

# Review of Achievements 2017



Walsall Council

## Introduction

The council has faced some very challenging times but there is much to be proud of. The end of year provides an opportunity to reflect on some of the key achievements delivered over the last 12 months.

As a council we need to have a strong understanding of all the communities we serve and of what matters most to them. This is the foundation of our Corporate Priorities, articulated in our Corporate Plan, refreshed in February 2018.

During the last 12 months we have reflected on these priorities and how the council has set about delivering them.

The LGA Corporate Peer Challenge process has informed the addition of a 5th priority focussing on improving how we operate. It will ensure our transformation ambitions are fit for purpose.



## Economic Growth

for all people, communities and businesses.

### **2017-2020 wording Pursue inclusive economic growth:**

*Walsall people will have appropriate skills and access to jobs so economic benefits are felt in each of our communities.*

In 2017 Walsall Council approved £2million of additional investment into its Inclusive Economic Growth Programme, bringing together a range of funding and focussing this on the delivery of outcomes for local people and businesses.

## Employment

Walsall Works, part of Walsall Council was launched in 2012 and over the past 6 years, has contacted over 4300 local people, achieving a range of valuable outcomes for Walsall people of all ages. The last year has seen 362 people supported into employment and over 600 people supported with employability skills. There has also been an increased focus to support young care leavers and 4 looked after children have recently commenced apprenticeships.

The highly successful, Walsall Expo events provide prospective candidates with a range of training and employment opportunities. Working in partnership with training agencies, schools, colleges and employers is key to our continued success.

The Walsall Works team provide vital support to business investing in the borough through meet the employer events that match local people to real job opportunities, together with any training or support they need to gain the best chance of success. Recent examples include opening a new store (Primark), leisure centre / facility (Light Cinema) or factory (JLR).

The Black Country Impact Programme started in July 2016 and is a jointly funded European Union / UK Government Youth Employment Initiative that aims to support 16 – 29 year olds who are Not in Employment, Education or Training into positive outcomes. Since then 2403 people have enrolled, with 1137 recruited and supported, and during the last year 317 moving into a positive outcome. Collaborative working across all Walsall Council directorates and with partners has enabled 40% of all participants achieving a positive outcome ranging from securing a work experience or training placement to moving directly into employment.

As a result of working together through Walsall Works and Impact, Walsall Council and its partners have made real and evidenced reductions in unemployment claimant levels over the past 5 years. Walsall's claimant rate as a % of the working age (16-64) population is lower than all neighbouring Black Country authorities.

Although ahead of the Black Country claimant rate at 3.6%, there is still work to do if we are to close the gap with the National rate at 2.0% as Walsall's claimant rate as a % of the working age (16-64) population currently sits at 3.0% (NOMIS Feb 2018).

## Business Support

Support continues to be provided to existing businesses, as well as start-up businesses, helping them to grow and expand. With our top 6 Walsall-registered strategic companies generating a combined turnover of £5 billion, including Poundland, A F Blackmore and One Stop Stores Ltd, and another 13 companies generating more than £100m turnover per annum, establishing links and planned outreach has been a key priority. The Employment Growth Team has also engaged with Walsall-based businesses from a range of sectors, both delivering ERDF and VIEW funded programmes, recording over 1000 business engagements. Our support for businesses includes securing 23 grants for Walsall projects through the Black Country Growth Hub from the Black Country Transformational EU funded GOLD programme, totalling almost £300k, drawing in £685,000 of private sector investment and creating 52 additional jobs.

Investment in the development and delivery of high-quality housing, employment and commercial schemes together with integrated transport links is central to supporting Walsall's economic growth agenda.

## Local Plans

Statutory 'Local Plans' are vital to ensure a sufficient supply of land and premises whilst protecting the environment and providing the basis for the council's decisions on Planning Applications.

The council submitted its Site Allocation Document (SAD) and Walsall Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) to the Secretary of State in June 2017. The Planning Inspectorate lead an Examination in Public of each plan in September and October respectively. Consultation on a number of main modifications is on-going until April 2018. If the plans are considered 'sound' they will be adopted following formal approval from Full Council.

Covering the period up to 2026, the plans propose sites for about 4,000 new dwellings and seek to safeguard and make available around 650ha of employment land, as well as 7,500 sqm of new retailing and 73,000 sqm of offices in Walsall Town Centre.

## Black Country Core Strategy

Alongside progressing plans for Walsall, together with the Black Country authorities, the Review of the Black Country Core Strategy has commenced with the 'Issues and Options' consultation completed. The review will plan for the Black Country's future development needs up to 2036; addressing new challenges and opportunities and making sure that investment is attracted to create jobs and wealth across the area. Addressing housing need, whilst sustaining employment opportunities, will be a key issue of the review with additional sites needed to meet growing demand.

## The Walsall Pipeline

As identified in the Walsall Local Plan and the Strategic Economic Plans for the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Walsall has an established development pipeline of projects to deliver the borough's strategic priorities to provide new homes, jobs and employment/ commercial floor space.

Moving forward, the majority of the pipeline requires public sector intervention and funding to aid and accelerate delivery largely due to historic ground condition and below ground viability. Over the last year, the council has been working closely with the BC LEP, WMCA and the investor market with regard to the level of investment required to deliver the pipeline.

More recently work has commenced with the WMCA about Walsall's 'top' priority pipeline schemes that have a financial contribution requirement totalling £250m and have the potential to deliver:

- 1500 new jobs
- 83,522sqm of new employment floor space
- 25.4ha of land remediated
- 532 new homes.

In addition, the £350m West Midlands Housing Deal announcement also formed part of the Government's Spring Statement; of which £100m has been allocated to accelerate housing delivery in the Walsall to Wolverhampton corridor, including pipeline sites between Willenhall and the Town Centre including Darlaston, Pleck and Birchills, totalling around 2500 units.

## Walsall Town Centre

In 2017 the council acquired the Saddlers Centre as part of its growing retail investment portfolio. As well as a strategic investment, the acquisition provides the council with a real point of control of a key town centre asset to proactively support regeneration in the town centre, link with the HS2 connectivity and stations programme, and enhance the key gateways at Station Street, Park Street and Bradford Place.

Also in the town centre, the £14m 'The Quarter' retail development is complete providing over 8,000sqm of new floorspace. In total the scheme is estimated to bring in an excess of 300 new jobs and complements previous investment driven by the council in the Old Square development (Primark and Co-op).

Planning consent has also been granted for Wisemore Central – a £9million scheme which includes a 60-bed Travelodge hotel, plus restaurant and retail/commercial uses- having secured £6.9m loan funding from the WMCA through successful partnership working.

Construction work is scheduled to start on site in spring 2018 and will create more than 100 jobs when complete. Within the ring road corridor, demolition consent was granted earlier this year for the former Green Lane police station which will enable future redevelopment thereafter.



## Walsall Waterfront

To complement the £12m Walsall Waterfront cinema and restaurant development completed in 2016, an additional £2m has been invested in the delivery of a further four restaurants units (900sqm), including Creams (independent) and Subway. Together with the refurbishment of Wharfingers Cottage into a new restaurant, these developments have significantly enhanced Walsall Waterfront as a leisure destination and widened the evening economy of the town centre, as well as creating new jobs for Walsall people. Site remediation works have also been completed this year at the adjoining former Lex site through £150k Local Growth funding, with proposals to develop the site being considered.

## Black Country Enterprise Zone

Delivery of sites within the Darlaston element of the Black Country Enterprise Zone in and around M6 Junction 10 offers a significant opportunity to deliver high quality employment uses on existing vacant brownfield land.

The 18ha Phoenix 10 Enterprise Zone site is the largest employment opportunity in the borough; capable of delivering circa 620,000sqft of employment uses and around 1100 jobs.

A key milestone has been reached in the Phoenix 10 project where, following a developer procurement process by the land owners (the council and Homes England), Henry Boot Developments Ltd have been announced as the preferred partner for the site.

Significant investment decisions have also been taken by the council to acquire strategic sites within the Enterprise Zone at Darlaston Road, including the former Gasholders site, in order to accelerate delivery of employment uses and economic growth.

These public sector led interventions at Phoenix 10 and Gasholders help provide a strong message and confidence to the market about investing and developing in Walsall.

Earthworks at the Tempus 10 site to provide development platforms were completed in year with planning application proposals now being progressed for employment uses of circa 10,000sqm.

The area will also benefit from the planned £65m M6 Junction 10 improvements, with planning consent granted in March 2018 and works scheduled to start in late 2019, the scheme will increase highway capacity and reduce delays to support and encourage economic growth throughout the borough.

Elsewhere in the borough, the construction of the £5m Airfield 55 industrial unit at Aldridge is well underway. Initially progressed as a speculative development with grant funding assistance from the Local Growth Fund, the developer, Trebor has now entered into a 15 year lease for the 5,100sqm unit with Accord Housing once complete. The site will become the factory base for Accord's LoCAL Homes business- the off-site production of timber framed homes- which will enable Accord to relocate from their existing Beechdale premises to increase annual production to over 1,000 units per year. This business investment by Accord Housing is major boost for the borough in terms of off-site housing production and job opportunities by one of Walsall's key housing providers.

Outline planning consent has also been granted for up to 18,500sqm of employment floor space at Reedswood Business Park which has the potential to create up to 450 new jobs. Alongside commercial and employment schemes, significant housing developments have progressed this year.

## Housing

Working relationships with strategic housing partners have continued to be strengthened through joint projects, such as the VIEW programme with Walsall Housing Group investing in our Inclusive Economic Growth Programme, and supporting the City Deal Housing Pilot being delivered by Accord Housing in Darlaston South.

Phase 1 of the Waters Keep development at Goscote Lane by whg and Keepmoat has been completed providing 412 units. The sale of the market units (235 total) completed off plan: being Keepmoat's most popular development nationally.

Phase 2 of the scheme has been granted planning consent for a further 426 units with construction to be phased over the next 3 years.

The overall £87m Waters Keep development, which has received £8.83m grant funding from the Black Country LEP, will be delivering over 80% of the Black Country's Local Growth deal housing outputs.

Developments have progressed at Hemlock Way (formerly Harrowby Rd), Oak Hill Mews (formerly Servis site) and Silver Court Gardens which in total will deliver 550 new homes.

Construction has also started on site by whg and Lovell at The Cinnamons (Teddesley St) and Silver Waters (Silver St) that will provide a further 65 units and planning progress has been made on the former Goscote Works site that will deliver up to 263 units within the Goscote Lane Corridor regeneration area.

## Transportation

Through the Walsall Transport Plan 2017-2022, Walsall has a clear, ambitious and forward thinking vision to improve and develop the network to support local connectivity for residents and businesses and unlock development potential.

This includes the continuation of works on the Chase Line electrification project; £65m planned works at M6 Junction 10; £30m proposals for the re-opening of the Walsall to Wolverhampton rail line with additional stations proposed in Willenhall and Darlaston, and £32m improvement proposals for Walsall Town Centre transport hubs.

## People



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

**2017-2020 wording *Make a positive difference to the lives of Walsall people:***

*Increasing independence and improving healthy lifestyles so all can positively contribute to their communities.*

## Better Support for those with Mental Health Issues

Adult Social Care is changing the way it delivers Mental Health Services in the borough.

We know in society that mental health issues are affecting more and more of us. We also know that people don't separate their mental health from their physical wellbeing.

It is now recognised that our mental wellbeing is linked to other important life issues such as employment, good social connection, education and feeling safe. These elements help people to stay well and connected.

Our changes are about putting those two aspects together.

The council has a focus for people experiencing mental health issues, to aid their early access to support and to enable recovery. This is a much wider set of duties than just accessing treatment, although that is vital too.

Groundwork has been completed so that from April 2018, the Walsall mental health social care workforce will move into the Place Based Locality Model. This means those staff will start to co-work and offer support with GP's, nurses, therapists and other providers of support and recovery services. We will monitoring the access to early help, the social care support available, and the ability to aid recovery in this way of working by offering a holistic response to people to identify, treat and recover from a period of mental ill health.

## Autism in Walsall

We were delighted to see our Befriending Services at Autism West Midlands were nominated for "the great autism practice award" at the National Learning Disability and Autism Awards, held last summer at the ICC Birmingham.

The service in Walsall offers supportive, reliable volunteer befrienders to people with autism who may otherwise be socially isolated. Our befrienders are volunteers who give their time to support adults with autism. They spend time doing activities both parties enjoy. Whether it's drinking coffee together in the coffee shop, shopping, attending the cinema or swimming, or taking part in cultural activities. These may seem simple to many of us but can be fraught with issues for those who have autism.



Group sessions are also offered for those who would like to meet other people with autism. These can be activities such as going to the zoo or watching a film, or sessions where we discuss topics such as stress management or learning more about autism. Befriending can open up a range of activities and lead to increased self-esteem, self-confidence and independence.

The award nomination recognised the service's innovation and prevention outcomes for individuals and their carers, and for challenging myths in relation to social interaction and friendship for adults on the autistic spectrum.

## **Sustainable Health and Care in Walsall**

In 2016, Walsall health and care partners established the Walsall Together Board to integrate and improve health and social care to the population. Since then an active plan of improvements has been underway including:

- Resilient Communities - how people can keep connected and free from social isolation
- Single Point of Access - increasing the linkages between different organisations to improve access for citizens
- Integrated Intermediate Care - reducing unnecessary time in hospital and increasing opportunities for rehabilitation after ill health
- Locality Teams that are multi-disciplinary and based in primary care, with teams working around the patient and communities

This has now moved into a more detailed phase between the council, One Walsall, Walsall Healthcare Trust, Walsall CGG, mental health, primary care and GPs who have developed a business case to improve whole population wellbeing. This case has been approved, and our collective aims are:

- To offer a health and care system for the whole population.
- To provide clarity about the entitlements of access to care and support for the whole population.
- The development of prevention, self care and early help where people are well advised, confident and knowledgeable about their own health and wellbeing.
- For care and health to be joined up in localities
- To ensure decisions about health and wellbeing are evidence based and cost effective.

To achieve this deeper co-working, the organisations involved have agreed to develop a full business case to progress a "Host Provider" model. This enables collective decision making across what are separate organisations, who will be bound by one vision and a set of aims, within a single contract and outcomes framework. The next key milestone is the new contractual arrangement being in place by April 2019.

## People with Disabilities into Work

We are delighted that the Goscote Greenacres Community Garden project has secured funding from the Big Lottery Fund which will help move the gardening work it offers into an independent business and work experience to disabled people. The funding will allow further enhancement of the grounds surrounding the Goscote Centre. The project oversees 42 plots occupied by local residents and groups and has a volunteer scheme which provides work experience opportunities for local people including those with a registered disability. This funding will be invaluable in assisting the scheme to continue with local vegetable box scheme for housebound or limited income households as well as the educational sessions on horticulture for adults with complex learning disabilities. We wish them well and hope to see it go from strength to strength.

## Enabling Independence – Housing Support

Accord and Walsall Council's learning disability floating support service offers outreach support to adults with a learning disability/difficulty to enhance their daily living skills and build confidence and personal empowerment. The service aims to improve their living environment, and to offer support to access many other opportunities which they may be discriminated against. It enables the individual to breakdown these barriers to create fair access and equality for all. The service has shown it can help people develop all aspects of their social living and to provide preventative support to promote independence.

In addition, this support has prevented a number of service users over the past 12 months from needing to access adult social care services which are often seen as the first port of call for users experiencing a learning disability/difficulty. This has been achieved by offering and delivering education, in a verbal and practical way, giving advice and guidance, and building encouragement to recognise people's capabilities.

The service has adopted a more diverse and flexible approach on both the method of delivery such as telephone support, the use of assistive technology, and pooling specialism's with other services where needed. It has also widened access to other customer groups, such as people with mental health support needs.

The service was shortlisted for the National Learning Disability and Autism Awards 2017, as a demonstration of its value to our communities.



## Internal Focus

**All council services  
are efficient and effective.**

### *New priority in the Corporate Plan 2018-2021*

Against the stability of a 4 year budget the council willingly participated in the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge process in September 2017. This provided a unique opportunity to invite officers and elected members from other local authorities to independently assess how well the council is performing across a set range of areas. The outcomes of this process provided valuable insight which the council is now taking forward. Most significantly is the commitment to undertake a stocktake of activity and particularly the transformation programme. The outcomes of the stocktake will inform the future shape and focus of the transformation programme.

For the first time since 2010 an employee survey has been undertaken and with almost 50% of staff participating in the process the reach is unprecedented. The survey results will inform the refresh of the Workforce Strategy that was approved in May 2017 (the first organisational wide workforce strategy for a number of years).

Recognising the value of our staff the council's public health service has been instrumental in providing an in house cervical screening programme to local authority staff and the council has been praised by Jo's Trust (the National Charity for Cervical Cancer) for undertaking comprehensive and targeted work to improve cervical screening attendance in their staff. In addition public health organised a flu immunisation programme during the flu season 2017/18 for all council staff. Over 300 people who would otherwise not have received the vaccine were immunised. The programme is being evaluated and early indications are that there has been a reduced number of flu like illness in staff this year. It has already been agreed to financially support this programme again for the 2018/19 flu season.



**Children**

**have the best possible start and are safe from harm, happy, healthy and learning well.**

**2017-2020 wording Children are safe from harm, happy and learning well with self belief, aspiration and support to be their best:**

*Walsall children are provided with the best start in life so they can fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to their communities.*

The Local Authority School Improvement Inspection in 2016 recognised the systems, structures, support and challenges put in place to raise academic standards across the borough. After 12 years of a third party provider, the local authority brought education back into the council and the Education Challenge Board was established to focus on improving Ofsted grades for all schools in order for them to be good or better.

Access and Achievement headlines include:

- The percentage of schools judged to be outstanding within the borough has now risen to 23% which is above the national average
- The percentage of good or better schools continues to improve and presently is 87.2% closing the gap to national 88.7%
- Increased bespoke training and support offered to governing bodies which has improved the challenge to leadership and management in schools
- Implementation of an enhanced Behaviour Support Service across most secondary schools in Walsall which has helped schools to retain pupils in education and learning environments
- Range of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) programmes for identified schools continue to improve Walsall's overall Good Level of Development (GLD) to match national performance
- Improvement Fund bids (EYFS and KS1 Writing) improving practice in all schools. Targets predicted for 2018 are matching or exceeding national expectations
- Successful Partnership with the Black Country Authorities and Teaching Schools Alliance working in partnership to bid and secure special school innovation funding (SSIF) /explore position of schools
- Kingshill Primary School move to outstanding due to the collective hard work and determination of the Head teacher and senior leadership team. The Head teacher is now offering School to School support and is involved in initiatives with other schools
- 2280 young people aged 16-19 engaged in the Youth Employment Initiative, 437 of which have a job, apprenticeship or are in education or training as a result
- Reduced offending and reoffending of Walsall young people; our performance is better than regional and national.

Our Ofsted 'requires improvement' judgement in September 2017 recognised progress and commitment to embedding improvements across Children's Social Care and Safeguarding, reflecting our steadily improving services and solid practice in a challenging context.

Social Care and Safeguarding headlines include:

- Stronger front-door and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) partnership
- Improving offer for care leavers
- Strong performance on adoption
- Increasing stability of the workforce and manageable caseloads
- Comprehensive workforce development offer

## Early Help and Commissioning

*'The Authority has improved its Early Help provision significantly, following a comprehensive review and resign of services to ensure children and families receive the right help at the right time'.*

Ofsted report, September 2017

Early Help and Commissioning headlines include:

- Our Early Help locality arrangements provide a strong platform for solution-focused, partnership working, providing better outcomes for children, young people and families
- Innovative locality partnership projects keeping children safe, reducing anti-social behaviour and mitigating the impact of child poverty in school holidays
- New services for children, young people and families experiencing domestic abuse preventing, protecting and repairing the effects of domestic abuse
- The percentage of eligible 2 year olds (often our most vulnerable children) taking up a funded early learning place is 70.5%, up 5% on the previous year and take up is actively promoted through all frontline services.

The health of children and young people continues to be a key priority and area of work.

## Infant Mortality Strategy

In 2017/18 Walsall has revised its infant mortality strategy and with multiagency leadership the following key objectives have been achieved;

- Increase in ratio of midwife to women from 1:37 in 2014/15 to 1:22
- Increased emphasis on learning from Child Death Overview Panels
- Development of a new Health in Pregnancy service
- Closer monitoring of the national Saving Lives Care Bundle to tackle the following key causes of infant mortality; smoking in pregnancy, monitoring foetal movement, effective foetal monitoring during labour and surveillance of foetal growth restriction



## Children's Healthy Weight

Walsall reflects the national trends, with an increasing number of children who are not within a healthy weight range. Walsall's Children and Young Persons Healthy Weight Strategy is being refreshed. The strategy will implement a whole systems approach to promoting direct behavioural change and adjustments to the physical environment to assist healthy living. Children and young people will have a significant role to play in shaping and delivering the strategy and the resulting action plan focusing on what works well in each locality.

## Redesign of the 'Healthy Schools' Model

Schools have opportunities to shape healthy habits, they also have unique contact with parents and families. Walsall Public Health and partners are currently piloting a redesigned localised model of the National 'Healthy Schools Programme'. Using a 'Whole School Approach' the model supports the links between health, behaviour and attainment and is about supporting healthy and happy children and young people who, as a result, do better in learning and in life.

## Communities



**are prospering and resilient with all housing needs met in safe and healthy places that build a strong sense of belonging and cohesion.**

### **2017-2020 wording Safe, resilient and prospering communities:**

*Walsall is a clean, safe and healthy place, with the right housing to meet need, accessible to all and with a strong sense of belonging and cohesion.*

## The Night Shelter

A Public Health and Money, Home, Job collaboration Walsall's Night Shelter for rough sleepers and homeless people operated from 1 December 2017 until 3 April 2018. This was open 8pm – 9am daily with extended opening when town experienced heavy snow falls and severe winter conditions.

The service was used by 146 individuals, all of whom were given physical respite from the elements while offering homeless prevention and other health and social care support services. Of the total group 76 stayed for less than a week and received primary homeless prevention assistance, 41 stayed for up to a month and received more comprehensive support and 29 had complex needs staying up to 4 months and receiving offers of accommodation with support plans. The quality of the service was enhanced by the 80 community volunteers who offered over 1250 additional hours of service each month.

The housing standards and improvement team has had a great year, obtaining the council's first Compulsory Purchase Orders on three long-term empty homes. This action, which was taken as a last resort, will help rejuvenate neighbourhoods blighted by properties in disrepair and bring much needed housing back into use for local people.

Joint work with West Midlands Fire Service has proved particularly successful in identifying poor housing conditions and promoting the need for landlords to provide relevant smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.

Housing provision service has been shortlisted by the National Charity for Home Improvement Agencies for an award of 'Adaptations Service of the Year'.

Moving forward the multiagency Homelessness Strategy approved by Cabinet on 21 March 2018, focuses on:

- Establishing protocols with external bodies such as the Manor Hospital and criminal justice system to ensure that homelessness is prevented at the point of discharge
- Ending the use of bed and breakfast accommodation, and remodelling the council's current temporary accommodation from the existing flatted block provision to a dispersed accommodation model

- The discharge of homelessness duty into the private rented sector where appropriate
- Revising the existing Allocations Scheme and conducting an options appraisal on the establishment of a common housing register and allocations policy
- The future commission of accommodation and support services for street homeless to be a Housing First led service.

## Community Cohesion

Community Cohesion and Integration Strategy (Nov 2017) enabled services to successfully access grant funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). New projects focusing on integration of new communities into neighbourhoods have started focusing on clean and green agenda, housing standards and school admissions of children. Further investment was made into community safety, outreach, engagement with Roma communities and English as a Second Language provision.

The Community, Equality and Cohesion team organised a conference 'A Vision for Integrated Communities in Walsall' that resulted in closer alignment of our integration strategies with the localities model. Due to our work on community cohesion so far, Walsall has been identified as the Integrated Area by MHCLG that will benefit from further investment into our communities' project that support integration.

## Locality Model

The council has led on a partnership initiative for locality working and the development of the new locality model. The locality model has been introduced to ensure a more local perspective can influence strategic decisions on investment and priorities.

The key elements of this model include improving political oversight and involvement through Strategic Locality Partnership Boards, operational Locality Panels with a focus on delivery, and an overall rationalisation of meetings. The new locality model also benefits from the involvement of the voluntary and community sector and businesses.

Key benefits include:

- The council and partners working to agreed priorities on both a locality and borough level
- A locality focus to conversations and planning
- Links to communities and community groups through One Walsall
- Agreed geographical boundaries with partners
- Streamlining and removing waste in communications
- A clearer communication route into the council and beyond the council to the combined authority.

Each locality area has an evidence based locality plan which utilises both bottom-up and top-down approaches to engagement and decision making. Strategic Partnership Locality Boards meet four times a year and are chaired by politicians with a vice chair from a partner organisation.

## Other notable achievements

Public Health has successfully commissioned and implemented **Making Connections Walsall** (MCW), a new innovative social prescribing service addressing the loneliness and social isolation of older people. The MCW model is comprised of a multiagency partnership and pathway enabling the health and social care professionals with a single route of referral into local community based social support networks. Referrals are received and processed by West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) and allocated to one of four locality community hubs via the NHS Data Collection and Recording System (DCRS).

The **Healthy Spaces** Steering Group with representation from Public Health, Parks and Green Spaces, Sports and Leisure and Community Development are pooling their expertise to develop an integrated programme of work to make better use of our spaces, particularly parks as a means of supporting healthy living of our residents.

This partnership work has led to substantial population level increases in usage of parks and green spaces for health reasons from 6% (2011/12) to 18% (2017/18). This is in line with the national average and in real terms is an increase of nearly 25,000 residents. In addition Led Walks and Jogs programme participants have almost doubled compared to same period last year to 1600 and the success of Adult Park Run has led to a Junior Park Run being developed with over 40 young people now attending.

A court injunction giving Walsall Council greater powers to remove **unauthorised encampments** (UEs) from 10 sites across the borough was granted in November 2017. This latest injunction order brings the total number of sites in Walsall prohibiting an encampment to 24. The sites were chosen because of the number of UEs there have been and the impact a UE has on the communities in the vicinity. This enables the council to take possession of the land more quickly and reduces the costs of clearing the site afterwards.

Taking pride in our Town Centre is important to Walsall Council and we all need to feel that the environment we work, live and shop in is welcoming, clean and safe. Walsall is a great town, but sometimes the behaviour of a few can impact negatively on the many. After a period of extensive public consultation and evidence gathered from local police enabled the council to make a **Public Spaces Protection Order** (PSPO) to tackle anti-social behaviour in the Town Centre, which came into effect from 28 September. It will ensure that the law abiding majority can use and enjoy their public spaces in the town centre safely and go about their daily tasks - free from anti-social behaviour to enjoy the space around them. Any breach of the PSPO is a criminal offence for which an individual can be summonsed to attend court and fined. Alternatively fixed penalty notices of £100 may be issued by the council.







**Resources and Transformation**

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