

Economy and Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee

11 April 2024 at 6:00PM

Meeting Venue: Council Chamber at the Council House, Lichfield Street, Walsall

[Livestream Link](#)

Membership:

Councillor M Follows (Chair)
Councillor B Allen (Vice-Chair)
Councillor P Bott
Councillor S Cheema
Councillor A Hicken
Councillor P Gill
Councillor F Hassan
Councillor P Kaur
Councillor R Larden
Councillor M Ward
Councillor J Whitehouse

Portfolio Holder(s):

Councillor A. Andrew – Deputy Leader and Regeneration
Councillor G. Perry – Deputy Leader and Resilient Communities
Councillor K. Murphy – Street Pride
Councillor M. Statham – Education and Skills
Councillor G. Flint – Wellbeing, Leisure and Public Spaces

Quorum:

4 Members

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>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="715 118 1406 226">(i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or<li data-bbox="715 264 1406 519">(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.
--	---

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

Access to information: Exempt information

Part 1

Descriptions of exempt information: England

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

Part 1 – Public Session

- 1. Apologies**
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. Minutes**
To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2024.
- 4. Declarations of Interest and party whip**
To receive declarations of interest or the party whip from Members in respect of items on the agenda.
- 5. 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.
- 6. Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark – Progress Update**
To receive an update on the Black Country UNESCO Geopark and consider ways in which tourism of the Black Country can be promoted.
(Enclosed Pages 14 - 18)
- 7. Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Strategy**
To consider the Council's Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Strategy.
(Enclosed Pages 19 - 35)
- 8. Areas of focus – 2023/24**
To consider the areas of focus for the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.
(Enclosed Pages 36 - 37)
- 9. Forward Plans**
To receive the latest Forward Plans in respect of the following:
 - Executive Forward Plans.
 - Black Country Joint Executive Committee.
 - West Midlands Combined Authority Board.*(Enclosed Pages 38 – 51)*
- 10. Recommendations Tracker**
To consider progress on recommendations from the previous meeting.
(Enclosed Pages 52 - 56)
- 11. Date of next meeting**
To note that the date of the next scheduled meeting to be determined at Annual Council in May 2024.

Part 2 – Private Session

12. Derelict Sites Taskforce Update

To receive an update on the progress made by Derelict Sites taskforce on addressing derelict sites throughout the Borough.

(Enclosed Pages 57 – 60)

(Exempt information under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended))

Minutes of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at Walsall Council House

Tuesday, 27 February 2024 at 6.00p.m.

Committee Members present: Councillor M Follows (Chair)
Councillor P Bott
Councillor S Cheema
Councillor A Hicken
Councillor P Gill
Councillor R Larden
Councillor M Ward
Councillor J Whitehouse

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Bird – Leader of the Council
Councillor G Flint – Wellbeing, Leisure and Public Spaces
Councillor K Murphy – Street Pride

Officers Present: Katie Moreton - Director of Place & Environment
David Elrington – Head of Community Safety and Enforcement
Paul Gordon – Director of Resilient Communities
Richard McVittie - Healthy Spaces Community Development Officer - North
Matt Powis – Senior Democratic Services Officer

51. **Apologies**

An apology was received from Councillor P Kaur.

52. **Substitutions**

There were no substitutions.

53. **Declarations of Interest and Party Whip**

There were no declarations of interest or party whip.

54. **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)**

There were no items to consider in private session.

55. **Minutes**

A copy of the Minutes of the meeting held on the 16 January 2024 was submitted. [annexed]

A Member sought clarification on the number and location of leaflets for Darlaston South in respect of Minute No. 47, Off-Road Vehicles – Updates. In response, the Senior Democratic Services Officer confirmed that he would provide a response in writing.

Resolved

That, the minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2024 copies having previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.

Councillor Cheema joined the meeting at this point at 6:03p.m.

56. **Litter Volunteering – Progress Update**

The Portfolio Holder for Wellbeing, Leisure and Public Spaces presented an update of the Council's Volunteer Litter Programme. [annexed]

The programme was designed to support and empower local people to help keep streets and open spaces across the Borough free from litter. In addition, the programme enabled:

- Community and enhance wellbeing.
- Development of Civic Pride.
- Improvement of the environment.

In 2019, two volunteer coordinators were appointed to support the creation of Walsall Community Litter Watch (WCLW). To assist volunteers of the WCLW, the Council had developed a reporting portal as well providing opportunities for volunteers to request litter picking equipment, bags, stickers and report bag collections.

The Council had developed a WCLW Action Plan 2024 with the aim of engaging with local businesses, partner organisations, improving educational programmes and identifying persistent litter hotspots.

A question and answer session took place and following on, the principal points from the ensuing discussion:

- There was an aspiration to access more schools to educate young people about recycling and promote responsible refuse disposal.
- Some schools had their own litter education programmes.
- There was a view that civic pride was important, and communities should be empowered to clean up their own communities.

- As part of the work to educate individuals about recycling, there was a need to ensure HMO landlords had appropriate sized bins.
- Members conveyed their thanks to the Borough's litter volunteers.
- The Council was working with local businesses to continue the legacy of the litter charter.
- Technical issues regarding the report portal had been resolved.
- The Council had submitted a total of 13 green flag proposals for local green spaces. Following a number of improvements, 10 areas had been green flag accredited.
- The Chair sought clarification on the retention rates of local volunteers. In response, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that Council had seen the overall number of volunteers reduce post-pandemic. However, the Healthy Spaces team continued to encourage and signpost any new volunteers for the programme.
- There was a view that the Council needed stricter littering enforcement powers to act as a viable deterrent.
- There was a consensus that engagement at litter stations was positive and there were many volunteers that actively contributed to their local area.

The Chair thanked officers for their attendance and requested that a reminder be circulated to the Committee on how to get involved with the strategy, upcoming action days and local litter stations.

Councillor Gill joined the meeting at this point at 6:06p.m.

Resolved:

That, the litter volunteering support programme be noted.

57. Grass Cutting Schedule and mapping of Council Assets

The Portfolio Holders for Street Pride presented an update on the Council's grass cutting schedule and mapping of Council assets. [annexed]

In January 2023, the Government published the Environmental Improvement Plan, which outlined plans to improve the natural environment. As such, there was a commitment to halve the decline in species abundance by 2030 and restore or create at least 500,000 hectares of a range of wildlife rich habitats.

As part of this commitment to improving biodiversity, the Council undertook rewilding in areas such as Nest Common. There was commitment to ensure proper consultation with local residents and communities on the benefits of rewilding. The Committee noted that the Council was still maintaining grass areas and undertook maintenance between three and give weekly cuts from late March to early October, weather dependant.

A question and answer session took place and following on, the principal points from the ensuing discussion:

- There were concerns about the number of complaints received by Members about areas of unkept grass in the Borough.
- Areas of high pedestrian traffic such as parks and churchyards would continue to benefit from regular grass cutting.
- The Portfolio Holder confirmed that many communities were aware of the benefits of rewilding and as such, the Council received less than average complaints from residents than the previous year.
- The Council revised its maintenance schedule based on submitted feedback and comments from the previous year.
- Members were encouraged to provide feedback on grass cutting in their wards during the season and note the Council's communication in preparation for the schedule of works in the summer.
- The Leader of the Council reflected on the importance of advertising the risks and associated health implications of tick bites when walking through long grass.
- The Council would utilise social media and physical notices in communities to explain rewilding in areas.
- Some Councils had improved their biodiversity net gain by reducing grass verge cutting.
- The Council was aware of the problems and associated nuisance of grass verge parking. The Director of Place and Environment confirmed that unless parking was unsafe, the Council had no statutory power to intervene.
- The Chair sought clarification on whether the Council had collated data on green space site ownership across the Borough. The Director of Place and Environment confirmed that the Council had collated information on grass site ownership and was working to make this information available to the public. It was confirmed that once available, this information would be made available to the Committee.
- The Council was working closely with Walsall Housing Group on ground maintenance and fly tipping.

The Chair thanked officers for their attendance.

Resolved:

That, the Council's grass cutting schedule and biodiversity programme be noted.

58. Fly Tipping Enforcement and Activity

The Head of Community Safety and Enforcement presented an overview of the enforcement activity in respect of fly tipping.

The Committee was informed that the Council had a statutory responsibility to ensure that the collection and disposal of waste generated or deposited was appropriately undertaken. Fly tipping was a primary concern for the Council and Members noted that the number of reported cases of fly tipping and side waste had remained consistent throughout 2023 but had reduced since 2020.

The Environmental Crime Scene Initiative was noted as a good example of working with local areas to identify and advertise fly tipping incidents within areas. This work provided an example to local communities that fly tipping was a crime and due to its success, the initiative was being rolled out to other areas of the Borough. To complement this approach, the Council was committed to strengthen enforcement and had invested in five new staff within Community Protection. Members noted several examples of enforcement action taken by the Council including actions resulting from CCTV deployment.

A question and answer session took place and following on, the principal points from the ensuing discussion:

- Change in legislation to raise the upper limits of fixed penalty notices for littering from £150 to £500 and fly tipping from £400 to £1000 was inadequate and did not go far enough to discourage individuals from fly tipping.
- There was a discussion on whether removal vans should be licensed in the same way as private hire or hackney carriage vehicles.
- Any fly tipping on unadopted land required the Council to undertake a public health assessment and ascertain whether the items required removal. It was confirmed that the Council would always try to identify a landowner or responsible persons.
- Non-payment of Fixed Penalty Notices would result in prosecution in accordance with evidence.
- Income from fixed penalty notices were reinvested into the service and engagement programmes.
- CCTV cameras were checked and rotated around the Borough regularly. Members noted the importance of engagement with residents and local communities to reduce the instances of fly tipping.
- The Leader of the Council outlined that the Council was committed to reduce the instances of fly tipping. It was noted that fly tipping costed the Council over £750k a year.
- Members heard multiple examples of fly tipping in areas across the Borough.
- A Member highlighted a reward scheme by Wolverhampton Council to encourage the public to notify and provide evidence of fly tippers.
- The Council was investigating the viability of intelligent cameras to improve evidence gathering.
- Walsall Housing Group was working with Council to use the incidences of fly tipping by tenants.
- Skip days were noted as a popular incentive for reducing fly tipping.
- There was a suggestion that Walsall Housing Group could procure the Council to be a designated contractor for fly tipping removals.
- The Leader of the Council confirmed that the Council would utilise all legal tools available to prosecute and hold landowners accountable for incidences of fly tipping.
- Bulky waste collection charge increases were raised in line with neighbouring authorities.

- There were some households which required larger refuse bins in accordance with their needs. However, it was noted that many households struggled to correctly recycling and utilise their bins appropriately.
- Black bags classed as side waste would be investigated by the Council's enforcement team to identify root cause of fly tipping and whether it was caused by a household or business.
- Many individuals and families were confused by recycling packaging.
- A Member sought clarification on how many fixed penalty tickets were issues across the Borough in respect of dog fouling. In response, it was confirmed that the Council's enforcement team had only issues a few fixed penalties recently.
- There was a suggestion the Council could use Public Spaces Protection Orders to enforce dog owners to carry waste bags or face fixed penalty notices.

Following a lengthy debate, it was proposed and seconded that the Cabinet work with the Local Government Association to increase the financial levels of fixed penalty notices and strengthen enforcement legislation.

Resolved

That, the Cabinet work with the Local Government Association to lobby Government to increase the financial levels of fixed penalty notices and strengthen enforcement legislation.

59. Areas of focus – 2023/24

The Committee noted the proposed areas of focus for the remaining meetings of the municipal year. [annexed]

Resolved

That, forward plans be noted.

60. Recommendations Tracker

The Senior Democratic Services Officer updated Members on the recommendations from previous meetings of the Committee. [annexed]

A Member sought clarification on an outstanding action in respect of recovering costs associated with fly tipping from a Magistrates or Small Claims Court. In response, the Senior Democratic Services Officer confirmed that he would liaise with officers to provide an update.

Resolved:

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

61. **Date of next meeting**

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for 11 April 2024.

There being no further business, the meeting terminated at 7.31p.m

Signed:

Date:

11 April 2024

Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark - Progress Update

Ward(s): All

Portfolios: Wellbeing, Leisure and Public Spaces

1. Aim

- 1.1. The Black Country has geology spanning 428 million years and the area is well known for its exceptionally well-preserved fossils. The Black Country is also rich in coal, ironstone and limestone, resources which inspired discovery, invention and innovation and placed the region at the centre of the Industrial Revolution which continues to shape the modern world. The Geopark boasts a range of varied geosites including landscapes and viewpoints, disused mines and quarries, canals, national and local nature reserves, museums with spectacular collections, open air visitor attractions and many historic buildings. It connects the geology under our feet with cultural and industrial heritage.
- 1.2. The Black Country became a UNESCO Global Geopark on 10 July 2020 in recognition of the international importance of its natural and cultural heritage.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To note the work of the Black County UNESCO Global Geopark and to suggest ways in which the project can promote the tourism potential of the Black Country.

3. Report detail – know

- 3.1. The Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark hosted its first revalidation visit from the 14 to 18 July 2023. Following the visit a report was presented at the Global Geopark Network executive meeting which took place in Morocco in September 2023. The Network were very impressed with what the Black Country Geopark have achieved in its first three years as a geopark despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact. They concluded that the Black Country is performing well as a global geopark and particularly commended the work on environmental improvement and engagement of communities and volunteers.
- 3.2. They recommended a 'Green Card' pass, and this was confirmed following the Paris UNESCO General Assembly meeting in the spring of 2024.
- 3.3. The revalidation mission was a significant piece of collaborative work between all four local authorities, external partners and many community groups and local specialists. The partnership would like to record our sincere thanks to all those involved for making it such a successful visit.

Revalidation mission recommendations

- 3.4. As part of the revalidation assessment discussions were held about where the global network felt that the Black Country could improve and areas of focus for the next few years.
- 3.5. Three recommendations were suggested to the partnership by inspectors during their revalidation mission:
- That the partnership develops a Black Country ‘tourism strategy’ that is truly ‘Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark’ and that the group should engage with stakeholders via an annual forum/meeting. The inspectors thought that educational/lifelong learning connections were particularly important to develop.
 - The inspectors felt that the Black Country partnership could do more to promote local products/produce and make these products better connected to the heritage stories of the area.
 - Steps should be taken to strengthen the Black Country Geopark sustainability and capacity given the very modest dedicated resources.

Update on actions to address these UNESCO recommendations

- 3.6. The joint geopark management team which meets monthly has begun to address these recommendations. Key actions are:
- The group has formed a task group to draft a Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark tourism strategy. Dudley’s Tourism Development Officer is our most experienced visitor economy officer and is leading the project.
 - The Tourism Development Officer has consulted other UK geoparks and other UNESCO sites in the UK and has produced a first draft that has been circulated for discussion to the wider partnership.
 - The tourism strategy will specifically feature a section dedicated to ‘Geopark Geoproducts’ to drive the promotion of local products and their connections to the heritage story of the Black Country.
 - The group received the ABCA approval in principle for the recruitment/secondment of a permanent geopark team and took on board the 2023 UNESCO recommendations. The geopark management has revisited the previous proposals for improving the human resources. Further details on the staffing proposals are set out below.
 - The team has begun working with the UK National Commission for UNESCO on a HLF funded project called ‘Local to Global’. This project is providing free expertise and consultancy to the partnership in the areas of:

- fundraising opportunities
 - audience development and
 - the use of technology in heritage interpretation and promotion
- 3.7. The advice is helping the group to address the recommendations, with expert advice from external bodies at no cost to the Black Country and will also provide a small sum of up to £5,000 for a Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark project within one of the themes.

Some other significant geopark achievements and applications

- 3.8. Since revalidation, the geopark partnership has been engaged in several projects and has submitted expressions of interest for funding opportunities.
- 3.9. The group has hosted, (with the University of Wolverhampton), a post doctorate/early careers training course on the reclamation of brownfield sites and we currently have an application sitting with the UK research councils for hosting a two-day seminar on Nature Recovery best practice in urban areas.
- 3.10. The group has hosted a field trip for the International Symposium of ProGEO (International Association for the Conservation of Geological Heritage) held in Loughborough. A total of 41 delegates from countries as far away as Brazil, Tasmania, Canada, and from across Europe were in attendance. The feedback was that everyone enjoyed an excellent, informative, and well-organised visit to the Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark. This was event was promoted globally as it was the groups offering to the UN International Geodiversity Day global events register for October 2023.
- 3.11. The partnership has held meetings with the tourism and culture representatives of the West Midlands Combined Authority and expressed the importance of the Black Country Geopark to the forthcoming Local Visitor Enterprise Partnership and discussed how best to use the international profile for the region.
- 3.12. The four local authorities, led by Walsall MBC, submitted an expression of interest to the UK Fund for £3,000,000 over four years for a climate change behavioural project working with young people. Unfortunately, the bid was unsuccessful, however, a lot of useful work was undertaken developing the bid.
- 3.13. A date has been set for the 20th anniversary of the UNESCO Global Geoparks Network (UGGp), with Walsall agreeing to host an event as part of Black Country month in July. The event, funded by the Black Country festival group, will celebrate Black Country products which was a key recommendation by the inspectors from UNESCO in 2023. There will be a music festival celebrating the Black Countries greatest exports in the music industry, there will also be produce stands and displays. This event will also tie in with the 150th anniversary celebrations of the Walsall Arboretum throughout 2024. The event is due to take place on 27 July 2024.

Support and recommendations

- 3.14. With the help of the UNESCO Global Geopark Network, the awareness of the Black Country as a heritage destination is growing and new opportunities are rapidly emerging. The group is seeing a significant rise in interest and opportunities for joint project working. The group is, however, beginning to struggle with capacity.
- 3.15. The partnership was asked to review the geopark staffing and bring details and costs to a future ABCA meeting for discussion. Having done the review, the previous proposals put forward for dedicated staff still seem to be appropriate for the emerging workload. They included:
- A fund-raising officer to coordinate funding and ensure that monitoring and reporting are adequately resourced to make the most of opportunities.
 - An education officer to coordinate learning opportunities across the Black Country.
 - A generic support officer to handle administration, promotion, and practical support at events, etc.
- 3.16. Specialist functions for geology, natural history and historic environment will continue to be provided by existing staff and guided by the management group for the geopark.
- 3.17. Job descriptions and person specifications have been drafted and will be sent to Dudley HR for evaluation. This work has been progressed on the approval of the Association of Black Country Authorities (ABCA).

4. Financial information

- 4.1. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was agreed in 2019 for a contribution of £9,500 from each Local Authority to develop the Black Country Geopark and recruit to the posts. This figure was agreed with the approval of ABCA in 2020 to £35,000 per authority, but an MoU has yet to be signed for this sum. Walsall Council has agreed to pay this contribution towards this important international project.

5. Reducing Inequalities

- 5.1. The development of the geopark as an important global brand, much like the World Heritage Site status has for Ironbridge, will provide the Black Country with a way of promoting the area on the back of its industrial past. The importance of the Black Country is based on the underlying geology of the area, and it is this heritage which will help to promote the region in the future.
- 5.2. The promotion of the tourism offer across the area will develop pride in place and will also provide people with more economic means for improving the area, which all helps in improving the difference in economic outputs for the town.

6. Decide

- 6.1. The Black Country Geopark is an important partnership arrangement endorsed by UNESCO officers. There is an opportunity to endorse the work of the partnership by agreeing to support the development of the Black Country Geopark further through the appointment of dedicated officers and by supporting the events and activities taking place.

7. Respond

- 7.1. The Committee is asked to discuss the Black Country Geopark and what it could mean for the region, particularly when considering the very positive endorsement from the International Geopark Committee for the great work that has already taken place.

8. Review

- 8.1. The officers work together as a partnership and meet monthly to review progress on the development of the geopark. This progress will be brought to committee every time there is an important decision by the partnership to be made or if there is a change to the funding arrangement. Ideally, the Black Country Geopark partnership will be successful in recruiting to the staff and will develop strength because of full-time staff on board and will be able to provide a more detailed focus on.

9. Background papers

None

Author

Liz Stuffins
Group Manager Healthy Spaces and Environment
☎ 650835
✉ liz.stuffins@walsall.gov.uk

Economy & Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

11 April 2024

Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Strategy

Ward(s): All

Portfolios: Deputy Leader and Regeneration

1. Aim

- 1.1. In line with the Government's commitment to ban the sale of new diesel and petrol cars from 2035, there is a need to ensure that the borough of Walsall has the necessary charging infrastructure to facilitate the move to electric vehicles (EVs). Walsall Council has developed a draft Walsall EV Chargepoint Strategy (**Appendix A**) that sets out our action plan, including the forecast and target number of on-street and car park-based EV chargepoints for installation across the borough up to 2030.
- 1.2. The Walsall EV Chargepoint Strategy aims to set the direction of government capital funding and investment, whilst supporting the wider strategic direction of the draft Walsall Net Zero Strategy, the Black Country Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) Strategy (adopted by Walsall Council 2022) and the emerging West Midlands Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that committee members note the targets and action plan for EV chargepoint installation up to 2030 in the Walsall EV Chargepoint Strategy, and that consultation responses to the draft strategy are being analysed and will be responded to in due course.
- 2.2. It is recommended that committee members provide feedback and location suggestions for future electric chargepoint installations across the borough.

3. Report detail

- 3.1. The draft EV Chargepoint Strategy sets out the clear, strategic vision for Walsall, aligning to the draft Walsall Net Zero Strategy and We are Walsall 2040. It also regionally supports the Black Country Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) Strategy, that Cabinet adopted in April 2022, and the emerging West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy.
- 3.2. It supports the short-term roll out of chargepoints by 2026, and the longer-term strategic roll out of chargepoints to 2030. The focus on 2030 was aligned to the

Government's then commitment to phase out the sale of new cars and light goods vehicles (LGVs) by this date i.e. it was the target date at the time the strategy was drafted. We acknowledge that the date is postponed to 2035 but the strategy continues to focus on delivery by 2030 in line with the need to support our We Are Walsall 2040 ambitions to be lead regionally in carbon sustainability with a net zero economy.

- 3.3. The draft strategy considers evidence-based forecasts for the future need of charging in the borough, including 1,134 standard chargepoints and 153 rapid chargepoints by 2030.
- 3.4. The strategy considers opportunities available on council-owned land for charging infrastructure including on-street, council-owned car parks, schools, leisure centres and community centres. There is also a need to influence the planning system and specify the level of provision required through the Local Plan or Supplementary Planning Document.

Progress to Date

- 3.5. Walsall Council commissioned City Science to develop a draft Walsall Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Strategy in 2023. The draft strategy went to public consultation between 21st February – 20th March 2024. The process to review the public feedback is now underway.
- 3.6. In April 2022 Cabinet delegated authority to the Executive Director for Economy, Environment and Communities to authorise the sealing of deeds and/or signing of contracts and any other related documents, as well as any extension and variation of the contractual arrangements for the On-street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS). ORCS funding will see the delivery of the first 35 public on-street chargepoints in the borough of Walsall this year.
- 3.7. Further funding has been allocated to Walsall for charging infrastructure, as well as the wider Black Country and West Midlands (see the Finance section for more details of funding secured to date). This will kick start the delivery of chargepoint across the borough, but further funding is required, including that of the private sector, to achieve the forecast number required by 2030.

Consultation

- 3.8. In August 2023, City Science led a series of engagement workshops to support the development of the draft strategy. Each workshop had approximately 15-20 attendees. Workshops included:
 - An internal Walsall Council officers' workshop to gather inputs across a range of council departments regarding EV infrastructure attitudes, experiences, constraints, and opportunities in the borough.
 - An external workshop with representatives from other public sector partners including Black Country Transport and West Midlands Combined Authority, key businesses, and the voluntary sector.

- One-to-one interviews with potential EV chargepoint operators to understand the commercial models in relation to the local context.
- 3.9. The draft strategy went to public consultation between 21st February – 20th March 2024. The consultation aimed to understand stakeholders' support for EV chargepoints across the borough and the type of chargepoints Walsall's public and businesses need (slower, cheaper charging or quick rapid charge and go). It also considered if respondents already had access to, or were considering a move to EV.
- 3.10. Consultation was undertaken with the following audiences:
- Portfolio Holder and Ward Councillors - Email distribution of Walsall EV Chargepoint Strategy Briefing Note and face to face briefing with Portfolio Holder.
 - The Public and stakeholders – Online questionnaire and dedicated EV Chargepoint Strategy area on the Council's Walsall Says Commonplace and Walsall Council website, with further circulation of links on social media and via press release.
 - Walsall businesses – Direct email correspondence with key businesses through Walsall Council's Business Engagement Team.
 - Council officers – Internal communications and link to online questionnaire for comments on the draft strategy on Commonplace.
- 3.11. The strategic transport team is currently in the process of reviewing responses to the public consultation. This will be used to shape the final version of the strategy prior to Cabinet approval.
- 3.12. The Walsall EV Chargepoint Strategy Commonplace page will be kept up to date with any future updates to the strategy and delivery of chargepoints. This includes links to future consultation on the roll out of specific chargepoints and locations.
- 3.13. Direct responses are being made in a timely manner to those members of the public and businesses who provided direct email correspondence to the consultation.

4. Financial information

- 4.1. Walsall Council commissioned City Science to develop a draft Walsall EV Chargepoint Strategy using capital funding that was allocated through the 2023-2024 Transport Capital Programme.
- 4.2. The Office of Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) for the On-street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS), Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funds, and West Midlands City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement

(CRST) funding, subject to full business case approval through West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), will be used to deliver EV chargepoint infrastructure. This is in addition to wider private sector interest in the investment of chargepoint infrastructure in the borough.

- 4.3. ORCS grant capital funding is for a total of £338,712, covering up to 75% of the total capital costs of installation. The chargepoint operator Wenea and sister company Gamma Energy will provide the remaining 25% of match funding.
- 4.4. West Midlands Combined Authority secured £3,016,582 of LEVI Pilot Capital funding, of which Walsall Council has a provisional allocation of approximately £226,000 for the Pelsall Charging Hub.
- 4.5. Walsall Council has entered a concession contract with Wenea West Midlands Limited for the delivery of the ORCS and LEVI Pilot Capital funding schemes.
- 4.6. LEVI capital funding is for a total of £14.5 million for the West Midlands, including an allocation within this for Walsall Council to be determined. The procurement for chargepoint operators for this funding is in development at a West Midlands level.
- 4.7. The West Midlands CRSTS fund includes an allocation of £7 million for the Black Country for ultra-low emission infrastructure, including EV charging infrastructure in Walsall. This funding is subject to full business case approval by West Midlands Combined Authority.
- 4.8. The council will seek to provide the required match funding, develop the outcomes of the action plan in the Walsall EV Chargepoint Strategy and seek to install additional chargepoints through the 2024-2025 Transport Capital Programme allocation of £118,493.00 (approved at Cabinet in March 2024).

5. Tackling climate change and reducing inequalities

- 5.1. In 2019 Walsall Council declared a climate emergency and in 2022 adopting the West Midlands Combined Authority target to reach net zero carbon emissions across the borough no later than 2041.
- 5.2. Our draft Walsall Net Zero Strategy builds on these climate change pledges, and that of the recently approved We are Walsall 2040 Borough Plan which includes the ambition to have the infrastructure in place to enable residents to smoothly switch to net zero and improve air quality across the borough.
- 5.3. Promoting the uptake of electric vehicles and responding to climate change will help to reduce harmful emissions. The draft Walsall EV Chargepoint Strategy aims to support the draft Walsall Net Zero Strategy and our strategic commitment to tackling climate change impacts in our borough to ensure that Walsall will be a clean and green borough, fit for future generations.

5.4. Sites selected to date in the ORCS programme (the first group of chargepoint installations) support equity of charging infrastructure across the borough, filling the gap created by the private market. LEVI funded sites will provide further equity of sites across the borough, particularly for those without access to off-street parking.

6. Decide

6.1. There are no direct decisions arising from this report.

7. Respond

7.1. The feedback provided by the committee on the strategy will factor into the text of the final strategy document, and the future decision of chargepoint locations across the borough.

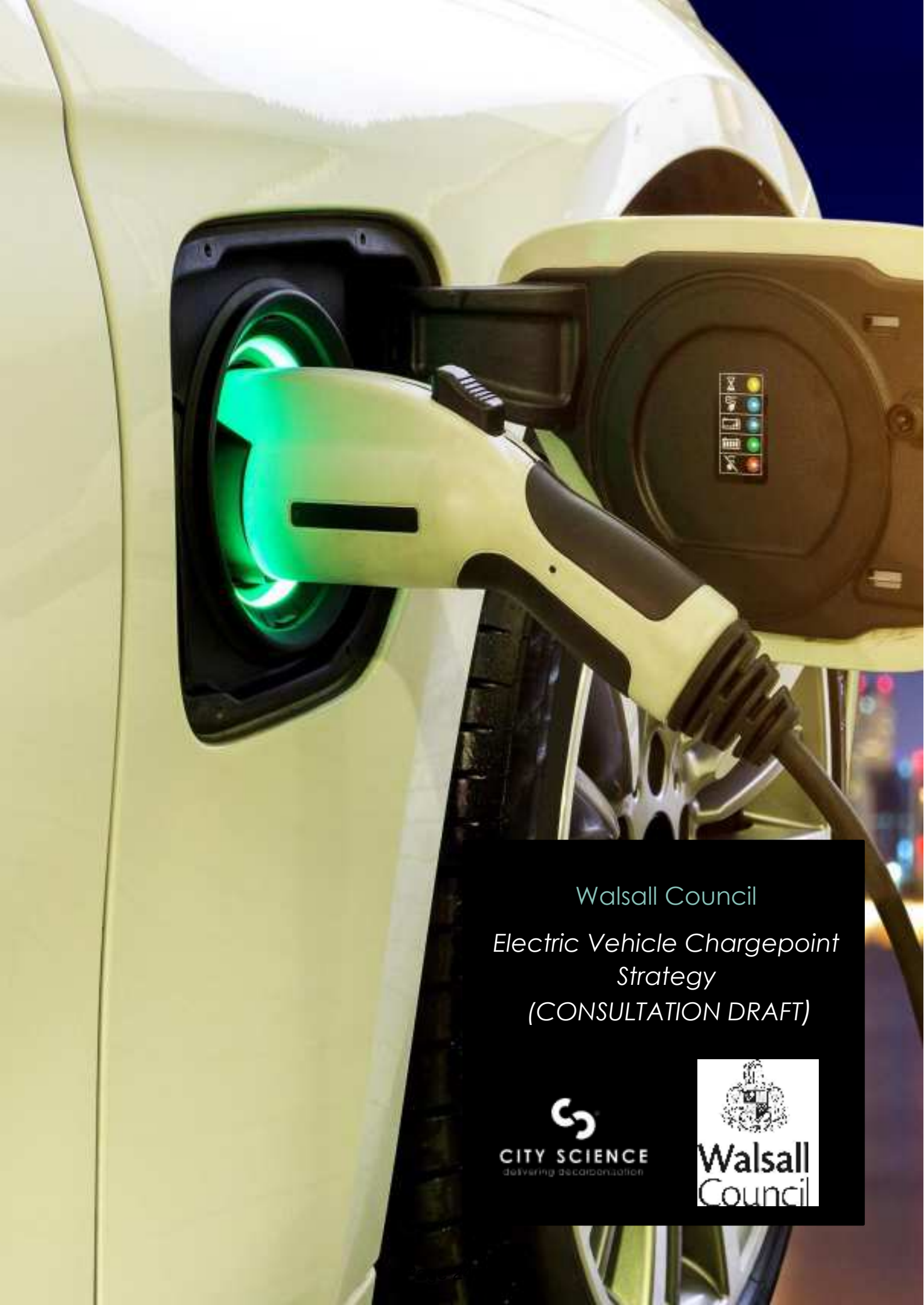
7.2. The Walsall Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Strategy is expected to be considered by Cabinet in summer 2024. The Cabinet will be asked to approve the strategy.

8. Review

8.1. The Walsall EV Chargepoint Strategy includes a set of 10 recommendations to accelerate the delivery of EV chargepoints across the borough. These recommendations include targets for delivery of standard and rapid chargepoints, opportunities to deliver on council-owned land and providing a good spatial spread of chargepoints.

Author

Nichola Byrne
Principal Transport Planner, Walsall Council
✉ nichola.byrne@walsall.gov.uk



Walsall Council
*Electric Vehicle Chargepoint
Strategy*
(CONSULTATION DRAFT)

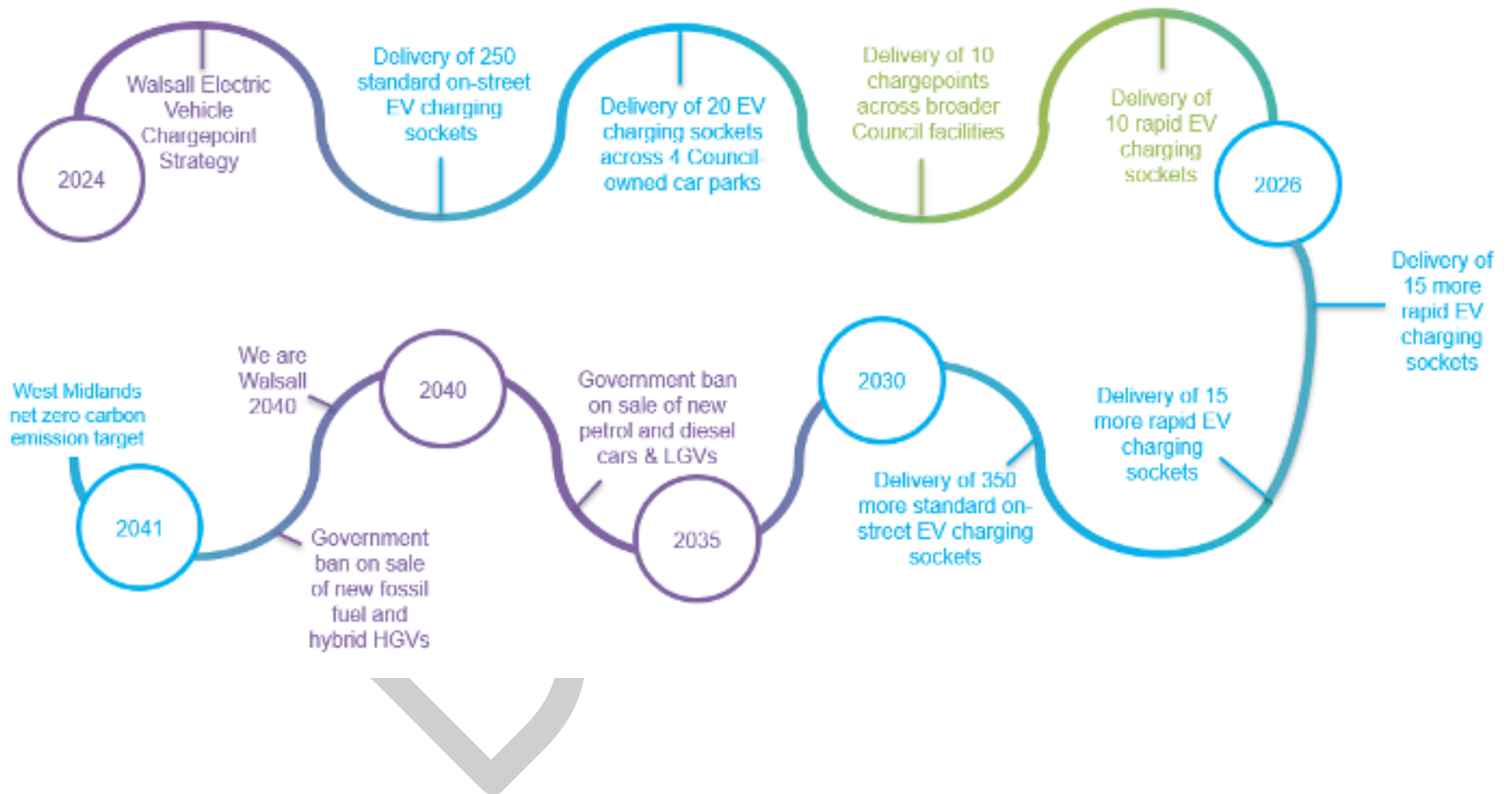




Contents

1	Executive Summary	2
1.1	Overview & Approach	2
1.2	Key Findings	2
1.3	Recommendations	2
1.4	Next Steps	2
2	Introduction	3
2.1	Key Principles	3
3	Current Situation	4
3.1	Policy & Strategy Landscape	4
3.2	Existing Chargepoint Provision	4
4	Future Demand	5
4.1	Approach	5
4.2	Anticipated Chargepoint Need	5
5	Chargepoint Delivery	6
5.1	Approach	6
5.2	Supporting Chargepoint Delivery on Council-Owned Land	6
6	Key Findings, Recommendations & Next Steps	9
6.1	Key Findings	9
6.2	Key Recommendations	9
6.3	Next Steps	11

Walsall Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Strategy Delivery Plan





Key Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
CPO	Chargepoint Operator
CRSTS	City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement
DfT	Department for Transport
EV	Electric Vehicle
EVCATS	Electric Vehicle Charging Area Transit Stations
KRN	Key Route Network
LEVI	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund
LGV	Light Goods Vehicle
MRN	Major Road Network
ORCS	On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme
RCF	Rapid Charging Fund
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SRN	Strategic Road Network
TfWM	Transport for West Midlands
ULEV	Ultra Low Emission Vehicle
WMCA	West Midlands Combined Authority

Draft



1 Executive Summary

1.1 Overview & Approach

The aim of this Strategy is to provide a clear, strategic vision for Walsall, to support the delivery of new electric vehicle (EV) chargepoints in-keeping with the wider Black Country and West Midlands context. It will support the short term roll out of chargepoints while also looking ahead strategically to 2030. Our focus is 2030 as when the analysis that informs this strategy was conducted the Government's commitment was to phase out the sale of new cars and light goods vehicles (LGVs) by 2030. We acknowledge that the date has now been postponed to 2035.

This Strategy is evidenced by an accompanying Baseline Report and full technical EV Strategy which are available upon request.

1.2 Key Findings

- Existing Chargepoint Provision: Walsall currently hosts 16 chargepoints, none of which are owned by the Council. A range of funding has been secured which should deliver a further 102 sockets across the Borough over the next few years.
- Future Need: Forecasting has highlighted a significant difference between current delivery and anticipated future need. It indicates that 227 standard and 56 rapid chargepoints are required in 2023, rising to 1,134 standards and 153 rapids by 2030.
- Funding & Delivery Models: Whilst funding allocated to date will undoubtedly help kickstart delivery of chargepoints, some of the funding has been allocated across the region and therefore the proportion available to support delivery within the Borough is limited. To help address the gap we recommend that the Council explore further funding options to ensure the Borough is well-positioned for the transition to EVs.
- Opportunities on Council-Owned Land: The Council has opportunities to deliver chargepoints on Council-owned land. This includes delivering on-street standard chargepoints, and rapid chargepoints for high mileage vehicles, alongside potentially rolling out infrastructure in Council car parks, at leisure centres, libraries, and community centres. There is also an opportunity to influence through the planning system, via specifying the level of provision required through the Local Plan or a Supplementary Planning Document.

1.3 Recommendations

The findings and insights gained whilst developing this Strategy have supported the development of key recommendations to support the accelerated delivery of EV chargepoints across the Borough. These include targets for delivery of standard and rapid chargepoints, opportunities to deliver on Council-owned land and providing a good spatial spread of chargepoints to support equity.

1.4 Next Steps

It is anticipated that the Strategy will be adopted by Summer 2024.

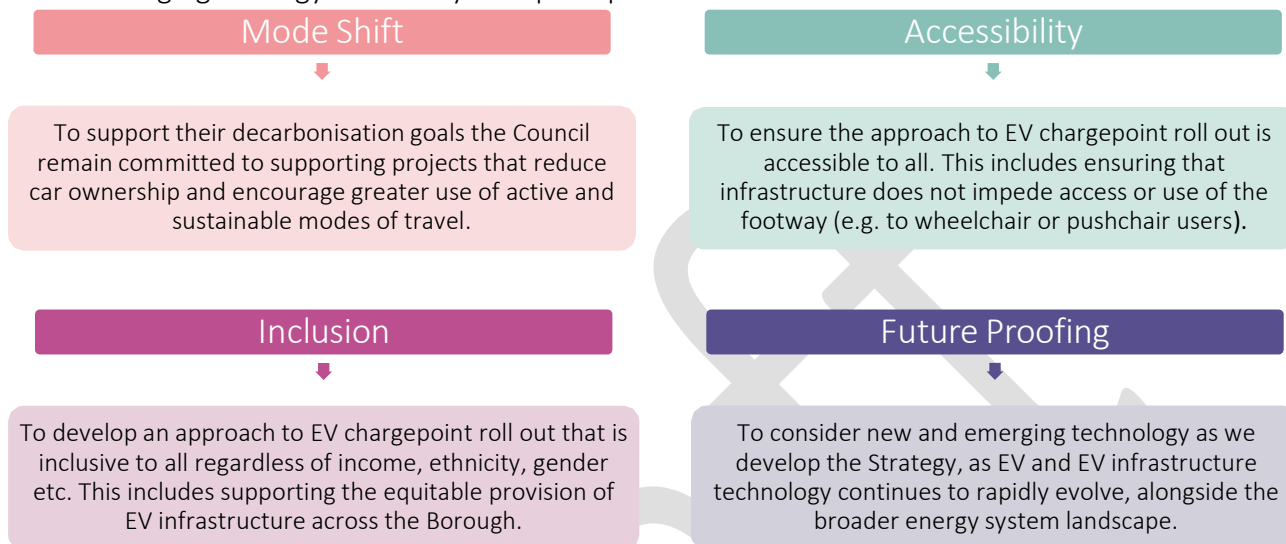


2 Introduction

2.1 Key Principles

The Council has identified four core principles which will ensure that the EV Chargepoint Strategy aligns with and supports its broader vision and goals.

The EV Charging Strategy & Delivery Plan principles are as follows:



2.1.1 Chargepoint Definitions

The definition of standard and rapid chargepoints, along with usual charging times for a typical 60kW battery) used within this Strategy are shown in Table 2-1.

Report Terminology	Charging Type	Charging Speed	Time to Full Charge
Standard	Slow	3.7kW	16 hours
	Standard	7.4kW	8 hours
	Fast	11 – 22kW	3-4 hours
Rapid	Rapid	43 – 50kW	1-2 hours
	Ultra-Rapid	50 – 350kW	30 mins or less

Table 2-1: Charging Speed Terminology



3 Current Situation

Chapter at a Glance

This Chapter provides an overview of the current policy landscape and existing chargepoint provision within Walsall Borough.

3.1 Policy & Strategy Landscape

To ensure this Strategy aligns with national, sub-regional and local policy, we reviewed a range of policies, strategies, and documents. The review highlights that at a national, sub-regional and local level there is a clear policy framework to work towards a net zero future, with an emphasis on accelerating the transition to EVs.

- National: The government are providing a range of tools and funding to support local authorities to plan and deliver local public charging infrastructure.
- Regional: At a regional level, this Strategy will build on the work delivered in the Black Country Ultra Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) Strategy and integrate with the forthcoming West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Infrastructure for Zero Emissions Vehicles Strategy.
- Local: The Council has refreshed its net zero commitment, to meet the wider regional WMCA target to be net zero by 2041 and developed We Are Walsall 2040. Walsall Area Action Plan reflect a desire to improve the availability of sustainable transport options including EV charging, and a need to deliver on the infrastructure requirements set out in the Black Country ULEV Strategy.

3.2 Existing Chargepoint Provision

3.2.1 Chargepoint Locations & Types

According to the National Chargepoint Registry there are 16 EV chargepoints currently available to the public across the Borough (as of June 2023). Of the 16 chargepoints, 11 are standard and five are rapid. The Borough's existing chargepoints are all located within the car parks of commercial establishments including hotels, shopping centres and large supermarkets. At present no chargepoints have been delivered by Walsall Council (although plans are underway), and there is a lack of on-street, publicly accessible chargepoints in residential areas to support households that do not have access to off-street parking.



4 Future Demand

Chapter at a Glance

This Chapter summarises the results of the chargepoint forecasting and outlines the anticipated chargepoint needs for the Borough in the future.

4.1 Approach

To establish the anticipated number of chargepoints required in Walsall for 2025 and 2030, we used a forecasting tool which is available to all local authorities. The tool predicts the number of EVs and the required chargepoints, based upon the size of the current vehicle fleet and EV sales predictions.

It should be noted that while the outputs may vary between this report and other regional forecasts due to the selection of different scenario assumptions, all forecasts indicate the need for a significant increase in the availability of charging infrastructure across the region.

4.2 Anticipated Chargepoint Need

Figure 4-1 sets out the anticipated EV chargepoint needs for Walsall, considering the Borough’s residents, visitors, and businesses.

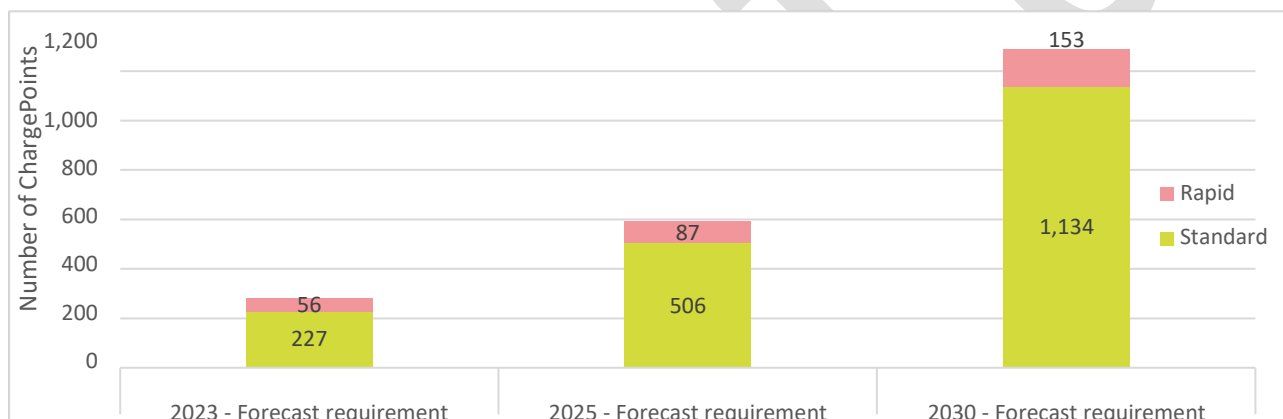
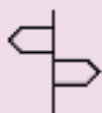


Figure 4-1: Anticipated EV Chargepoint Provision (NEVIS, 2021)

There is a clear gap between current chargepoint provision and anticipated need in the immediate and short/medium term. At present the Borough has a total of 16 chargepoints – 11 standard and five rapids, compared to anticipated need for 227 standard and 56 rapids in 2023. By 2030 this rises to 1,134 standard and 153 rapids. A substantial increase in both standard and rapid chargepoints is required at pace, to meet anticipated need and support the Borough’s net zero goals.

Council Action



Anticipated Chargepoint Need: The forecasting has demonstrated that there is a significant gap between existing and future chargepoint infrastructure needs. Rapid progress on delivery of chargepoints is required to help accelerate the uptake of EVs. To support an acceleration in delivery of chargepoints to meet future demand, the Council will commit to delivery targets for standard and rapid chargepoints.



5 Chargepoint Delivery

Chapter at a Glance

This Chapter builds on the anticipated chargepoint need for the Borough as outlined in Chapter 4 and considers various delivery models which could support the roll out of EV

5.1 Approach

This Strategy has been developed in close collaboration with key stakeholders to support local and sub-regional alignment, to harness local knowledge and insights and align and respond to the needs of the Borough's residents, visitors, and businesses.

5.2 Supporting Chargepoint Delivery on Council-Owned Land

There are a number of ways for Walsall Council to support chargepoint delivery on its land, to increase standard chargepoint provision, accelerate the delivery of rapid chargepoints, and ensure an equitable spread of chargepoints across the Borough.

5.2.1 Standard On-Street Chargepoints

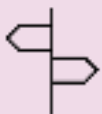
Based on data about housing types within the Borough approximately 39% of residents (those that live in flats/apartments or maisonettes and terraced houses) do not have access to off-street parking. Through supporting on-street chargepoint delivery the council can support equitable access to chargepoints for residents that lack access to off-street parking.

The analysis showed that there are clear areas of good off-street parking that we assume correlate to households living in detached and semi-detached homes. However, it also highlighted areas that have low levels of access to off-street parking including Druid's Heath and Willenhall town centre. This points to the importance of on-street EV chargepoint provision such as the 70 sockets planned over the next year.

5.2.2 Car Parks

The Council owns and manages 17 public car parks. The car parks are primarily clustered within central Walsall and Willenhall. A total of 961 bays are provided across all car park sites. At present none of the sites provide EV chargepoint facilities.

Council Action



Car Park Review: Whilst the car parks clearly provide a significant opportunity for chargepoint delivery, the Council will conduct analysis to identify any car park sites that require investment or may be repurposed. Chargepoint delivery can then be targeted at the long-term car park sites to avoid inefficiencies. e.g. the removal of chargepoints.

5.2.3 Broader Community Facilities

There are a number of additional car park facilities that are owned and operated by the Council. These include libraries, community centres, and leisure facilities across the Borough. There are 19 facilities in total, delivering approximately 1,145 spaces. Whilst not all the sites are likely to be suitable for chargepoint delivery the Council will explore opportunities at the larger car park sites. This includes at leisure centres (including Oak Park, Bloxwich and Darlaston) Walsall Arena and at community centres.



Equitable Transition



Walsall Council are committed to ensuring that Council-owned infrastructure is spread across the Borough, providing access to chargepoints for all users. This includes those without access to off-street parking as well as people with disabilities, mobility impairments and the elderly.

5.2.4 Pay & Display Bays

The Council own and operate approximately 225 pay and display bays across the Borough. The majority of these are located in Walsall town centre and provide short-term parking (e.g. for 2 hours max). As centrally located and visible locations, they provide ideal sites for standard chargepoints (both slow and fast).

5.2.5 Rapid Chargepoints

Alongside supporting on-street public chargepoints, there is also a need to accelerate the delivery of rapid chargepoints that are essential for fleet users (e.g. taxis, and fleet operators) and longer distance drivers, to ensure that a lack of chargepoints does not negatively impact the Borough and the local economy. At present the borough has five rapid chargepoints, however the forecasting indicates that 87 are required by 2025 (and 153 by 2030). In the short-term, particularly looking to 2025, we propose that Walsall's key focus should be on-street delivery. However, Walsall Council will also explore supporting the delivery of rapid charge points on or near key strategic roads. Whilst it is anticipated that the private sector (e.g. CPOs) will lead rapid chargepoint delivery, they lack access to land and therefore in our role as landowners, local authorities can support rapid delivery. High flow routes, such as the Strategic and Major Road Networks (SRN & MRN) and the West Midlands Key Route Network (KRN), are of interest to rapid CPOs and present the potential for revenue generation for the Council.

5.2.6 Planning Influence

There are a number of EV charging requirements listed within the Building Regulations that define which buildings must have chargepoints provided, and how many.

As the local planning authority, we have the opportunity to set higher standards for chargepoint requirements in developments within our area. This would ensure that developers provide appropriate levels of infrastructure to meet future demand and support our goal of increasing the level of provision.



6 Key Findings, Recommendations & Next Steps

Chapter at a Glance

This Chapter consolidated the key findings from the development of the Strategy and outlines recommendations to support infrastructure delivery.

6.1 Key Findings

The key findings are as follows:

- **Existing Chargepoint Provision:** Walsall currently hosts 16 chargepoints, none of which are owned by the Council. A range of funding has been secured which should deliver a further 102 sockets across the Borough over the next few years.
- **Future Need:** Forecasting has highlighted a significant difference between current delivery and anticipated future need. It indicates that 1,134 standards and 153 rapids by 2030.
- **Funding & Delivery Models:** While some public funding that has been secured will undoubtedly help kickstart delivery of chargepoints, some of the funding has been allocated across the region to date to support delivery within the Borough. We commit to seeking further public funding and exploring options with chargepoint operators to ensure the Borough is well-positioned for the transition to EVs.
- **Opportunities on Council-Owned Land:** The Council is a significant landowner and as such there are many opportunities to deliver chargepoints on Council-owned land. This includes committing to the delivery of on-street standard chargepoints, and rapid chargepoints for high mileage vehicles, alongside rolling out infrastructure in Council car parks, at leisure centres, libraries, and community centres. There is also an opportunity to influence through the planning system, through specifying the level of provision required in the Local Plan or a Supplementary Planning Document.

6.2 Key Recommendations

There are a number of key actions that the Council will consider to accelerate delivery of chargepoints (Table 6-1).

No.	Key Recommendations	Rationale
1.	Continue to explore future funding options for delivery of chargepoints	There is a significant gap between the anticipated need outlined by the forecasts and current and planned delivery. Whilst the Council should continue to maximise match funding from Government, we will also consider exploring options with private CPOs.
2.	Promote the EV chargepoint request form on the Council’s website.	To understand need and help identify suitable sites for early roll out. Responding to demand should also help accelerate the transition to EVs.
3.	Commit to delivering 250 standard on-street sockets by 2026, and 600 by 2030.	Analysis indicates that approximately 39% of the Boroughs residents do not have off-street parking. On-street chargepoints are essential to support equity.
4.	Commit to delivering ten rapid sockets by 2026, and 25 by 2030.	Rapids are essential to fleet vehicles (e.g. taxis and private hire vehicles) and to long distance private drivers, which is pertinent given the influence of the M6 motorway. We propose a phased approach to rapid delivery, so that officers can capitalise on expertise from the initial roll out to scale up delivery.



No.	Key Recommendations	Rationale
5.	Conduct a car park review to determine which of the Council's sites have a long-term future. Long-term and high-quality car park sites can then be assessed for chargepoint suitability. We	Car parks present a significant opportunity to the Council. We currently operate 17 car parks that can support both standard and rapid chargepoint installation. Site feasibility assessments will be required e.g. to assess electrical capabilities at each site.
6.	Commit to delivering ten sockets across the broader community facilities (e.g. leisure and community centres) by 2026.	Community facilities are generally located in the heart of communities and therefore provide convenient, central locations that can support an equitable and inclusive approach to chargepoint delivery.
7.	Commit to delivering ten sockets in Pay and Display bays across the Borough by 2026.	The Council owns and operates approximately 225 pay and display bays across the Borough. The majority of these are located in Walsall town centre and provide short-term parking (e.g. for 2 hours max). As central, visible locations they provide ideal sites for standard chargepoints (both slow and fast), and for catering to the needs of all drivers.
8.	Work with a wide range of CPOs and explore charging prices.	To support choice and reduce costs to the users, we will consider working with a variety of CPOs, providing a range of benefits including a variety of tariffs for users to choose from and allows the Council to monitor both chargepoint reliability and revenue potential over time between CPOs.
9.	Commit to ensuring that there is good spatial provision of chargepoints across the Borough.	Council Officers shall use their influence to actively work with CPOs to ensure that there is an equitable provision of chargepoints across the Borough. The distribution of chargepoints will be continually monitored and evaluated to ensure an equitable approach.
10.	Utilise the Office of Zero Emission Vehicles' accessibility specifications	To support the Strategy's accessibility principle, and design in access for all users, including people with disabilities and in parent and child spaces.

Table 6-1: Summary of Key Recommendations

6.3 Next Steps

The Council are undertaking consultation on the EV Chargepoint Strategy. It is anticipated that the Strategy will be adopted in Summer 2024.

Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Area of Focus – 2023/24

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

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.

Agenda Items							
Theme	6 July 2023	12 September 2023	19 October 2023	23 November 2023	16 January 2024	27 February 2024	11 April 2024
Economy		Derelict Properties Taskforce	Regeneration focus – Towns Funds projects, Town Centre Masterplan, Willenhall Masterplan, M6 J10	Willenhall, Darlaston and Aldridge Train Stations	Heritage Strategy with reference to Highgate Brewery		Private session discussion on derelict properties taskforce
Environment		Streetworks permit scheme		Tree Planting Strategy	Climate change Off-road biking	Litter picking strategy and volunteers Enforcement	
Cross cutting both Economy and Environment	Outturn 2022/23			Quarter 2 Monitoring Budget Setting		Grass cutting schedule and mapping of council assets	UNESCO Geopark Update Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Strategy

Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Area of Focus – 2023/24

*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 unless specially requested by the Committee.

Items to be scheduled in work programme:

1. Public Toilets Pilot Update;
2. Cycling Infrastructure Programme;
3. Government Recycling Strategy.



FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

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

4 MARCH 2024

FORWARD PLAN

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

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

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

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

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

- (1) A key decision is:
 - (i) any decision in relation to an executive function which results in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant, having regard to the Council’s budget for the service or function to which the decision relates or
 - (ii) any decision that is likely to have significant impact on two or more wards within the borough.
- (2) The threshold for “significant” expenditure/savings is £500,000.
- (3) A decision taker may only make a key decision in accordance with the requirements of the Executive Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.

**FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS
APRIL 2024 TO JULY 2024 (04.03.2024)**

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
20/24 (4.3.24)	<p>Walsall Proud Programme: Next Stages of Transformation</p> <p>This report details the key outcomes, achievements and progress of the Council's Proud transformation journey and outlines the approach to service transformation going forward.</p>	Cabinet Non-key decision	Caroline Brom Caroline.Brom@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Bird	20 March 2024
18/24 (4.3.24)	<p>Public Sector Equality Duty:</p> <p>To note the Public Sector Equality Duty annual report which will be published in March 2024 in accordance with our obligations with the Equality Act 2010.</p>	Cabinet Non-key Decision	Karen Griffiths Karen.Griffiths@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Bird	20 March 2024
7/24 (5.2.24)	<p>Darlaston Long Term Plan for Towns:</p> <p>To authorise the Executive Director for Resources and Transformation, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, to act as</p>	Cabinet Key Decision	Philippa Venables Philippa.Venables@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	20 March 2024

	Accountable Body for the Darlaston Long Term Plan for Towns.					
8/24 (5.2.24)	<p>Fixed Penalty Notices:</p> <p>Cabinet to consider law changes allowing the increase of penalties for litter, fly tipping and duty of care and approving the new penalty limits in Walsall.</p>	Cabinet Key Decision	David Elrington David.Elrington@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Perry	20 March 2024
9/24 (5.2.24)	<p>West Midlands Local Transport Plan Settlement and Transport Capital Programme 2024/25:</p> <p>To approve the West Midlands Local Transport Plan Settlement and Transport Capital Programme 2024/25.</p>	Cabinet Key Decision	Matt Crowton Matt.Crowton@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	20 March 2024
2/24 (8.1.24)	<p>Acquisition of a Strategic Town Centre Development Site:</p> <p>To approve the acquisition of a strategic town centre development site.</p> <p><i>This will be a private session report containing commercially sensitive information.</i></p>	Cabinet Key Decision	Nick Ford Nick.Ford@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	20 March 2024
15/24 (5.2.24)	<p>Acquisition of a Town Centre Property for Strategic Regeneration:</p> <p>To approve the acquisition of a town centre property for strategic development.</p>	Cabinet Key Decision	Nick Ford Nick.Ford@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	20 March 2024

	<i>This will be a private session report containing commercially sensitive information.</i>					
11/24 (5.2.24)	<p>Connected Gateway:</p> <p>To approve delegations to enable continued delivery of the external grant funded programmes/ projects in line with the agreed governance and assurance framework.</p> <p><i>This will include a private session report containing commercially sensitive information.</i></p>	Cabinet Key Decision	Simon Tranter Simon.Tranter@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	20 March 2024
14/24 (5.2.24)	<p>Healthy Levelling Up Partnership:</p> <p>To agree to the Healthy LUP proposal and agree delegations to bring forward proposals for funding under the scheme.</p>	Cabinet Key Decision	Simon Tranter Simon.Tranter@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	20 March 2024
17/24 (4.3.24)	<p>Strategic Acquisition in Pheasey:</p> <p>To approve the use of Compulsory Purchase powers to bring forward the development of a derelict site.</p> <p><i>This will be a private session report containing commercially sensitive information.</i></p>	Cabinet Non-key decision	Nick Ford Nick.Ford@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	20 March 2024
16/24 (14.02.24)	<p>Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy:</p> <p>To adopt a new strategy and establish a council led steering group to</p>	Cabinet Key Decision	Jaki Brunton-Douglas Jaki.Brunton-Douglas@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Flint	20 March 2024

	undertake ongoing monitoring and annual update.		Black Country PPOSS - Overarching Strategic Framework Walsall PPOSS - Assessment Report			
65/23 (4.12.23)	Contract for Multiple Recyclable Materials: To award off-take and processing contracts for multiple recyclable materials. <i>This will be a private session report containing commercially sensitive information.</i>	Cabinet Key Decision	Katie Moreton Kathryn.Moreton@walsall.gov.uk Alan Bowley Alan.Bowley@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Murphy	20 March 2024
6/24 (8.1.24)	Alternative Provision Contract: To approve the award contracts for the provision of Alternative Education. <i>This will include a private session report containing commercially sensitive information.</i>	Cabinet Key Decision	Laura Wood Laura.Wood@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr M. Statham	20 March 2024
58/23 (6.11.23)	High Needs Funding Formula 2024/25: 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 2024/25 financial year.	Cabinet Key Decision	Richard Walley Richard.Walley@walsall.gov.uk	Schools Forum, Internal Services	Cllr M. Statham	20 March 2024

59/23 (6.11.23)	Early Years Funding Formula 2024/25: To Cabinet approve the Early Years Funding Formula, as agreed by Schools Forum, to be used as 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	20 March 2024
46/23 (4.9.23)	SEN Place Requirement: To approve finance for additional special educational needs school places.	Cabinet Key Decision	Alex Groom Alex.Groom@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr M. Statham	20 March 2024
14/23 (6.2.23)	Growth Funding for Schools: To enable the Local Authority to fulfil its duty to secure sufficient primary and secondary school places, through the adoption of a policy for the application of revenue funding for school growth.	Cabinet Key Decision	Alex Groom Alex.Groom@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services, Schools Forum	Cllr M. Statham	20 March 2024
66/23 (4.12.23)	Waste Management Strategy Update - Fryers Road Household Waste Recycling Centre redevelopment (HWRC): That Cabinet approve the pre-tender budget for the redevelopment of a larger Fryers Road HWRC and agree to use the Pagabo framework (design and build stages) for the procurement of Fryers Road HWRC.	Cabinet Key Decision	Katie Moreton Kathryn.Moreton@walsall.gov.uk Stephen Johnson Stephen.Johnson@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew Cllr Murphy	17 April 2024

67/23 (4.12.23)	Council Plan 2022/25 – Q3 23/24: To note the Quarter 3 2023/24 (outturn) performance against the Markers of Success in the Council Plan 2022/25.	Cabinet Non-key Decision	Elizabeth Connolly Elizabeth.Connolly@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Bird	17 April 2024
20/24 (4.3.24)	Protective Characteristics for Care Leavers: To agree that ‘care experience’ be treated as if it were a Protected Characteristic under the Equalities Act 2010, so that decisions on future services and policies made and adopted by the council consider the impact on people with care experience.	Cabinet Key Decision	Zoe Morgan Zoe.Morgan@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Elson	17 April 2024
13/24 (5.2.24)	Multifunctional Devices leasing contract: To consider the award of a 5-year contract for the leasing of multifunctional devices (MFDs) and production print devices. <i>This will include a private session report containing commercially sensitive information.</i>	Cabinet Key Decision	Sharon Worrall Sharon.Worrall@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Ferguson	17 April 2024
19/24 (4.3.24)	Compact Sweeper Hire Contract: Award of contract for 5 hired compact sweepers (plus a spare) for 6 years. Street Cleaning – Clean & Green.	Cabinet Key Decision	Den Edwards Den.Edwards@walsall.gov.uk	Internal services	Cllr Murphy	17 April 2024

	<i>This will include a private session report containing commercially sensitive information.</i>					
21/24 (4.3.24)	Healthwatch Contract Extension: For Cabinet approval to extend the current contractual arrangements for Healthwatch under Reg 72 to allow for full design, tendering and implementation.	Cabinet Key Decision	Grace Charles Grace.Charles@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Pedley	17 April 2024
10/24 (5.2.24)	Surveillance and Access to Communications Data: To review the authority's performance as regards directed surveillance and to approve an updated policy for surveillance and the interception of communications data.	Cabinet Key Decision	David Elrington David.Elrington@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Perry	17 April 2024
12/24 (5.2.24)	Walsall Safer Streets – Palfrey Big Local and General Update: To cover the work of Palfrey Big Local, their resident led approach and the outcomes they have achieved.	Cabinet Non-key Decision	Paul Gordon Paul.Gordon@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services Palfrey Big Local	Cllr Perry	17 April 2024
57/23 (6.11.23)	Walsall Net-Zero 2041 Climate Strategy: To approve the Walsall Net-Zero 2041 Strategy.	Cabinet Key Decision	Katie Moreton Kathryn.Moreton@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Flint	July 2024

Black Country Executive Joint Committee
Forward Plan of Key Decisions

Published up to June 2024

Date Created	Key Decision	Contact Officer	Main consultee	Date of meeting
	No decisions scheduled.			



West Midlands Combined Authority

Forward Plan

Forthcoming key decisions

Title of key decision:	Decision to be taken by and date:	Open or Exempt:	Portfolio Lead	Employee to contact:
<p>Arrangements for Mayoral Question Time with MPs To agree the arrangements for mayoral question time sessions with the region's MPs.</p>	WMCA Board 14 June 2024	Open	Andy Street Mayor of the West Midlands	Jonathan Gibson Head of Policy & Public Affairs
<p>Penalty Fares for Midland Metro Following public consultation, to agree a new penalty fare amount and to consider moving to a proposed two-tier penalty structure, where the fee amount will reduce for early payment.</p>	WMCA Board 14 June 2024	Open	Councillor Mike Bird Portfolio Lead for Transport	Chris Hopkinson Owner Representative - West Midlands Metro
<p>Private Sector Representation To consider retaining existing private sector representation on WMCA boards until such time as the future Single Settlement governance structure is known.</p>	WMCA Board 14 June 2024	Open	Councillor Stephen Simkins Portfolio Lead for Economy & Innovation	James Hughes Member Relationship Manager
<p>Bus Options Report To consider options for the future delivery of the region's bus network.</p>	WMCA Board 19 July 2024	Open	Councillor Mike Bird Portfolio Lead for Transport	Steven Hayes Head of Network Transformation
<p>Key Route Network Review 2023/24 To approve the amended Key Route Network within the WMCA area.</p>	WMCA Board 19 July 2024	Open	Councillor Mike Bird Portfolio Lead for Transport	Rachel Ing Corridor Manager

The Forward Plan

This document sets out known 'key decisions' that will be taken by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) over the coming months.

Forthcoming key decisions are published online to meet the statutory 28 day notification rule for each meeting where a key decision will be taken. Where it has not been possible to meet the 28 day rule for publication of notice of a key decision or an intention to meet in private, the relevant notices will be published as required by legislation as soon as possible.

What is a key decision?

A 'key decision' means a decision of the Mayor, WMCA or officer which is likely:

- (a) to result in the WMCA incurring expenditure, making savings or generating income amounting to £1m or more; or
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the WMCA

The report relating to a decision, together with any other documents being considered, will be available five clear working days before the decision is to be taken (unless the documentation contains exempt information).

The forward plan also provides notice of when the WMCA may decide to exclude the press and public during consideration of a particular matter due to the potential for disclosure of confidential or exempt information. The grounds upon which local authorities can exclude the press and public are specified by law and details of the exempt categories are available on request from the Governance Services team (governance.services@wmca.org.uk).

Councillors or members of the public wishing to:

- make a representation about why a matter should be heard in public, or
- submit information to the decision-making body about an item in the forward plan, or
- request details of relevant documents, or
- seek advice about the WMCA's decision-making arrangements,

should contact the Governance Services team: governance.services@wmca.org.uk

Recommendation Tracker

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	Completed		Report discussed at Cabinet on 8 February. Further fuller details to be discussed at next Cabinet meeting on 22 March.

Recommendation Tracker

2 February 2023	Willenhall, Darlaston and Aldridge Railway Stations	Report to be considered at a future meeting of the Committee.	Sian Lloyd	Completed		Discussed at the meeting of the Committee on April 13.
	Areas of Focus 22/23	Report on public toilet provision to be presented at the next meeting of the Committee.	Sian Lloyd	Completed		Report on public toilets brought to meeting on 28 February.
28 February 2023	Area of Focus 22/23	CCTV provision in housing estates be added to the list of items to be considered.	Sian Lloyd	Completed		Added to areas of focus document.
13 April 2023	Willenhall, Darlaston and Aldridge Railway Stations	A further written update to be considered by the Committee.	West Midlands Rail Executive	Completed		Added to areas of focus.
	Phoenix 10	A further report to be considered by the Committee in due course following the site remediation phase.	Simon Tranter	Completed		Added to areas of focus.
12 September 2023	Derelict Properties Taskforce	Discussions in relation to specific sites to be held at a future meeting in private session within six months.	Simon Tranter/David Moore	Completed		Added to areas of focus – to be scheduled for a specific date.
	Areas of Focus	Request an invitation to the Scrutiny Overview Committee meeting in relation to the Walsall Local Borough Plan.	Sian Lloyd	Completed		Invitation requested – at present this discussion is scheduled for February 2024.
23 October 2023	Regeneration Update	Request an update on the UNESCO Geopark and an update on Moorcroft Wood with the associated visitor centre at a future meeting of the Committee.	Liz Stuffins	Completed		Item scheduled for February 2024.

Recommendation Tracker

		Clarification of the number of electric vehicles charging points in the town centre	Dave Brown	Completed		Circulated to Members on 07 November 2023.
		A copy of the Transport Scheme to be forwarded to Willenhall Councillors	Matt Powis	Completed.		Circulated on 15 November 2023
		Highways England and SISK be invited to a special meeting of the Committee.	Matt Powis	Completed		Briefing to be held on 15 January 2024.
		<p>Committee recommends to Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That, the Cabinet and Council Officers should be radical in changes to the Borough's Town Centre plans as our town centres have radically changed post pandemic. 2. In connection with (1) above, the Council look to increase transport links by moving bus services closer to Walsall Train Station and Park Street, Walsall. 3. That, the Council explore a clearer vision of future housing potential in our town centres in future plans and reports. 	Matt Powis	Completed		Circulated on 19 February 2024
	Areas of Focus	Cycling Infrastructure Programme and Government Recycling Strategy be added to the areas of focus.	Matt Powis	Completed		Added to Areas of Focus.

Recommendation Tracker

23 November 2023	Draft Budget and Capital Programme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cost benefit analysis in respect of preventative measures with fly tipping compared to 2022. 2. Clarification on whether the Council could recover costs associated with fly tipping from a Magistrates' or Small Claims Court. 	Dave Elrington	In progress		
16 January 2024	Heritage Strategy	A Member requested a report on the future of Darlaston Recreation Centre.	Nick Ford	Completed		Added to the areas of focus
	Off-Road Vehicles	Conviction data relating to off-road vehicles to be circulated to the Committee.	Dave Elrington	In progress	TBC	
		The Council had prepared literature to raise awareness of the dangers of off-road vehicles including the legal ramifications of using such vehicles. In this respect, it was agreed that an example of the literature would be circulated to the Committee in writing.	Dave Elrington	Completed		Circulated on 20 February 2024
27 February 2024	Minutes of the previous meeting	A Member sought clarification on the number and location of leaflets for Darlaston South in respect of Minute No. 47, Off-Road Vehicles – Updates.	Dave Elrington	In progress		
	Fly Tipping Enforcement and Activity	That, the Cabinet work with the Local Government Association to lobby Government to increase the financial levels of fixed penalty notices and strengthen enforcement legislation.	Dave Elrington	In progress		

