

Meeting of the Council

**Monday, 15th April, 2024 at 6.00pm
in the Council Chamber
The Council House, Priory Road, Dudley**

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council for the purpose of transacting the business set out in the numbered agenda items listed below.

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

Prayers

1. Apologies for absence
2. To receive any declarations of interest under the Members' Code of Conduct
3. To confirm and sign the minutes of the meetings held on 26th February and 4th March, 2024 as correct records (Pages 8 - 36)
4. Mayor's Announcements
5. To receive reports from meetings as follows:

Meetings of the Cabinet dated 11th and 20th March, 2024

Councillor P Harley to move:

- (a) 2023/2024 Revenue and Capital Programme Monitoring (Pages 37 - 57)
- (b) Council Plan 2022-25 (Pages 58 - 62)

Councillor Dr R Clinton to move:

- (c) [Dudley Council Climate Action Plan \(Pages 63 - 97\)](#)
- 6. [Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24 \(Pages 98 - 148\)](#)
- 7. Notice of Motion
 - (a) To consider the following notice of motion received from Councillor R Priest on 8th February, 2024:

Tackling Anti-social use of Off-Road Vehicles

“Anti-social use of off-road vehicles, including quadbikes, motorbikes, scramblers and mini motors is an issue that affects many parts of the borough, and is causing particular nuisance in parks and green spaces. While the use of these vehicles is permitted on private land with the land owners permission, the Road Traffic Act 1988 prohibits their use where no permission has been given.

The Council recognises that tackling the anti-social use of off-road vehicles requires a proactive multi-agency approach involving the local authority, neighbourhood police teams, the wider West Midlands Police and the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Council also recognises that in parts of the borough, there has been a failure to respond appropriately to the anti-social use of off-road vehicles.

The Council additionally recognises that Stevens Park, Wollescote, is one part of the borough where there has been a failure to respond appropriately to the anti-social use of off-road vehicles.

The Council expresses its dissatisfaction with the response of the Police and Crime Commissioner for failing to adequately address the issue of the use of anti-social use of off-road vehicles in the Dudley Borough, particularly in Stevens Park, Wollescote.

The Council therefore resolves to:

- Ask the relevant Officer to conduct a survey amongst the elected Members of this Council asking Members to identify areas within their ward where anti-social use of off-road vehicles occurs and use the results of this survey to improve signage discouraging the use of off-road vehicles.
- Introduce a system where elected Members can report addresses to the Council which are suspected to be involved in the anti-social use of off-road vehicles, and the Council to send letters to these addresses outlining the legality of the anti-social use of off-road vehicles and the consequences of their continued use.
- Ask the relevant Directorate to install a trip rail fence around the perimeter of Stevens Park, Wollescote, while maintaining access points for pedestrians, pushchairs, and wheelchairs.
- Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner informing them of this motion, and the Councils' dissatisfaction with the response of the Police and Crime Commissioner for failing to adequately address the issue of the anti-social use of off-road vehicles in the Dudley Borough, particularly in Stevens Park, Wollescote.
- Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority in May, once the result of the election to the post is known, requesting an urgent meeting to develop a strategy to tackle the anti-social use of off-road vehicles. This meeting should involve appropriate Cabinet Members, Ward Councillors, and community groups."

NB: The above motion was moved by Councillor R Priest and seconded by Councillor J Clinton at the Council meeting on 26th February, 2024.

The following amendment was moved by Councillor L Taylor-Childs, seconded by Councillor N Neale and debated at the Council meeting on 26th February, 2024.

“Anti-social use of off-road vehicles, including quadbikes, motorbikes, scramblers and mini motors is an issue that affects many parts of the borough, and is causing particular nuisance in parks and green spaces. While the use of these vehicles is permitted on private land with the land-owner’s permission, the Road Traffic Act 1988 prohibits their use where no permission has been given.

The Council recognises that tackling the anti-social use of off-road vehicles requires a proactive multi-agency approach involving the local authority, neighbourhood police teams, the wider West Midlands Police and the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner.

This issue is prevalent in a number of areas in the borough including, but not limited to, Wollescote Park, Quarry Bank, Wordsley and Brierley Hill. It is recognised that, locally, there has been a joined-up approach to tackling this issue within the Community Safety Partnership. However, this work is hindered by the lack of regional support and resource from the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Both strategy and resource is important to tackling this issue, the PCC recently funded just three off-road bikes for Police use across the West Midlands area. The Council expresses its dissatisfaction with the response of the Police and Crime Commissioner for failing to adequately fund resource to address the issue of the anti-social use of off-road vehicles in the Dudley Borough.

The Council therefore resolves to:

- Recognise the impact this behaviour is having on local residents and businesses and resolves to renew its approach to tackling the issue.
- Instruct the Chief Executive and relevant Cabinet Member to write to the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner informing them of this motion, and the Council’s dissatisfaction with the response of the Police and Crime Commissioner for failing to adequately address the issue of the anti-social use of off-road vehicles in the Dudley Borough.

- Identify a single point of contact within the Community Safety Team for reporting the specific incidents of the anti-social use of off-road bikes. These figures will be communicated to the Police via existing reporting methods within the Community Safety Partnership, with a focus on ensuring intelligence (such as addresses of stored bikes) being followed up by Police and/or Housing Management.
- Instruct the Chief Executive and relevant Cabinet Member to write to the Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority in May, once the result of the election to the post is known, requesting an urgent meeting to develop a strategy to tackle the anti-social use of off-road vehicles. This meeting should involve appropriate Cabinet Members, Ward Councillors, community groups and other affected organisations such as the Canal and River Trust.
- Consider the implementation of physical preventative measures, such as trip rails, fencing and entry points when the financial position of the authority allows.
- Ensure that the Council is utilising deployable CCTV, where intelligence indicates there would be a benefit to investigations, to monitor problem areas.”

8. Questions from Members under Council Procedure Rule 11
9. To consider any business not on the agenda which by reason of special circumstances the Mayor is of the opinion should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972

Distribution: All Members of the Council



Chief Executive

Dated: 5th April, 2024

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Minutes of the proceedings of the Council

Monday, 26th February, 2024 at 6.00pm
in the Council Chamber, The Council House, Priory Road, Dudley

Present:

Councillor A Goddard (Mayor)
Councillor P Lee (Deputy Mayor)
Councillors S Ali, A Aston, M Aston, P Atkins, C Barnett, C Bayton, D Bevan, I Bevan, H Bills, D Borley, S Bothul, P Bradley, R Buttery, B Challenor, S Clark, J Clinton, Dr R Clinton, R Collins, D Corfield, J Cowell, T Creed, T Crumpton, A Davies, K Denning, P Dobb, P Drake, M Dudley, C Eccles, J Elliott, M Evans, J Foster, M Hanif, D Harley, P Harley, S Henley, A Hopwood, M Howard, L Johnson, S Keasey, I Kettle, E Lawrence, A Lees, K Lewis, W Little, P Lowe, J Martin, P Miller, N Neale, S Phipps, R Priest, A Qayyum, K Razzaq, C Reid, S Ridney, M Rogers, P Sahota, D Stanley, A Taylor, E Taylor, L Taylor-Childs, A Tromans, M Webb, K Westwood, M Westwood and Q Zada together with the Chief Executive and other Officers.

Prayers

The Mayor led the Council in prayer.

53 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors K Casey, A Hughes, S Mughal, T Russon and C Sullivan.

54 Declarations of Interest

Declarations of interests, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, were made by the following Members:

Councillor A Aston – Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment with West Midlands Ambulance Service.

Councillor M Evans and A Taylor - Any matters relating to Castle Hill development and all references to Dudley Zoo - Non-pecuniary interests as Members of Dudley and West Midlands Zoological Society Limited.

Councillors D Stanley and A Taylor - West Midlands Combined Authority – Transport Delivery Committee - Non-pecuniary interests as Members of the Committee.

Councillor P Miller - Any matters relating to adult social care – Non-pecuniary interest as his wife received care in a care home.

Councillor I Bevan – Any references to Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust/Russells Hall Hospital – Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment.

Councillor Q Zada – Any references to health issues and any matters affecting his portfolio of property investments – Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment of portfolio of property investments.

Councillors I Kettle and W Little – Any references to West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority - Non-pecuniary interests as Members of the Authority.

Councillor E Taylor - Non-pecuniary interest as her daughter was employed by Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust.

Councillor N Neale – Minutes of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee – Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting her employment with the Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust.

Councillor S Henley – Any references to matters affecting West Midlands Fire Service – Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment.

Councillor J Cowell – Agenda Item 6(d) – Review of Housing Finance and any references to matters relating to housing – Non-pecuniary interest as a Council tenant.

Councillors I Kettle and D Stanley – Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Non-pecuniary interests as members of Overview and Scrutiny Committees at West Midlands Combined Authority.

Councillor P Lee – Minutes of the Children’s Services Select Committee - Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting him as a Dudley Foster Carer.

Councillor K Lewis - Minutes of the Children’s Services Select Committee - Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting her as an Early Years Provider.

Councillor S Ridney - Minutes of the Children’s Services Select Committee - Non-pecuniary interest as a member of the Management Board of the Virtual School.

Councillor R Collins – Minutes of the Health Select Committee - Non-pecuniary interest as a member of the Patient Participation Group at Russells Hall Hospital.

Councillor M Hanif – Minutes of the Health Select Committee - Non-pecuniary interest as a Member of the Life in Lye group.

Councillor K Westwood – Minutes of the Health Select Committee - Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting her employment with Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust.

Councillor P Drake – Minutes of the Planning Committee (Application No. P21/0912 – Former Coseley Baths, Peartree Lane, Coseley) – Non-pecuniary interest as he had raised an objection to the application when it was originally considered by the Planning Committee. Councillor P Drake had taken no part in the debate or the decision-making at the Planning Committee on 14th December, 2023.

Councillor P Drake – Minutes of the Planning Committee (Application No. P23/1139 – Land between Upper Ettingshall Methodist Church and 56 Upper Ettingshall Road, Coseley) – Non-pecuniary interest as he had raised an objection to the application when it was submitted. Councillor P Drake had taken no part in the debate or the decision-making at the Planning Committee on 10th January, 2024.

55 **Minutes**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 4th December, 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.

56 **Mayor's Announcements**

(a) Former Councillor Christine Wray

The Mayor referred in sympathetic terms to the recent death of former Councillor Christine Wray. The Council observed a minute of silence as a mark of respect following which tributes were paid.

(b) Mayor's Annual Charity Ball and Civic Awards

The Mayor reported that tickets were on sale for the Annual Charity Ball and Civic Awards taking place at the Copthorne Hotel, Brierley Hill on 19th April, 2024.

(c) Charity Climb

The Mayor referred to a charity 'crazy' climb being undertaken by Honorary Alderman Steve Waltho MBE. Members were requested to support this event, which would include a contribution to the Mayor's Charity.

57 **Statutory Recommendations from External Auditor Grant Thornton**

A joint report of the Deputy Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Legal was submitted setting out the recommendations of the External Auditor, Grant Thornton, under Section 25, Schedule 7 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Following an introduction from A Smith, representing Grant Thornton, the recommendations in the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Legal were moved by Councillor S Clark and seconded by Councillor P Bradley.

The motion was then debated by the Council.

At the conclusion of the debate, Councillor S Clark exercised the right to reply pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.9.

The motion was put to the meeting and it was

Resolved

- (1) That the recommendations made by the External Auditor, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be accepted.
 - (2) That the recommendations be incorporated into the Council's Improvement and Sustainability Programme setting out the actions to address the recommendations.
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58 Capital Programme Monitoring

A report of the Cabinet was submitted.

The recommendations of the Cabinet were moved by Councillor P Harley and seconded by Councillor P Bradley.

Following a debate, Councillor P Harley exercised the right of reply pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.9.

The motion was put to the meeting and it was

Resolved

- (1) That the progress with the 2023/24 Capital Programme, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be noted.
- (2) That the additions and amendments to the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraphs 10 to 21 of the report, be approved.
- (3) That the Prudential Indicators as required to be determined by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code of Capital Finance in Local Authorities and the Local Government Act 2003, as set out in Appendix B to the report, be approved.
- (4) That the updated Capital Strategy, as set out in Appendix C to the report, be approved.

- (5) That the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2024/25, as set out in paragraph 25 of the report, be approved.
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59 **Suspension of Council Plan 2022-2025**

A report of the Cabinet was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor P Harley, seconded by Councillor P Bradley and

Resolved

- (1) That the Council Plan for the period from April 2022 to March 2025 be suspended and replaced with a focussed one-year plan for 2024/25.
- (2) That the one-year Council Plan for 2024/25 be focussed on those priorities and projects that will prevent a higher cost, deliver cost reductions / increased income and the delivery of the Council's improvement and sustainability programme.
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60 **Annual Review of the Constitution**

A report of the Cabinet was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor P Harley, seconded by Councillor P Bradley and

Resolved

- (1) That the revision of Article 6 and the associated Scrutiny Procedure Rules, as incorporated in Part 4 of the Constitution, be endorsed.
- (2) That the trial of the revised 'Question Time' session at Full Council meetings be extended for the remainder of this municipal year and that, subject to the outcome of the trial, the necessary revisions to Council Procedure Rule 11 be incorporated in the Constitution for the 2024/25 municipal year.

- (3) That the inclusion of the revised Contract Standing Orders, as approved by the Audit and Standards Committee, within Part 5 of the Constitution, be noted.
 - (4) That the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 24.6 and the associated legal provisions concerning the recording of meetings be noted.
 - (5) That the provisions in Article 12 of the Constitution (Officers), including the deputising arrangements in the absence or inability to act of the Chief Executive, be endorsed.
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61 **Review of Housing Finance**

A report of the Cabinet was submitted.

The recommendations of the Cabinet were moved by Councillor L Taylor-Childs and seconded by Councillor P Bradley.

Following a debate, Councillor L Taylor-Childs exercised the right of reply pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.9.

The motion was put to the meeting and it was

Resolved

- (1) That the latest Housing Revenue Account outturn forecast for 2023/24, as set out in paragraphs 8 to 14 and Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.
- (2) That the increase in rents for Housing Revenue Account dwellings by 7.7% with effect from 1st April, 2024, as set out in paragraphs 15 to 17 of the report, be noted.
- (3) That the introduction of service charges at full cost recovery, as set out in paragraph 18 of the report, be noted.
- (4) That the Housing Revenue Account revenue budget for 2024/25, as set out in paragraphs 19 to 21 and Appendix 2 to the report, be approved.

- (5) That the public sector housing revised capital budgets for 2024/25 to 2026/27, attached as Appendix 3 to the report, be approved and that the consultation arrangements, as outlined in paragraphs 4 to 7 of the report, be noted.
- (6) That the Director of Housing and Communities and the Director of Finance and Legal be authorised to bid for and enter into funding arrangements for additional resources to supplement investment in the public sector housing stock, as outlined in paragraphs 24 to 29 and Appendix 3 to the report, and that expenditure funded from such resources be added to the Capital Programme.
- (7) That the Director of Housing and Communities, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Safer Communities, be authorised to manage and allocate resources to the Capital Programme as outlined in paragraphs 24 to 29 and Appendix 3 to the report.
- (8) That the Director of Housing and Communities, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Safer Communities, be authorised to develop and implement service charges as outlined in paragraph 18 to the report.
- (9) That the Council confirm that all capital receipts arising from the sale of Housing Revenue Account assets (other than any receipts that may be specifically committed to support private sector housing) should continue to be used for the improvement of Council homes, as set out in paragraphs 24 to 29 and Appendix 3 to the report.
- (10) That the Director of Housing and Communities be authorised to continue to buy back former right to buy properties, to buy other properties, and to buy land where required to assemble a viable site for housing development, subject to a robust assessment of good value for money and sustainability in terms of lettings, maintenance and major works, as set out in paragraphs 24 to 29 and Appendix 3 to the report.
- (11) That the Director of Housing and Communities be authorised to procure and enter into contracts for the delivery of the Capital Programme, as outlined in paragraphs 24 to 29 and Appendix 3 to the report.

- (12) That the Housing Revenue Account Medium Term Financial Strategy be endorsed.
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62 **Dudley Council Pay Policy Statement 2024/25**

A report of the Cabinet was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor S Clark, seconded by Councillor P Bradley and

Resolved

That the Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25 be approved and adopted.

63 **Treasury Management**

A report of the Audit and Standards Committee was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor A Lees, seconded by Councillor P Bradley and

Resolved

- (1) That the treasury activities in 2023/24, as outlined in the report, be noted.
 - (2) That the Treasury Strategy 2024/25, attached as Appendix 2 to the report, be approved.
 - (3) That the Director of Finance and Legal be authorised to effect such borrowings, repayments and investments as are appropriate and consistent with the approved Treasury Strategy and relevant guidance.
 - (4) That the delegation to enable the Director of Finance and Legal to update the prudential indicators, as detailed in Section 3 of Appendix 2 to the report, be noted.
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64 **Appointment of Director of Environment**

A report of the Appointments Committee was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor P Harley, seconded by Councillor P Bradley and

Resolved

That Nicholas McGurk be appointed to the post of Director of Environment in accordance with the salary and terms of conditions of employment applicable to the post.

65 **The Dudley (Electoral Changes) Order 2024**

A report of the Lead for Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) was submitted on the provisions of The Dudley (Electoral Changes) Order 2024, which had been made by Parliament on 16th February, 2024.

The recommendation in the report was moved by Councillor P Harley and seconded by Councillor P Bradley.

Following comments from Councillor S Phipps, Councillor P Harley exercised the right of reply pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.9.

The motion was put to the meeting and it was

Resolved

That the report be noted.

66 **Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations**

A report of the Lead for Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor P Harley, seconded by Councillor P Bradley and

Resolved

- (1) That the proposal document published on the Polling Place and Polling Station Review, available on the Dudley Council website, with the alterations mentioned in the report, be approved and adopted for elections in Dudley.
- (2) That the proposed changes, on the changes document published for the wards set out in paragraph 3 of the report, be approved.
- (3) That the changes proposed on the changes document for the Amblecote Ward, with the alteration of S04 polling district remaining at Amblecote Primary School, be approved.
- (4) That the changes proposed on the changes document for the Belle Vale Ward, with the amendments suggested in the report, be approved.
- (5) That the changes proposed on the changes documents for the Brierley Hill and Wordsley South Ward, with the amendments suggested in the report, be approved.
- (6) That the changes proposed on the changes document for the Gornal Ward, with the amendments in the alterations to original proposals due to availability section of the report, be approved.
- (7) That the changes proposed on the changes document for the Hayley Green and Cradley South Ward, with the amendments suggested in the report submitted, be approved.
- (8) That the changes proposed on the changes document for the Lye and Stourbridge North Ward, with the amendment to use the Elton Centre for polling District U04, be approved.
- (9) That the charges proposed on the changes document for the Netherton and Holly Hall Ward, with the amendment of M03 to vote at the alternative venue of Ebenezer Baptist Church, 17 Andrews Street, be approved.
- (10) That the changes proposed on the changes document for the Norton Ward, with the amendment of V06 electors remaining at the Sons of Rest building at Mary Stevens Park, be approved.

- (11) That the changes proposed on the changes document for the Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood Ward, with the alteration for X07 polling district to remain at the Scout Hut, be approved.
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67 **Appointment of Returning Officer, Electoral Registration Officer and Deputy Electoral Registration Officer**

A report of the Director of Finance and Legal was submitted.

Councillor P Harley informed the Council that recommendation 2 in the report was withdrawn.

It was moved by Councillor P Harley, seconded by Councillor P Bradley and

Resolved

That Mohammed Farooq (Lead for Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer) be appointed as Deputy Electoral Registration Officer.

68 **Composition and Membership of Committees**

A report of the Lead for Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor P Harley, seconded by Councillor P Bradley and

Resolved

That the revised composition and membership of Committees for the remainder of the 2023/24 municipal year be determined in accordance with the political balance requirements of Sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, as set out in the Appendix to the report.

Tackling Anti-Social Use of Off-Road Vehicles

Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 12, Councillor R Priest had given notice of the following motion on 8th February, 2024:

“Anti-social use of off-road vehicles, including quadbikes, motorbikes, scramblers and mini motors is an issue that affects many parts of the borough, and is causing particular nuisance in parks and green spaces. While the use of these vehicles is permitted on private land with the land owners permission, the Road Traffic Act 1988 prohibits their use where no permission has been given.

The Council recognises that tackling the anti-social use of off-road vehicles requires a proactive multi-agency approach involving the local authority, neighbourhood police teams, the wider West Midlands Police and the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Council also recognises that in parts of the borough, there has been a failure to respond appropriately to the anti-social use of off-road vehicles.

The Council additionally recognises that Stevens Park, Wollescote, is one part of the borough where there has been a failure to respond appropriately to the anti-social use of off-road vehicles.

The Council expresses its dissatisfaction with the response of the Police and Crime Commissioner for failing to adequately address the issue of the use of anti-social use of off-road vehicles in the Dudley Borough, particularly in Stevens Park, Wollescote.

The Council therefore resolves to:

- Ask the relevant Officer to conduct a survey amongst the elected Members of this Council asking Members to identify areas within their ward where anti-social use of off-road vehicles occurs and use the results of this survey to improve signage discouraging the use of off-road vehicles.

- Introduce a system where elected Members can report addresses to the Council which are suspected to be involved in the anti-social use of off-road vehicles, and the Council to send letters to these addresses outlining the legality of the anti-social use of off-road vehicles and the consequences of their continued use.
- Ask the relevant Directorate to install a trip rail fence around the perimeter of Stevens Park, Wollescote, while maintaining access points for pedestrians, pushchairs, and wheelchairs.
- Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner informing them of this motion, and the Councils' dissatisfaction with the response of the Police and Crime Commissioner for failing to adequately address the issue of the anti-social use of off-road vehicles in the Dudley Borough, particularly in Stevens Park, Wollescote.
- Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority in May, once the result of the election to the post is known, requesting an urgent meeting to develop a strategy to tackle the anti-social use of off-road vehicles. This meeting should involve appropriate Cabinet Members, Ward Councillors, and community groups."

The motion was moved by Councillor R Priest and seconded by Councillor J Clinton.

During the debate on the motion, the following amendment was moved by Councillor T Crumpton and seconded by Councillor K Denning:

"This Council is fully aware that there has been a rise in anti-social behaviour caused by the widespread use of often unlicensed and uninsured young people on untaxed motorbikes and quad bikes.

This Council condemns those few who are making so many people's lives a misery. Our parks and green spaces are being targeted; local roads and pavements see near misses almost every day.

These individuals are known within our communities, not only by their names but where they live. Sadly, however, local people are also intimidated and fearful of retaliation.

The reduction in local neighbourhood policing teams over past years, particularly the massive reduction in PCSOs, has decreased the deterrent but also the relationship between Police and the young people in our communities.

Police are fully aware, in most cases, of who these criminals are but little is being done to bring them to justice.

Recent decisions and funding through the Police and Crime Commissioner have brought in off-road bikes to our Borough. This Council acknowledges the success of the new police off-road bikes team who have visited Dudley undertaking operations, seized bikes and made a number of arrests.

However, such interventions are currently piecemeal and, due to the dramatic cuts in funding for the police over recent years, cannot act as a sufficient deterrent.

Our communities are fed up and frustrated with what they perceive as a lack of support.

The law is clear that anyone caught driving in this manner can:

- Have the bike or other vehicle confiscated and destroyed.
- Be prosecuted and both fined and banned from driving.
- If convicted of dangerous driving face imprisonment.

These are Police powers but the Council can and should, as with other anti-social behaviour, be taking action against the households involved.

This Council resolves:

- That a system for Councillors to report such incidents and any intelligence they have gathered is urgently introduced. Information from this system to be shared with the relevant council directorates to ensure any action that can be taken is taken.
- That the system data is shared with the Police with the objective that any actions being planned are done jointly with both Police and Council.

- That 3 monthly reports are produced and shared wherever possible with local Councillors and the people of Dudley.
- That if sufficient evidence is available Civil and Criminal prosecution will be pursued and publicised.

In addition, that an exercise is undertaken to all petrol stations to advise of the illegality of sales to those under-age; to help with advice to the proprietors to refuse such sales and to prosecute any providers found to have done so.

This problem is not confined to Dudley but is prevalent across the UK. Some Councils have made inroads by working very closely with the Police and communities, but these have had limited success.

This Council instructs the Chief Executive to arrange an urgent meeting with the West Midlands Mayor and the Police and Crime Commissioner and all local Councillors. The objective to greater understand current powers and resources available and the strategies currently being actioned or planned to tackle this increasing problem for the people of our communities.”

Following a debate on the amendment, Councillor R Priest was afforded a right of reply pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.9.

The amendment was put to the vote and lost.

The following amendment to the original motion was then moved by Councillor L Taylor-Childs and seconded by Councillor N Neale:

“Anti-social use of off-road vehicles, including quadbikes, motorbikes, scramblers and mini motors is an issue that affects many parts of the borough, and is causing particular nuisance in parks and green spaces. While the use of these vehicles is permitted on private land with the land-owner’s permission, the Road Traffic Act 1988 prohibits their use where no permission has been given.

The Council recognises that tackling the anti-social use of off-road vehicles requires a proactive multi-agency approach involving the local authority, neighbourhood police teams, the wider West Midlands Police and the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner.

This issue is prevalent in a number of areas in the borough including, but not limited to, Wollescote Park, Quarry Bank, Wordsley and Brierley Hill. It is recognised that, locally, there has been a joined-up approach to tackling this issue within the Community Safety Partnership. However, this work is hindered by the lack of regional support and resource from the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Both strategy and resource is important to tackling this issue, the PCC recently funded just three off-road bikes for Police use across the West Midlands area. The Council expresses its dissatisfaction with the response of the Police and Crime Commissioner for failing to adequately fund resource to address the issue of the use of anti-social use of off-road vehicles in the Dudley Borough.

The Council therefore resolves to:

- Recognise the impact this behaviour is having on local residents and businesses and resolves to renew its approach to tackling the issue.
- Instruct the Chief Executive and relevant Cabinet Member to write to the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner informing them of this motion, and the Council's dissatisfaction with the response of the Police and Crime Commissioner for failing to adequately address the issue of the anti-social use of off-road vehicles in the Dudley Borough.
- Identify a single point of contact within the Community Safety Team for reporting the specific incidents of the anti-social use of off-road bikes. These figures will be communicated to the Police via existing reporting methods within the Community Safety Partnership, with a focus on ensuring intelligence (such as addresses of stored bikes) being followed up by Police and/or Housing Management.
- Instruct the Chief Executive and relevant Cabinet Member to write to the Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority in May, once the result of the election to the post is known, requesting an urgent meeting to develop a strategy to tackle the anti-social use of off-road vehicles. This meeting should involve appropriate Cabinet Members, Ward Councillors, community groups and other affected organisations such as the Canal and River Trust.

- Consider the implementation of physical preventative measures, such as trip rails, fencing and entry points when the financial position of the authority allows.
- Ensure that the Council is utilising deployable CCTV, where intelligence indicates there would be a benefit to investigations, to monitor problem areas.”

Following discussion on the amendment, Councillor S Phipps moved a closure motion pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.11, which was seconded, to the effect that the amendment be now put to the vote.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14.11(b) the Mayor was of the opinion that matter had been sufficiently discussed. The Mayor then indicated that, pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 12.5, the 30 minutes allowed to deal with all notices of motion had expired.

The motion and the amendment would therefore stand referred to the next ordinary meeting of the Council. The notice of motion and the amendment would be included in the summons for that meeting in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.2.

70 **Questions under Council Procedure Rule 11**

It was moved by Councillor P Harley, seconded by Councillor P Bradley and

Resolved

That under Council Procedure Rule 22.1, the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 11 be suspended for this meeting to enable the revised Question Time session to take place as referred to in Minute No. 60(2) above.

Questions to the Leader, Cabinet Members and Chairs

The Cabinet Member for Public Health (Councillor I Bevan) responded to questions from Councillor J Foster seeking clarification concerning the situation on Community Forum funding.

The Chair of Audit and Standards Committee (Councillor A Lees) responded to questions from Councillor P Lowe confirming that he had sent an email, on behalf of the Committee, highlighting concerns raised by External Auditors regarding reserves. An internal investigation was being undertaken to retrieve the email to forward to Members of the Audit and Standards Committee for information.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor P Harley) responded to questions from Councillor P Lowe concerning an email sent by the Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee in July, 2023.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Environmental Services (Councillor D Corfield) responded questions from Councillor R Priest concerning the resurfacing of a Car Park at Toys Lane, Cradley.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Safer Communities (Councillor L Taylor-Childs) responded to questions from Councillor E Taylor concerning the number of void properties currently in the Council's housing stock, the number of residents currently on the waiting list and the reasons for the delays in void turnaround times.

The Cabinet Member for Public Health (Councillor I Bevan) responded to questions from Councillor S Keasey seeking further clarification on the position regarding Community Forum funding.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Environmental Services (Councillor D Corfield) responded to questions from Councillor S Phipps concerning the extension of the average speed camera enforcement zone on the A458 between Lye and Cradley to Stourbridge Road, Halesowen and progress on the deployment of speed cameras.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care (Councillor M Rogers) undertook to investigate a request from Councillor J Cowell concerning cases where tenants refusing to pay for the telecare service had retained access to the equipment.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Strategy (Councillor P Atkins) responded to questions from Councillor R Priest concerning utilising the Public Health Grant to fund discounted memberships at the Borough's Leisure Centres for elderly residents.

The Deputy Leader of the Council (Councillor P Bradley) responded to questions from Councillor S Keasey concerning the annual International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia event.

The Mayor indicated that the 30 minutes allowed for questions had expired. Any Members indicating to ask questions could either send these in writing or raise the question at the next appropriate meeting.

71 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business for consideration at this meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.10pm

MAYOR

Minutes of the proceedings of the Council

Monday, 4th March, 2024 at 6.00pm
in the Council Chamber, The Council House, Priory Road, Dudley

Present:

Councillor A Goddard (Mayor)
Councillor P Lee (Deputy Mayor)
Councillors S Ali, A Aston, M Aston, P Atkins, C Bayton, D Bevan, I Bevan, H Bills, D Borley, S Bothul, P Bradley, R Buttery, K Casey, B Challenor, S Clark, J Clinton, Dr R Clinton, R Collins, D Corfield, J Cowell, T Creed, T Crumpton, A Davies, K Denning, P Dobb, P Drake, M Dudley, C Eccles, J Elliott, M Evans, J Foster, M Hanif, D Harley, P Harley, S Henley, A Hopwood, M Howard, L Johnson, S Keasey, I Kettle, E Lawrence, A Lees, K Lewis, W Little, P Lowe, J Martin, P Miller, N Neale, S Phipps, R Priest, A Qayyum, K Razzaq, C Reid, S Ridley, M Rogers, T Russon, P Sahota, D Stanley, A Taylor, E Taylor, L Taylor-Childs, A Tromans, M Webb, K Westwood and M Westwood together with the Chief Executive and other Officers.

Prayers

The Mayor led the Council in prayer.

72 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors C Barnett, A Hughes, S Mughal, C Sullivan and Q Zada.

73 Declarations of Interest

Declarations of interests, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, were made by the following Members:

Councillor A Aston – Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment with West Midlands Ambulance Service.

Councillor M Evans and A Taylor - Any matters relating to Castle Hill development and all references to Dudley Zoo - Non-pecuniary interests as Members of Dudley and West Midlands Zoological Society Limited.

Councillors D Stanley and A Taylor - West Midlands Combined Authority – Transport Delivery Committee - Non-pecuniary interests as Members of the Committee.

Councillor P Miller - Any matters relating to adult social care – Non-pecuniary interest as his wife received care in a care home.

Councillor K Casey – Any references to West Midlands Combined Authority – Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment with West Midlands Combined Authority.

Councillor I Bevan – Any references to Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust/Russells Hall Hospital – Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment.

Councillors I Kettle and W Little – Any references to West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority - Non-pecuniary interests as Members of the Authority.

Councillor E Taylor - Non-pecuniary interest as her daughter was employed by Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust.

Councillor N Neale – Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting her employment with the Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust.

Councillor S Henley – Any references to matters affecting West Midlands Fire Service – Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment.

74 **Mayor's Announcements**

There were no announcements at this meeting.

75 **Suspension of Council Procedure Rules**

It was moved by Councillor P Harley, seconded by Councillor P Bradley and

Resolved

That, under Council Procedure Rule 22.1, the time restriction of five minutes referred to in Council Procedure Rule 14.4, be suspended to enable the Cabinet Member for Finance, Legal and Human Resources and the Lead Spokespersons from the Political Groups to speak for longer than five minutes on Minute No. 76 below and to enable the Cabinet Member for Finance, Legal and Human Resources to speak for longer than five minutes to exercise the right of reply to the debate.

76 **Medium Term Financial Strategy and Council Tax Setting 2024/25**

A joint report of the Deputy Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Legal was submitted, setting out recommendations concerning the deployment of General Fund revenue resources, a number of statutory calculations that had to be made by the Council and the Council Tax to be levied for the period from 1st April, 2024 to 31st March, 2025.

Following a speech by Councillor S Clark (Cabinet Member for Finance, Legal and Human Resources) it was moved by Councillor S Clark, and seconded by Councillor P Bradley, that the recommendations set out in the report submitted to the meeting be approved and adopted.

Councillor S Ali addressed the meeting on behalf of the Labour Group.

Councillor M Westwood addressed the meeting on behalf of the Independent Group.

The original motion was then the subject of general debate by the Council.

The following amendment was moved by Councillor R Priest and seconded by Councillor S Keasey:-

“That in addition to the recommendations in the report submitted to Council, the Chief Executive be instructed not to review the scope of library services as part of the Total Operating Model as currently proposed in the report.”

The amendment was put to the vote and lost.

During further debate on the original motion, the following amendment was moved by Councillor S Keasey and seconded by Councillor M Westwood:-

“That in addition to the recommendations in the report submitted, the Council

- (1) Instructs the Chief Executive to instigate a review of the Members’ Allowances Scheme, including convening an Independent Remuneration Panel as required by the Local Authorities (Member Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, with a view to reducing the total amount of Members’ Allowances to save £120,000 and subsequently to create a pot of £120,000 for Community Forum grants (split equally between the 24 wards).
- (2) Recommends that, subject to the outcome of (1) above, an exception be made to any spending controls that are in place so that this funding can be distributed in line with recommendations from the Your Home, Your Forum Grant Panels.”

The amendment was debated by the Council. Councillor S Clark was then afforded and exercised the right of reply to the amendment pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.11(b).

The amendment was put to the vote and lost.

The original motion was then debated further by the Council.

At the conclusion of the debate, Councillor S Clark exercised his right to reply pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.9.

The original motion was put to the vote and it was

Resolved

- (1) That the Council note:-
 - (a) The actions of the External Auditors as set out in paragraphs 12 and 13 of the report.
 - (b) The forecast variances to budget in 2023/24 and progress with delivery of savings set out in paragraph 17 and Appendices C and D of the report.
 - (c) The advice of the Director of Finance and Legal on future saving measures and Council Tax as set out in paragraph 53 of the report.
- (2) That with effect from 1st April, 2025, for properties which have been unoccupied and unfurnished for between one and five years, an Empty Homes Premium of 100% be applied, resulting in a 200% Council Tax charge being payable in these circumstances, as set out in paragraph 32 of the report.
- (3) That with effect from 1st April, 2025, for properties that have been empty and furnished for more than one year, a premium of 100% be applied, resulting in a 200% Council Tax charge being payable in these circumstances, and that authority be delegated to the Director of Finance and Legal, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Legal and Human Resources, to approve a policy for exceptions to this premium as set out in paragraph 33 of the report.
- (4) That with effect from 1st April, 2025, discretionary business rates relief be limited to charities whose registered office is in and/or only provide services to people who live in the Dudley Borough and that authority be delegated to the Director of Finance and Legal, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Legal and Human Resources, to amend the policy to give effect to this change as set out in in paragraph 38 of the report.
- (5) That the budget for 2024/25, and Directorate allocations, including the Public Health budget, as set out in the report, be approved:

Revenue Budget Allocations 2024/25

Directorate	£m
Adult Social Care	129.304
Children's Services	97.357
Health and Wellbeing	3.477
Chief Executive	0.252
Corporate and Treasury	15.225
Finance and Legal	6.544
Digital, Commercial and Customer Services	5.674
Environment	55.695
Housing and Community	3.007
Regeneration and Enterprise	15.907
Total Service Budget	332.442

- (6) That the statutory amounts required to be calculated for the Council's spending, contingencies and contributions to reserves; income and use of reserves; transfers to and from its collection fund; and Council Tax requirement, as referred to in Section 67(2)(b) be now calculated by the Council for the year 2024/25 in accordance with Sections 31A, 31B and 34 to 36 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992 as follows:
- (a) £ 826.516m being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act. *(The Council's spending, contingencies, contributions to reserves, and specified transfers from the general fund to the collection fund)*
- (b) £ 670.935m being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Sections 31A (3) of the Act. *(The Council's income, use of reserves, and specified transfers from the collection fund to the general fund)*

(c) £ 155.581m being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year.

(d) £1,646.7067 being the amount at (c) above divided by the Council Tax base 94,480.09, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B (1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.

(e) Dudley Council Tax for each Valuation Band

A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
1,097.80	1,280.77	1,463.74	1,646.71	2,012.64	2,378.58	2,744.51	3,293.41

being the rounded amounts given by multiplying the amount at (d) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different bands.

(f) Precepts for each Valuation Band

That it be noted that for the year 2024/25, the major precepting authorities have issued the following amounts in precepts to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below:

	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
West Midlands Police	143.70	167.65	191.60	215.55	263.45	311.35	359.25	431.10
West Midlands Fire & Rescue	50.13	58.49	66.84	75.20	91.91	108.62	125.33	150.40

- (7) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts in Appendix M, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, agrees the following levels of Council Tax for 2024/25.

Valuation Bands

A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
1291.63	1506.91	1722.18	1937.46	2368.00	2798.55	3229.09	3874.91

- (8) That the Medium Term Financial Strategy, as set out in the report, be approved.
- (9) That the Council determine that a referendum relating to Council Tax increases is not required in accordance with Chapter 4ZA of Part 1 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as set out in paragraph 50 of the report.
- (10) That the Cabinet Members, Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive and Directors be authorised to take all necessary steps to implement the proposals contained in the report, in accordance with the Council's Financial Management Regime.

Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 16.4 and under the provisions of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, the voting on the motion was recorded as follows:-

For (40)

Councillors P Atkins, D Bevan, I Bevan, D Borley, S Bothul, P Bradley, R Buttery, B Challenor, S Clark, Dr R Clinton, J Clinton, R Collins, D Corfield, T Creed, A Davies, P Dobb, M Dudley, J Elliott, M Evans, A Goddard, D Harley, P Harley, S Henley, A Hopwood, L Johnson, I Kettle, E Lawrence, P Lee, A Lees, K Lewis, W Little, N Neale, S Phipps, K Razzaq, M Rogers, T Russon, D Stanley, A Taylor, L Taylor-Childs and M Webb.

Against (27)

Councillors S Ali, A Aston, M Aston, C Bayton, H Bills, K Casey, J Cowell, T Crumpton, K Denning, P Drake, C Eccles, J Foster, M Hanif, M Howard, S Keasey, P Lowe, J Martin, P Miller, R Priest, A Qayyum, C Reid, S Ridney, P Sahota, E Taylor, A Tromans, K Westwood and M Westwood.

77 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business for consideration at this meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.30pm

MAYOR

Meeting of the Council – 15th April, 2024

Report of the Cabinet

2023/2024 Revenue and Capital Programme Monitoring

Purpose

1. To report the forecast 2023/24 General Fund Revenue outturn position and propose amendments to the Capital Programme. The Cabinet has noted the forecast General Fund revenue outturn position for 2023/24, the effect on Unallocated General Fund Reserves at 31st March 2024 and risks in relation to Continuing Health Care Income.
2. The recommendations below have been referred for consideration by Full Council.

Recommendations

3. The Council is recommended:
 - That the deferral, reduction and removal of various capital budgets be approved, as set out in paragraphs 11-18.
 - That the additional budget for the swimming pool works at Halesowen Leisure Centre funded by grant be included in the Capital Programme as set out in paragraphs 19-23.
 - That in respect of the Health Innovation Dudley (HID) Towns Fund project, a maximum provision of £1.871m be made in the capital programme to meet the project's cost pressures including the maximum 'pain share' and that this be funded by prudential borrowing if further external funding cannot be secured as set out in paragraph 24.
 - That the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy be approved and added into the Capital Strategy, as set out in paragraphs 26-28 and Appendices C and D.
 - To note the progress against the Capital Programme as detailed in Appendix B.

Background

4. At 31st March 2022 our unringfenced revenue reserves as a proportion of net revenue spend were 19%. The average¹ for all Metropolitan Councils at the same date was 55%. Calculated on the same basis, our position at 31st March 2023 was still 19%. Comparisons with other councils are not yet available.

Forecast Revenue Outturn 2023/24

5. On 6th March, 2023 Council set the 2023/24 budget. The budget was amended by Council on 10th July, 2023. The latest forecast performance against the amended budget is summarised below:

Directorate	Latest Budget £m	Outturn £m	Variance £m
Chief Executive	6.8	6.5	(0.3)
Adult Social Care	110.6	113.8	3.2
Children's Services	82.0	86.8	4.8
Health and Wellbeing	2.7	2.4	(0.3)
Finance and Legal	14.2	14.7	0.5
Digital, Commercial and Customer Services	16.5	15.9	(0.6)
Environment	48.8	50.5	1.7
Housing and Communities	2.5	1.8	(0.7)
Regeneration and Enterprise	14.4	16.2	1.8
Corporate, Treasury and Levies	13.9	8.9	(5.0)
Total Service Costs	312.4	317.5	5.1
Total Resources	(307.3)	(307.3)	0.0
Use of Balances	5.1	10.2	5.1

6. The adverse variance of £5.1m represents a £3.9m improvement to the previous outturn presented to March Council. Appendix A gives further detail of forecast performance at service level. The significant changes since last reported to Cabinet are summarised as follows:
- a. Backdated Continuing Health Care income (£4m)
 - b. Share of National Business rates Levy surplus (£0.6m)
 - c. Reduction in section 31 Business rates grant +£0.5m
 - d. Other net pressures +£0.2m

¹ The percentage quoted is based on the Median average of all Metropolitan Councils

7. The Council should note that this is a significant adverse variance with severe implications for the ongoing Medium Term Financial Strategy. The immediate impact on the General Fund is outlined below.

	Budget £m	Latest Position £m
Forecast balance 31 st March 2023	20.8	20.8
2022/23 outturn (as reported to July Cabinet)		1.0
Unallocated General Fund Reserve at 31st March 2023	20.8	21.8
Planned use of Reserves approved by Council March 2023	(4.2)	(4.2)
Planned use of Reserves approved by Council July 2023		(0.9)
Adverse Forecast 2023/24 outturn		(5.1)
Forecast Unallocated General Fund reserve at 31st March 2024	16.6	11.6

8. The Cabinet has approved proposals for resources to support the Fit for the Future Programme. The costs of the Programme Delivery Office for 18 months is estimated to be £0.6m. Funding of £0.2m has been found from earmarked reserves and vacancies. It is proposed that the balance is funded from use of flexible capital receipts detailed in Appendix C and D.

Capital

9. The table below summarises the *current* 3-year Capital Programme updated where appropriate to reflect latest scheme spending profiles.

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000
Public Sector Housing	58,900	87,400	92,300
Private Sector Housing	8,143	4,605	71
Environment	5,565	9,891	8,179
Transport	12,053	13,233	8,896
Regeneration and Corporate Landlord	19,814	20,236	12,709
Culture, Leisure and Bereavement	1,542	3,099	2,700
Schools and SEND	11,271	19,916	17,741
Social Care, Health and Well Being	702	1,850	0
Digital, Commercial and Customer Services	1,767	1,218	1,381
Total spend	119,757	161,448	143,977

Revenue	4,286	3,884	3,650
Major Repairs Reserve (Housing)	25,100	26,400	26,928
Capital receipts	25,123	44,224	47,263
Grants and contributions	42,488	29,797	15,948
Capital Financing Requirement	22,760	57,143	50,188
Total funding	119,757	161,448	143,977

Note that the capital programme is subject to the availability of Government funding.

10. Following a review of the Capital Programme the following amendments have been proposed.

Highways Structural Maintenance

11. Along with all schemes in the Capital Programme that are funded by revenue contributions and / or prudential borrowing it is proposed that instead of funding £2,000,000 each year for this area that the annual budget for this spend is reduced to £1,750,000. It is proposed that for 2024/25 onwards the budget for this area that is funded by prudential borrowing is reduced by £250,000.

Priory Road Car Park

12. An allocation for this scheme was agreed by the Council over 10 years ago and there is a budget of £19,000 remaining. There are no immediate plans for this site so it is proposed that this budget is removed. It is proposed that the £19,000 budget is removed from the Capital Programme.

Wren's Nest Warden's Base

13. Plans for this scheme were stalled when further plans were requested with a higher cost than originally budgeted. As no immediate plans are in place for this site it is proposed that the budget of £279,000 is deferred. It is proposed that £279,000 budget is deferred to 2027/28.

Marlborough Gardens and Ascot Gardens

14. Following consultation with residents a budget of £92,000 was approved into the Capital Programme in July 2021. Fees of £2k were incurred in 2021/22. Therefore, if the scheme no longer goes ahead, these fees will revert to revenue however the original contribution of £92,000 will also be transferred back to the service. This revenue saving will be reported as part of the Council revenue outturn reporting. It is proposed that the

£90,000 remaining budget for this scheme is removed from the Capital Programme.

Leisure Centre Strategy

15. There is £128,000 in the 2023/24 Capital Programme for residual works to this scheme. There is currently £78,000 either spent or contractually committed to be spent in 2023/24. It is proposed that the unspent proportion of this budget is removed from the Capital Programme. It is proposed that the remaining budget of £50,000 is removed from the Capital Programme.

Crystal Leisure Centre Roof

16. There is currently a budget of £554,000 agreed at February 2022 Cabinet for the replacement of the roof at Crystal Leisure Centre. Given financial pressures it is proposed that the budget and spend is deferred until 2027/28. It is proposed that the £554,000 budget is deferred to 2027/28.

Stalled and Derelict Sites

17. Work has commenced on this scheme and there are currently budgets of £200,000 and £500,000 in 2024/25 and 2025/26 of the Capital Programme respectively. It is proposed that the spend for these years is deferred until 2027/28. It is proposed to defer £700,000 of project spend to 2027/28.

Mental Health and Adult PSS

18. There are historical budgets in the Capital Programme across these areas of a combined £376,000. There are no immediate plans to use this funding so it is proposed to defer this spend to 2027/28. It is proposed that the £376,000 budget is deferred to 2027/28.

Halesowen Leisure Centre

19. The swimming pool at Halesowen Leisure Centre has been awarded a capital grant of £176,125 from Sport England, based on a competitive bid submitted by the Council in late 2023. The award is for environmental improvements to include triple glazed pool hall windows and variable speed pumps. Both measures will benefit the pool area from both an environmental and economic point of view.
20. A condition of the grant from Sport England's Swimming Pool Support Fund is that the swimming pool remains open for a minimum period of 10 years. Should the decision be made to close the centre within this time,

Sport England would have a claim on any capital receipt to recover the grant.

21. Should a future decision be made to outsource leisure centres, the obligations the grant places on any operator of the centre would be discussed and if necessary, included in the tender information. For clarity, the obligations include matters such as the operator agreeing to regularly report on issues such as user demographic and utility usage, and to provide a Strategic Leisure Plan for the Halesowen facility by 1st April 2025.
22. From an appraisal of the terms of the grant offer, officers believe the Authority can procure another organisation to run the leisure centre, provided the written approval of Sport England is obtained. The Council can also close the facility, but Sport England must be informed. In this instance, Sport England would request information on how swimming provision will be delivered. Sport England do not, however, have the authority to prevent closure.
23. It is therefore proposed that the grant and associated spend is added to the Capital Programme for 2024/25, with Sport England reimbursing the costs in 2025/26.

Towns Fund Project Update Spring 2024

24. On 11th March, 2024, the Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise providing an update on the Health Innovation Dudley (HID) Towns Fund project, which sought the approvals and the necessary resources to progress to the next stage of the project. The public report considered by the Cabinet is available on the Council's [Internet Site](#). The Cabinet decided:
 - (1) That the project update be noted.
 - (2) That the transition of the project from Phase 1 to Phase 2 of the Insurance Backed Alliance (IBA) process be approved.
 - (3) That the Council be recommended to make a maximum provision of £1.871m in the capital programme to meet the project's cost pressures including the maximum 'pain share' and that this be funded by prudential borrowing if further external funding cannot be secured.
25. The Cabinet also considered a report in private session and noted the current position in respect to negotiations to acquire third party land and new rights within the Order Land, whilst a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) is being promoted.

Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy

26. The Flexible Use of Capital Receipts has been offered by central government since 2016/17 and it has recently been announced that the flexibility would be extended to March 2030. This flexibility allows Councils to use their capital receipts to fund revenue transformation projects and service reform as long as it meets certain criteria and providing full Council approves both the strategy surrounding this and the specific schemes proposed to be funded in this way.
27. The Council is working on new ways to provide cost savings across the Council and some of these may be eligible to be funded using these capital receipt flexibilities. Qualifying expenditure is expenditure on any project/activity that is designed to generate ongoing revenue savings in the delivery of public services and/or transform service delivery to reduce costs and/or transform service delivery in a way that reduces costs or demand for services in future years for any of the public sector delivery partners.
28. The Full Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy is included in Appendix C and a list of proposed projects to be approved to be funded in this way is included in Appendix D.

Finance

29. In the Section 25 report to Council on 4th March, the Director of Finance and Legal stated: "Our forecast unringfenced reserves at 31st March 2024 are around 8% of net revenue spend. Based on the forecasts in this report they will fall to around 4% by 31st March 2025. From that point forward the outlook is unsustainable. Reserves are low by comparison with other councils. The rate of Council Tax (and as a result the level of spending) is also low compared to other councils. Forecasts already build in the maximum increase in Council Tax without a referendum for 2024/25. There are significant risks to the forecast and Members should note that, if these risks materialise and if mitigating actions are not taken, then I may need to issue a notice under Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988."
30. The deferral or reduction of spend in the Capital Programme outlined in this report will reduce the revenue cost of borrowing to finance the capital programme. However, the flexible use of capital receipts referred to above (and Appendix D) will increase the requirement to borrow to finance the capital programme. These impacts will be kept under review and revenue budget for the cost of borrowing will be adjusted accordingly.

Law

31. The Council's budgeting process is governed by the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980, the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, and the Local Government Act 2003.

Risk Management

32. The Corporate Risk Register recognises the risk that the Council may be unable to set and/or manage its budget so as to meet its statutory obligations within the resources available. At the last review point, this risk was allocated the maximum rating of 25 (Extreme).
33. Risks, and their management, are considered prior to proposals being brought forward to include projects in the Capital Programme. This includes risks relating to the capital expenditure itself, funding of that expenditure (e.g. grant availability and conditions), and ongoing revenue costs and/or income.

Equality Impact

34. These proposals comply with the Council's policy on Equality and Diversity. With regard to Children and Young People:
- The Capital Programme for Schools will be spent wholly on improving services for children and young people. Other elements of the Capital Programme will also have a significant impact on this group.
 - Consultation is undertaken with children and young people, if appropriate, when developing individual capital projects within the Programme.
 - There has been no direct involvement of children and young people in developing the proposals in this report.

Human Resources/Organisational Development

35. The proposals in this report do not have any direct Human Resources / Organisational Development implications.

Commercial / Procurement

36. All procurement activity will be carried out in accordance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders, and the relevant officers will take the procurements through the Procurement Management Group to monitor compliance at the relevant Gateways.

Environment / Climate Change

37. Individual capital projects should be separately assessed for their environmental impact before they commence and major schemes with climate change impacts will include details of this in their progress reports going forward.

Council Priorities and Projects

38. The aspirations of the Council Plan can only be delivered if the Council is financially sustainable. Proposed capital projects are in line with the Council's capital investment priorities as set out in the approved Capital Strategy.



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Leader of the Council

General Fund Revenue Forecast Outturn 2023/24

	Latest Service Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comment
Chief Executive	6,769	6,510	(259)	
People and Inclusion	3,134	2,729	(405)	Staff car park permits (£53k), Occupational Health (£38k) other net savings (£18k), (£242k) vacancy savings, (£54k) saving on software development and HR assistance project
Communications and Public Affairs	1,000	1,067	67	Shortfall on Musicom £70k and Street vendors and town centre income generation £20k, £35k pressure for reduced income and property costs. Partly offset by (£58k) net staffing cost savings
Chief Executives Office	2,635	2,714	79	Salary costs £162k and non pay pressures £67k offset by reduction in spend on strategic contingency (£150k).
Adult Social Care	110,651	113,815	3,164	
Dudley Disability Service	53,504	55,205	1,701	Bed based pressure £432k arising from 15 long term placements (£63k) and £495k of short term placements, Community Services pressure of £1370k arising from 68 extra clients and +£108 pw increase in costs. Placement pressures inc (£4085k) backdated

	Latest Service Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comment
				CHC income. other pressures of backdated Business Rates at Ladies walk £219k, consultancy costs £250k. Offset by net staff savings (£570k).
Assessment and Independence	42,783	43,298	515	Additional 391 clients £1524k, salary pressures £285k, £276k other pressures. Offset by; additional grants & joint funding (£1570k).
Access & Prevention, adults commissioning, Performance & complaints	9,904	9,811	(93)	Shortfall on Telecare income (£62k council tenant, £50k private income), £211k pressure on equipment offset by net staffing savings within division (£316k), (£100k) Public Health switch for carers.
Adult Safeguarding & Principal Social Worker	1,828	1,611	(217)	Net salary savings (£217k)
Integrated Commissioning	4,285	4,208	(77)	Net salary savings (£78k)
Other ASC	(8,194)	(8,394)	(200)	Net Salary savings (£50k); Release of reserves (£150k – CQC and Workforce). NB £100k CQC reserve contribution to DCX Sustainable Plan.
Adult Mental Health	6,541	8,076	1,535	Supported living £1047k, Residential care £606k, other care costs £98k, £86k Woodside pressure off set by net salary savings (£302k)
Children's Services	81,968	86,826	4,858	
Adolescent Safeguarding	4,465	4,339	(126)	Net salary savings (£126k)
Family Safeguarding	5,955	5,779	(176)	Net salary savings (£176k)

	Latest Service Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comment
Through Care	41,622	46,652	5,030	External Residential Placements £5,127k, Fostering int/ext £36k, Legal fees £156k, Transport £77k, offset by other net savings (£366k).
Front Door and Partnerships	2,630	2,596	(34)	Net staff savings (£34k)
Safeguarding Practice & QA	3,345	3,359	14	Reduction in school contributions £14k
Other Children's Services	2,527	2,588	61	Agency and temporary staff £161k, offset by use of reserve (£100k)
Family Solutions	8,047	6,715	(1,332)	Use of grants to fund staffing activity (£618k), use of reserve (£385k), Public Health grant reserve support (£270k), other net savings mainly vacancies (£59k)
Lead for Education Outcomes	8,927	10,110	1,183	Home to School Transport £1000k, School Improvement Officers £80k, other net pressures £103k
Children's Disability Service and SEN Team	4,450	4,688	238	Direct payments £45k, other net pressures £193k
Health and Wellbeing	2,641	2,346	(295)	
Communities and Healthy Places	403	403	0	
Environmental Health and Trading Standards	3,196	3,063	(133)	Legal fees £94k and other net pressures of £22k, offset by (£130k) switch from public health grant to trading standards, (£104k) additional court income, and (£15k) additional Fix A Home income.
H&W other	(958)	(1,120)	(162)	Covid grants (Lateral Flow and Practical Support) now confirmed that balances do not have to be returned.

	Latest Service Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comment
				(£118k). Savings on substance misuse as fewer clients (£45k)
Finance and Legal Services	14,243	14,754	511	
Law and Governance	5,015	5,677	662	Elections £230k, members allowances £76k, net cost of locums within legal £300k, other net pressures £56k
Financial Services	6,733	6,714	(19)	Legal fees £45k, offset by net savings (£64k)
Revenues and Benefits	1,868	1,771	(97)	Discretionary council tax discount £114k and other net pressures £44k, offset by release of reserves (£255k)
Audit and Risk Management	427	382	(45)	Net savings (£45k)
Data Protection and Information Governance	200	210	10	Mainly Software licence £10k
Digital, Commercial and Customer Services	16,480	15,904	(576)	
Commercial	210	186	(24)	Saving on Pay (£4k), release of (£50k) reserve, (£60k) additional income from DGFL on charges offset by 10k Leisure Serv Concession and £80k reserve requests for 24/25.
Procurement	617	540	(77)	Staffing saving of (£152k), £50k reserve roll forward into 24/25, £53k pressure for Atamis Ltd offset with (£29k) public health contribution other variances £1k.
Libraries	4,257	4,280	23	£20k pressure due to legal fees, £3k pressure on income.

	Latest Service Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comment
Digital Customer Services	4,034	3,566	(468)	Net Staffing saving of (£554k), utilities pressure of £31k and £53k pressure on other expenditure (includes £20k MyDudley Comms reserve request), Other variance £2k
Technology Systems and Services	8,056	8,035	(21)	Staffing saving of £340k (76k pay award, offset with vacancy savings of £416k), £35k premises pressure the bulk of which is delays in the wallows, £58k other costs pressure (£25k consultants, £19k printing costs, £53k materials, £20k rates, £6k other offset with (£65k) saving on postage), £273k pressure on income (£292k print service), (£5k) saving on contracts.
DCCS other	(694)	(703)	(9)	Salary Savings of (£52k), (£12k) other cost saving, £15k consultancy fees, £40k Improvement Programme Reserve. Movement in month due to salaries
Environment	48,791	50,459	1,668	
Waste & Transport Operations	11,209	12,084	875	Staffing £512k (of which pay award £251k, agency / sickness cover £1,893k, offset by vacancies (£1,680k) plus other staffing pressures of £49k including training). Favourable Income (£210k); (of which Dry recycling plastics (£115k), vehicle sales (£71k), (£58k) extended green waste service, Shortfall on Waste Business Income £32k). Spot Hire pressure of £693k, Other Vehicle pressure £595k (£181k Tyres, £106k parts, £308k rechargables) offset with fuel saving of (£179k). (£517) saving on leasing costs and (£19k) other cost savings.

	Latest Service Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comment
Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change	6,901	8,693	1,792	Staff saving (£218k), Energy from Waste contract £1,470k (of which PPA income shortfall £653k, Commercial waste income £310k, EfW R&M cost £1,500k, Increased fire suppression cost £91k, release of disputed dilapidation provision (£240k), avoided landfill & street Sweeps costs (£370k), pressure on NNDR £63k, pressure on diversions £55k reduced payments to contractor due to lower income (£242k), reduced insurance premiums (£221k), release PPA reserve (£280k) and creation of £150k Reserve Request for EfW Strategy Consultancy). Household Waste Recycling Centre contract uplift inflation £156k, Pop up £80k, Textek disposal pressure £85k, £150k consultancy reserve, and other other minor variances £70k.
Neighbourhood Services	11,884	11,298	(586)	Net staffing savings (£1,585k), shortfall in parking income £917k, savings on vehicles including fuel (£82k), other pressures £164k including utilities, and premises.
Transport & Highways Services	18,797	18,384	(413)	Net staff savings (£965k), offset by utilities £248k due to price inflation and £338k due to usage during roll out of infrastructure improvements , under recovery of income pressure £400k offset with other savings of (£47k) on vehicles, (£250K) Tourism Sign Reserve Release and (£136k) reduced spend on trading accounts.

	Latest Service Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comment
Housing and Communities	2,506	1,775	(731)	
Maintenance	(80)	60	140	Under recovery of staff time £69k and high incidence of sickness resulting in under recovery 71k
Community Safety	1,417	746	(671)	Maximising use of grants (£618k) and vacancies (£53k).
Housing Strategy	672	605	(67)	Staffing savings net of pay award (£109k), Other net pressures including Tenants Perception Survey (Private Sector) £42k.
Housing Options	290	290	(0)	
Housing Assets & Development	207	74	(133)	Net staffing savings (£19k). Movement due to increased capitalisation (£114k).
Regeneration and Enterprise	14,416	16,175	1,759	
Culture, Leisure & Bereavement Services	236	2,123	1,887	Bereavement £678k (of which utilities £135k, shortfall of income £510k, other £33k). Halls, Himley, Market & Museums +£320k (of which net staffing costs £23k, Utilities +£106k, shortfall of income £195k, other -£4k). Leisure Centres £929k (of which £503k net staff costs, utilities £452k, Backdated Business rates £150K, other supplies & services +£160k, increased income (£336k)). Executive Support -£40k (of which net cost of interims +£0k, less other s&s savings (£40k)).
Planning	1,920	2,161	241	Net staff savings (£296k) offset by income shortfall £445k, consultants and other pressures £142k, less release of Dudley Local Plan reserve (£49k)

	Latest Service Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comment
Economic Growth & Skills	2,346	884	(1,462)	One-off windfall re Black Country Legacy funds (£555k), maximising Adult and Community Learning external funding (£199k), Other favourable variance being mainly Enterprise Zone budget (£208k), Impact Project surplus (£350k) and maximising the use of UKSPF/CWG Legacy funds (£150k)
Corporate Landlord Services	7,497	8,847	1,350	Catering Commercial £646k (of which Staffing £198k, external income £761k, provisions (£293k), other (£20k)). Catering & Cleaning Other £186k (of which Staffing (547k), internal income £706k, external income £531k, catering provisions (£401k) other (£103k)). Property £518k (of which Staffing (£285k), utilities £305k, Admin buildings including churn costs £200k, Construction and Design fees shortfall £169k, other internal income £74k, voids and NNDR £42k, Facility management £43k, CCTV other (£108k), external income £78k).
Projects and Placemaking	901	901	0	£50k pressure due to shortfall of income netted off by general savings (£50k).
Regeneration Projects	1,516	1,259	(257)	Release of unspent reserves Eton Project (£207k), Stalled & Derelict sites (£50k)
Corporate & Treasury	13,912	8,937	(4,975)	
Treasury	19,860	17,982	(1,878)	Lower borrowing costs and MRP compared to MTFS due to slippage and lower interest rates (£1,490k) offset by higher HRA balances on usable reserves and high interest rates £829k. Higher interest rates on interest

	Latest Service Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comment
				paid on trust balances £56k. Higher interest rates and payments compared to budget (£1,365k) Reduction in income from fleet re internal borrowing and increased interest paid to Paragon for internal balances £92k.
Levies	15,020	14,369	(651)	Reduced share of Transport Levy (£51k), Surplus due to latest profile re EZ modelling of the black Country (£600k)
Corporate	(20,968)	(23,414)	(2,446)	Allowance for impairment of loans £2,000k, BR revaluation contingency released (£3,013k), Pensions GF Over Recovery (£942k), other pension savings (£77k) general contingency released (£334k), Interchange settlement (£50k) and other net savings (£30k)
Total Service Costs	312,377	317,501	5,124	
Total Funding	(307,271)	(307,279)	(8)	Less S31 grant than budgeted £570k, offset by national distribution of Business Rates levy surplus (£578k)
Use of Balances	5,106	10,222	5,116	

2023/24 Capital Programme Progress to Date

Appendix B

Service	Budget – June 2023 £'000	Additions / Amendments £'000	Slippage £'000	Revised Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000
Public Sector Housing	65,158	-6,258	0	58,900	58,900	0
Private Sector Housing	18,868	-6,035	-4,690	8,143	8,143	0
Environment	19,306	764	-14,505	5,565	5,638	73
Transport	13,216	2,258	-3,421	12,053	12,053	0
Regeneration and Corporate Landlord	20,767	1,112	-2,065	19,814	19,721	-93
Culture, Leisure & Bereavement	5,381	60	-3,899	1,542	1,620	78
Schools and SEND	31,950	7,689	-28,368	11,271	11,271	0
Social Care, Health and Well Being	907	1,645	-1,850	702	702	0
Digital, Commercial & Customer Services	1,882	430	-545	1,767	1,767	0
Total	177,435	1,665	-59,343	119,757	119,815	58

1. Environment - forecast overspend of £70k on the Energy from Waste project is to be funded by revenue budgets within Environment. The other overspends (Greenspaces (£2k) and Liveability (£1k)) will also be funded by revenue.
2. Transport – Primrose Bridge, the Council has slipped the unspent budget here and is working with the funding provider to establish other schemes that may be able to utilise the grant.
3. Regeneration & Corporate Landlord – underspends on Low Carbon Place Strategy (£66k) and Blue Network (£27k) will result in reduced grant claims and a potential reduction in revenue contributions (work is in progress to check this).
4. The forecast variance within Culture, Leisure and Bereavement relates to an overspend of £47k for the Stourbridge Crematorium works and £31k for the Round Oak Memorial which will both be funded by additional revenue contributions.

Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy

The Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy is to be approved annually by Full Council. This Strategy is to enable the Council to utilise capital receipts from the disposal of property, plant and equipment to fund service reform.

This flexibility only extends to expenditure on projects that generate ongoing revenue savings in the delivery of public services and / or transform service delivery to reduce costs or to improve the quality of service delivery in future years. Capital receipts can only be used to fund set up and implementation costs and not ongoing revenue costs.

Full details of proposed projects should be taken to Full Council and include what the project is for, the service outcomes it will achieve, the costs and benefits of the project and the impact on the Council's Prudential Indicators.

This Strategy should be viewed as part of the Council's Capital Strategy that was approved on 26th February 2024. Any additional schemes identified to be funded in this way or amendments to the amounts agreed to be funded per scheme in this Strategy require approval by Full Council and also need to be reported to DLUHC.

A list of proposed projects to be approved to be funded in this way in 2024/25 is included in Appendix D. Future Strategies must include details of projects previously agreed and comment on their progress against delivery of planned savings.

The current forecast for capital receipts to be received are as follows:

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Projected Capital Receipts	2.0	5.0	0.7	0.2	7.9

Included above is the expected unapplied capital receipts from 2023/24. Any funding applied to the schemes in Appendix D will reduce the funding available to finance the Capital Programme. The funding split and Prudential Indicators will be adjusted following the approval of this Strategy; however the main change will be an increase to the Capital Financing Requirement equivalent to the amount of capital receipts used flexibly for the projects listed in Appendix D.

Proposed Projects to be Funded by Capital Receipts

Project Heading	Type of Expenditure and Description of the Project	Amount (max) £m	Efficiencies and Savings (including values where quantifiable)
Organisational Redesign	The Council is reviewing its Target Operating Model. To facilitate this activity external expertise may be required. Any subsequent costs of change including termination costs would be funded from this flexibility.	7.2	The Council needs to identify significant savings on top of the current Medium Term Financial Strategy in order to become sustainable.
Programme Delivery Office	Team supports the Council's Fit for the Future Programme	0.4	As above
Estates Strategy	Project team supports development and implementation of the Council's Estates Strategy	0.2	£800k annual revenue savings and capital receipts
UNIT4 Cloud Migration	Subject Matter Experts will be engaged by the Council to support staff through the migration process	0.1	Efficiencies are expected through improved functionality

All of these projects meet the criteria of funding the cost-of-service reconfiguration, restructuring or rationalisation where this leads to ongoing efficiency savings or service transformation.

The ability to capitalise the categories of expenditure set out above will in practice be limited by the level of capital receipts achieved.

Meeting of the Council – 15th April. 2024

Report of the Cabinet

Council Plan 2024-2025

Purpose of report

1. To adopt a new one-year Council Plan for 2024-25.

Recommendations

2. That the Council approve and adopt the new one-year plan for 2024-25 which focusses on those priorities and projects that will prevent a higher cost, deliver cost reductions/increased income and which support the delivery of the Council's improvement and sustainability programme.

Background

3. The previous Council Plan that was expected to run from April 2022 to March 2025 was suspended at the 15th February Cabinet and 26th February, 2024 Council meetings.
4. By suspending the Council Plan 2022-25 all projects and priorities were re-considered and only those that met criteria within the spending controls/support the delivery of the Council's Improvement and Sustainability Programme were put forward in the 2024/25 Council Plan.

Council Plan 2024-25 Priorities

5. The new plan has 5 key priority areas, 3 inward facing and 2 outward facing.

These priorities are supported by additional narrative on the outcomes that the Council aims to achieve including the need to improve its governance,

decision making, leadership and financial resilience whilst maintaining the delivery of core services to our residents and communities:

Financial sustainability, efficiency and providing best value

- Adherence to our financial management through tighter spend controls, delivering agreed savings, and compliance to procurement and contract management guidelines.
- Develop new ways of working, reshaping our services and operating models.
- Review all council assets to identify opportunities for efficiency and optimisation.

Governance and control

- Build and strengthen effective governance and control by defining a clear and transparent governance and decision-making structure.
- Meet our obligations regarding regulatory compliance and assurance through focussed reporting with clear accountability.
- Monitor and report on organisational risk, performance and project management by acting on timely and accurate reports.

Leadership and culture

- Define core values for the organisation that will achieve a unified, one council culture fit for the future.
- Encourage our employees to actively participate in continuous improvement and sustainability.
- Strengthen our learning development programme by providing opportunities for employees to enhance their skills and knowledge.

Delivering for our customers, residents and communities

- Enhance our customer experience by promoting digital self-service options whilst recognising individual needs and improving engagement.
- Empower individuals of all ages to make choices and exercise independence in their lives and provide care and support when necessary.
- While delivering services within communities, provide safe clean spaces, promote healthy lifestyles, support wellbeing and reduce inequality.

Supporting businesses and the local economy

- Ensure access to quality education and training for all, raising aspirations and increasing skills.



- Deliver an affordable regeneration strategy that brings about structural economic change and supports the growth of a diverse, broad-based economy and ensure investment in transport connectivity.
- Work with local businesses and communities to develop shared opportunities, create jobs, deliver economic growth and change the role of our town centres.

Monitoring and Reporting

6. The 5 key priorities will be measured and delivered through key performance indicators, actions and projects aligned to the improvement and sustainability programme.

Progress will be monitored through the formal Improvement and Sustainability programme governance.

Finance

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

Law

8. A local authority has a general power of competence pursuant to Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.

Risk Management

9. The proposals contained in this report do not create any 'material' risks.

Equality Impact

10. There are no special considerations to be made with regard to equality and diversity in noting and receiving this report. Relevant changes will be assessed for impact through normal processes.

Human Resources/Organisational Development

11. The challenging financial position facing the Council will require changes to our current ways of working and a programme to undertake an organisational review to develop the future target operating model will be a key programme in the new Council Plan and the People Strategy under the Leadership and Culture priority.



Commercial/Procurement

12. There is no direct commercial impact.

Environment/Climate Change

13. The Council will continue to support and contribute to the Council's commitment to become a carbon net zero authority by 2030, as part of its Climate Emergency declaration.

Council Priorities and Projects

14. The Council Plan 2024-25 will ensure a focus on those priorities and projects that will support the overall sustainability of the Council and the services we deliver to our residents. As such revised performance indicators are being developed to ensure clear communications with residents and partners on the changes to Council services and overall performance.



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Leader of the Council

Dudley Council Plan 2024-2025



► Our Council Plan gives us direction by setting our key priorities for the year
It shows our internal and external drivers which all directorates and teams work together as one council to achieve

► Improving our organisation

Supporting the improvement and sustainability programme through effective strategy, governance and financial sustainability

Financial sustainability, efficiency and providing best value

- Adherence to our financial management through tighter spend controls, delivering agreed savings, and compliance to procurement and contract management guidelines
- Develop new ways of working, reshaping our services and operating models
- Review all council assets to identify opportunities for efficiency and optimisation.

Governance and control

- Build and strengthen effective governance and control by defining a clear and transparent governance and decision-making structure
- Meet our obligations regarding regulatory compliance and assurance through focussed reporting with clear accountability.
- Monitor and report on organisational risk, performance and project management by acting on timely and accurate reports.

Leadership and culture

- Define core values for the organisation that will achieve a unified, one council culture fit for the future.
- Encourage our employees to actively participate in continuous improvement and sustainability
- Strengthen our learning development programme by providing opportunities for employees to enhance their skills and knowledge.

► Serving our borough

Contributing to our Borough Vision by creating opportunities for all to thrive in a safe and healthy environment

Delivering for our customers, residents and communities

- Enhance our customer experience by promoting digital self-service options whilst recognising individual needs and improving engagement
- Empower individuals of all ages to make choices and exercise independence in their lives and provide care and support when necessary
- While delivering services within communities, provide safe clean spaces, promote healthy lifestyles, support wellbeing and reduce inequality.

Supporting businesses and the local economy

- Ensure access to quality education and training for all, raising aspirations and increasing skills
- Deliver an affordable regeneration strategy that brings about structural economic change and supports the growth of a diverse, broad-based economy and ensure investment in transport connectivity.
- Work with local businesses and communities to develop shared opportunities, create jobs, deliver economic growth and change the role of our town centres.



...the historic capital of the Black Country



Meeting of the Council – 15th April, 2024

Report of the Cabinet

Dudley Council Climate Action Plan

Purpose of report

1. To note decisions made by the Cabinet and to endorse the Dudley Council Climate Action Plan, Phase 1 (2024-2027), (see Appendix A), as part of the Council's climate emergency declaration.

Recommendation

2. That this report and the action plan, setting out Council's response to the climate change emergency, be endorsed.

Background

Climate Change – Causes and Impacts

3. Human activity has caused irreversible climate change and its impacts are being felt around the world. Global temperatures have increased by around 1°C since pre-industrial times. The past decade has seen record breaking storms, forest fires, droughts, coral bleaching, heat waves and floods around the world.
4. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is a United Nations body, founded in 1988, which evaluates climate change science. The IPCC special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, issued in October 2018 stated that in order to remain within a 1.5°C temperature increase, governments would have to significantly reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by 2030 to avoid the most catastrophic impacts, including food scarcity and loss of life.

Climate Emergency

5. Since the IPCC report, a Climate Emergency movement has emerged. Subsequently over 300 Local Authorities in the UK have declared a Climate Emergency to date. The most commonly set date for councils' operations and activities to be net zero is 2030. The UK Government has set a target for the UK to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. There is no single definition of what declaring a climate emergency means. The majority are defining a 'climate emergency' as reflecting a commitment to becoming net zero (given the results of the IPCC report) by 2030 to stop global temperatures rising above 1.5°C.

Climate Emergency Motion

6. The Council recognises that climate change is having a significant impact on the environment world-wide and is directly affecting our local area and communities. Over the last ten years, Dudley has experienced a wide range of extreme weather events including surface water flooding, heatwaves, heavy snow and storms which have impacted on the health, wellbeing and livelihoods of local people.
7. As such, the Council recognises it has leadership role to play by:
 - Setting a positive example by addressing the impact of our own operations and services;
 - Providing information and advice to the public and encouraging our staff to take action, and
 - Engaging with partners, residents, businesses and community groups to tackle climate change across the Borough.
8. In light of this, the Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2020. The declaration included the following specific commitments:
 - Establish a Council-wide Climate Change Group to develop and monitor the delivery of a Carbon Reduction Plan for Dudley;
 - Encourage partners to declare a Climate Emergency and take steps to achieve a net-zero carbon footprint;
 - Explore opportunities for investment in green businesses and support green business growth.
9. Following the declaration, the Council committed to become a net zero Council by 2030 and a net zero borough by 2041.

10. What we are already doing

Over the past year, the Council has made progress in reducing carbon emissions from its operations and activities, as well as the Borough, through initiatives illustrated in the table below:

Action	Potential Carbon Saving (Low / Medium / High / Enabling)
100% green energy purchased for the council estate	High
8 travel plans agreed with employers/educational establishments	Enabling
7 new or upgraded pedestrian/cycle phases	Enabling
5 new puffins/toucans/parallel crossings for pedestrians/cyclists	Enabling
2 new traffic signal junctions include LED lamps and extra low voltage power supply	Enabling
0.96km of new cycle footpaths	Enabling
50 EV charging points to be installed across the borough by April 2024	Enabling
23 fossil fuel based machinery replaced with electric machinery, such as leaf blowers and hedge cutters	Low
Purchased 5 electric quad bikes for street scene operations in lieu of petrol quad bikes	Medium
100 public recycling waste bins in-situ	Medium
Flytip recyclable items recycled	Medium

Trialling electric footway mechanical sweepers	Low
Undertaking a programme to change 30,000 streetlights to LED	High
90% of streets lights at Lister Road Depot are LED	Medium
More than 60 per cent of Dudley borough schools have a 20mph scheme in their locality with many others having traffic calming measures in place	Enabling
416 solar panels installed on the roof of Duncan Edwards Leisure Centre, saving 23 tonnes of CO2 a year	Medium
The council has committed £1million towards an Energy Development Fund to invest in renewable energy projects	High
First in the region to secure funding on a Net Zero Neighbourhoods pilot that will see 300 homes to be sustainably retrofitted including loft, cavity and solid wall insulation, solar PV schemes, electric vehicle street charging points, community food growing initiatives and nature-based solutions such as green roofs.	Enabling

Carbon Reduction Baseline

11. To reach the 2030 target, the Council will have to go further and reduce its emissions by a further 13,209.85 tonnes CO_{2e}.
12. In order to establish the Council's baseline, the Council has monitored emissions from each area of its activities including buildings where we can control usage (this excludes schools and the property investment portfolio) based on the methodology of the most widely-used accounting tool, the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol.
13. Scope 1 covers direct emissions from owned or controlled sources. Scope 2 covers indirect emissions from the generation of purchased

electricity, steam, heating and cooling consumed by the organisation. Scope 3 includes all other indirect emissions that occur e.g. in relation to contracted services.

14. The scopes assist in defining the sources of pollutants and targeting action.
15. The research to establish the baseline has enabled the Council to identify the following:

Scope	Emissions Type	Emissions (tCO ₂ e)	Percentage of Total Emissions
Scope 1	Heating	4,081.53	30.9%
	Authority's Fleet	2,561.00	19.4%
Scope 2	Electricity	6,016.90	45.5%
	Transmission & Distribution Losses	550.41	4.2%
Total Emissions		13,209.85	100%

Dudley Council Climate Action Plan

16. The Dudley Council Climate Action Plan (Appendix 1) sets out actions to be delivered over the next three years 2024-2027. It is published in line with the Council's climate emergency declaration showing our commitment to take action on climate change - but it is not set in stone. The actions are based on a range of assumptions and current knowledge but recognises that learning from partners and communities, new technologies, changing public attitudes, public funding and government regulation are evolving that will influence the Action Plan. The Action Plan is therefore live and will be formally reviewed and updated annually.
17. The Action Plan is divided into 6 themes as follows:
 - Theme 1: Community and Business
 - Theme 2: Transport & Active Travel
 - Theme 3: Energy
 - Theme 4: Waste and Fleet
 - Theme 5: Land use planning, regeneration and biodiversity
 - Theme 6: Enabling Actions (these actions support delivery of individual actions, such as communications, fundraising and partnership working)

18. Examples of actions in the plan include:-

- Requesting developers to undertake a Sustainability Checklist as part of the planning application process
- Completing implementation of LED solutions for street lighting
- Producing a tree and woodland strategy for Dudley Borough to ensure tree coverage on council-owned land is maintained and increased
- Producing a sustainable events policy that emphasises minimisation of waste and encourages more sustainable options. This will be supported with guidance on sustainability best practice, options and suggestions for events that are held across the borough
- Developing a Waste Strategy to maximise recycling and reduce waste, including the collection of food waste
- Developing Sustainable Procurement Guidance and setting a 10% minimum social value contribution as part of the procurement process for new contracts

Dudley Council's approach to net zero will also realise co-benefits. For example, actions on sustainable travel modes will tackle air quality but this also has benefits to health from exercise and mental well-being, as well as reducing carbon emissions.

Biodiversity & Carbon Offsetting

19. Biodiversity has already been impacted by the current rise in average temperatures. Species distributions are changing, along with the timing of migration, breeding and flowering. Dudley Council recognises the need to address the Biodiversity Crisis alongside the Climate Emergency.
20. Nature-based solutions can play a key role in mitigating against, and adapting to, the impact of a changing climate. Natural solutions and sustainable land management practices can be used to maximise our natural habitat's ability to absorb carbon from the atmosphere through natural processes, known as carbon sequestration.
21. The Dudley Climate Action Plan states that, only after seeking to reduce carbon emissions to as close to zero as possible through organisational change, will the Council offset residual carbon budgets through local

carbon sequestration projects, such as habitat creation and enhancement schemes on local nature reserves and other wildlife sites.

22. As a minimum we are committing to:

- (i) Maintaining and undertaking restoration on Dudley Nature Reserves
- (ii) Creating opportunities on other green spaces for creation and enhancement of priority habitats including trees and woodlands, grassland and wetlands.

Net Zero Borough

23. The Council is setting an example and seeking to provide leadership by reducing its own carbon emissions and using the planning and regulatory powers local government has to shape and influence action on climate change in the Borough. However, the Council does not have the power to significantly reduce carbon emissions across the Borough as a whole, alone. Organisations, businesses, residents and community groups in Dudley are already exploring smarter, greener ways of working and living – and the Council recognises there is much to learn and share between partners. Following the launch of the Dudley Council's Climate Action Plan, the Council will be establishing a borough-wide Climate Partnership, where the Council will invite local organisations and representatives of the community to come together to explore and implement actions for the borough to become net zero by 2041.

Engagement and Communications

24. On 1st November 2023, the Council launched its climate change webpage – Dudley Climate Action – providing information on the climate emergency declaration and the Council's vision for climate change.

25. The webpage will continue to evolve and develop to include information on:

- Ideas for climate action for community groups and businesses;
- Funding and support available for climate action; and
- Sharing best practice, case studies and toolkits.

Next Steps

26. The Council's newly appointed Climate Policy Manager will work with officers across the authority to implement the Climate Action Plan and engage with borough partners to start work on development of the borough climate action plan.
27. This report was considered by the Cabinet on 20th March, 2024. The Cabinet decided:
 - That Dudley Council's Climate Action Plan, Phase 1 (2024-2027) be approved.
 - That the requirement for an annual update of the Action plan to address rapidly changing international/national/regional/local context and to review the data and evidence, monitor progress and insert new actions to further reduce the Council's carbon footprint, be noted.
 - That the Director of Environment, be authorised to amend and/or make additions to the Action Plan in the interest of achieving the objectives of mitigating and adapting to climate change both in respect of the Council's own operations and activities borough-wide.
 - That the establishment of a Borough Climate Partnership, as set out in the Action Plan, be approved.
 - That the Director of Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, be authorised to implement arrangements for the operation of the Partnership.
 - That the report be referred to Full Council to endorse the Council's response to the climate change emergency.

Finance

28. External funding will be utilised to fund any costs that are not currently within existing budgets.

Law

29. The Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2020 and has committed to become a net zero Council by 2030 and a net zero Borough by 2041. The UK Government has set a target for the UK to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Risk Management

30. There are a number of key risks both for the Council and more widely which could impact on the success of the Action Plan:
- Currently not all the necessary infrastructure, finance and regulation is in place to enable the changes needed, with a burgeoning impact of the cost of living crisis on current and future patterns of expenditure at both a personal and organisational level.
 - The UK will only meet its emissions reduction targets if central government, regional bodies and local authorities, amongst others, work together to resolve some of these key barriers, noting that local authorities only have powers or influence over roughly a third of greenhouse gas emissions in their local areas.
 - Failure to develop and approve the Action Plan would present a reputational risk to the Council.

Equality Impact

31. In order to comply with Public Sector Equality Duty, and the Dudley Council Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy 2022-2025, for any activity undertaken under the action plan that has an impact on people, an Equality Impact Assessment shall be undertaken, to ensure there has been due regard of impact on differing groups.
32. Initial work with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager has highlighted how climate change has a varying impact on those falling into different categories and protected groups, such as the disparities caused by health status, disability status, age, pregnancy/ maternity, race, voluntary and community sectors; alongside the impact on public cohesion.
33. Notwithstanding this, in our changing borough, there is also the socioeconomic impact that should be considered, in terms of poverty and financial inclusion.

Human Resources/Organisational Development

34. Delivery of the Council's Climate Action Plan is based on current staffing resources and departmental headcount, and therefore this proposal has no direct HR impacts.

Commercial/Procurement

35. Procurement are working to build sustainability into the procurement process and note the desire to make Social Value a 10% weighting in all

tenders. However, noting the Council's current financial position and its ability to monitor the delivery of social value this is something that should be brought in over time.

36. From a commercial perspective, the actions of the Council's Climate Plan could lead to increased pressure on the Council's current budgetary position.

Environment/Climate Change

37. This decision will support the Council in delivering a carbon reduction/climate action plan and define existing sources of the Council's carbon emissions under Scopes 1 and 2 of the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and set a carbon budget to net zero by 2030 for council operations and activities.

Council Priorities and Projects

38. Forging a Future for All
Our climate commitment is creating a sustainable borough on its way to net zero carbon emissions, improved air quality, reduced fuel poverty and outstanding waste and recycling services.

United Nations 17 goals, ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

39. The recommendations from this plan will have a direct and positive impact on air quality, transport and travel emissions, housing efficiency, energy security and affordability/cost of living, provision of green skills and jobs and biodiversity.



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Leader of the Council

Background Document

[IPCC, 2018: Summary for Policymakers. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C](#)

Dudley Council **Climate Action Plan** Phase One 2024-2027





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Foreword

The devastating consequences of climate change can be seen globally from the heatwaves experienced here in Dudley this summer to the devastating wildfires across the world. The urgent need to act on climate change is prevalent like never before.

We have a duty as caretakers of the planet to help tackle this human induced challenge and to put actions in place to help safeguard Dudley's residents, communities, businesses, and the local environment from climate change.

However, the scale of this challenge cannot be underestimated. As such, the Council has set itself an ambitious target to become carbon net zero by 2030 and to work with partners to become a net zero borough by 2041.

To become a net zero council by 2030, we have developed a comprehensive Dudley Council Climate Action Plan encompassing operations and activities across the Council.

The Action Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis to refine the current actions within the plan and to develop new actions.

Alongside delivery of the Climate Action Plan, the Council will be supporting stakeholders and partners to develop a borough-wide climate change action plan for Dudley.



Cllr Dr Clinton, PhD
Cabinet Lead Climate Change



Introduction

Human induced climate change, from the burning of fossil fuels has led to average global temperatures rising by at least 1.1°C since 1880. Much of this warming has occurred during the past four decades with the past decade (2013 – 2023) experiencing the highest temperatures since records began.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has stated that global warming should be limited to 1.5°C, to avoid the most catastrophic impacts of climate change.

Rising global temperatures have resulted in more frequent and severe droughts, storms, and heat waves and melting glaciers and warming oceans leading to rising sea levels.

Sustainability West Midlands have used current UK climate change trends to identify the main climate risks for the region. The report, Summary of Climate Change Impacts in West Midlands, highlights several direct risks based on UK Climate Projections to 2100. For Dudley these include heatwaves, droughts, and surface water flooding. The impacts arising from these extremes of weather include increased water scarcity, food production issues, effects on health and wellbeing, as well as damage to infrastructure.

The report also highlights several indirect risks, including:

- Coastal flooding causing a potential influx of residents moving to the region.
- Global food scarcity as crop yields fall internationally.
- Potential for increased international conflict because of resource scarcity.

In response, national and local governments, businesses and educational establishments across the globe have called for a Climate Emergency.

Dudley Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2020. As part of the declaration Dudley Council has committed to:

- Encourage partners to acknowledge the Climate Emergency and to take steps to achieve a carbon net zero footprint
- Exploring opportunities for investment in green businesses and to support green business growth.

Following the declaration, the Council committed to become a carbon net zero council by 2030 and a net zero borough by 2041.

The Dudley Council Climate Action Plan sets out the initial actions for the Council to become net zero by 2030.

Policy Background

The Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change which came into effect in 2016. 195 different countries and states, including the UK have signed up to the treaty.

Its overarching goal is to limit the increase in the global average temperature to 1.5°C and ideally to keep it below 2°C to avoid the most catastrophic effects of climate change.

Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment Order) 2019

The Act establishes a legally binding target to reduce the UK's greenhouse gas emissions by 100% by 2050 compared with 1990 levels.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In 2015, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by all UN members, including the UK, to mobilise efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind. They address a range of needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection.

The Dudley Council Climate Action Plan seeks to embody the ambition of the SDGs. All actions in the plan have been developed considering both their impact on reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and the wider benefits for Dudley. For more information about the goals visit <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>

Co - benefits

There are many associated economic, social, and environmental benefits to reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate change.

Examples of these co-benefits include:

- cleaner air
- the creation of green jobs
- improved public health and wellbeing
- creation and enhancement of biodiversity
- accessible and multi-functional green spaces



Case study

An example of co-benefits in practice is the Brockmoor Net Zero Neighbourhood project, a landmark scheme for the region funded by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) to combat climate change and reduce household energy use to help tackle fuel poverty.

The WMCA has awarded Dudley Council £1.65m for the scheme, which will see low energy retrofits take place in 50 homes in Brockmoor, as well as wider improvements to the neighbourhood such as new green spaces and transport links.

Eventually up to 300 homes in the area, a mix of both privately owned and social housing properties, will benefit from the Net Zero Neighbourhood scheme.

Homes will undergo 'deep retrofit' using cutting-edge insulation with options for solar panels and low carbon heating systems. Other measures being considered on a neighbourhood-wide scale include LED street lighting, new pocket parks, community food growing initiatives, playgrounds, green roofs, electric vehicle street charging points and sustainable drainage systems.

These initiatives will create a low carbon community that will subsequently offer financial benefits through energy savings, green benefits for both people and wildlife, educational and learning opportunities, green skills as well as jobs creation.



Emissions Data

One of the ways that organisations' greenhouse gas emissions are measured and assessed is through three scopes. The scopes are from the Greenhouse Gas Protocol¹, which is a greenhouse gas accounting standard.

Scope 1 emissions are those emissions that the council makes directly.

Scope 1 examples:

- Building onsite energy use (e.g. space heating)
- Building refrigerants (e.g. in air conditioning units)
- Council vehicles fuel consumed by owned and leased vehicles.

Scope 2 emissions are those emissions the council makes indirectly, such as buying energy.

Scope 2 examples:

- Purchased electricity, heating & cooling for own use.

Scope 3 emissions are sources of emissions that are external to the council, such as those across the supply chain.

Dudley Council has worked with the Midlands Net Zero Hub to calculate the Council's carbon footprint, which the Council will use as a baseline to report on our organisational emissions from 2024/25.

Scope 3² reporting will be included once methodologies for measurement have been developed. This is because Scope 3 emissions are harder to measure as they are outside the council's direct control. In addition, Scope 3 reporting is relatively new, and methodologies are still emerging to allow for robust measurement.

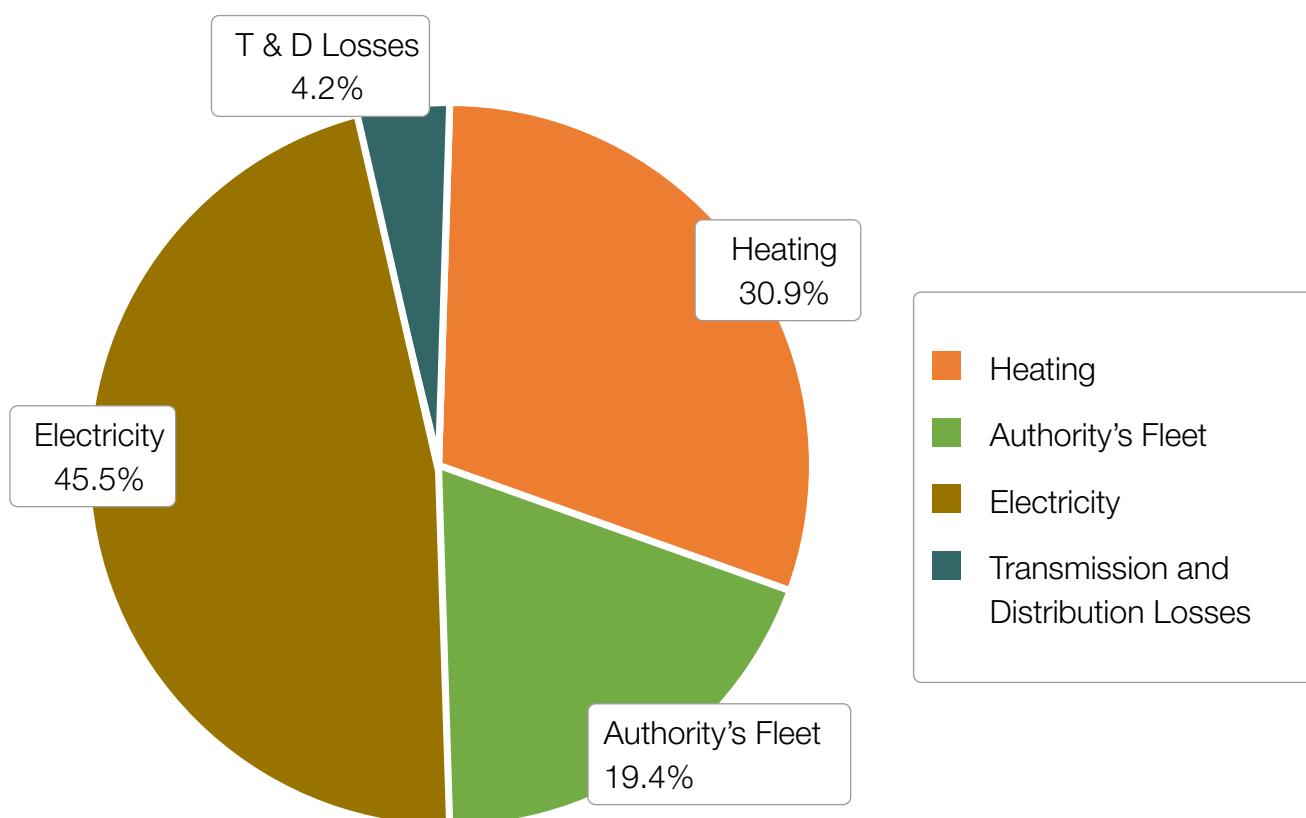
¹ <https://ghgprotocol.org/>

² Emissions are all other indirect emissions other than electricity.

Emissions Data

The Council generated 13,209.85 tonnes of carbon from our buildings and activities in the baseline year from April 2022 to March 2023.

Scope	Emissions Type	Emissions (tCO ₂ e)	Percentage of Total Emissions
Scope 1	Heating	4,081.53	30.9%
	Authority's Fleet	2,561.00	19.4%
Scope 2	Electricity	6,016.90	45.5%
	Transmission and Distribution Losses	550.41	4.2%
Total Emissions		13,209.85	100%



Council actions towards net zero by 2030

We have already delivered either in part or in full the following actions:

- 100% green energy purchased for the council estate
- 50 EV charging points to be installed across the borough by April 2024
- 23 fossil fuel-based machinery replaced with electric machinery, such as leaf blowers and hedge cutters
- Purchased 3 electric quad bikes for street scene operations to replace petrol quad bikes
- 100 public recycling waste bins installed
- Trialling electric footway mechanical sweepers
- Undertaking a programme to change 30,000 streetlights to LED
- 90% of streets lights at Lister Road Depot are LED
- More than 60% of Dudley borough schools have a 20mph scheme in their locality with many others having traffic calming measures in place
- 416 solar panels installed on the roof of Duncan Edwards Leisure Centre, saving 23 tonnes of CO2 a year
- The council has committed £1million towards an Energy Development Fund to invest in renewable energy projects with a pay back of 7.5 years or less
- First council in the region to secure funding for a Net Zero Neighbourhoods pilot that will see 300 homes be sustainably retrofitted including loft, cavity and solid wall insulation, solar PV schemes, electric vehicle street charging points, community food growing initiatives and nature-based solutions such as green roofs

The following corporate sites retrofitted:

Himley Hall

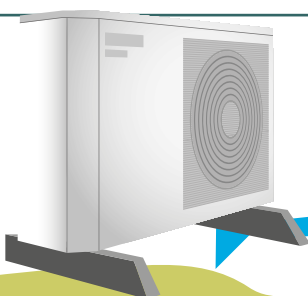
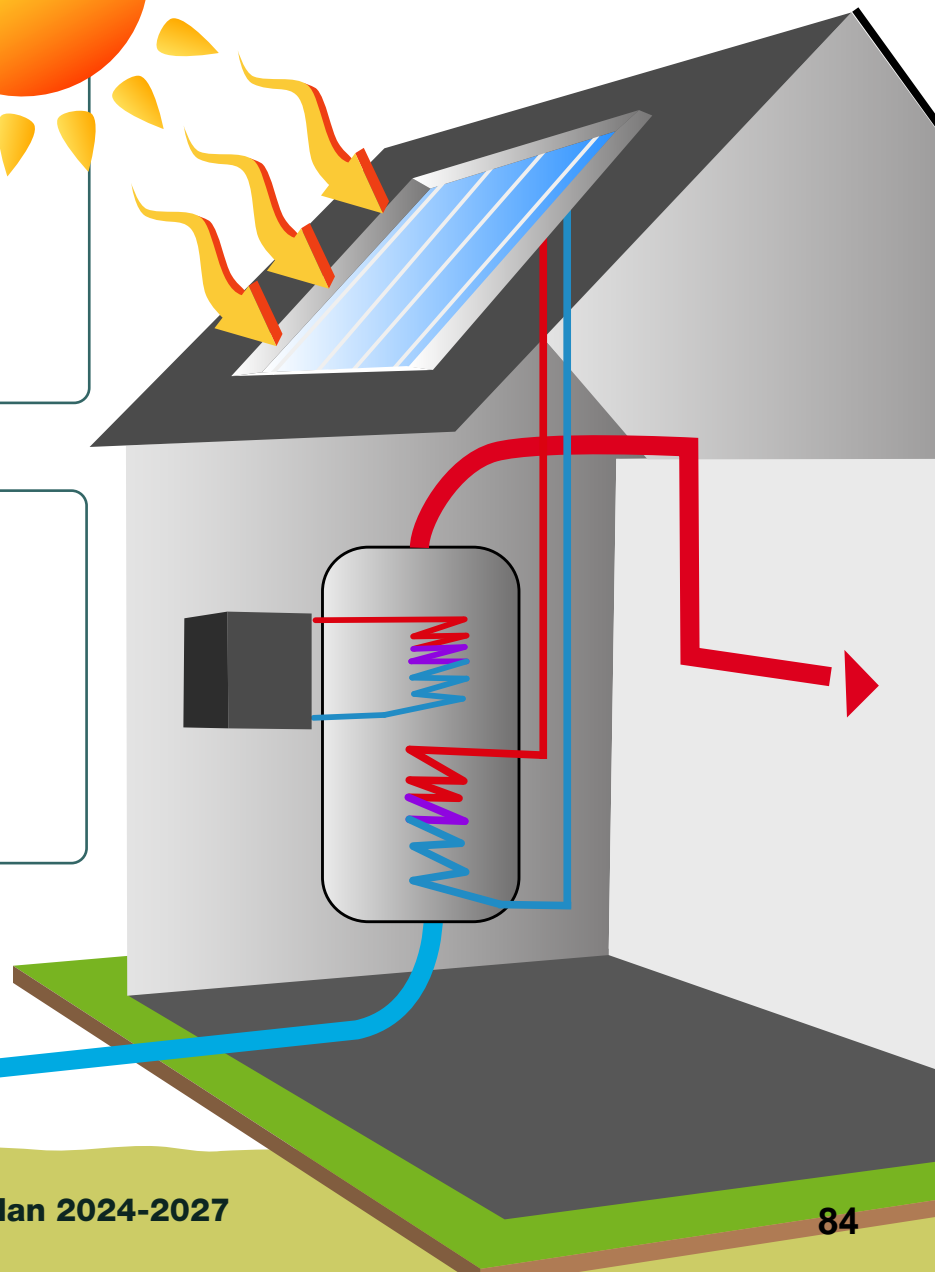
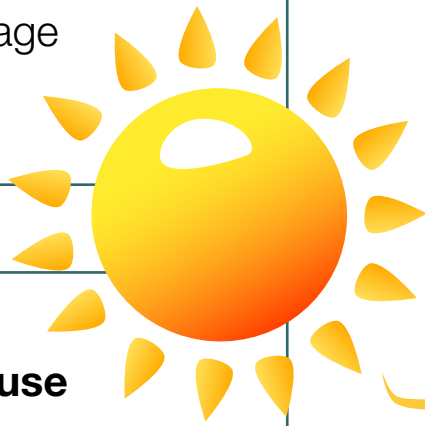
Air Source Heat Pump
LED Lighting Upgrade
Solar PV
Battery Storage
Heat Meter

Council House

Air Source Heat Pump
Heat Meter

Stourbridge Library

Air Source Heat Pump
LED Lighting Upgrade
Heat Meter



Off-setting

Achieving our net zero 2030 goal will require ambitious action at scale across all council operations and activities. However, to ensure we can maximise our impact, the action plan will aim to prioritise actions that eliminate emissions, followed by those that reduce or substitute emissions. Offsetting, for example, through habitat creation schemes or carbon capture, will only be used as a last resort where all other reasonable options have been explored.

We first want to understand our baseline carbon footprint and undertake actions to reduce this footprint, including via carbon literacy training, the 'greening' of strategies and renewable technologies.

Dudley Council cannot offset its way to net zero without first tackling energy consumption and actioning plans to reduce the Council's carbon baseline before offsetting that which cannot be reduced eg hard to decarbonise sectors like transport/HGVs.

Enabling climate action

Council-wide interviews with officers in key service areas have underpinned the development of the actions in this plan, supporting the objective 'Our climate commitment is creating a sustainable borough on its way to net zero carbon emissions, improved air quality, reduced fuel poverty and outstanding waste and recycling services' set out in Forging a Future for All – Dudley Borough Vision 2030 <https://www.dudleyboroughvision2030.org.uk/home>.

Engagement & Consultation

The Dudley Council Climate Action Plan has also been informed by the ‘Your Borough, Your Future’ public consultation, undertaken by the Council between 18 October – 18 November 2022. The consultation sought to understand residents’ views on what the council can do and what individuals would be willing to do, to address the challenges of climate change.

Feedback from the survey indicated the following top five priorities for the Council in tackling climate change:

1. Recycling more by improving recycling services
2. Encouraging wildlife in parks and green spaces
3. Dedicating resources to tackle littering and fly tipping in the borough
4. Using low emission or electric bin lorries to improve local air quality
5. Using council buildings for renewable energy generation

Broader feedback reflected the need for the Council to:

- Work with partners to facilitate installation of home insulation to a high standard
- Improve public transport
- Campaigns to help educate and provide examples of ways to help improve our environment



Dudley Council Climate Action Plan

The phase 1 action plan is for three years from 2024 – 2027.

The actions for the plan are under 6 themes of:

- Theme 1: Community and Business
- Theme 2: Transport and Active Travel
- Theme 3: Energy
- Theme 4: Waste and Fleet
- Theme 5: Land Use and Biodiversity
- Theme 6: Enabling Actions (these actions support delivery of individual actions, such as communications, fundraising and partnership working)

Dudley Council Climate Action Plan

Key

The rows in blue are actions which enable a borough-wide carbon reduction

The rows in pink are actions which enable carbon reduction for council operations

Action	Financial year for Delivery			Carbon Saving Potential Low: <1% reduction in council emissions Medium: 2-5% reduction in council emissions High: 5-10% reduction in council emissions Enabling - borough wide reduction	Council Service Area Delivering Action
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26		
Theme 1: Community and Business					
Establish a Climate Youth Council for the Borough		X		Enabling	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change
Work with external stakeholders to develop and set up a Dudley Climate Partnership to bring together the public sector, businesses and community groups to share knowledge, network and collaborate on the development of a borough climate action plan to reach net zero by 2041		X		Enabling	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change

Dudley Council Climate Action Plan

Commission Oxford Innovation Service (OIS) to develop and deliver an information, advice and account management service for Dudley SME's as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund's (SPF) regional business support programme, including providing advice on carbon net zero and engaging with a target of 650 SME's in Dudley over the next 18 months		X		Enabling	Economic Growth and Skills
Theme 2: Transport and Active Travel					
Increase active travel provision around the borough			X	Enabling	Transport and Highway Services
Implement a borough-wide strategy for EV infrastructure			X	Enabling	Transport and Highway Services
Explore options for setting up a public e-bike hire scheme for the Borough			X	Enabling	Transport and Highway Services
Promote the council's bike scheme to staff	X			Low	Communications and Public Affairs
Explore options to procure a multi partner electric vehicle framework and deploy across car parks in Dudley			X	Enabling	Transport and Highway Services

Dudley Council Climate Action Plan

Explore the development of a salary sacrifice scheme for council employees to purchase/lease EV vehicles			X	Enabling	People and Inclusion
Undertake a review of the Council's commuting and business travel policy and develop a policy on sustainable business travel	X			Medium	People and Inclusion
Set up a car sharing club for council staff			X	Low	People and Inclusion
Theme 3: Energy					
Input to the Combined Authority's Local Area Energy Planning project and seek funds for potential pilot schemes within Dudley Borough		X		Enabling	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change
Explore options to install a private wire from the Energy from Waste Plant to power the council's corporate estate			X	High	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change
30,000 streetlights converted to LED bulbs by 2025		X		Medium	Transport and Highway Services
Develop a decarbonisation plan for the corporate estate alongside the office accommodation strategy – to include property decarbonisation, energy efficiency measures and expanding the energy management system		X		High	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change

Dudley Council Climate Action Plan

Theme 4: Waste and Fleet					
Develop a Waste Strategy to maximise recycling and reduce waste including the collection of food waste			X	Enabling	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change
Explore the option to replace existing diesel fuelled bin lorries with Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs)			X	Medium	Waste and Fleet Operations
Extend the Textec kerbside offer to include additional items such as sofas		X		Enabling	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change
Explore the possibility of collecting small WEEE and batteries in the kerbside collection		X		Enabling	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change
Textile banks to be made available in various locations across Dudley		X		Enabling	Waste and Fleet Operations
Dudley Council to be a Plastic Free Council by 2030			X	n/a	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change
Cut the Council's paper waste by going paperless in addition to reducing the number of photocopiers provided in office buildings			X	Low / Medium	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change /Technology Systems and Services

Dudley Council Climate Action Plan

Theme 5: Land Use and Biodiversity					
Plan and deliver biodiversity enhancements on council owned land – (i) maintain and undertake restoration on Dudley Nature Reserves (ii) create opportunities on other green spaces for creation and enhancement of priority habitats including trees and woodlands, grassland and wetlands	X	X	X	Medium / High	Street, Green Care and Amenity Services
Finalise production of a Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan to support delivery of the Council's carbon net zero ambition		X		Enabling	Economic Growth and Skills
Develop a Green Infrastructure Strategy		X		Enabling	Street, Green Care and Amenity Services
Produce a tree and woodland strategy for Dudley Borough to ensure tree coverage on council-owned land is maintained and increased		X		Medium / High	Street, Green Care and Amenity Services
Develop and deliver a Council Climate Adaptation Plan			X	n/a	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change

Dudley Council Climate Action Plan

Produce new planning policy to support retrofitting of energy efficiency measures in heritage buildings as part of the draft Local Plan process		X		Enabling	Planning
Through the development of the new Draft Local Plan, develop policy that supports the need to adapt to the impacts of climate change and promotes opportunities to maximise carbon sequestration		X		Enabling	Planning
Request developers to undertake a Sustainability Checklist as part of the planning application process		X		Enabling	Planning
Produce a set of local planning policies that ensure that all new development, both residential and non-residential, follow the principles of the energy hierarchy and minimise energy demand through fabric energy efficiency measures and then meet all residual energy demand via renewable energy technologies		X		Enabling	Planning

Dudley Council Climate Action Plan

Theme 6: Enabling Actions (including communications and funding)					
Investigate green finance options for a Community Municipal Investment Scheme		X		Enabling	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change and Finance
Develop and deliver an external and internal corporate communications and engagement plan for the climate emergency	X			Enabling	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change
Develop a long-term fundraising strategy to support investment in delivery of the council's net zero ambitions			X	Medium - High	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change and Finance
Develop and maintain a funding tracker to provide management information about current funding opportunities to support delivery of projects in the action plan	X			Enabling	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change
Roll out carbon literacy training to council employees starting with senior decision makers to achieve Bronze accreditation for the Council from the Carbon Literacy Trust, this is to ensure any carbon reduction measures can be understood and fully implemented by staff.	X			Low - Medium	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change

Dudley Council Climate Action Plan

Alongside carbon literacy training for senior officers and members, develop in-house online climate change training suitable for all council staff		X		Low - Medium	People and Inclusion and Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change
Undertake a carbon footprint analysis for the council to develop a carbon budget baseline to reach carbon net zero by 2030.	X			Enabling	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change
Provide guidance on carbon reduction measures for council service areas to decarbonise their service delivery via sustainable service/business planning processes		X		Medium - High	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change
Prepare a council Environment Policy to reflect the Council's climate and environment aims	X			n/a	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change
Develop a guidance note on incorporating the UN SDGs into Cabinet reports	X			n/a	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change

Dudley Council Climate Action Plan

Produce a sustainable events policy that emphasises minimisation of waste and encouragement of more sustainable options. This will be supported with guidance on sustainability best practice, options and suggestions for events that are held across the borough	X			Medium	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change
Develop Sustainable Procurement Guidance and set a 10% minimum social value percentage into the procurement process for new contracts		X		High	Procurement and Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change
Lobby West Midlands Pension Fund to reduce the carbon footprint of pension fund investments over time	X			Enabling	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change
Produce guidance and advice for staff to reduce their carbon footprint whilst homeworking	X			Enabling	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change/People and Inclusion
Develop a series of priority lobbying actions to influence national Government policy and funding in support of delivery of the Council's climate action plan		X		High	Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change

Finance and funding

The full costs of achieving net zero emissions across Council operations and activities by 2030 are currently unknown.

Further information on the costs associated with specific actions will need to be developed over the plan lifecycle. However, significant additional resources will need to be identified and secured to support our immediate, medium, and long-term climate response.

Funding Sources identified and/or allocated by the Council	Source
£1 million funding for an Energy Development Fund to invest in renewable energy projects with a 7.5 year payback or less	Dudley MBC budget
Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS)	Government funding
Ongoing review of new and innovative funding sources (e.g. green bonds, crowdfunding etc)	Private investment / public funds
Lobbying for external funding and support	Central government

Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

We will undertake an annual monitoring process to evaluate the progress of the Dudley Council Climate Action Plan. Actions will be reviewed, and new ones added as part of this process. An annual report will be produced which will be published on the climate page of the Council's website to ensure transparency.

The plan is intended to be a live document and will develop as we continue to increase our understanding of emission sources and the most effective ways to reduce them.

The Dudley Council Climate Action Plan will be fully reviewed after three years.

Governance

The delivery of the action plan will be overseen by the council's Climate and Sustainability Board at Director/Heads of Service level and internal officer groups.

Meeting of the Council – 15th April, 2024

Report of the Lead for Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report 2023/24

Purpose

1. To consider the annual Overview and Scrutiny Report.

Recommendation

2. That the annual Overview and Scrutiny Report for 2023/24 be received and noted.

Background

3. Article 6.02 of the Council's [Constitution](#), requires that Scrutiny/Select Committees will submit an annual report to the Council.
4. The Annual Report for 2023/24 is attached. Minutes and outcomes of all Scrutiny/Select Committee meetings can be accessed online via the [Council's Website](#).
5. Consideration is being given to the Council's scrutiny arrangements and programme for the 2024/25 municipal year in the context of the Council's Improvement and Sustainability Programme ('Fit for the Future'). The attached report also contains ongoing items that will need to be considered for the scrutiny programme for 2024/25.
6. The Council has a flexible approach to developing the scrutiny programme to incorporate any issues that might arise during the year. Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs have considerable discretion to adapt their approaches to carry out the scrutiny work allocated to them.

7. The Council has recognised the importance of retaining an annual review and report process. This is to ensure that the arrangements continue to align themselves to the needs of the Council and that the scrutiny arrangements remain adaptable and flexible to changes in circumstances.

Finance

8. The costs of operating the Council's scrutiny arrangements are being contained within existing budgetary allocations.

Law

9. Scrutiny/Select Committees are established in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 and the requirements of the Council's Constitution, which was adopted under the Local Government Act 2000, subsequent legislation and associated Regulations and Guidance.
10. Scrutiny powers relating to health are included in the Health and Social Care Acts 2001 and 2012, and associated Regulations and statutory guidance. The Police and Justice Act 2006 gives the Council powers to scrutinise the work of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 enables local authorities to scrutinise other partners. Much of this legislation is consolidated in the Localism Act 2011.
11. The Council's scrutiny arrangements are set out in Article 6 of the [Constitution](#) and the associated Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules.

Risk Management

12. Scrutiny Committees are an integral part of the Council's governance arrangements, which ensure that the Council considers any ongoing material risks as part of the Council's Risk Management Framework.

Equality Impact

13. Provision exists within the scrutiny arrangements for overview and scrutiny to be undertaken of the Council's policies on equality and diversity.

Human Resources/Organisational Development

14. Any human resources/organisational development issues are referred to in individual reports on the items concerned.

Commercial/Procurement

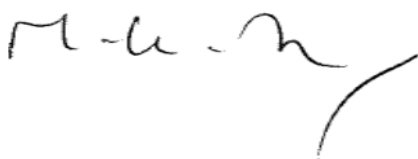
15. Reports to Scrutiny/Select Committees include a Commercial/Procurement paragraph. Consideration is also given to compliance with Contract Standing Orders and Procurement legislation.

Environment/Climate Change

16. The Leader has established a specific Cabinet portfolio for Climate Change to reinforce the Council's commitment to addressing environmental issues and climate change. The Council also established the Climate Change Select Committee for the 2023/24 municipal year.

Council Priorities and Projects

17. The Council's governance arrangements, including the work of Scrutiny/Select Committees, underpin the delivery of key Council priorities and projects.



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Mohammed Farooq
Lead for Law and Governance
(Monitoring Officer)



Overview and Scrutiny

Annual Report 2023/2024



Working as One Council in
the historic capital of the Black Country





**Chair -
Councillor
Ian Kettle**

Annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

2023/24 Municipal Year



**Vice-Chair -
Councillor
Mohammed Hanif**

Introduction

This report gives a summary of the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Select Committees during 2023/24.

Effective scrutiny is a key element of the Council's democratic governance arrangements. We need to make sure there is proper accountability and transparency in the way the Council conducts its business.

Scrutiny has several key roles. These include holding decision takers to account, contributing to policy development, reviewing performance, undertaking scrutiny inquiries and making recommendations for improvement.

Scrutiny work must be placed in context with the severe financial and service pressures faced by the local authority and other partners. We have to make the best use of limited resources by focussing on key priorities.

At the start of this municipal year, a Scrutiny Development Session was held with representatives of the Local Government Association. Work is ongoing to ensure that our overview and scrutiny functions remain fit for the future. This work will be driven by recognised good practice, statutory guidance and input from elected Members.

We would like to place on record our appreciation of all the hard work and support given by Councillors, Officers, Partners and members of the public who have contributed to our Scrutiny work during 2023/24.

Full details of Committee meetings, including agendas, minutes and reports, can be viewed online by accessing the [Committee Management Information System](#). Alternatively, contact Democratic Services on 01384 815238 or e-mail democratic.services@dudley.gov.uk.

Overview and Scrutiny Arrangements 2023/24

During the Municipal Year, the Committee has received reports on the development of the Council's overview and scrutiny arrangements. This followed the introduction of a revised structure of Scrutiny/Select Committees for the 2023/24 municipal year.

Outcome:

- *Revisions to the Council's Constitution and the Scrutiny Procedure Rules were endorsed by Full Council in February, 2024 as part of the annual review of the Constitution.*

Corporate Quarterly Performance Reports

Quarterly corporate performance reports have been submitted to Members during the municipal year. This identifies issues that have been particularly problematic over time and/or which are of strategic significance. Issues identified by Members are considered in more detail by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, raised with Cabinet Members or referred to the relevant Select Committee for more detailed analysis.

Dudley Economy

The Committee received a detailed report and presentation on an overview of Dudley's economy at mid-year 2023. The Committee recognised that the information was complex, however, demonstrated a level of resilience in the Dudley economy. Members noted that the information presented would form a context for future decisions and assist Members in undertaking their overview and scrutiny role.

Outcomes:

- *The information promoted a wider understanding of all the complex issues affecting the local economy, together with recognition of the ongoing activity to enhance the quality of life for people in the Borough.*
- *The Committee requested that further reports be presented to Members in due course.*

Traffic Congestion and the Impact on the Dudley Economy

Members received a detailed presentation and commented on the performance of the Dudley Highway Network Performance.

The Committee considered this as a ‘cross-cutting’ issue in view of the impact of traffic congestion on issues such as the quality of life of residents, the environment and the local economy. This report complemented the work undertaken by the Highways and Environmental Services Select Committee.

Outcome:

- *That the issue of traffic congestion be included in the future scrutiny work programme with a view to a detailed scrutiny exercise being undertaken on this topic in the future.*

West Midlands Combined Authority - Formal Ratification of the Single Settlement Memorandum of Understanding between the West Midlands Combined Authority and His Majesty’s Government

The Committee considered the Single Settlement Memorandum of Understanding between West Midlands Combined Authority and His Majesty’s Government. Members had the opportunity to comment prior to the report being approved by the Cabinet on 15th February, 2024.

Outcomes:

- *The proposed Single Settlement Memorandum of Understanding between West Midlands Combined Authority and His Majesty’s Government was noted and subsequently approved by the Cabinet.*
- *The Committee noted the high-level next steps for Single Settlement negotiations and implementation ahead of the first Single Settlement allocation, which is likely to be 1st April, 2025.*

Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Committee considered the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy to 2026/27, approved by the Cabinet as the basis for consultation and scrutiny. In the interests of full transparency, the proceedings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25th January, 2024 were broadcast on the Internet and the recording of the meeting is available on the [YouTube Channel](#). Details of the discussion are also recorded in the minutes on the [Council’s Internet site](#).

Outcome:

- *Comments on the proposals for the Medium-Term Financial Strategy to 2026/27, taking account of the report and the issues raised by Members, were referred to the Cabinet and Full Council for consideration as part of the budget setting process.*

West Midlands Combined Authority Activity – Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

The Committee considered a detailed report on the work that West Midlands Combined Authority is carrying out within the Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council area. Members welcomed this report as an opportunity for improving engagement and promoting a wider understanding of the activities of West Midlands Combined Authority.

Outcomes:

- *Details of the work that West Midlands Combined Authority is carrying out in the Dudley MBC Local Authority Area were noted.*
- *Specific issues raised by Members were noted by Officers for action, further consideration or a response as appropriate.*
- *Updates from the West Midlands Combined Authority will be given to future Scrutiny Committee meetings.*

West Midlands Combined Authority - Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report

The Committee received the annual report on the West Midlands Combined Authority Scrutiny function in the 2022/23 Municipal Year. The report was presented by Councillor C Bayton (Chair of the WMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee) and Councillor J McNicholas (Chair of the Transport Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Committee).

Outcome:

- *The Committee welcomed the report and noted the key ongoing issues being considered by the West Midlands Combined Authority scrutiny function.*

Employee Health and Wellbeing

The Committee received a report and a detailed presentation on the findings of a review of the Council's employee wellbeing offer and an action plan to address issues identified in the review.

Outcomes:

- *The Committee noted:*

That employee wellbeing within the Council currently reflects the national trends of an overall increase in sickness and absence due to mental health related sickness.

The findings of work undertaken to review the Councils' employee wellbeing offer.

The need to strengthen the Council's wellbeing offer to employees to address the issues highlighted.

- *Members endorsed an action plan and agreed that a progress report be submitted in six-months' time.*

Improvement and Sustainability Programme ('Fit for the Future') Scope and Governance

Following an initial progress update in January, 2024, the Committee considered a report on the Council's Improvement and Sustainability Programme, known as 'Fit for the Future'. The proposals were agreed by the Cabinet on 20th March, 2024.

The report set out the scope, timelines and key financial and other success measures and milestones along with the governance arrangements to ensure that the Programme delivers the necessary benefits for Dudley MBC and its residents.

Outcome:

- *The Committee noted:*
 - *The achievements of the completed Phase 1 of the programme.*
 - *The detailed scopes of Phase 2, 'Fit for Purpose' at the first Programme Gateway.*
 - *The governance arrangements for the 'Fit for the Future' Programme.*

Ongoing/Future Items

Items that require further consideration and potential inclusion in the Scrutiny Programme for 2024/25 are listed below: -

- Traffic Congestion and the Impact on the Dudley Economy.
- Dudley Economy - Updates
- Procurement
- Employee Health and Wellbeing Progress Report



**Chair -
Councillor
Luke Johnson**

Annual report of the Adult Social Care Select Committee

2023/24 Municipal Year



**Vice-Chair -
Councillor
Jonathan Elliott**

Our role involves the scrutiny of matters falling within the portfolio responsibilities of the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, and to contribute to policy development for functions of the Directorate of Adult Social Care.

Programme of Meetings and Business Items for 2023/24

Members of the Committee considered the programme of meetings and potential items of business for the Adult Social Care Select Committee during 2023/24. In considering the proposed changes to the Overview and Scrutiny arrangements, Members were of the view that individual Select Committees, who had a specialised knowledge and experience, should be responsible for the scrutiny of any call-ins and budgetary implications relevant to their specific service area/directorate.

Outcomes:

- *That the programme of meetings for 2023/24, be noted.*
- *That subject to the comments referred to above, the business items as outlined in paragraph 4 of the report submitted, be noted and agreed.*
- *That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be recommended to continue with the existing arrangements for call-in and that the Medium-Term Financial Strategy report continue to be submitted to individual Select Committees for scrutiny.*
- *That the Lead for Law and Governance, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, be authorised to make all necessary arrangements to enable the Select Committee to undertake its work during the 2023/24 municipal year.*

- *That subject to any necessary amendments, as a consequence of resolution 3, the draft terms of reference for the Select Committee, as set out in the appendix to the report, be noted.*

(Members again expressed concern at its meeting on 17th January, 2024, that budget proposals specifically relating to Adult Social Care would not be scrutinised by the relevant Select Committee)

Progress Update with the Woodside Day Service

Members received an update on the Woodside Mental Health Day Service Provision and the current position regarding the condition, viability, cost and long-term appropriateness of the building were provided. Details with regards to the 12-week strengths-based approach programme were outlined which Members were informed was designed to be portable and promote recovery, without being reliant upon a building and that the criteria for the service were consistent and in line with the Care Act. Members expressed concerns and made comments with regards to how the service would now be portrayed, how the new criteria were being used to assess service users and questioned why previous users were no longer eligible to attend. The relocation of the service was also discussed.

Outcomes:

- *That the progress in re-opening Woodside Mental Health Day Service as a recovery focused preventative service be noted.*
- *That the Head of Adult Mental Health to develop partnership working to further develop and enhance the preventative offer.*
- *That a further report be submitted to a future meeting of the Select Committee, with consideration being given to ways of seeking service users' views on the service.*
- *That the Director of Adult Social Care pursue a land valuation for the current Woodside Day Centre site.*
- *That the Director of Adult Social Care provide a summary of the support currently provided to service users that are no longer eligible to attend Woodside Day Centre.*

Improvement priorities for adult social care mental health in Dudley Borough

Members considered a report which provided an overview of improvement priorities for adult social care mental health in Dudley. The key improvement priorities, in particular the work that had been undertaken to

refocus on early intervention and prevention, with clear criteria, and entry and exit pathways into services, were outlined, which included the reconfiguration of the Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHP) Services to maximise resources. Key risks in compliance with statutory frameworks, which included Section 117 reviews, were identified. Members were advised that there were 953 cases identified that would be subject to review under Section 117 of the Mental Health Act and that work was ongoing to improve partnerships with health colleagues to develop a joint review system to increase review activity.

Outcomes:

- *That the progress in delivering improvement in adult mental health in Dudley, be noted.*
- *That the views of the Select Committee be taken into account by the Head of Adult Mental in the ongoing programme of improvement activity.*
- *That further work be undertaken to enhance the approved mental health professional provision.*

Adult Social Care Complaints, Comments and Compliments

Members considered a report which provided an overview of the Adults Social Care Complaints Annual report for the period 1st April, 2022 to 31st March, 2023. A decrease in the number of complaints received for this period was reported and performance for responding to complaints was consistent with the previous year. Members commented positively on the information contained in the report and commended the Directorate on the high level of service that was evidently provided.

Outcomes:

- *That publication of the Adults Social Care Complaints Annual Report, in line with statutory requirements, be endorsed.*
- *That the Democratic Services Officer, on behalf of the Select Committee, send a letter of thanks and appreciation to the Directorate of Adult Social Care.*

Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection and Readiness Review/ Recommendations and developments from ADASS Principal Social Worker Practice Review Programme of Dudley Adult Social Care

During the municipal year, Members received reports and information on the Care Quality Commission Inspection regime for Adult Social Care in Local Authorities and the preparation work that was being done in readiness for an inspection in Dudley. Feedback from West Midlands Association of Directors of Adult Social Care (WM ADASS) readiness review was provided, together with a copy of the external practice review report highlighting the key strengths and areas for improvement with actions to meet requirements.

Outcomes:

Meeting held 7th September, 2023:-

- *That the contents of the report and the requirements for the CQC inspection, in particular the Quality Statements, be noted.*
- *That the key risks and improvement priorities identified, be noted.*
- *That the implications of a CQC inspection and the potential impact for people who use care and support, Adult Social Care in Dudley and the Council's reputation, be noted.*
- *That the continuation to ensure that people of Dudley who use care and support continue to have the right level of support and are safeguarded, be endorsed.*
- *That the Director of Adult Social Care provide Select Committee Members with government guidance to support them in the scrutiny role with regards to Adult Social Care Scrutiny and Safeguarding.*

Meeting held 7th March, 2024:-

- *That the report on the external Practice Review, together with the key strengths and areas for improvement, be noted.*

Dudley Adult Social Care Activity – Average Number of People Delayed

An overview of supported hospital discharge activity assisting residents to return home was provided. The critical incident that had been declared by Russell Halls Hospital, due to limited capacity in the hospital because of high admissions was referred to, together with details in regard to the winter plan that had been established across the whole health and care system. Members were advised that to meet with hospital pressures, the

Local Authority were processing 8 to 10 discharges a day instead of 5 as per the winter plan and that a request for financial support to balance the cost of the additional demand had been submitted to the Integrated Care Board.

Outcomes:

- *That the information contained in the report and presented at the meeting in relation to Dudley Social Care Activity – Average Number of People Delayed per day, be received and noted.*
- *That the Director of Adult Social Care provide data with regards to the number of complaints received in relation to the discharge process from Russells Hall Hospital.*

Other items considered by the Select Committee in the 2023/24 Municipal Year

- Quarterly Performance Report
- Blue Badge Fraud, Process and Enforcement
- Adult Social Care Select Committee Progress Tracker and Future Business
- Annual Adult Safeguarding Report and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)
- Market Position and Sustainability
- Preparing for Adulthood (PFA)
- Service Update from Dudley Telecare

Future items for consideration by the Select Committee

Item to be considered for potential inclusion in the work programme for 2024/25:-

- Woodside Day Service – update report to include feedback and views from users of the service that had completed a twelve-week programme.



**Chair -
Councillor
Kerry Lewis**

Annual report of the Children and Young People Select Committee

2023/24 Municipal Year



**Vice-Chair -
Councillor
Daniel Bevan**

Our role involves the scrutiny of matters relating to Children's and Young People Services in the Directorate of Children's Services and the Cabinet portfolios of appropriate Cabinet Member(s).

Children's Services Committee Progress Tracker and Future Business

Throughout the Municipal Year Members considered reports on the progress tracker and discussed issues in relation to Disclosing and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

Arising from the consideration of this item during the meeting held on 18th January 2024 discussions ensued in relation to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and in particular the impact that would have upon Children's Services for the forthcoming municipal year.

At the meeting held on 11th March 2023 Members considered a briefing note on the position in relation to the DBS checks and it was noted that there was legal requirement for enhanced checks to be carried out for those Members of the Select Committee.

Outcomes:

- *Democratic Services were requested to invite the Assistant Director People and Inclusion to a future meeting of the Committee to determine the position in relation to DBS checks for Members and details of the criteria required.*
- *The Service Director Education, SEND and Family Solutions was requested to discuss with the Chair a possible date of a future meeting to submit a report on Child Friendly Dudley*
- *The Assistant Director of People and Inclusion was recommended that the Members of the Committee should receive enhanced DBS Checks given the possibility of them encountering those children and young people who were vulnerable.*

- *The Director of Children's Services was requested to consider reporting to a future meeting on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, particularly the impact that would have upon Children's Services for the forthcoming municipal year.*

Children's Social Care Complaints, Comments and Compliments Annual Report 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

Members considered the annual report noting that every Local Authority with a responsibility for Social Care Services is required to provide an annual report in relation to the operation of the complaints and representations procedure.

Outcomes:

- *The Director of Children's Services was requested to submit annual reports on learning in relation to complaints through the Centre for Professional Practice.*

Child Poverty

A report was considered providing a summary of child poverty in Dudley and information on initiatives in Dudley to support families living in poverty.

Outcomes:

- *The development of a system wide strategy and encouragement of system participation in the strategic mitigating poverty group was supported.*

Family Hubs and Start of Life Information and Update Report.

A report was submitted on the overview of the development and recent progress of the Dudley Family Hubs and Start of Life Programme.

Outcomes:

- *There was a request that Members be provided with leaflets in relation to the Family Hubs to distribute to their constituents in order that they were aware of the services provided.*
- *Democratic Services were requested to email to Members details of the dates available for them to attend the Family Hubs.*

Care Experienced Young Adults Accommodation

Members considered a report on the delivery of accommodation to Care Experienced Young Adults as well as providing a response to the Committee's recommendations to improve suitability of accommodation for this cohort of young people.

Outcome:

- *That any future reports on Care Experienced Young Adults Accommodation include details of the specific accommodation that was unsuitable for them.*

Education Report

Members considered a report providing an update on Education outcomes including the work of the Education Outcomes Team in relation to Dudley Performing Arts, Suspensions, the Alternative Provision Strategy, Elective Home Education and Children Missing Education.

Outcome:

- *The Head of Education Outcomes and Inclusion was requested to provide Members with a breakdown of where those children and young people who were being EHE were within the Borough.*

Other Items Considered by the Scrutiny Committee in the 2023/24 Municipal Year

- Family Safeguarding Model
- Children's Services Phase Two Redesign
- Dudley Children's Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report
- Education Reports
- Dudley Virtual Summary of Annual Report 2022-2023
- Corporate Quarterly Performance Reports.
- Learning from Complaints

Ongoing/Future Items

Items that require further consideration and potential inclusion in the Scrutiny Programme for 2024/25 are listed below: -

- Corporate Quarterly Performance Reports
- Children's Services Complaints, Comments and Compliments Annual Report
- Dudley Children's Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report
- Integrated Early Years, Family Hubs, and Start of Life in Dudley
- Education Reports
- Dudley Virtual School Annual Report
- The Needs Assessment Findings
- Learning from Complaints



**Chair -
Councillor
Peter Dobb**

Annual report of the Climate Change Select Committee

2023/24 Muncipal Year



**Vice-Chair -
Councillor
Thomas Russon**

Our role involves the scrutiny of matters concerning Climate Change and the Council's decision to declare a Climate Emergency. This includes the development and implementation of the Carbon Reduction Plan and action to support the United Nations sustainable development goals. The role includes contributing to the environmental sustainability agenda and action to address the corporate priority to create a cleaner and greener place, working collaboratively with partners, businesses, and communities to achieve long term goals.

Transport Fleet Services

The Committee considered a report on the Council's Transport Fleet Services, which provided a progress update of the work carried out on the Council's Fleet services together with consideration of future options for its fleet management responsibilities and commensurate with the Council's financial and environmental policy objectives. An outline of the current vehicle replacement programme was provided and that a new Climate Change team had been established together with a newly appointed Head of Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change who would be collaborating and working on future plans.

During the meeting, the Committee commented on the information presented and raised a number of queries in relation to the early trials being carried out to upcycle and recycle the current fleet to electric vehicles, electric vehicles that had been trialled for future waste collection and utilising existing infrastructures. The Committee commented positively on the use of Euro 6 diesel fuelled vehicles and the potential to reduce energy from waste for the fleet to be self-sufficient by producing green waste such as green hydrogen.

Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

The Committee considered a report on the current progress of all matters associated with public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure across the Borough. An outline of work undertaken including assessments for identifying locations throughout the Borough to install

charging points were reported to the Committee and further updates would be provided.

The Committee raised a number of queries in relation to the potential disruption that could be made during installation of Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points, obstruction to properties and the potential for anti-social behaviour and were assured that this would be monitored.

Environmental Impact on Council House Refurbishment

The Committee received a presentation from the Head of Corporate Landlord Services regarding the Environmental Impact on the Council House Refurbishment.

During the meeting, the Committee commented on the information presented and raised a number of queries in relation to the installation of heat pumps and boiler optimisers and raised concerns regarding secondary glazing being installed at the Council House, although it was acknowledged that consideration would need to be given to keep in style with the Grade 2 listed building and installation would need to be done sensitively.

Update on Carbon Reduction Plan

The Committee received a presentation on the Council's Carbon Reduction Plan outlining key work that had been completed. Actions for the draft Climate Action Plan had been agreed and a Climate and Sustainability Board had been established to develop and monitor the delivery of the Action Plan. The Climate Action Plan was a three-year plan from 2024 to 2027, which an annual review and reporting process would be provided.

During the meeting, Members raised a number of queries regarding the impact spending controls would have on implementation of the Climate Action Plan.

Dudley Council Climate Action Plan

The Committee received a report on the Dudley Council's Climate Action Plan, Phase 1 (2024-2027) as part of the response to the climate emergency. The Climate Action Plan was a Corporate Plan which would be formally reviewed, and an annual update provided.

Outcomes:

- *That the Dudley Council's Climate Action Plan, Phase 1 (2024-2027) outlining how the Council would work to reduce carbon emissions from the Council's operations and activities and influence carbon reduction boroughwide, be received and noted.*
- *That an annual update of the Climate Action Plan to review the data and evidence, monitor progress and insert new actions to further reduce the Council's carbon footprint towards achieving its ambition to reach carbon net zero by 2030, be considered as part of the Annual Scrutiny Programme for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.*

Update on Food Waste Collection and Anaerobic Digestion

The Committee received a presentation from the Head of Waste and Fleet Operation regarding an update on Food Waste Collections and Anaerobic Digestion. The benefits to collecting food waste were outlined together with information provided regarding how food waste would be collected; operating revenue costs; potential funding and reference was made to the preferred method of food waste recycling via anaerobic digestion to generate biogas such as biofuel, power or heat or digestate to fertiliser.

The Committee expressed concerns with regards the potential cost to residents and to the Council having waste being transported and processed through Kinver Anaerobic Digestion plant, it was acknowledged that further information would need to be sought from other Local Authorities for best practices.

Further updates and information to be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee within the next municipal year.

Planning Policies in Relation to Renewable Energy and Climate Change

The Committee received a report and presentation on the Planning Policies in relation to Renewable Energy and Climate Change, which provided an overview of how developers have responded to emerging planning policies following the recent Draft Local Plan consultation. Officers outlined the existing planning policy documents, which contained several policies in relation to renewable energy and how

policies within the draft Dudley Local Action Plan supported actions within the Dudley Council Climate Action Plan.

Other items Considered by the Select Committee in the 2023/24 Municipal Year

- *Net-Zero Neighbourhood and Additional Sustainability Measures*
- *Information regarding the High Plateau Site at Merry Hill*
- *Corporate Quarterly Performance Reports*

Ongoing/Future Items

Items that require further consideration and potential inclusion in the Scrutiny Programme for 2024/25 are listed below: -

- Update Dudley Climate Action Plan
- Cycle and Travel Card Scheme
- The Grant Register
- Biodiversity
- Update on the Use of Pesticides and Maintaining the Boroughs Green Spaces
- Update on Food Waste Collection and Anaerobic Digestion
- Carbon Literacy Training



**Chair -
Councillor
David Stanley**

Annual report of the Corporate and Economic Strategy Select Committee

2023/24 Municipal Year



**Vice-Chair -
Councillor
Stuart Henley**

Our role involves the scrutiny of matters falling within the functions of the Directorates of Chief Executive's, Digital, Commercial and Customer Services, Finance and Legal and Regeneration and Enterprise and the Cabinet portfolios of appropriate Cabinet Member(s).

Programme of Meetings and Business Items for 2023/24

Members of the Committee considered the programme of meetings and potential items of business for the Corporate and Economic Strategy Select Committee during 2023/24.

Outcomes:

- *The Senior Democratic Services Officer, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, review the timings of the proposed items in relation to the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension Update and the Economic Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan.*
- *The following items be included in the programme of business for 2023/24:*
 - *Key Performance Indicators – Corporate and Regeneration*
 - *Commercialisation Strategy Update*
 - *UK Shared Prosperity Fund*
 - *Estates Strategy*
 - *Stalled Sites Progress Update (March, 2024)*
- *That, subject to resolution (2) and (3) above, the Committee confirm the programme of business as outlined in paragraph 4 of the report submitted, subject to the need for flexibility to reflect any changes that might arise during the municipal year.*
- *That the Lead for Law and Governance, following consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, be authorised to make all the necessary arrangements to enable this Committee to undertake its programme of scrutiny work during the 2023/24 municipal year.*

- *That the terms of reference for the Corporate and Economic Strategy Select Committee, as set out in the Appendix to the report submitted, be noted.*

Call-In of Decision Sheet – Loan to Dudley and Kent Commercial Services Ltd Joint Venture Company

An additional meeting was scheduled to respond to the call-in of the decision of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Legal and Human Resources concerning a loan to Dudley and Kent Commercial Services Ltd Joint Venture Company. The decision had been called-in at the request of four Members of the Corporate and Economic Strategy Select Committee in accordance with the Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules, as set out in the Council's Constitution. The Cabinet Member of Finance, Legal and Human Resources, Cabinet Member for Corporate Strategy, Director of Finance and Legal, Director of Digital, Customer and Commercial Services, Director of Children's Services and the Monitoring Officer attended the Committee to address the meeting and to respond to questions.

Outcomes:

- *That the Corporate and Economic Strategy Select Committee recommend that no objection be raised to the decision, in which case no further action is necessary and that the decision of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Legal and Human Resources be implemented with immediate effect.*

Commercial Strategy

The Committee received a report and detailed presentation on an update on the Commercial Strategy, core commercial activity and key projects and to assure the Committee on the value of the work undertaken by the Commercial team.

Outcomes:

- *That the Head of Commercial liaise with the Head of Corporate Landlord Services to provide details of the operation of the system in relation to the school meal service, how the system had failed and what had resulted in that failure to members; Advise members how many customers had left the Telecare service and advise the relevant service areas who were managing the analogue switch off of the request that elected members be provided with material detailing the analogue switch*

off to assure those who had concerns in relation to the loss of their landlines.

Consultation Process Review across the Authority

The Committee received a report on the consultation activity across the authority and future improvements to processes.

Outcomes:

- *Noted, that Dudley Council does not have a single, corporate departments with an oversight of responsibility for consultations taking place across all directorates and services in the local authority.*
- *That the scale and complexity of consultation activity undertaken across the local authority service areas and how best practice has been used to inform a consistent corporate approach, be noted.*
- *That the new Consultation Framework and the database produced for guidance by the Chief Executive's performance management team and key stakeholders across the organisation, as outlined in Appendix B of the report submitted, be supported.*
- *That the officer working group to identify the best software solution be supported.*

Corporate and Economic Strategy Select Committee Progress Tracker and Future Business

During a meeting on 6th September, 2023, an urgent item was raised in relation to the national developments at that time regarding Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in schools in England. Although it was acknowledged that communication bulletins had been circulated confirming that local authority led schools and academies were unaffected, the Committee suggested that an audit of all council buildings, including libraries, leisure centres and community centres, be undertaken to establish whether RAAC had been used in any of the buildings. Following the meeting, a communication bulletin was circulated to all Elected Members.

Concerns were also raised in relation to the disruption that may be caused to two town centres and traders due to the full funding now being obtained in relation to the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension, and a request was made for a report to be submitted to a future

committee. This information was presented to the Committee in January, 2024.

Corporate Quarterly Performance Report

The Committee received the corporate Quarterly Performance reports during the year. The Corporate Quarterly Performance Report in relation to Quarter 3 was e-mailed to the Committee for comments. Directorate Service Summary documents providing detailed accounts of service delivery for each Quarter was also provided.

Outcomes:

- *Detailed scrutiny has been undertaken of specific performance indicators that are reported as 'below target' with responses provided by relevant Directorates.*
- *That the Chair and Vice-Chair in conjunction with the Corporate Performance Manager consider how future reports should be presented to the Committee above, referring to the suggestions by members above.*
- *That the Corporate Performance Manager be requested to:*
 - *report on the details in relation to the complaints procedure to include processes, how they were handled and feedback from complainants to include timeliness;*
 - *report on what work was being conducted in relation to work related sickness in future Corporate Quarterly reports;*
 - *discuss with relevant officers the future reporting of the Corporate Performance Report to all Select Committees;*
 - *provide a written response on the Council's Policy for COVID testing and the measures taken across the Council to mitigate stress levels for employees in view of the current financial situation and challenging times ahead;*
 - *liaise with the Chair and Vice-Chair on dedicated sessions focusing on specific elements raised by the Committee, including complaints and sickness absence, in future reports;*
 - *investigate whether an overview of the reasons why employees had left the authority could be provided to Members for information.*

Dudley Borough Economic Regeneration Strategy

The Committee received a report on the work undertaken to date on the proposed Dudley Borough 'Economic Regeneration Strategy'.

- *That all future reports clearly outline the purpose of the report and the response or observations required by Members.*
- *That the relevant Cabinet Member be recommended to consider the feasibility of the development of a Business Improvement District for Brierley Hill Town Centre to support the economic sustainability and vitality of the Town Centre following recent and ongoing investment.*
- *That an agenda item looking at the regeneration programme, the breakdown of funding awarded, how much was retained within Dudley and where it can be quantified the economic benefit and social value obtained, be included on the future work programme of the Committee.*

MyDudley Digital Platform Update

The Committee considered a report on the MyDudley programme, the functionality of which included customer portal, customer service hub, councillor portal and staff portals. Arising from a request made by the Committee, the Head of Digital and Customer Services agreed to consider introducing facilities in council owned buildings including libraries and leisure centres to enable users to provide feedback direct to the Council.

Progress on Major Regeneration Projects

The Committee considered a report on an update on the major regeneration projects in Dudley town centre, Brierley Hill and other town centre proposals and projects in development. During this item, a Member of the Committee shared concerns that the Medium-Term Financial Strategy report would not be presented to individual Select Committees. It was acknowledged that some difficult decisions would need to be made that were in the scope of the Select Committee and a request was made for the scheduling of an urgent cycle of additional Select Committee meetings where Elected Members could examine the most controversial and impactful proposals within the remit of their respective Select Committees.

Outcomes:

- *That the update on the major regeneration projects in Dudley town centre, Brierley Hill and other town centre proposals and projects in development, be noted.*
- *The Director of Regeneration and Enterprise be requested to provide a written response to options considered in relation to car parking following the closure of Pool Road Car Park, Halesowen.*
- *That the Chair consider the comments made with regard to scheduling an urgent Committee meeting where Members could examine the most controversial and impactful of proposals within the remit of the Select Committee.*

Following the meeting, confirmation was received that it was not possible for the proposed Medium-Term Financial Strategy to be presented to individual Select Committees due to time constraints. A dedicated Question and Answer session was arranged for all Members and the report was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25th January, 2024. The meeting was broadcasted live on the internet and recorded for future viewing on the Council's Youtube channel.

Stalled Sites – Strategies for bringing back into use privately owned vacant land and property

The Committee considered a report on the strategies being deployed by the Local Authority to bring back into use privately owned land and property which remained derelict or untidy of where development was stalled.

A further update was provided to the Committee at the last meeting of the Municipal Year in March, 2024.

Outcomes of 6th September, 2023 meeting:

- *That the progress made and positive actions being undertaken by services in seeking to bring back into use privately owned land and property which remained vacant and derelict, be acknowledged.*
- *That the limitations of statutory powers in requiring private landowners to bring forward vacant and derelict sites for development be recognised.*
- *That the Head of Economic Growth and Skills circulate information on progress made to the remaining 48 sites to the Committee including a map identifying all 68 sites; liaise with the Technology, Systems and Services Department with regard to an*

accessible list of all sites including regular updates and an online directory of available rentable amenities within Dudley and liaise with Democratic Services with regard to future Member training.

Outcomes of 6th March, 2024 meeting:

- That the progress made since the report was submitted to the Committee on 6th September, 2023, be noted.*
- That the positive actions being undertaken by services in seeking to bring back into use privately owned land and property which remained vacant and derelict, be acknowledged.*
- That the methodology for drawing up the revised short and long list of sites to be included in the programme for the next period, be endorsed.*
- That the limitations of statutory powers in requiring private landowners to bring forward vacant and derelict sites for development be recognised.*
- That the constraints on resources following the introduction of spending controls measures and the implications on service priorities be recognised.*
- That the Head of Economic Growth and Skills provide a written update on progress made in relation to Site 8 and 58 of the stalled and derelict sites long list and contact the Brockmoor and Pensnett Ward Members in relation to a site included as part of the stalled and derelict sites long list.*

UK Shared Prosperity Fund / Multiply Programme Update

The Committee received a report updating Members on the Council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Multiply Programme.

Outcomes:

- That the information contained in the report submitted and as reported at the meeting, on the update on the Council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Multiply Programme, be noted.*
- That the progress being made with regards to the Council's financial year 1 (2022-23) and year 2 (2023-24) programme of activity be acknowledged.*

- *That the continued risk linked to the original delays in the receipt of both year 1 and year 2 funding be acknowledged.*
- *That the year 3 funding allocations and the proposed range of activity across Communities and Place, Local and Regional Business Support, People & Skills and Multiply be acknowledged.*
- *That the Head of Economic Growth and Skills provide a written response as to the reasons why Mary Stevens Park, Halesowen had been identified as a site for refurbishment works.*

Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension Delivery Update

Representatives from Transport for West Midlands attended the Committee and provided a detailed presentation on progress made with the delivery of the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension.

Outcomes:

- *That the information contained in the presentation on progress with the delivery of the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension, be noted.*
- *That the Executive Director, Transport for West Midlands refer comments and explore options available in relation to repainting the mural previously displayed on Hanson's Ale Bridge to the new structure and interpretative signage for the Parkhead Viaduct and Hanson's Ale Bridge.*
- *That the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise confirm whether the Parkhead Viaduct was locally listed.*

Ongoing/Future Items

Items that require further consideration and potential inclusion in the Scrutiny Programme for 2024/25 are listed below: -

- Estates Strategy
- Corporate Quarterly Performance Reports
- Dudley Borough Economic Regeneration Programme (including breakdown of funding awarded, how much was retained within Dudley and where it can be quantified, the economic benefit and social value obtained).



**Chair -
Councillor
James
Clinton**

Annual report of the Health Select Committee

2023/24 Muncipal Year



**Vice-Chair -
Councillor
Rebekah
Collins**

Our role is to fulfil the scrutiny functions as they relate to the improvement of local health and associated services, as a contribution to the Council's community leadership role, in accordance with the relevant legislation, regulations and associated guidance. This includes the scrutiny of local National Health Service (NHS) bodies and policy development matters falling within the portfolio responsibility of the Cabinet Member for Public Health.

Programme of Meetings and Business Items for 2023/24

Members of the Committee considered the programme of meetings and potential items of business for the Public Health Select Committee during 2023/24. Members opposed the proposed changes to the Overview and Scrutiny arrangements and emphasised the importance in ensuring that the current arrangements remained, in that individual Select Committees be responsible for the scrutiny of any call-ins and budgetary implications relevant to their specific service area/Directorate.

Outcomes:-

- *That the programme of meetings for 2023/24, be noted.*
- *That subject to the comments referred to above, the business items as outlined in paragraph 4 of the report submitted, be noted and agreed.*
- *That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be recommended to continue with the existing arrangements for call-in and that the Medium-Term Financial Strategy report continue to be submitted to individual Select Committees for scrutiny.*
- *That the Lead for Law and Governance, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, be authorised to make all necessary*

arrangements to enable the Select Committee to undertake its work during the 2023/24 municipal year.

- *That, subject to any necessary amendments as a result of resolution 3, the draft terms of reference for the Select Committee, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report submitted, be noted.*

High Oak Surgery

Following the full scrutiny review on the relocation of High Oak Surgery which was undertaken by the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee during the 2022/23 municipal year, the Select Committee have continued to receive regular updates from Dudley Integrated Health and Care Trust (DIHC) on the current situation. DIHC have continued to engage with the local pharmacy to develop a business case to get a more permanent solution, whilst GP services have continued to be provided from the original portacabin site. Members have continued to express their disappointment that the situation was still unresolved and have presented their offer of support to DIHC in any way that would help to advance the process.

Development of Dudley's Integrated Model of Health and Care

Members have received updates on the Development of Dudley's Integrated Model of Health and Care as a standing item on all agendas. Following the cessation of the Integrated Care Provider procurement process in November 2022 and the subsequent review of the Dudley Integrated Health and Care Trust, progress updates on the future delivery of services previously provided by DIHC and the development of integrated care pathways have been received.

National Health Service (NHS) Quality Accounts – Black Country Healthcare Trust

The Committee considered the published Quality Accounts of the Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust for 2022/23, including priorities set out for their services for the forthcoming year.

Outcomes:-

- *That the Quality Accounts of the Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust for 2022/23 and the priorities set out for the service for the forthcoming year be received and noted.*
- *That the Chief Nursing Officer provide a written response with regards to the utilisation of local charities, namely The What Centre, to assist with providing mental health support to young people.*

- *That a further report be submitted to a future meeting, a date of which to be confirmed, in relation to Children and Young People's Mental Health.*

(Reports on Collaborative Working to address the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Needs for Infants, Children and Young People in Dudley and All Age Mental Health Needs Assessment were considered by the Select Committee on 28th March, 2024)

Life in Lye Project

Members considered a report which provided an overview of the 'Life in Lye' programme and its approach to improving community cohesion and reducing health inequalities in Lye through a system-wide, place-based approach. The different approach that was being taken for Lye and the challenges faced around community cohesion and safety were outlined.

Outcomes:-

- *That the report and activity that had already taken place with regards to Life in Lye and the alignment with the Council Plan, Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy and the Forging the Future Dudley Borough Vision, be received and noted.*
- *That the requirement for Public Health to submit quarterly reports to the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) on activity in line with the agreed funding proposals, be noted.*
- *That the Acting Director of Public Health and Wellbeing pursue a twinned approach of quick fix options, together with long-term projects.*
- *That issues raised with regards to fly-tipping, street cleansing and houses in multiple occupation, which fall outside of the remit for Public Health Select Committee, be referred to the appropriate Directorate.*

(Regular updates on the project have formed part of the Director of Public Health and Wellbeing's verbal update)

Substance Misuse Commissioning and Delivery in Dudley

Members received a comprehensive and detailed report in relation to the issue of substance misuse in Dudley and the interventions and services commissioned by Dudley's Public Health and Wellbeing Directorate to address and mitigate the issue. An outline of the overall impact of substance misuse and the national and local picture, the services and interventions commissioned were presented.

Outcomes:-

- *That the report in relation to Substance Misuse Commissioning and Delivery in Dudley, be noted*
- *That the ways in which Select Committee Members can support substance misuse work in the Borough, as outlined in the report and discussed at the meeting, be noted.*
- *That the Programme Manager (Dr M Andrews) provide information in relation to the number of heroin related deaths or injuries normally be experienced over a similar period.*
- *That the Director of Public Health and Wellbeing give consideration to providing an online session to the Select Committee on how Members can proactively support substance misuse work in the Borough and how their scrutiny skills could be deployed to help drive improvement as a critical friend of the service.*
- *That any Member wishing to undertake a visit to Atlantic House be requested to contact A Burford – Change Grow Live.*
- *That a report on the associated work undertaken by Trading Standards be presented to a future meeting of the Select Committee.*

Evaluation of Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2022 and Health, Wellbeing and Inequalities Strategy 2023-2028

Members considered two reports on the findings and recommendations from the Health and Wellbeing Board's evaluation of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2022 and the new joint Health, Wellbeing and Inequalities Strategy 2023-28 which had been developed by the Health and Wellbeing Board. The reason for the evaluation and how the authority was progressing on achieving the 2017-2022 strategy goals were outlined, and it was acknowledged that whilst the priorities for the new strategy had changed, work continued on the goals for the 2017-2022 strategy, which had become embedded as 'business as usual'. During deliberations of the reports, Members expressed concern in that the Health and Wellbeing Board evaluated their own work and that the report presented to the Select Committee was just to be noted.

Outcomes:-

- *That the new Health, Wellbeing and Inequalities Strategy 2023-2028 and its new goals, be noted.*
- *That the reinstatement of the monthly webinars for all Members to provide support and to discuss Health and Wellbeing initiatives,*

including the Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy and a deep dive into alcohol abuse, be reconsidered by the Cabinet Member for Public Health and the Director of Public Health and Wellbeing.

- That consideration of the role of the Select Committee in scrutinising the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board be considered and that the Chair and Vice-Chair review how this may be incorporated into the work programme for the Select Committee.*

Update from the Director of Public Health and Wellbeing

Throughout the municipal year Members have received verbal updates from the Director of Public Health and Wellbeing on national and local issues. The updates have provided detailed information on national infection outbreaks, as well as updates in respect of the Brockmoor and Pensnett Innovation Project and the Life in Lye Project.

Outcomes:-

- That details of the location of the five local Family Hubs be circulated.*
- That further information in relation to Poverty Proofing that was presented in schools, together with poverty proofing in maternities which was also due to commence be provided. (Report to be considered at the Select Committee in March 2024)*
- That details of future community funding initiatives, that could be shared with Community Groups, be provided.*

Other items considered by the Scrutiny Committee in the 2023/24 Municipal Year

- NHS Quality Accounts
- Dudley Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) – Operational Changes
- Director of Public Health and Wellbeing Annual Report
- All Age Mental Health Needs Assessment

Ongoing/Future Items

Items considered at Select Committee on 28th March, 2024:-

- All Age Mental Health Needs Assessment
- Collaborative Working to address the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Needs for Infants, Children and Young People in Dudley
- Development of Dudley's Integrated Model of Health and Care

- Growing up in Dudley

Items to be considered at Select Committee on 25th April, 2024:-

- NHS Quality Accounts
- Update on the development of the Integrated Care Partnership
- Update on the Household Support Fund

Item that requires further consideration and potential inclusion in the Scrutiny Programme for 2024/25:-

- Trading Standards – report on the role and involvement of Trading Standards in the fight against drugs and illicit substances.



**Chair -
Councillor
Ed
Lawrence**

Annual report of the Highways and Environmental Services Select Committee

2023/24 Municipal Year



**Vice-Chair -
Councillor
Peter Miller**

Our role involves the scrutiny of matters falling within the functions of the Directorate of Environment and the Cabinet portfolios of appropriate Cabinet Member(s). The Cabinet Member for Highways and Environmental Services attended all Committee meetings and responded to questions raised by the Select Committee.

Programme of Meetings and Business Items for 2023/24

Members of the Committee considered the programme of meetings and potential items of business for the Highways and Environmental Services Select Committee during 2023/24.

Outcomes:

- *The programme of meetings and items of business for the Committee for 2023/24, be noted.*
- *That, subject to an update on the Neighbourhood Approach being scheduled for later in the year, the Committee confirm the programme of business as outlined in paragraph 4 of the report submitted, subject to the need for flexibility to reflect any changes that might arise during the municipal year.*
- *That the Lead for Law and Governance, following consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, be authorised to make all the necessary arrangements to enable this Committee to undertake its programme of scrutiny work during the 2023/24 municipal year.*
- *That the terms of reference for the Highways and Environmental Services Select Committee, as set out in the Appendix to the report submitted, be noted.*

Developing the Neighbourhood Approach

The Committee received a report on developing the neighbourhood approach in the Environment Directorate, which aimed to provide customer focused services that were tailored to specific neighbourhoods and deliver value for money. A consultation exercise had commenced as part of Phase 2 of the restructure of the Environment Directorate and it was proposed that a further update would be provided to the Select Committee on progress made and outcomes of the Consultation.

During the meeting, the Committee commented positively and welcomed the new model approach and Elected Member involvement and emphasised the importance of collaborative working.

A further update was provided to the Committee at the last meeting of the Municipal Year in March, 2024. The Street Scene Group Manager attended the meeting together with five Street Scene Neighbourhood Managers (each covering one of the new 5 community forum areas). During the meeting, Members commented positively on the progress made since the neighbourhood approach had been presented to the Committee in August, 2023.

Outcomes of the meeting held on 2nd August, 2023:

- *That a further progress report be submitted to the Highways and Environmental Services Select Committee before the end of the 2023/24 municipal year*

Outcomes of the meeting held on 21st March, 2024:

- *That the Director of Environment be requested to circulate a copy of the structures across the Directorate to Members for information.*

Corporate Quarterly Performance Report

The Committee received the corporate Quarterly Performance reports during the year. Directorate Service Summary documents providing detailed accounts of service delivery for each Quarter was also provided.

Outcomes:

- *Detailed scrutiny has been undertaken of specific performance indicators that are reported as 'below target' with responses provided by the Director of Environment and Officers.*
- *That figures in relation to fly-tipping be categorised into areas in future reports.*
- *That the Head of Waste and Fleet Operations be requested to emphasise the need for sufficient and safe places for waste disposal once applications had been submitted for larger developments with the Head of Planning.*
- *That the Head of Waste and Fleet Operations be requested to provide a breakdown of specific locations of fly-tipping incidents to Members for information.*

Dudley Highway Network Performance and Road Safety

The Committee received a detailed presentation on an overview of the Dudley Highway Network Performance, Major Scheme Development and Road Safety, including National Data and Trends, Economic Impact and Local Data.

The Committee raised a number of queries in relation to traffic restrictions across the Borough, the School Streets Initiative and introduction of 20mph speed limit around schools and traffic congestion. The Committee welcomed a proposal to undertake further in-depth scrutiny in relation to Road Safety at a future meeting of the Select Committee.

Outcomes:

- *That the information contained in the presentation on an overview of the Dudley Highway Network Performance, Major Scheme Development and Road Safety, be noted.*
- *That a presentation on road safety together with a review of the draft Road Safety Strategy be submitted to a future meeting of the Select Committee.*

Public Forum

Two petitions were presented by local residents of Quarry Bank during a meeting held in November, 2023 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.

The Committee acknowledged and supported comments made during the meeting and the Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery accepted the petitions presented and undertook to provide a response and ensure that any outstanding responses were actioned.

The Environment Highways Group – Ways of Working / Work Programmes

The Committee received a detailed presentation to Members on the ways of working and work programmes by the Environment Highways Group over the past 12 months. An overview was also provided of the changes adopted compared to previous years including the introduction of the Road Hierarchy review categorising a highways importance to the Borough, to help identify where focus is needed to maximise spend where the greater benefit could be made.

During the meeting, the Committee commented positively and expressed their appreciation on the vast improvements made across ward areas, however it was acknowledged that there noted that further work was needed to improve maintenance in estate roads and gulley's. A request was also made to ensure that future presentations be produced in an accessible format.

Outcomes:

- *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.*

Transport Fleet Services

The Committee considered a report on an update on the Council's Fleet Service and the future options for its fleet management responsibilities, commensurate with the Council's financial and environmental policy objectives. An update was also presented on the trials undertaken of electric vehicles for waste collection covering multiple rounds throughout a week to establish capacity and allow operatives to trial the new technologies.

During the meeting, the Committee commented positively on the information presented and raised a number of queries in relation to the electric vehicles that had been tested for future waste collection, utilising existing infrastructures and the potential impact to weekly residential waste collections.

Outcomes:

- *That the information contained in the report submitted, and as reported at the meeting, on an update on the Council's Fleet Service and the future options for its fleet management responsibilities, commensurate with the Council's financial and environmental policy objectives, be noted.*

Update on Green Waste Charging

The Committee received a report on all matters associated with the introduction of a chargeable Green Waste collection service. The proposal for Dudley to charge residents for the collection of the garden waste was ratified at the meeting of the Full Council on Monday 4th March, 2024. The Chair requested that a report be submitted to allow the Select Committee to comment or raise any questions relating to the operation of the service.

During the meeting, Members raised a number of concerns and comments in relation to the communications and engagement with residents, the challenges faced by residents in paying the £36 charge as a one-off payment and the possibility of recycling old green waste bins that had been collected in order to reduce costs for new residents that had moved into properties that did not have a bin.

Outcomes:

- *That the Head of Waste and Fleet be requested to provide a breakdown of the departmental costs for the green waste service to Members for information.*
- *That the Cabinet Member for Highways and Environmental Services, in consultation with the Director of Environment, be requested to consider future charging options for residents and maximising the recycling of bins that had been collected in order to be available to residents that wished to subscribe to the green waste collection service at a reduced rate, on request.*

Ongoing/Future Items

Items that require further consideration and potential inclusion in the Scrutiny Programme for 2024/25 are listed below: -

- Road Safety (including the draft Road Safety Strategy)
- Quarterly Performance Reports
- Dudley Transport Plan
- Dudley Borough Parking



**Chair -
Councillor A
Davies**

Annual Report of the Housing and Safer Communities Select Committee

2023/2024 Municipal Year



**Vice-Chair –
Councillor
S Bothul**

Our role involves the scrutiny of matters falling within the functions of the Directorate of Housing and Community Services and the Cabinet portfolios of appropriate Cabinet Member(s).

Programme of Meetings and Business Items for 2023/24

The Committee considered the annual scrutiny programme 2023/24.

Outcome:

- *That the Director of Housing and Communities be requested to:*
 - *provide regular updates on progress on the stock condition survey;*
 - *liaise with the Housing Strategy Team to ascertain whether there were any groups/organisations that recorded data in relation to social housing, housing associations, private rented and owner occupier properties in the Dudley Borough and provide a written response to Members of the Committee;*
 - *circulate the structure of the Safe and Sound Board to Members;*
 - *consider the possibility of providing Members the opportunity to allow more detailed scrutiny of the housing stock within the Borough, supported by the Democratic Services Officer;*
 - *incorporate a community safety element to each report programmed for the Committee for the municipal year.*

Public Forum

The Committee heard representations concerning numerous issues within the remit of the Housing and Communities Directorate throughout the 2023/24 municipal year and raised questions as outlined below.

Outcome of the meeting held on 13th September, 2023:

- *That the Director of Housing and Communities be requested to provide written responses to a member of the public and all Members of the Committee on the following questions raised.*
 - *What were the timescales involved in allocating Housing Officers to areas within the Borough?*
 - *Consideration of a review to take place on how Aerial Funding was allocated moving forward. It was considered that quorum numbers for meetings were currently too high which was affecting the voting requirements on how to use funding.*
 - *In referring to the Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC), a member of public, together with Councillor J Cowell queried the number of high and low rise blocks within the Dudley Borough that were affected and where those buildings were located.*

Outcome of the meeting held on 22nd November, 2023:

- *That the Director of Housing and Communities be requested to provide written responses to a member of the public and all Members of the Committee on the following questions raised.*
 - *In referring to the minutes of the meeting held on 13th September, 2023, which referred to the Tenant Housing Board and clarification was requested on what the Board was now called?*
 - *What was happening to high-rise forums? There did not appear to be a group that focused on the needs of high-rise properties.*
 - *In referring to information contained in the Quarterly Corporate Performance reports, the number of properties awaiting investment decisions had increased from 50 to 95 properties. Questions were raised, as follows:*
 - *What was happening to those properties?*
 - *What was required to bring the properties back into use?*
 - *Out of the 95 properties awaiting investment decisions, what type of properties were they? The significant financial*

implications relating to the properties for the Local Authority was questioned as they were in high demand so why were they being held back?

- *What had been spent on properties awaiting investment decisions over the last 20 years.*

Outcome of the meeting held on 13th March, 2024:

- *That the comments made by the member of public whilst delivering a presentation around the general experiences of Dudley residents who identify as LGBTQ+, Disabled, Muslim etc, be circulated to appropriate officers for consideration.*

Progress Tracker and Future Business

The Committee received information on outstanding actions following recommendations made throughout the 2023/24 municipal year, which included items to be considered at future meetings.

Outcome of the meeting held on 21st September, 2023:

- *That the Chair and Vice-Chair be requested to review the timings of the Community Safety Partnership report to an earlier programmed meeting.*
- *That the following updates be provided to Members of the Committee at a future meeting on:*
 - *private rented housing;*
 - *work associated with the Stock Condition Survey programme that Savills was currently undertaking on all Council housing stock;*
 - *the Right to Buy scheme.*
- *That information be provided to all Members of the Committee on accurate statistics of Right To Buy sales for the last five-year period to include the property types purchased.*

Corporate Quarterly Performance Report

The Committee received the Corporate Quarterly Performance reports during 2023/24. Specific officers attended meetings to provide a summary and responded to questions asked by the Committee.

Outcome of the meeting held on 22nd September, 2023:

- *That the Interim Lead for Compliance and Building Safety be requested to provide a written response to all Member of the Committee on the details associated with the timescales around void bungalow turnaround times.*
- *That “Know Your Community Housing Officer” information, including pictures and contact details for each of the six areas be submitted to all Members of the Council.*

Outcome of the meeting held on 22nd January, 2024:

- *That the Director of Housing and Communities be requested to:*
 - *provide Members with an accurate figure of cases associated with housing fraud for the 2023/24 financial year;*
 - *forward Members’ appreciation to the Housing Team for the work, support and expertise in tackling homelessness and begging in the Stourbridge area.*

Outcome of the meeting held on 13th March, 2024:

- *That the Director of Housing and Communities be requested to:*
 - *circulate a briefing note regarding the complexities involved in relation to the 53-week rent cycle to all Members of the Committee.*
 - *clarify the position in relation to mid-year alterations to Housing Benefit and Universal Credit claims as a result of the introduction of service charges with the Department for Work and Pensions and provide a written response to all Members of the Committee.*
- *That the Ward Members for Gornal be informed of any updates in relation to the sheltered accommodation at Church View.*

Impact of the 2023/24 Rent Increase

The Committee received a report on the 2023/24 rent increase and the impact on tenants and Dudley MBC budgets.

Outcome:

- *That the Director of Housing and Communities be requested to provide Members of the Committee with information on the average cost of various property types across the Borough.*
- *That the Director of Housing and Communities be requested to circulate to all Members of the Committee accurate figures of customers that were currently charged the underoccupancy rate.*
- *That the Director of Housing and Communities be requested to circulate to all Members of the Committee the accurate figure that was “written off” as unrecoverable debt during the 2022/2023 financial year.*

Update on Property Condition and Compliance

The Committee received a report on Property Condition and Regulatory Compliance in Council owned homes.

Outcome of the meeting held on 21st September, 2023:-

- *That Councillor D Stanley provide information on a complaint received relating to the cancellation of a gas safety inspection at short notice to the Interim Lead for Compliance and Building Safety for consideration and action.*

Tenant Satisfaction Measures – Tenant Perception Survey

The Committee received a report which provided an overview on the introduction and implementation of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM), examining specifically the Baseline Tenant Perception Survey 2023 element of the research.

Outcome:

- *That “Know Your Community Housing Officer” posters for each of the six areas of the Borough be re-circulated to all Members of the Committee.*

Annual update on the Safe and Sound Partnership priorities

The Committee considered an overview of the Safe and Sound (Dudley’s Community Safety Partnership) and the ongoing work to

improve the management of neighbour disputes and anti-social behaviour.

Outcomes:

- *That the Director of Housing and Communities be requested to:*
 - *identify appropriate Housing Officers for the Wolverhampton Street area and circulate the information to Councillor C Reid;*
 - *investigate timescales involved in erecting notices notifying the public of the consequences of graffiti and associated matters and provide a response to all Members of the Committee;*
 - *raise Member issues in relation to online harm at the next meeting of the Safe and Sound Board and arrange for a response to be provided to all Members of the Committee on the types of online harm being fed through the Community Safety Partnership and what was being done to tackle the issues;*
 - *forward Members' appreciation to the Head of Anti-Social Behaviour and her Team for the exceptional work provided in communities;*
 - *investigate location and impact of Public Space Protection Orders and circulate to Members of the Committee;*
 - *invite a Police representative to attend the next meeting of the Select Committee where an update on the Safe and Sound Partnership was provided to respond to specific questions raised by Members.*
 - *provide information to all Members of the Committee following the confirmation of the annual community safety fund received from The Office of Police and Crime Commissioner.*

Review of Housing Finance

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director of Housing and Communities and the Director of Finance and Legal on the Review of Housing Finance.

Outcome:

- *That the latest Housing Revenue Account outturn forecast for 2023/24, outlined in paragraphs 5 – 9 and Appendix 1 of the report submitted, be noted.*
- *That the proposals considered by Cabinet at its meeting held on 13th December, 2023, relating to the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2024/25 onwards, as detailed above, be endorsed.*

Review of Private Rented Sector

The Committee considered a report on the roles and responsibilities of the Private Sector Housing Team working in the Private Rented Sector, including the statutory duties of the team which determined key roles and responsibilities, enforcement options available and challenges faced in operations.

Outcome:-

- *That Councillor C Reid be requested to provide information associated with a specific rogue landlord to the Private Sector Housing Manager for investigation and appropriate action.*
- *That the Private Sector Housing Manager be requested to provide actual figures of empty homes located within the Borough associated with the private sector to all Members of the Committee.*
- *That the Private Sector Housing Team work with colleagues in Planning, Regeneration, Environment and other departments, to look into how selective licensing could be used to tackle ongoing issues in hotspot locations concerning the lack of waste storage and inappropriate parking, particularly in town centres.*
- *That Councillor C Reid provide information associated with the derelict properties located in Charlton Street and surrounding areas to the Private Sector Housing Manager for appropriate investigation and action.*

Contractor Management

The Committee considered reports on the work being undertaken to review contracts and contractor management.

Outcome:-

- *Noted that the review of contractor management was underway with an expected outcome due in April 2025, with the implementation of a new approach and strategy to the procurement and management of contractors.*
- *That a further report be submitted to the Committee towards to end of the 2024 municipal year setting out the final outcomes of the project.*

Other Items Considered by the Committee in the 2023/24 Municipal Year

- Customer Engagement and Involvement
- Community Housing Services – The Neighbourhood Approach

Ongoing/Future Items

Items that require further consideration and potential inclusion in the Scrutiny Programme for 2024/25 are listed below: -

- *Review of Housing Finance*
- *Stock Condition Survey*
- *Private Rented Housing*
- *Safe and Sound (Community Safety Partnership Board)*
- *Contractor Management*