

Meeting of the Highways and Environmental Services Select Committee

Thursday 4th January, 2024 at 6.00pm
In Committee Room 2, The Council House, Priory Road,
Dudley

Agenda – Public Session **(Meeting open to the public and press)**

1. Apologies for absence
2. To report the appointment of any substitute members serving for this meeting of the Committee
3. To receive any declarations of interest under the Members' Code of Conduct
4. To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 27th November, 2023 as a correct record (Pages 4 – 15)
5. Public Forum
6. Dudley Highway Network Performance and Road Safety (Pages 16 - 18)
7. Corporate Quarterly Performance Report – Environment Directorate – Quarter 2 (1st July 2023 to 30th September 2023) (Pages 19 – 46)
8. Highways and Environmental Services Select Committee Progress Tracker and Future Business (Page 47)

9. To consider any questions from Members to the Chair where two clear days notice has been given to the Monitoring Officer (Council Procedure Rule 11.8)

Distribution:

Councillor E Lawrence (Chair)
Councillor P Miller (Vice-Chair)
Councillors D Borley, K Casey, K Denning, P Dobb, P Drake, I Kettle, A Lees, J Martin and K Westwood.



Chief Executive

Dated: 19th December, 2023

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Minutes of the Highways and Environmental Services Select Committee

Monday, 27th November, 2023 at 6.00 pm
In Committee Room 2, The Council House, Priory Road, Dudley

Present:

Councillor E Lawrence (Chair)
Councillor P Miller (Vice-Chair)
Councillors D Borley, K Denning, P Dobb, P Drake, I Kettle, J Martin and K Westwood.

Dudley MBC Officers:

N McGurk (Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery), S Hunt (Highways Group Manager) and K Taylor (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

Also in Attendance:

Councillor D Corfield (Cabinet Member for Highways and Environmental Services)

7 Members of the Public.

19 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors K Casey and A Lees.

20 **Appointment of Substitute Member**

There were no substitute Members appointed for this meeting of the Committee.

21 **Declarations of Interest**

No member made a declaration of interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

22 **Minutes**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21st September, 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.

23 **Public Forum**

Councillor C Barnett, on behalf of Quarry Bank residents, made representations to the Committee and presented two petitions in relation to safer roads and speed control measures on Thorns Road, Quarry Bank and restoring access to the public footpath located between Lynval Road and Thorns Road, Quarry Bank.

Councillor C Barnett stated that footpath at Lynval Road was a public right of way and therefore access should not be obstructed, and although residents had been advised of two further routes, these were considered unacceptable.

The petition in relation to Thorns Road, Quarry Bank, requested to make Thorns Road safe for pedestrians, residents and road users by taking urgent measures to prevent further deaths and incidents by installing working speed cameras and additional traffic calming measures.

The Committee were advised of the dangerous driving demonstrated by vehicles on a regular basis and that an existing pelican crossing allowed pedestrians only seven seconds to cross the road safely, and as there was no central island, this raised further safety concerns.

In responding to a question raised by Councillor I Kettle, it was reported that approximately 28,000 vehicles travelled along the Thorns Road each day. Councillor C Barnett also stated that further responses to questions raised to the Transport and Highway Services Department was also expected.

In responding to a question raised by Councillor K Denning in relation to what safety measures had been implemented by the West Midlands Police, Councillor C Barnett confirmed that the speed camera located on the road had not been in operation for a long time and that some speed testing of vehicles had been undertaken occasionally.

Councillor D Borley supported the comments made and urgent action needed particularly of the timings of the pelican crossing and referred to a pilot scheme that had been suggested by the Transport and Highway Services Department within that area. He also suggested that West Midlands Police be requested to undertake vehicle speed tests during evenings.

In referring to comments made, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Environmental Services referred to a recent public meeting that he had attended where he assured those present of his commitment, and the deterrents needed to improve roads within the Borough. Reference was made to discussions held with Chief Superintendent Tagg from West Midlands Police in relation to two multi-agency vehicle operations, namely, Advance and Hercules, that had been implemented which could be utilised on Thorns Road. He then reiterated his commitment and support as Cabinet Member in making roads as safe as possible for users and pedestrians and shared his sincere condolences to those that had lost a relative or friend as a result of an accident, sharing his personal experience of such loss.

The Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery echoed comments made by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Environmental Services and further emphasised that the safety of users and pedestrians was paramount. He accepted the two petitions presented to the Committee and undertook to provide a response and ensure that any outstanding responses as previously referred to were actioned. He also undertook to resolve the timings of the pelican crossing as a matter of urgency.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Councillor C Barnett and members of public for their attendance and comments made, and requested that responses to the petitions be shared with the Chair and Vice-Chair for information.

24 **The Environment Highways Group – Ways of Working / Work Programmes Presentation**

The Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery gave a detailed presentation to Members on the ways of working and work programmes by the Environment Highways Group over the past 12 months.

It was noted that the Highway functions were previously separated across three areas namely, Capital; Maintenance and Street Lighting with four separate Highway Managers covering individual areas and budgets divided across the network to fit the ways of working. Reference was made to the recent restructure within the Environment Directorate in which the Highways Group Manager had responsibility for all aspects of the maintenance and asset management of the Borough's highways maintenance and engineering and street lighting.

In order to identify medium and long term work programmes it was essential to fully understand all Highway assets, become performance driven and operationally efficient to enable an holistic medium and long term vision for the Dudley Borough. The service would also look to enhance through digital improvements helping inform annual programmes. Political support towards a sustainable approach to roads and improving real time communications was also needed.

Although there had been some improvement in Dudley with regard to potholes, this issue had also been recognised nationally, however, the outcomes of this approach would deliver visible and tangible differences for residents and users of the Highway and an operationally efficient workforce that would be digitally enhanced.

At this juncture, the Highways Group Manager provided an overview of the changes adopted compared to previous years including the introduction of the Road Hierarchy review categorising a highways importance to the Borough from 1-7, to help identify where focus is needed to maximise spend where the greater benefit could be made. A 5-6 year reconstruction programme to Classified and Unclassified Highways had also been developed based on the hierarchy review criteria.

It was noted that high quality materials were being utilised to extend the life of the highway / setting targets that were warrantied for 5 years. An annual programme of structural patching to areas in excess of 200m² based on the hierarchy review criteria had been developed in conjunction with reactive structural maintenance of individual or groups of highway defects to a high-quality specification to prevent repeat occurrences.

Reference was made to improvements completed in areas around the Borough, and although it was acknowledged that there were insufficient resources to improve all locations, more innovative ways of working was being explored to maximise resources and reduce Carbon footprint. Areas were continually reviewed on a risk-based approach, therefore feedback and reporting of issues by residents and Elected Members was welcomed and encouraged in order to target areas accordingly.

Photographs and statistical information in relation to the work undertaken within Highways was outlined and the Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery commented positively on the vast improvement in engagement with residents and Elected Members.

Members were advised of the three-year Gully Zonal Mapping that had been implemented, and whilst it was acknowledged that the service would continue to respond to emergency works and repairs, the mapping allowed efficiencies through each zone. It was reported that 4431 Classified Roads; 1794 Critical Locations and 5063 Unclassified Zones had been completed to date during 2023/24. It was noted that work had been undertaken to address areas that had not been maintained previously in particular around dual carriageways, town centres and old quarters.

The Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery confirmed that a software programme would be introduced to monitor all aspects of gully emptying which would be used to develop work programmes based on the information received allowing for resources to be directed to the locations on a risk-based approach and reduce running costs and provide greater accountability of the service. This would also result in operational efficiencies allowing for resources to be redirected to other areas.

It was noted that a Lining Programme had been implemented in 2022/23 which resulted in all schools across Dudley being refreshed, 63 schools had school keep clears, double yellows and hatching completed with 90% of the Boroughs Zebra crossings refreshed. The 2023/24 programme focussed on relining areas including all pedestrian crossings, major junctions, islands and roundabouts and town centres.

An overview of the Street Lighting – Phase 2 LED Program was provided and it was confirmed that streets were re-designed, as required, to ensure appropriate lighting levels and electrical testing undertaken on all lighting that had been replaced by LEDs. It was noted that the LEDs were warranted for 10 years plus, and that a sign and bollard cleaning programme would also be undertaken on the various signs located throughout the Borough, and invisible signs removed if no longer needed.

It was acknowledged that although the communications and public perception had improved, there was further work to do, in particular ensuring connectivity between Elected Members and residents.

Following the presentation of the report, Members had the opportunity to ask questions make comments and responses were provided, where necessary, as follows:-

- a) The Chair commented positively on the presentation given and the improvements made within the Kingswinford area.
- b) Councillor I Kettle referred to the previous structure of the highways functions and queried how capital was divided across the network to fit the ways of working.

In responding, the Highways Group Manager referred to the West Midlands Combined Authority annual funding towards Highways Maintenance in Dudley which was used in conjunction with the capital and revenue budget allocated by the Local Authority. It was also confirmed that an additional £700,000 grant had been awarded to Dudley by the Department for Transport for maintaining and improving the highway network.

- c) In responding to a number of questions raised by Councillor I Kettle in relation to the Gully Program and identified zones, the Highways Group Manager confirmed that the areas had been identified and predominately categorised by the amount of gully's within the Borough. It was emphasised that reactive maintenance continued in those areas at risk of high flooding and were addressed immediately or preventative works undertaken if available.

The Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery referred to the Neighbourhood Model approach which would be vital in implementing new ways of working to ensure better value in areas.

- d) Councillor D Borley referred to the lack of cleaning to verges in areas that could not be accessed due to vehicle parking and queried whether advanced warning could be given to ensure clear roads.

In responding, the Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery confirmed that although there were currently no advance warnings given for street cleansing, further consideration would be given to digital applications that would allow the Local Authority to improve communications in future.

- e) In responding to a question raised by the Chair in relation to a road sweeping programme, the Highways Group Manager confirmed that road sweeping was included within the street cleaning programme with four large channel sweepers and five street sweeper vehicles currently in use.
- f) In responding to a further question raised by the Chair, the Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery confirmed that all programmes were incorporated within the proposed Neighbourhood Model and whilst it was acknowledged that all areas could not be delivered, the model would help empower and improve communities dependent on need. It was noted that an event would be arranged in January, 2024 for Elected Members to meet with Town Managers.
- g) Reference was made to the long-term vision and whether this provided an opportunity for the Local Authority to work with Utility Companies to ensure a good quality of road repairs after carrying out street works. The Highways Group Manager confirmed that the meetings with Utility Companies usually occurred four times each year which included assessments of work programmes, and that notice of works proposed to classified and unclassified roads was provided 14 weeks prior. It was also confirmed that Utility Companies were now responsible in repairing roads that had deteriorated within five years of being completed.

- h) The Chair shared some examples of areas that had been left unsatisfactorily following work undertaken and sought clarification as to whether the work undertaken by contractors and utility providers were monitored by the Local Authority.

The Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery and Highways Group Manager acknowledged comments made and assured the Committee that the number of meetings with utility companies had increased and that repairs were being monitored accordingly.

- i) In referring to comments made in relation to the requirement for political support towards a sustainable approach to roads, the Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery clarified that this was not directed towards any controlling party of the Local Authority but emphasised the need for cross-party support. He also shared his appreciation of the support given by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Environmental Services.
- j) Councillor J Martin referred to comments made with regard to the move from a reactive service to committed long term plans and shared concerns that it had appeared that those that had frequently requested work to be completed was then actioned compared to requests that had been submitted in accordance with procedure.
- k) Councillor J Martin suggested that the success of the programmes would be determined by how it would be embedded and welcomed the proposed new stable way of working. The need to ensure that a right balance was maintained between medium and long term plans and short-term requests was emphasised.
- l) Reference was made to a number of estate roads and gulley's, in particular located on steep streets within the Brierley Hill Ward, that had not been maintained for some time due to accessibility and that a programmed maintenance schedule for all roads throughout the Borough would be beneficial for both Elected Members and residents to ensure that all areas were maintained accordingly.
- m) Councillor J Martin also referred to a large white sign located in Bank Street, Brierley Hill which had not been cleaned for some time and displayed some historic graffiti.

- n) Councillor J Martin queried whether winter road treatments were impacting road surfaces and whether there were any alternative options that could be utilised to prevent any further damage to existing roads.
- o) Reference was also made to the communication practices adopted by the refuse collection service and whether the same could be undertaken within Highways in order to promote programmed works.
- p) In responding to all queries raised by Councillor J Martin, the Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery emphasised that works undertaken previously were not prioritised according to individual requests and welcomed and acknowledged the comments made in relation to maintenance in estate roads and gully's that had not been undertaken. It was acknowledged that despite the large task ahead the service was now taking a methodical approach to ensure all areas had been programmed. Members were advised that there had not been a programme implemented with regard to sign cleaning and that further consideration would be given to this area ensuring the safety of employees and pedestrians was maintained.

It was further reiterated that the Neighbourhood Model would ensure engagement with communities in order to understand the priorities of each community.

With regard to communications, it was envisaged that a new digital way of working would greatly enhance processes and that despite the need for further improvement, there had been a significant change within a short period of time.

The Highways Group Manager referred to the current winter maintenance regime which included a fleet of gritters that were due to be replaced next year. It was expected that the latest vehicles contained innovative technology, which included being able to pre-programme gritters with information specific to each gritting route. This enabled salt to be spread onto the road automatically, taking into account any specific requirements of the highways network. This should minimise the level of salt used and generate savings in order to make it a more efficient service. It was also reported that rainwater exacerbated potholes causing further damage and not snow and ice.

- q) Members commented positively and expressed their appreciation on the vast improvements made within their respective ward areas.
- r) Councillor K Denning welcomed the presentation given, however requested that future presentations be produced in an accessible format.
- s) Councillor K Denning referred to repair works undertaken in Wolverhampton Street, Dudley, however there remained a deep pothole which was extremely dangerous to pedestrians and road users. He also suggested that all pedestrian crossings should be accessible and user friendly for all and not separate disabled crossings.
- t) Councillor K Denning commented positively on structural patching within areas and encouraged officers to communicate with utility companies the importance of minimising disruption and safeguarding public safety during and after programmed works.
- u) Councillor K Denning further suggested that road sweeping should be incorporated into programmes taking into account seasonal increases, in particular during the leaf fall period to ensure that roads and pavements were as safe as possible.
- v) Councillor K Denning also welcomed the replacement of street lighting to LEDs which would enable them to be more durable and reduce the likelihood of faults.
- w) In responding to all of the comments made by Councillor K Denning, the Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery undertook to ensure all future presentations were in an accessible format. He again acknowledged and echoed the frustration surrounding defects to roads that had been repaired and assured the Committee that measures were available to penalise utility companies where road works failed to meet expected standards. Further Legislation was expected in 2024 to allow Local Authorities to inspect utility companies street works and assess the quality of their road repairs.

- x) In responding to further questions raised by Councillor K Denning, the Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery confirmed that any monetary gain resulting from a penalty to the utility companies would be reallocated to Highways Assets and invested into the network.
- y) Councillor K Westwood queried whether the relining of unclassified roads had been adopted and referred specifically to the continuing parking issues around the Russells Halls Hospital and neighbouring streets. She also referred to a ‘Welcome to Brockmoor Village’ sign which had been removed and requested that this be re-installed.

The Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery and Highways Group Manager thanked all Members for their comments and undertook to investigate the specific cases raised during the meeting and again reassured the Committee that all the programmes presented today predominantly focused on the safety of pedestrians, residents and road users. Although the focus was for medium and long term plans, the department would continue to deliver a reactive service to requests.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Environmental Services commended the excellent presentation given and the exemplary work undertaken by the Team involved and achievements made. He also confirmed that the new street team scene was now operational and encouraged Members to work together with Area Managers.

The Chair thanked all those in attendance for the informative discussions undertaken during the meeting.

Resolved

That the information contained in the presentation submitted, and as reported at the meeting, on the ways of working and work programmes by the Environment Highways Group over the past 12 months, be noted.

It was noted that Dudley Transport Plan report due to be submitted to the January, 2024 would be deferred and Members was requested to e-mail the Chair with recommendations of topics, within the remit of the Select Committee, that they may wish to scrutinise for the remainder of the 2023/24 municipal year.

Resolved

That the Highways and Environmental Services Select Committee Progress Tracker and Future Business, as outlined in the report, be noted.

26 **Questions Under Council Procedure Rule 11.8**

There were no questions to the Chair pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 11.8.

The meeting ended at 8.20pm

CHAIR

Meeting of the Highways and Environmental Services Select Committee – 4th January 2024

Report of the Acting Service Director - Neighbourhood Delivery

Dudley Highway Network Performance and Road Safety

Purpose of report

1. To update members on work being carried out in relation to the performance of the Borough's Highway Network, the development of major transport schemes and to provide an overview of the approach to Road Safety.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of the report and the more detailed presentation to be presented at the meeting and provide feedback to support officers to develop and inform future work plans.

Background

3. There are a range of factors that influence the performance of the Highway Network in terms of congestion and delays to traffic. A range of data and metrics are used to identify hotspots on the network and inform and prioritise future programmes of work.

Officers have prepared a presentation for Committee, and this will include the following elements:

- National data and trends
- The economic impact of congestion
- Local Congestion data mapping
- Traffic delay hot spots in Dudley Borough
- Project Pipeline
- Confirmed 5 Year Capital Funding through the City Regions Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS)

- West Midlands Transport Policy Context
- Implications for our schemes
- Funding Principles
- Road Safety Overview

Finance

4. The presentation includes details on the confirmed 5 year CRSTS transport funding settlement. There are no direct financial implications of this report.

Law

5. The Council is empowered to improve Highways under Section 62 of the Highways Act 1980.

Risk Management

6. The design and delivery of schemes on the ground will be carried out in accordance with approved operational risk assessments as appropriate for the stage of the project.

Equality Impact

7. All schemes being developed will include specific provision to benefit pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable users of the highway, assist social inclusion and the mobility of the less able together with measures to improve access for young people to schools and education where appropriate.

Human Resources/Organisational Development

8. Staff resource costs associated with the design and development of schemes are included in the Transport capital programme. The cost of the actual scheme delivery will be covered by the direct CRSTS grant related to a specific scheme.

Commercial/Procurement

9. All procurement activity that may result from the development and delivery of transport schemes will be carried out in accordance with the Councils Contract Standing Orders and approved procurement procedures.

Environment/Climate Change

10. All projects will include specific provision for both safety and sustainable travel as required by the policy and strategy context and stipulated in relevant funding allocations. Through the improvement of the transport network and provision of infrastructure that encourages a move to more sustainable modes of travel (thus supporting both air quality improvements, public health and wellbeing) the programme supports the Council's overall response to Climate Change.

Council Priorities and Projects

11. Improvements to the transport network supports the key Council priorities including the Borough Vision, Council Plan and Future Council Programme through the provision of infrastructure that supports regeneration and economic growth and provides improved sustainable connectivity and access to all services for the residents of the borough.



Nicholas McGurk
Acting Service Director - Neighbourhood Delivery

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Appendices

None

List of Background Documents

None

Meeting of the Highways and Environmental Services Select Committee – 4th January 2024

Corporate Quarterly Performance Report – Environment Directorate – Quarter 2 (1st July 2023 to 30th September 2023)

Purpose

1. To present the Quarter 2 Corporate Quarterly Performance report of the financial year 2023/24 covering the period 1st July 2023 to 30th September 2023. Aligned to the 2022-25 Council Plan.

In addition, further data relating to directorate service delivery are included as appendices to the report. This quarter concentrates on the Environment Directorate.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that the Select Committee review the contents of this report and that any identified performance issues are referred to the relevant Cabinet Member and Service Director.

Background

3. The Quarter 2 performance report provides the committee with progress against the delivery of the 3-year Council Plan priorities and our Future Council Programme:
 - Dudley the borough of opportunity
 - Dudley the safe and healthy borough
 - Dudley the borough of ambition and enterprise
 - Dudley borough the destination of choice

The Future Council programme incorporates everything we do, it sits at the heart of the Council Plan enabling our services. The comprehensive programme ensures the council is 'fit for the future'. The programmes are key themes are:

- People
- Digital
- Place
- Process
- Financially sustainable

Directorate plans will show the operational activity to deliver the objectives in the Council Plan alongside our other strategies.

Performance Framework

4. **Performance Framework**

The [performance reporting framework launched early 2022](#), monitors performance and progress against the delivery of the [Council Plan](#) and sets out the councils approach including:

- Golden thread and hierarchy of plans
- Linking the Borough Vision and Council Plan
- Performance measures and indicators
- Performance reporting and governance
- Annual performance management cycle

Dudley's council priorities and plans are under continual review and need to respond to the changing environment and pressures which we face as a local authority. Dudley's performance approach is inherent in everything we do, and our framework is based on the **Plan, Do, Review, Revise model**.

The council plan cycle is 3 years with Directorate Service Plans being revised annually against the council plan for that year. Reviewing and revising plans allows us to be responsive to developing priorities as well as ensuring we are delivering against the current plan.

Directorate Service Planning

Good service planning is a cornerstone of effective governance and performance management. Services need to plan their strategy and delivery to make sure resources, finances, people, skills and assets are used efficiently.

Our directorate service plans provide an overview of each directorate, setting out their resources, service improvement priorities and how they contribute to delivering the outcomes and priorities outlined in the Council Plan.

They are a vital part of the 'golden thread' which links the council plan and borough vision objectives through to individual annual reviews. They are also a key element of our Corporate Performance Management Framework as they identify the key performance indicators and key initiatives/actions which will allow us to assess our progress against the council plan.

As previously mentioned, Directorate Plans are reviewed annually, however a suitable approach will be agreed to enable Directorate Plans to be updated during the year following a significant change to a service, performance indicator or action. This has been incorporated recently into the performance framework following an audit during the summer 2023.

Directorate service plans are supported by service/team plans. These plans contain details on operational matters and how the overall aims and priorities of the directorate service plan will be delivered.

All directorate plans are available from the [directorate pages in Connect](#).

Benchmarking

In line with the Performance framework as stated in section 5 of this report, an extensive piece of work has been carried out across all directorates to review directorate service plans. These align to the 3-year council plan core priorities and outcomes for this financial year (2023/2024). The review included benchmarking by either using our local data from previous outturns and/or comparing against other authorities.

Key Performance Indicators and Summary

- Overall, for the Environment Directorate there are 68 key initiatives/actions and 11 Corporate KPI's (9 quarterly and 2 annually) being reported on. Annual performance measures will be reported at year end.
- Q2 Performance Summary

The dashboards highlight 9 corporate quarterly measures for Environment Directorate. The table below shows the performance summary against target:

Overview: Number of Corporate key performance indicators (KPI's) due for reporting this quarter:

Environment Directorate	 2	 0	 4
Note: There are 3 KPI outturns within Environment with no score as a target cannot be set against the KPI's at Q2 2023-24.			

Please Note:

There is a time lag for the Waste KPI's due to the nature of their collection and validation from the Waste Data flow. Waste Data Flow is the national database for municipal waste data reporting by UK local authorities to government therefore will be reported as actual 3 months in arrears i.e., Quarter 1 data presented in Quarter 2.

A target cannot be set for the number of incidents of fly-tipping. The aim is to achieve an ongoing reduction in the number of fly-tipping incidents.

% of fly-tip enforcement actions - No target figure set, dependent on number of fly-tips and evidence available.

Number of Penalty Charge Notices - Guidance for Local Authorities on Enforcing Parking Restrictions (section 2.2) does not allow Local Authorities to set targets.

Number of Fly-Tip Investigations by Ward

In Q2, 133 Total Waste investigations were reported. 105 were actioned after deducting 28 duplicate reports.

The breakdown by ward is in the table below:

Number of Fly tip Investigations by each ward				Total
Amblecote	0	1	0	1
Brierley Hill	5	5	8	18
Brockmoor and Pensnett	0	2	2	4
Castle and Priory	6	1	1	8
Coseley East	1	1	4	6
Upper Gornal and Woodsetton	5	0	0	5
Gornal	2	0	2	4
Halesowen North	0	3	3	6
Halesowen South	2	3	0	5
Hayley Green and Cradley South	0	1	0	1
Kingswinford Nth and Wall Heath	0	1	0	1
Kingswinford South	0	1	1	2
Lye and Stourbridge North	6	5	1	12
Netherton, Woodside and St Andrews	3	9	2	14
Norton	0	0	0	0
Pedmore and Stourbridge East	1	1	2	4
Cradley and Wollescote	3	0	1	4
Sedgley	2	0	1	3
Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood	2	3	0	5
St James	4	2	5	11
St Thomas	4	4	2	10
Wollaston and Stourbridge Town	1	1	1	3
Wordsley	0	2	0	2
Belle Vale	1	3	0	4
Total				133

The highest number of fly-tips have been reported in Brierley Hill (18) and Netherton, Woodside and St Andrews (14). The lowest number of reports were in Norton (0), Amblecote (1), Hayley Green and Cradley South (1) and Kingswinford North and Wall Heath (1).

7. Environment Directorate:

The below Corporate reported performance measures provide a snapshot of where areas of concern (below target) are being monitored closely within the Directorate.

These performance measures are reported within our management teams at both service and strategic levels to ensure understanding of the issues and assurances that appropriate actions are being taken to address the issues.

The Corporate dashboards also compare direction of travel as both short-term comparing Q1 2023-24 to Q2 2023-24 and also annual trend comparing Q2 2022-23 to Q2 2023-24.

In relation to the short-term trend there are 4 improved and 3 worsening trends. There are 2 KPI's within the Directorate that are reported a quarter in arrears so trend data will be available in Q3. The annual trends show 3 improved and 4 worsening trends.

- **PI.2393 % Street Lighting inventory that is LED**

This measure has been on an upward projectory throughout the last financial year and therefore the target was increased from 15% last year to 35% for Q2 this year, showing an outturn of 31%, close to target tolerance.

From the start of the contract to the end of September 1,000 new LED lanterns have been installed. Inventory at the start of the contract was 8,900 LED lanterns out of 32,500 streetlights. The service is currently delivering 1,000 new LED's per month resulting in energy bills reducing.

- **PI.2390 % of Gullies cleansed as per annual programme**

The in-house tanker was taken off the road for approximately 6 weeks due to a breakdown and awaiting parts therefore the team had to use the contractor tanker to do emergency work and respond to complaints leaving the contractor short of a tanker to utilise.

In Q3 to date (30.11.23) we have cleansed 3,528 gullies (16%). This is on track to achieve the target for Q3.

- **PI.1498 % household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (NI192)**

The data highlights the percentage of all household waste collected from households in the Borough that is either recycled, composted or reused.

During quarter 1, 48.8% equated to 15,389.14 tonnes, 5,920.93 comprising tonnes of dry recycling (paper, cardboard, plastic, cans and

glass) and 9,421 tonnes of green waste. (The remaining tonnage relates to items sent for reuse).

Dudley's recycling rate is 44.8% for the year in comparison to the family group average of 44.64%. Range of nearest Councils has a high of 56.5% and low of 28.2%

The first quarter of every year has the highest recycling rate due to the start of the "green" waste season. The figures are lower than expected as the grass has been too wet to cut so the recycling volume has been reduced although the residual waste figure has also decreased.

Improvements in the recycling will be accelerated and show an increase when guidance is published by DEFRA on mandatory food waste collection (and associated new burdens funding), the delayed Deposit Return Scheme & Extended Producer Responsibility. Consistency of collection has now changed to "Simpler Recycling".

- **PI.1499 % municipal waste landfilled (NI 193)**

The data highlights the percentage of all municipal waste collected in the Borough that is sent for landfill. During Quarter 1 this equated to 1,516 tonnes.

This figure states that more material was sent to Landfill than expected. This is in main the result of the HWRC waste being sent to landfill rather than being processed through the EfW plant. The Operator of the EfW controls the input and there is other waste that is prioritised over the HWRC waste.

The EfW contractor has been asked to look at receiving more HWRC waste over other commercial waste, to reduce this figure.

8. Key Initiatives / Actions Monitoring

The Directorate Service Plans feature service improvement actions that are updated each quarter to monitor progress. At quarter 2 2023-24, for Environment Directorate of the 68 actions reported, 12 were completed, 46 were on target or ahead of target and 10 were behind target.

9. Key activities / awards and accreditations

In addition, inclusive to the report, Directorate Service Summary documents provide a detailed account of service delivery for the quarter period. Some key highlights from the Environment Directorate are outlined below, for a more detailed account, please refer to the appendix – Quarter 2 Service Summary Sheet for further information.

10. Environment Directorate:

The pop-up tip in Dudley borough continues to prove popular among residents with around 269 tonnes of waste been disposed of at the facility on Lister Road since it switched to opening twice a month at the start of April.

This total includes 74.2 tonnes of wood, 54.2 tonnes of bricks and rubble, and 34.7 tonnes of mattresses and other furniture. 4,888 bookings have been made at the site since April, with 3,420 places (70%) reserved by residents from the north of the borough.

The ward with the most users of the pop-up tip in this period is St Thomas's, where 1,286 spots were booked 1 July – 30 September.

A three-year programme to convert around 24,000 borough streetlights to LED started in August. After successfully converting 7,100 lights on the borough's main roads, Dudley Council has awarded the contract to Fitzgerald Civil Engineering Contractors to convert the remaining street lights over the coming three years.

As it moves through the programme of replacement, the team will also be assessing whether the level of lighting is suitable for each area to meet the needs of residents and making changes where needed. Lampposts will also be assessed as part of the programme and replaced where necessary.

The conversion programme is part of the council's invest to save project, with the cost of the initial outlay being part covered by the savings on electricity.

The new LED bulbs will almost halve the energy used by the bulbs they are replacing and, once complete, will reduce consumption by approximately three million kWh per year.

Dudley Council has invested £130,000 of its grant from the government's public sector decarbonisation scheme to install 194 solar panels on the roof of a school. They were installed last summer and in 12 months the school has saved nearly 12,000kg of CO2 emissions, which would be equivalent to planting more than 700 trees.

A newly painted activity trail is set to help children as they learn to ride their bike in the safety of a borough park. In a project joint-funded by Dudley Council and Friends of Hurst Green Park, a new street-themed cycle trail has been laid on an area of hard-standing in Hurst Green Park. It includes a zebra crossing, island and road junctions.

More than £80,000 is being invested in improving rights of way across Dudley borough to make them more accessible. Eight key sites are being targeted to encourage people to walk, jog and cycle along the routes. Work includes widening pathways, improving surfaces, removal of trip hazards and cutting back trees and bushes.

Dudley Council launched a two-week consultation in September about its proposals for new cycle infrastructure in central Dudley. The local authority has been granted funding from the Department for Transport to design and install cycle lanes on the A4123 Birmingham New Road from Tipton Road Junction to Castle Road Junction. Proposed work includes a segregated cycle route, new crossing points and alterations to the Canal and Caverns Trust entrance.

Council Plan Refresh

Our current Council Plan from 2022-2025 sets out our vision and priorities under four core priorities. The plan is refreshed every three years, mapping out our journey and commitment that the council will constantly strive to improve the way we deliver services to meet the needs of local people and to ensure that we can measure and demonstrate our achievements.

The current Council Plan runs to March 2025, work will commence early next year (2024) to refresh the plan and review our strategic priorities. A report will be presented to the Strategic Executive Board in due course outlining the timeframes, process and recommendations from the outcome of the LGA peer review and the new Improvement and Sustainability Programme.

Finance

11. There are no direct financial implications in receiving this report

Law

12. There are no direct law implications in receiving this report

Risk Management

13. As part of the new risk management framework approved at audit and standards committee, risk reporting does not sit within performance reporting processes, each directorate develop a risk register for monitoring purposes. However, performance and risk management work in partnership to ensure directorate performance and risk management are monitored accordingly, providing assurance directorates work towards our council priorities.

Equality Impact

14. The positive impact for children and young people from the street-themed cycle trail project to be noted.

The assessment of street lighting needs in each area will potentially enhance the safety aspect for residents.

Human Resources/Organisational Development

15. There are no specific direct human resource issues in receiving this report. In terms of the Council's sickness level and the management of attendance, the People and Inclusion team continues to work with Directors and Heads of Service to assist and provide support in tackling those areas identified as having high levels of sickness.

Commercial/Procurement

16. There is no direct commercial impact.

Environment/Climate Change

17. There are no implications arising from this report.

Council Priorities and Projects

18. The Council Plan and the Performance Management Framework enables a consistent approach for performance management across the organisation, aligning the Council Plan, Borough Vision and Future Council Programme and provides that golden thread between them.

Our Council Plan is built around 4 key priority areas, and our Future Council programme. The Council Plan is a 3-year '[Plan on a Page](#)'. Each directorate has a Directorate Service Plan that aligns to the priority outcomes that the Council is striving to achieve and includes an assessment of how the service has contributed towards these priorities along with a range of key performance indicators to enable us to keep track of progress.

Performance management is key in delivering the longer-term vision of the Council. Quarterly Corporate Performance Reports are reported and reviewed by Strategic Executive Board, Informal Cabinet, the Deputy and Shadow Deputy Leader and Scrutiny/Select Committees.

This will help to enable the council to deliver the objectives and outcomes of the Council Plan and in turn the Borough Vision.



Nicholas McGurk
Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery

Appendices
Corporate Quarterly Performance reports – Environment Directorate – Q2
(1st July 2023 to 30th September 2023)
Environment Directorate Service Summary Sheet Q2 2023-24

Corporate quarterly performance management report **2023-24**

Quarter 2 (1 July to 30 September 2023)

Extract of Environment Directorate

Introduction

This Quarterly Corporate Performance Management Report highlights performance for the period 1 June to 30 September 2023. It provides specific information related to corporate performance indicators and key initiatives/actions that link to outcomes in the Council Plan 2022-25. Measuring indicators and actions allows us to monitor progress towards our Borough Vision 2030.

This extract of the full Q2 report relates to the performance measures of the Environment directorate.

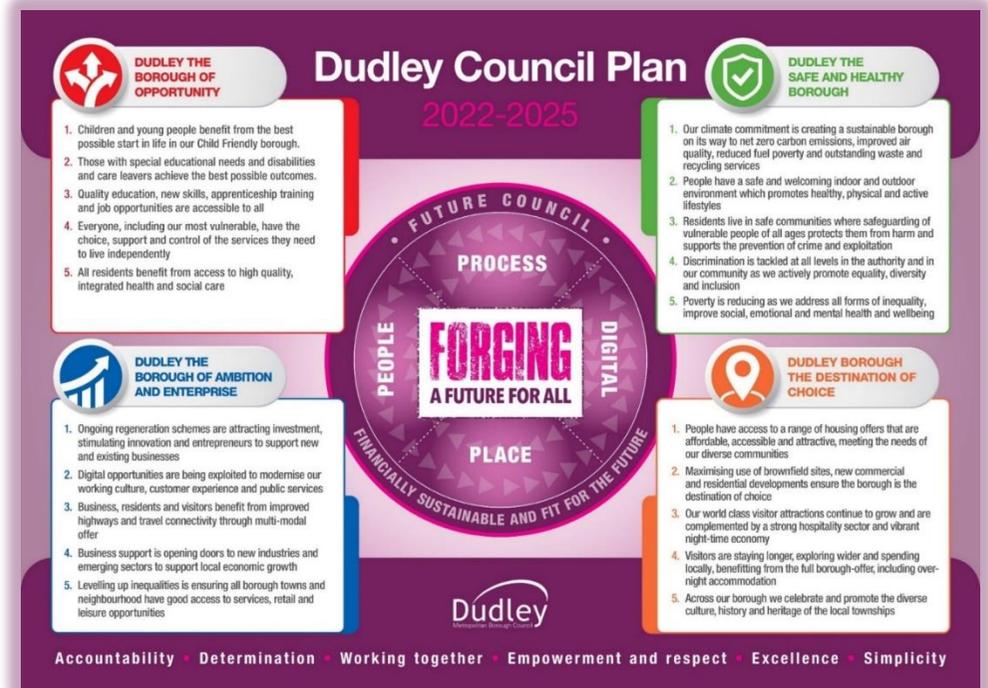
Council plan 2022-25

The Council Plan sets out our priorities and objectives, mapping out our journey to achieving the aspirations of Future Council and the Borough Vision. The plan is refreshed every three years with the current plan being effective from 1 April 2022.

In addition to the Future Council programme at the heart of the plan, the four priorities of the current council plan are:

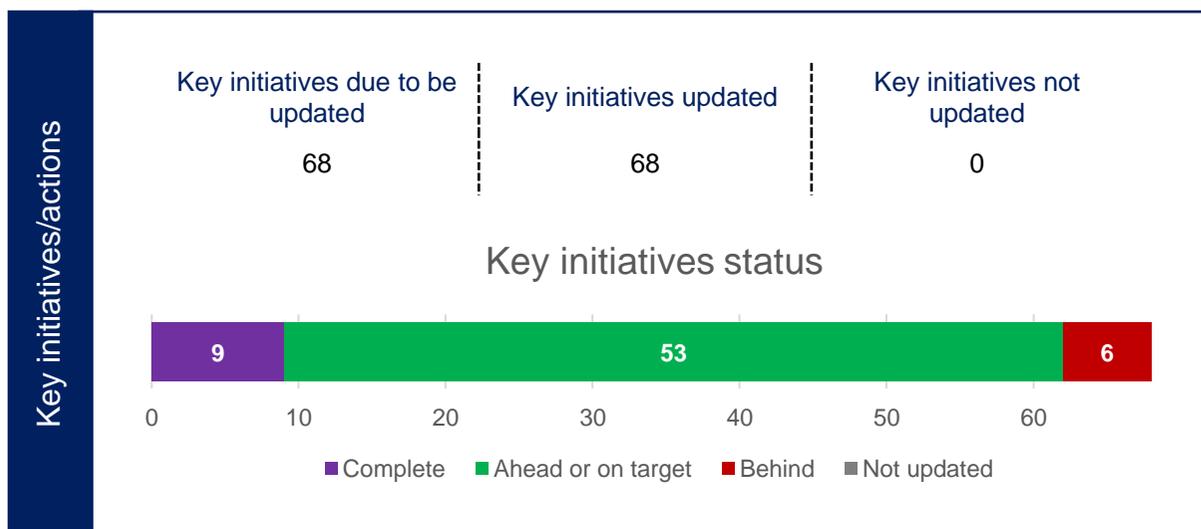
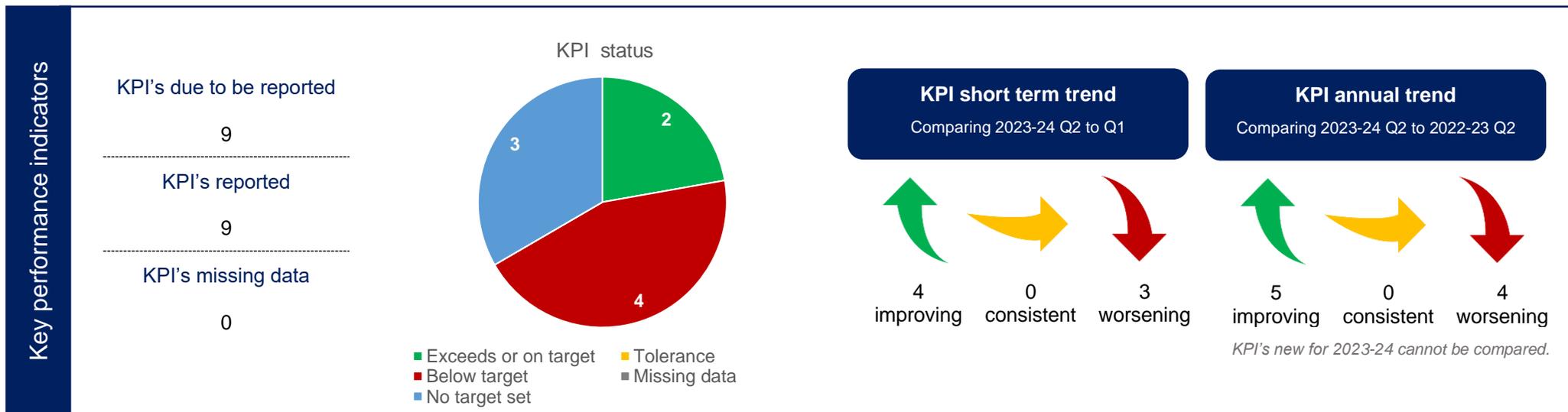
- The borough of opportunity
- The safe and healthy borough
- The borough of ambition and enterprise
- The destination of choice

Further information on the Council Plan can be found on the [dudley.gov.uk council plan pages](https://www.dudley.gov.uk/council-plan-pages)



Environment overview

The following pages provide a dashboard overview for the directorate of Environment. They show the status of corporate key performance indicators and of key initiatives/actions being delivered. KPI scorecards are used to report and monitor performance outturns for the given quarter along with exception commentary for those measures below target.



Council plan links

The table below provides a breakdown of key initiatives and corporate KPI's by directorate for this financial year including any not due to be reported this quarter.

Council plan priority	Key initiatives	Corporate KPI's
Dudley the safe and healthy borough	54	10
Dudley the borough of ambition and enterprise	5	1
Dudley borough the destination of choice	3	0
Future council	6	0
Total	68	11

Environment scorecards

	Performance Indicator	2022-23				2023-24						Benchmarking comparator data
		Qtr. 1 outturn	Qtr. 2 outturn	Qtr. 3 outturn	Qtr. 4 outturn	Qtr. 1 outturn	Qtr. 2 outturn	Target	Score	Short term trend	Annual trend	
Safe & healthy	PI.2383 % Highway Safety Inspections completed on time	3%	0.32%	7%	1.74%	0%	11.38% (139 / 1,221)	5%	★	↗	↗	Local measure, APSE data being investigated
	PI.2390 % of gullies cleansed as per annual programme	10.4%	28.53%	29%	31.02%	28%	18% (4,100 / 22,400)	25%	▲	↘	↘	No direct comparison, APSE data relating to cost per gully available
	PI.2471 % of trees with a valid tree inspection	12.07%	14.63%	16.24%	16.82%	16.17%	26.24% (44,604 / 170,000)	16%	★	↗	↗	Local measure, benchmark against previous years
	PI.2393 % street lighting inventory that is LED	19%	24%	25%	25%	25%	31% (9,900 / 32,500)	35%	▲	↗	↗	Local measure, benchmark against previous years
	PI.324 No. incidents of fly-tipping	398	812	1,248	1,984	748	1,425	See note*		↗	↘	1,554 (2022-23 Q2 LG Inform, CIPFA nearest neighbours)
	PI.322 % fly-tipping enforcement actions	117	229	332	414	108	213	See note**		↘	↘	544 (2022-23 Q2 LG Inform, CIPFA nearest neighbours)
Ambition & enterprise	PI.2478 Number of Penalty Charge Notices issued for parking offences	2,540	4,597	6,276	7,954	1,860	3,409	See note***		↘	↘	Local measure

* A target cannot be set for the number of incidents of fly-tipping. The aim is to achieve an ongoing reduction in the number of fly-tipping incidents

** No target figure set, dependent on number of fly-tips and evidence available

*** Guidance for Local Authorities on Enforcing Parking Restrictions (section 2.2) does not allow Local Authorities to set targets

There is a time lag for the following KPI's due to the nature of their collection and validation from the Waste Data flow. Waste Data Flow is the national database for municipal waste data reporting by UK local authorities to government therefore will be reported as actual 3 months in arrears i.e., Quarter 4 data presented in Quarter 1.

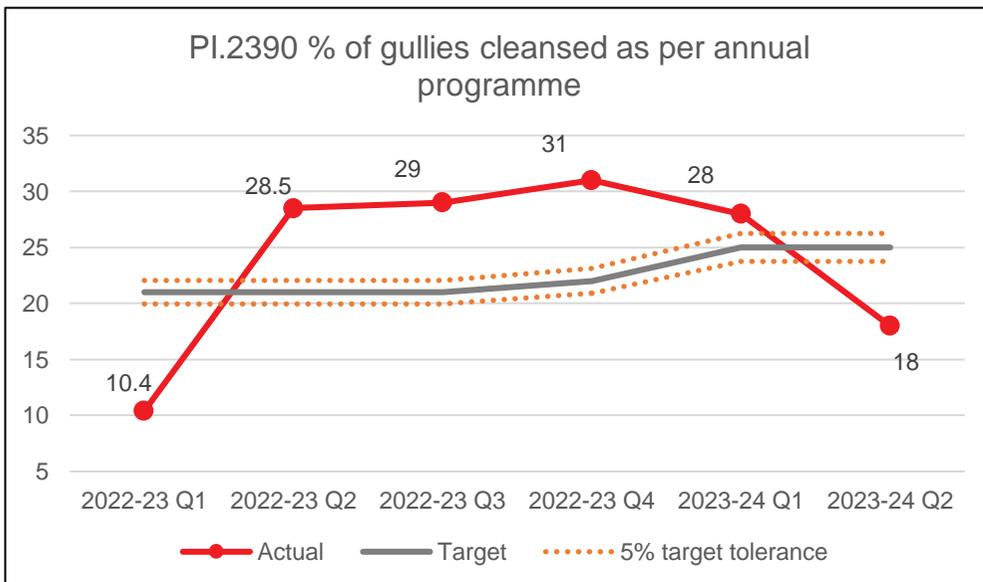
	Performance Indicator	2022-23				2023-24					Benchmarking comparator data
		Qtr. 1 outturn	Qtr. 2 outturn	Qtr. 3 outturn	Qtr. 4 outturn	Qtr. 1 outturn	Target	Score	Short term trend	Annual trend	
Safe and healthy	PI.1498 % household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (NI 192)	43.5% (15,101.57)	41.16% (12,059.50)	37.7% (35,105.30)	35.5%	44.8% (15,389.14 / 34,329 tonnes)	48%	▲	Available Q2	↗	44.64% CIPFA Family Group Average (Q1 2022/23)
	PI.1499 % municipal waste land filled (NI 193)	4.3% (1,648.73)	2.72% (2,001.76)	2.64% (2,737.59)	4.5% (6,035.78)	4.0% (1,516 / 38,000 tonnes)	1.0%	▲	Available Q2	↗	8.53% CIPFA Family Group Average 2022/23)

Short term trend compares current quarter with previous quarter within the same year. Annual trend compares the same quarter between years.

Environment exception commentary

PI.2390 % of gullies cleansed as per annual programme

PI	2022-23				2023-24				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Quarter 2			
						Outturn	Target	S	T
PI.2390	10.4	28.5	29	31	28	18%	25%	▲	▼



Performance: what is the data telling us?

The in-house tanker was taken off the road for approximately 6 weeks due to a breakdown and awaiting parts therefore we had to use the contractor tanker to do emergency work and respond to complaints.

Impact: what are the issues/risks for service delivery?

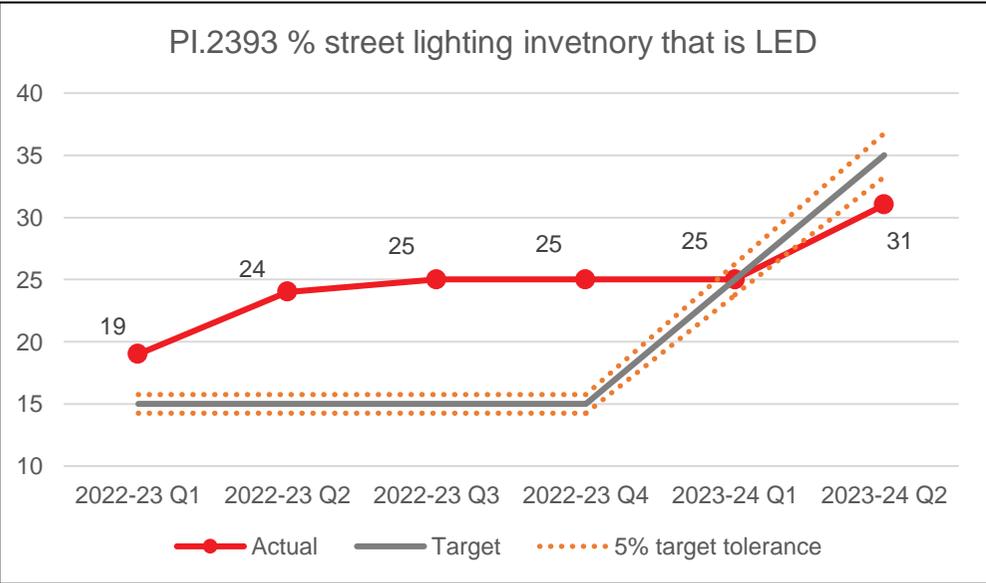
No issues/risks to service delivery.

Assurance: evidence that actions are in place and having an impact

The contractor assures that we will be back on track in Q3.

PI.2393 % street lighting inventory that is LED

PI	2022-23				2023-24				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Quarter 2			
						Outturn	Target	S	T
PI.2393	19	24	25	25	25	31%	35%	▲	➔



Performance: what is the data telling us?

From the start of the contract to the end of September 1000 new LED lanterns have been installed.

Inventory at the start of the contract was 8,900 LED lanterns out of 32,500 street lights.

Assurance: evidence that actions are in place and having an impact

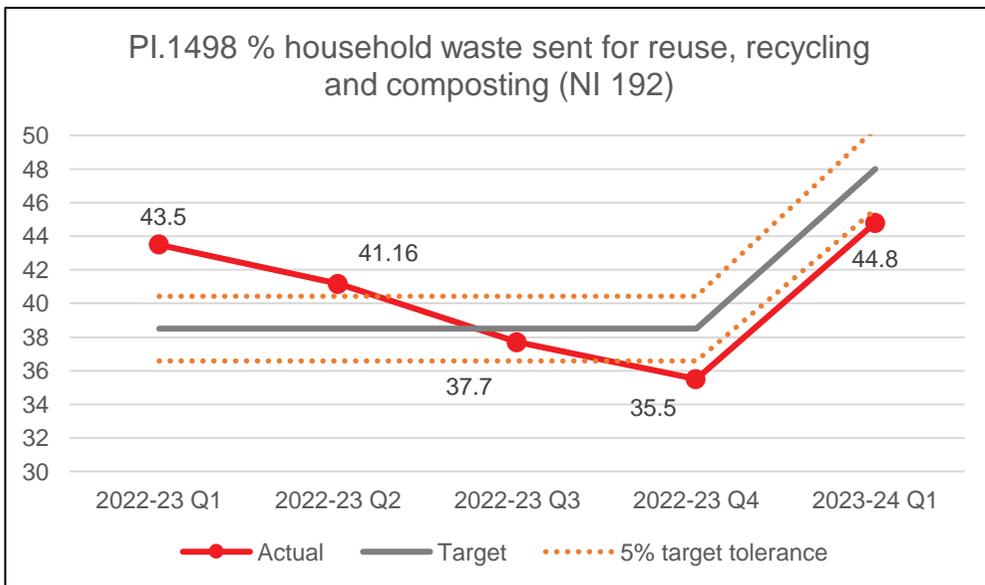
Current delivering 1000 per month and the energy bill is reducing

Impact: what are the issues/risks for service delivery?

Failure to deliver in accordance with programme reducing energy savings

PI.1498 % household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (NI 192)

PI	2022-23				2023-24			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Quarter 1			
	Outturn	Target	S	T	Outturn	Target	S	T
PI.1498	43.5	41.2	37.7	35.5	44.8%	48%	▲	-



Performance: what is the data telling us?

The data highlights the percentage of all household waste collected from households in the Borough that is either recycled, composted or reused. During quarter 1, 48.8% equated to 15,389.14 tonnes; 5,920.93 comprising tonnes of dry recycling (paper, cardboard, plastic, cans and glass) and 9,421 tonnes of green waste. (The remaining tonnage relates to items sent for reuse).

Dudley's recycling rate is 44.8% for the year in comparison to the family group average of 44.64%. Range of nearest Councils has a high of 56.5% and low of 28.2%

The first quarter of every year has the highest recycling rate due to the start of the "green" waste season. The figures are lower than expected as the grass has been too wet to cut so the recycling volume has been reduced although the residual waste figure has also decreased.

Impact: what are the issues/risks for service delivery?

Recycling collections are affected by breakdowns and availability of vehicles. Recycling is having to be completed by overtime crews or after the normal collection day. This leads to recycling being missed as material is transferred into the residual stream.

Assurance: evidence that actions are in place and having an impact

Improvements in the recycling will be accelerated and show an increase when guidance is published by DEFRA on mandatory food waste collection (and associated new burdens funding), the delayed DRS & EPR. Consistency of collection has now changed to "Simpler Recycling"

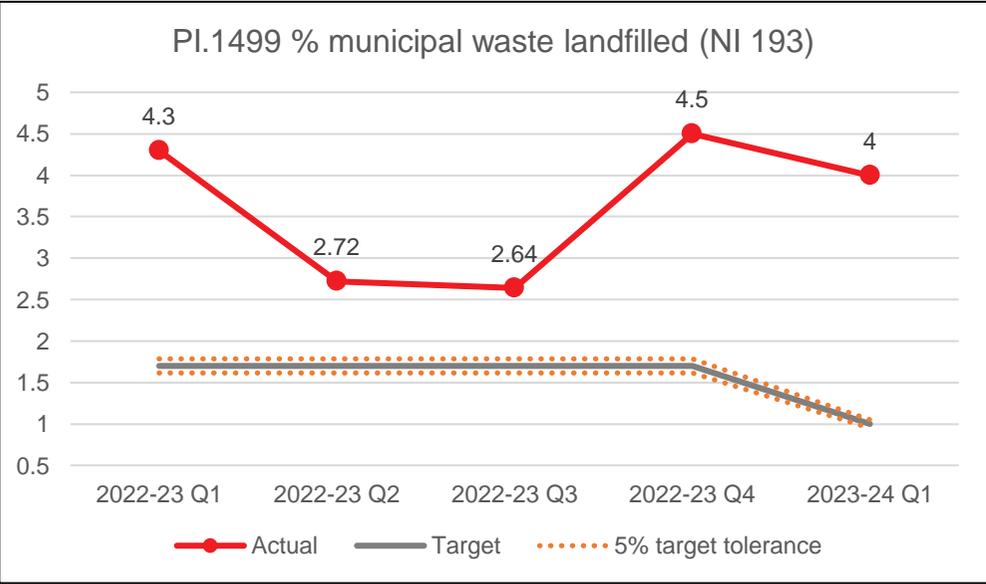
PI.1499 % municipal waste land filled (NI 193)

PI	2022-23				2023-24			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Quarter 1			
	Outturn	Target	S	T	Outturn	Target	S	T
PI.1499	4.3	2.72	2.64	4.5	4.0%	1.0%	▲	-

Performance: what is the data telling us?

The data highlights the percentage of all municipal waste collected in the Borough that is sent for landfill. During quarter 1 this equated to 1,516 tonnes.

This figure states that more material was sent to Landfill than expected. This is in main the result of the HWRC waste being sent to landfill rather than being processed through the EfW plant. The Operator of the EfW controls the input and there is other waste that is prioritised over the HWRC waste.



Assurance: evidence that actions are in place and having an impact

The EfW contractor has been asked to look at receiving more HWRC waste over other commercial waste, to reduce this figure.

Impact: what are the issues/risks for service delivery?

There is no risk as all the disposal costs sit with the Contractor as part of the contract. The issue is that the Council won't meet national targets.

Service Summary Sheet

Directorate	Environment Directorate		
Year	2023-24	Quarter	Quarter 2 (1 st July to 30 th September 2023)

Benchmarking *with local authorities/nearest neighbours*

Energy, Sustainability & Climate Change

Waste PI's are reported quarterly in arrears in line with the national reporting timeframes for the Defra WasteDataFlow data base. Quarter 1 outturns are therefore included in this summary sheet.

- In Quarter 1, Dudley recycled, reused or composted 15,389.14 tonnes (44.8%) of the household waste collected comprising 5,920.93 tonnes of dry recycling (paper, cardboard, plastic, cans and glass) and 9,421 tonnes of green waste. The remaining tonnage relates to items sent for reuse.
- The first quarter of every year has the highest recycling rate due to the start of the "green" waste season. The figures are lower than expected as the grass has been too wet to cut so the recycling volume has been reduced although the residual waste figure has also decreased.
- Improvements in the recycling will be accelerated and show an increase when guidance is published by DEFRA on mandatory food waste collection (and associated new burdens funding), the delayed Deposit Return Scheme & Extended Producer Responsibility.
Consistency of collection has now changed to "Simpler Recycling"
- Dudley's recycling rate of 44.8% at Quarter 1 is slightly higher than the family group average of 44.64%. We continue to educate and encourage our residents to recycle.
- In Quarter 1 Dudley landfilled 1,516 tonnes 4%. This figure states that more material was sent to Landfill than expected. This is in main the result of the HWRC waste being sent to landfill rather than being processed through the EfW plant. The Operator of the EfW controls the input and there is other waste that is prioritised over the HWRC waste.
The EfW contractor has been asked to look at receiving more HWRC waste over other commercial waste, to reduce this figure.

	Q1 2023/24	
	Dudley	CIPFA Family Group Average
% household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	44.8%	44.64%
% municipal waste landfilled	4.0%	8.53%

- Estimated output for Q2 from EfW is 5,232.8 MWh (13,001.8 MWhYTD). Plant shutdown for 3 weeks in August and didn't export any electricity for 11 days due to fault in September.

Transport and Highway Service

- For Q2, the percentage of safer routes to school schemes completed against programme is 16% and the target is 32%. 1 School Zone has been completed. 3 others are currently in consultation. Works around schools are generally restricted to school holiday times, which can delay the delivery.
- For Quarter 2, 60% of capital spend on highways was achieved against a target of 50% resulting in performing above programme.
- For Quarter 2, the percentage of street lighting inventory that is LED is 30% and the target is 35%. From the start of the contract to the end of September 1000 new LED lanterns have been installed. Inventory at the start of the contract was 8,900 LED lanterns out of 32,500 street lights
- For Quarter 2, 22% of gullies were cleansed as per annual programme, against a target for the quarter of 25%. The tanker was taken off the road for a few days so we didn't utilise the contractor for that short period.
- For Q2, Highways Inspections completed on time 11.38% inspections were completed against a target of 5%. Figures have improved significantly this quarter, mainly through the utilisation of the 'pothole' inspector to take some of the strain from the 3 area based inspectors.
- For Quarter 2, the number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCN's) issued for parking offences was 1,549 (3,409 YTD) this has decreased by 508 from same quarter in 2022/23. The Enforcement Service is currently being reviewed and outsourcing arrangements are still being considered.
- For Q2, 677 fly-tip reports were received with 1425 (YTD) reports. There has been an decrease of 71 instances of deposited waste between Q1 and Q2 anecdotally this is a slight improvement as Q2 is an historically busy period and includes the long summer school holiday and an increase would have been expected.
- For Q2, 104 fly-tipping investigations were conducted 212 (YTD). There were 4 less enforcement actions this quarter than last . It is difficult to evaluate enforcement actions and compare with other quarters as the work involved in each report differs greatly. The general level of investigations remains level.

Neighbourhood Services

- For Quarter 2, 26.24.% of trees have a valid tree inspection against the target of 16%.
Higher than target figure due to employment of contractors to survey Nature Reserve trees

Overview of service delivery

Waste Management and Transport Operations

- Pop-up site at Lister Road Depot is on Saturday, 8.00a.m. to 3.30 p.m. every fortnight from 1st April 2023.
- Waste Care Team are awaiting for Guidance from Central Government in regards to consistency in collections, however a recent announcement from Central Government has removed the consistency in collections and replaced it with Simpler Recycling.
- HWRC - Various options being considered on future provision. Extension of 6 months has been offered to HW Martin.
- Weekly Food Collections will be introduced for most households across England by 2026.

Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change

Power Purchase Agreement - Market prices in September softened, however there was still considerable volatility in the markets. Gas maintenance remains a consideration, although we are likely at its peak, so should see impact of this shortly. Oil prices have ramped due to supply restrictions but to date this appears to have had limited impact on gas and electric pricing. Strong wind generation at the end of September curtailed gas demand, and increased confidence in an El Nino forecast for this winter that could cause milder temperatures for Q4.

Our current position is that we have effectively hedged against recent drops, and we have benefited from trading at market highs seen in April. When looking at Winter 2023 in isolation, the average market price over the trading period has been £131.06 whilst the trades completed average £133.31. If the market maintained its current price, by the deadline day the trading period average would be £129.77 versus a fully closed Winter 2023 achieved price of £132.55.

End date for the current recycling contract is October 2024, with work starting on what this may mean. Legislation has changed and Consistency of Collection is now "Simpler Recycling". Awaiting more details on what this means.

For Award Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating (WUDS) contract -Full tender written for the collection of WUDS from Dudley controlled depots. Items maybe collected from fly-tips, house clearances or from pop-up events. Affects other service areas and Directorates. Bulky service to be retained by Council as part of MyDudley self-serve package.

Approval to Procure submitted and Exemption being applied for to bridge gap in award, due to implementation of legislation.

The power of the sun will help a borough leisure centre save on its energy usage when new solar panels are installed later this year. Dudley Council is investing more than £150,000 to add 416 solar panels to the roof of Duncan Edwards Leisure Centre in Dudley.

Once installed the panels are expected to save nearly 40,000 kg of carbon a year, equivalent to planting 2000 trees. The panels will also generate an estimated 200 MWh every year, which based on the cost of energy would generate a large enough saving to cover the initial cost of the solar panels within five years. Work on the installation is expected to take place later in the autumn.

Neighbourhood Services

The improvement work with the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) is near completion and the courts should be re-opened towards the latter end of October. The online booking system has been developed and the system should be ready to go once the courts have been handed back from the LTA.

The contract for the improvements at Wordsley Park has been awarded to Wicksteed Leisure. We are currently in discussion with the ward members and the Tenants Resident Association regarding the location of the new toddler play area, which is the second phase of the works.

18 (YTD) school visits have taken place at Nature Reserves. A target of 22 was set for 2023/24.

4,398 (YTD) volunteer hours have been recorded across Parks and Countryside Services. A target of 8,000 hours has been set for 2023/24.

Transport and Highway Service

- DMBC involved in regional meetings to support Local Transport Plan development and providing pipeline project and scheme details to support the Area Strategy development.
- DMBC solicitors have agreed to review the legal elements only – structures team will finalise the rest of the report. Completion date is on target.
- Development of the Dudley Local Transport Plan (LTP) – The Dudley Transport Strategy will commence following the completion of the West Midlands Area Based Strategy work which is expected March 2024. The target completion for the Dudley Strategy is Sept 2024.
- A number of changes to the parking service approved in the Council's budget continue to be explored including the outsourcing of the Enforcement Team and review of car parks maintenance.

- Enforcement Officers continue to respond to fly-tipping reports, carrying out investigations where evidence permits. During Quarter 2, Street Cleansing removed 677 fly-tips and 104 fly-tip enforcement actions were carried out. 13 Fixed Penalty Notices and 15 Legal Notices were served for fly-tipping offences during the quarter.

Service Achievements

Waste and Transport Operations

The pop-up tip in Dudley borough continues to prove popular among residents with around 269 tonnes of waste been disposed of at the facility on Lister Road since it switched to opening twice a month at the start of April.

This total includes 74.2 tonnes of wood, 54.2 tonnes of bricks and rubble, and 34.7 tonnes of mattresses and other furniture. 4,888 bookings have been made at the site since April, with 3,420 places (70%) reserved by residents from the north of the borough.

The ward with the most users of the pop-up tip in this period is St Thomas's, where 1,286 spots were booked 1 July – 30 September.

Residents in Sedgley saw a different vehicle doing the rounds in August as the Waste Care Team trials a new upcycled electric vehicle for waste collection. The authority is trialling a new electric refuse vehicle for one day, to test the vehicle's capabilities and its suitability for refuse collections. The vehicle is a previous diesel vehicle which has been upcycled to run on electricity, and the pilot is part of the authority's commitment to invest in renewable energy.

Local charity Provision House accepted donations from residents at two sessions of Dudley's pop-up tip. Users of the waste disposal site on Lister Road donated their unwanted items on 2 and 16 September. The charity is on the look-out for soft furniture and domestic goods like kettles, toasters, microwaves, lamps, power tools and toys.

Based in Dudley town centre, Provision House supplies essential household items to people who have faced difficulties like domestic violence, poverty, homelessness, and modern slavery.

Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change

Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change Team's work to maximise energy from waste has earned it a top regional award. DMBC were named the winner of the Technology and Innovation Category at the Nachural Business Awards in July.

It won for its work to put in place a new contract to manage its energy from waste plant.

The new contract gives the council greater flexibility in shaping its energy, heat and waste strategy. The council appointed Urbaser Environmental Ltd to manage the day-to-day running of its Lister Road energy from waste plant, where it disposes its household and trade waste.

As part of the new contract, the council will benefit from being able to sell the energy produced at the plant back to the national grid, which has the potential to generate substantial income for the council.

Solar panels at a borough school have saved enough carbon to do the job of more than 700 trees since being installed last summer. Councillor Dr Rob Clinton met the school's eco warriors, who are part of a club to help drive environmental projects at the school.

Dudley Council has invested £130,000 of its grant from the government's public sector decarbonisation scheme to install 194 solar panels on the roof of a school. They were installed last summer and in 12 months the school has saved nearly 12,000kg of CO2 emissions, which would be equivalent to planting more than 700 trees.

Neighbourhood Services

A newly painted activity trail is set to help children as they learn to ride their bike in the safety of a borough park. In a project joint-funded by Dudley Council and Friends of Hurst Green Park, a new street-themed cycle trail has been laid on an area of hard-standing in Hurst Green Park. It includes a zebra crossing, island and road junctions.

Following a project to resurface the hard standing area of the park for play in 2020, the park is already popular with roller skaters, people riding scooters and children learning to ride their bikes. It is hoped the new trail, which is a first in a borough park, will help children practice their cycling proficiency as it allows them to simulate actions such as riding on the road.

The total cost for the project is £4,000.

Transport and Highway Services

School Crossing Patrol celebrated 70 years since the service was first introduced nationally in July. The school crossing patrol service was officially created by the School Crossing Patrol Act in 1953 when the government recognised the value of having a service that helped children cross the road at busy and difficult locations. In Dudley, the service was operational from 1989 and since then hundreds of school crossing patrols have worked in the borough helping children and young people to and from school safely.

During the event held today (July 12) at Priory Hall, each member of staff was presented with a certificate and commemorative badge. There are 35 school crossing patrols working across the borough.

A three-year programme to convert around 24,000 borough street lights to LED got underway in August. After successfully converting 7,100 lights on the borough's main roads, Dudley Council has awarded the contract to Fitzgerald Civil Engineering Contractors to convert the remaining street lights over the coming three years.

Energy efficient LED lighting costs less to run, is considered more effective and is also flexible, so levels can be adjusted to suit the area, or dimmed at certain times of the night.

As it moves through the programme of replacement, the team will also be assessing whether the level of lighting is suitable for each area to meet the needs of residents and making changes where needed. Lampposts will also be assessed as part of the programme and replaced where necessary.

The conversion programme is part of the council's invest to save project, with the cost of the initial outlay being part covered by the savings on electricity.

The new LED bulbs will almost halve the energy used by the bulbs they are replacing and, once complete, will reduce consumption by approximately three million kWh per year.

Fly-tippers hit Dudley borough more than 240 times a month prompting the service area to call on the public for their help in catching them.

Dudley Council has had to deal with 1,425 incidents of fly-tipping in the past six months (April-June 2023).

The fly-tippers have targeted roads, alleyways and other areas across the borough with items ranging from kitchen appliances, black bags, tyres and vehicle parts. It has cost DMBC thousands of pounds to clear the rubbish left by other people.

The public have been asked to be vigilant and share any evidence such as vehicle registrations and images of perpetrators with the council. If people are caught they face fines ranging from £75 to £400 and potentially hundreds more through the courts.

Over the past six months Dudley Council has fined 38 people for fly-tipping and waste that had been illegally disposed

More than £80,000 is being invested in improving rights of way across Dudley borough to make them more accessible. Eight key sites are being targeted to encourage people to walk, jog and cycle along the routes. Work includes widening pathways, improving surfaces, removal of trip hazards and cutting back trees and bushes.

DMBC hopes the work will help encourage people to leave the car at home for local trips. Priority sites have been identified including Summerfields Avenue to Narrow Lane, Halesowen, Saltwells Road to Lincoln Road, Netherton, Leys Road to Nanaimo Way, Brockmoor/Kingswinford, Maybank Road to Saltwells Road, Netherton, Ratcliffe Close to Tipton Road, Sedgley, Mousesweet Close to Withymoore Road, Netherton, Hockley Lane to Knowle Hill Road, Netherton, and Greenhill Road to Mucklow Hill, Halesowen.

Improvements to a school crossing outside a borough primary school will help families as they make their way to and from school. The team recently completed the upgrade to a zebra crossing outside Wallbrook Primary School in Coseley.

Improvements include repainting the zebra crossing, a new anti-skid surface laid on the approach, new flashing halo beacons and improved road markings.

Other road safety improvements across the borough include an upgrade to a zebra crossing on Richmond Street in Halesowen as well as new speed humps and a new zebra crossing installed on Bromley Lane.

Work is also underway to install a new pedestrian crossing on Summerhill Road in Coseley to provide a safer place for residents to cross the busy road.

Dudley Council launched a two-week consultation in September about its proposals for new cycle infrastructure in central Dudley. The local authority has been granted funding from the Department for Transport to design and install cycle lanes on the A4123 Birmingham New Road from Tipton Road Junction to Castle Road Junction. Proposed work includes a segregated cycle route, new crossing points and alterations to the Canal and Caverns Trust entrance.

Dudley Council launched two other cycling and walking schemes in 2022 following the receipt of funding from the Department for Transport via the Active Travel Fund. The schemes were implemented along a section of the Birmingham New Road (A4123) and along a section of the A456 at Halesowen.

Opportunities for improvement

- Heads of Service and Group/Team Managers have worked together to deliver Phase 2 of the restructure for the Environment Directorate.
- Sickness absence levels, both long and short-term, continue to be higher than the Corporate target for quarter 2 and remain a priority for the Environment Directorate to address. Heads of Service are working closely with their managers and HR colleagues to address the high sickness absence rates in order to seek future improvement.
- Environment Directorate received 1,210 enquiries through the Councillor / MP Contact System during Quarter 2 (431 enquiries in June, 393 in July and 386 in August 2023).
This is a decrease of 61 compared to Q2 in 2022/23.

Any additional information relating to performance

- Environment Directorate Leadership Team have worked together to deliver Phase 2 of the restructure for the Environment Directorate. Phase 2 should be implemented by 1st November 2023.
- There continues to be significant financial pressures in the Directorate, caused by a number of factors including:
 - Inflationary pressures such as fuel and utility / energy costs
 - Costs arising from staff absences. This can be due to sickness absence or the requirement to cover annual leave with agency workers in some front-line services.

Highways and Environmental Services Select Committee

Progress Tracker

Future Business 2023/24

<u>Date of Meeting</u>	<u>Work Programme</u>	<u>Responsible Officer/Area</u>
21 st March, 2024	Annual Report 2023/24 and potential items of business for 2024/25 Quarterly Performance Report – Quarter 2	Democratic Services N McGurk (Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery)
TBA	Delivering the Neighbourhood Approach Update	N McGurk (Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery)
TBA	Dudley Borough Parking	N McGurk (Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery)