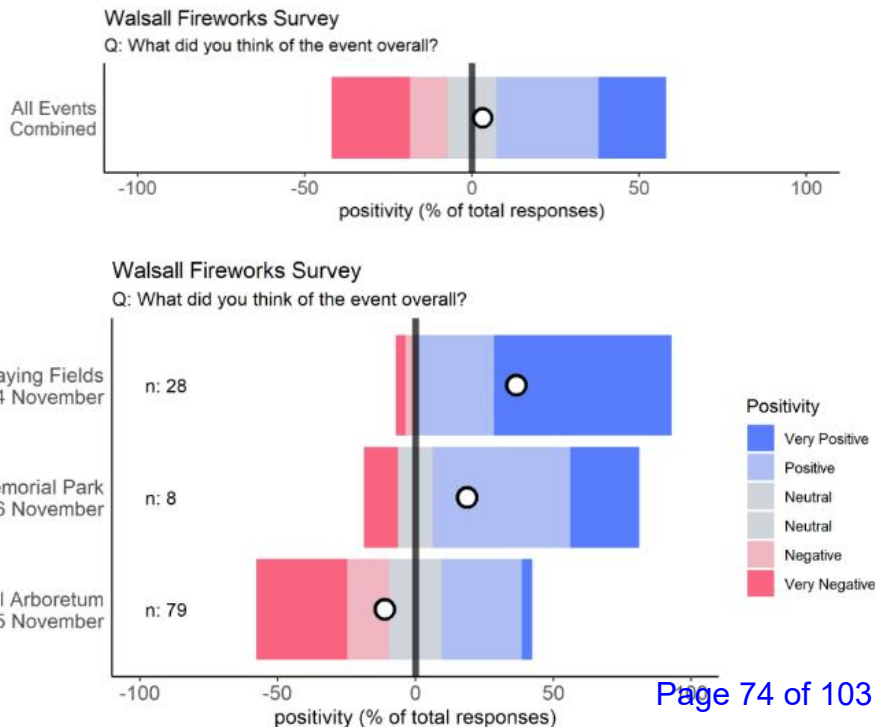
Half of respondents (51%) would expect a bonfire at an event, with only 17% (1 in 6) feeling that it is not important.

Feedback and Areas for Improvement



Q: What did you think of the event overall?

Positivity was balanced overall, but varied widely by individual event:



Arboretum

33% were Very Negative about the event (1 in 3).
32% were Broadly Positive about the event (1 in 3).

However the Very Negative responses pulled average reception towards negative overall (-11%).

We can read this as:

Mixed reception with a segment that strongly disliked it.

King George V

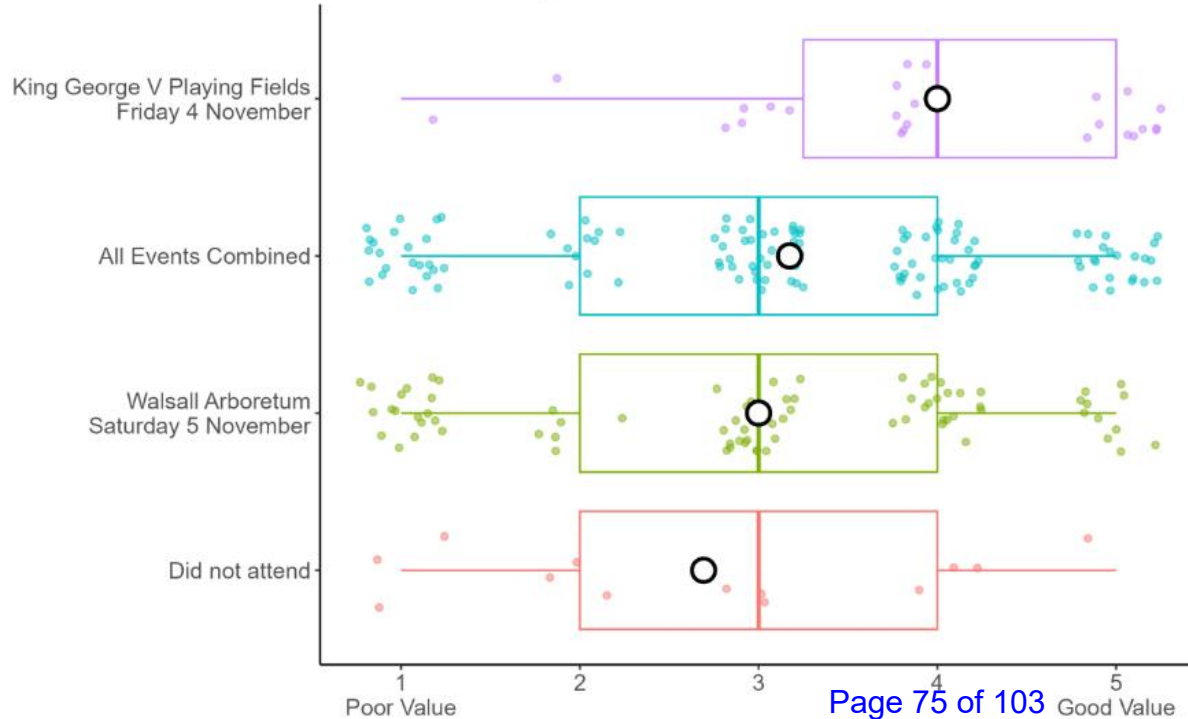
92.9% felt Positively or greater
64.3% (2 in 3) were Very Positive

Willenhall Memorial

50% had a positive response or greater,
although very few responses (8 people)

Q: To what extent do you think these prices offer value for money?

Q: To what extent do you think these prices offer value for money? (5 = Good)
Walsall Fireworks Survey - All Events 4th-6th November 2022



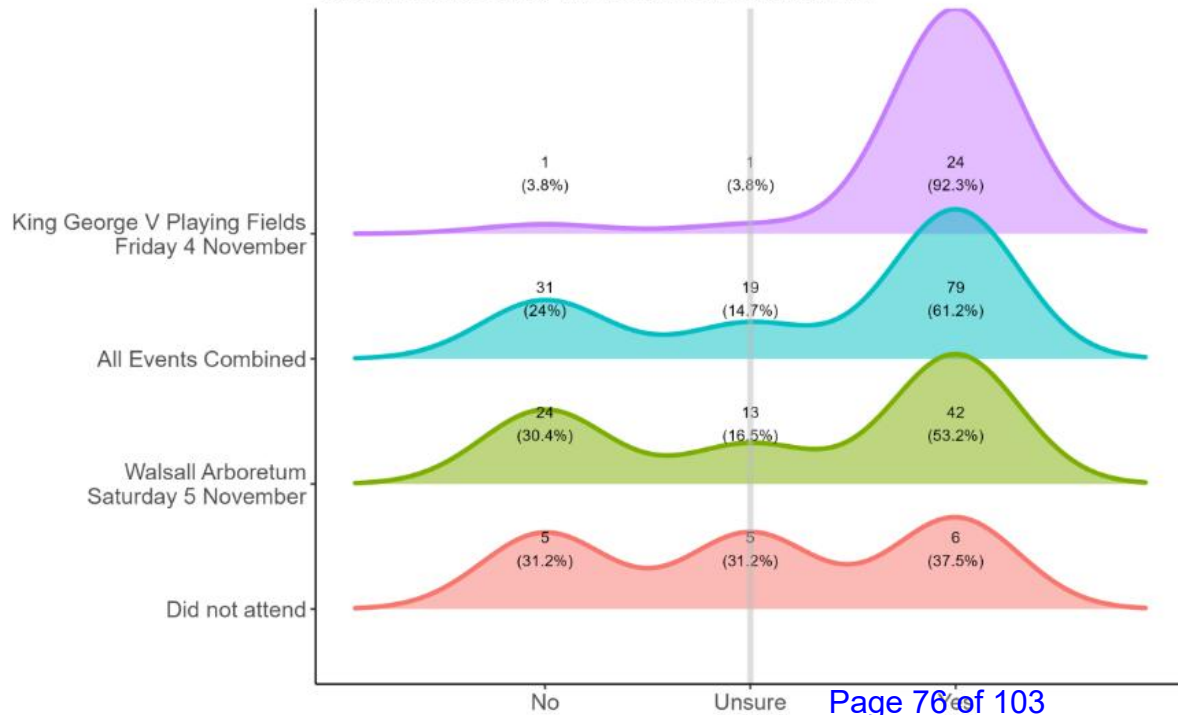
Overall, Walsall events rated as middling in terms of value (3 on a scale of 1 to 5).

Unsurprisingly perhaps, the highest rated event, Bloxwich, ranked the highest value for money

Those who did not attend averaged Value for Money as slightly poor value.

Q: Do you think Walsall Council should organise bonfire and firework displays in the future?

Q: Do you think Walsall Council should organise firework displays in the future?
Walsall Fireworks Survey - All Events 4th-6th November 2022



61%

Of respondents favoured Walsall hosting displays in future:

92%

Of those who went to the Kings Park (Bloxwich) display

53%

Of those who went to the Arboretum Display

Positive Comments Sample

Q: Do you think Walsall Council should organise bonfire and firework displays in the future? - Why do you say this:

Very good value, a lot cheaper than buying our own fireworks. Really good fireworks and enjoyed the music alongside. Kids enjoyed the fair too.

Because they are brilliant

A great night out. Thanks for organising. Appreciated by all I am sure.

It was well organized and security made me feel safe

Family and great community traditional event

It was really good, very happy there were so many options this year after missing a display for the last few years

I can't think of anything to improve, it was really well organised.

Council did a great job keeping everyone entertained and the fire work and music was the highlight. I had a great time so thank you.

I'm sad that the Council bonfire and fireworks events don't happen in Brownhills any longer, but Bloxwich wasn't too far to travel. The events are well organised and reasonably priced.

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Negative Comments Sample

Q: Do you think Walsall Council should organise bonfire and firework displays in the future? - Why do you say this:

Fireworks were a good display but in all was a let down, far too many people could get food, rides, lights or anything without queuing for at least over half an hour

Fireworks were great. However the rest of the event was pretty awful. Too many people with too few facilities.

They sold way too many tickets (10 thousand) it was dangerous! Couldnt move! Kids where getting trampled on! Rides where shocking! People arguing fighting to get on the rides

At most 6 food stands, 2 ice cream van, about 6 fair ground rides and a hand full of toilets to cater for 11.000.

Absolutely packed far to many people. Badly organised. We left and didn't even see the fireworks due to huge anxiety

Bonfire night is a great fun night out. But for an event that was sold out 9 toilets for everyone was a disgrace and not enough food stalls/rides. Queues too long.

Not enough food stalls or toilets for the amount of people

The amount of people there was very overwhelming, there was not enough food stalls, we had to wait 1 hour plus in a queue, not enough toilets, waited around 25 mins.

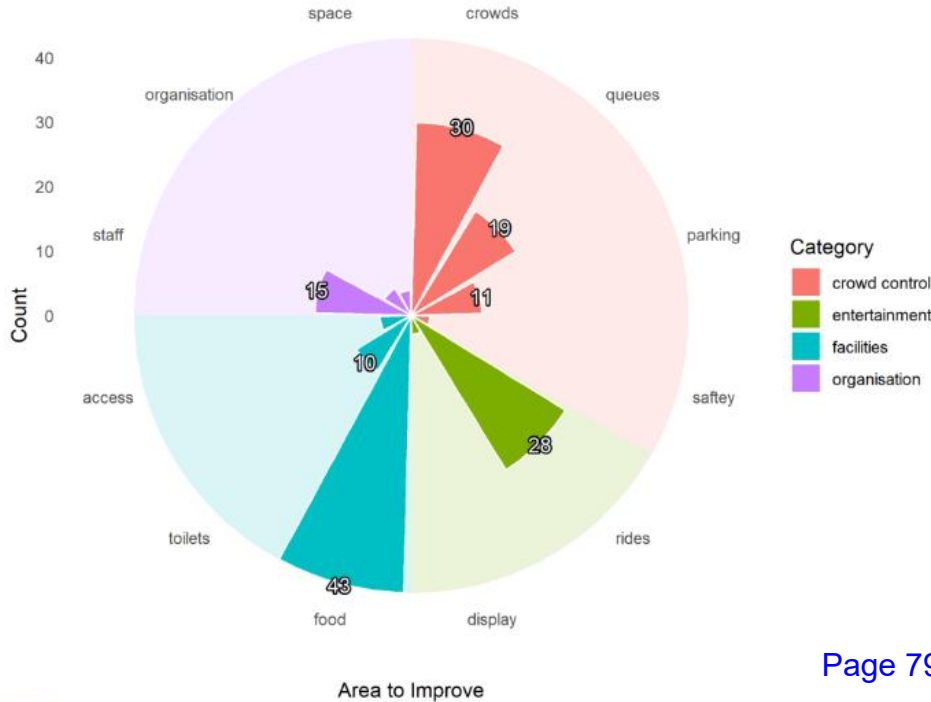
We did not feel safe - the parking was difficult -the fair and food were no good. I think there should just be one display in the towns main park with better security

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Arboretum: Areas for Improvement

Q: How might our bonfire and firework displays be improved in the future?
Walsall Fireworks Survey - Arboretum 5th Nov 2022

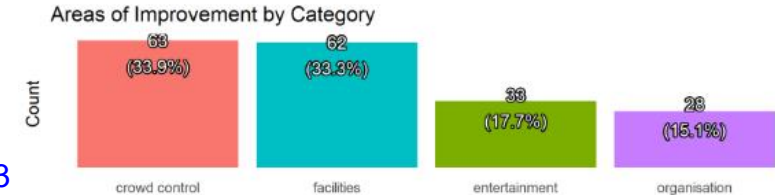


Feedback was very clear (75 respondents, 186 themes):

Overcrowding, and subsequent scarcity

This manifested in comments revolving

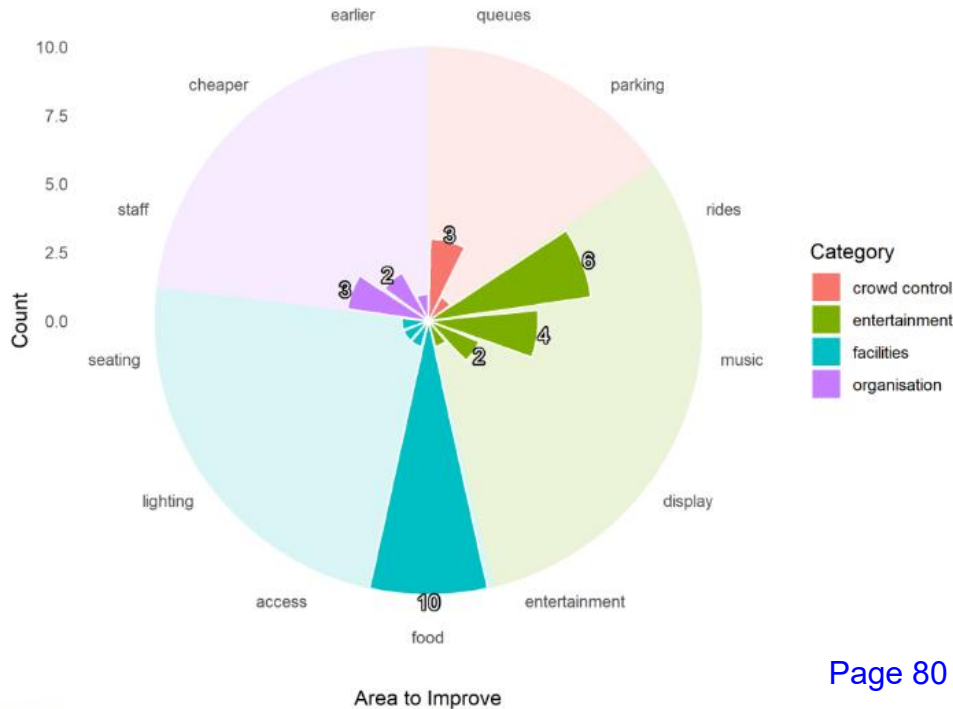
- 1) Overcrowding (n=63, 33%)
 - 1) Too many people / Queues too long
 - 2) Parking availability
 - 3) Safety, specifically young children
- 2) Food variety and scarcity
- 3) Ride variety and scarcity
- 4) Staff to marshal the event
- 5) Toilet availability



Bloxwich: Areas for Improvement

Q: How might our bonfire and firework displays be improved in the future?

Walsall Fireworks Survey - King George V Park - Bloxwich 4th Nov 2022

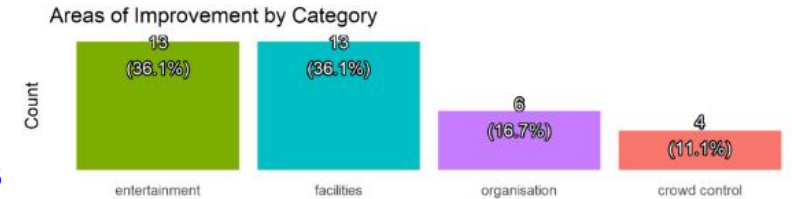


28 respondents, 36 Themes

Very little concern with overcrowding (contrasted to Arboretum)

Primary area for improvement was food: more stalls and cheaper prices

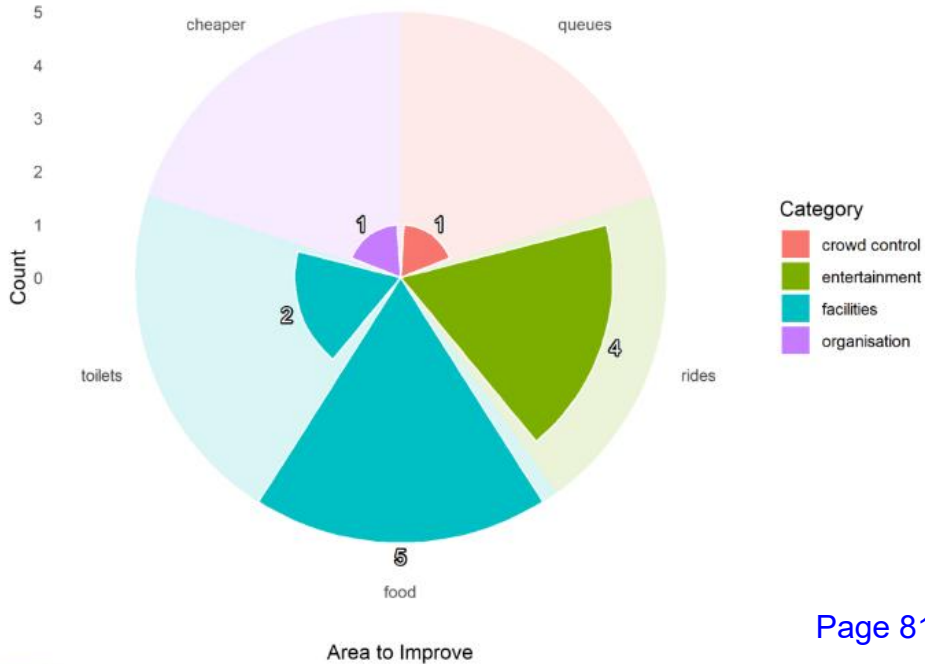
Small numbers interested in improved entertainment (rides, music).



Willenhall: Areas for Improvement

Q: How might our bonfire and firework displays be improved in the future?

Walsall Fireworks Survey - Willenhall Memorial Park 6th Nov 2022



Very little feedback and limited usability:
11 responses, few suggestions (13 themes)

Food: Variety, Availability

Rides: More, Better quality

Toilets: Availability

Social Media Reaction

Analysis courtesy of Walsall's Communication Team

37,200

Impressions
(Views)

2,200

Engagements
(Clicks/Shares)

1,960

Clicked Links

791

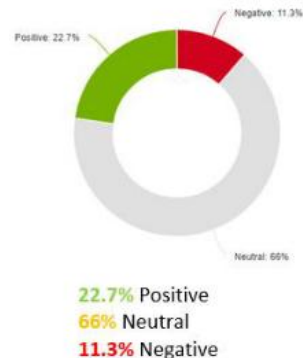
Video Views

- Engagements peaked on October 24th and November 3rd. On both occasions, event promo posts were shared. Engagements were heightened due to conversation in the post's comments around details of the events.
- Engagements and Impressions dropped off after November 10th. Since then, conversation around the Bonfire and Fireworks events has stopped.
- Social conversation around the events peaked between the 3rd and 6th November. Between these days, the 3 events took place, so this trend is to be expected.

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Sentiment

*Sentiment of social conversations around 'Walsall Bonfire'



Comments WordCloud:



Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Area of Focus – 2022/23

Committee responsible for all aspects and general services related to the economy and environment including:
 Responsibility of scrutiny of flood risk management functions which may affect the Local Authority's area as required by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010

Agenda Items							
Theme	7 July 2022	29 September 2022	20 October 2022	24 November 2022	2 February 2023	28 February 2023	13 April 2023
Economy		LEP Report	Bus Network Update		Willenhall and Darlaston, Aldridge Railway Stations	Willenhall Framework Plan	Phoenix 10
Environment	Petition regarding pedestrian crossing on Birmingham Road, Aldridge	Cemetery Maintenance	Street Scene Strategy	Off-road Bikes	Bonfires		The Council's Waste Strategy – new HWRC and Transfer Station
Cross cutting both Economy and Environment	Areas of Focus Portfolio Holder Presentations	Portfolio Holder Presentations – Cllrs Andrew and Perry		Town Centre Regeneration Update Quarter 2 Budget monitoring	Budget		

Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Area of Focus – 2022/23

And the scrutinising of performance in relation to the relevant priority in the Council Plan: Enable greater local opportunities for all people, communities and businesses.

*Quarter 1 and Quarter 3 Financial reports will be circulated via e-mail to Members of the Committee and will not form part of the Committee's Agenda.

Items to be scheduled:

1. District Town Centres Update;
 2. Partnership working with West Midlands Police on traffic speed enforcement.
 3. West Midlands Local Transport Plan
 4. Derelict Properties Taskforce – Written Update
-
- An update on Walsall's Heritage strategy

Items suggested for next municipal year:

1. Derelict Properties Taskforce



Walsall Council

FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

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

9 January 2023

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
FEBRUARY 2023 TO MAY 2023 (09.01.23)**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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
141/22 (10.10.22)	<p>Corporate Financial Performance 2022/23:</p> <p>To report the financial position based on 9 months to December 2022, including the impact of Covid-19.</p>	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Non-key decision</p>	<p>Vicky Buckley</p> <p>Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Corporate Management Team and Internal Services</p>	<p>Cllr Bird</p>	<p>8 February 2023</p>
142/22 (10.10.22)	<p>Corporate Budget Plan 2023/24 – 2026/27, incorporating the Capital Strategy and the Treasury Management and investment Strategy 2023/24:</p> <p>To recommend the final budget and council tax for approval by Council.</p>	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Council</p> <p>Key decision</p>	<p>Vicky Buckley</p> <p>Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Council tax payers, business rate payers, voluntary and community organisations</p> <p>Internal Services</p>	<p>Cllr Bird</p>	<p>8 February 2023</p> <p>Council 23 February 2023</p>
150/22 (7.11.22)	<p>Payments Project Contract Award:</p> <p>To award a contract to Capita/Pay360 Ltd (soon to be Access Group Ltd) for the provision of Pay 360 Licences and Capita/Pay360 Ltd services.</p>	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Key Decision</p>	<p>Janice Freeman-Phillips</p> <p>Janice.Freeman-Phillips@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Internal Services</p>	<p>Cllr Bird</p>	<p>8 February 2023</p>

155/22 (7.11.22)	<p>Council Plan: Review of Achievements 2021/22:</p> <p>To note the Review of Achievements for 2021/22, highlighting successes and progress towards achieving our Council priorities.</p>	<p>Cabinet Non-key decision</p>	<p>Meresh Kumari (meresh.kumari@walsall.gov.uk)</p> <p>Elizabeth Connolly (elizabeth.connolly@walsall.gov.uk)</p>	Internal Services	Cllr Bird	8 February 2023
7/23 (9.1.23)	<p>TUPE transfer of Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership Economic Intelligence Team:</p> <p>To consider the transfer of the Black Country LEP Economic Intelligence Team to Walsall Council.</p>	<p>Cabinet Key Decision</p>	<p>Stephen Gunther (Stephen.Gunther@walsall.gov.uk)</p>	Internal Services	Cllr Bird	8 February 2023
107/22 (6.6.22)	<p>Procurement of Corporate Landlord Strategic Partner:</p> <p>To seek approval to the appointment of a strategic partner to support the programme of capital schemes related to the council's property portfolio.</p>	<p>Cabinet Key Decision</p>	<p>Nick Ford (Nick.Ford@walsall.gov.uk)</p>	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	8 February 2023
1/23 (9.1.23)	<p>Derelict Sites Intervention:</p> <p>That various key derelict sites be appraised and prioritised for intervention and that authority be delegated to pursue Compulsory Purchase Orders where appropriate.</p> <p><i>This will be a private report containing exempt information.</i></p>	<p>Cabinet Key Decision</p>	<p>Philippa Venables (Philippa.Venables@walsall.gov.uk)</p>	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	8 February 2023

129/22 (5.9.22)	Update on Resilient Communities Safer Streets Programme: To report back on Safer Streets activity and recommend any adjustments/additions to the programme.	Cabinet Non-key Decision	Paul Gordon Paul.Gordon@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Perry	8 February 2023
8/23 (9.1.22)	We Are Walsall 2040: To consider the draft We are Walsall 2040 strategy and consultation framework.	Cabinet Key Decision	Karen Griffiths Karen.Griffiths@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Perry	8 February 2023
151/22 (7.11.22)	Introduction of Council Tax Premium on unoccupied but furnished properties: Levy the premium on properties that are unoccupied and unfurnished for more than 12 months. Effective from 1 April 24	Cabinet Council Key Decision	Mark Fearn Mark.Fearn@walsall.gov.uk	Part of budget consultation	Cllr Ali	8 February 2023 Council 23 February 2023
156/22 (7.11.22)	Healthy Lifestyles Contract and Smoking Cessation Contract Extensions: To delegate authority to the Director of Public Health and the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing. This will allow them to extend contracts on behalf of the Council and to subsequently authorise the variations to the contractual arrangements for the services should this be required at any time during the term, in line with Public Contract Regulations and the Council's Contract Rules.	Cabinet Key Decision	Joe Holding Joe.Holding@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Flint	8 February 2023

2/23 (9.1.23)	<p>Adult Social Care Market Sustainability Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To consider the outputs of Phase 2 Fair Cost of Care Exercise in Walsall and note the potential implications for Adult Social Care fee rate setting and budgets. 2. To note the content of the final Market Sustainability Plan briefing paper. 3. To seek delegated authority for the Portfolio holder, Adult Social Care and the Executive Director, Adult Social Care to approve the final Market Sustainability Plan submission to Department for Health and Social Care. 	Cabinet Key Decision	Tony Meadows Tony.Meadows@walsall.gov.uk	Adult Social Care service providers Internal Services Local Integrated Care Board	Cllr Pedley	8 February 2023
3/23 (9.1.23)	<p>Determination of the Scheme for coordinated admissions, and the Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary Schools for the 2022/23 academic year:</p> <p>To approve the Scheme for coordinated admissions and the Admission Arrangements for Community and</p>	Cabinet Key Decision	Alex Groom Alex.Groom@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Statham	8 February 2023

	Voluntary Controlled Primary Schools for the 2022/23 academic year:					
152/22 (7.11.22)	<p>Renewal of the Council's Oracle Cloud Licenses:</p> <p>To renew the Council's Oracle cloud Licenses required for the operation of the Council's One Source system for HR, Payroll, Finance and Procurement from May 2023</p>	Cabinet Key Decision	Ian Tuft Ian.Tuft@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Bird Cllr Ferguson	22 March 2023
162/22 (5.12.22)	<p>Approval of the Black Country Joint Committee Collaboration Agreement:</p> <p>Delegate authority to the Executive Director for Resources and Transformation to enter into legal agreements with WMCA relating to BC LEP Legacy funds.</p>	Cabinet Key Decision	Kelly Valente Kelly.Valente@walsall.gov.uk	Internal services	Cllr Bird	22 March 2023
145/22 (7.11.22)	<p>Town Centre Theatre Project:</p> <p>To agree next steps for the Town Deal Theatre project, setting out funding implications and options.</p> <p><i>This will be a private session report containing commercially sensitive information.</i></p>	Cabinet Key Decision	Philippa Venables Philippa.Venables@walsall.gov.uk	Internal services	Cllr Andrew	22 March 2023
4/23 (9.1.23)	<p>West Midlands Local Transport Plan Settlement and Transport Capital Programme 2023/24:</p> <p>To approve the West Midlands Local Transport Plan Settlement and Transport Capital Programme 2023/24.</p>	Cabinet Key Decision	Matt Crowton Matt.Crowton@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	22 March 2023

5/23 (9.1.23)	Sandwell Local Plan – Issues and Options Consultation: To approve Walsall’s response to the Sandwell Local Plan consultation.	Cabinet Key Decision	Neville Ball neville.ball@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	22 March 2023
153/22 (7.11.22)	Walsall’s Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022 to 2027: To approve Walsall’s Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, 2022 to 2027.	Cabinet Key Decision	Neil Hollyhead Neil.HollyHead@walsall.gov.uk	Internal services, service users, external stakeholders	Cllr Ali	22 March 2023
6/23 (9.1.23)	Borough Playing Pitch Strategy: To adopt and publish the Walsall Playing pitches strategy and the Black Country strategic framework	Cabinet Key Decision	Liz Stuffins Liz.Stuffins@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Flint	22 March 2023
140/22 (10.10.22)	High Needs Funding Formula: To approve changes to the High Needs Funding Formula, as agreed by Schools Forum, to be used for the allocation of Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block to schools in Walsall for the 2023/24 financial year	Cabinet Key Decision	Richard Walley Richard.Walley@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services, Schools Forum	Cllr M. Statham	22 March 2023
154/22 (7.11.22)	Early Years Funding Formula: That Cabinet approves the Early Years Formula, as agreed by Schools Forum, to be used for the allocation of funding to early years providers in Walsall	Cabinet Key Decision	Richard Walley Richard.Walley@walsall.gov.uk	Schools Forum Internal Services	Cllr M. Statham	22 March 2023

Black Country Executive Joint Committee
Forward Plan of Key Decisions Published up to May 2023

Date Created	Key Decision	Contact Officer	Main consultee	Date of meeting
	Land and Property Investment Fund (LPIF)			
03/10/2022	<p>Willenhall Garden City - Phase 1 (Moat Street and Villiers Street)</p> <p>Approval for the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) to proceed to enter into internal Grant Agreement with Walsall Council, to deliver the BCLEP funded elements of the Willenhall Garden City – Phase 1 (Moat street and Villiers Street) with delivery to commence in the 2023/24 financial year.</p>	<p>Simon Neilson Simon.neilson@walsall.gov.uk</p>	Walsall Council	01/02/2023
03/10/2022	<p>Dudley Brownfield Land Programme</p> <p>Approval for the Accountable Body for the Land and Property Investment Fund (Walsall Council) to proceed to enter into a Grant Agreement with Dudley Council, to deliver the</p>	<p>Helen Martin Helen.Martin@dudley.gov.uk</p>	Dudley Council	01/02/2023

Date Created	Key Decision	Contact Officer	Main consultee	Date of meeting
	Land and Property Investment Fund (LPIF), funded elements of the Dudley Brownfield Land Programme with delivery to commence in the 2023/24 financial year.			
07/11/2022	<p>Wolverhampton Stowheath Redevelopment for Housing</p> <p>Approval for the Accountable Body for the Land and Property Investment Fund (Walsall Council) to proceed to enter into a Grant Agreement with Wolverhampton City Council, to deliver the Land and Property Investment Fund (LPIF), funded elements of the Stowheath Redevelopment for Housing project with delivery to commence in the 2023/24 financial year.</p>	<p>Richard Lawrence Richard.Lawrence@wolverhampton.gov.uk</p>	<p>City of Wolverhampton Council</p>	<p>01/02/2023</p>
	Non-Key Decision	Growing Places Fund Delegated Authority for Noting		

Date Created	Key Decision	Contact Officer	Main consultee	Date of meeting
05/12/2022	<p>Dudley Zoo Visitor and Education Centre Development Phase Project</p> <p>To note that the Executive Director for Economy, Environment and Communities within Walsall Council in his role of the Chair of the Working Group has used his Delegated Authority to approve the Accountable Body for the Growing Places Fund (Walsall Council) to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with the Dudley and West Midlands Zoological Society Ltd, to deliver the Growing Places Fund (GPF) funded elements of the Dudley Zoo Visitor and Education Centre Development Phase project with delivery to commence in the 2022/23 financial year.</p>	<p>Simon Neilson Simon.neilson@walsall.gov.uk</p>	Walsall Council	01/02/2023
	Non-Key Decision	Black Country Growth Hub for Noting		

Date Created	Key Decision	Contact Officer	Main consultee	Date of meeting
05/12/2022	<p>Black Country Growth Hub</p> <p>To note that the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) has received Walsall Council's Cabinet approval to proceed to a Grant Agreement to the value of £231,000, with the Black Country Consortium Ltd to deliver the Black Country Growth Hub Funding for 2022/2023.</p>	<p>Simon Neilson Simon.neilson@walsall.gov.uk</p>	Walsall Council	01/02/2023
	<p>Black Country Executive Joint Committee Governance</p>			
05/12/2022	<p>Approval of the Black Country Joint Committee Collaboration Agreement</p> <p>Approval of future arrangements for the Black Country Joint Committee, and approval of the revised Black Country Joint Committee Collaboration Agreement setting out how</p>	<p>Simon Neilson Simon.neilson@walsall.gov.uk</p>	Walsall Council	19/04/2023

Date Created	Key Decision	Contact Officer	Main consultee	Date of meeting
	legacy funds, including Enterprise Zones, will be dealt with.			
	Land and Property Investment Fund (LPIF)			
05/12/2022	<p>Music Institute - Cable Plaza Site (Main Scheme)</p> <p>Approval for the Accountable Body for the Land and Property Investment Fund (Walsall Council) to proceed to amending its Grant Agreement with Dudley Council, to deliver the Land and Property Investment Fund (LPIF), funded elements of the Music Institute - Cable Plaza Site (Main Scheme) project.</p>	<p>Helen Martin Helen.Martin@dudley.gov.uk</p>	Dudley Council	19/04/2023

WEST MIDLANDS COMBINED AUTHORITY FORWARD PLAN: FEBRUARY 2023 - JULY 2023

Title of Report	Summary of purpose and recommendations	Lead Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	Confidential	Category
Meeting 10 February 2023					
Regional Activity & Delivery Update	Purpose: To provide an update on the activity and delivery across the region since the last meeting.	n/a	Laura Shoaf	No	n/a
Review of the West Midlands Growth Company	Purpose: To review the West Midlands Growth Company.	n/a	Julie Nugent	No	Governance
WMCA Budget 2023/234	Purpose: To approve the WMCA's 2023/24 budget.	Cllr Bob Sleigh	Linda Horne	No	Finance
Race Equalities Taskforce Action Plan	Purpose: To approve the action plan.	Cllr Kerrie Carmichael	Ed Cox	No	Inclusive Communities
Local Transport Plan	Purpose:	Cllr Ian Ward	Anne Shaw	No	Transport
Wednesbury - Brierley Hill Metro Extension Funding Mitigation Measures	Purpose: To consider the latest progress in securing the mitigation measures for addressing the funding gap identified for phase 1 of the project and to close the funding gap for the full scheme.	Cllr Ian Ward	Linda Horne	Yes	Transport

Title of Report	Summary of purpose and recommendations	Lead Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	Confidential	Category
Meeting 24 March 2023					
Regional Activity & Delivery Update	Purpose: To provide an update on the activity and delivery across the region since the last meeting.	n/a	Laura Shoaf	No	n/a
Financial Monitoring 2022/23	Purpose: To outline the latest financial position of WMCA and provide an update on any current financial matters affecting WMCA.	Cllr Bob Sleigh	Linda Horne	No	Finance
Inclusive Communities Strategy	Purpose: To agree the scope and design of a programme.	Cllr Kerrie Carmichael	Ed Cox	No	Inclusive Communities
City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement - Metro Line 1 Business Case	Purpose: To consider the business case for essential renewal work to core elements of the existing line, including sections of key systems to ensure they continued to function correctly and avoided interruption to the service on the current routes.	Cllr Ian Ward	Anne Shaw	No	Transport
Meeting 9 June 2023					
Regional Activity & Delivery Update	Purpose: To provide an update on the activity and delivery across the region since the last meeting.	n/a	Laura Shoaf	No	n/a
Appointment of WMCA Boards and Committees 2023/24	Purpose: To approve consider the appointments to boards, chairs and meetings dates for 2023/24.	n/a	Satish Mistry	No	Governance

Title of Report	Summary of purpose and recommendations	Lead Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	Confidential	Category
Overview & Scrutiny Committee Annual Report	Purpose: To consider a report setting out the activity of overview & scrutiny during 2022/23.	n/a	Satish Mistry	No	Governance
Financial Monitoring 2022/23	Purpose: To outline the latest financial position of WMCA and provide an update on any current financial matters affecting WMCA.	Cllr Bob Sleigh	Linda Horne	No	Finance
Meeting July 2023					
Regional Activity & Delivery Update	Purpose: To provide an update on the activity and delivery across the region since the last meeting.	n/a	Laura Shoaf	No	n/a
Financial Monitoring 2022/23	Purpose: To outline the latest financial position of WMCA and provide an update on any current financial matters affecting WMCA.	Cllr Bob Sleigh	Linda Horne	No	Finance

Committee Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Action/Recommendation	Officer responsible	Status	Target Completion Date	Notes
7 July 2022	Response to petition: 'Pedestrian Crossing for Birmingham Road, Aldridge, enabling the safety of school children'	S106 funding schemes in Aldridge to be reviewed to see if any funding could be secured for the crossing in this way.	Katie Moreton	Completed		The Development Monitoring Officer who starts on 3 October will provide improved resource to review this matter. Unlikely that previous S106 funds can be used as each S106 specifies what works the obligations are to cover as it has to be related specifically to the development proposed.
20 October 2022	Urgent Item: Bus Matters – Bus Network Update	Presentation and report be circulated to all Members of the Council.	Sian Lloyd	Completed		Sent out by email 21/10/2022.
24 November 2022	Off-Road Bikes	The Committee recommends Cabinet to investigate the acquisition of a drone or drone service for community protection to use in conjunction with West Midlands Police.	Sian Lloyd/Simon Neilson	In progress		Report to be discussed at Cabinet on 8 February.