

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

TUESDAY, 08 JULY 2025 AT 14:00 HOURS
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL HOUSE, VICTORIA SQUARE,
BIRMINGHAM, B1 1BB

A G E N D A

1 NOTICE OF RECORDING

Lord Mayor to advise that this meeting will be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Public-I microsite [\(please click this link\)](#) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there are confidential or exempt items.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members are reminded they must declare all relevant pecuniary and other registerable interests arising from any business to be discussed at this meeting.

If a disclosable pecuniary interest is declared a Member must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless they have been granted a dispensation.

If other registerable interests are declared a Member may speak on the matter only if members of the public are allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless they have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', Members do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that they have an interest.

Information on the Local Government Association's Model Councillor Code of Conduct is set out via <http://bit.ly/3WtGQnN>. This includes, at Appendix 1, an interests flowchart which provides a simple guide to declaring interests at meetings.

3 MINUTES

To confirm and authorise the signing of the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2025.

4 LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(1400-1410)

To receive the Lord Mayor's announcements and such communications as the Lord Mayor may wish to place before the Council.

5 PETITIONS

(10 minutes allocated) (1410-1420)

To receive and deal with petitions in accordance with Council Rules of Procedure (B4.4 E of the Constitution)

As agreed by Council Business Management Committee a schedule of outstanding petitions is available electronically with the published papers for the meeting and can be viewed or downloaded.

6 QUESTION TIME

(70 minutes allocated) (1420-1530)

To deal with oral questions in accordance with Council Rules of Procedure (B4.4 F of the Constitution).

- A. Questions from Members of the Public to any Cabinet Member or Ward Forum Chair (20 minutes)
- B. Questions from any Councillor to a Committee Chair, Lead Member of a Joint Board or Ward Forum Chair (up to 10 minutes)
- C. Questions from Councillors other than Cabinet Members to a Cabinet Member (up to 20 minutes)
- D. Questions from Councillors other than Cabinet Member to the Leader or Deputy Leader (up to 20 minutes)

7 **APPOINTMENTS BY THE COUNCIL**

(5 minutes allocated) (1530-1535)

To make appointments to, or removal from, committees, outside bodies or other offices which fall to be determined by the Council.

101 - 146

8 **ROUTE TO NET ZERO ANNUAL REPORT 2024**

(35 minutes allocated) (1535-1610)

Councillor Majid Mahmood to move the following recommendations:

"That Council:

1. Notes the progress and achievements made in the last 12 months both on the Route to Zero Carbon and City of Nature programmes set out in Appendix 1, alongside wider Council and city decarbonisation activities.
2. Notes the level of Council's greenhouse gas emissions, calculated in accordance with the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol reporting standards set out in para 4.2.
3. Notes the Birmingham's City's greenhouse gas territorial emissions using the UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics set out in para 4.3.
4. The Route to Net Zero team will continue working with directorates and services across the Council to improve awareness of net zero and support activities to reduce the Council's emissions. Alongside this, they will continue to work with stakeholders and citizens to support net zero, whilst pursuing further funding opportunities, building upon our previous successes, to deliver our climate change, nature, and net zero activities. Outcomes and progress will be reported annually to Council."

147 - 194

9 **EXECUTIVE BUSINESS REPORT**

(30 minutes allocated) (1610-1640)

Councillor Nicky Brennan to move the following recommendation:

"That the report be noted by the City Council".

(Break 1640-1705)

195 - 206

10 **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

(10 minutes allocated) (1705-1715)

Councillor John Cotton to move the following recommendation:

"That City Council approves the annual report of the Standards Committee."

SCRUTINY INQUIRY - ATTRACT AND RETAIN A YOUNGER WORKFORCE

(25 minutes allocated) (1715-1740)

Councillor Katherine Iroh to move the following recommendations:

" That the Council:

1. Considers the Inquiry's key findings and requests the Executive implements the Inquiry's recommendations;
2. Confirms the timeframe for when long term workforce planning for each directorate will be completed;
3. Analyse key findings from exit interviews with leavers aged 24 and under to understand why approximately 50% are leaving within their first 12 months;
4. Provide both a corporate and directorate summary of how these workforce plans will deliver on corporate objectives, with a specific focus on how they will increase numbers of staff aged 24 and under and informed by exit interviews;
5. Advise how this will be monitored in the future to ensure workforce plans are on track and remain focused on delivering corporate objectives;
6. Ensure there is a corporate list setting out the number and directorate/ service for all early entrants including apprentices and graduates;
7. Advise when the review of the Attraction Policy will be complete and the timescale for the implementation of a new policy;
8. Implement a new Attraction Policy including refreshed careers content on the Council website, information to schools, colleges and universities; attendance at Job Fairs, and with a focus on how local government careers can deliver social impact;
9. Review how work experience opportunities are accessed to ensure it is fair and equitable to all young people in Birmingham, and set out timeframes for how any improvements will be delivered;
10. Deliver a refreshed work experience programme;
11. Provide a timeframe for when Council will be able to guarantee interviews for care leavers and have appropriate support in place. This should include wraparound support for new starters;
12. Refresh the application process for roles at the Council including:
 - a. Resetting the different roles in recruitment and in particular, the role of HR, OD and Transformation as Subject Matter Experts in support of individual hiring managers;
 - b. Reviewing the time taken from advert to onboarding to enable joiners to start quicker;
 - c. All future job adverts and job descriptions to be reviewed by HR, OD and Transformation in line with directorate workforce plans;
 - d. All future job adverts and job descriptions are inclusive by ensuring any qualifications listed are necessary and all language used realistically sets out the role;
 - e. The introduction of wider application tools including phone based applications;
 - f. Reviewing managers' unconscious bias training to ensure age and care experience as protective characteristics are recognised;
 - g. Ensuring applicant data is available and used to baseline current recruitment of young people and monitor any future impact;

13. Map out the current employment programmes delivered through the Council or partners and work with partners to adapt or design courses which create a talent pipeline to meet our corporate needs;
14. Consider options for how a corporately led approach for early entrant programmes could be implemented; and if this is not possible, advise what mitigations can be put in place to enable these programmes to contribute more effectively towards corporate objectives;
15. Consider introducing a challenge that all future recruitments should clearly state why this role could not be undertaken through an apprenticeship or other early entrant programme. This should be considered once the Workforce Strategy and Early Career Strategy have been completed;
16. Explore how further apprenticeship levy could be transferred to SMEs as part of new procurement arrangements;
17. Set out clearly future career pathways supported by accredited training in the Council long term workforce plans to create a talent pipeline; and
18. Confirm a manager package is in place to support staff on early entrant programmes. This should include (but not exclusively):
 - a. Ensuring all managers promote the Early Careers Network and provide time for staff to participate in network activities;
 - b. Surveying all early entrants to confirm how they are being supported by their managers and whether there are opportunities to improve this; and
 - c. Reviewing working at home practices to ensure all staff have access to regular in-person working to support wellbeing and professional development.
19. Agrees that the Executive reports on its progress on these recommendations to the Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee every 6 months and with the first report in January 2026".

245 - 252

12 DECISIONS NOT ON THE FORWARD PLAN AND THOSE AUTHORISED FOR IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION

(10 minutes allocated) (1740-1750)

Councillor John Cotton to move the following recommendation:

"That City Council notes the report".

253 - 258

13 MOTIONS FOR DEBATE FROM INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

(90 minutes allocated) (1750-1920)

To consider the attached Motions of which notice has been given in accordance with Council Rules of Procedure (B4.4 G of the Constitution).



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL HELD
ON TUESDAY, 17 JUNE 2025 AT 1400 HOURS IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, COUNCIL HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM**

PRESENT:- Lord Mayor (Councillor Zafar Iqbal) in the Chair.

Councillors

Deirdre Alden	Robert Alden	Gurdial Singh Atwal
Shabina Bano	David Barker	Baber Baz
Jilly Bermingham	Marcus Bernasconi	Bushra Bi
Sir Albert Bore	Nicky Brennan	Kerry Brewer
Marje Bridle	Martin Brooks	Mick Brown
Zaker Choudhry	Liz Clements	Carmel Corrigan
John Cotton	Phil Davis	Adrian Delaney
Barbara Dring	Sam Forsyth	Ray Goodwin
Rob Grant	Colin Green	Fred Grindrod
Roger Harmer	Deborah Harries	Kath Hartley
Adam Higgs	Des Hughes	Jon Hunt
Mumtaz Hussain	Mahmood Hussain	Shabrana Hussain
Timothy Huxtable	Mohammed Idrees	Katherine Iroh
Ziaul Islam	Morriam Jan	Meirion Jenkins
Jane Jones	Amar Khan	Mariam Khan
Saqib Khan	Izzy Knowles	Chaman Lal
Bruce Lines	Mary Locke	Basharat Mahmood
Majid Mahmood	Lee Marsham	Karen McCarthy
Saddak Miah	Shehla Moledina	Gareth Moore
Simon Morrall	David Pears	Miranda Perks
Rob Pocock	Julien Pritchard	Hendrina Quinnen
Esther Rai	Lauren Rainbow	Darius Sandhu
Jamie Scott	Shafique Shah	Rinkal Shergill
Ron Storer	Saima Suleman	Jamie Tennant
Lisa Trickett	Penny Wagg	Clifton Welch
Ken Wood	Alex Yip	Waseem Zaffar

NOTICE OF RECORDING

1. The Lord Mayor advised that the meeting would be webcast for live and subsequent broadcasting via the Council's Public-I website and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or

exempt items.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

2. The Lord Mayor reminded Members that they must declare all relevant pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests relating to any items of business to be discussed at the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

MINUTES

3. It was moved by the Lord Mayor, seconded and –

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting and the Annual Meeting held on 20 May 2025 be taken as read and confirmed and

signed.

LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

4. The Lord Mayor indicated that his announcements were extremely pleasant, as he was delighted to congratulate those mentioned in The King's Birthday Honours list this year, for services to Birmingham or who lived in Birmingham.

Awarded a Knight Bachelor:

- Andrew George Christie

A CBE:

- James Barton

An OBE:

- Hanifa Unisa Shah
- Fang Gao Smith

- Captain Jagjit Singh Sohal

An MBE:

- Peter Richard Bill
- Surdarshan Singh Chana
- Hafsha Dadabhai-Shaikh
- Anne Teresa Fenton
- Janet Mary Harding
- Joanne Judith Jones
- Rachel Kerry O'Reilly
- Wayne Ian Parmel
- Sonia Sabri
- Surdarshan Singh
- Sarah Elizabeth Smith
- Elizabeth Swift
- Nicolette Marie Thomas-Tapper

A British Empire Medal:

- Christie Acton
- Elizabeth Brownlees
- Gavin Brownlees
- Richard Patrick Hayhow
- Peter Paul Mayer
- Aruna Bipin Mistry
- Patricia Prudence Neal

And the King's Police Medal:

- Samantha Ellen Ridding
- Timothy John Rogers
- Nigel Philip Walsh

Council joined the Lord Mayor in congratulating them all on these marvelous achievements.

PETITIONS

Petitions Relating to City Council Functions Presented at the Meeting

5. The following petitions were presented:-

(See document No. 1, 'Additional Meeting Documents')

In accordance with the proposals by the Members presenting the petitions, it was moved by the Lord Mayor, seconded and:-

RESOLVED:-

That the petitions were received and referred to the relevant Chief Officer(s).

PETITIONS UPDATE

6. A Petitions Update had been made available electronically:-

(See document No. 2, 'Additional Meeting Documents')

It was moved by the Lord Mayor, seconded and

RESOLVED:-

That the Petitions Update be noted and those petitions for which a satisfactory response has been received, be

discharged.

QUESTION TIME

7. The Council proceeded to consider Oral Questions in accordance with Council Rules of Procedure (B4.4 F of the Constitution).

Details of the questions asked are available for public inspection via the webcast.

CITY COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS 2025/26

8. A report of the Interim Head of Scrutiny and Committee Services was submitted:-

(See document No. 3, agenda item 7)

Councillor John Cotton moved the recommendations which were seconded from the floor.

The Lord Mayor invited Councillor John Cotton to sum up.

RESOLVED:-

That, as a result of changes to the political proportionality of the Council:

1. The Harborne and Quinton Independent Group be invited to nominate to a total of 2 seats on non-executive committees as follows.

Planning Committee replacing Councillor Goodwin (Labour).

Licensing & Public Protection Committee replacing Councillor Bridle

(Labour)

2. That the Liberal Democrat Group be invited to nominate a Member to the Education Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee replacing Councillor Clancy (Conservative).
-

APPOINTMENTS BY THE COUNCIL

9. The Lord Mayor invited Groups to address the Council to advise of any changes to appointments.
Councillors Gareth Moore, Katherine Iroh, Baber Baz and Martin Brooks all addressed Council.

RESOLVED:-

1. That City Council noted the following changes to appointments:
 - a. Councillor Meirion Jenkins was replaced by Councillor Clifton Welch on the Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
 - b. Councillor Sam Forsyth was appointed to the Licensing and Public Protection Committee.
 - c. Councillor Martin Brooks was appointed to the Planning Committee.
 - d. Councillor Basharat Mahmood was replaced by Councillor Jane Jones on Licensing Sub-Committee B.
 - e. Councillor Deborah Harries was appointed to the Education, Children and Young People Overview and

Scrutiny Committee.

DECISIONS NOT ON THE FORWARD PLAN AND THOSE AUTHORISED FOR IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION

10. The Lord Mayor advised the meeting that this item had been deferred to the July 2025 meeting.
-

11. A report of the Head of Corporate Performance, Strategy Insight and Governance was submitted:- (See document No. 4, agenda item 10).

Councillor John Cotton moved the recommendations which were seconded by Councillor Rob Pocock.

There was one amendment to be debated with the report.

Councillor Deirdre Alden moved the amendment which was seconded by Councillor Robert Alden.

A debate ensued.

Councillors Roger Harmer, Julien Pritchard, Sir Albert Bore, Gareth Moore, Waseem Zaffar, Marje Bridle, Katherine Iroh and Morriam Jan spoke during the debate.

The Lord Mayor invited Councillor John Cotton to sum up.

The amendment proposed by Councillor Deirdre Alden and seconded by Councillor Robert Alden was put to the vote and by a show of hands was declared to be lost.

Names were called and the Chamber doors were locked.

Here upon a poll being demanded the voting was as follows:-

For the amendment (16)

Deirdre Alden	Gareth Moore	Alex Yip
Baber Baz	Martin Brooks	Timothy Huxtable
Adrian Delaney	Adam Higgs	Bruce Lines
Ron Storer	Clifton Welch	Robert Alden
David Pears	Ken Wood	Darius Sandhu
Kerry Brewer		

Against the amendment (46)

Katherine Iroh	Ray Goodwin	Carmel Corrigan
Miranda Perks	Karen McCarthy	Jamie Tennant
Saima Suleman	Shafique Shah	Saddak Miah
Rob Pocock	Ziaul Islam	Chaman Lal
Jayne Francis	Mariam Khan	John Cotton
Lisa Trickett	Shabrana Hussian	Basharat Mahmood
Marje Bridle	Hendrina Quinnen	Mahmood Hussain
Roger Harmer	Lauren Rainbow	Mohammed Idrees
Waseem Zaffar	Phil Davis	Majid Mahmood
Mick Brown	Jamie Scott	Rinkal Shergill
Peny Wagg	Kath Hartley	Colin Green
Sir Albert Bore	Deborah Harries	Morriam Jan

Jane Jones
Jilly Bermingham
Lee Marsham
Bushra Bi

Mary Locke
Esther Rai
Izzy Knowles

David Barker
Barbara Dring
Zaker Choudhry

Abstentions (2)

Julien Pritchard

Rob Grant

The proposed amendment was lost

RESOLVED:-

That City Council:

1. Approved the City Vision (Appendix 1) as the shared, partnership-wide, framework for strategic planning.
 2. Approved the Corporate Plan (Appendix 2) as the overarching document that summarises the key priorities to drive improvement and contribute to the City Vision.
 3. Noted the Annual Business Plan (Appendix 3) and the key metrics and milestones within.
 4. Noted the Performance Management Framework (Appendix 4) as a key mechanism for ensuring accountability for performance throughout the organisation
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ADJOURNMENT

12. It was moved by the Lord Mayor, seconded and-

RESOLVED:-

That the Council be adjourned until 1705 hours on this day.

The Council then adjourned at 1640 hours.

13. At 1705 hours the Council resumed at the point where the meeting had been adjourned.
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AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

14. A report of the Independent Chair of the Audit Committee was submitted:-

(See document No. 5, agenda item 11)

Councillor John Cotton moved the recommendations which were seconded from the floor.

The Lord Mayor invited Andrew Hardingham, Independent Chair of the Audit Committee to address Council.

A debate ensued.

Councillors Fred Grindrod, Miranda Perks and Lee Marsham spoke during the debate.

The Lord Mayor invited Councillor John Cotton to sum up.

RESOLVED:-

1. That the Council noted the report.
-

MOTIONS FOR DEBATE FROM INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

The Council proceeded to consider the Motions of which notice had been given in accordance with Council Rules of Procedure (B4.4 G of the Constitution).

A. Councillors Jamie Tennant and Rinkal Shergill had given notice of the following Notice of Motion:-

(See document No. 6, agenda item 12)

Councillor Jamie Tennant moved the Motion which was seconded by Councillor Rinkal Shergill.

There were no amendments to be debated with this Motion.

The Lord Mayor called upon Councillor Jamie Tennant to reply.

The Motion, having been moved and seconded was put to the vote and by a show of hands was declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:-

“This Council notes that:

Sikhs and Jews have been legally recognised as ethnic groups for over 40 years since the Mandla v Dowell-Lee case in 1983, and this was reaffirmed in the Equality Act 2010.

Sikhs and Jews can be considered both ethnic and religious groups under the Equality Act 2010. Despite this, ethnicity data on Jews and Sikhs is not routinely collected by public bodies, and The Race Disparity Audit

found that of 340 data sets held across government, none included data on Sikhs.

The government advises public bodies to primarily use the existing ethnic categories modelled on the Census to deliver public services, not the religion category. The collection of ethnicity data is therefore crucial for equalities, but Jews and Sikhs are not included as specific options in ethnicity questions recommended by the government.

The routine collection of ethnicity data on Jews and Sikhs by public bodies is crucial to delivering on their statutory Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

Birmingham City Council's current standardised demographics questionnaire does not include specific 'Sikh' and 'Jewish' categories as options for a person's ethnic group.

This Council believes that:

Birmingham's estimated 2,000-strong Jewish community and over 30,000 Sikh residents make an enormous contribution to the culture, diversity and prosperity of our city, and should be supported to identify as they choose with specific 'Jewish' and 'Sikh' ethnic group categories as options for a person's ethnic group.

More comprehensive data collection on Jewish and Sikh residents will allow us to more effectively meet our Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), better understand the communities we serve, tackle inequalities and discrimination, promote equality, equitably deliver public services and allocate resources fairly.

This Council resolves to:

- Routinely include specific 'Jewish' and 'Sikh' categories as options for a person's ethnic group wherever we collect data about ethnicity, and to update our standardised demographics questionnaire to reflect this and encourage our partners across the city to also make these changes.
- Write to the city's MPs and the Equalities Minister to support the 'Public Body Ethnicity Data (Inclusion of Jewish and Sikh Categories)' Bill as it progresses through Parliament."

B. Councillors Robert Alden and Alex Yip had given notice of the following Notice of Motion:-

(See document No. 7, agenda item 12)

Councillor Robert Alden moved the Motion which was seconded by Councillor Alex Yip.

In accordance with Council Rules of Procedure, Councillors Morriam Jan and Baber Baz gave notice of the following amendment to the Motion:

(See document No. 8, 'Amendments – City Council').

Councillor Morriam Jan moved the amendment which was seconded by Councillor Baber Baz.

In accordance with Council Rules of Procedure, Councillors Nicky Brennan and Mick Brown gave notice of the following amendment to the Motion:-

(See document No. 9, 'Amendments – City Council').

Councillor Nicky Brennan moved the amendment which was seconded by Councillor Mick Brown.

In accordance with Council Rules of Procedure, Councillors Gareth Moore and Clifton Welch gave notice of the following amendment to the Motion:-

(See document No. 10, 'Amendments – City Council').

Councillor Gareth Moore moved the amendment which was seconded by Councillor Clifton Welch.

A debate ensued.

Councillors Adam Higgs, Rob Grant, Saima Suleman, Sam Forsyth and Jamie Tennant spoke during the debate.

The Lord Mayor invited Councillor Robert Alden to sum up.

The amendment to the Motion in the names of Councillors Morriam Jan and Baber Baz having been moved and seconded was put to the vote and by a show of hands was declared to be carried.

The amendment to the Motion in the names of Councillors Nicky Brennan and Mick Brown having been moved and seconded was put to the vote and by a show of hands was declared to be carried.

The amendment to the Motion in the names of Councillors Gareth Moore and Clifton Welch having been moved and seconded was put to the vote and by a show of hands was declared to be carried.

The Motion as amended, having been moved and seconded was put to the vote and by a show of hands was declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:-

“The Council does not believe that the limited scope of inquiries into grooming gangs undertaken so far were sufficient to help secure justice for the tens of thousands of young girls who have suffered, or to identify

adequate measures to protect children from such atrocities continuing into the future.

Council therefore welcomes the recommendation of Baroness Louise Casey that a full national inquiry is needed and the government's statement that it intends to accept this recommendation along with all 12 recommendations.

Council notes the campaigning for a full national inquiry, particularly from victims and their families who have bravely spoken out.

Council call upon the Government to ensure the inquiry is not unduly delayed and that its scope is sufficiently broad and comprehensive enough so that child sexual exploitation by grooming gangs both historic and current in the West Midlands and across the whole of the country is fully investigated and appropriate lessons can be picked up and applied locally and nationally.

Meanwhile, all other recommendations in the Baroness Casey Report and the Jay

Report should be fully implemented by the government, local authorities, and all relevant organisations without any further delay.

Further, the Council fully commits to cooperating with and supporting the promised Inquiry in any way necessary, including but not limited to sharing all information it holds relating to incidents and risks. It also asks the Managing Director to instruct all staff and contractors not to dispose of any information that may be relevant to the Inquiry, including ensuring records management companies that hold information on the council's behalf extend the retention period of relevant files to ensure they are not destroyed.

This council notes the recommendation about taxi licensing in the Casey report and believes that a nationwide taxi licensing scheme should be introduced.

Council believes that anyone involved with perpetrating, enabling, or covering up these horrific crimes, no matter their position, should face the full force of the law.

Council also commits to reviewing what changes and improvements it can make ahead of national changes to progress the Baroness Casey recommendations, including better data recording and information sharing and affirming a clear position for everyone working for and with the council that children should be treated as children.

This council notes the government have said that they will proceed with implementing the recommendations of the Jay Report. Council believes this is an important step and publicly expresses its regret that the previous government did not commit to implementing the recommendations and welcomes the government's commitment to a full national statutory inquiry into grooming gangs.

Council notes that the Tackling Exploitation Strategy and Delivery Plan is a whole partnership strategic approach to tackling child exploitation in Birmingham and recognises that it is our joint responsibility to both prevent children from becoming victims of this form of abuse and reduce the opportunities that offenders may have to exploit children in the future.

The strategy takes a child-centred; relationship-based approach, whilst recognising that to protect other children and minimise the potential for future abuse there is a need to identify, disrupt and prosecute offenders. A further update will be provided to the Education, Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the coming months.

Council welcomes the call for a full national public inquiry investigating child sexual exploitation and we urge that it is carried out as quickly as possible to ensure that any learning from it is implemented swiftly. Council believes that this inquiry should complement and not impede the implementation of the 20 recommendations published in the Jay Review.

Council calls on the government to take a victim-centred approach to the full national public inquiry, building on the work begun by the Safeguarding Minister, and continue to work with local authorities where appropriate to investigate both historic and current cases of abuse whether in the West Midlands or across the whole of the country to ensure appropriate lessons can be picked up and applied locally and nationally.

Council believes that all victims of child sexual abuse should be heard that there are systems in place to provide adequate support and that all victims should qualify for free and independent legal advice and legal aid.”

The Lord Mayor made a presentation to and thanked Marie Rosenthal, Interim City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer who was leaving the Council after 20 months’ service.

The meeting ended at 1844 hours.



CITY COUNCIL 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

A To the Leader of the Council

1. Shaping Birmingham's Future Together

From Councillor Ewan Mackey

2. Creating Second Chances

From Councillor Debbie Clancy

3. Vision and Corporate Plan

From Councillor Adrian Delaney

4. Moved to B3

B To the Deputy Leader of the Council

1. Moved to F15

2. "Basement Carpet"

From Councillor Clifton Welch

3. Planning Breaches Email

From Councillor Jon Hunt

C To the Cabinet Member for Children Young People and Families

1. CSE

From Councillor Debbie Clancy

2. Home to School Transport

From Councillor Alex Yip

D To the Cabinet Member for Digital, Culture, Heritage & Tourism

VE Day Funding

From Councillor Clifton Welch

E To the Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport

1. **Centenary Square Water Feature**
From Councillor Deirdre Alden
2. **Trade Waste**
From Councillor Robert Alden
3. **Rat Baiting**
From Councillor David Barrie
4. **City Centre Fountains**
From Councillor Matt Bennett
5. **Pot Holes**
From Councillor Maureen Cornish
6. **Support from other LAs**
From Councillor Debbie Clancy
7. **Grab Trucks**
From Councillor Adam Higgs
8. **MHWC Visits**
From Councillor Richard Parkin
9. **Parking in Parks**
From Councillor David Pears
10. **Paper Recycling Income**
From Councillor Ewan Mackey
11. **WRCO Officers**
From Councillor Ron Storer
12. **Graffiti**
From Councillor Gareth Moore
13. **Ward Breakdown of MHWC Visits**
From Councillor Baber Baz

F To the Cabinet Member for Finance

1. Highways PFI Reserve

From Councillor Timothy Huxtable

2. Spring Fun Fest- Centenary Square

From Councillor Ewan Mackey

3. Moved to H11

4. CfGS spend

From Councillor Adrian Delaney

5. Contract Register

From Councillor Debbie Clancy

6. Business Rates on Car Parks

From Councillor Richard Parkin

7. Serco

From Councillor Ron Storer

8. Spitfire Advice and Support Services

From Councillor Gareth Moore

9. Consultants

From Councillor Matt Bennett

10. Mercer

From Councillor David Barrie

11. Equal Pay Comms

From Councillor Adam Higgs

12. Park incomes and expenditure

From Councillor David Pears

13. Business Rates Income from Pubs and Bars

From Councillor Deirdre Alden

14. Report Financing

From Councillor Baber Baz

15. Debt and Benefit Advice Services

From Councillor Robert Alden

G To the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care

NONE SUBMITTED

H To the Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness

1. Traveller Sites

From Councillor Adam Higgs

2. Oscott Gardens

From Councillor Darius Sandhu

3. Oscott Gardens Cost

From Councillor Clifton Welch

4. CCTV in Tower Blocks

From Councillor Robert Alden

5. ASB in Tower Blocks

From Councillor Gareth Moore

6. Property Acquisition Programme

From Councillor Ron Storer

7. Temporary Accommodation Out of Contract Placements

From Councillor Adrian Delaney

8. Temporary Accommodation Arrears

From Councillor Adam Higgs

9. Property Acquisition Strategy

From Councillor Ewan Mackey

10. Monthly Number of Total Residents and Children Living in Temporary Accommodation

From Councillor Roger Harmer

11. **Contracts with Exempt\Supported Accommodation Providers**

From Councillor Robert Alden

I **To the Cabinet Member for Social Justice, Community Safety and Equalities**

NONE SUBMITTED

J **To the Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR**

1. **1 May All Staff Seminar**

From Councillor Ron Storer

2. **Corporate Complaints Approach for Missed Collections**

From Councillor Adam Higgs

3. **West Midlands Employers – Job Evaluation**

From Councillor Robert Alden

4. **TUPE**

From Councillor Darius Sandhu

5. **External Legal Services**

From Councillor Ewan Mackey

6. **Governance on waste dispute**

From Councillor Deirdre Alden

7. **Equal Pay legal advice**

From Councillor Debbie Clancy

8. **Facility Time**

From Councillor Adrian Delaney

9. **Strategic Partner Programme Support, Early Intervention and Prevention Programme**

From Councillor Clifton Welch

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM
COUNCILLOR EWAN MACKEY**

“Shaping Birmingham’s Future Together”

Question:

How many of the glossy brochures for Shaping Birmingham’s Future Together were printed and at what cost?

Answer:

500 printed copies of the City Vision were produced at a Cost of £1345.50.
Design work was completed by the in-house design team.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR
DEBBIE CLANCY**

“Creating Second Chances”

Question:

At a launch event for a project called ‘creating second chances’, Councillor Waseem Zaffar used a display banner about the project that said that, amongst other organisations, the project was supported by Birmingham City Council.

Specifically what support is being provided by the City Council to this scheme and what permission was sought and granted for the use of the City Council logo on a display board that also carried his own election campaigning website?

Answer:

This was a non-political event. BCC officers attended at the ward councillor's request.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR ADRIAN DELANEY

“Vision and Corporate Plan”

Question:

Including all consultation events, design and print work, and any consultancy support, what was the total cost and hours of officer time for the production of the City Vision and Corporate Plan, including associated documents and reports?

Answer:

Corporate Plan

- The production of a Corporate Plan is an important aspect of our Best Value duty. The Improvement and Recovery Plan (IRP), which now forms an integrated part of the corporate plan is an essential part of the Council's improvement journey. The first IRP was mandated by the Statutory Directions dated October 2023 and a refresh was required after consultation with Commissioners.
- The previous Corporate Plan was approved in 2022 and no longer reflected the current context. Refreshing and bringing the Corporate Plan and IRP together into a single, coherent plan for the organisation ensures clarity of direction, performance targets and deliverables against which progress can be reported and reinforces the importance of continuous improvement of services in line with our Best Value Duty.
- **0 printed copies** have been produced of the Corporate Plan. This will be available in an accessible format online for download. Design work was completed by the in-house design team and used imagery and design content that had already been developed for the City Vision.
- **1 online session** was held to share the draft high level priorities and discuss how citizens would like to be kept informed of progress towards the Corporate Plan.
- **£74,260 (ex VAT)** was spent on consultancy support to the development of the Corporate Plan and component IRP, which was bid for, and funded through, the IRP transformation fund.

- Officers from across the breadth of BCC services were involved in the production of the Corporate Plan and Annual Business Plan. Officer time spent on this is not an “add on” that has incurred costs, but a core expectation on role holders to shape and continuously improve council services through a coherent planning and performance framework in line with the Best Value Duty placed on all Local Authorities. Evidencing that we are meeting this Duty is crucial to our recovery and exit from intervention. Whilst the Corporate Plan covers 3 years, the annual business plan will be refreshed each year to ensure the latest context and progress is reflected and any new or emerging opportunities are seized.

City Vision

- **500** printed copies of the City Vision were produced. Design work was completed by the in-house design team.
- Officers from across BCC contributed to the development, but the activity was co-ordinated and led by the [Public Participation team](#).
- **40** events were held with citizens and partners to develop the vision (10 online)
- **30** community venues provided their spaces free of charge for this purpose

A4

**PLEASE NOTE WRITTEN QUESTION A1 TO THE LEADER
OF THE COUNCIL HAS NOW BEEN REDIRECTED TO THE
DEPUTY LEADER – B3**

B1

**PLEASE NOTE WRITTEN QUESTION B1 TO THE DEPUTY
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL HAS NOW BEEN REDIRECTED
TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE – F15**

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM
COUNCILLOR CLIFTON WELCH**

“Basement Carpet”

Question:

What was the total cost, including fitting, of the new carpet in the basement of the Council House?

Answer:

The overall project cost of the basement corridor carpet including the Acivico Management fee was £12,855.00.

The construction element of the cost amounted to £67.60 per square metre.

I have asked officers to provide assurance that relevant spend control processes were followed.

The reason for undertaking the flooring replacement was due to health and safety risks resulting from the condition the existing vinyl flooring.

The flooring was circa 40 years old and had severely deteriorated, leading to a number of trip hazards and a lack of accessibility.

These developing issues had been managed for several years (with hazard tape).

The Council House (following closure of other CAB buildings) has become the main office hub for staff and therefore the corridor has become a much more intensively used access route.

Following a number of minor trips and near miss reports the replacement of the floor covering was deemed essential to avoid injury to building users.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR JON HUNT

'Planning Breaches email'

Question:

Does the Deputy Leader consider it right that the Planning Department seems to ignore and fob off emails sent to Planning.Breaches@birmingham.gov.uk, especially as they may contain important information?

Answer:

It is not acceptable for members or residents to be 'ignored or fobbed off' when raising concerns with the Planning Department.

While the Head of Enforcement, Householder & Technical Services has advised that emails sent to Planning.Breaches@birmingham.gov.uk are monitored and responded to, we acknowledge that this may not always reflect individual experiences.

If members have specific examples or sites where emails have gone unanswered, I will follow these up with the Executive Director for Place, Prosperity & Sustainability to ensure they are addressed.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES FROM COUNCILLOR DEBBIE CLANCY

“CSE”

Question:

In each of the last 10 years, how many cases of Child Sexual Exploitation were reported for children already in the care of the council, broken down placement type (residential care, foster etc)

Answer:

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is reported to the Police, so this information is held by them. It is shared confidentially with Birmingham Children’s Trust as part of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

Birmingham Children’s Trust maintains records on whether children or young people, including those in care, present a risk of CSE. It monitors the severity of risk and tailors support and intervention based on risk levels.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES FROM COUNCILLOR ALEX YIP

“Home to School Transport”**Question:**

Since the commencement of the DPS contract for home to school transport, how much has been paid to each provider on the list, and how much has been paid for home to school transport outside of this contract?

Answer:

The DPS expired in October 2023. This was replaced by the Procurement Framework. We still have a number of contracts with 3 providers that are still live that were procured under the DPS, finishing 2025 and 2026, due to the contract durations. We do not hold complete data for historic spend on DPS by Operator.

All contracts subsequently were called off the Framework or through Framework providers in mini competitions for cheaper than Framework prices in which all Framework operators have the opportunity to bid.

Provider	DPS	Framework	Total
Green Destinations	£ 53,197	£ 7,741,274	£ 7,794,471
AFJ	£ 11,472	£ 7,210,224	£ 7,221,696
HATS	£ 3,625,655	£ 2,666,670	£ 6,292,325
London Hire	£ -	£ 202,312	£ 202,312
Halo	£ -	£ 247,642	£ 247,642
Lawrence's Garage	£ -	£ 1,141,272	£ 1,141,272
Select Private Hire	£ -	£ 80,033	£ 80,033
Shencare	£ -	£ 130,283	£ 130,283
Solihull Cars	£ -	£ 182,597	£ 182,597
Taxie Ltd	£ -	£ 533,499	£ 533,499
Travel SOS	£ -	£ 535,702	£ 535,702
Touchwood Private Hire	£ -	£ 173,246	£ 173,246
24/7 Cars	£ -	£ 72,367	£ 72,367
TOTAL	£ 3,690,324	£ 20,917,122	£ 24,607,446

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR DIGITAL, CULTURE,
HERITAGE AND TOURISM FROM COUNCILLOR CLIFTON WELCH****“VE Day Funding”****Question:**

Did the council apply to DCMS for any funding for VE Day 80 year commemoration events? If so how much was applied for and how much, if any was received?

Answer:

The city council did not submit a funding bid to DCMS for VE Day 80-year commemoration events. However, the Lord Mayor's office marked the day by leading a service in Centenary Square which included the raising of the Union Flag and a minute's silence.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND
TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR DEIRDRE ALDEN**

“Centenary Square Water Feature”

Question:

When does the Council expect the water feature in Centenary Square to actually feature water again?

Answer:

There is currently work being undertaken to identify necessary repairs for the fountain. We will undertake those repairs and then complete a further review to ensure the fountain is functional. On successful completion, the feature will be operational.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND
TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR ROBERT ALDEN**

“Trade Waste”

Question:

How many organisations have a) cancelled or b) not renewed their trade waste contracts since January 2025 and what is the lost revenue from this?

Answer:

The surplus associated with the loss of contracts is £140,000.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND
TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID BARRIE**

“Rat Baiting”

Question:

What is the frequency of rat baiting in sewers in each of the last 4 years?

Answer:

Sewers are owned by Severn Trent. Several years ago, Severn Trent paid the Council to undertake sewer baiting on their behalf, however this ceased some years ago. Birmingham City Council therefore does not undertake treatments in the sewers.

It is a legal duty on all landowners and property owners to keep land free of rodents and therefore it is a matter for Severn Trent Plc on who they use to meet this duty.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND
TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR MATT BENNETT**

“City Centre Fountains”

Question:

What is the maintenance schedule for the public realm fountains in Victoria Square and Chamberlain Square, including how often the pumps are cleaned and when this was last done?

Answer:

The fountains in Victoria Square and Chamberlain square are attended on a weekly basis for regular routine maintenance. At the most recent visit on 9th June 2025 the pumps in the Victoria Square fountain were cleaned.

The Chamberlain Square fountain has recently been drained to facilitate the steam cleaning of the structure. This is scheduled to take place between 16th and 18th June 2025, following which the fountain will be back in operation.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND
TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR MAUREEN CORNISH**

“Pot Holes”

Question:

How many potholes were reported in 2024?

Answer:

While the Council maintain an asset management system that quantifies various assets, such as roads and infrastructure, a pothole itself is not considered an asset within our systems. Therefore, we are unable to provide a precise figure for the total number of potholes reported in 2024 due to various factors that influence how a 'pothole' may be categorised. These factors may include size, depth, location, and severity, among others and therefore, it would be inaccurate and misleading to present a definitive count of potholes reported.

Our sub-contractor Kier, on behalf of the Council, actively investigate all reported carriageway defects and proactively identify and repair those discovered during routine inspections and those reported by the public. We can confirm that during 2024, the number of 'pothole' defect jobs raised was 4,788.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND
TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR DEBBIE CLANCY**

“Support from other LAs”

Question:

On what date did the Council stop bringing in additional support from other local authorities for clearing waste and why?

Answer:

The additional support from other local authorities has not stopped.

The council will continue to use mutual aid for clearing waste from the streets of Birmingham.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND
TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR ADAM HIGGS**

“Grab Trucks”

Question:

How many grab trucks have been used, at what cost, per week by the Council since January for clearing waste from the streets? (cost including vehicle, staffing and disposal)

Answer:

From January 1st - April 25th 2025 the Council has:

- Deployed 136 grab vehicle shifts
- A total cost of £165,750
- This equates to a weekly cost of £10,045.45

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR RICHARD PARKIN

“MHWC Visits”

Question:

Please list the total number of MHWC visits for each Ward between 1 January and 15 June 2025, split between weekday and weekend visits

Answer:

Below as requested is a list by ward of the MHWC service visits for the timeframes being requested. MHWC resources are allocated on the basis of need, but this is not a universal service and not all wards have suitable locations for safe operation of the service.

MHWC Visit Numbers by Ward Jan-May 2025

<u>Ward</u>	<u>Visit Number</u>
Acocks Green	5
Allens Cross	1
Alum Rock	8
Aston	7
Balsall Heath West	5
Bartley Green	6
Billesley	5
Birchfield	3
Bordesley & Highgate	2
Bordesley Green	3
Bournbrook & Selly Park	0

Bournville & Cotteridge	1
Brandwood & Kings Heath	2
Bromford & Hodge Hill	8
Castle Vale	5
Druids Heath and Monyhull	2
Edgbaston	2
Erdington	3
Frankley Great Park	3
Garretts Green	1
Glebe Farm & Tile Cross	5
Gravelly Hill	2
Hall Green North	1
Hall Green South	3
Handsworth	2
Handsworth Wood	4
Harborne	4
Heartlands	4
Highters Heath	3
Holyhead	2
Kings Norton North	2
Kings Norton South	2
Kingstanding	2
Ladywood	1
Longbridge & West Heath	0
Lozells	3
Moseley	1

Nechells	2
Newtown	2
North Edgbaston	3
Northfield	1
Oscott	1
Perry Barr	2
Perry Common	0
Pype Hayes	4
Quinton	5
Rubery & Rednal	1
Shard End	2
Sheldon	3
Small Heath	4
Soho & Jewellery Quarter	0
South Yardley	3
Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East	5
Sparkhill	3
Stirchley	3
Stockland Green	1
Sutton Four Oaks	0
Sutton Mere Green	0
Sutton Reddicap	1
Sutton Roughley	0
Sutton Trinity	0
Sutton Vesey	3
Sutton Walmley & Minworth	1

Sutton Wylde Green	0
Tyseley & Hay Mills	2
Ward End	8
Weoley & Selly Oak	2
Yardley East	1
Yardley West & Stechford	4

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND
TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID PEARS**

“Parking in parks”

Question:

Will the Cabinet Member confirm in writing that all income from the introduction of car parking charges in council parks will be spent in the parks themselves as an increase in overall funding and not just a replacement for existing funding?

Answer:

As per the Cabinet report approved on 13th May 2025, once the capital investment for the car parking schemes has been repaid, i.e. 2028/29 onwards, surplus car park revenue, over and above any agreed savings, will be reinvested to improve car parking facilities and enhance wider park infrastructure and amenities.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND
TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR EWAN MACKEY**

“Paper Recycling Income”

Question:

What has been the total income received from paper and cardboard recycling since January 2025 to date, and what was it for the same period in each of the previous 3 years?

Answer:

The income from paper and cardboard from January to May 2025 was £57,054, this was lower than previous years due to the suspension of mixed paper recycling collections from February 2025 during Industrial Action.

Paper & Cardboard Receipts	January to May
2022	153,296
2023	200,815
2024	138,053

Source: Oracle (excluding the reversal of year-end accruals)

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND
TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR RON STORER**

“WRCO Officers”

Question:

On what date did WRCO officers in the waste collection service cease to be employed in that role?

Answer:

The WRCO roles ceased on 6th January 2025.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND
TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR GARETH MOORE**

“Graffiti”

Question:

For each year since 2021/22 please provide the total number of sites cleared of graffiti and the total amount spent on graffiti cleaning.

Answer:

The average number of sites visited by our crews is 35 per day.

Year 2021/22 there was a significant increase, and this was to prepare for the commonwealth games held in Birmingham.

2021/22 – 7 crews were in operation this equates to 60,760 sites for the year

2022/23 – 4 crews were in operation this equates to 34,720 sites for the year

2023/24 – 4 crews were in operation this equates to 34,720 sites for the year

2024/25 – 3 crews were in operation this equates to 26,040 sites for the year

Crew also when out working will move graffiti as a matter of course when it is identified.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR BABER BAZ

“Ward breakdown of MHWC visits”

Question:

Can you please give me a Ward-by-Ward breakdown, since March when car parks started to accommodate the Mobile Household Waste Centres, which Wards have received visits?

Answer:

Below is the list by ward where car parks have been used to accommodate the MHWC service since March 2025:

Acocks Green
Alum Rock
Aston
Balsall Heath West
Bartley Green
Billesley
Birchfield
Bordesley & Highgate
Bordesley Green
Bromford & Hodge Hill
Castle Vale
Druids Heath & Monyhull
Erdington
Frankley Great Park
Glebe Farm & Tile Cross
Hall Green North
Hall Green South
Handsworth
Handsworth Wood
Heartlands

Highters Heath
Holyhead
Kings Norton North
Kings Norton South
Pype Hayes
Quinton
Shard End
Small Heath
Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East
Ward End
Yardley West & Stechford

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE FROM COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY HUXTABLE

“Highways PFI reserve”

Question:

In each year since 2016 what was the start and closing balance of the highways PFI reserve?

Answer:

Including contingency set aside for Tame Valley Viaduct Refurbishment.

2015/16	£106,655,201	
2016/17	£110,723,373	
2017/18	£134,531,920	
2018/19	£187,019,794	
2019/20	£194,353,819	
2020/21	£196,344,814	
2021/22	£200,184,219	
2022/23	£189,645,768	
2023/24	£161,332,970	
2024/25 (draft)	£207,310,248	subject to change pending capitalisation

The increase in provision in 2024/25 is as a result of the Council descopeing services during the appeal against the Department for Transport’s decision to terminate the PFI. It has taken longer than anticipated to have the decision confirmed.

The reserve remains ring-fenced under the terms of the PFI contract.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE FROM
COUNCILLOR EWAN MACKEY**

“Spring Fun Fest- Centenary Square”

Question:

On what date was the contract signed with the operator for the recent ‘Spring Fun Fest’ in Centenary Square and for how many years is it committed for at what expected income?

Answer:

The Licence to Occupy for the use of Centenary Square was signed on 28th March 2025. It was a pilot and therefore there is no future commitment with the event organiser or associated income. We are currently gathering feedback from stakeholders.

F3

**PLEASE NOTE WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET
MEMBER FOR FINANCE HAS NOW BEEN REDIRECTED TO
THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND
HOMELESSNESS – H11**

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE FROM
COUNCILLOR ADRIAN DELANEY**

“CfGS spend”

Question:

Since April 2023, how much has the Council spent with CfGS, and how much is planned to be spent this year?

Answer:

Since April 2023 we have spent £72,000.00.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE FROM COUNCILLOR DEBBIE CLANCY

“Contract Register”

Question:

During the work to make the Council’s contract register compliant with legislation and regulations, how many incidents have been found so far where

1. Arrangements were operating with no formal contract in place where one was needed
2. Contracts were in place but this was not recorded in the register
3. Contracts had been put in place without appropriate approvals
4. Contracts in place were not compliant with Public Contract Regulations and/or the Council’s constitution?

Answer:

The work to produce a fit for purpose contract register is continuous. Thus far this has unearthed a significant volume of contract details, previously not on the register but have now been captured.

A) Arrangements were operating with no formal contract in place where one was needed.

The work to produce a fit for purpose contract register highlighted spend data that linked to c1000 suppliers, for which there were no contract entries on the register.

b) Contracts were in place but this was not recorded in the register:

To date c1985 additional contract records have been identified that were not recorded in the register. These have now been added to the contract register.

c) Contracts had been put in place without appropriate approvals:

This information is not available retrospectively. However, a fair conclusion to arrive at based on the answer to b) above, is that it is a possibility that some of those previously unidentified contracts could have been put in place without the appropriate approvals.

d) Contracts in place were not compliant with Public Contract Regulations and/or the Council's constitution?

This information is not available retrospectively. However, a fair conclusion to arrive at based on the answer to b) above, is that it is a possibility that some of those previously unidentified contracts could have been put in place without being compliant with Public Contracts Regulations and/or the Council's constitution.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE FROM COUNCILLOR RICHARD PARKIN

“Business Rates on Car Parks”

Question:

For each car park owned by the City Council, what is the total annual business rates payable on each?

Answer:

Rates for Car Parks	2024/25
Brewery St.C & L Pk	9,980
Car Park - Adams Street/Richard Street	1,946
Car Park - Anchorage Road, S.Coldfield	9,232
Car Park - Baker St	7,611
Car Park - Boulton Road/Soho Road H/W	4,899
Car Park - Church Road No.2 Erdington	7,610
Car Park - Duchess Road/Huntly Road	4,726
Car Park - Dudley Street Underground	32,024
Car Park - Duke Street, S.Coldfield	15,078
Car Park - Gt Charles Street	24,291
Car Park - High Street Kings Heath	5,537
Car Park - Hob Moor Road	2,844
Car Park - Hockley Flyover	6,743
Car Park - Jewellery Qtr. M/S, Vyse St.	54,481
Car Park - Machin Road, Erdington	3,593
Car Park - Mill Street, S.Coldfield	7,442
Car Park - Moseley Village	12,015
Car Park - Navigation Street	44,204
Car Park - Oldfield Road, Balsall Heath	1,198
Car Park - Reddicroft Lower, S.Coldfiel	13,458
Car Park - Reddicroft Upper, S.Coldfiel	10,407
Car Park - South Parade, S.Coldfield	14,596
Car Park - Victoria Road M/S, S.Coldfie	24,072
Car Park - Waverhill Road, Handsworth	2,766
Car Park - York Street, Harborne	19,087

Car Park Alum Rock Road, Hodge Hill	2,997
Car Park -Metchley Lane/York St	8,070
CP - Herbert Austin (Ulwine Dr)	5,563
CP- Alfred Street Free	3,593
Millennium Point M/S	151,515
Paradise Circus multi - storey car park	4,526
Snow Hill multi storey - car park	328,474
Town Hall multi - storey car park	303,206
Cannon Hill Park - Car Park	20,459
Grand Total	1,168,240

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE FROM
COUNCILLOR RON STORER**

“Serco”

Question:

Please list all contracts the Council holds with Serco, including the purpose of the contract, total length and total value.

Answer:

Response to follow.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE FROM COUNCILLOR GARETH MOORE

“Spitfire Advice and Support Services”

Question:

On what date and why was the original contract value for Welfare Benefits and Debt Advice (Lot 3 Tribunal Services - City Wide) with Spitfire Advice and Support Services, extended from £90k to £175k and - given this is an increase of more than 50% of the original contract - who took the decision and under what contract and procurements rules?

Answer:

Spitfire Advice & Support Services was successful in a tender exercise for the period April 2022 to March 2025. The lot 3 citywide Tribunal Support contract had a value of £30,000 per annum or a maximum of £90,000 over the three-year contractual period.

No increase whatsoever was offered or awarded in respect of the Tribunal Support Service contract at any point.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE FROM COUNCILLOR MATT BENNETT

“Consultants”

Question:

In each year since 21/22 how much was spent on consultants from a) the general fund b) capital programme c) HRA d) centrally retained DSG?

Broken down by service area.

Answer:

This analysis has been pulled together from the general ledger code specifically for "Consultancy":

	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adults	179	26	58	50
Children & Families excl Schools	627	120	130	554
City Housing	53	-	86	285
City Ops	917	751	1,224	1,044
Council Management	11,368	5,008	4,569	4,648
PPS	4,081	2,637	1,095	1,596
SEP	243	1,322	388	(1)
General Fund	17,467	9,864	7,551	8,175
Schools - DSG	348	371	361	298
HRA	42	190	25	396
TOTAL	17,857	10,425	7,936	8,868

It is not feasible to produce an analysis of consultancy spend across the capital programme as individual invoices would need to be gathered and scrutinised to determine whether they fit the definition of a consultant rather than a standard professional fee for part of the works required on a project, such as quantity surveyors, valuers etc.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE FROM
COUNCILLOR DAVID BARRIE**

“Mercer”

Question:

How many contracts at what cost for what does the council have with PR company, Mercer?

Answer:

We have one contract with Mercer for £1.48m for providing management consultant services and business case financial modelling for the revised Pay & Grading structure in Equal Pay.

Part of their services include internal corporate communications but not external PR.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE FROM
COUNCILLOR ADAM HIGGS**

“Equal Pay Comms”

Question:

What is the total spent so far, and total budget allocated, for communications on the 3 pillars of Equal Pay (settlement, pay and grading, job evaluation)?

Answer:

For settlement there is no budget or external spend on communications. As everything is legally privileged, all comms is managed internally via the settlement team.

For job evaluation and Pay and Grading we employ two permanent staff (on secondment) at an annual cost of £108k. This is budgeted within the Equal Pay ringfenced budget allocation.

In addition to the above, a third party pay and grading specialist supplier provides a communications package as part of its fixed price contract. There is no breakdown on individual communication costs.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE FROM
COUNCILLOR DAVID PEARS**

“Park incomes and expenditure”

Question:

Based on forecast income from parking charges in parks and other spending and savings plans for the parks within the MTFP what will the net expenditure on the parks service be in each of the 4 years of the current MTFP and what was it in 23/24 and 24/25?

Answer:

	2023-24		2024-25*		2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget
Net Expenditure	14,162,151	14,158,403	12,825,717	13,382,810	14,511,320	14,766,450	15,627,346	16,424,721

*provisional data. The accounts have not been finalised yet

Please note that budgets will change each year for inflation (on average 4.8% year on year) and various savings and pressures. In 2025-26 the most notable budget variation relates to the reversal of the old saving target for the sale of parks land (£1.17m). In 2026-27 there is a one off £420k reduction in superannuation costs.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE FROM COUNCILLOR DEIRDRE ALDEN

“Business Rates income from Pubs and Bars”

Question:

What is the total amount of income received from pubs and bars each year from establishments outside the ring road? (If it is not possible to break it down precisely on this geography then please provide for all wards outside the ones that fall predominately inside the ring road)

Answer:

Total Business Rates income for Pubs and Bars outside of the Birmingham Ring Road

Please Note:

1) The figures below relate to the pubs and bars outside of the Birmingham Ring Road. However, due to the difficulties in pulling geographical information from the billing system, there could be some properties that fall on or just inside the Birmingham Ring Road area.

2) The figures below are based upon properties that have been identified as Pubs and Bars using the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) Property Description Category in accordance with the Rating List. Therefore, there may be properties that are pubs or bars that have not been included as we were unable to easily distinguish them due to not being officially categorised as such in the Rating List. For example, a former shop being converted into a bar, but the property remains designated as a shop in the Rating List by the VOA.

2025 Expected income		2024 Expected income	2024 Actual income
£5,034,861.53		£4,134,827.59	£3,993,274.34

Please note the above takes into consideration retail and hospitality relief of 40% which has already been awarded.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE FROM
COUNCILLOR BABER BAZ**

“Report financing”

Question:

Can you please tell me how much the Council paid Anthony Collins Solicitors to compile the report against Bullying and Harassment, that Councillor Shabina Bano raised?

Answer:

The net cost was £30,000 exclusive of VAT.

For the avoidance of doubt this relates to costs of investigating the complaint and compiling their reports as there was more than one report. The figure does not include any subsequent costs in preparing and attending any standards hearings.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM
COUNCILLOR ROBERT ALDEN**

“Debt and Benefit Advice Services”

Question:

For each welfare advice service commissioned by the Council, what are the KPIs for service delivery and what has been the performance against these?

Answer:

This response focuses on the current 2024/25 contracts. The existing contracts were originally set to expire on 31 March 2025, but due to the appointment of new contractors in different areas and related TUPE considerations, all contracts have been extended by three months, now running until 30 June 2025.

2024/25 Contracted providers cover the following areas:

- **North**
- **South & East**
- **West**

Each quarter, advice providers must submit a quarterly return detailing their performance compared to set targets. These figures are manually transferred onto summary spreadsheet for monitoring and reporting. The data required is outline below and the performance figures are attached:

HSF/LEAS:

- No. of Welfare Benefit enquiries
- No. of Welfare Benefit casework
- No. of Debt enquiries
- No. of Debt casework
- Total Enquiry Numbers
- Total People Supported
- Financial outcomes -Income Maximisation

Health Data:

- Health Condition
- Disability
- Chronic/Long Term Condition
- Mental health condition
- Substance Abuse Issue
- Prefer Not Say/ Not recorded
- No Disability / issue.
- Learning Difficulty
- Total People Supported

The performance data is attached in the excel spreadsheet.



Welfare%20Benefit
%20%20Debt%20Ad

CITY COUNCIL – 17JUNE 2025

No questions received for Cabinet Member for Health & Social Care.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR ADAM HIGGS

“Traveller Sites”

Question:

How much income did the Council receive from pitch charges on its two designated travellers sites since 2014 for Tameside Drive and 2020 for Proctor Street and how much was spent on repairs, maintenance and servicing over the same period (split between HRA and General fund income and expenditure)?

Answer:

We are unable to retrieve data from before the implementation of 2022/23, when the costs were collected in a single cost centre under the Housing General Fund. As such, data provided is amalgamated costs and income for both sites for the past three years.

Cost Centre AU010

Sub Analysis T08Z2

Sub Analysis
Name Traveller Sites

Table for response

Repairs	£0	£11,378	£3,462
Legal and professional fees	£18,391	£940	£0
Supplies and Services	£0	£0	£9,505
Income	-£1,628	-£1,400	-£2,926
Net Spend/(Surplus)	£16,763	£10,918	£10,041

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND
HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR DARIUS SANDHU**

“Oscott Gardens”

Question:

Since 2021 please provide a breakdown of the total number and percentage of units at Oscott Gardens, Perry Barr, that were taken by individuals of families placed by organisations other than BCC, including who placing (e.g. name of other local authority, probation service, home office etc)

Answer:

All households placed at Oscott Gardens, Homeless Centre, Perry Barr, since it opened as a Homeless Centre, have been placed by Birmingham City Council as part of our statutory duties under homelessness legislation. No other organisations or Local Authorities have access to place at Oscott Gardens.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR CLIFTON WELCH

“Oscott Gardens cost”

Question:

What was the final cost of the redevelopment of Oscott Gardens for use as temporary accommodation and what are the current net and gross annual running costs?

Answer:

Redevelopment of Oscott Gardens cost £4.536m funded from prudential borrowing.

2024/25 as an example year, generated rental income of £4.482m, with an operating cost of £2.919m, repayment of the redevelopment borrowing of £0.991m, leaving a net income of £0.572m to fund service and corporate overheads.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR ROBERT ALDEN

“CCTV in tower blocks”

Question:

Since approval for the pilot of CCTV in tower blocks, how many cameras in which locations have now been installed, and how many are still waiting for installation?

Answer:

CCTV cameras have been installed in the pilot scheme at Bakeman House, Yardley. The next high rise tower block will be Durham Tower in Ladywood, following which there is a route map for the remaining 23 high rise blocks across the city. The plan is all the blocks will have working CCTV by March 2026.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR GARETH MOORE**“ASB in Tower Blocks”****Question:**

Since approval for the pilot of CCTV in tower blocks, how many ASB and crime incidents have been recorded in council owned tower blocks (broken down by block, indicating which ones now have CCTV and which do not)?

Answer:

CCTV cameras have been installed in the pilot scheme at Bakeman House, Yardley. The next high rise tower block will be Durham Tower in Ladywood, following which there is a route map for the remaining 23 high rise blocks across the city.

Set out below is the breakdown of ASB, crime incidents and West Midland Fire Service incidents broken down by block. The evaluation of the CCTV pilot will provide options as to how CCTV progresses across our portfolio.

HRB Reference	Total ASB Cases	Total Criminal Damage	WMFS Incidents
Bakeman Tower	13	6	0
Durham Tower	1	5	1
Inkerman House	7	4	1
Wickets Tower	6	2	19
Boundary House	1	2	1
Century Tower	10	2	2
Browning Tower	4	18	2
Shelley Tower	4	5	1
Topfield House	9	3	0
Drews House	7	3	0

Pleck House	6	15	0
Moor House	7	0	1
Hollypiece House	9	0	0
Coppice House	1	5	0
Hollowmeadow House	6	3	1
Essington House	7	5	0
Harrison House	2	3	0
Middlefield House	4	4	0
Parker House	2	6	0
Loweswater House	6	0	1
Sandhurst House	10	1	1
Waltham House	6	3	0
Wyrley House		2	0
Barrow House	3	2	0
Jordan House	3	5	0

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND
HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR RON STORER**

“Property Acquisition Programme”

Question:

Under the Council’s property acquisition programme for temporary accommodation, how many properties purchased have been used to home refugees or asylum seekers?

Answer:

No properties purchased under the Council's property acquisition programme are used to house people who are asylum seekers, that is a function undertaken by the Home Office.

There are 69 properties that have been acquired specifically for people coming through refugee programmes, part funded by Local Authority Housing Fund Grant, with grant funded to secure a further 9 properties by March 2026.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND
HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR ADRIAN DELANEY**

“Temporary Accommodation out of contract placements”

Question:

How many tenants are currently housed in temporary accommodation that is out of contract?

Answer:

There are no residents currently housed in temporary accommodation where it has gone out of contract.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR ADAM HIGGS

“Temporary Accommodation arrears”

Question:

What is the current total of arrears owed to the Council for temporary accommodation and how much has been written off in each of the last 3 years?

Answer:

Total Arrears as at end of March 2025 - £33,090,934.

18 Arrears written off last 3 years - £137,073.66.

Arrears written off	
2024/25	76,691.12
2023/24	39,366.14
2022/23	21,016.40
Total	137,073.66

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR EWAN MACKEY

“Property Acquisition Strategy”

Question:

Please provide a breakdown by ward of the total number of properties bought under the council’s property acquisition strategy in each ward, split between number of bedrooms.

Answer:

Ward	Acquisitions
Acocks Green	6
Allens Cross	5
Alum Rock	2
Aston	2
Bartley Green	11
Billesley	2
Bournbrook & Selly Park	1
Brandwood & King's Heath	1
Bromford & Hodge Hill	6
Castle Vale	4
Druids Heath & Monyhull	13
Erdington	59
Frankley Great Park	12
Garretts Green	5
Glebe Farm & Tile Cross	13
Gravelly Hill	6
Harborne	2
Heartlands	1
Highter's Heath	8
King's Norton North	6
King's Norton South	10
Kingstanding	27
Ladywood	4

Longbridge & West Heath	13
Moseley	1
Newtown	1
North Edgbaston	2
Northfield	4
Oscott	22
Perry Barr	8
Perry Common	8
Pype Hayes	15
Quinton	5
Rubery & Rednal	8
Shard End	11
Sheldon	5
Soho & Jewellery Quarter	2
South Yardley	1
Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East	1
Stirchley	1
Stockland Green	16
Sutton Reddicap	9
Sutton Roughley	1
Sutton Vesey	1
Sutton Walmley & Minworth	1
Tyseley & Hay Mills	1
Ward End	4
Weoley & Selly Oak	13
Yardley West & Stechford	3
To be confirmed	5

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR ROGER HARMER

“Monthly number of total residents and children living in Temporary Accommodation”

Question:

Can you please provide the monthly statistics on the number of people in temporary accommodation from 1 February 2025 until 1 June 2025, broken down by:

All people in TA

Children in TA

Households in TA

Households with Children in TA

Answer:

Month	All People In TA	Children in TA	All Households TA	All Households with Children
Feb 25	20434	10052	5593	4376
Mar 25	20502	10047	5592	4383
Apr 25	20521	10052	5586	4361
May 25	20686	10150	5586	4382
Jun 25	20775	10174	5596	4413

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR ROBERT ALDEN

“Contracts with Exempt\Supported Accommodation Providers”

Question:

Please list all contracts the council holds with providers of exempt or support accommodation, including the start and end dates and total value of each contract.

Answer:

The Council have limited contracts with providers of supported exempt accommodation.

1. City Housing have commissioned supported emergency accommodation for individuals who are rough sleeping. The contract is for the provision of support staff only:

Provider: **Trident Reach**

Contract term: 1st December 2024 to 31st March 2026

Purpose: To provide support and emergency accommodation to citizens who are rough sleeping or at risk of doing so. Accommodation for those over 25 is provided by Trident Reach, and for young people aged 18-24 by St Basil's, with Trident being the contract holder.

Contract Value: £415,000 funded by the Rough Sleepers Prevention and Recovery Grant (RSPARG) received into City Housing from the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG), and via Public Health grant funding.

This contract value does not include any contribution towards the cost of the Supported Exempt Accommodation.

Provider: **St Basil's Housing**

Contract term: 1st July 2025 to 31st March 2026

Purpose: To provide support and emergency accommodation to young people who are at risk of homelessness or rough sleeping.

Contract Value: £169,931.25 funded by the Rough Sleepers Prevention and Recovery Grant (RSPARG) received into City Housing from the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG),

This contract value does not include any contribution towards the cost of the Supported Exempt Accommodation.

2. Public Health contracts have been awarded as follows for the purpose of Adult Drug and Alcohol Treatment intervention:

Provider: Lindale Recovery Services

Contract term: 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026

Purpose: To deliver Recovery Housing and Support workers related to Adults Substance Misuse.

Contract Value: £370,956.00 funded by the Drug and Alcohol Treatment and Recovery Improvement Grant (DATRIG) received into Public Health from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and managed by the Public Health Addictions & Commissioning Teams with oversight by the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID).

This contract value does not include any contribution towards the cost of the Supported Exempt Accommodation.

Provider Emerging Futures

Contract term: 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026

Purpose: To deliver the Through the Gate Programme (Prison Release) and Assertive Women's Outreach related to Adults Substance Misuse.

Contract Value: £560,096.00 funded by the Drug and Alcohol Treatment and Recovery Improvement Grant (DATRIG) received into Public Health from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and managed by the Public Health Addictions & Commissioning Teams with oversight by the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID).

This contract value does not include any contribution towards the cost of the Supported Exempt Accommodation.

3. Adult Social Care do not specifically contract providers for the provision of supported accommodation. However, specialist targeted support in supported accommodation has been procured in establishments that offer domestic abuse refuges, health and wellbeing support for multiple disadvantage and substance use recovery and hospital discharge. Please see the table below:

PROVIDER / CONTRACT PERIOD / SERVICE NAME	Annual Value
Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid	£ 650,000
01.12.2024 to 30.11.2026	£ 650,000
Domestic Abuse Refuge Spaces	£ 650,000
Birmingham Crisis Centre	£ 350,721
01.12.2024 to 30.11.2026	£ 350,721
Domestic Abuse Refuge Spaces	£ 350,721
Claremont Living	£ 800,000
01.04.2025 to 30.11.2029	£ 800,000
Discharge to Assess (Health and Homeless) Service	£ 800,000
GreenSquareAccord limited	£ 303,000
01.12.2024 to 30.11.2026	£ 303,000
Domestic Abuse Refuge Spaces	£ 303,000
St Basils	£ 1,413,891
01.12.2024 to 30.11.2029	£ 1,413,891
Young Persons Lead Worker Plus	£ 1,413,891
17.04.2025 to 16.04.27	
Young Persons Lead Worker Plus	
Trident Reach the People Charity	£ 2,261,207
01.12.2024 to 30.11.2026	£ 573,707
Domestic Abuse Dispersed Accommodation	£ 250,707
Domestic Abuse Refuge Spaces	£ 323,000
01.12.2024 to 30.11.2029	£ 1,687,500
Adults Lead Worker Plus	£ 1,000,000
Young Persons Lead Worker Plus	£ 687,500
YMCA Heart of England	£ 284,026
01.12.2024 to 30.11.2029	£ 284,026
Adults Lead Worker Plus	£ 173,093
Young Persons Lead Worker Plus	£ 110,934
Spring Housing Association Limited	£ 285,880
01.12.2024 to 30.11.2029	£ 285,880
Young Persons Lead Worker Plus	£ 285,880
Sanctuary Housing Association trading as Sanctuary Supported Living	£ 153,917
01.12.2024 to 30.11.2029	£ 153,917
Adults Lead Worker Plus	£ 153,917
PROVIDER / CONTRACT PERIOD / SERVICE NAME	Sum of Annual Value
Anvil House	£ 192,185
01.07.2022 - 30.06.2027	£ 192,185
MH Long term and emergency accommodation	£ 192,185
Birmingham Mind	£ 612,596
01.07.2022 - 30.06.2027	£ 612,596
MH Long term and emergency accommodation	£ 612,596
Birmingham Rathbone	£ 506,741

01.07.2022 - 30.06.2027	£	506,741
LD Long term and emergency accommodation	£	506,741
GreenSquareAccord Limited	£	41,683
01.07.2022 - 30.06.2027	£	41,683
LD Long term and emergency accommodation	£	41,683
Home Group	£	108,803
01.07.2022 - 30.06.2027	£	108,803
MH Long term and emergency accommodation	£	108,803
Trident Reach the People Charity	£	512,226
01.07.2022 - 30.06.2027	£	512,226
LD Long term and emergency accommodation	£	512,226
Claremont Living Homeless Hospital Discharge 01/04/2022-31/03/2027	£	200,000

4. **Birmingham Children's Trust:** Have a West Midlands regional supported accommodation Flexible Framework Agreement for 16 to 21 year olds with providers.

Contract term: 1st February 2022 to 31st January 2026 (with an option to extend for up to a further 2 years) - (1st February 2026 to 31st January 2028)

Purpose: To provide support and accommodation for children in care or in need of support. Under 18 year olds placements are regulated by Ofsted.

Contract Value: There is no contract value to this framework an IPA is generated for each young person for their placement.

Provider: St Basils

Contract term: 1st January 2025 – 31 December 2025

Purpose: To provide a blocked bed contract for support and accommodation for children in care (25 beds) and for those children to have a follow on placement post 18 (33 beds). Under 18's provision is Ofsted regulated.

Contract Value: £1,632,176 per annum

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2015



No questions received for Cabinet Member for Social Justice, Community Safety and Equalities

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSFORMATION,
GOVERNANCE AND HR FROM COUNCILLOR RON STORER**

“1 May All Staff Seminar”

Question:

What were the ‘unforeseen circumstances’ that led to the cancellation of the All Staff Seminar (later rescheduled) on Pay and Grading, and why was this not foreseen?

Answer:

The webinar was paused for a week to focus on the Waste dispute negotiations with Unite. It was important that the key messages and benefits of Pay & Grading that all our employees across BCC, BCT and Acivico needed to understand would not be lost in other communications at that time.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSFORMATION,
GOVERNANCE AND HR FROM COUNCILLOR ADAM HIGGS**

“Corporate Complaints approach for missed collections”

Question:

Residents raising complaints during the current industrial action have been informed that the Council is not processing complaints about missed collections during the dispute. Who was the decision maker for this and what assessment have been made about how this approach complies with the council’s corporate complaints procedure and the Local Government Ombudsman’s code of practice?

Answer:

The decision to not take complaints regarding missed collections during Waste Industrial Action was made through the emergency response governance structure that we are using for this major incident. The decision was made by the Strategic Group on the advice of the Tactical Group and was discussed with the Ombudsman to agree our process during this period. Any complaints we have received we have responded to, advising that whilst we are not progressing complaints we will log the missed collection if appropriate for remedial action by our waste collection service.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSFORMATION,
GOVERNANCE AND HR FROM COUNCILLOR ROBERT ALDEN**

“West Midlands Employers – Job Evaluation”

Question:

The contract with West Midlands Employers for a managed job evaluation process was originally due to expire on 31 March 2025, in line with the hard deadline agreed by Full Council in Oct 2023 for delivery of the Job Evaluation Process. Given that deadline has been missed, has the contract with WME been extended and if so, for how long, at what cost and using which procurement route?

Answer:

The contract for WME to provide a managed job evaluation process was not extended. BCC now has fully trained job evaluators who evaluate all jobs. WME still provide technical advice and additional training where needed, these services are arranged via the appropriate procurement route subject to the value of the contract to be awarded. As WME is defined as a ‘Teckal’ organisation direct awards can be made without the need for a competitive tender.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSFORMATION,
GOVERNANCE AND HR FROM COUNCILLOR DARIUS SANDHU**

“TUPE”

Question:

How many staff have TUPE'd from the Council to another organisation since 2017 and of these, how many has the Council provided indemnity for any equal pay liability?

Answer:

The Council has provided an indemnity for any equal pay liability arising from the TUPE transfer of over 3,000 staff as obliged in line with TUPE regulations.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSFORMATION,
GOVERNANCE AND HR FROM COUNCILLOR EWAN MACKEY**“External Legal Services”****Question:**

How many contracts does the Council hold, at what total value, for the provision of external legal advice and how much has been paid for external legal advice in each month since April 2022?

Answer:

1. **How many contracts does the Council hold** - The contract register as at 9 June 2025 shows the following live contracts coded under the category Legal Services. The table below shows the contract title & total value

Name	Contract value
PO966 Provision of Legal Services for Druids Heath	450,000.00 GBP
LEGAL SUPPORT IN RESPECT OF ACIVICO	18,800.00 GBP
P2289 PROVISION OF LEGAL SERVICES TO SUPPORT 10YR + 1 DAY LEASE PROCESS	384,617.50 GBP
P1278-2 - LEGAL SERVICES TO SUPPORT AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY	166,666.66 GBP
P1278-2 - LEGAL SERVICES TO SUPPORT AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY	166,666.66 GBP
P1278-2 - LEGAL SERVICES TO SUPPORT AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY	166,666.66 GBP
BKQ Collaboration Agreement	25,000.00 GBP
CCS RM6240 - Browne Jacobson Legal Services for Affordable Housing Delivery	87,000.00 GBP
CCS RM6168 - Savills Legal Valuation Services for Affordable Housing Delivery	87,000.00 GBP
RM6168 - Affordable Housing Legal Advice	87,000.00 GBP
RM6240 - Affordable Housing Legal Advice	87,000.00 GBP
P0989_2024-1 - Specialist External Advocacy, Legal Advice and Support Relating to the Highway Maintenance and Management Contract	4,500,000.00 GBP
Agent Defend Legal Claim Grand Central	3,000,000.01 GBP
LS/PTY/ST/200214/Wheels Legal Services - Sale of Bordesley Park (Former "Wheels" Site)	133,500.00 GBP

2. **How much has been paid for external legal advice in each month since April 2022** - Using Oracle data that has been coded to legal services or legal fees other the table below shows the total amount spent per month. It is not possible from any of the data available in Oracle to identify how much of this is 'legal advice'. It is likely that the amounts paid below include other non-legal advice charges e.g. settlements, payments for damages interim/temporary legal workers/solicitors, court costs etc

Mth/YR	Amount ex VAT
Apr-22	£537,112.33
May-22	£1,200,702.65
Jun-22	£655,537.23
Jul-22	£1,067,784.47
Aug-22	£771,494.93
Sep-22	£784,187.57
Oct-22	£942,630.23
Nov-22	£838,225.27
Dec-22	£1,003,513.46
Jan-23	£486,853.53
Feb-23	£1,174,182.96
Mar-23	£1,946,959.99
Apr-23	£531,861.20
May-23	£823,512.29
Jun-23	£977,711.23
Jul-23	£934,350.26
Aug-23	£1,140,514.88
Sep-23	£1,201,069.89
Oct-23	£815,872.03
Nov-23	£840,773.07
Dec-23	£1,038,689.70
Jan-24	£2,081,288.29
Feb-24	£1,458,576.24
Mar-24	£1,344,351.72
Apr-24	£1,335,064.60
May-24	£1,459,706.08
Jun-24	£1,495,474.48
Jul-24	£1,501,202.07
Aug-24	£1,196,429.72
Sep-24	£1,213,687.83
Oct-24	£746,483.81
Nov-24	£1,195,539.46
Dec-24	£981,992.59
Jan-25	£1,242,836.43
Feb-25	£576,751.21
Mar-25	£973,228.23

Apr-25	£1,270,944.83
May-25	£689,829.97

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSFORMATION,
GOVERNANCE AND HR FROM COUNCILLOR DEIRDRE ALDEN**

“Governance on waste dispute”

Question:

In 2017 one reported failure of the Labour's bin strike settlement was not considering all advice and lack of proper governance of decision-taking, including the recording of minutes of meetings.

How is the process for trying to end this strike ensuring lessons from that are learned, including recording advice, whether it was followed, what factors have been considered and appropriately minuted?

Answer:

All Officers involved in resolving the waste dispute are conscious of the shortfalls in the 2017 settlement of the waste strikes and the need not to repeat such issues again. The Council's statutory officers are ensuring that proper legal, governance and financial advice is taken at all stages of the negotiations to resolve the dispute. Where advice is received and decisions taken, these are appropriately recorded and documented in the proper way.

Cabinet will need to approve any settlement proposal that has financial or legal implications.

Further, in accordance with the Statutory Directions issues in October 2023, oversight is being provided via the Commissioners in relation to the Waste Transformation and Equal Pay related matters.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSFORMATION, GOVERNANCE AND HR FROM COUNCILLOR DEBBIE CLANCY

“Equal Pay legal advice”

Question:

Since April 2022, how much has been spent in each year on external legal advice for equal pay (including all elements of the programme – settlement, job evaluation, pay and grading and ongoing tribunal claims)?

Answer:

Since April 2022, the following has been spent on external legal advice relating to equal pay matters:

Financial Year	Spend
2022-23	£18,489.68
2023-24	£488,823.22
2024-25	£130,528.00
2025-date	£46,442.90

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSFORMATION, GOVERNANCE AND HR FROM COUNCILLOR ADRIAN DELANEY

“Facility Time”

Question:

Since 6 January 2025, how much has been provided in facility time to Unite the Union?

Answer:

Unite continue to be given time-off in accordance with the Time-Off and Facilities Agreement. No additional facility time has been given to Unite during the period of the current Industrial Action in Waste.

CITY COUNCIL – 17 JUNE 2025

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSFORMATION,
GOVERNANCE & HR FROM COUNCILLOR CLIFTON WELCH**“Strategic Partner Programme Support. Early Intervention and Prevention Programme”****Question:**

The contract with Ernst and Young for consultancy support for the early intervention and prevention programme that commenced in June 2022 has increased in value by more than 350% since it was first let (from £1.4m to £6.3m.)

Please list all dates on which the decisions to extend the contract were extended, including the approval route followed and any waivers granted from contract rules (including the approving committee\cabinet member\officers) and also confirm if the contract will cease on 30 June 2025 per current listing, or if it will be extended again, and if so for what length and at what cost.

Answer:

The table below sets out information relating to decisions made

Decision	Date of decision	Approval route including the approving committee\cabinet member\officers
Original award - inc two extension options up to 30th June 2024	23rd May 2022	Chief officer as delegated by cabinet - the Strategic Director – Adult Social Care in conjunction with the Assistant Director, Procurement, Strategic Director of Council Management and the City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer:- 22nd March 2022, in the report “Early Intervention and Prevention – A High Level Target Operating Model (TOM)”
Contract Extension #1	28th February 2023	Chief officer - the Strategic Director – Adult Social Care in conjunction with the Assistant Director, Procurement, Strategic Director of Council Management and the City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer
A waiver from the rules was approved in line	25 th June 2023	Chief officer - the Strategic Director – Adult Social Care in conjunction with the Assistant Director, Procurement, Strategic

with the Procurement & Governance Rules to cover the overspend of £0.496m		Director of Council Management and the City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer Cabinet Member for Finance/Deputy Leader
Contract Extension #2 (contract expiry 30th June 2024)	12th June 2023	Chief officer - the Strategic Director – Adult Social Care in conjunction with the Assistant Director, Procurement, Strategic Director of Council Management and the City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer
Extension #3 (contract expiry 30th June 2025)	10th July 24	Interim Chief Executive in conjunction with the Interim Commercial & Procurement Director Interim Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer and the Interim City Solicitor & Monitoring Officer

This is a draw down contract against work packages to be agreed by BCC. The contract has not been drawn down since 30th June 2024. The contract has now expired and cannot be utilised further. There is no intention to extend the contract or commission similar at this time.

Birmingham City Council

City Council

8 July 2025



Title:	Route to Net Zero Annual Report 2024
Lead Member:	Councillor Majid Mahmood, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport
Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee:	Not applicable
Has this report been shared with the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair?	Not applicable
Report Author:	Ellie Hignett, Principal Portfolio Officer Place, Prosperity and Sustainability Ellie.hignett@birmingham.gov.uk
Authorised by:	Ellie Horwitch-Smith, Assistant Director for Route to Net Zero Place, Prosperity and Sustainability
Is this a Key Decision?	No Forward Plan Reference: No forward plan reference
Reason(s) why not included on the Forward Plan and confirm who has authorised it to be considered:	Not applicable
Is this a Late Report?	No
Reason(s) why Late and confirm who has authorised it to be considered:	Not applicable
Is this decision eligible for 'call in'?	Not applicable
If 'call-in' has been dis-applied, please provide reason(s) and confirm who has authorised:	Not applicable
Wards:	Not applicable
Does this report contain exempt or confidential information?	No

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The UK Government has set a legally binding target to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, with local authorities expected to play a critical role in achieving this target. Birmingham City Council (the 'Council') must play its role in reducing emissions and improving the city's resilience and ability to adapt to a changing climate. We continue to make good progress in tackling our own greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, working with and supporting the city to reduce its emissions.
- 1.2 Since [declaring a climate emergency in June 2019](#), the Route to Net Zero (R20) team has developed the Council's ability to calculate and report on its corporate GHG emissions, in accordance with the [Greenhouse Gas Protocol standards](#), and has been working with directorates, services and teams across the Council to understand and reduce its emissions.

2 COMMISSIONERS' REVIEW

- 2.1 The Council is in the process of producing a long overdue Net Zero Plan that will set out how it will reduce scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions. We encourage the Council to complete this as soon as possible and to concentrate on initiatives that have the added benefit of reducing expenditure. Commissioners have identified the energy budget as an area that could generate significant efficiencies as well as carbon savings. For this to occur the necessary discovery work must be completed for example the business case for the conversion of street lighting to LED needs to be completed. Once a plan is in place it will be far easier for the Council to monitor and assess progress.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:

- 3.1 Note the progress and achievements made in the last 12 months both on the Route to Zero Carbon and City of Nature programmes set out in Appendix 1, alongside wider Council and city decarbonisation activities.
- 3.2 Notes the level of Council's greenhouse gas emissions, calculated in accordance with the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol reporting standards set out in para 4.2.
- 3.3 Notes the Birmingham's City's greenhouse gas territorial emissions using the UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics set out in para 4.3.
- 3.4 The Route to Net Zero team will continue working with directorates and services across the Council to improve awareness of net zero and support activities to reduce the Council's emissions. Alongside this, they will continue to work with stakeholders and citizens to support net zero, whilst pursuing further funding opportunities, building upon our previous successes, to deliver our climate change, nature, and net zero activities. Outcomes and progress will be reported annually to Council.

4 KEY INFORMATION

Context

- 4.1 The Council's greenhouse gas emissions can be categorised as follows:
- 4.1.1 Scope 1: the direct emissions from sources which are owned or controlled by the Council, including emissions from the combustion of fossil fuels in council buildings' boilers and vehicles.
 - 4.1.2 Scope 2: the indirect emissions arising from the generation of purchased energy, which includes the emissions caused by Council consumption of purchased electricity, heat, steam, and cooling.
 - 4.1.3 Scope 3: the other indirect emissions (not in scope 2) from sources that the Council does not own or control, such as those from the procurement of goods and services, and its leased assets.
- 4.2 The Council's Scope 1 and 2 emissions for the 2023/24 financial year were approximately 38,000 tonnes of 'carbon dioxide equivalent' (CO₂e), which represents a 5% reduction when compared to 2022/23. During 2023/24 roughly 58% of our emissions arose from the Council's corporate estate (our buildings), 28% arose from highways (primarily streetlighting), and the remaining 14% arose from its fleet vehicles (primarily bin lorries). The R20 team continues to improve the Council's awareness of its scope 3 emissions, which are estimated to be much greater than the Council's scope 1 and 2 emissions and remain dominated by three activities: procurement of goods and services; Council housing; and the emissions to air from the Tyseley Energy Recovery Facility.
- 4.3 The [UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics](#) (which have a 2-year publication lag), published by [DESNZ](#), provides Birmingham with information on the city's GHG territorial emissions. The city's territorial emissions for 2022 were 4,316 ktCO₂e. This represents a 40.2% reduction since 2005, and a 3.7% reduction when compared to 2021. A similar reduction in emissions occurred in [346 out of the 361 local authorities from across the UK](#), which is consistent with the decrease in overall UK emission of 5% during 2022, which was largely due to a reduction in fuel use (primarily natural gas) to heat buildings.
- 4.4 To support the delivery of the Council's natural environment and climate adaptation goals, the existing local plans policies are under review, and its green infrastructure evidence base has been updated to reflect emerging legislation and the increasing availability of climate change data. The R20 team secured funding to deliver a range of projects to improve the Council's highways and waterways, will harness Biodiversity Net Gain to enhance biodiversity and open spaces across the city, and has started a new partnership with the University of Birmingham and the UK Met Office on the EU [Climate-Resilient Development Pathways in Metropolitan Regions of Europe \(CARMINE\) project](#).
- 4.5 Some of the Council's most significant achievements to over the last year include:

- Delivering it's £24.8m of [Social Housing Decarbonisation Funding](#) (SHDF) to improve the energy efficiency of 2,076 Council homes.
 - Winning the Retrofit [National Multi-Measure Project of the Year](#) at the National Energy Efficiency Awards for our Public Sector Decarbonisations Scheme activities.
- 4.5.1 Collaborating with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council and International Synergies to deliver the UK Shared Prosperity Funded circular economy support for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).
- 4.5.2 Delivering the UK Shared Prosperity Funded Sustainable Supply Chains for Birmingham & Solihull project with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council to supports SMEs to decarbonise their businesses.
- Commissioning a new retrofit partnership with 3 ECO4 concession partners to deliver energy efficiency improvements to over 3,000 citizens' homes per year.
 - Awarded, with University of Birmingham, the Special Recognition award at the SEE Global Sustainability Summit for our Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment for Birmingham
- 4.5.3 Hosting the second Schools Model Conference of Parties (COP) event to increase our engagement with local schools and pupils on climate change.

More detail on the above activities can be found in appendix 1.

- 4.6 The R20 team has been successful in securing almost £2m in funding, of which about £0.9m was used to support external bodies, and the remaining roughly £1m funded the council's programme of activities.

Other Options Considered

- 4.7 No options have been considered for this report as it is a report on activity relating to the council's climate emergency declaration over the past 12 months only.

5 MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

Ward Councillor(s)

- 5.1 Not applicable

Overview and Scrutiny

- 5.2 Not applicable

Other

- 5.3 Not applicable

6 IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS

Finance and Best Value

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this update report. All projects are developed and approved through the Council's Financial Approval Gateway process, which ensures that all financial implications are identified before funding is bid for and accepted.

Legal

- 6.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report

Equalities

- 6.3 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

Procurement

- 6.4 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

People Services

- 6.5 There are no staffing implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

Climate Change, Nature and Net Zero

- 6.6 The Council's [Corporate Plan](#) sets a vision for improving the quality of our environment, through increasing the cleanliness of our streets, improving the quality of the air that is breathed driving up waste recycling rates, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and increasing access to a high-quality natural environments. This report is an update on the Council's route to net zero progress and aligns with the Council's wider corporate plan priorities.

Corporate Parenting

- 6.7 There are no implications or opportunities relating to the Corporate Parenting Responsibility arising from the recommendations in this report.

Other

- 6.8 There are no other implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7 APPENDICES

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – Birmingham Route to Net Zero Annual Report 2024

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 Report to City Council 9 February 2024 - Route to Zero – Annual Progress Report 2023.



ROUTE TO NET ZERO ANNUAL REPORT

January 2025

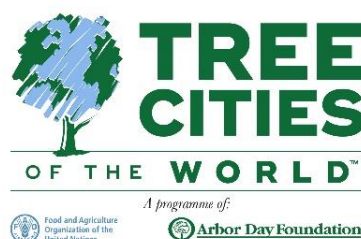
Group Memberships and Awards



**West Midlands
Combined Authority**



Birmingham





**West Midlands
Combined Authority**



Birmingham





West Midlands
Combined Authority



Birmingham



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Glossary

Term	Definition
Adaptation	Action that helps cope with the effects of climate change - for example construction of barriers to protect against rising sea levels, or conversion to crops capable of surviving high temperatures and drought.
Carbon Dioxide (CO₂)	Carbon dioxide is a gas in the Earth's atmosphere. It occurs naturally and is also a by-product of human activities such as burning fossil fuels. It is the principal greenhouse gas produced by human activity.
Climate Change	Climate change refers to a large-scale, long-term shift in the planet's weather patterns and average temperatures.
Carbon Dioxide Equivalents (CO₂e)	Each greenhouse gas has a different global warming potential. The overall warming effect of a mixture of these gases is often expressed in terms of CO ₂ equivalent - the amount of CO ₂ that would cause the same amount of warming.
Fossil Carbon	Carbon derived from fossil fuel or other fossil sources.
Biogenic Carbon	Carbon derived from biogenic (plant or animal) sources excluding fossil carbon.
Global warming	Global warming is the long-term heating of Earth's surface observed since the pre-industrial period (between 1850 and 1900) due to human activities, primarily fossil fuel burning, which increases heat-trapping greenhouse gas levels in Earth's atmosphere.
Greenhouse Gases	Greenhouse gases (also known as GHGs) are gases in the earth's atmosphere that trap heat. The gases act like the glass walls of a greenhouse – hence the name, greenhouse gases. Greenhouse gases consist of carbon dioxide, methane, ozone, nitrous oxide, chlorofluorocarbons, and water vapor.
Mitigation	Action that will reduce man-made climate change. This includes action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or absorb greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.
Net Zero	Net Zero is about reducing and removing greenhouse gases to mitigate against increasing climate risk. The term net zero means achieving a balance between the greenhouse gas emitted into the atmosphere, and the greenhouse gases removed from it. This balance – or net zero – will happen when the amount of carbon we add to the atmosphere is no more than the amount removed. To reach net zero, emissions from homes, transport, agriculture and industry will need to be cut.
Scope 1	The direct emissions from council activities, for example the emissions from the combustion of fossil fuels in council buildings' boilers and council fleet vehicles.
Scope 2	The indirect emissions arising from the generation of purchased energy, which includes the emissions caused by council consumption of purchased electricity, heat, steam, and cooling.
Scope 3	The other indirect emissions (not in Scope 2) from sources that the council does not own or control, such as those from the procurement of goods and services, and our leased assets.

Executive Summary

Birmingham City Council (the 'council') must play a leading role in reducing emissions and improving the city's resilience and ability to adapt to a changing climate. We continue to make good progress in tackling our own greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, working with and supporting the city to reduce its emissions, and improve the city's resilience. Since declaring a climate emergency in June 2019 our Route to Net Zero team has developed our ability to calculate and report on the council's corporate GHG emissions, in accordance with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol standards, and has been working with directorate, services and teams across the council to reduce our organisation's emissions.

Birmingham City Council's Scope 1 and 2 emissions for the 2023/24 financial year were approximately 38,000 tCO₂e, which represents a 5% reduction when compared to 2022/23. During 2023/24 roughly 58% of our emissions arose from our corporate estate (our buildings), 28% arose from Highways (primarily streetlighting), and the remaining 14% arose from our fleet vehicles (primarily bin lorries). We continue to improve our understanding of our scope 3 emissions, which are much greater than our scope 1 and 2 emissions and remain dominated by three activities: procurement of goods and services; council housing; and the emissions to air from the city's energy from waste plant.

We report on the city of Birmingham's GHG territorial emissions using the UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics (which have a 2-year publication lag), and the City of Birmingham's territorial emissions for 2022 were 4,316 ktCO₂e. This represents a 40.2% reduction since 2005, and a 3.7% reduction when compared to 2021. A similar reduction in emissions occurred in 346 out of the 361 local authorities from across the UK, which is consistent with the decrease in overall UK emission of 5% during 2022, which was largely due to a reduction in fuel use to heat buildings.

To support the delivery of our natural environment and climate adaptation goals we have been reviewing our local plan's policies, and our green infrastructure evidence base has been updated to reflect emerging legislation and the increasing availability of climate change data. We have secured funding to deliver a range of projects to improve our highways and waterways, will harness Biodiversity Net Gain to enhance biodiversity and open spaces across the city, and are excited to start our new partnership with the University of Birmingham and the UK Met Office on the EU Climate-Resilient Development Pathways in Metropolitan Regions of Europe (CARMINE) project.

The initiative and activities underway to tackle the above climate change, nature and net zero challenges are presented within the relevant sections of this report. However, some of our most significant achievements to over the last year include:

- Delivering our £24.8m of Social Housing Decarbonisation Funding (SHDF) to improve the energy efficiency of 2,076 council homes.
- Winning the Retrofit National Multi-Measure Project of the Year at the National Energy Efficiency Awards for our Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund activities.
- Completing over 50 Environment and Sustainability Assessments (ESA) over the last year to ensure council proposals align with its climate change, nature and net zero commitments.
- Collaborating with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council and International Synergies to deliver circular economy support for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).
- Delivering our Sustainable Supply Chains for Birmingham & Solihull project with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council to support SMEs to decarbonise their businesses.
- Bringing the number of electric vehicle charge points installed across the city to 266, including a 100kW charger (Livery Street) which can charge two cars in 30 minutes.

- Commissioning a new retrofit partnership with 3 ECO4 concession partners to deliver energy efficiency improvements to over 3,000 citizens' homes per year.
- Supporting members of the Birmingham faith covenant through sharing learning and securing £200,000 of grant funding for faith-led climate action.
- Awarded, with University of Birmingham, the Special Recognition award at the SEE Global Sustainability Summit for our Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment for Birmingham
- Delivering, in partnership with Low Carbon Homes and other stakeholders from across the city, the annual Birmingham Retrofit Summit in May 2024
- Hosting the second Schools Model Conference of Parties (COP) event to increase our engagement with local schools and pupils on climate change.

The Route to Net Zero team has been successful in securing almost £2m in funding, of which about £0.9m was used to support external bodies, and the remaining roughly £1m funded the council's programme of activities. The team has also arranged, attended and/or presented at numerous local, regional and national events, and hosted international delegations from Leipzig (Germany) and Ulsan (South Korea) to showcase our activities and experience.

We are proud of our successes to date, are building momentum and are excited about the year ahead. We look forward to continuing to work across the council and with our city's stakeholders and citizens in delivering our climate change, nature and net zero programme, reducing our greenhouse gas emissions and improving our resilience to climate change.

We will continue to share and celebrate our successes.



Bromford Pocket Park Opening



Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport at Active Travel Launch

Chapter 1: Introduction

Birmingham City Council (the 'council') continues to make good progress in tackling its own greenhouse gas emissions, working with and supporting the city and its citizens to reduce emissions, and improving the city's resilience to the impacts of climate change.

[The Council declared a climate emergency in June 2019](#), with a commitment to take action to reduce the city's greenhouse gas emissions, and to do so in a way which brings communities with us and reduces inequalities across the city. The [Council's Corporate Plan](#) sets a vision for improving the quality of our environment, through increasing the cleanliness of our streets, improving the quality of the air we breathe, driving up recycling rates, reducing our greenhouse gas emissions, and increasing our access to a high-quality natural environments. The Corporate Plan guides our activities to ensure positive climate and nature action is at the heart of council decision-making, and enable all directorates, departments and services to support delivery.

The [2015 Paris Agreement](#) saw world governments commit to curbing global temperature rises to well-below 2°C above pre-industrial levels - and increase efforts to limit warming to less than 1.5°C. In 2018 the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) warned that global warming must not exceed 1.5°C to avoid catastrophic impacts to our wellbeing. Achieving net zero is about reducing and removing greenhouse gases from across our society which contribute to global warming, including those emissions from our homes, transport systems, agriculture activities and industrial processes. We will achieve net zero when we reach a balance between the greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere, and those removed from it, in line with the 2015 Paris Agreement.

In addition to reducing emissions, we also need to respond to our changing climate. Data shows that our historic emissions are already significantly influencing our climate locally, with the [spring of 2024 being UK's warmest on record](#), and globally, with the [summer of 2024 being the Earth's warmest on record](#). The [Met Office's Local Authority Climate Report](#) forecasts that we will experience warmer and wetter winters, hotter and drier summers, and more frequent and intense weather extremes. The West Midlands Combined Authority's [Summary of Climate Change Impacts](#) highlights several direct risks to Birmingham and its citizens, including the increased risk of fires, floods and damage to property and infrastructure. The impact of flooding alone is significant, with the current [annual cost of flood damage across the UK exceeding £700m](#), and the [repairs for a flooded home costing £30,000 on average](#). To mitigate these impacts and costs we need to prepare for these changes and ensure that our current projects and policies embed resilience into our built and natural environments so they can best respond to our changing climate and the needs of our citizens.

Case Study: University Hospitals Birmingham

A warming climate will have a [variety of impacts on human health](#), including an increased risk of pregnancy complications and respiratory illnesses, a rise in new patterns of vector-borne illnesses and an increase in mental health conditions linked to the impact of extreme weather events, as well as increasing anxiety about climate change impacts.

Health inequalities are likely to widen as those who are already affected by social deprivation are also the most likely to be impacted by climate change.

In summary, the council recognises its role in tackling climate change through reducing emissions and increasing the city's resilience and ability to adapt to a changing climate. In our role as a civic leader, as a major local employer, and a partner with the local community, we are striving to do all we can to address the net zero, nature and biodiversity challenges. This Annual Report presents an update on our progress across these activities and our ambitions for the years ahead.

Chapter 2: The Council's Greenhouse Gas Emissions

We are committed to delivering net zero and demonstrating leadership in tackling our organisation's emissions, as well as those of the wider city. The Route to Net Zero team prepares, calculates and reports on the council's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions annually. The following section summarises our 2023/24 emissions, how they compare to our 2022/23 emissions, and the steps we are taking to reduce our emissions.

The Council's Approach to Greenhouse Gas Accounting

Greenhouse gas (GHG) accounting is how organisations quantify their greenhouse gas emissions¹, and because these emissions are usually presented as CO₂ equivalents (CO₂e), based on their global warming potential, their emissions are often referred to as an organisation's carbon footprint. The [Greenhouse Gas \(GHG\) Protocol](#) reporting [guidance and standards](#) are the world's most widely used greenhouse gas accounting standards and provide the requirements and guidance for organisations preparing and calculating their greenhouse gas emissions. In adopting these standards, we categorise our emissions into three scopes:

- **Scope 1:** the direct emissions from sources which are controlled by the council, including emissions from the combustion of fossil fuels in council buildings' boilers and vehicles.
- **Scope 2:** the indirect emissions arising from the generation of purchased energy, which includes the emissions caused by council consumption of purchased electricity, heat, steam, and cooling.
- **Scope 3:** the other indirect emissions (not in scope 2) from sources that the council does not own or control, such as those from the procurement of goods and services, and its leased assets.

While the council has control over its direct emissions, it has influence over its indirect emissions, and we have defined our organisational boundary for GHG accounting purposes using the 'Operational Control' approach. We have calculated our emissions using the UK Government Conversion Factors for greenhouse gas reporting. These emissions factors are updated annually and more information on how these are generated and can be applied is available on the [Department for Energy Security and Net Zero](#) website.

The Council's Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The following sections outline our scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions for the 2023/24 financial year and outlines how these have changed since our first reporting cycle in 2022/23. We've been able to quantify our scope 1 and 2 emissions, because the activities which contribute to these emissions fall under our immediate control and accessing timely and good quality data on these activities is relatively straightforward. For example, we calculate our energy related emissions (i.e., electricity and natural gas) based on how much energy we have consumed through our energy framework agreement with West Mercia Energy. However, quantifying our scope 3 emissions is more challenging, and this is because the activities which contribute to our scope 3 emissions fall outside of our immediate control and are often shared with third parties (e.g., suppliers) making it much more difficult to obtain high quality emissions data. Nevertheless, we have conducted a high-level screening of our scope 3 emission activities and are taking steps to improve our understanding of these emissions, identified some initial priorities, and are commencing activities to tackle these emissions.

¹ These emissions usually include all six greenhouse gases covered by the Kyoto Protocol - carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆).

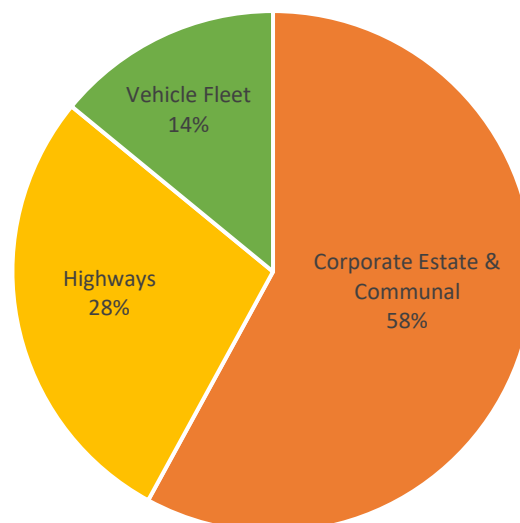
The Council's Scope 1 and 2 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Birmingham City Council's Scope 1 and 2 emissions for the 2023/24 financial year were approximately 38,000 tCO₂e, which represents a 5% reduction when compared to our 2022/23 emissions of 40,000 tCO₂e.

During 2023/24 roughly 58% of our emissions arose from our corporate estate and the communal areas we are responsible for within our housing and commercial estate (energy for buildings), 28% arose from Highways (primarily streetlighting), and the remaining 14% arose from our fleet vehicles (primarily bin lorries). Approximately 47% of our 2023/24 emissions were scope 1, arising from the combustion of fossil fuels, primary gas in our buildings and diesel in our fleet vehicles, and the remaining 53% were scope 2, arising from the consumption of electricity by our buildings and the city's streetlights.

Whilst the council's reduced its overall consumption of natural gas, electricity and vehicle fuel in 2023/24, the emissions from the consumption of electricity increased. This is because the '[UK Electricity CO₂e factor](#)', which regularly sees a 9-10% reduction year on year as the national grid decarbonises, increased by 7% in 2023 - compared to 2022 - due to an increase in natural gas use in electricity generation and a decrease in renewable generation. This impact was most pronounced for our streetlights, where a roughly 5% reduction in electricity consumption in 2023/24 compared to 2022/23, resulted in a 2% increase in emissions.

Figure 1. The Council's Scope 1 and 2 GHG Emissions



Corporate Estate

Our corporate estate accounts for roughly 58% of our scope 1 and 2 emissions. These emissions arise from across our corporate estate, which includes our offices, libraries, leisure centres, crematoria, depots, and parks, and the communal areas in our council houses and commercial estate (e.g., heat networks, hallways, stairwells and lifts).

The council is taking several actions to reduce its corporate estate emissions, including improving how it manages its buildings, increasing their energy efficiency, whilst reducing their reliance on gas boilers for space heating, and exploring options to source high quality renewable electricity.

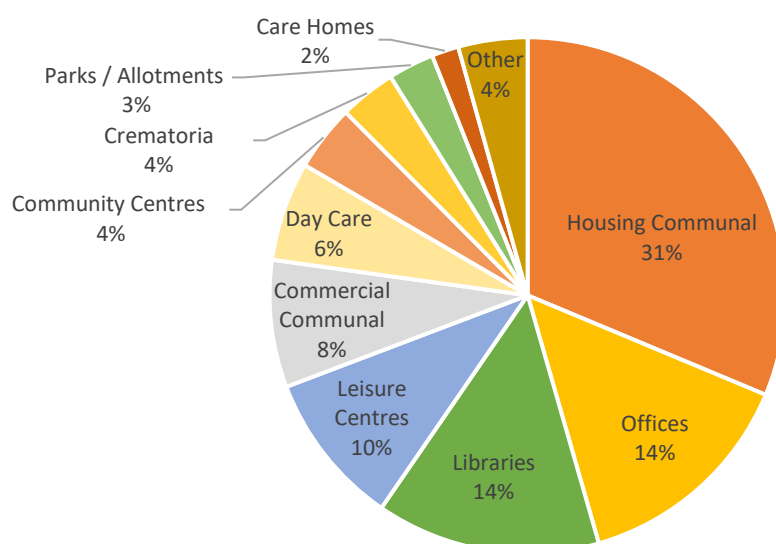
Managing our Corporate Estate:

The creation of the Corporate Landlord function represents a significant evolution in the management of the council's estate, which currently comprises of more than 700 assets. The

centralised and professionalised property function will strategically manage the council's operational and community facing property assets, delivering a higher quality estate, reducing duplication of property management activity, and through working across the council to identify opportunities for service co-location, relocation and asset rationalisation, reduce the overall size of the estate and delivering operational efficiencies.

The Route to Net Zero team will continue to support the Corporate Landlord function to inform and shape future asset strategies, ensuring that net zero is at heart of our asset maintenance and management programmes. The provision of technical and advisory support to guide estate energy management and decarbonisation activities will result in a more sustainable and net zero aligned council asset profile. Instrumental in delivering these outcomes is improving our management of energy, increasing the energy efficiency of the council's assets, and reducing their energy consumption.

Figure 2. The Council's Corporate Estate Scope 1 and 2 GHG Emissions by Source



Improving Energy Management:

The consumption of energy (natural gas and electricity) by our corporate estate and streetlighting accounts for 86% of the council's scope 1 and 2 emissions. To oversee and optimise this consumption of energy the council is establishing a Corporate Energy Management Function. This centralised function will be responsible for: improving energy metering, billing and consolidating energy contracting; raising awareness about the council energy consumption and its consumption profile; supporting services across the council to improve energy management; and, through better management, reducing demand and delivering financial savings for the council.

The function will also play a key role in the development of a comprehensive integrated energy management and decarbonisation strategy for the council. This strategy will span sourcing and procuring high-quality renewable energy aligned to the council's net zero ambitions², through to the retrofitting our buildings and streetlighting to reduce their energy consumption and emissions and exploring other energy management/reduction and decarbonisation opportunities. These activities

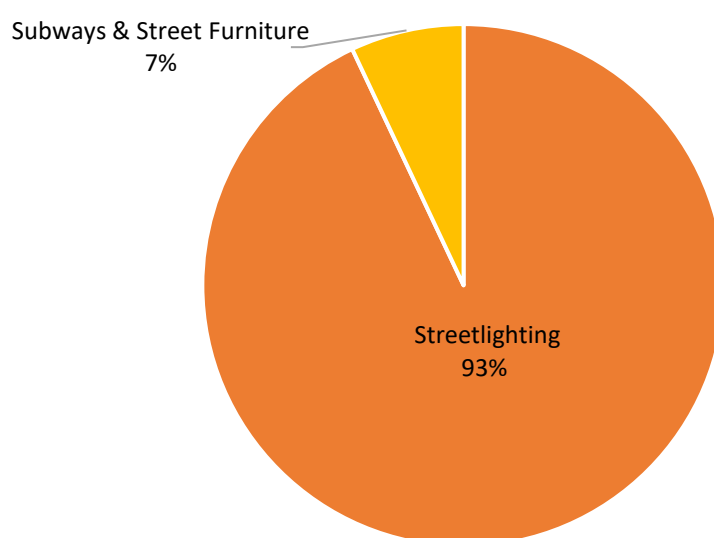
² The council's current electricity is supplied with 'unbundled' Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGOs) certificates, and there is a risk that the REGO certificates may have been purchased independently from electricity generation, which may misrepresent the true emissions associated with the electricity supplied, and may also not support the development of new renewable electricity projects.

will leverage capital grant funding where available, and we will explore other innovative commercial delivery and investment opportunities to facilitate and accelerate delivery (e.g., [National Wealth Fund](#)).

Highways and Streetlighting

Birmingham's highway network includes 2,500km of roads, 100,024 streetlights (116,420 lamps), and over 850 highway structures, such as bridges and subways, across the city. The electricity consumed by our Highways accounts for roughly 28% of the council's scope 1 and 2 emissions (because they consume electricity, they contribute to our scope 2 emissions), and streetlights are responsible for 93% of these emissions, with subways and other street furniture making up the remaining 7%.

Figure 3. The Council's Highways Scope 1 and 2 GHG Emissions by Source

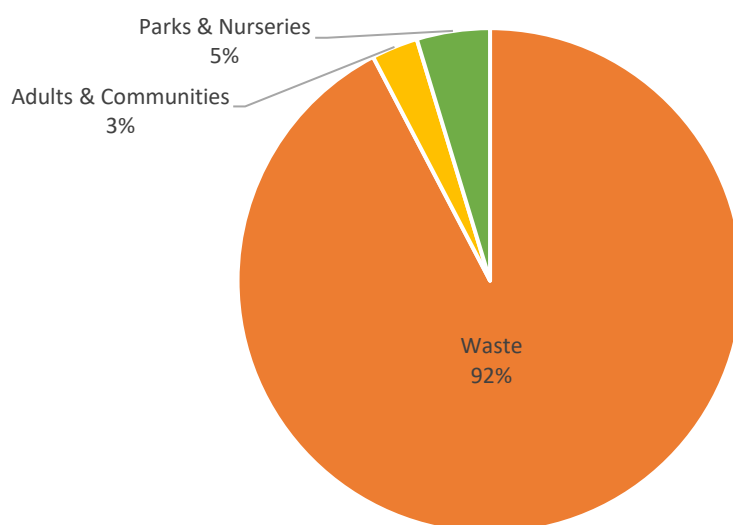


We have, through our Highways PFI contract, replaced 54,345 (47%) of our inefficient sodium lamps with more efficient LED lamps, and we are exploring opportunities to convert our remaining streetlights to LED lamps to reduce their electricity consumption. The council continues to optimise our streetlighting Central Management System (CMS), which allows the 'dimming' of lights and the 'trimming' of their operational hours, where it is safe and acceptable to do so, which reduces energy consumption further, and provides additional benefits, such as reducing light pollution and minimising the impact of streetlights on nature and biodiversity. We hope that coupling these actions with sourcing high quality renewable energy (pg. 10) will deliver significant cost and carbon savings.

Fleet Vehicles

Our fleet vehicles account for roughly 14% of our scope 1 and 2 emissions, and this is primarily driven by the consumption of diesel by these vehicles. The emissions arising from our waste collection vehicles (i.e., bin lorries) are the greatest contributor to fleet vehicle emissions, with emissions from other fleet vehicle vehicles and users (e.g., Parks and Conservation, and Adult Social Care) making a much smaller contribution. We are taking several actions to understand and reduce our fleet vehicle emissions

Figure 4. The Council's Fleet Vehicles Scope 1 and 2 GHG Emissions by Source



Integrated Transport Unit:

A council project is underway to explore establishing an Integrated Transport Unit (ITU) to proactively manage and optimise the council's vehicle fleet. However, as the Street Scene vehicle fleet is currently undergoing its own fleet transformation activity as part of the Waste Service Transformation Programme, it is currently out of the ITU's scope of work. Nevertheless, creating a single centralised fleet management function, with a dedicated specialist team, could work with and support service areas to improve fleet management, increase fleet co-ordination, drive efficiencies in fleet utilisation, deliver financial savings and reduce emissions. The project will review 'tried and tested' best practice fleet management practices, drawing on the expertise and experience of other organisations, including local authorities, government departments, executive agencies and the private sector. The centralised management of the council's vehicle fleet would also support the council's longer-term decarbonisation activities and other priorities through, for example, the centralised management of infrastructure development (e.g., charging infrastructure for electric vehicles), ensuring fleet replacement responds to council needs - informed by comprehensive knowledge of the council's fleet makeup and its utilisation, and through consolidating purchasing and leasing arrangement to deliver value for money.

Waste Collection Vehicle Fleet:

The council is taking several steps to reduce the emissions arising from our waste collection vehicles as they collect waste from across the city. The [UK Environment Act 2021](#) will drive changes in how we collect waste and we are taking steps to optimise our waste collection service to ensure it delivers value for money for the city and achieves high waste recycling rates through increased segregation of waste at source³. The council's 'Waste Service Transformation Programme' will oversee the phased waste collection service transition to the fortnightly collection of residual waste from April 2025⁴, and the phased introduction of weekly food waste collection by April 2026. We

³ The Environment Act 2021 places new obligations on the city council, including: the collection of core material streams (paper and card; plastic (excluding plastic film); glass; metal; food; and garden waste from all household by 31st March 2026; the collection of food waste from all households by 31st March 2026; the collection of plastic film by 31st March 2027; and to halve the waste per person that is sent to residual treatment by 2042.

⁴ The [Council received a £6.825m capital grant from DEFRA](#) for the purchase of vehicles and containers to support the introduction of weekly food waste collections.

expect these changes to waste collection will reduce our overall vehicle fuel consumption leading to a reduction in the emissions arising from our refuse collection vehicle fleet.

Changes to our [waste fleet vehicle configuration](#) will support this transition, reducing the current vehicle fleet from 241 to 172 vehicles (whilst extending collections), introducing Euro 6 standard vehicles, significantly reducing the average vehicle age, and delivering improved efficiency, increased productivity, and lower emissions. The changes to our vehicle fleet will be accompanied with an [upgraded mobile IT system](#) which will increase the efficiency of the waste collection service, aid route planning and scheduling following the most efficient routes, facilitate communication between operational staff and back-office operations, and improve the quality of service, whilst reducing fleet mileage and further reducing emissions. Where practical, and cost effective to do so, HVO⁵ fuel will be utilised as an alternative to conventional diesel, delivering a [significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions](#).

The Council's Scope 3 Emissions

Our scope 3 emissions are much more difficult to determine, because they occur up and down our supply chains, fall outside of our immediate control, and are often shared with other parties (e.g., contractors and suppliers). Whilst this makes gathering data on these activities challenging, and whilst we are currently unable to provide accurate figures for all our scope 3 emissions, we're continually improving our understanding of these emissions. We have used the [GHG Protocol Corporate Value Chain \(Scope 3\) Standard](#) to screen our scope 3 emission sources, and our most recent analysis reinforces that the council's scope 3 emissions are significantly greater than our scope 1 and 2 emissions, and remain dominated by three activities: procurement of goods and services (the products and services we purchase to deliver our services); council housing (which we use to provide homes for our citizens); and the energy from waste plant (which we use to manage our citizens' / city's waste).

Procurement

The council's procurement of goods and services is a significant contributor to the council's scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions. This is common for most public (and many private) sector organisations. Tackling these GHG emissions is challenging, but also a huge opportunity due to the council's scale and influence to drive net zero and sustainability through our procurement and commissioning supply chains, encouraging greater co-operation with our suppliers, and delivering better outcomes for the council, the city and the wider region.

Supporting Sustainable Supply Chains:

Birmingham City Council, in partnership with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, have secured £290k [UK Shared Prosperity Funding](#) to deliver our '[Sustainable Supply Chains for Birmingham & Solihull](#)' (SSCBAS) project, which will work with our Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and support them to decarbonise their operations. Since commencing this activity, and working across both councils, we have improved our understanding of the councils' procurement spend profile and GHG emissions, engaged with our suppliers about their net zero commitments, activities and performance, and delivered targeted support for our SME suppliers with the transition to net zero.

⁵ Hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) is alternative to fossil diesel which made from organic material, often wastes, such as used cooking oil and animal fats, but occasionally palm oil which can drive rainforest deforestation. Whilst the use of HVO reduces the tail pipe greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles, care should be taken to ensure it is sourced sustainably.

Our ambition is for this activity to provide training and non-financial support to almost 60 SMEs, and work with a third of these to support them develop decarbonisation plans.

We have maximised the reach and impact of these activities through collaborating with the UKSPF Circular Economy in Birmingham and Solihull (CEBAS) programme, which is being delivered by International Synergies (see pg. 29 for more information).

Integrating Net Zero into Contracts:

In addition to supporting our SMEs, we have also reviewed our procurement policies, frameworks and contracts to identify opportunities where they can better facilitate net zero delivery and our wider climate emergency priorities. This includes embedding sustainability and greenhouse gas accounting requirements into council contracts, including the '[Birmingham Highways Maintenance and Management Services Private Finance Initiative](#)' and the '[Veolia Waste Management Contract](#)' where we have asked suppliers to provide a greenhouse gas emissions baseline for the contracted activities, which enables the council to better understand the contracts' impacts and identify opportunities where we can work with our suppliers to reduce their emissions.

Council Housing

Birmingham City Council is the largest Local Authority social landlord in Europe, with a stock profile of just under 60,000 properties - 13% of the city's total homes ([457,934 in 2024](#)). Preliminary analysis suggests that the emissions arising from heating and lighting these properties makes a significant contribution to the council's scope 3 emissions. This makes developing strategies and plans (e.g., 'Housing Sustainability Strategy and Delivery Plan') to maximise opportunities to improve the energy efficiency of these properties a key priority.

Improving Asset Data and Insights:

We are taking a data driven approach to council housing decarbonisation and are making good progress in gathering, generating and improving data on our housing stock. An important step forward is the completion of 1200 asset condition reports with accompanying EPC surveys each year. Having more comprehensive and detailed data on council housing assets and their condition will underpin our decision-making and inform a more strategic approach to asset improvements and decarbonisation of Birmingham City Council owned housing stock.

Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund:

After our [successful application](#) to Wave 2.1 of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF)⁶ our Housing Asset Management team have been making significant progress in decarbonisation of our council housing stock, with the aim of retrofitting 2,078 Birmingham City Council owned social homes by September 2025. The programme includes the [Whole House Retrofit Project](#) which has implemented multiple measures to improve the energy and thermal efficiency of 300 homes in Bromford, East Birmingham, including external wall and roof insulation, and the installation of solar panels and air source heat pumps. Overall, these activities will save 1.5 tonnes of carbon dioxide (tCO₂) per property per year, on average, leading to a total annual saving of over 3,000 tCO₂ per year.

Our success delivering our SHDF wave 2.1 activities has been recognised nationally, with the council and our delivery partner, EQUANS Regeneration Ltd., being awarded the [Retrofit National Multi-Measure Project of the Year](#) at the [National Energy Efficiency Awards](#).

⁶ The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) invites social housing landlords to apply to the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund to improve the energy performance of social housing.

Figure 5. Bromford Whole House Retrofit and EQUANS Team at National Energy Efficiency Awards



Council Housing Sustainability Team and Strategy:

Building upon our previous retrofit activities and experience, the council's City Housing team, supported by Route to Net Zero, is proactively developing plans to improve the sustainability of the council's social housing stock. A 'Sustainability Team' is being established within the council's Asset Management team, who will have responsibility for driving the decarbonisation of our housing stock. This team will lead development of the council's 'Housing Sustainability Strategy and Delivery Plan'. However, building on these activities, it will also clarify and define longer term ambitions for net zero council housing and set ambitious targets, create the programmes to deliver these targets, and identify the necessary resources required to support delivery.

Gressel Lane - Energy Saving Technologies Pilot

The council constructed 36 housing units at Gressel Lane, Shard End, and secured European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funding to install and test energy efficiency technologies in 30 units. Working with tenants and other partners, the council will assess the impact of the technologies and conduct post occupancy monitoring. The findings will be published and inform future sustainable housing developments plans and research to support the Future Homes Standard.

Energy from Waste

The [Tyseley Energy Recovery Facility \(ERF\)](#) is operated by Veolia under an integrated waste management contract with Birmingham City Council to manage the domestic waste arising from the city of Birmingham. The ERF processes approximately 340,000 tonnes of waste produced by the city annually to produce electricity, of which 25MW is fed into the National Grid, after providing for on-site needs. The facility is a significant emitter of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in Birmingham and is a key contributor to the council's scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions⁷. Whilst recent investment in the plant has modernised its operations and the ERF maintains its R1 status, meaning it is classified as an efficient recovery option by the Environment Agency, the UK Government announcement that the emissions from Energy from Waste (EfW) facilities will be included in the [UK Emissions Trading Scheme](#) (ETS) from 2028 will likely bring greater scrutiny of EfW emissions⁸.

The [expansion of the UK ETS to include waste incineration](#) and EfW facilities marks a significant regulatory intervention in the UK waste sector, and coupled with the [UK Environment Act 2021](#)⁹, will play a crucial role in aligning the waste and recycling industry with the UK's net zero targets and

⁷ Further information on the facility's annual emissions can be found on the UK's [National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory](#) which reports fossil 'carbon dioxide as carbon', and the UK government's [Pollution Inventory](#) which reports the facility's 'fossil' and 'biogenic' carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions.

⁸ The UK ETS is a cap-and-trade system that sets a limit on emissions from particularly carbon intensive industries. Participating companies must obtain allowances for each tonne of CO₂ they emit, encouraging them to cut emissions by buying, trading or surrendering allowances.

⁹ The Environment Act 2021 aims to halve the waste per person that is sent for residual treatment by 2042.

accelerating the country's transition to a more sustainable economy. Whilst there is no obligation for organisations to purchase or surrender UK ETS allowances until 2028, there is a two-year transition from 2026 where emissions from facilities are required to be monitored, reported, and verified. In preparation, fossil carbon measurement equipment will be installed at the facility during 2025, which will provide definitive reporting on the facility's fossil carbon emissions from 2026.

The current management and future for the Tyseley ERF falls within the wider plans for city decarbonisation, which are discussed and outlined further in the 'City Emissions' section of this report.

Other Council Scope 3 Emissions

In addition to tackling our three-priority scope 3 emissions, described above, we are also taking steps to improve our understanding of other activities which contribute to our scope 3 emissions, and how these can be reduced. Some of these activities are elaborated upon briefly below.

Schools

We have been working with climate charity Ashden, and their newly recruited [West Midlands Schools' Climate Action Advisors](#), to support their [Let's Go Zero Campaign](#) to decarbonise schools across Birmingham¹⁰. Acivico Group, the council's building consultancy, is also providing support and has developed a [school roadmap to decarbonisation](#), is delivering sessions for parents on energy efficiency, and working with schools to help them to decarbonise. The council is also extending engagement on school decarbonisation through the Spotlight newsletter for School Governors, and delivering carbon literacy training for governors, clerks and head teachers.

Commercial Estate

The City Council is the single largest owner of property in Birmingham. The council provides opportunities for business tenants, prospective landowners and developers across Birmingham, through the management and letting of council-owned commercial land and buildings, including shops, offices, industrial units, warehouses, business parks and car parks. We are continuing to better understand the contribution our commercial property portfolio makes to our scope 3 emissions profile and investigate how we can better quantify and tackle these emissions.

Leisure Centres

Having successfully secured and utilised £296,550 of revenue support for utility and chemical cost pressures across our swimming pools from phase I of Sport England's [Swimming Pool Support Fund](#), the City Council has subsequently been awarded a further £250,000 under phase II, match funded with £118,643 from the [UK Shared Prosperity Fund](#), totalling £368,643. The funding will be used to provide new efficient gas boilers and pool covers at Handsworth Wellbeing Centre¹¹.

Council Companies

We have been working to better understand and quantify the greenhouse gas emission arising from council companies. Our activities have focused on two companies, [Acivico Group](#) (the council's building consultancy) and [Shelforce](#) Ltd. (the council's window and door manufacturer), and we continue to work with these organisations and explore opportunities to support them to better understand, quantify, and ultimately reduce their GHG emissions.

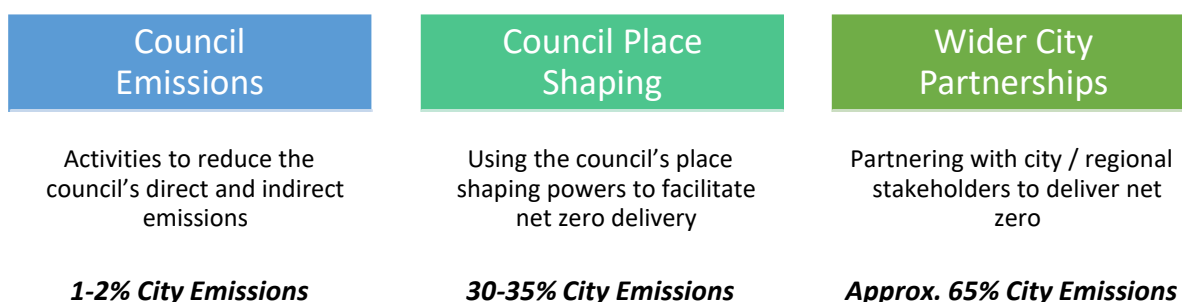
¹⁰ 40 schools from across Birmingham have signed up to the Let's Go Zero campaign and are in the process of completing Climate Action Plans to reduce their emissions and encourage nature at their schools.

¹¹ Note: this funding will cover some leisure centres which are operated as concessions by third parties, which is why it is included in this section on our scope 3 emissions.

Chapter 3: The City of Birmingham's Greenhouse Gas Emissions

In addition to tackling our own emissions, we are also playing a key role in working with stakeholders and citizens across Birmingham and the wider region to tackle our city's greenhouse gas emissions. We are doing this in the following ways: 1) by tackling our own scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions, we will contribute to reducing the city's emissions; 2) by using our 'place shaping powers' and leading activities which will support the decarbonisation of the city, with our ability to influence planning policy, city transportation and district heat networks, being three obvious examples; and, 3) by acting as a convenor, bringing together different city stakeholders to share knowledge, expertise and experience, and explore opportunities to collectively take action to tackle our city's emissions.

Figure 6. Structuring Birmingham City Council's Net Zero Challenge



The Route to Net Zero team has continued working with the council's Insight, Policy and Strategy team to make data on the city more easily accessible. We have renamed the 2023 [Climate Change Briefing Book](#) as the '*Birmingham Environmental Data Handbook*', are including updates to the original data sets (e.g., the city's greenhouse gas emissions, housing stock and their energy performance, waste management and recycling) and including additional data sets (e.g., air quality). We will publish the updated report in early 2025 through the [Birmingham City Observatory](#), and review and update it annually to demonstrate and communicate our city's progress towards net zero - and other outcomes.

The following section of the report provides an overview of our city's emissions by source and outlines our activities underway and progress tackling these emissions.

City Territorial and Consumption Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The City's emissions can be categorised and calculated as 'territorial' and 'consumption' emissions. Territorial emissions include all the direct emissions arising from the domestic, industry, commercial, transport and other activities which occur within the city boundary. Consumption emissions take a wider view by including the emissions embodied in the manufactured goods (e.g., appliances, electronics, foods and clothes) and services (e.g., cloud computing and music streaming services), which are imported into and consumed within the city, regardless of where in the world these emissions occur. The 'territorial' and 'consumption' approaches are complementary and when used alongside each other, provide a richer picture of our city's greenhouse gas emissions.

Whilst the UK government publishes standardised territory emissions data for local authorities (DESNZ), there is no standardised government publication of consumption emissions data for local authorities. This is because consumption greenhouse gas accounting is a relatively new and evolving discipline, and there are different accounting approaches emerging which apply different scopes and

methodologies and produce different results¹². Rather than selecting an approach and using it to report the city's consumption emissions annually, we are assuming that the consumption greenhouse gas accounting field will develop, and that the different tools will provide important and complementary insights. Consequently, we will continue to review the emerging approaches and how they can improve our understanding of consumption emissions. We will use our findings to identify and explore opportunities where they can help raise awareness and guide the development of strategies, policies and actions to tackle the city's wider carbon footprint.

It is for this reason that most of the following section of the report focuses on the city's territorial emissions.

The City of Birmingham's Territorial Emissions

The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) publish annual local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions data on industry, commercial, public sector, domestic, transport, land use, land-use change, and forestry (LULUCF), agriculture and waste activities. These are the most reliable and consistent breakdown of territorial greenhouse gas emissions across the country and show annual emissions from 2005, with the 2024 publication providing data for 2022 emissions: [UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics](#). As this is the most up to date local authority source of greenhouse gas emissions data, we use this data to track progress in reducing the city's territorial emissions.

During 2022 the City of Birmingham's territorial emissions were 4,316 ktCO₂e. This represents as 41% reduction since 2005, and an almost 7% reduction when compared to 2021, as shown in 'Figure 7. City of Birmingham Territorial Greenhouse Gas Emissions, 2005-2022'. A similar reduction in emissions occurred in [346 out of the 361 local authorities](#) across the UK for 2022, which is consistent with the decrease in overall UK emissions of 5% during 2022. This reduction in emissions was largely due to a [reduction in fuel use to heat buildings](#) due to the warmer temperatures in 2022 compared to 2021, and its impacts can be seen in the reduced emissions from Birmingham's 'Domestic' (-13%), 'Commercial' (-2%), 'Public' (-5%) sectors. Higher energy prices may have also been a factor in reducing demand for fuels, particularly towards the end of the year.

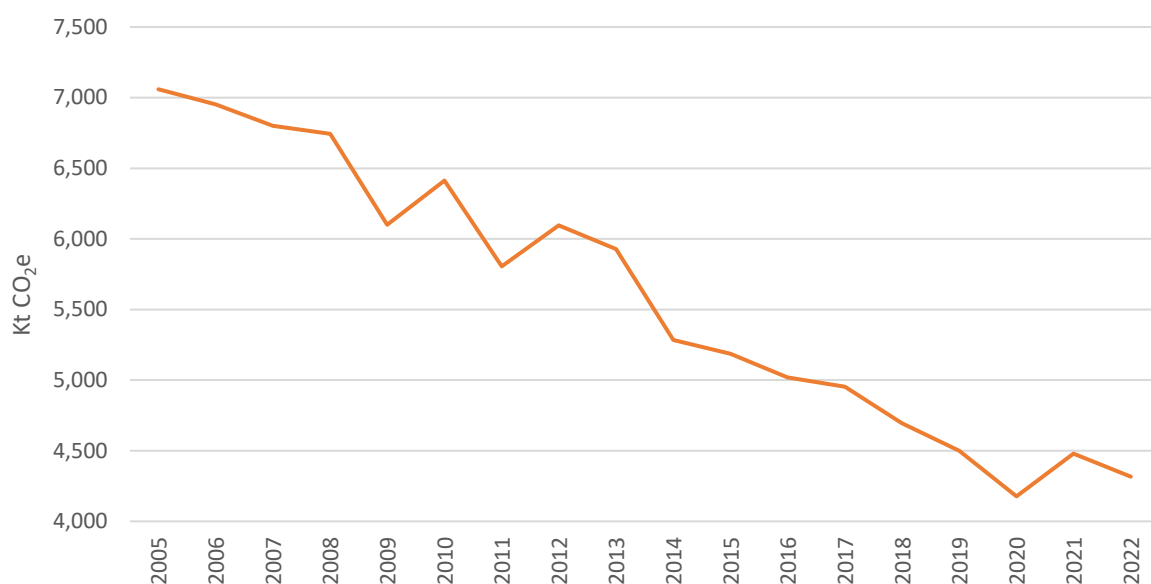
Birmingham's 'Transport' sector emissions increased in 2022 (+2.5%), and [59% of local authorities \(212\) saw a similar increase](#) following the removal of the last COVID-19 restrictions. However, the city's transport emissions are almost 13% lower than 2019, the last year before the pandemic, which is also the case for 95% (342) of local authorities. Birmingham's 'Waste' sector emissions also increased in 2022 (+15%), and whilst this may be down to a combination of factors, a key contributor is likely the [DESNZ adjustment of the local authority datasets](#) to align with the new [Territorial Emissions Statistics \(TES\)](#) sectors, which, amongst other changes, reallocated emissions from household composting from the 'Domestic' to the 'Waste' sector.

Birmingham's emissions from 'Agriculture' and 'Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF)' are low, given the city's high degree of urbanisation, and year-to-year variations have little impact on the city's overall emission profile.

¹² Commonly used tools to calculate local authority / regional consumption greenhouse gas emissions include:

- [Local Authority Consumption Accounts \(LACA\)](#), which have been developed by University of Leeds and funded by Defra, London Councils and ReLondon.
- [Community Carbon Calculator \(Impact\)](#), which was developed by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) and the Centre for Energy and the Environment at the University of Exeter.

Figure 7. City of Birmingham Territorial Greenhouse Gas Emissions, 2005-2022



Most sectors within Birmingham have seen significant emissions reductions since 2005, as shown in 'Figure 8. City of Birmingham Territorial Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Sector, 2005-2022', and the similar downward profiles and trajectories in Core Cities emissions would suggest that the nationwide decarbonisation of electricity (and reduction in industrial combustion) has played a significant role in these emissions reductions, as illustrated in 'Figure 9. Core Cities Total Emissions, 2005-2022'.

Figure 8. City of Birmingham Territorial Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Sector, 2005-2022

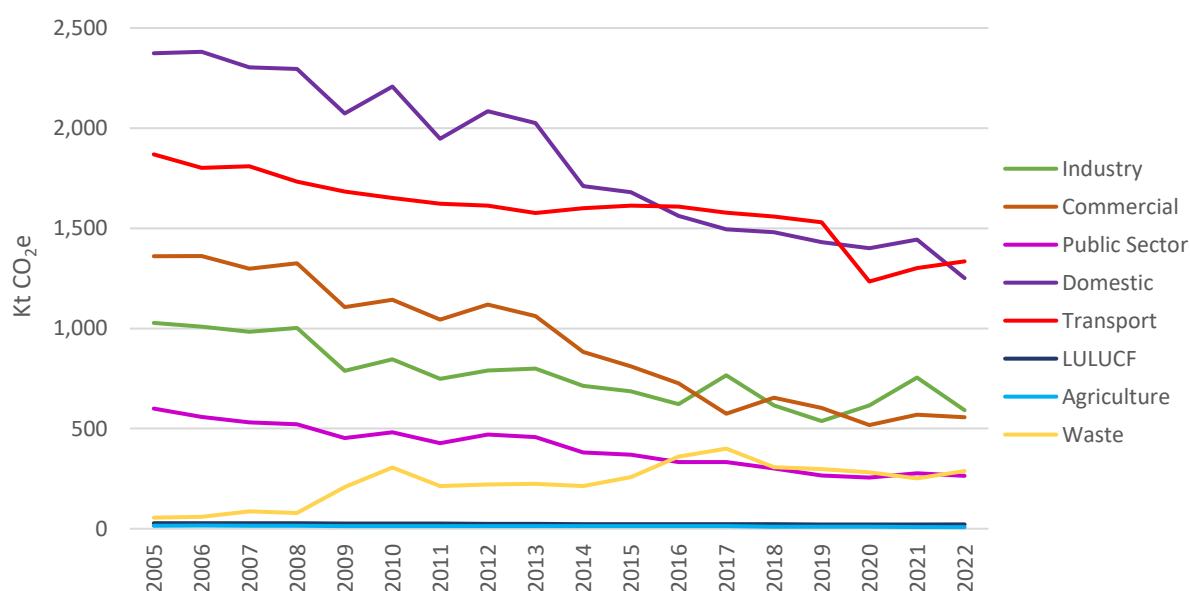
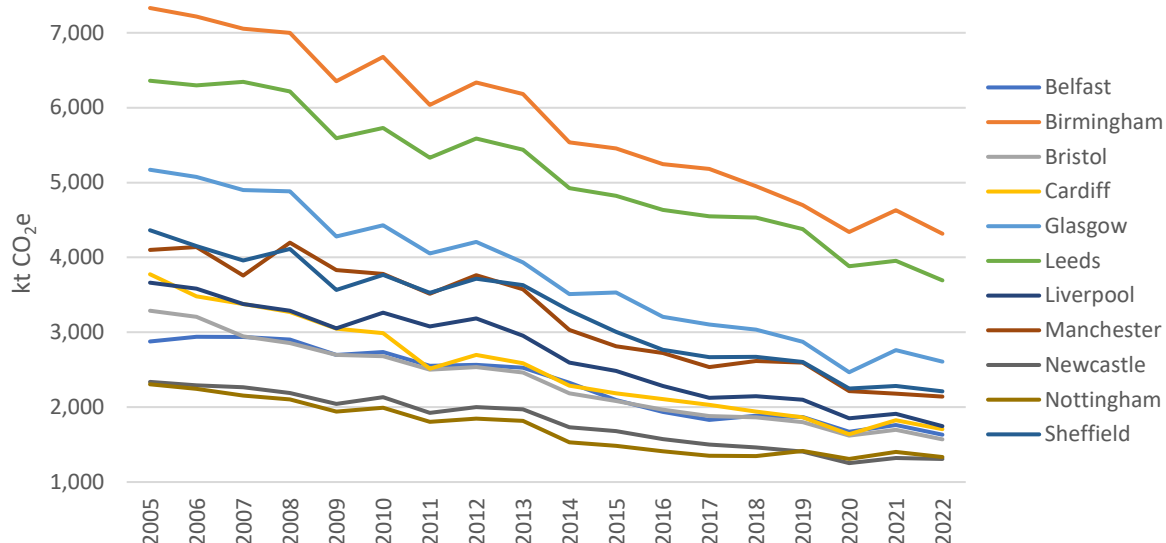


Figure 9. Core Cities Total Emissions, 2005 – 2022



Birmingham's per capita emissions have fallen by 48.4%, from 7.2 tonnes CO₂e per person in 2005 to 3.7 tonnes CO₂e per person in 2022. This represents an almost 10% reduction when compared to 2021 per capita emissions of 4.1 tonnes CO₂e per person. As shown in 'Figure 10. Core Cities Per Capita Emissions, 2022', Birmingham (3.7 tCO₂e) has the 3rd lowest per capita emissions of the core cities, after Bristol (3.3 tCO₂e) and Liverpool (3.5 tCO₂e). The reduction in per capita emission is broadly consistent across the core cities, 'Figure 11. Core Cities Per Capital Emissions, 2005-2022'.

Figure 10. Core Cities Per Capita Emissions, 2022

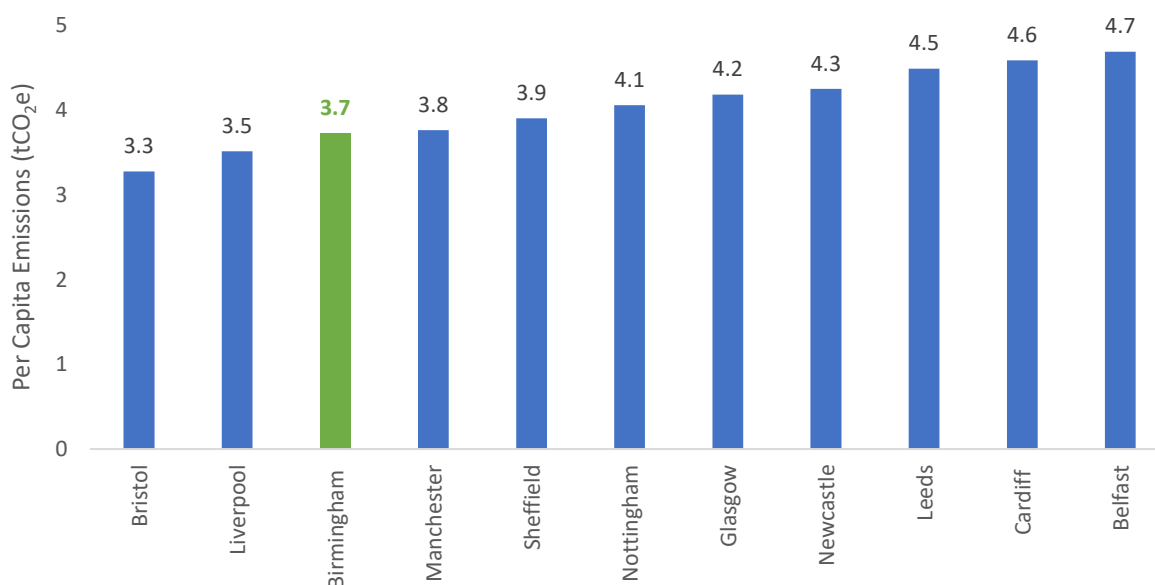
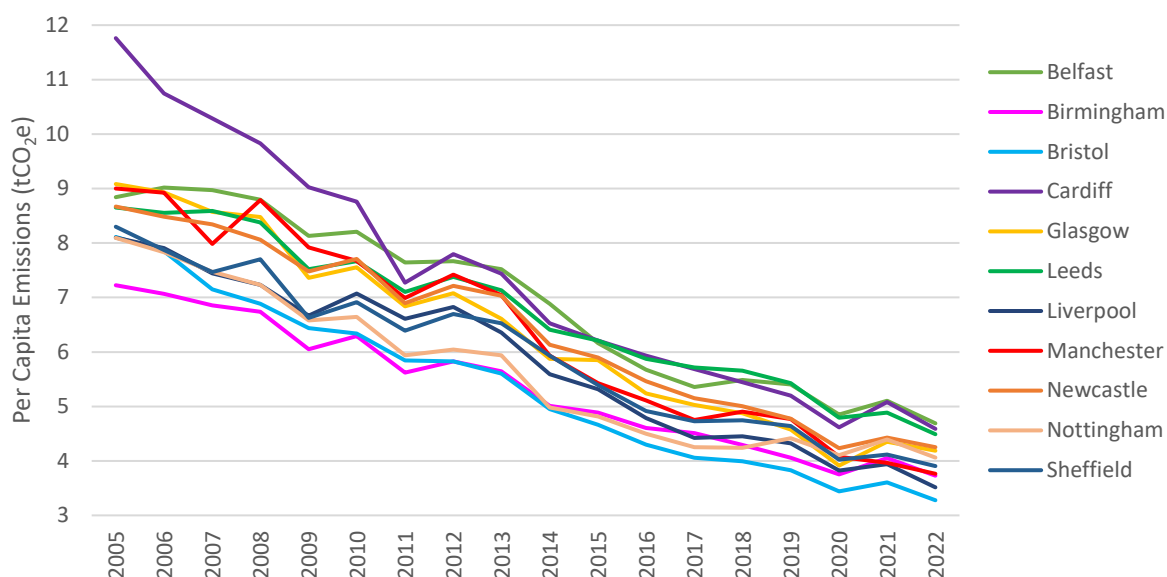


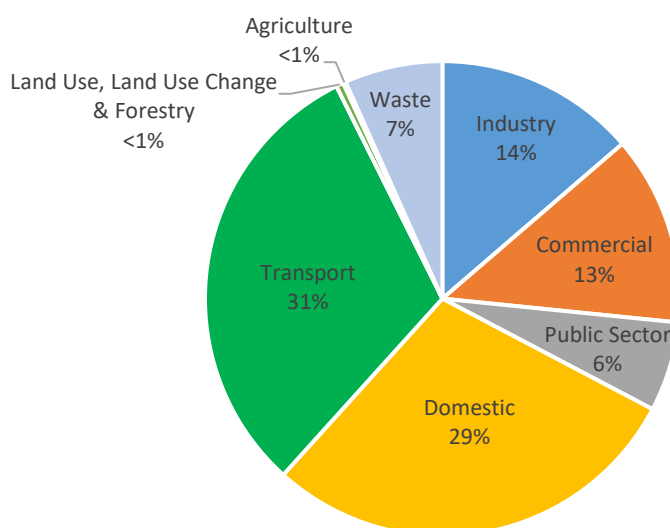
Figure 11. Core Cities Per Capita Emissions, 2005 – 2022



Tackling Birmingham City's Territorial Emissions

The transport (31%), domestic (29%) and industrial (14%) sectors make the greatest contribution to the City of Birmingham's territorial emissions in 2022, as detailed in 'Figure 12. City of Birmingham Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Sector, 2022'. This distribution of emissions is consistent with national trends, with transport being the largest emissions source in more than half of all UK local authorities. Whilst the council is not directly responsible for these city emissions, the council does have the ability to influence the emissions arising from buildings, transport systems, waste services and the natural environment, through its place shaping powers and activities.

Figure 12. City of Birmingham Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Sector, 2022



The council is working with and encouraging other city stakeholders to reduce and/or enable emissions reductions, for example through bringing organisations from the public, private and third sectors together to share their knowledge and expertise in reducing emissions, and by supporting community groups that wish to take climate action.

The following section outlines some of the key actions the council is leading to help tackle the city's emissions, starting with those which will benefit multiple city sectors, before focusing on actions to tackle specific emission sources.

Cross Sector City Wide Decarbonisation Enabling Activities

The council is using its range of place shaping powers to influence the design and operation of the city, and the following activities will support, enable and encourage wider city decarbonisation activities across multiple city sectors.

Birmingham Local Plan Review

The Birmingham Local Plan (BLP) will support city wide decarbonisation across multiple sectors. The [Issues and Options](#) consultation took place between October and December 2022 and sought the views and inputs from a wide range of stakeholders on a variety of issues, including sustainability and net zero, along with the different policy options for addressing these issues. This feedback gathered informed the development of the evidence base and the resulting draft policies. The council worked with [Jacobs](#) to prepare a climate change evidence base for the BLP, and the resulting policies formed our 'preferred options' for our policy direction, which was consulted on summer 2024. We will utilise these consultation responses to inform our draft local plan, however changes to the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) mean the timeline for the local plan are currently being reviewed. A revised Local Development Scheme, setting out the new timetable, will be considered by Cabinet in January.

East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Programme

The [East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Programme](#) is a 20-year initiative to attract investment into in the East of the city. The programme forms part of wider plans for the East Birmingham and the North Solihull Growth Corridor and has established a Growth Zone (GZ), including an [Investment Zone \(IZ\)](#), which stretches from Birmingham city centre to the Airport, the NEC and what will be the new HS2 interchange at Arden Cross. The area will provide investment opportunities for projects which support decarbonisation in East Birmingham and the wider city. Working in collaboration with the Tyseley Strategic Alliance, the East Birmingham programme has been successful in supporting a range of net zero and nature aligned projects, including: establishing the Tyseley [Green Energy Innovation Quarter](#); designating Tyseley within the East Birmingham North Solihull Growth Zone; delivering local nature benefits (more info on pg. 32); supporting the creation of the [National Centre for Decarbonisation of Heat](#); and working with local businesses on a range of projects (e.g., Fast Followers and Inclusive Innovation Network element of the DIATOMIC project (pg. 35). There are also plans to retrofit the grade 2 listed Ward End Park House for use by the Council and benefit of the local community, and the Route to Net Zero team is exploring retrofit funding opportunities.

Local Area Energy Planning

[Local area energy planning \(LAEP\)](#) is a relatively new process which is led by local government and developed collaboratively with defined stakeholders to translate national net zero targets into local energy system action. LAEP's are a bottom up, data driven and whole systems approach to deliver effective local decarbonisation action which will contribute to the UK's 2050 net zero greenhouse gas emissions target. To support LAEP development, the City Council has been working with the West Midlands Combined Authority and Advanced Infrastructure to integrate the City of Birmingham into their Local Area Energy Planning Plus (LAEP+) tool. The LAEP+ tool creates custom maps of local areas populated with hundreds of datasets which can be analysed to explore the suitability of different sites for low carbon energy technologies (e.g., solar panels). The council is reviewing how the LAEP+ tool can support LAEP planning and accelerate the city's decarbonisation.

Tackling Domestic Emissions

Domestic Buildings account for 29% of the greenhouse gas emissions across the City of Birmingham ([DESNZ, 2022](#)), with most emissions resulting from the burning of natural gas for space and water heating. We are working with communities and other partners to maximise access to grants to support energy and carbon emissions reductions, as well as exploring funding and delivery approaches for large scale energy efficiency and renewable energy investment. Our update of the Local Plan policies will encourage development in the city to be more energy efficient and have lower greenhouse gas emissions, and the council is working with major developers as part of the planning pre-application process to maximise the energy performance of new buildings.

Housing Decarbonisation Plans

To enable the council to meet net zero ambitions it is essential that we tackle the carbon emissions arising from the City's [457,934 homes](#). Driving decarbonisation across all tenures requires clear, ambitious and deliverable plans which address how the Council and our partners can support residents and social and private landlords to make their homes more efficient. We are taking steps in developing components of these plans – which are outlined below – and because the council has minimal influence over properties in private ownership our focus is on stimulating retrofit demand by supporting residents to access retrofit funding, finance and knowledge, working with the retrofit sector to overcome barriers to retrofit rollout, and pursuing grant applications and other alternative funding/finance sources to facilitate retrofit delivery.

WMCA Single Settlement Devolution Pilot

From April 2025, funding to support retrofit is expected to be available through the [Single Settlement Devolution Pilot for the West Midlands](#). The Council has been developing a Place Based Strategy which includes an approach to area based retrofit to ensure we maximise income from devolution funding. This funding includes the [Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund](#), the [Warm Homes Local Grants](#) and [Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme](#). Our approach for housing retrofit has focused on supporting households who are most at risk from fuel poverty to reduce their fuel bill, and maximising outcomes by targeting our most inefficient homes. The council will be engaging with stakeholders and community representatives before April 2025 on our proposals for the priority areas. We are also taking opportunities to align the place-based approach with existing and planned works in the Council Housing Asset Management Programme, which will ensure investment from the Housing Revenue Account is, where possible, supported by funding to deliver greater benefits.

Energy Company Obligation (ECO)

The [Energy Company Obligation \(ECO\)](#)¹³ is a government energy efficiency scheme designed to tackle fuel poverty and help reduce carbon emissions, which is currently in its 4th iteration, ECO4, running from April 2022 to March 2026. Over the last year the council has identified several opportunities and made significant progress on drawing investment for Birmingham's homes through the ECO retrofit programme. Building on our previous experience with ECO and learning from best practice examples from other local authorities, including Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Liverpool City Council, Birmingham City Council has taken the bold decision to procure three ECO installer partners to deliver home retrofit measures. The three partners will work with the council, communities and other stakeholders, to drive the delivery of energy efficiency measures to over 3,000 Birmingham homes. The initiative will harness £45m per year of private investments, achieve

¹³ The ECO scheme places a Home Heating Cost Reduction Obligation (HHCRO) on medium and large energy suppliers. Under HHCRO, obligated suppliers must promote measures, such as installing insulation or upgrading heating systems, that improve the ability of low-income, fuel-poor and vulnerable households to heat their homes.

estimated fuel bill savings of £1.2m, and reduce the carbon emissions from the city's homes by 4,500 tonnes per year.

Increasing Retrofit Skills and Capacity

The Council has been working in partnership with East Lindsay Council and Bolsover Council, and the Midlands Net Zero Hub, on establishing a DESNZ funded housing retrofit skills pilot. The pilot has been working with stakeholders from Tyseley Energy Park (TEP), South City College Birmingham (SCCB), University College Birmingham (UCB) and Acivico to develop retrofit careers pathways and produce materials for school and college curriculums - and the installation of heat pump and solar panel training kits at the colleges will enable students to gain practical experience working with these technologies. Activities are also underway to support local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to get started in retrofit, with a recent 'network and learn' session hosted by Acivico attended by over 30 organisations. [Videos](#) produced as part of this session are available as support tools for SMEs.

Retrofit Summit

The Route to Net Zero team, in partnership with [Low Carbon Homes](#) and other stakeholders from across the city, delivered the annual [Birmingham Retrofit Summit in May 2024](#). The event brought together council officers, housing providers, community groups and local businesses, and a wide range of speakers discussed the challenges faced in retrofitting properties, alongside the opportunities to reduce fuel poverty carbon emissions. The event demonstrates the council's commitment and leadership on retrofit, and over 150 retrofit professionals registered to attend.





Tackling Transport Emissions

In 2022 transport contributed 31% to the City's territorial greenhouse gas emissions. To achieve net zero, we will need to fundamentally change how people and goods move around our city. For example, the adopted [Birmingham Transport Plan](#) (BTP) identifies the need to reduce the total number of 'vehicle kms' travelled in Birmingham by around 90%. This presents a significant challenge, requiring the rapid shift away from single occupancy private car use, but it will also provide many other opportunities and benefits.

Birmingham Transport Plan - Delivery Plan

The Delivery Plan sets ambitious targets for delivery of transport improvements against the key principles of the Birmingham Transport Plan. It outlines how the BTP will be delivered, quantifies the scale of the challenge, outlines the spatial framework underpinning delivery, and provides a prioritised package of transport related interventions. The Delivery Plan marks a move away from mode-based planning, towards a spatial framework with four key typologies, 'Figure 13. Birmingham Delivery Plan Key Typologies', and rather than producing a list of schemes and projects, will produce packages of demand management policies and transport interventions to transform different areas of the city to improve travel. Targets from the City's EV Charging Strategy for electric vehicle infrastructure (pg. 26) are also included in the Delivery Plan, noting that EV rollout must be carefully planned to avoid simply replacing the city's current car fleet with low emission vehicles, which will do little to reduce congestion, and fail to influence the necessary changes required in travel mode and behaviour.

Figure 13. Birmingham Delivery Plan Key Typologies

Typology	Future Aspirations
 <p>Corridors are strategic routes where lots of people travel by different types of transport</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Road space reallocated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bus priority, Adequate footway and Segregated cycle facilities where space allows - Residual road network supports freight and other journeys - Crossing facilities link communities and neighbourhoods
 <p>Neighbourhoods are networks of residential streets, often including parades of local shops</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low traffic areas with Healthy Street Principles applied - Attractive environment for active travel - Links to mobility hubs and public transport - A space for people, not a car park
 <p>Centres are areas with a significant number of shops and local amenities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Space reallocated to sustainable modes/ placemaking - Enhanced public transport accessibility - Decreased traffic and enhanced crossing facilities - Connections to local active travel networks and facilities. - Measured approach to freight to support local businesses
 <p>Central Birmingham is the city centre, the area inside the A4540 ring road, and close areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Central segments - Low traffic conditions - no through trips for private vehicles - Enhanced movement and connectivity for public transport and active travel - Increased public realm and reduced parking

Informed by the Delivery Plan, the Transportation and Highways programme dictates ongoing delivery of projects to promote sustainable modes of travel. During 2023/4 progress has been made at a number of sites across the city, including: [Dudley Road](#); [Midland Metro Eastside Extension](#); [Digbeth High Street](#) public realm; [City Centre](#) public realm; and, the [Coventry Road](#) cycle route.

Figure 14. Birmingham Transport Infrastructure Projects



Birmingham Transport Plan Monitoring Strategy

The BTP monitoring strategy has been developed to measure progress in achieving the aims and objectives of the Birmingham Transport Plan. To better understand the greenhouse gas emissions from transport, an indicator for traffic flows in the city has been developed, using over 700 real time traffic sensors that have been strategically placed around the city. This data shows there were 3.69

billion vehicle miles travelled by motorised modes of travel in Birmingham during 2023. This represents an increase of 3.4% on 2022. Using the average UK vehicle emissions for 2023, we have estimated that 680,000 tCO₂e were emitted by transport in Birmingham in 2023¹⁴. Over the next year this monitoring will be developed to increase our confidence in the data to create a more reliable local estimate of carbon emissions arising from transport.

Clean Air Zone

The Council launched its first Clean Air Strategy in 2022, which builds on the Council's statutory obligations around air quality with the ambitious aim of providing clean air for everybody in the city. The Clean Air Zone (CAZ) remains the single biggest intervention to improve air quality and was introduced to specifically tackle the air pollutant nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) which has been above the legal limit at a significant number of locations within the city centre. Critically, there is a growing body of evidence that links this air pollutant to several diseases and chronic health conditions. Whilst the CAZ's primary objective is to improve air quality, it is also an enabler of change within the Birmingham Transport Plan and influences transport carbon emissions.



Case Study: Schools Air Quality Monitoring

The Council is expanding its School Air Quality Monitoring Programme to include every school across the city, and will offer an air quality monitor for each school so that they can access real time data on a range of pollutants. Aligned with Birmingham's Clean Air Strategy, this initiative will help to engage students, teachers and the public, and inform curricula and wider sustainability and climate change activities and support the Healthy Schools' Programme and active travel through Modeshift Stars.

Progress towards improving the city's air quality is monitored and the data published regularly through the [Bum Breathes](#) website and the annual [Clean Air Zone progress report](#)¹⁵. Since the Clean Air Zone began operation in 2021, the percentage of the most polluting vehicles entering the city has dropped - from just over 15% in June 2021 to 4.5% in August 2024. There has also been a significant reduction in the daily average number of unique non-compliant vehicles from 14,873 June 2021 to 4,621 in August 2024. These changes have led to a reduction in the levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) in the city centre and there are now only two areas (the area around Moor Street and A38/St Chads), and three locations on the A4540 Middleway where there continue to be exceedances of the legal limit for NO₂. Work is underway to improve our understanding of the sources of the exceedances in these locations and develop plans to reduce the emissions.

EV Strategy & Electric Vehicle Charging Points:

To reduce emissions from transport there is a need to reduce vehicle usage and transition to electric vehicles (EVs). This transition will be underpinned with the provision of a comprehensive public EV

¹⁴ Operational carbon only and does not include the embodied carbon involved in the construction of the vehicles, nor other pollutants (e.g., particulates) created by vehicle components.

¹⁵ The CAZ scheme has generated over £82m. Under the legislation used to establish the scheme the spending of revenues generated must be aligned with the high-level spending priorities of the Clean Air Zone Charging Order, and has been used to support a range of schemes which encourage the adoption of more active and sustainable forms of transport - in line with the strategic themes of the Birmingham Transport Plan.

charging network, which spans the city and serves the needs of all users (e.g., residents, businesses, taxis, etc.). The council's [city-wide electric vehicle charging strategy](#) will support the rollout of this charging infrastructure enabling the uptake of electric vehicles. Whilst the overall number of charge points required for the city will depend on the scale of the change in people's travel behaviours and the modal shift achieved, the EV Strategy modelled the need for at least 40% modal shift in Birmingham by 2032 as an interim step towards achieving the central government's 2050 net zero targets.

The council is making good progress in rolling out [public EV charging infrastructure](#) across the city and has been working with its delivery partner [ESB](#) to install 200 fast and rapid chargers (394 connections) - of which 130 fast and rapid charging stations are already in operation - and the remainder are scheduled for completion in 2025. The rollout of residential charge points is also progressing, with a trial rollout of 560 lamppost chargers (5kw-7kw). These chargers will be installed in areas of the city where there is limited or no off-street parking - the case for roughly a third of Birmingham's households. The Council has secured £1m of [Off Street Residential Charge Point](#) scheme funding and is working with its delivery partner [Ubitricity](#) to install the chargers. An additional £14m of funding has been allocated through the Local EV infrastructure scheme to the region and the Council plan to make use of this funding to expand this network over the coming years.



Hydrogen Bus Pilot:

Birmingham's fleet of 20 double decker [hydrogen buses](#) continues to operate commercial bus routes across the city under the 'Clean Air Hydrogen Bus Pilot'. Whilst the operational availability and reliability of hydrogen fuel supply has been challenging, the buses represent a significant step in decarbonising our public transportation system and reducing air pollution. Birmingham's hydrogen buses, along with the buses operated in surrounding areas, see the West Midlands running the [UK's largest hydrogen bus fleet](#).



Tackling Industrial, Commercial and Public Sector Emissions

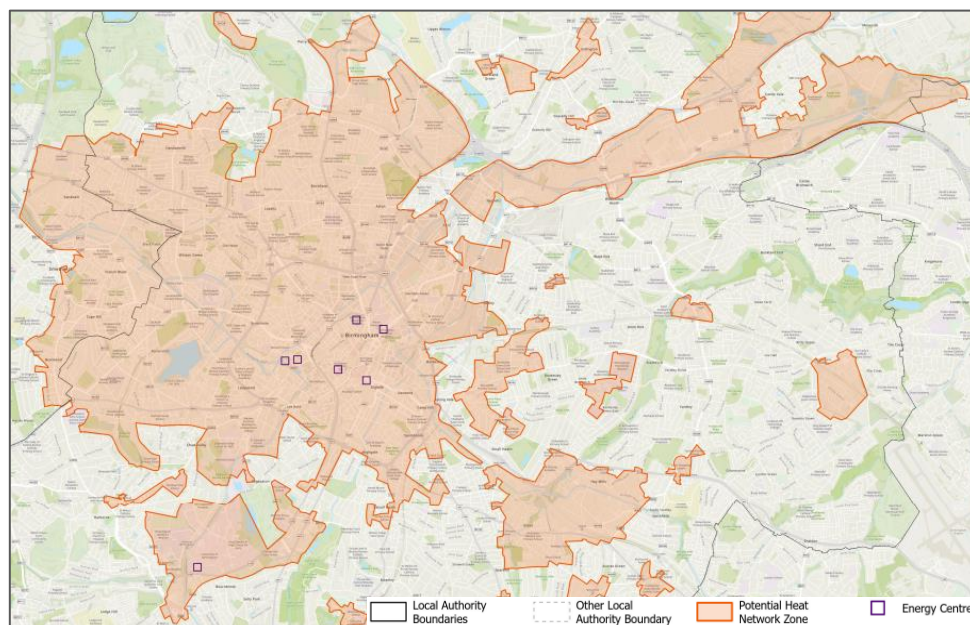
During 2022 the city's industrial (14%), commercial (13%) and public sector (6%) activities made a significant contribution to the city's territorial greenhouse gas emissions. The council continues to explore and pursue opportunities to work with businesses and other organisations to support them on their decarbonisation journey.

Heat Decarbonisation via Heat Networks

Heat networks are expected to provide significant emissions reductions, particularly in urban areas, through the decarbonisation of heating and cooling. The council has been working with the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) on the [Advanced Zoning Programme](#) to identify locations in Birmingham where heat networks may present the most cost-effective method for decarbonising heat. [Maps showing existing energy centres supplying heat via heat networks, and potential heat network zones across Birmingham have been published by DESNZ](#), 'Figure 15. Map of Birmingham's Potential Heat Network Zone'. These maps are an output of the National Heat Network tool, which will be used to refine the boundaries of potential zones once the legislation commences. The [Energy Act 2023](#) enables government to implement heat network zoning

regulations in England and secondary legislation to formally commence heat network zoning is due to come into effect during 2025. The Council has a key enabling role to play in this energy transition and we are working with DESNZ and stakeholders from across the city to develop a heat network strategy and delivery plan for the city which identifies and realises these opportunities.

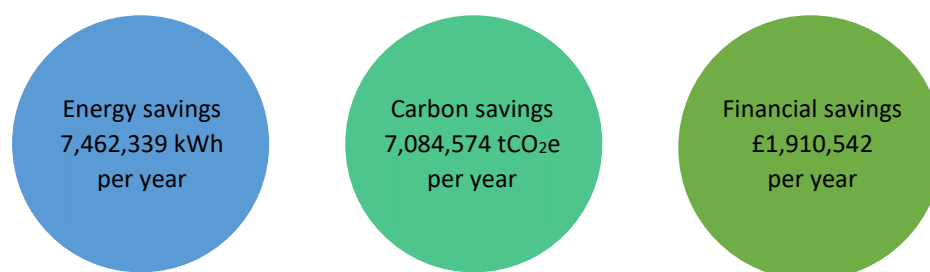
Figure 15. Map of Birmingham's Potential Heat Network Zones



Grant Programmes Support for SMEs in the West Midlands Area

The Business Development and Innovation (BDI) Team is delivering 3 national government funded grant programmes which are available to SMEs across Birmingham and the wider region. The [West Midlands Grant Programme](#) (WMGP) supports SMEs' growth initiatives and the [Net Zero Grant Programme](#) (NZGP) and the [Business Energy Efficiency Grant Programme](#) (BEEGP) support SMEs' carbon reduction initiatives. All 3 programmes provide SMEs with grants of between £1,000 to £100,000 and since 2023 have delivered significant outcomes across the region, 'Figure 16. Forecast Outcomes from Grant Programmes for SMEs In Birmingham / Region'.

Figure 16. Forecast Outcomes from Grant Programmes for SMEs In Birmingham / Region



Net Zero Living - Fast Followers

Our [Innovate UK Net Zero Living: Fast Followers](#) project has employed a Net Zero Innovation Delivery Officer (NZIDO) to support SMEs in the Tyseley area on their journey to net zero. The NZIDO is working with the [University of Birmingham and the Tyseley Energy Park](#) (Webster and Horsfall) to map the businesses, carry out net zero audits, complete sustainability diagnostics, and support them to apply for further funding to allow for the implementation of their action plans. Two

sessions have been held with local businesses to explore the potential for installing solar panels to reduce energy costs, and the project is progressing well, delivering grant applications, delivery plans and other investable propositions.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund - Circular Economy

Through our collaboration with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, we secured £520k from the [UK Shared Prosperity Fund](#) and have been working with [International Synergies](#) (ISL), a world leader in industrial symbiosis, to deliver tailored circular economy support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across the region. The [Circular Economy for Birmingham and Solihull](#) (CEBAS) project is providing training, events, workshops and one-to-one support to help SMEs improve their resource and waste efficiency, and will run until March 2025.

Tackling Waste Emissions

The management of the city's waste accounts for 7% of the city's territorial emissions, and reducing the quantity of waste produced and increasing the recycling of waste streams across the city will support the reduction of waste system related emissions. Whilst it is difficult to tease out the specific makeup of the city's waste emissions from the DESNZ data, the management of the city's domestic waste is likely to be a significant contributor – and a contributor which grows as the city's population increases. The domestic waste arising from the city of Birmingham is managed by [Veolia Environmental Services Birmingham Ltd.](#) who operate the city's two major waste transfer stations, handling most materials collected via the council-operated kerbside collection schemes, the Tyseley Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) and the five Household Recycling Centres. The Waste Service recognises the contribution that it can make to the net zero agenda and work is underway to develop a new Waste Strategy, which will focus on increasing the city's waste recycling and resource efficiency and seek ways to reduce carbon emissions in a cost-effective manner.

Increasing Waste Recycling and Resource Efficiency

The [UK Environment Act 2021](#) (the 'Act') will influence our city's management of waste by setting a statutory target to cut residual waste produced per person by 50% by 2042, requiring all local authorities to provide households with separate weekly food waste collections from April 2026, and eliminating food waste from landfill by 2030. The Waste Service Transformation Programme (pg. 12) will implement optimised waste collections, which will deliver value for money, and supported by public adoption of circular economy principles, will achieve higher recycling rates through increased segregation of waste at source, in collections, and in processing. The Act also contains the framework for introducing the enhanced [Extended Producer Responsibility](#) (EPR) regime for the UK, and provisions for the introduction of a [Deposit Return Scheme](#) (DRS) for drinks containers.

Waste Processing & Treatment

The Tyseley Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) processes the city's waste and generates electricity, of which 25MW is fed into the National Grid, after providing for on-site needs. The energy generated during 2021 was equivalent to powering ~63,000 Birmingham households for a year. The waste service recognises the contribution that it can make to the net zero agenda and, in line with the new Waste Strategy, which is currently being developed, will focus its efforts on seeking ways to reduce carbon emissions - most pertinently in relation to waste collection (providing appropriate recycling facilities for residents), waste fleet (operating a modern vehicle and optimised service), and waste treatment technologies (harnessing proven, efficient and cost effective technology). This work will form a key part of the Waste Service Transformation Programme that is currently underway.

Chapter 4: Natural Environment and Climate Adaptation

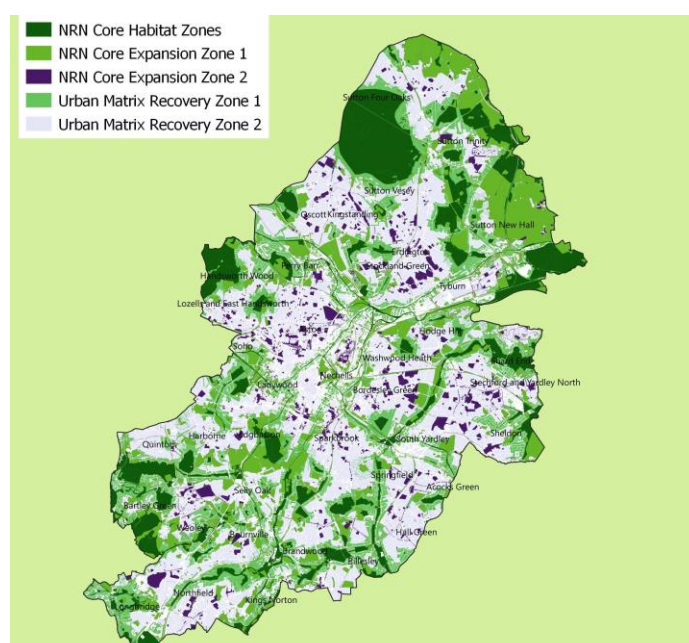
Our response to climate change requires us, in addition to taking steps to reduce our emissions, to consider how we adapt to the changing climate and support and encourage nature resilience. Adaptation and nature resilience are important for many reasons, including our need to prepare for and reduce the risk of flooding, moderate the impacts of rising temperatures, particularly in urban environments, and managing and reducing the impact of pollutants.

Clear local plan policies are key drivers in accelerating adaption activity, and we are in the process of reviewing our local plan (pg. 22). Our green infrastructure evidence base has been updated to reflect emerging legislation and the increasing availability of climate change data. This evidence base has informed a suite of new draft policies, which consider biodiversity net gain, ecological networks and nature recovery, green infrastructure, the provision of open space, urban greening factors, flood risk management, water quality, other resources and the green belt. These revised policies and evidence base will support [The City of Nature Plan](#), which is the council's green infrastructure strategy, and [Our Future City: Central Birmingham Framework 2045](#). They will also support the aims and objectives of the UK Government's [Environmental Improvement Plan 2023](#) (EIP) which was published in January 2023 – but is [currently under review](#).

Local Nature Recovery Network and Biodiversity Net Gain

In January 2024, the mandate set by the Environment Act 2021 came into force, which requires all applicable developments to deliver measurable increases in Biodiversity (Biodiversity Net Gain) over a predevelopment baseline. While the expectation is that all net gain will be delivered on site, if this is not possible then off-site locations must be found, and implementation and management funded for a minimum of 30 years. To identify key areas for biodiversity and opportunities for enhancement regional Local Nature Recovery Network Strategies are being drawn up. The council is working with the WMCA and their members to set these priorities, define the nature recovery network and identify opportunity sites for the delivery of biodiversity net gain. Through the Urban Nature Development programme, Birmingham's Nature Recovery Network has been defined and open spaces within that identified which could benefit from investment through the net gain process.

Figure 17. Birmingham's Draft Nature Recovery Network



Birmingham's nature recovery network is emerging, 'Figure 17. 'Birmingham's Draft Nature Recovery Network', and several sites across the city have been surveyed to establish ecological baselines and their potential for delivering net gain increases. Net Gain offers a major opportunity to secure funding specifically for biodiversity and the management of open spaces across the city. Prior to full mandate over £400k was secured through S106 agreements with developers for biodiversity improvements.

Urban Forest Master Plan

The city's [Urban Forest Master Plan](#) sets the long-term strategic vision for the management of all the trees within the city boundary. Sustaining and increasing urban tree canopy cover supports the delivery of essential ecosystem services and provides increased climate adaptation benefits for local communities. Trees sequester carbon, decrease flood risks, and provide shade, which reduces the need for cooling and provides indirect carbon savings. The council partnered with the National Trust, the Woodland Trust and the Community Forest Trust to secure funding from the [Trees Call for Action Fund](#) to deliver the two-year [Urban Forest Accelerator \(UFA\)](#) Project. This project provided grant funding (alongside the Urban Nature Development Programme) for the council's Strategic Lead for Urban Forestry and Nature and two new members of staff at Birmingham [TreePeople](#) to investigate key issues affecting the delivery of urban tree planting and management. To understand the barriers to community engagement and stewardship of urban trees Birmingham TreePeople led engagement with residents to understand the impacts of climate change and the role that trees play in mitigating these impacts. The partnership worked with residents to support tree planting in Nechells, Hodge Hill, Highters Heath, and Newtown. There are plans to continue expanding engagement to other areas of the city, and work is underway to develop a 5-year strategic tree planting plan. The learning outcomes from the UFA project will be shared through a nationally available 'tool kit' and the city council will continue to pursue funding opportunities in partnership with Birmingham TreePeople.

City of Nature Plan for Birmingham

The [City of Nature](#) Plan was derived from work undertaken as part of a nation-wide Future Parks Accelerator Programme, and was adopted by Council in February 2022. It sets out the vision for the management of green space for the benefit of its residents, biodiversity, and climate change adaptation under 5 key themes, as a 'Green', 'Healthy', 'Involved', 'Valued' and 'Fair' city. Grant funding was secured to deliver the City of Nature Plan under the Urban Nature Development Programme and embed the plan within the council's operations across the city.

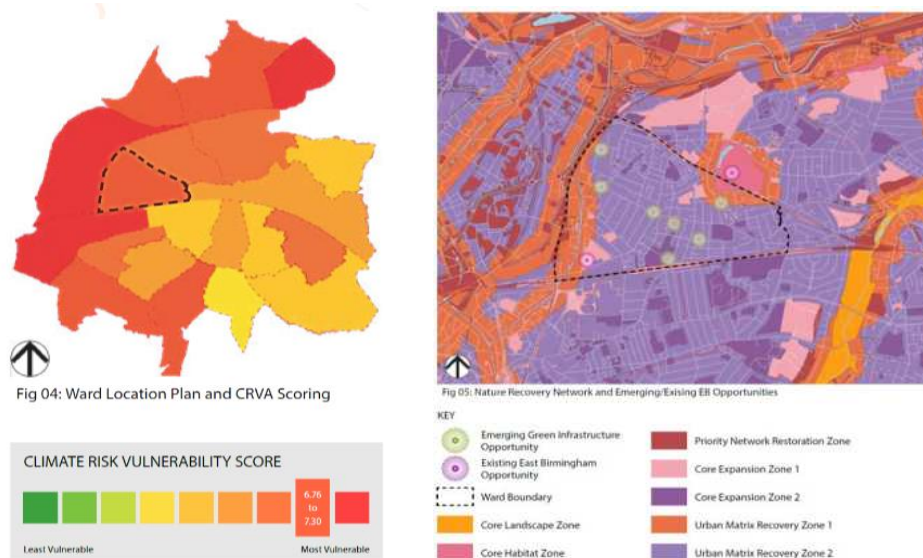
Initiatives such as the [A to Bee Roads](#) programme, which was launched in 2024, is an example of where this plan has driven changes in management to over 100km highways grass verges, delivering many benefits, including:

- Encouraging a range of flowering plants to flourish (including Hair bells for the first time in over 50 years) and allowing plants to flower which supports pollinators.
- Integrating highways into Local Nature Recovery Network to provide improved corridors for wildlife movement, which connect wildlife sites together and enhancing biodiversity.
- Retaining and slowing the flow of storm water, which provides additional rainwater storage which reduces surface water flooding.
- Reducing the time and costs of using machinery to maintain verges and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

East Birmingham Inclusive Growth

The [East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Programme](#) (pg. 22) has numerous initiatives and activities underway to enhance nature and biodiversity. The Urban Nature Development programme has supported the creation of the Green Infrastructure Masterplan covering East Birmingham's 20 wards. This plan combined multiple data sets including Climate Risk and Vulnerability allowing the identification of opportunities, and locations for new green infrastructure (GI), such as pocket parks (a partnership with the National Trust using UKSPF funding has established 4 pocket parks), and identifies locations where changes in management or GI composition will enhance ecosystem services and deliver community health and well-being benefits.

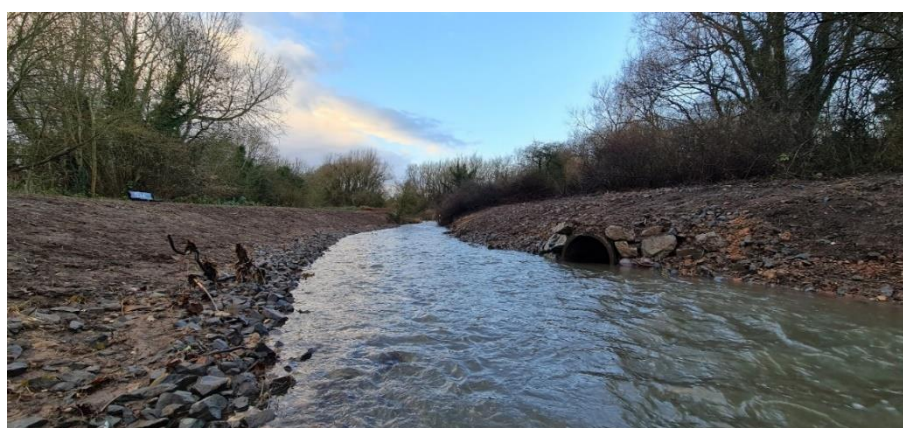
Figure 18. Heartlands Mapping from East Birmingham Green Infrastructure Masterplan



Natural Rivers and Green Corridors – Phase 2

The Environment Agency have secured additional funds to expand the Natural Rivers and Green Corridors Programme, which will be delivered in partnership with the Environment Agency, The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country and the Council through late 2023 into 2025. The second phase will see the removal of further weirs and reprofiling of water courses in the River Rea catchment to improve ecological connectivity and deliver elements of flood risk alleviation, and 'Figure 19. Re-naturalisation of the River Rea Following a Weir Removal', shows the results of some of this work along the River Rea.

Figure 19. Re-naturalisation of the River Rea Following a Weir Removal



Flood Alleviation and Defence

The new flood defence bund at Pebble Mill playing fields was completed in mid-2024 to protect residential properties from surface water flooding. The land surrounding the bund has been restored to a species rich meadow with additional tree planting, providing a significant biodiversity net gain when compared to the previous short amenity grassland. Re-naturalisation of the 600m of channel on the River Cole at Hay Barnes has also been completed, and delivered in partnership with the Environment Agency, University of Birmingham and the WMCA. The re-naturalisation will increase its capacity to hold more flood water, improve water quality and enhance biodiversity.

Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment

The council's [Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment for Birmingham](#), which was developed in partnership with University of Birmingham, was presented with a Special Recognition award at the [SEE Global Sustainability Summit](#) held in Dubai.



Climate-Resilient Development Pathways in Metropolitan Regions of Europe

The Council, in partnership with the University of Birmingham and the UK Met Office, secured £1.2m from UK Research and Innovation to participate in the EU project: [Climate-Resilient Development Pathways in Metropolitan Regions of Europe \(CARMINE\)](#). This Europe wide partnership and funding will allow us to explore the use of new satellite derived heat imaging and climate modelling in relation to seasonal patterns of plant growth and the use of nature-based solutions - over traditional methods to address climate risk and vulnerability.

Chapter 5: Enabling Activities

The council will deliver its climate change, nature and net zero outcomes working with and through a diverse and extensive network of organisations, stakeholders and citizens. Effective stakeholder engagement is crucial, and some examples of the activities we do to encourage and support engagement include: working with the [Birmingham Faith Covenant](#) to secure £200k funding for [faith-led climate action](#); working with the retrofit sector to host the [2024 Birmingham Retrofit Summit](#); and, securing funding to support local Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to improve [energy management](#) and reduce their costs and emissions. Other enablers which facilitate delivery include having appropriate governance and scrutiny of decisions, through to the educational, communication, and behaviour change programmes we deliver across the council and the wider city.

Climate Change, Nature and Net Zero Governance

The council's Climate Change, Nature and Net Zero Programme Board (the 'Board') is comprised of senior representatives from across the council and has continued to meet quarterly. The Board sets the programme's overall strategic direction, encourages and oversees programme delivery, provides assurance, and manages emerging risks and issues. Additional oversight is provided by the Climate Change, Nature and Net Zero Advisory Committee, a cross-party group comprising of elected representatives from the city's political parties which also meets quarterly. The Advisory Committee's role is to provide political insight on the programme's strategic direction, and to work collaboratively and provide collective support to support delivery.

Carbon Disclosure Project Reporting

The council has been declaring the city's climate change data to the [Carbon Disclosure Project \(CDP\)](#) since 2020, and in 2023 the [city scored an A](#). This is the highest rating available and recognises Birmingham as one of 119 cities across the globe that is taking bold leadership on environmental action and transparency. To achieve an 'A' requires the city, among other actions, to disclose publicly through CDP, produce a city-wide emissions inventory and provide a published climate action plan. Completing a climate risk and vulnerability assessment for the city was another key component in achieving an 'A' rating. The council will receive its 2024 score in Spring 2025.



Climate Change Engagement Framework

Our draft 'Climate Change Engagement Framework' was created in consultation with 85 of Birmingham's residents and outlines the council's approach to climate-related communications, behaviour change, public participation, and partnership working, based on evidence and expert advice. Following the creation of the Framework, the approaches it describes have been applied to internal and external engagement activities, some of which are already completed, including the establishment of a 'climate action staff network' and delivering awareness-raising training to officers.

Environment and Sustainability Assessments

All relevant Council and Cabinet reports require the completion of an Environment and Sustainability Assessment (ESA) to ensure proposals are compliant with the council's climate change, nature and net zero carbon commitments. Over 145 ESAs have been completed since they were introduced in 2022. We continually refine our ESA process and have worked with colleagues across the council to

update our ESA template and accompanying guidance to increase their rigour and impact. The updated ESA process will be required for all cabinet reports from early 2025.

Carbon Literacy Training

The [Carbon Literacy Project](#) raises 'awareness of the carbon costs and impacts of everyday activities, and the ability and motivation to reduce emissions, on an individual, community and organisational basis'. The Route to Net Zero team has been delivering '[Carbon Literacy Training for Local Authority Officers](#)' to council staff (which covers the science of climate change, the local and international causes and impacts of climate change, and international, national, and local policy setting), with over 60 officers receiving training and have become accredited through the [Carbon Literacy Trust](#).

Engaging & Empowering Schools

The council is engaging with schools across several different service areas related to climate change like [transport](#), [clean air](#), waste, and the [natural environment](#). Our ambition is to link these different schemes, campaigns, and educational resources together so that teachers and pupils can access the help and support the Council provides on climate change-related topics with ease. Building upon last year's successful Birmingham Schools' Model Conference of Parties (COP) event in the council chamber, we ran the event again in November 2024



Figure 20. Schools Model Cop, 2024

(figure 20) to continue our engagement with local schools and pupils. Overall, we hope that this will help encourage and raise awareness of climate change among staff, pupils, and parents.

Major Event Sustainability

Birmingham is a welcoming, diverse and inclusive city and we have a proud history of successfully hosting [major sporting events](#), which boost our visitor economy and enhance our reputation. Building on our success embedding sustainable transport at the heart of the Commonwealth Games, we have developed the Birmingham Event Impact Framework to improve the sustainability of major sporting events. We continue to promote the [Sustainable Tourism Hub](#) which was developed with Sustainability West Midlands to provide [training and advice](#) on sustainability for businesses in tourism, and includes local case studies and information for creating [sustainability strategies](#). The council continued its participation in the [Global Destination Sustainability Index](#) in 2024, which measures and benchmarks the sustainability performance of tourism destinations. We continue to encourage local businesses to sign up to [Green Tourism](#) and receive a year's membership funded by the West Midlands Growth Company.

Digital Birmingham

The council is a partner in the Connected Places Catapult led [Digital Innovation Transformative Change \(DIATOMIC\)](#) Accelerator project and working with 8 [participating SME's](#) to nurture Birmingham's innovation ecosystem through tackling four urban challenges (data insights, performance, citizen engagement, knowledge sharing) and improving the delivery of the city's housing, adult social care and waste services. The Route to Net Zero team worked with Furbnow and Novoville to support a trial of the Novoville 'Shared Works' tool with the council's housing team, to improve the retrofit journey for tenants and contractors. To date DIATOMIC has recruited 6FTE, secured £180,000 research and development funding, £47,000 public sector funding, attracted £71,000 private investment, and established 40 new collaborations with external organisations.

Chapter 6: Summary and Next Steps

The council is making good progress in tackling our own greenhouse gas emissions, working with and supporting the city reduce its emissions, and improving the city's resilience to the impacts of climate change.

The Route to Net Zero team has been bringing together key teams working on climate change from across the council. We have advanced our internal capability to report on our greenhouse gas emissions and will continue to improve the scope, availability and quality of data on our emissions. We have calculated the council's scope 1 and 2 emissions and screened our scope 3 emissions to identify the council's greatest emissions sources. These emissions are the focus of our decarbonisation efforts, and we are working with the relevant council's directorates, departments, and services to identify emissions reductions opportunities. We will continue to report our progress in tackling these emissions annually.

We also continue to improve our understanding of our city's emissions. Since 2005 the city's territorial emissions have fallen by 41%, and there was an almost 7% reduction in the city's emissions between 2021 and 2022. This drop in the city's territorial emissions between 2021 and 2022 was largely due to a [reduction in fuel use to heat buildings](#) due to the warmer temperatures in 2022 compared to 2021. We anticipate that developments in the consumption-based emission field will provide additional data and further insights about our city's emissions. To support the city in tackling and reducing its emissions, the council is using its place shaping and convening powers, including the Birmingham Local Plan Review and the Birmingham Transport Plan, to galvanise climate action.

We are making good progress in delivering our natural environment and climate adaptation goals, and our [Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment for Birmingham](#) received an award at the [SEE Global Sustainability Summit](#). The Urban Forest Accelerator (UFA) Project is supporting tree planning across the city, our [A to Bee Roads](#) programme is changing how we manage highways for the benefit of nature, and the introduction of Biodiversity Net Gain presents major opportunities to continue to enhance biodiversity and open spaces across the city. We completed the installation of flood defences at Pebble Mill and are expanding the Natural Rivers and Green Corridors Programme to improve ecological connectivity and deliver elements of flood risk alleviation along the River Rea.

We will continue working across the city with our stakeholders and citizens to achieve net zero. Our Climate Change Engagement Framework will guide our work with partners to share knowledge, expertise and experience, and explore opportunities to collectively take action to respond to climate change. We also hope that increasing the availability and accessibility of environmental data about our city through the City Observatory will raise awareness and help to emphasise the role our citizens and other organisations can play to supporting the delivery of net zero.

Building upon our previous successes we will continue to pursue further funding opportunities to deliver our climate change, nature, and net zero activities. We will also explore how we can do things differently by pursuing innovative, efficient, and cost-effective means to support outcome delivery, particularly where there are other benefits (e.g. improving the comfort of citizens homes and reducing air pollution) and implement them where they are sensible and practical.

It has been a privilege to work with our colleagues across the council and with our city stakeholders and citizens in delivering our climate change, nature and net zero programme over the last year, and we are excited about the opportunities ahead.

Birmingham City Council

Report to City Council

8 July 2025



Title:	EXECUTIVE BUSINESS REPORT
Lead Member:	Councillor Nicky Brennan, Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness Councillor Saima Suleman, Cabinet Member for Digital, Culture, Heritage, and Tourism
Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee:	Not Applicable
Has this report been shared with the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair?	Not Applicable
Report Authors:	Councillor Nicky Brennan, Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness Councillor Saima Suleman, Cabinet Member for Digital, Culture, Heritage, and Tourism nicky.brennan@birmingham.gov.uk saima.suleman@birmingham.gov.uk Paul Langford, Executive Director, City Housing Richard Brooks, Executive Director, City Operations Carol Culley, Executive Director, Finance Stuart Lackenby, Executive Director, Adult Social Care and Health
Authorised by:	Councillor John Cotton, Leader Joanne Roney, Managing Director
Is this a Key Decision?	No
Reason(s) why not included on the Forward Plan and confirm who has authorised it to be considered:	Not Applicable

Is this a Late Report?	No
Reason(s) why Late and confirm who has authorised it to be considered:	Not Applicable
Is this decision eligible for 'call in?'	Not Applicable
If 'call-in' has been dis-applied, please provide reason(s) and confirm who has authorised:	Not Applicable

Wards:	Not Applicable
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Does this report contain exempt or confidential information?	No
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Has this decision been included on the Notification of Intention to consider Matters in Private?	Not Applicable
Reasons why not included on the Notification and confirm who has authorised it to be considered:	Not Applicable

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This Executive Business Report will provide an update on the ongoing work in two Cabinet Member portfolios over the past year:

- Housing and Homelessness
- Digital, Culture, Heritage, and Tourism

2 COMMISSIONERS' REVIEW

2.1 Commissioners have no observations on this report.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 That the report be noted by the City Council.

4 KEY INFORMATION

Context

4.1 On 10th September 2019, Full Council accepted the recommendations of the Coordinating O&S Committee review in respect of changes to the Full Council agenda.

4.2 Recommendation 3 of the review requested that the Executive provide an update to Full Council on its work via the provision of an Executive Business Report ('EBR'). EBRs will be provided to Full Council four times per municipal year and will include details of progress made in relation to Council strategic outcomes and priorities linked to two Cabinet Member portfolios.

5 Housing and Homelessness Portfolio

6 Introduction

6.1 This report outlines the work led by the previous Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness over the past year against the following strategic priorities:

- Strategic Enabling Service
- Whole House Retrofit, Devolution, and the Cost of Living
- Gypsy, Roma, and Travellers (GRT) Strategy
- Housing Ombudsman/ Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
- Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM)
- Consumer Standards and Preparation for Inspection
- Supported Exempt Accommodation (SEA)
- Regeneration and Community Engagement

- Affordable Housing
- Housing Solutions and Support Service
- Capital Investment and Repairs
- Building Safety and Regulatory Compliance
- Housing Management
- Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Planning
- Private Rented Sector
- Future Challenges

7 Strategic Enabling Service

- 7.1 The service continues to provide support to operational teams to improve the quality of housing and homelessness services for citizens, and to enable the Directorate to respond to current and emerging housing challenges. Most recently, the service's responsibilities have expanded to include leading on engagement work for Community Regeneration Schemes, and re-setting relationships with Registered Providers.

Strategy and Policy Development

- 7.2 In 2024-25, the service has delivered the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy 2024-29, the Community Influencing and Engagement Strategy 2024-29, the Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller Strategy 2025+, the ASB Policy 2024+, the CCTV Strategy 2024+, and is working on the Financial Inclusion Strategy 2025+. These policies and strategies look to move beyond traditional consultation towards genuine co-production, to embed citizen voices into the design, development and delivery of housing services and strengthen transparency, accountability, and citizen empowerment.

Transformation

- 7.3 The service is in the process of embedding a dedicated transformation function to drive and sustain service improvements within the Directorate, such as modernising reporting systems and performance dashboards. Working in conjunction with operational teams, the team focuses on delivering projects aligned to the Improvement and Recovery Plan (IRP), as well as responding to the Directorate's strategic priorities.

Programme Management Office (PMO) and Governance

The City Housing PMO function is now fully established, focusing on reporting and supporting the delivery of the Directorate's Recovery Plan and strategic priorities. Following a recent internal audit, project reporting has been enhanced,

with greater emphasis placed on risk and issue mitigation, improved dependency management, and closer monitoring of programme and project benefits. A more robust governance structure has also been established, with service area Transformation Boards all reporting to the City Housing Transformation Board.

Workforce Development

- 7.4 In 2024-25, the Directorate has introduced a dedicated Learning Management System (LMS), offering a range of housing specific e-learning modules and facilitated courses. This plays a critical role in documenting and evidencing staff training and development, to ensure compliance with current and anticipated regulatory requirements. The Workforce Development Team has recently transferred to the Corporate HR function but will remain fully dedicated to supporting the learning and development needs of the City Housing Directorate.

8 Whole House Retrofit, Devolution, and the Cost of Living

- 8.1 The Council continues to work to secure funding to deliver physical improvements for citizens to make their homes more energy efficient and reduce fuel bills. To support our ambitions to upscale the delivery of energy efficiency improvements across tenures, in December 2024 the Council onboarded three Energy Company Obligation 4 (ECO4) and Great British Insulation Scheme (GBIS) installers by way of a concessionaire agreement. Through this agreement, our partners have committed to retrofitting 1,000 homes each per annum for the next three years, delivering an estimated £180m inward investment of ECO funding across 9,000 homes throughout the duration of the agreement.

Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund

- 8.2 The Council was additionally awarded a grant of £24.8m via the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) and committed significant match funding to retrofit 2,076 homes across the city. The programme aims to upgrade stock currently below Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C rating via the delivery of a suite of improvements depending on the type of property. As of April 2025, these improvements have been delivered to 2,400 properties.
- 8.3 As part of the SHDF allocation, the Council delivered a whole house retrofit pilot across circa 300 homes in the Bromford ward. Following these works, 174 low-rise flats achieved an EPC B+ rating, and 124 cross-wall homes achieved an EPC B rating. The scheme delivered carbon reductions for the city, economic growth, supply-chain development as a result of the investment, and reduced energy costs and health and wellbeing benefits to residents of the properties.

Homes Upgrade Grant (HUG2)

- 8.4 During 2024-2025, the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) administered Home Upgrade Grant (HUG2) across the region. In total, 59 properties in

Birmingham will receive HUG2 funded energy efficiency measures, with an approved Capital spend of circa £1m. These projects were all completed by May 2025, with reductions in annual energy bills across the 59 properties totalling £72,148 whilst combined annual carbon reductions are at 3560 tonnes.

Devolution Integrated Settlement – West Midlands Combined Authority

- 8.5 As part of the Devolution Integrated Settlement, the WMCA will now be administering the Council's allocation of the Warm Homes Social Housing Fund, the Warm Homes Local Grant, and the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.
- 8.6 The Council's HRA Business Plan supports the match funding of Warm Homes Social Housing Fund for Council stock. Match funding for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme will come from sources including National Lottery Community and Heritage Fund, or education funding programmes.
- 8.7 As part of the devolution deal, the Council will be expected to deliver the following outcomes:
- 101.8kt CO₂e carbon emissions savings from domestic buildings between 2025-2069.
 - 3,228 Council homes upgraded to EPC Band C.
 - 625 low-income private homes upgraded to EPC Band C.
 - Projected £40,039,050 cumulative bill savings between 2025-2069.
- 8.8 The Council has implemented part of a £15m programme to upgrade the West Midlands' dampest social housing, meaning that thousands of families who were living in damp and mouldy homes are now benefitting from improved health and well-being outcomes. The funding, given to local Councils via the WMCA as part of their Social Housing Decency Fund, has been used to install damp-eliminating measures in more than 4,000 homes across the region.

Partnership Working and Resident Support

- 8.9 There has been significant collaboration between the Net Zero Team from City Housing and the Cost-of-Living programme to enable current and grant funded programmes to be delivered. Collaboration has greatly contributed towards the Council's Economic Place Strategy for delivering "just and green" economic growth. Collaboration has also enabled a series of SME events to be delivered in partnership with South and City College with the aim of developing local skills and growing the supply chain.
- 8.10 There have been six Green Doctor events in the last 12 months delivered in partnership with Spearhead Trust, Fortem, Equans and Groundworks. In total

across the events, approximately 100 tenants attended and benefitted from a range of financial advice, payments towards fuel costs, and food vouchers.

- 8.11 Some 4,330 tenants in Birmingham have joined “Housing Perks”, a free app aimed at providing shopping discounts to social housing tenants, as a result of a communications campaign, targeted emails, and tenant newsletter signposting. So far, these tenants have saved around £3,400.
- 8.12 During November 2024, City Housing hosted Talk Money Week. Staff and partners benefitted from Moneyhelper and PayPlan webinars, a MyBank Escape Room, and Reachout Community Project awareness raising sessions. Through these events, 220 individuals benefitted from debt advice, pension planning, financial well-being and planning, budgeting advice, and signposting, which will enable them to share this information more widely with other citizens. A further 13 events were held across the city ranging from Jobs Fairs to Cost of Living advice from partners like Act on Energy, Age Concern, and Pure Project.

9 Gypsy, Roma, and Travellers (GRT) Strategy

- 9.1 In March 2025, Cabinet approved the Council’s new approach to managing its statutory accommodation provision requirements and resetting its wider relationship with the Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) community.
- 9.2 The Council has statutory obligations to provide appropriate transit sites for the Travelling element of the GRT community. In recent years, these transit sites have faced issues such as vandalism and unauthorised encampments, and as a result have been out of commission for long periods of time. This in turn creates pressures elsewhere in the city where unauthorised encampments occupy public spaces, often resulting in damage caused to gain access and remediation costs when the site is cleared. In the absence of operational transit sites, attempts to remove unauthorised encampments are delayed, resulting in further inconvenience to citizens in the affected areas.
- 9.3 Limitations in transit site provision and meaningful engagement with the Travelling community has led to negative perceptions of the city’s attitudes towards travellers. The GRT Strategy seeks to reset this relationship, whilst ensuring that the Council’s statutory obligations are met.
- 9.4 These objectives will be delivered by:
- Developing a robust accommodation offer that considers the community’s specific cultural needs. The Council will review the physical quality and condition of the existing transit sites, and the arrangements for carrying out repairs to transit sites. To support this, the Council will also implement a pilot

programme of Negotiated Stopping (non-fixed short-term transit sites brought into use on an as-needed rather than permanent basis).

- Ensuring that there is a joined-up health and well-being offer for the community, promoting access to mainstream services. The Council will look to provide dedicated officers with an on-site presence on transit sites to build relationships with the GRT community, to understand their wider needs and preferences and tailor the Council's services to these accordingly.
- Re-setting our relationship with the community, using their lived experience to improve the services provided. Limitations in engagement have resulted from a lack of dedicated resource to support the GRT community, coupled with a lack of coherent understanding of the wider needs of the community. Recruitment to provide dedicated officer support will deliver this engagement going forward.

9.5 The implementation of the GRT Strategy will be delivered from a cross-service working group. An update will be provided to Cabinet in March 2026.

10 Housing Ombudsman/Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman

10.1 In October 2024, the Housing Ombudsman published their annual landlord report. This report details the Council's performance across a range of comparators (national, landlords of varying size, Local Authorities v Housing Associations etc). Within this report, the main focus is the "maladministration rate," whereby the Council has been found to have demonstrated severe maladministration, maladministration, or service failure when handling underlying issues or complaints.

10.2 Over the relevant reporting period, the Council's overall maladministration rate rose by 32%, against a national rise of 30%. Whilst it is disappointing that the Council's overall maladministration rate remains high, this is in the context of a challenging time for all social landlords.

10.3 Despite this, internal tracking of determinations received in 2024-25 indicate that the Council's severe maladministration rate has reduced substantially on 2023-24. There have been further improvements in other areas, such as Complaint Handling Failure Orders, which will be outlined in the Housing Ombudsman's report in October 2025.

Local Government Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

10.4 The LGSCO determines complaints relating to housing and homelessness applications and the provision of temporary accommodation.

- 10.5 The Council continues to receive a large number of initial enquiries from the LGSCO each month, however the majority of these do not progress to full investigations. For those complaints that do progress to full investigation, the main themes for determinations are length of time taken to assess housing applications/reviews, and length of time households remain in B&B accommodation beyond the statutory six-week limit.
- 10.6 In relation to the length of time taken to assess housing applications and reviews, there have been significant improvements throughout 2024-25. Between 1 January 2024 and 1 January 2025, the overall number of applications awaiting assessment had fallen from 9,494 to 3,747, with only 284 (7.58%) in excess of the eight-week target. For housing application reviews, this fell from 156 to 43 in the same period. Going forward, these continued improvements will deliver an improved service for applicants and minimise the number of negative determinations received from the LGSCO.
- 10.7 In relation to B&B stays in excess of six weeks, this continues to be an issue for the Council and for other local authorities. Throughout 2024-25, the Council has sought to onboard additional provision of temporary and permanent accommodation to ensure that there is sufficient move-on capacity for households in B&B; this work will continue throughout 2025-26. The Council continues to engage with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government around plans to reduce the dependence on B&B accommodation and is currently working with Shelter on an approach to households in B&B for longer than the statutory period. This work will also continue throughout 2025-26.

11 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM)

- 11.1 As part of the Council's regulatory requirements with the Regulator of Social Housing, the Council is obligated to carry out yearly TSM Surveys with tenants to gauge their perception and experience of housing services and the Council's engagement with and treatment of tenants. Data from the surveys is then used to inform service improvements and target areas of poor perception or areas where the Council is under-performing against comparator landlords.
- 11.2 For 2025-26, the Council has procured Acuity Research and Practice to conduct the surveys. Due to delays in procuring this provider, the Council's TSM Surveys for 2024-25 were conducted in one survey period in January 2025. This will revert to quarterly surveys from April 2025.
- 11.3 Overall, the results of the 2024-25 TSM Survey are encouraging, noting improvement in tenant perception within 10 of the 12 measures. Of note are the significant improvements in tenant perception around the standard of the Council's repairs service and the time taken to complete repairs. This is hopefully indicative of the significant investment programme in the Council's stock in 2024-

25, and the service improvements made across the repairs service in response to the Housing Ombudsman's Special Report in January 2023.

- 11.4 Whilst there remains work to do, the Council is encouraged by the overall direction of travel and the increase in our tenants' perception of the services we provide. Reverting to quarterly surveys in 2025-26 will enable the Council to more closely monitor perception trends and the effectiveness of service improvements intended to improve tenant perception.

12 Consumer Standards and Preparation for Inspection

- 12.1 In April 2024, the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) implemented a revised set of Consumer Standards. This replaced the previous version and is supported by a proactive inspection regime, whereby all social landlords will be inspected as part of a four-year rolling programme. The Council has not yet been inspected under the new process and has not been given any indication as to when an inspection will take place.

- 12.2 The four new Consumer Standards in effect from April 2024 are:

- The Tenancy Standard – addressing tenancy agreements and rights.
- The Neighbourhood and Community Standard – promoting better community engagement and living conditions.
- The Safety and Quality Standard – ensuring homes are safe and meet quality standards.
- The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard – encouraging landlords to listen to tenants and respond to their concerns.

- 12.3 In September 2023, the Council conducted a self-assessment in preparation for inspection, assessing compliance against each element of the four Consumer Standards. Following this, Task and Finish groups were established to work against perceived areas of weakness and deliver service improvements.

- 12.4 In October 2024, a further self-assessment was undertaken with the support of Campbell Tickell, informed by their work with other local authorities and RSH findings from early inspections. This self-assessment was used to re-set the existing Task and Finish groups, and ensure that the Council's focus is on delivering improvements based on internal assessments of performance and data from published inspections.

- 12.5 As part of further preparation for inspection, the Council has commissioned Campbell Tickell to carry out a mock inspection in Autumn 2025. This will further enhance the Council's preparations for inspection and ensure that progress is being made against the relevant elements of the Consumer Standards.

13 Supported Exempt Accommodation (SEA)

- 13.1 The Supported Exempt Accommodation (SEA) sector has experienced exponential growth in recent years. The number of SEA claims has risen from approximately 11,000 in 2018, to around 30,000 across 9,700 properties in 2025.
- 13.2 The Government has recently consulted on proposals to reform the SEA sector following the introduction of the Supported (Regulatory) Oversight Act 2023. This consultation was scheduled for early 2024, however this was delayed following the change in Government.
- 13.3 The Council is broadly supportive of the proposals within the consultation; however, some concerns have been raised across different aspects of licensing, planning, costs, risk of homelessness, regulatory consistency, and scrutiny. Across these areas, the Council has requested additional clarity from Government to understand long-term funding provision for SEA proposals and applicable regulatory standards in relation to the condition of properties as some examples.

Supported Housing Improvement (SHIP) Programme

- 13.4 Since 2020, the Council has been part of the Supported Housing Improvement Pilot (SHIP) programme. This is a grant-funded programme which is used by the Council to invest in a multi-disciplinary partnership to tackle issues within the SEA sector, raise standards, and take action against non-compliant providers and properties. This partnership has thus far saved £8.3m in overpaid Housing Benefit and improved over 3,000 properties by removing hazards and decommissioning sub-standard provision.
- 13.5 Funding for this programme was scheduled to end in March 2025; however, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government has recently confirmed that funding will continue on the same basis until April 2026, pending the outcome of the consultation. This provides certainty around the continuation of funding for existing activities and also negates any General Fund pressures on the Council as a result of a cessation of funding. The work of the SHIP programme will continue in its current form pending the outcome of the consultation.

14 Regeneration and Community Engagement

- 14.1 The Council continues to work on regeneration and community engagement projects across the city.

Ladywood

- 14.2 Plans have been approved for a project across Ladywood through a £2.2Bn investment partnership with St. Joseph, part of the Berkeley Homes Group. This

scheme will deliver around 7,500 new homes as well as regeneration to an area of the city that has seen little investment in recent years.

- 14.3 Significant consultation has taken place with Ladywood residents, businesses, and stakeholders over the past 18 months, including 18 community consultation workshops, three community surveys, four community events, and doorstep consultation and engagement with residents who may be specifically affected. Local twice-monthly drop-in sessions commenced in April 2024; these sessions are ongoing and provide residents with a direct contact route to the project team.
- 14.4 The project has seen substantial local mobilisation and challenge from some Ladywood residents. Progress had been made in facilitating a productive and mutually beneficial dialogue; however, this broke down in late 2024 requiring the intervention of the Council's Legal Services. Work continues to re-establish these relationships.
- 14.5 The Council has partnered with Birmingham Mind to launch a new wellbeing and mental health service within the regeneration area. This seeks to ensure that there is suitable emotional and wellbeing support for residents affected by regeneration.
- 14.6 Development of the Resident and Community Charter has been completed and will be launched imminently. A "You Said, We Did" document is in place to support this, providing the community with transparency as to how their views and feedback have shaped the Charter.

As the Council approaches the finalisation of the Development Agreement with St. Joseph, a comprehensive engagement programme has been established to support the transition to St. Joseph working with the community to develop a Masterplan for the regeneration scheme.

Druids Heath

- 14.7 The Druids Heath estate is one of the most deprived across the UK, and faces numerous challenges around stock condition, antisocial behaviour and high levels of poverty and deprivation. This major redevelopment project scheme seeks to provide approximately 3,500 new homes.
- 14.8 The Council has undertaken extensive engagement over recent years to understand community priorities and the community vision for the future of the neighbourhood. This has included workshops, doorstep consultation, surveys, mailouts, newsletters, community events and a refreshed dedicated website. This community feedback has shaped the Resident Charter and Masterplan for the area, both of which were launched in November 2024.
- 14.9 All residents within the regeneration area have been provided with a copy of the Charter. A separate "You Said, We Did" document detailing how feedback was

used to inform the Resident Charter has been produced. A local Community Hub located within the Edmiston shopping parade is being progressed to ensure that there is a local offer within the estate, offering drop-in services and key updates on the regeneration.

- 14.10 As part of the “meanwhile” offer, night security patrols have been implemented across the remaining high-rise accommodation. Additional cleaning and caretaking provision has been added to ensure that wider estate activity focusing on the clean and green agenda has been enhanced. Dedicated Housing Officers have been recruited to ensure that targeted engagement takes place across the estate, supporting the ongoing conversations and events.
- 14.11 A comprehensive engagement programme has been developed for the 2025-26 financial year, following the submission of an outline planning application in February 2025. This includes bespoke activity for older residents, dedicated homeowner sessions with specialist consultant Newmark, bespoke BCC tenant sessions relating to alternative social registered landlord and The Growth Hub, providing specialist impartial advice and support to local businesses.

Perry Barr

- 14.12 The Perry Barr Residential Scheme is a pivotal component of Birmingham’s regeneration efforts. The first phase, completed in spring 2024, delivered 1,414 homes, with over 700 designated as affordable housing. Recently, Legal and General Affordable Homes acquired two plots, adding 487 affordable homes to the development. This initiative is part of a broader £1.2Bn regeneration plan aimed at revitalising the area, seeking to emphasise sustainable design and community integration, transforming the former Birmingham City University North campus into a vibrant residential neighbourhood.
- 14.13 The Council has appropriated Plot 9 within the Perry Barr development for use as general needs accommodation for households from the housing register, and to provide a means of targeting under-occupying households who may wish to access smaller accommodation within a new-build scheme. Work has continued throughout 2024-25 via a Local Lettings Plan and the provision of a tailored resident offer, supported by funding via the Wise Move scheme, to provide accommodation to households in need of rehousing due to under-occupancy and to free up valuable larger properties via the housing register. A total of 106 apartments have been earmarked for letting to these households, with the remaining 107 apartments being offered to general needs households via the Birmingham Choice scheme.
- 14.14 Through this tailored approach, the Council has identified around 60 households willing to move to the Perry Barr scheme on a planned basis from April 2025, and these lettings continue will continue throughout 2025-26.

15 Affordable Housing

- 15.1 Birmingham continues to face a significant gap between the demand for affordable housing and the available supply. The Council recognises that addressing this issue will require stronger partnerships beyond the previous provision of the Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT).
- 15.2 To achieve the Council's affordable housing targets, the Affordable Housing team is working to strengthen partnerships and collaborating closely with housing developers, Registered Providers, private landlords and investors to increase housing options.
- 15.3 The Council has also successfully used a competitive tender process to facilitate the disposal of Council-owned sites, enabling the development of new affordable housing units across the city. Two key sites previously held by BMHT have already been sold, generating a significant capital receipt. These sites will now contribute to the delivery of additional affordable housing, with the Council retaining nomination rights at no extra cost.
- 15.4 Currently, the affordable homes programme is delivering 487 homes along with one block acquired by the HRA, bringing the total to 700 newly available affordable and social housing units in the city. Moving forward, the focus will shift towards rationalising the operational estate to reduce ongoing revenue costs while generating receipts that can be invested into future affordable housing projects. Additionally, a ward-by-ward review of housing holdings is being undertaken to identify and release small and medium-sized sites that can be developed by way of a variety of providers to further increase the available affordable housing stock in the city,

16 Housing Solutions and Support Service

- 16.1 The Housing Solutions and Support Service (HSSS) delivers services to citizens who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Demand across all areas of HSSS continues to increase year-on year, driven by a combination of factors including the cost-of-living crisis, the lack of a supply of social and affordable housing options, the rising costs of the Private Rented Sector, and the ongoing growth of the Supported Exempt Accommodation Sector.
- 16.2 The HSSS works across three distinct areas. These are Housing Solutions and Rough Sleepers; Temporary Accommodation; and Applications, Allocations and Accommodation Finding.

Housing Solutions

- 16.3 The rate of homelessness presentations and households seeking assistance due to being threatened with homelessness remains high. In 2024-25, there were on

average 293 presentations for homelessness assistance per week, and 137 housing needs assessments being taken.

- 16.4 The most common reasons for presentation for homelessness assistance include family/friends no longer willing to accommodate (21.94%), end of Assured Shorthold Tenancies (18.45%), eviction from Supported Housing (14.96%), and Domestic Abuse (9.39%).
- 16.5 Households who have come to the UK through a migrant route appear to be more vulnerable to homelessness in the city. Birmingham's population is made up of 17% migrant households; this compares to 30% of homelessness presentations and 47% of households in temporary accommodation.
- 16.6 Homelessness presentations from single people makes up 76% of the weekly presentations for housing assistance. A significant driver for this is the continuing growth in Supported Exempt Accommodation across the city, and the ongoing churn within these properties where people may repeatedly move between providers and properties.
- 16.7 Preventing homelessness is the Council's key priority and we continue to be successful in many cases. On average in 2024-25, 57% of cases opened at the prevention stage successfully secured accommodation preventing homelessness. This is above England, Regional and Core Cities averages. Prevention interventions include landlord incentives to prevent evictions, home security measures installed to keep a home safe, family mediation, financial and debt assistance, "find your own" assistance to secure a home in the Private Rented Sector, and specialist HUBs for single people, young people and people fleeing Domestic Abuse.

Rough Sleeping

- 16.8 Through commissioned partners, a Street Outreach presence has been maintained, day and night, seven days per week throughout the past year. This includes access to emergency beds and well-developed and established supported pathways away from the street.
- 16.9 Rough sleeping numbers in Birmingham have broadly reflected national trends, while numbers are below average based on population. The official count figure in Birmingham for 2024 was 59; this figure was taken on a single night in October 2024 based on the number of people bedded down as well as intelligence from partner organisations.
- 16.10 In Birmingham with a population of 1.1m, the rates of rough sleeping remain relatively low in comparison with other large cities (5.1 per 100,000). This is below the national rate of 8.1 per 100,000.

- 16.11 The Council has been working with partners to seek to ensure that rough sleeping is rare, brief, and non-recurring. This is reflected in the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2024-29 and supported by the Birmingham Homelessness Forum. Wellbeing and befriending services aim to help people maintain a lifestyle away from the streets, whilst additional focused support is there for the most entrenched on the streets.

Temporary Accommodation (TA)

- 16.12 Temporary Accommodation (TA) is provided on a statutory basis where homelessness prevention has not been possible or where households approach the Council too late for prevention to take place.
- 16.13 At the end of 2024-25 there were 5,279 households in TA. Of these, 4,811 were households with children, with 11,260 children in total within TA.
- 16.14 A range of TA provision types are used to address this need. 40% of TA is provided using the Council's own housing stock. 21% are homes leased from Private Rented Sector Providers. 17% of TA is bed and breakfast (B&B) provision. 14% is within Homeless Centres (Council-owned and managed hostels for families), and 8% is Annexe accommodation.
- 16.15 As of 31 March 2025, there were 635 households with dependents who had been in B&B accommodation for more than six weeks, and therefore in excess of the statutory maximum. The Council's B&B Reduction Plan, developed in conjunction with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, aims to have no families in B&B accommodation for longer than six weeks by July 2027.
- 16.16 A revised TA Strategy was approved by Cabinet in September 2024. This strategy reflects the changed financial circumstances of the Council and the consistently high levels of demand. Activity arising from this strategy has included the contracting of the entirety of four hotels under Regulation 10 to be used as TA at the best rates and quality available, a new Dynamic Purchasing Framework to secure private sector accommodation as TA that is cost-neutral to the Council, and additional property acquisitions ranging from family homes to additional Homeless Centre capacity.

Applications, Allocations and Accommodation Finding Teams

- 16.17 The number of applications to the housing register seeking access to social housing in the city remains very high. In 2024-25, an average of 559 applications were received each week, and the number of completed housing application assessments done each week was 815. Increased resources and improved processes within the Allocations and Applications Teams have resulted in 95.45% of housing applications received being assessed within eight weeks of receipt in 2024-25.

- 16.18 The overall number of households on the housing register has continued to grow. There are almost 26,000 live housing applications as of 28 April 2025; over 8,000 of these households have a Band A award, with over 5,600 of these receiving this award due to being owed a homelessness duty by the Council. A further 9,000 households have Band B or Band C awards for overcrowding.
- 16.19 In 2024-25, 2,865 households were housed via the Birmingham Choice scheme. Of these, 49% were housed in “studio” or one-bedroom accommodation, 35% were housed in two-bedroom accommodation, and 15% in three-bedroom accommodation. Only 62 properties (2%) were let with four or more bedrooms during this period. Homelessness duty owed households accounted for 46% of all properties let in 2024-25.
- 16.20 In Autumn 2024, the Council reviewed its Allocation Scheme. This involved a consultation with stakeholders and partners, resulting in changes being made effective from January 2025. The key changes made were giving Band B to homeless applicants who have previously accepted an offer in the Private Rented Sector under the prevention or relief duties; enabling letting quotas for specific housing need groups such as care leavers, existing tenants under-occupying social housing etc; and confirming auto-bidding status for non-engaged or vulnerable households.
- 16.21 The Accommodation Finding Team (AFT) was “highly commended” at the UK Housing Awards 2024. In the first two years of operation, the AFT has provided over 700 Assured Shorthold Tenancies and 140 leases with Private Sector Landlords. This equates to a cost avoidance of £16m compared to the cost of these households remaining in TA for the average timescale.

17 Capital Investment and Repairs

- 17.1 The Council remains the largest social landlord in Europe, with responsibility for approximately 58,600 units of housing stock throughout the city. The Council continues to deliver a repairs service via its repairs partners Fortem and Equans.
- 17.2 The Council is currently working through the procurement process for a new Repairs contract, effective from April 2026. This is on track and will ensure that the Council procures repairs contractors working to a robust and fit-for-purpose contract to continue to deliver the high-quality repairs and maintenance that our tenants deserve.
- 17.3 The service continues to receive significant volumes of repair requests and complaints relating to repairs. The Council carries out around 250,000 repair requests per year to its housing stock, which is higher than the national average per-property (4.2 per-property against a national average of 3 per-property). Whilst the volume of repairs resulting in a complaint is only around 3%, this

represents a significant number of complaints when the overall number of repairs carried out is taken in context.

- 17.4 This disparity highlights the urgent need for the Council to address the historical under-investment and the resultant deterioration of the housing stock. In January 2024, Cabinet approved the HRA Business Plan which set out the Council's priorities for investment in its housing stock, with an aim to achieve compliance with the existing Decent Homes Standard by 2033.
- 17.5 Investment in the stock portfolio has continued throughout 2024-25. The Council has scaled-up investment to in excess of £200m in 2024-25, ensuring that an additional 4,000 homes are compliant with the Decent Homes Standard.
- 17.6 The Council's investment programme is one of the largest and most ambitious in the UK. The Council's current position in relation to compliance with the Decent Homes Standard continues to fluctuate, as the level of investment is currently often being cancelled out as more accurate data regarding stock condition is received.
- 17.7 As of March 2025, the compliance rate was 29.31%. The Council must continue to invest at pace to ensure that compliance against the Decent Homes Standard is delivered as soon as is feasible.

18 Building Safety and Regulatory Compliance

- 18.1 The Building Safety Act 2022 (BSA) introduced reforms to give greater rights and protections to residents and homeowners, and a regulatory framework for landlords responsible for the management of social housing, overseen by the Building Safety Regulator (BSR).
- 18.2 The Council has assessed all high-rise blocks within the BSR's scope (those of a minimum of 7 storeys or more than 18 metres in height) and has registered these blocks as required. All blocks within scope will require a building safety certificate; so far, the Council has received requests and submitted data as part of this process for 10 blocks.
- 18.3 In response to the Grenfell tragedy, the Council has invested £33m on sprinkler systems in all high-risk buildings and has recruited and trained 24 Building Safety Officers and two Building Safety Managers, to ensure that there is sufficient experience, capacity, and expertise in place to respond to a quickly changing regulatory environment. The focus of the Building Safety Team in 2025-26 will also be on our Tenant Management Organisations (TMO's), as this is an area where historically there has been limited focus.
- 18.4 In relation to landlord health and safety, the below table sets out the Council's position in relation to regulatory compliance when the Regulator of Social Housing's breach notice was received in May 2023 and in March 2025, to reflect

the improvements made. Whilst the Council is continually undertaking assurance work around the quality of data, the below demonstrates that significant progress has been made. The data around gas safety compliance only shows a reduction because certification is being uploaded into a new computer system as part of the Council's data assurance work. Actual completion figures mirror that of April 2023 at circa 99%.

Area	Compliance % April 2023	Compliance % March 2025
Gas (domestic)	99.80%	93.15%
Gas (communal)	78.57%	100%
Electrical (domestic)	73.69%	89.98%
Electrical (communal)	82.01%	85.96%
Asbestos	28.20%	71.13%
Legionella (block)	100%	100%
Legionella (domestic)	71.12%	77.95%
Fire Risk Assessments (low-rise)	34.43%	99.01%
Fire Risk Assessments (high-rise)	94.74%	96.17%
Carbon Monoxide (installation)	50.38%	94.69%
Lifts	95.60%	99.45%
Smoke Detectors	52.46%	98.73%

- 18.5 To support efforts to maintain performance, a Compliance Team is currently being recruited to work exclusively on the ongoing governance and monitoring of regulatory compliance.
- 18.6 In February 2025, the Council underwent an inspection via Savills. The Council received confirmation that the direction of travel across most areas of regulatory compliance was positive, and that concerns raised in previous inspections had been partially or substantially addressed.

19 Housing Management

Housing Management has made significant progress in 2024-25, including a root and branch redesign of the service, technological innovations and increased emphasis and commitment to tenant/leaseholder engagement and involvement.

Housing Management Redesign

- 19.1 Following extensive consultation with staff, Trade Unions and tenants, the Housing Management service is now mobilising the new structure, which was formally agreed and launched in December 2024.
- 19.2 The redesigned model centres on delivering locality-based Housing Management services, with the aim of increasing officer presence on patches and strengthening relationships between tenants/leaseholders. The redesign also focuses on enhancing the look and feel of our neighbourhoods and ensuring that tenants and leaseholders are fully involved in the delivery, design, and scrutiny of our housing services. There are also financial benefits associated with this approach; approximately £2m savings have been delivered so far as part of the HRA business plan commitments.
- 19.3 Mobilisation of the Housing Management redesign is being delivered through a phased and structured approach. The intention is to have the new model fully mobilised by late 2025 as recruitment to new roles occurs, however many aspects of the revised model are already fully operational.

Tenant Support

- 19.4 A key element of the Housing Management redesign has been the establishment of a new tenants' support team, which has created a multidisciplinary function to provide more intensive support to citizens who need it most. This includes focusing on our corporate parenting role, supporting victims of Domestic Abuse and a Think Family approach that aligns to the Council's wider aims as giving children the best start in life and ageing well through the Council's Supported Accommodation offer.

Digital and Agile Working

- 19.5 As part of the wider transformation of the Housing Management service, significant digital improvements have been introduced to support more agile and flexible ways of working for officers. This includes the deployment of 100+ tablet devices across the service, enabling officers to carry out their roles effectively in the local area and reducing the need to return to office bases.
- 19.6 Additionally, the service has invested in a new NEC module "Go Housing," which is specifically designed to support a wide range of housing management-related tasks directly from the field. This functionality allows officers to access real-time information, update case records, and manage tasks on the go, ultimately improving service delivery and responsiveness to tenants' needs. These digital enhancements form a key part of the ongoing effort to modernise the service and empower officers with the tools they need to work more efficiently and effectively.
- 19.7 Income from fees and charges is an essential resource for local authorities. This includes service charges, where the principal continues for the full recovery of

the cost of services provided, including an appropriate proportion of overhead costs, thus increasing income into the HRA fund.

- 19.8 This two-phase project aims to ensure that the Council is recovering all available costs of services provided to our tenants and leaseholders and will address the issue of non-collection of s20 major works from leaseholders.
- Phase 1 – This completed first phase focused on producing accurate data in readiness for the distribution of 2025-26 rent notices, ensuring an efficient collection of service charges from our residents. This was fully achieved and subsequent queries received from our tenants were significantly lower than in the previous year (19 in 2024-25 versus 350 in 2023-24).
 - Phase 2 – This phase commenced in March 2025 and concentrates on the Council's approach to service charges currently and in future years to ensure that all chargeable costs are recovered by robust and compliant processes. This will be delivered via three workstreams by early 2026; these are the 2026-2027+ Service Charges, ICT and New Ways of Working; and Recruitment workstreams.

CCTV

- 19.9 One of the key areas of focus for the Council as a social landlord is the prevention and effective management of ASB. To this end, Housing Management works closely with City Operations colleagues and partner agencies to reduce ASB; this includes activities such as mediation as well as enforcement.
- 19.10 Following Cabinet approval of the CCTV Strategy in 2024, installations are underway at Bakeman House and Durham Tower – two locations identified as high-priority due to ongoing concerns around safety and ASB.
- 19.11 These early installations mark the beginning of a wider rollout, with a comprehensive list of priority high-rise blocks currently under review. Progress will be reported separately to Cabinet in due course.

Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement

- 19.12 Alongside Tenancy and Estate Management, the other central pillar of the Housing Management service is tenant and leaseholder engagement. The focal point of this engagement is delivered via the City Housing Involvement Board and 10 Local Housing Involvement Boards, which are structured around the 10 Council constituencies.
- 19.13 These boards are well-attended and focus on key areas of interest for our tenants and leaseholders such as repairs, ASB, building safety and neighbourhood management. At present, there are around 300 residents involved. In early 2025, the Council conducted a review of the revised engagement arrangements with

the chairs of the local involvement boards, who were supportive of the new direction the Council is taking. The number of joint Council and tenant neighbourhood walkabouts have increased by over 75% in 2024-25, and the Council anticipates building on this progress.

- 19.14 The Council published its 2023-24 Annual Tenants' Report, which highlighted the Council's achievements and challenges. Work on the 2024-25 report is currently progressing.

Performance, Policy, and Service Standards

- 19.15 Throughout 2024-25, Housing Management has introduced a new performance framework focusing on the issues that matter most to our tenants and leaseholders. This includes a focus on targeted visits, support for tenants considering downsizing, and responses to ASB. This work has seen performance improvements across all measures and is regularly presented to the Tenant Scrutiny Committee.
- 19.16 Housing Management has also consulted on a revised set of Conditions of Tenancy and leaseholder payment options, as well as producing a revised set of Service Standards including those relating to ASB, High Rise Caretaking and Cleaning, and Lettings.

20 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Planning

- 20.1 The HRA Business Plan is vital for ensuring that the overall HRA is viable in the short, medium, and longer term. Using a model designed by industry consultants Savills, this process zero-based both revenue and capital income and expenditure budgets for 2024-25 and planned the resource requirement for the next 30 years.
- 20.2 The Business Plan is reset and approved every year at the January Cabinet, by way of a report which also recommends the rent and service charge setting change for the following financial year. The HRA Business Plan informs the itemised budget which requires regular review as pressures and demands change. The plan must show that the Council's three main commitments are resourced to ensure continued improvement. These commitments are to deliver a strong supply of genuinely affordable housing; that neighbourhoods are enhanced, and the quality of existing housing is improved; and that citizens can access and sustain the right home for them.
- 20.3 These commitments inform the key drivers within the Business Plan, which include the following:
- **Asset Management** – An understanding of the Council's stock condition is necessary to determine the investment required and ensure that the costs within the Business Plan are robust. The Council has worked to improve this

data in the last 18 months, and for 2024-25, the Council is projecting to deliver a £0.216Bn investment to improve our housing stock.

- **Supply of Affordable Housing** – The HRA also funds the development of affordable housing in the city. The Council no longer has the HRA capital funding available to support the continuation of the Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT) in its current form. It has been recommended that the Council undertakes a different approach to development via third parties, capitalising on relationships with Registered Providers and Developers.

- 20.4 The Council's HRA capital programme is funded primarily through borrowing and retained Right to Buy (RTB) receipts. In November 2024, Government significantly reduced the maximum discounts given to eligible tenants, resulting in a huge increase of RTB applications. Currently, around 6,000 applications are outstanding for consideration.
- 20.5 The HRA Business Plan mitigates against risk by having both a risk register and thorough robust scenario testing. The risk register considers interest rate changes, the Council's inability to find regeneration schemes, and the scaling back of the direct delivery programme.
- 20.6 The Business Plan has built-in corporate recharges which amount to approximately £38m. These day-to-day operations are carried out by existing functions within the wider Council, and this forms a planned recharge of this amount from the HRA budget to the Council's accounts. The recharge process has historically not been robust, and these charges are currently under review to ensure that the services provided offer the best value for money to the HRA.
- 20.7 A summary analysis is reported to the Housing Governance Board to ensure that there is a transparent process and that the Council is following appropriate Government guidance.

21 Private Rented Sector

- 21.1 Work is ongoing to deliver against the Council's seven key priorities for the private rented sector.
- 21.2 The key priorities are:
- Increase the supply of safe and secure accommodation by bringing empty homes back into use.
 - Identify and implement local initiatives to address local issues.
 - Tackle disrepair and criminality.
 - Prevent illegal evictions and harassment.

- Improve the energy efficiency of homes, tackle fuel poverty and reduce carbon emissions.
- Operate a high-quality mandatory HMO licensing scheme.
- Seek to influence Government and national regulatory agencies to enhance relevant legislation and regulation.

Mandatory HMO Licensing

- 21.3 Currently, 2,375 mandatory licences have been issued across the City. During the financial year 2024-25, 363 compliance visits were completed which exceeded the target for such visits. The purpose of the visits was to identify unlicensed HMOs and ensure landlords were adhering to licence conditions and HMO management regulations.

Empty Properties

- 21.4 Maximising the supply of available properties is a significant priority for the Council. By ensuring that empty properties are brought back into use as residential accommodation, this increases the available housing stock at a time of unprecedented demand, and addresses the issues that properties standing empty for long periods of time can bring to communities, such as fly-tipping, ASB and crime.
- 21.5 During Empty Homes Week in March 2025, Birmingham showcased our contribution to returning empty properties back into use by hearing the experience of a neighbour who had lived next door to an empty property. The resident explained how beneficial the Council intervention had been, resulting in increasing pride in the road now that the empty property was occupied.
- 21.6 The Empty Property Team has an annual target of returning 350 empty properties back into use. In 2024 – 25, the number brought back was 353 which exceeded the target.
- 21.7 Recently the team has been faced with dealing with a significant number of complex cases such as hoarders and adverse possession. We are working across service boundaries to find resolutions to such cases with the intention to return the empty properties back into use.

Fire Safety

- 21.8 The Private Rented Service (PRS) fire team have responsibility for ensuring that High-Risk High-Rise Buildings (HRHRB's) (18m+) in the private rented sector are safe and remediated following the Grenfell Tragedy. There are approximately 180 HRHRBs across the city that need to be assessed, with several thousand medium rise blocks also in scope (11-18m).

- 21.9 Officers work alongside West Midlands Fire Service using powers under the Housing Act 2004 to ensure that where necessary buildings are remediated and fire safety matters are fully addressed, including the removal of dangerous cladding.
- 21.10 The council is on track to meet the government target to ensure that all privately rented HRHRBs are risk assessed, remediated or at least have works started by the end of this financial year. The work on the medium rise buildings in scope will follow.

PRS Enforcement Team

- 21.11 This team of qualified Environmental Health Officers respond to reports of disrepair and poor housing conditions in the private rented sector. They assess the issues and try to ensure compliance before enforcement action is needed. Their aim is to ensure that tenants live in safe homes free from Category 1 Hazards (HHSRS).
- 21.12 In 2024-25 the team exceeded their KPI, resulting in 658 properties improved and hazards removed. In the process 85 legal notices were served by the team, including 3 Emergency Prohibitions and 11 Prohibitions, protecting tenants from further harm.
- 21.13 A total of 8 Civil Penalty Notices were issued to landlords for the offence of failure to comply with an Improvement Notice, totalling £74,500.

Private Tenancy Unit (PTU)

- 21.14 The Private Tenancy Unit (PTU) offers advice and guidance to private tenants about their rights and to landlords about their statutory responsibilities. The team supports tenants where landlords are not following processes for ending tenancies and acting illegally. Officers will determine whether the correct legal processes are being followed, such as where tenants are issued notices to end tenancies or increase the rent.
- 21.15 The PTU dealt with 1,314 cases of harassment and threatened eviction in 2024/25. From 220 cases for threatened eviction, the team's intervention was successful for 190 cases and unsuccessful for 16 cases. There were 9 cases where the tenants left prior to the eviction, and 5 cases that disengaged with the process, so the outcome was unknown.

PRS Pathfinder

- 21.16 As part of the PRS strategy to identify and implement local initiatives in the private rented sector, in 2023-24 the authority bid for government grant funding to trial different enforcement approaches as part of a national Pathfinder programme. Birmingham was the accountable body for the West Midlands pilot.

- 21.17 Most of the delivery was in 2024-25 and our officers carried out over 600 proactive visits to identified property. As of 28 February 2025, over 225 Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) inspections had been carried out. As a result, 163 of those properties required improvement which was carried out by the landlord/agent, and a further 34 are subject to ongoing enforcement action. Importantly, none of the tenants of the 600 plus properties had reported any disrepair; many of them stating that they were fearful of eviction or extortionate rent increases if they did.
- 21.18 The project findings are being independently collated and verified and will be available later in the year.

Selective and Additional Property Licensing Schemes

- 21.19 During the past 19 months of the predicted 62,000 privately rented properties which required a licence, the section have received over 41,000 applications and issued over 36,000 licences so far.
- 21.20 The Selective Scheme operates in 25 wards of the city, which were selected due to having a high proportion of rental properties together with high deprivation and or crime rates. It is estimated that there are 54,000 single household type properties which require a licence in these areas. The Additional Scheme applies to all wards and covers approximately 8,000 properties, which house two to three households who all share one or more amenities.
- 21.21 Compliance inspections commenced in January 2024 for properties that have been issued a licence; so far 9,991 inspections have been completed. Of these, 3,101 required additional interventions to bring them into compliance which in turn has improved the safety and living conditions of those properties. During one inspection an officer recognised that a family were suffering from the advance stages of carbon monoxide poisoning, and the officer's actions saved the lives of four residents.
- 21.22 In addition to the direct benefit of the schemes, the section has been working closely with other Council departments. For example, as it is illegal to serve a s.21 eviction notice on tenants living in an unlicensed property, by working with the Housing Options Team the schemes have been able to prevent 386 illegal evictions. This has given the housing team more time to work with the landlord to keep the tenant in the property or find them more suitable alternative accommodation. Through joint working with the Council Tax section the schemes have identified around 600 properties which are not paying Council Tax.
- 21.23 Since November 2024, the schemes have introduced a small team of Property Licensing Community Officers who are operating in the scheme wards identifying non-compliant properties. Through their work they have identified over 3,000 issues, of which 812 related to unlicensed properties. They have also identified

and referred 99 incidents of fly-tipping, 17 instances of waste on the front of properties, and 5 abandoned vehicles. The team have also reported a suspected Cannabis factory to West Midlands Police, found and removed an offence weapon (a Combat knife) off the street; and reported suspected gang related modern-day slavery.

22 Future Challenges

Awaab's Law

- 22.1 The Council has begun preparations for the anticipated implementation of Awaab's Law by increasing capacity within the repairs and maintenance service and establishing a dedicated team to address damp and mould. Guidance on the wider implementation of Awaab's Law is expected in Summer 2025, and the Council will consider this and ensure compliance ahead of the planned implementation dates.

Future Decent Homes Standard

- 22.2 Following the implementation of the Social Housing Regulation Act and the initial White Paper that triggered its implementation in 2020, Government committed to a review of the Decent Homes Standards. An initial consultation was carried out in 2022 which has not yet resulted in any formal action. The Council like many other landlords only have a certain amount of headroom in the HRA and as a sector. As a result, the Council remains aware of the impact of that any changes in compliance standards may pose from a Birmingham perspective.

Competency and Conduct Standard

- 22.3 Government consulted on the Competency and Conduct Standard in early 2024. The aim of this standard is to embed professionalism within housing services delivered by Local Authorities and to ensure that officers at senior/management grades have appropriate housing (or equivalent) qualifications.
- 22.4 The Council has carried out preparatory work for the implementation of the standard as consulted, however this has potential to place further financial pressures on the HRA budget where retraining and qualifications for existing staff is required to be funded by the Council. There is also a resource risk given current uncertainty over the timescales for compliance and the potential for large numbers of staff needing to attend training/learning simultaneously, which would influence service delivery.

23 Conclusion

- 23.1 As demonstrated, significant activity has taken place to improve and progress service delivery across the Housing and Homelessness portfolio throughout 2024-25. The new Cabinet Member for this portfolio is committed to driving

strategic priorities across City Housing throughout the next municipal year, and would like to thank officers and the previous Cabinet Member for their dedication to this work throughout the last year.

24 Digital, Culture, Heritage, and Tourism Portfolio

Introduction

24.1 This report outlines the work led by the Cabinet Member for Digital, Culture and Tourism over the past year against the following strategic priorities:

- Customer Services
- Oracle
- Digital Inclusion
- Arts and Culture
- Museums and Heritage
- Tourism
- The Library of Birmingham and Community Libraries

25 Customer Services

Contact Centre

- 25.1 During the financial year 2024-25, the Contact Centre received 1.6million calls, achieving an answer rate of 90% compared to the target of 85%. During the same period, they also handled 200,000 emails, 52,000 webchats, and processed 25,500 penalty charge notices.
- 25.2 The Contact Centre has previously provided support to the City Housing complaints service, delivering a triage team to assist with the high volumes of complaints. Due to the success of this work, the Complaints service is now offering development opportunities to Contact Centre staff to learn the complaints functions to support progression into higher level roles within the Council.
- 25.3 The cost-of-living line has remained busy throughout 2024-25. During this period, the Contact Centre has handled 41,300 calls achieving an answer rate of 93%. The Hub continues to support access to food / foodbank vouchers, energy related advice, access to support around household support fund, and signposting to charitable organisations for white goods and hardship fund.
- 25.4 The service area is working with CCA Global for a second year, having achieved their Global Accreditation for Customer Experience. This is a progressive industry

accreditation focused on improving the customer experience; the latest accreditation criteria recognises the evolution of customer contact and the need for a more collaborative approach to customer experience. This is an important demonstration of the Council's commitment and accountability to our customers and reinforces employee commitment to their role and responsibilities and demonstrates consistency, competence, and integrity in service provision.

Waste Industrial Action

- 25.5 Since January 2025, the service area has been heavily involved with supporting responses to the Waste Industrial Action. The Contact Centre witnessed increases of up to 85% in demand in both the calls and on Voice Automation consumption due to this.

Customer Service Programme – Voice Automation

- 25.6 Voice Automation (VA) has continued at pace with all 25 services within the Contact Centre now benefiting from the deployment of automated journeys. This frees up contact centre agents to focus on high value, complex tasks; reducing demand and waiting times; further supported by introducing UK-firsts such as online customer identity verification (enabling customers to fulfil requests end to end); AI (artificial intelligence)-powered chatbot to support customers online; as well as integrations with existing line of business applications enabling customers to self-service 24/7 without the constraint of 9-5 operational hours. Between February 2024 to 31 March 2025, Voice Automation has handled 1.2million calls.
- 25.7 Collaboration and commitment to innovation have been key to the delivery of over 190 automated user journeys for 25 services across 3 tranches. The team is well underway with Tranche 4, and is engaging and transitioning more services (Business Rates, Registers – Births, Deaths, Certificates & Ceremonies, People Services and Housing Repairs), as well as conducting analysis and recommendations on the back office mailboxes (Housing Repairs, School Admissions, Housing Options, Tenancy Estate Management and Parking Enforcement analysed so far) to inform the strategic direction of whether to remove the mailbox, apply generic or customised automations to fulfil customer enquiries.
- 25.8 To further improve efficiency and accessibility whilst remaining on track to deliver the £1.69million savings target for 2025-26, the service has already delivered savings efficiencies for 2024-25 that are equivalent to 19 FTE. These savings have been released through natural attrition, reassigning agency staff, and terminating some agency contracts.
- 25.9 Continuous activities have focused on improving the customer experience, obtaining insight from the data and feedback from users and user research activities. This is informing the design of the automations and identifying further opportunities for automation to make the solution more user-friendly and

accessible to our customers. Connecting and engaging with our customers has been key to testing the functionality of not only the VA user journeys but the AI-powered Chatbot, and also in promoting its availability and ease of use to our customers.

- 25.10 National recognition of the innovative work by the Customer Experience Programme (CEP) team in advancing customer service has been acknowledged through nominations for the 2025 Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Awards (Digital Impact category); and the 2025 Municipal Journal (MJ) Achievement Awards 2025 (in two categories: Digital Transformation – Delivering Better Outcomes, Best Council Service Team; and Innovation in Public Private Partnerships).

Housing Repairs Online

- 25.11 Since the implementation of the new Housing repairs online solution, we have seen a decrease of emails for reports being received by the contact centre. This was down to 59% by beginning 2025 and has reduced workload into the contact centre.
- 25.12 The digital Housing repairs solution has handled over 5,000 end-to-end transactions online since January 2025, which are sent directly to contractors without any contact centre staff intervention. A customer can now submit a non-urgent request for a repair, diagnose a repair, track the status, and book an appointment all online through their Housing online account and change appointments digitally within 24 hours of their appointment or contact the contact centre if it is within the appointment time schedule.
- 25.13 The complaints service has been selected to be part of the LGSCO new Complaint Handling code pilot. The pilot is to introduce a code which is similar to the Housing Ombudsman code and will go live in 2026. The service is working closely with both Ombudsman to ensure we are meeting the requirements of the separate codes.

Customer Experience Programme – Consolidation

- 25.14 The Consolidation Programme started in January 2024, with a 12-week period of Discovery for Business Support, Customer Contact, Integrated Transport and Debt. In April 2024, the programme reported back on its findings and the initial validation of the level of savings. Decisions were taken at that point to move Debt and Integrated Transport to their lead directorates (Finance & City Operations respectively). Customer Contact and Business Support remained within the programme for delivery.
- 25.15 Customer Contact consolidation undertook discovery work with six of the highest use services, to identify those which were best placed to consolidate into the Contact Centre. It was agreed to move forward with Client Financial Services for

consolidation, mapping out customer contact moving into the Contact Centre and business administration moving into Business Support, with final transfer happening in Q1 of 2025-26. Business Support Consolidation worked with directorates to verify the posts that had been identified through a Job Evaluation search, to reduce the liability of having multiple job descriptions with administration within the Job title. Seventy posts were verified and the activity, posts and budget consolidated into Business Support in August 2024.

- 25.16 In December 2024, the Consolidation Programme and the Customer Services Programme merged to become the Customer Experience Programme. Phase 2 consolidation discovery work started in October 2024. This approach consists of identifying in-scope activity and posts and transferring it into Centralised Services to undertake improvement work, and working with directorates and services to undertake a deep dive approach to customer experience, to identify activity and posts where consolidation and improvement work would increase the customer experience.
- 25.17 From the initial discovery, we have a list of services the programme is working with, and transfers across to Centralised Services will begin in Quarter 1 of 2025-26. The plan has been sectioned out across the year, to ensure the analysis and development work is completed prior to transfer.
- 25.18 There were no savings scheduled for 2024/25; however, the programme was able to deliver £1.4million of the £2.9million Business Support and Phase 1 consolidation saving early in 2024-25.

Business Support

- 25.19 95% of respondents to the 2024-25 annual service area satisfaction survey rated the service as excellent or good. 16 digital tools sessions have been held to develop IT and automation skills across the service, which has helped improve the support offer to directorates.
- 25.20 By utilising streamlined and automated processes, Business Support have been able to reduce the number of mailboxes; have created an automated process for tracking the street scene establishment; allowed the processing and quality checking of statutory claims for early education entitlement; and improved the chaperone application processing times while reducing complaint levels for this service down to zero. In addition, within Adult Social Care, automated quality panel meetings and a senior management hub SharePoint site have been established, together with improved contract register governance for Public Health.

Digital Mail Centre

- 25.21 The Digital Mail Centre (DMC) provides postal services both internally and externally. Services include inbound mail and digital conversion, outbound mail,

scanning, sorting and archiving, bulk printing, cheque processing, document verification, indexing and returns. They adhere to the universal ISO 27001, ISO 9001 and BSI 10008 accreditation standards.

- 25.22 During 2024-25, DMC secured work from four local hospitals, saving the NHS £290,000 and generating a £312,000 income stream for the Council. All print and postage for Parking Services was fulfilled, with costs reduced for the service by £150,000. Expected surplus on the DMC budget is in the region of £250,000, from income from external customers and automation, saving time, effort, and resources.
- 25.23 7.5million mail items were processed through DMC's C9 license in 2024/25, including over 460,000 items via the hybrid mail solution Press to Post. DMC have automated production across directorates for printing and dispatch of P45's, P60's, Foster Care Remits, Revenues Enforcement Notices, Adults Direct payments, Bids Summons and School Admissions. In addition, DMC are working closely with the Elections team to automate their print files, Payroll to automate their Payslips and Revenues, Benefits, Housing and Shared Services to automate their Bills, rather than printing to an outside print provider. This has a potential saving of approximately £350,000.

26 Oracle

Oracle Brindley Programme Update

- 26.1 The core requirements of the Council from an ERP system are the following 'golden thread' important outcomes:
- The ability to manage money (i.e. pay invoices and process payments accurately).
 - The ability to manage people (i.e. onboard, manage, perform payroll runs and offboard resources).
 - The ability to comply with necessary legislation, keep data securely including meeting data protection/GDPR requirements.
 - The ability to deliver a suitable user experience which allows users to operate in an efficient and effective way.
- 26.2 As well as supporting the delivery of outcomes for the core back-office services, the Oracle ERP system needs to support the delivery of savings across the organisation as part of the 2025-26 budget, and delivery of the outcomes contained within the Council's Improvement and Recovery Plan (IRP).

Oracle Progress Update

- 26.3 The re-implementation of a new fit for purpose Oracle solution is progressing well in line with the Oracle Implementation Cabinet Report (May 2024). It is expected to go live in April 2026.
- 26.4 The design work for re-implementation is now complete, after reviewing 206 processes and running 44 playback demonstrations. This will allow the Council to move on to producing the 'gold' build which can be used for final user testing and approval prior to deployment.
- 26.5 A new Cabinet Report will be taken in June 2025 which concludes that the new solution is fit for purpose to meet the Council's needs, and the issues from the initial implementation have been resolved without needing to use bespoke customisations. This report will set out the planned activities to provide reassurance over the programme's outcomes, and to ask for Cabinet's approval to fully deploy the new solution across the Council.
- 26.6 This is a major business change programme, and success will be influenced by the quality of the data uploaded into the new system, the robustness and understanding of the new business processes, the Council's readiness to change and use those systems, and the ability to effectively support the system and business processes post go live. To maintain oversight of any risks, close leadership attention from officers and Councillors will be essential to the programme's success.
- 26.7 In parallel to the re-implementation, many changes on the existing system have been prioritised, progressed, and deployed. This work in supporting the 'Live Service' has been important as the Council must continue key functions such as paying employees, suppliers and collecting customer debt whilst the re-implementation takes place.

Income Management

- 26.8 The project to implement the Council's new Income Management System (IMS) is well underway, which will replace the broken Bank Reconciliation System (BRS) and deliver other benefits around improved transaction processing, reconciliation, and other controls. Significant work has also been completed around the Council's income collection procedures and accounting policies.
- 26.9 The design for the IMS has now been documented and agreed, and the system is currently being built. A paper-based exercise against all the Council's income streams, bank accounts and accounting processes has been performed to validate that that income can be properly reconciled in the new design. The outcome of this suggests that the new design should, when implemented and optimised, allocate and match over 90% of the Council's income against the current Bank Reconciliation System (BRS) that achieves only a 60% allocation.

- 26.10 Testing and training preparation is in progress, and the implementation will involve shadow running and testing against the existing system over Summer 2025, with an expectation to go-live in September 2025.

Schools

- 26.11 In October 2024, Cabinet approved the proposal that that BCC will cease to offer HR, Payroll and Pensions as a traded service, instead retaining some staff to provide an audit and compliance function in line with its statutory duties. Cabinet also approved the proposal that the Council will review and adjust costs and charges for Schools Financial Services to ensure that it is able to reach a break-even position each year. If schools cannot afford the reviewed fees, the Council will cease to offer Schools Financial Services.
- 26.12 A programme of work is being undertaken by the Council to deliver the Cabinet decision and support the overarching aim of successful Oracle reimplementation. Schools are being supported to prepare for a move to their new HR and Payroll providers by ensuring that they have their own bank account, known as becoming a chequebook school. Of 131 schools, 75% have successfully opened an account, with the remainder completing this action in May or June 2025.
- 26.13 The Department of Education was engaged by the project to assist schools with procurement of new HR and Payroll Services, but schools chose to act independently. Of 250 schools, 99% have now confirmed their preferred leaving date and are being guided through the offboarding process.
- 26.14 As of 1 April 2025, 120 schools have successfully offboarded with a further 85 in the process of offboarding. The programme is on track to offboard all schools by 1 September 2025.
- 26.15 A business change workstream has identified the remaining statutory duties that the Council is responsible for in schools where the Council is the employer. Activity to map all processes and align them with the appropriate teams in the HR, OD and Payroll directorate is progressing.
- 26.16 Schools HR and Payroll are in the final stages of an organisation restructure which will mitigate against compulsory redundancies for colleagues in the traded services impacted by the Cabinet decision.
- 26.17 The review of Schools Financial Services has successfully concluded, with sufficient schools purchasing the revised service to allow the Council to continue delivering the service. The Schools Financial Services team is also in the final stages of an organisational restructure, which will ensure that Schools Financial Services reaches a break-even position.

27 Digital Inclusion

Digital Birmingham

- 27.1 In 2024-25, the Digital City and Innovation function was reduced, resulting in the delivery of the 10-year Digital City Programme being put on hold. Despite this, the Digital City team has delivered considerable achievements through collaborative working between Council directorates, external partners, and city stakeholders.

Birmingham Digital Partnership

- 27.2 The Partnership continues to support the City to identify and deliver strategic projects and programmes to accelerate sustainable economic growth opportunities and creating a City where “digital works for everyone.” Currently, there are 17 organisations from the public, private, academic, voluntary and community sectors collaborating to addressing the City’s strategic challenges. They are committed to delivering a number of key partner-led activities including enabling Birmingham to be the most connected City in the UK and supporting the development of digital skills ranging from basic digital inclusion through to establishing a pipeline of talent to support business growth.
- 27.3 The Partnership is a valuable asset for the City, and Council and is positioning itself to be recognised as one the Council’s strategic partnerships. The key successes of the Partnership for 2024-25 included:
- Developing the digital element of the Economic Placed based Approach for Single Settlement funding for 2025-26.
 - Influencing the WMCA Digital Steering Board to deliver funding opportunities for digital inclusion.
 - Identifying and shaping the digital requirements for the Investment and Growth zones.
 - Mobilising the assets and resources of stakeholders to promote Digital infrastructure and connectivity.
- 27.4 In 2025-26, the Partnership will focus on attracting new projects and funding opportunities through ideation and delivering innovation capabilities.

Digital Inclusion

- 27.5 Digital inclusion continues to be a growing issue exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis. Whilst the lack of devices, access to affordable connectivity and skills are the main reasons for the lack of digital inclusion, there are growing concerns that the rapid pace of technology development is widening and deepening the digital

divide. Following the successful delivery of the City-wide Digital Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan which finished in 2024, the Council continues to deliver a number of cross directorate projects including supporting the Digital Neighbourhood Network Scheme and providing access to free Wi-Fi in all community libraries and the Library of Birmingham.

27.6 In addition, the Digital City Team has:

- Secured £150,000 from the Household Support Fund to develop a digital inclusion project aimed at building local and sustainable capacity across the City alignment to the Warm Welcome Spaces network.
- Enabled access to £110,000 for the Early Intervention and Prevention Team from the Department of Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) for the further development of the Virtual Hub
- Established a strategic partnership with Barclays Eagles to create digital champions across the City.
- Established 5 Warm Welcomes Spaces and community hubs to become digital hubs, and provided 27 mobile devices directly to the citizens or for Warm Welcome Spaces. Alongside this, the Team has offered free connectivity packages to over 50 individuals or Warm Welcome Spaces.
- Supported approximately 1050 vulnerable citizens gain access to digital skills.

Next Steps

27.7 For 2025-26, the team will look to establish a network of at least 50 digital champions and work with partners to establish 120 digital hubs across the City. The team will secure support from up to 15 corporate organisations to deliver city wide digital inclusion activities including devices, connectivity, and skills. Finally, the team hopes to support 1,000 citizens to build their confidence to develop digital capabilities.

West Midlands Innovation Accelerator (Diatomic)

27.8 In 2024/25, the Digital City Team continued to work closely with the European and International Affairs Team to successfully deliver the £6.2million DIATOMIC (Digital InnovAtion TransfOrMative Change) project. This was part one of the major projects funded through the £33million Innovation Accelerator awarded to the West Midlands Combined Authority. The following key outcomes were achieved:

- SME Innovation Accelerator - supported nine businesses to develop new products and services addressing challenges in City Operations, Housing and

Adult Social Care. This enabled the creation of 35 new or enhanced applications for testing and trialling as well as 6 new jobs.

- Established A Digital Twin* Capability - with a composable, open standard digital twin demonstrator platform with the ability to scale and develop greater functionality.
- Global work and City Positioning - developed and promoted the work of the digital Twin, Innovation Accelerator, Inclusive Network as well as the city-to-city demonstrator work with Ulsan, South Korea through flagship events; BirminghamTech Week and the Barcelona Smart Cities Expo & World Congress as well as 9 articles and 14 videos.

27.9 In addition, a Transnational Collaboration Good Practice Guide to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing across diverse stakeholders was developed. This delivered 4 global projects to illustrate the innovation twin partnership with Ulsan (smart cities, circular economy, academic exchange and business collaboration with 8 academics and 5 companies engaged from the UK) and resulted in two signed Memoranda of Understanding.

Next Steps

27.10 For 2025-26, a 1-year project extension with an additional £1.8 million from Innovate UK has been secured. The project will be led by the Connected Places catapult and the extension will enhance the digital twin platform and capabilities to establish a virtual model of the Birmingham Knowledge Quarter and the Green Innovation Corridor in Wolverhampton and use it to identify opportunities to deliver its strategic outcomes. This will also establish an Innovation Accelerator programme to support businesses growth, new projects and applications, and continue developing the international relationship between Birmingham and Ulsan.

West Midlands Innovation Regions 5G – Adult Social Care

27.11 In 2024-25, the Digital City Team worked closely with Adult Social Care to deliver the Technology Enabled Care project using £1.9million funding from DSIT to explore ways to deliver care packages more efficiently. The project is led by WM5G and involves cross region collaboration between Coventry and Wolverhampton City Councils. To date, Birmingham Adult Social Services has made 239 care packages referrals where technology could be used to deliver the Care package; delivered 163 home installations involving the deployment of 753 items of technology; and set up a new virtual care call facility to support 22 citizens.

- 27.12 The benefits and the outcomes of the project are currently being reviewed in order to prepare a full business case to determine the impacts of the installation and level of efficiency achieved.

Next Steps

- 27.13 For 2025-26, further funding of £127,000 has been secured to continue the installations and potentially fund new referrals until March 2026. A business case is currently being prepared and will determine whether a greater technology enabled care approach can lead to improved and more efficient delivery of care packages.

28 Arts and Culture

- 28.1 Throughout 2024-25, officers have continued to work hard to identify and secure other sources of external funding to help support the wider cultural sector. These included Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) for a range of heritage and culture projects and Enterprise Zone funding for developing new Cultural Action Areas.
- 28.2 Significant funding was also secured from WMCA Commonwealth Games Legacy Funding towards delivery of the Birmingham Weekender Festival 2024 and for Cultural Engagement and Placemaking projects across the city.

Developing Birmingham's Cultural Compact / Cultural Strategy 2025 – 2035

- 28.3 The first official 'coming together' of the Birmingham Cultural Compact Board took place in October 2024. This is a cross-sector partnership designed to support the local cultural sector and enhance its contribution to development, with a special emphasis on cross-sector engagement beyond the cultural sector itself and the local authority. Chaired by David Mba, Vice Chancellor at Birmingham City University, and Councillor Suleman (Cabinet Member) as Deputy Chair, members work together to help culture make a difference in the city.
- 28.4 The Birmingham Cultural Compact has been overseeing the commissioning and development of Birmingham's Cultural Strategy 2025 – 2035, with the aim to help culture thrive in the city and increase the City's health, wellbeing, resilience, economic prosperity, and environmental sustainability. At the same time, the cultural strategy will help identify how the Council will be able to support the Arts, Culture and Heritage sector to thrive and grow in future years.
- 28.5 The commissioning of the cultural strategy was funded through a combination of the Council's allocation from the WMCA Commonwealth Games Legacy placemaking funding, and grants from Arts Council England (ACE). The Council acts as the 'Accountable Body'.
- 28.6 Looking ahead, Enterprise Zone funding for Cultural Action Areas (CAA) continues, and officers are progressing with further submissions for Round 4

Shared Prosperity Funding for heritage, culture, and tourism projects. Officers are also preparing the groundwork for various bids to different funding bodies, including Department for Culture, Media & Sport for 'Arts Everywhere' funding' and to The Arts & Humanities Research Council and partnering in an EU Horizon funded project.

- 28.7 Arts Council England has recently awarded a further £20,000 towards supporting delivery of the Birmingham Cultural Compact's objectives. These include investigating other funding initiatives to support culture, including funding from developments across the city, philanthropic giving, and supporting an Accommodation BID in Birmingham.

Cultural Events and Festivals

- 28.8 Birmingham City University (BCU) have been instrumental in securing a new 'Serendipity' Festival for the City. Originating from Goa in India, the 2025 mini festival is designed to expand into a larger event in 2026.
- 28.9 The recent Ramadan Streets event was a resounding success, interlinking faith, culture, and community in celebration of the holy month of Ramadan. This was a new event on Coventry Road which ran over five days. An impressive 30,000 people attended the event, highlighting the wide-reaching impact and confirming the proof of concept that an organised event is both viable and welcome. The event was championed by Cabinet Members and organised by Soul City Arts in collaboration with Halal Food Festival. This was supported by the Events Team at the Council, with grant funding from the UK Government Community Recovery Fund.
- 28.10 It is anticipated that alternative funding for the annual Birmingham Heritage Week in September 2025 can be secured through the Trust and Charities Committee, and it is hoped that, following the application submitted by the Jewellery Quarter BID, Birmingham will be awarded 'World Craft City' status for the Jewellery Quarter which could lead to a new British biennial Jewellery Festival.

29 Museums and Heritage

Birmingham Museums Trust (BMT)

- 29.1 The Council has a contract and service level agreement with Birmingham Museums Trust (BMT) to operate its nine Accredited museums, its vast museum collection, and public art until March 2043. Within this contract, the rolling 4-year funding agreement with the Council runs to March 2026. Under the current contract, any proposed changes to the next four-year cycle of fees and payments will need to be formally notified by the Council to BMT by 1 July 2025 for negotiation. However, it is the intention of both parties to start these discussions as soon as possible.

- 29.2 BMT has separate 25-year lease agreements for the nine museum properties, for which the Council has legal obligations as corporate landlord. Under the museums lease terms, the Council is responsible for the repair and maintenance of the external structure of the nine heritage properties. The Council has a budget allocated against corporate capital contingency towards maintenance and repairs across the museum's estate.
- 29.3 The City's 'flagship' Museum & Art Gallery (BMAG) was closed in 2020 so that the council could undertake statutory building (electrical) repairs. In Summer and Autumn 2024, BMAG began the gradual phase of reopening some of its galleries. BMT secured external funding towards reopening the Gas Hall which reopened with 'Victorian Radicals' exhibition in 2024. The Waterhall Gallery then reopened late Summer 2024, followed by the BMAG Tea Rooms and two galleries in October 2024 and the History Gallery in 2025. Currently, 23 of the 40 galleries have now reopened.
- 29.4 It is both parties' intention that £1 million of Council funding be used as match funding for up to £9million National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) application to support the full refurbishment of BMAG. Whilst funding has been allocated in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan, Commissioners have stipulated that any match funding to support the NLHF bid would require further Cabinet approval.
- 29.5 BMT secured £250,000 'resilience funding' from the National Lottery Heritage Fund towards scoping a sustainable business model and 5-year plan. This work started in February 2024, but the outcomes have yet to be presented to BMT's Board and the Council. In concert with this work, officers were successful in securing £0.020m Transformation Funding in 2024 towards an independent review of the ongoing financial viability of BMT.
- 29.6 A museums finance consultant was appointed through Hays in October 2024, but to date, their ability to analyse BMT's financial position with officers has proved challenging owing to the lack of reliable and constantly changing financial information from BMT. This has been exacerbated by BMT's inability to recruit a new Finance Director.
- 29.7 Regarding BMT's financial situation, the Trust is projecting a small surplus in 2024-25 but proposing approximately £0.530m deficit in 2025-26. This figure is over and above an additional £0.530m in support identified by the Council to the annual contract fee and payments. Any deficit in 2025-26 will need to be covered by BMT's £2.8m reserves, however, it is likely that recently announced Government funding for Civic Museums in 2025-26 will go some way towards mitigating the deficit. In addition, it is anticipated that BMT could benefit from Exhibition Tax Relief and support from Shared Prosperity Fund Round 4.

Updates for Museum Sites managed by BMT

- 29.8 Aston Hall - Officers propose to submit an Expression of Interest to DCMS MEND Fund Round 5 for up to £1.6m towards necessary roof and electrical repairs. If invited to apply, this will be subject to a Cabinet Report seeking approval and provide £0.178m match funding from the existing museums R&M budget.
- 29.9 Thinktank Museum – BMT will be requesting an extension of their current lease at Millenium Point which expires in 2029. However, the challenge remains that Millenium Point Trust plan to significantly raise rent and service charge costs from the start of a new Lease.
- 29.10 Museum of Jewellery Quarter – the museum had been closed in 2024 due to necessary works required to repair the roof. This has now been resolved, and it is expected that this will reopen in 2025.
- 29.11 Soho House – Soho House had also been closed due to a significant ingress of sewage into the basement. Works have been completed, and BMT are in the process of pursuing a claim for repairs with the water company.
- 29.12 Sarehole Mill – BMT are operating under a Licence to Occupy while a formal lease to match other BMT sites up to 2043 is put in place. This is dependent on Legal Services processing the consent through the Charities Commission. There are ongoing discussions with the Tolkien Society who have registered interest in being engaged with the site going forward.

Next Steps

- 29.13 Looking forward to the next four-year financial agreement, it is highly likely that the original Service Level Agreement (SLA) with BMT will need to be revised, based on what the Trust can provide within the overall funding envelope. This may include reduced opening hours at Heritage sites, reduction in access to collections, and less community projects. Officers have secured some support from Transformation (IRP) Funding in 2025-26 to help facilitate BMT's transition into a viable sustainable organisation.

Other Heritage Matters

- 29.14 Officers continue regular dialogue with the heritage sector in Birmingham through quarterly meetings of the Heritage Strategy Group chaired by Councillor Phil Davis. Alongside this work, officers commissioned and facilitated a range of organisations to deliver events in 2024-25, including Birmingham Heritage Week in September 2024; the first Birmingham Light Festival in February 2025; and Black History Month events across the city in September 2024.
- 29.15 Looking ahead, it is anticipated that the draft Heritage Strategy and refreshed Public Art Strategy will be presented for approval in 2025.

Film Birmingham

- 29.16 Film Birmingham has delivered day to day servicing of Film & Productions across the City, working closely with producers to ensure suitable locations were made available to film and TV series in Birmingham. Throughout 2024-25, this has included Steven Knights 'Immortal Man' and BBC's 'Silent Witness' which has relocated to the city along with the 'MasterChef' series.
- 29.17 The service was required to become cost neutral to the Council from 2024-25. This involved a required saving of £0.089m, made up of cuts to operational costs and increased income and fees and admin charges.
- 29.18 Looking ahead, officers continue to liaise with WMCA officers and Create Central to explore the potential of a new regional Film Office, building on the service developed to date by the Council and drawing on an external review of the service funded by Transformation Fund. The aspiration is to develop and promote a holistic and cohesive identity and service for the region in which Birmingham is front and centre as a filming location and base for productions.

30 Tourism

Birmingham and West Midlands Visitor Pass

- 30.1 Following a feasibility study commissioned by the Council's Tourism Service, West Midlands Growth Company (WMGC) has been working to develop a Visitor Pass providing admission and discounts to visitor attractions and experiences across the region. Soft launched in October 2024, the pass provides a convenient package for visitors staying for 1, 2 and 3-days, providing exposure for some of the region's smaller tourism experiences alongside the better-known attractions. The pass currently includes admission to 8 attractions in Birmingham, and discounts on food, retail, accommodation and transport. With a waiting list of 50 businesses looking to negotiate, the pass will continue to develop as an attractive product for national and international audiences.

Accessible Tourism

- 30.2 The Council has worked with MIMA to develop five short accessible tourism films to educate and inspire those working in the visitor economy, demonstrating what simple improvements can be made for little to no cost. The films were shot in December 2024 and January 2025 at a hotel, conference venue, café, arts centre and a heritage attraction. The films will be launched on social channels in June 2025 as part of a co-ordinated regional campaign and will signpost businesses to the Council's Accessible Tourism Hub.

Sustainable Tourism

- 30.3 In Spring 2024, the Council's Tourism service and Net Zero team worked with WMGC on Birmingham's submission to the Global Destination Sustainability Index to benchmark against other worldwide cities. Birmingham received a score of 44.2%, and as a result of this, work is underway to improve future scores with initiatives such as the Green Tourism Programme. Funded by West Midlands Destination Development Partnership, attractions, conference venues and accommodation providers have been offered a free year's membership and third-party certification with Green Tourism, followed by a 50% discount in Year 2 and 25% in Year 3.

Coach Tourism

- 30.4 UKSPF funding has enabled the Council to continue to improve Birmingham's Coach Tourism offer. Working with a travel trade consultant, the Council took a novel, industry-led approach to identify barriers to coach and group travel operators to visit the city and identify improvements that could be made in the short, medium, and long term. To support this, there was extensive consultation with attractions, hoteliers, the British Guild of Tour Operators and the Confederation of Passenger Transport, who also audited the city on its 'coach friendliness.'
- 30.5 A coach-friendly guide and map to Birmingham was produced, detailing driver benefits and essential parking and drop-off information. A quarterly email will be sent out to the coach industry detailing traffic management issues, major events and also provide access to real time traffic information portal. The project has also provided a roadmap for Birmingham to become the first major urban area in the UK to receive coach friendly status.
- 30.6 The Council's Transport Planning team have provided valuable insight and assistance throughout the project. A comprehensive review of city centre coach drop-off bays will be commissioned in 2025-26 to ensure coaches serving tour groups, concerts, theatre trips, sporting events and school visits will be well-served in the future.
- 30.7 It was revealed throughout the consultation process that the removal of coach bay signage outside the Coffin Works Museum during the pandemic had resulted in coach parties dropping from 40% to 15% of their business. Thanks to this project, this will be reinstated with the bay becoming enforceable again.

Digital Marketing Skills Programme

- 30.8 The Council has worked with training provider, Maybe, to offer Birmingham's visitor economy businesses free access to digital marketing skills training. Funded by UKSPF, 140 organisations including BIDs, attractions, hotels and food and beverage have 12-months' access to an AI-assisted, remote learning

platform with webinars, information guides and 24/7 support. Allowing businesses to learn at their own pace, the platform provides advice on websites, content creation, social medial marketing, e-marketing, managing review sites along with a digital audit, to take into consideration a business' capacity and prioritise key tasks. The platform includes translated training materials available in multiple languages (including Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Kurdish, and Urdu) to benefit our diverse hospitality sector.

Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) and Destination Development Partnership (DDP)

- 30.9 The Council continues to play a lead role in the Birmingham, Solihull, and Black Country Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP). This leads on accessible tourism initiatives and represents the LVEP at the national Skills and Workforce Forum, chaired by VisitBritain and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. The forum is working to change perceptions of careers in tourism and hospitality and improve skills, qualifications, and apprenticeships in the sector.
- 30.10 At a regional level, the West Midlands has received £350,000 in funding from VisitEngland to continue as a Destination Development Pilot. A programme of activity has been agreed with DCMS informed by LVEP priorities, with continuation of some aspects of the DDP / Global WM workstreams from the past 2 years but also delivering national policy at the regional level.

Looking Ahead

- 30.11 The Tourism Service is bidding for £340,000 from UKSPF Year 4 to support the continued development of Birmingham's visitor economy. A number of projects have been drawn up to improve the driver facilities at the Brewery Street Coach Park, visitor information services at the Library of Birmingham, consumer and travel trade marketing as well as a tourism capital grants programme. A pilot skills programme is also being developed to help address gaps identified by employers.
- 30.12 The Tourism Officer is engaging with stakeholders to refresh the Birmingham Visitor Destination Plan 2022-2027 in light of ongoing challenges and the current economic and political climate, whilst aligning with the Regional Tourism Strategy (also being refreshed).

The Library of Birmingham and Community Libraries

Libraries Service Redesign

- 30.13 To commence the redesign, the Council's Community Libraries launched a two-phased consultation period in April 2024 to December 2024. The process engaged with organisations, groups and residents to understand future needs to inform the operating model for the services.

- 30.14 The recommended option was presented in the 'EIP Transformation of Libraries and NAIS service' Cabinet report, detailing the proposed new service model for the amalgamation of the Community Libraries and Neighbourhood Advice Service. The approach was approved by Cabinet on 11 February 2025 and contributes to the corporate priority for Early Intervention and Prevention. Since securing Cabinet approval, an implementation plan has been put in place across all areas of transformation.
- 30.15 Following Cabinet approval, four call-in requests had been submitted and accepted for review. To address these applications, a Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting was scheduled for 5th March, where the decision was made to not continue with the call in process.
- 30.16 In March 2025, as part of the budget setting process, the Council approved a capital allocation of up to £3.9m towards the programme of works required for the buildings. The service teams are now moving forwards at pace with officers in Corporate Landlord and Finance to scope the appropriate business case for the capital works in line with our financial regulations. This is on the Forward Plan for Cabinet on 24 June 2025.
- 30.17 On 17 March, the service received a trade union dispute on the future service delivery model, which caused a further delay on progress and implementation. This is still currently in progress, and we are working to minimise any additional delays as part of this process.
- 30.18 The service has now re-engaged with partners to progress the implementation, and this will now increase in pace to ensure we meet the approval and recommendations set out by Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny.

Budget and Savings

- 30.19 The 2024-25 MTFP assumed October 2024 implementation for the service redesign, with a half year impact for 24-25 and a full year impact for 25-26. The 2025-26 MTFP assumed April 2024 implementation, forecasting a full year impact in 25-26.
- 30.20 However, due to a number of delays from external processes and factors, the current expectation for implementation is Summer 2025. Mitigations have been considered which include identifying early property savings through investing in the buildings that will be retained, and from increased income from existing grants which can be applied to Connected Communities work. Therefore, the forecast is for the full financial value to be achieved.

The Library of Birmingham and Community Libraries

- 30.21 The Library of Birmingham experienced an increase of visitors from March 2024 to March 2025 of approximately 50,000 public visits, bringing the total to

1,150,000. Although the overall number of visits to community libraries saw a slight decline, it is noteworthy that despite the implementation of temporary reduced opening hours across all locations beginning in August 2024, visitor numbers have remained stable at just over 1,000,000.

Library of Birmingham Exhibitions – 2024/25

- 30.22 In 2024-25, external funding, cultural partners, and community volunteers delivered more than £200,000 worth of engaging, insightful, and innovative exhibitions to the Library of Birmingham.

Business Start-up Support and Job Fairs at the Library of Birmingham

- 30.23 These workshops support Birmingham's pre and start-up businesses to develop, grow, and contribute to the local economy, and focus on everything a new business needs to know. To complement these workshops, the service also runs LAUNCH PAD, which is a monthly networking event that enables new and experienced entrepreneurs to share their business expertise.
- 30.24 Monthly job fairs are being held at Library of Birmingham in collaboration with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). These events have been well received, with attendance ranging between 300 and 600 participants per session. The last jobs fair focused on people over the age of 50.

Community Libraries Activities

- 30.25 During the past year, Community Libraries hosted a diverse range of events, including performances by the Birmingham Opera Company and the Long-Nosed Puppet Theatre's "Shoe Baby," as well as a production of "Lily and the Wave." The Warm Welcome initiative was expanded, allowing 11 libraries to conduct family book-themed arts and crafts sessions. Arts Therapies UK led engaging sessions attended by over 450 individuals. The Rep's "Snowflake" production provided a delightful winter experience for young library users.
- 30.26 The service also continues to focus on health and well-being, offering BMI and blood pressure checks as well as support groups for Cancer and Parkinson's UK. Furthermore, the jobs and skills initiatives were highlighted at the recent employers and partners event at Hall Green Library, in collaboration with Smartworks, which provides interview advice and professional clothing assistance to help citizens enter the workforce.

31 Conclusion

- 31.1 As Cabinet Member for Digital, Culture, Heritage, and Tourism, I would like to put on record my sincere thanks to officers for all of their hard work and dedication across areas within my portfolio. I am committed to driving strategic priorities across Digital, Culture, Heritage, and Tourism over the next municipal year, and

look forward to delivering more opportunities across the arts, culture, heritage, and technology sectors within Birmingham in the coming months.

32 RISK MANAGEMENT

32.1 Not Applicable

33 CONSULTATION

33.1 Not Applicable

34 MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

Ward Councillor(s)

34.1 Not Applicable

Overview and Scrutiny

34.2 Not Applicable

Other

34.3 Not Applicable

35 IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS

Finance and Best Value

35.1 Not Applicable

Legal

35.2 Not Applicable

Equalities

35.3 Not Applicable

Procurement

35.4 Not Applicable

People Services

35.5 Not Applicable

Climate Change, Nature and Net Zero

35.6 Not Applicable

Corporate Parenting

35.7 Not Applicable

Other

35.8 Not Applicable

36 APPENDICES

36.1 None

37 BACKGROUND PAPERS

37.1 None

Birmingham City Council

Report to City Council

8 July 2025



Title	Annual Report of Standards Committee
Report Author:	Peter Wiseman, Standards Committee Independent Chair
Authorised by:	Robert Connelly, Assistant Director – Governance Legal & Governance Tel: 0121 303 2443 Email: robert_connelly@birmingham.gov.uk
Is this a Key Decision?	No
If this is a Key Decision, is this decision listed on the Forward Plan?	Not Applicable
Reason(s) why not included on the Forward Plan:	Not Applicable.
Is this a Late Report?	No
Reason(s) why Late:	Not Applicable.
Is this decision eligible for 'call in?'	Not Applicable
If not eligible, please provide reason(s):	Not Applicable.

Wards: All

Does this report contain exempt or confidential information? Yes

Has this decision been included on the Notification of Intention to consider Matters in Private? Not Applicable

Reasons why not included on the Notification: Not Applicable.

1. Purpose of Report:

- 1.1 The report sets out the Standards Committee Annual Report for 2024-25.

2. Commissioners' Review

- 2.1 Commissioners have no observations on this report.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 To approve the annual report of the Standards Committee.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Localism Act 2011 ("the Act") requires that a local authority must:
- i. promote and maintain high standards of conduct by its members and coopted members; and
 - ii. when discharging its duty, adopt a voluntary code dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted members of the authority when they are acting in their capacity as members (that is in an official capacity).
- 4.2 Under section 28(6) of the Act a relevant authority must have in place arrangements:
- i. under which allegations can be investigated; and
 - ii. under which decisions on allegations can be made.
- 4.3 The Standards Committee's terms of reference are set out in the Council's Constitution.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no legal implications other than those set out in this report

7. Equalities / EIA

7.1 There are no public sector equality duties which are of relevance at this stage.

8. Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

8.1 None

9. Background Documents

9.1 None

10. List of appendices accompanying this report

10.1 Appendix 1 – Annual report

Annual report of the Standards Committee 2024/25

Foreword by the Chair of the Standards Committee

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Standards Committee for 2024/25. The Annual Report provides information to the Council about the work carried out by the Committee during the past 12 months and identifies particular issues that have arisen.

The Standards Committee is committed to promoting high standards of ethical conduct among elected Members in order to maintain public confidence in local government. The Committee will continue to proactively review all ethical standards policies and procedures as part of the forward work programme.

The training requirements for elected Members (as well as the member/officer code), will continue to be monitored as part of the Committee's forward work programme especially as we progress towards the elections in 2026.

Peter Wiseman (Independent Chair)

Terms of Reference & The Role of the Committee

1.1 The Localism Act 2011 ("the Act") introduced fundamental changes to the regulation of standards of conduct for elected and co-opted members.

1.2 Under Section 27 of the Act, a relevant authority must:

- i. promote and maintain high standards of conduct by its members and coopted members; and
- ii. when discharging its duty, adopt a voluntary code dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted members of the authority when they are acting in their capacity as members (that is in an official capacity)

1.3 Under section 28(6) of the Act a relevant authority must have in place arrangements:

- i. under which allegations can be investigated; and
- ii. under which decisions on allegations can be made.

1.4 The terms of reference of the Committee (which can be found in Part B of the

Council's constitution) is as follows;

- a) Advising the City Council on the adoption or revision of the Code of Conduct;*
- b) Monitoring the operation of the Code of Conduct and the arrangements for how the Council will deal with any complaints;*
- c) Advising, training or arranging to train members and co-opted members on matters relating to the City Council's Code of Conduct.*
- d) Determining complaints alleging a breach of the Code of Conduct by Councillors.*
- e) Determining the penalty to be imposed in the event of a breach of the Code being upheld.*
- f) Hearing appeals as may be necessary.*
- g) Granting any dispensations and dealing with any other powers granted to Standards Committees by legislation.*
- h) To submit an annual report on the work of the Standards Committee and, generally, promoting the standards of ethical conduct and behaviour expected of Councillors.*

The Standards Committee shall also determine under Sections 1 and 2 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989: -

- a) any application received from any officer of the Council for exemption from political restriction; and*
- b) any application to consider whether a post should be included in the list maintained by the Council under Section 2(2) of the 1989 Act and may direct the Council to include a post in that list.*

2. Membership of the Committee

2.1 The Committee is composed of 6 elected members drawn from the 3 largest political parties represented on the Council together with 6 independent lay members and a representative from both the New Frankley Parish Council and the Sutton Coldfield Town Council.

2.2 Membership of the Committee for 2024/25 was as follows: -

Appointed members		
Labour	Councillor Kath Hartley	Councillor Mahmood Hussain
Conservative	Councillor Deirdre Alden	Councillor Gareth Moore
Liberal Democrat	Councillor Colin Green	Councillor Paul Tilsley
Independent Lay Members		
Peter Wiseman (Chair)	Steven Jonas (Vice Chair)	Steve Atkinson
Zubair Khan	Sandra Cooper	Talbinder Kaur
Co-opted Town Council/Parish Members		
Councillor Terry Wood	Sutton Coldfield Town Council	
Councillor Marion Kenyon	New Frankley Parish Council	

2.3 The Committee normally meets 6 times a year dependent upon the business to be transacted. The Committee also meets to consider any complaints where a hearing is required.

2.4 Looking forward to 2025/26, Councillor Paul Tilsley stood down as a member of the Committee and was replaced by Councillor Baber Baz (Liberal Democrat) at the Council's annual meeting in May.

3. Code of Conduct Complaints

- 3.1 The number (and nature) of the complaints has remained relatively constant since 2021/22 as set out below:

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/2025
Declaration of interests.	1	1	1	3
Service delivery.	3	3	1	9

Performance in undertaking Councillor duties including Failure/delay in responding to a constituent.	13	8	10	7
Behaviour – including making misleading or inappropriate statements including those on social media.	12	21	10	18
Councillor / Councillor.	8	0	12	2
Other outside the Code	1	1	3	0
Total	38	34	37	39

- 3.2 Of the complaints received in 2024/25, 16 cases fell outside the ambit of the Code of Conduct and could not be considered. In the remaining cases the behaviour complained of was found not to have breached the Code of Conduct resulting in no further action or were dealt with by way of local resolution. There have been two formal hearings where the complaints were upheld in full or in part and sanctions recommended to the Council.

Other work of the Committee

4. Members' Gifts, Hospitality and Declarations of Interest

- 4.1 The Committee routinely received a report on a 6 monthly basis on the gifts and hospitality received by members. Upon considering a recent update the Commissioners made the following comments:

"Transparency and timely recording of these matters is crucial in building and maintaining trust in the integrity of the democratic process and its key participants. Until there is a regular routine of recording and then publishing such items, there is a risk that the Council, and its members, will be brought into disrepute.

Commissioners have some concerns about the clarity, consistency and frequency of this reporting approach and ask that the process is reviewed to ensure that in future, such reports are clear and consistent including more frequent and regular public reporting. That review should be reported to the Governance Board before its return to the Standards Committee. In due course, the Council should consider publishing Chief Officers' declarations and ensuring that the recordkeeping for all staff is fit for purpose".

- 4.2 In light of the Commissioners' comments it is proposed to bring a report to the Committee on a quarterly basis moving forward and it will continue to oversee the process. Further guidance has been provided to assist Members in meeting their obligations in full.
- 4.3 Similarly, reports are brought to the Committee on a 6 monthly basis at which the Members' register of interests is considered. It is the members individual responsibility to comply with the Code of Conduct including the registering of any interests. As a matter of good practice specific guidance and advice will continue to be provided to members regarding declarations of interest.

5. Strengthening the powers of Standards Committees

- 5.1 The Committee has discussed a Ministry of Housing and Local Government's consultation *Strengthening the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities in England* and responded to it in detail. The consultation includes strengthening the powers of standards committees which would be in line with previous recommendations made through the Local Government Association ("LGA") and the Committee for Standards in Public life.
- 5.2 The Committee will continue to monitor developments. If adopted, some of the proposals will require primary legislation before implementation which will result in a delay.

6. Removal of title of Honorary Alderman: Muhammed Afzal

- 6.1 The Council referred to the Standards Committee a petition in which there was a request that the title of Honorary Alderman be removed from former Councillor and Lord Mayor Muhammed Afzal. Having reviewed the circumstances, the petition and the Election Court Judgment of 23 February 2023 the Committee recommended that the title of Honorary Alderman be removed from Mr. Afzal. The Council adopted the recommendation at its meeting in April 2025.

7. Corporate Governance: Members/Officers Protocol

- 7.1 The Committee treated the development of the protocol as a key priority in the Council's programme for improving its governance. The contribution from all interested parties in the course of its preparation was both helpful and reassuring. There is clearly a common interest in developing better relationships which it is anticipated will help to enhance the decision-making process. On 17 September 2024 the protocol was presented to the Council for approval.
- 7.2 The Committee is committed to ensuring that the protocol is operating as intended and is keeping its operation under close review offering support where required as well as taking such action as may be deemed appropriate by working with the individuals concerned and/or with their groups or representatives.

8. Civility in Public Life, Intimidation in Public Life and Digital Citizenship

- 8.1 The LGA has been coordinating a programme of work entitled "*Civility in Public Life*". This work is in response to the increasing concern about intimidation and toxicity of debate and the impact this has been having on democratic processes. To support this work the LGA has started to develop a range of guidance and tools to support Members and candidates in their online communications (also known as their "Digital Citizenship") as it is now recognised that online communication is intrinsic to democratic engagement.
- 8.2 The Committee has also maintained a watching brief on work being undertaken by the Committee on Standards in Public Life and locally on supporting Members in dealing with challenges associated with public service, particularly in relation to intimidation and abuse. The Committee has been advised of work undertaken to support Members, including training, the availability of counselling services, protocols in place and work undertaken with the Police as part of a wider provision of support for Members to help address a national general trend of Members who are, and have, experienced some form of harassment and intimidation in carrying out their official duties.

8.3 As part of the 'Debate Not Hate' campaign the LGA has created a toolkit as a resource designed to aid local Councils in tackling and mitigating the impact and risks of abuse and intimidation that Members may encounter as part of their role, supporting them to be safe. The first stage proposed by the toolkit was for an evidence-gathering exercise to be undertaken that would inform the preparation of a summary and forward plan.

9. Other Work

9.1 The Committee has reviewed members' gifts and hospitality at six monthly intervals and, for the first time is now embarking on carrying out a similar review in respect of senior officers.

9.2 The Committee receives an update on Members' training during 2024/25 and supports the continuing delivery of the Members' Training and Development Strategy.

10. Work Programme

10.1 The Committee will continue to receive reports and updates from the Monitoring Officer on Code of Conduct complaints, Member and officer gifts and hospitality and will be regularly reviewing Members' declaration of interests to ensure they are kept up to date. The Committee will also have amongst its priorities:

- The operation of the Member/Officer protocol;
- The Debate not Hate campaign and pursuing all necessary action to reduce abuse, harassment and intimidation of Members by use of the self-assessment toolkit;
- The programme for training and development for Members as an important strand of the Improvement and Recovery Programme.

Birmingham City Council

City Council

8 July 2025



Title:	SCRUTINY INQUIRY – ATTRACT AND RETAIN A YOUNGER WORKFORCE
Lead Member:	Councillor Katherine Iroh, Chair of Inquiry and Chair, Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee:	Not Applicable
Has this report been shared with the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair?	Not Applicable
Report Author:	Amelia Wiltshire, Overview and Scrutiny Manager Strategy, Insight and Governance amelia.murray@birmingham.gov.uk
Authorised by:	Elaine Newsome, Interim Head of Scrutiny and Committee Services Strategy, Insight and Governance
Is this a Key Decision?	No
Reason(s) why not included on the Forward Plan and confirm who has authorised it to be considered:	Not Applicable
Is this a Late Report?	No
Reason(s) why Late and confirm who has authorised it to be considered:	Not Applicable
Is this decision eligible for ‘call in?’	No
If ‘call-in’ has been dis-applied, please provide reason(s) and confirm who has authorised:	Not Applicable
Wards:	Not Applicable

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the key findings and recommendations from the Scrutiny Inquiry – Attract and Retain a Younger Workforce. The Inquiry considered the following question: What steps can the Council take to attract and retain young people in its workforce?
- 1.2 The Scrutiny Inquiry has proposed 13 recommendations to Council arising from this Inquiry. These recommendations are structured around 4 themes: Risk to the Council; Recruitment; Early Entry Programmes; and Future Career Pathways and Staff Support.

2 COMMISSIONERS' REVIEW

- 2.1 Commissioners support the recommendations put forward by the Council to improve its percentage of young people directly employed by the Council and the same for those organisations commissioned by the Council to provide services to the community. Commissioners anticipate that this workforce initiative will be supported by a wider set of strategic workforce planning initiatives, so that the ambitions of these recommendations become sustainable over the medium term. Once agreed, the Council should further develop clear targets/success measures for each of the recommendations.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council:

- 3.1 Considers the Inquiry's key findings and requests the Executive implements the Inquiry's recommendations:
 - 3.1.1 Confirms the timeframe for when long term workforce planning for each directorate will be completed;
 - 3.1.2 Analyse key findings from exit interviews with leavers aged 24 and under to understand why approximately 50% are leaving within their first 12 months;
 - 3.1.3 Provide both a corporate and directorate summary of how these workforce plans will deliver on corporate objectives, with a specific focus on how they will increase numbers of staff aged 24 and under and informed by exit interviews;
 - 3.1.4 Advise how this will be monitored in the future to ensure workforce plans are on track and remain focused on delivering corporate objectives;
 - 3.1.5 Ensure there is a corporate list setting out the number and directorate/ service for all early entrants including apprentices and graduates;

- 3.1.6 Advise when the review of the Attraction Policy will be complete and the timescale for the implementation of a new policy;
- 3.1.7 Implement a new Attraction Policy including refreshed careers content on the Council website, information to schools, colleges and universities; attendance at Job Fairs, and with a focus on how local government careers can deliver social impact;
- 3.1.8 Review how work experience opportunities are accessed to ensure it is fair and equitable to all young people in Birmingham, and set out timeframes for how any improvements will be delivered;
- 3.1.9 Deliver a refreshed work experience programme;
- 3.1.10 Provide a timeframe for when Council will be able to guarantee interviews for care leavers and have appropriate support in place. This should include wraparound support for new starters;
- 3.1.11 Refresh the application process for roles at the Council including:
 - 3.1.11.1. Resetting the different roles in recruitment and in particular, the role of HR, OD and Transformation as Subject Matter Experts in support of individual hiring managers;
 - 3.1.11.2. Reviewing the time taken from advert to onboarding to enable joiners to start quicker;
 - 3.1.11.3. All future job adverts and job descriptions to be reviewed by HR, OD and Transformation in line with directorate workforce plans;
 - 3.1.11.4. All future job adverts and job descriptions are inclusive by ensuring any qualifications listed are necessary and all language used realistically sets out the role;
 - 3.1.11.5. The introduction of wider application tools including phone based applications;
 - 3.1.11.6. Reviewing managers' unconscious bias training to ensure age and care experience as protective characteristics are recognised;
 - 3.1.11.7. Ensuring applicant data is available and used to baseline current recruitment of young people and monitor any future impact;
- 3.1.12 Map out the current employment programmes delivered through the Council or partners and work with partners to adapt or design courses which create a talent pipeline to meet our corporate needs;
- 3.1.13 Consider options for how a corporately led approach for early entrant programmes could be implemented; and if this is not possible, advise what mitigations can be put in place to enable these programmes to contribute more effectively towards corporate objectives;
- 3.1.14 Consider introducing a challenge that all future recruitments should clearly state why this role could not be undertaken through an apprenticeship or

other early entrant programme. This should be considered once the Workforce Strategy and Early Career Strategy have been completed;

- 3.1.15 Explore how further apprenticeship levy could be transferred to SMEs as part of new procurement arrangements;
- 3.1.16 Set out clearly future career pathways supported by accredited training in the Council long term workforce plans to create a talent pipeline; and
- 3.1.17 Confirm a manager package is in place to support staff on early entrant programmes. This should include (but not exclusively):
 - 3.1.17.1. Ensuring all managers promote the Early Careers Network and provide time for staff to participate in network activities;
 - 3.1.17.2. Surveying all early entrants to confirm how they are being supported by their managers and whether there are opportunities to improve this; and
 - 3.1.17.3. Reviewing working at home practices to ensure all staff have access to regular in-person working to support wellbeing and professional development.
- 3.1.18 Agrees that the Executive reports on its progress on these recommendations to the Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee every 6 months and with the first report in January 2026.

4 KEY INFORMATION

- 4.1 This Scrutiny Inquiry was established in November 2024 by the Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee had been concerned to learn that the Council employed very low numbers of young people (18-25). This caused particular concern as the Committee had also been advised that nearly half of the Council's workforce would be able to retire within 5-10 years. Without effective strategies and plans in place to bring through the next generation, this is likely to present a significant risk upon the Council's future capacity to deliver services to Birmingham residents due to loss of skills and knowledge. The Committee wanted to understand what the Council is already doing and what it plans to do to address this challenge. It also wanted to make recommendations which could support and add value to this work in the future.
- 4.2 The Committee also recognised that Birmingham is a city where 66.9% of the working age population is in employment, which is below both the regional and national position. The city's youth unemployment claimant rate (18-24) is 15.3%, which is almost twice the national average at 8%. As one of the largest employers in Birmingham, the Committee also felt that the Council should lead by example as an employer of young people.
- 4.3 The key question the Inquiry Task and Finish Group asked was: "What steps can the Council take to attract and retain young people in its workforce?"

- 4.4 In seeking to answer this the Task and Finish Group considered the following lines of inquiry:
- 4.4.1 How are young people currently represented within the Council's workforce? How does the Council encourage recruitment and retention of young people in its workforce? How is the Council designing career pathways for young people?
 - 4.4.2 What are the benefits for the Council, and Birmingham, as a whole, to increase the proportion of younger staff?
 - 4.4.3 What are the barriers and challenges the Council experiences in recruiting and retaining younger staff?
 - 4.4.4 What can the Council learn from previous and existing Council initiatives as well as from other Local Authorities or public sector organisations?
- 4.5 The key findings and recommendations from this Inquiry specifically contribute towards delivering upon the following Corporate Plan 2025-2028 missions: 1. Growth and Prosperity; 2. Knowledge and Opportunity, and 6. Improvement and Recovery. However, it also underpins all of the Corporate Plan's 6 missions by enabling the Council to be in a better long term position to deliver towards them.
- 4.6 Appendix A sets out a summary of the evidence considered by the Inquiry. Its key findings are:
- 4.6.1 The Council may face challenges to deliver its service within the next 5-10 years through a potential 'churn' of approximately 50% of its workforce to retirement while the number of staff aged 24 and under is correspondingly very low. With average length of service over 14 years for staff aged 55+, these staff members have extensive skills and experience which will be difficult to replace without effective workforce planning. The Council needs to take action now to address this crisis by investing in its future and bringing through the next generation. This needs to be delivered through greater corporate oversight working collaboratively with directorates.
 - 4.6.2 When young people leave the Council, they most often leave within their first 12 months of employment. This suggests that further work needs to be done to create a working environment which retains young people. This includes better supported careers pathways. This will be considered further in section 2.4.
 - 4.6.3 The Council has stopped thinking about itself as a potential employer for young people in this city. It needs to market and raise awareness of the different career paths across local government and what they can offer to encourage more young people to consider a career at the Council. It is currently not making effective use of available resources such as the Council's website or careers advisors in schools, colleges and universities. It could also do more to match training in externally funded employment

programmes which the Council lead (or play a role in) to future opportunities in the Council.

- 4.6.4 The Inquiry is concerned that work experience opportunities, which could help to attract people at an early point to careers at the Council, are not being accessed in a fair and equitable way. This is further reinforced by the current recruitment approach, which may mean young people who cannot access advice through their own family or social network, may not be able to understand fulfil the stages of the recruitment process. Links with schools, colleges and universities need to be strengthened.
- 4.6.5 While the Council remains committed to guaranteeing interviews for care leavers, the related support is not in place yet (although funded) and no timescale is available.
- 4.6.6 The Council has many roles where lived experience could prove to be an asset in delivering service transformation and supporting services to be more customer focused. The Council needs to consider how it can best harness this experience to deliver better outcomes for its residents while also ensuring staff are properly supported. Staff who are aged 24 and under may be able to play an important part in this. If this is taken forward, the Council should review its policies and procedures to deliver on this.
- 4.6.7 The Council's application process is dated and traditional. Language used and unnecessary qualifications in job descriptions may deter younger applicants while not accurately reflecting the nature of the role. A new modern and quicker approach reflecting current best practice is required. The work undertaken by the Trust may be an example to follow. Unconscious bias training for managers needs to be retained.
- 4.6.8 A devolved approach does not enable these programmes to either meet the needs of the individuals or the corporate objectives. A corporately held approach with sufficient resources is required to link these opportunities with clear outcomes and demonstrate their impact. The Inquiry Group is aware that the resource supports the Early Careers work at the time of providing evidence has now reduced, and the recent progress towards increasing the apprenticeship levy spend may be at risk.
- 4.6.9 If the arrangements for early entrant programmes are devolved with no (or minimal) corporate oversight, this is likely to result in the current situation where apprenticeship, graduate or other programmes are not part of career progression pathways. Both corporate and directorate workforce plans need to introduce career pathways and supported by accredited training to enable apprenticeship funds to be used. This will give staff confidence that there is future career progression and increase retention.
- 4.6.10 All members of staff need to feel supported. Younger members of staff may have different needs as they would have a different knowledge level about the workplace. There feels inconsistencies in how managers are supporting

staff on these programmes, and particularly around future career development. The Inquiry Group questioned whether there was a standard offer to support managers, so they are clear on what they need to do and the information they should provide. Supported mentoring programmes beyond direct line managers may be another idea.

- 4.7 Evidence gathering took place between November 2024 and March 2025. This was delivered through a combination of a committee meeting and informal face to face sessions. Evidence was received from the People (now HR, OD and Transformation) directorate; Children and Families directorate; Careers Matters (a social enterprise, providing career services and developing the future workforce through face-to-face and digital solutions. This is particularly across the education, health, social care and industry sectors) and 4 employees of the Council aged 24 and under. Birmingham Children's Trust also provided a written response for the Inquiry Group to consider.
- 4.8 As a result of the first evidence gathering session with the council directorates, the Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested that the ageing workforce was urgently added to the corporate risk register; this was subsequently confirmed as completed. The Audit Committee also referenced this risk as part of the Internal Audit report on 30 April 2025.
- 4.9 The Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee will track the implementation of these recommendations and their impact through reports to the Committee.

5 MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

Executive

- 5.1 On behalf of the Executive, Cllr Rob Pocock advised that this was a welcome and very helpful Inquiry report addressing a key strategic issue for developing the future City Council workforce. He strongly supported the thrust of this work and will work with officers to progress its implementation and achieve the ambitions within it which both he and the Committee both share.
- 5.2 The Executive reviewed the draft recommendations and provided comments to the Inquiry Group to consider before finalising its report. This commentary highlighted how many of the recommendations would be (or could be) incorporated into existing workstreams including the development of a workforce strategy underpinned by a workforce analysis; the newly created end to end resourcing function in HR, OD and Payroll and its operating model; the Job Evaluation programme; the developing Recruitment and Selection policy, and the Early Career Strategy.
- 5.3 In summary, the Executive accepted all the draft recommendations except one (this recommendations focused on lived experience). The Executive advised that

this recommendation was not in line with the collective agreement with the Trade Unions. The Inquiry Group accepted this and deleted the recommendation.

6 IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS

Finance and Best Value

- 6.1 The Inquiry is very aware of the current financial position of the Council, and this was a key consideration when it determined its proposed recommendations. In line with the guidance for Overview and Scrutiny Inquiries in the Council, the proposed recommendations arising from this Inquiry do not have direct financial implications. Any future actions which might require additional resources or funding will be subject to the Council's financial approval framework as set out in the constitution.
- 6.2 Given the corporate risk to the Council in doing nothing, the Inquiry is satisfied (based on the evidence provided to them) that these recommendations are necessary, and if implemented will contribute towards mitigating this risk. The consultation with the Executive in advance of finalising these recommendations has also reassured the Inquiry that these recommendations can be implemented within existing resources and therefore, they are affordable and will demonstrate value for money.
- 6.3 However, the Inquiry has considered how the Apprenticeship Levy is being used by the Council to address this risk. There are opportunities for the Council to explore how to maximise its use of this funding to mitigate this risk.
- 6.4 The Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee will continue to consider financial and best value implications as part of its monitoring of the progress of these recommendations.

Legal

- 6.5 The Council will ensure that the proposed recommendations arising from this Inquiry will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and that recruitment processes will be conducted in a fair and transparent way. Furthermore, the Council will ensure that any monitoring of information is accurately recorded and anonymised to identify key themes and recommendations.
- 6.6 The Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee will continue to consider legal implications as part of its monitoring of the progress of these recommendations.

Equalities

- 6.7 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to: eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act; advance

equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

- 6.8 In delivering these recommendations, it is important that the Council Equalities implications are fully considered and that an Equality Impact Assessment is completed if the required criteria apply.
- 6.9 The Inquiry anticipates equality impact assessments are undertaken in relation to relevant recommendations, as appropriate, as they are progressed and at the right time to effectively inform their implementation. The Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee will continue to consider equalities implications as part of its monitoring of these recommendations.

Procurement

- 6.10 There are no procurement implications directly arising from the recommendations in this report.

People Services

- 6.11 This Inquiry informed and strengthened existing activities including:
- 6.11.1 Development of a new workforce strategy to ensure the right skills, capacity and succession planning is in place to support the Council's transformation and provide value to the citizens of Birmingham. This will include an Attraction Policy, updated Recruitment and Selection Policy and an Early Careers Strategy;
 - 6.11.2 The new operating model for HR, OD and Payroll including its Resourcing function, which is focused on ensuring the right talent is identified, recruited and retained;
 - 6.11.3 Job Evaluation Programme.

Climate Change, Nature and Net Zero

- 6.12 There are no anticipated Climate Change, Nature and Net Zero implications directly arising from the recommendations.

Corporate Parenting

- 6.13 Two recommendations, specifically R03 and R04 will have direct implications on care leavers and thereby, the Council's corporate parenting role. These two recommendations relate to delivering a fair and equitable work experience offer at the Council to children (R03); and requiring a timeframe for the introduction of guaranteed interviews for care leavers and appropriate support in place for them as a cohort in the recruitment and new starter stages (R04).

- 6.14 The Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee will continue to consider corporate parenting implications as part of its monitoring of the progress of these recommendations.

Other

- 6.15 There are no other implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

7 APPENDICES

- 7.1 Appendix A – Scrutiny Inquiry – Attracting and Retaining a Younger Workforce, 8 July 2025

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 [Evidence Gathering – Council as an Employer of Young People](#), Report to Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 27 November 2024
- 8.2 [Minutes](#), Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 27 November
- 8.3 Presentation, Careers Matters, 12 February 2025
- 8.4 Birmingham Children’s Trust as an Employer of Young People, Report to the Inquiry Group, 26 March 2025.

Attract and Retain a Younger Workforce

**An Overview and Scrutiny Report
July 2025**

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Further information regarding this report can be obtained from:

Amelia Wiltshire

E-mail: amelia.wiltshire@birmingham.gov.uk

Reports that have been submitted to Council can be downloaded from
www.birmingham.gov.uk/scrutiny

Chair's Foreword

Councillor Katherine Iroh, Chair of Inquiry and Chair of Sustainability and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee



As a committee we were very concerned to learn that, out of a workforce of nearly ten thousand, the Council only employs eight people under the age of 20 and 167 people under the age of 25. This equates to 0.08% of our workforce being under the age of 20 and 1.74% of our workforce being under the age of 25. Birmingham is the youngest city in Europe where according to the 2011 census the percentage of 16 to 24-year-olds in the city was 14.9%. The committee asserts that it is essential that the workforce of the Council adequately reflects the people of Birmingham that we serve. Indeed, if 14.9% of our workforce were under the age of 25 this would equate to over 1400 members of staff.

It was worrying for the committee to discover that half of the Council's workforce are due to retire in the next 5-10 years. The knowledge, skills and experience of these dedicated staff are invaluable and must not be allowed to be lost. The committee raised this issue to the Corporate Risk Register as we believe this to be a potential crisis unless the Council plans to mitigate this risk. Succession planning including recruiting and training younger staff should be key control measures.

Youth unemployment in the city is 17.2%, more than double the national average of 8.2% (May 2025 figures). As the second largest employer in Birmingham after the NHS the committee maintains that the Council should play its part in reducing youth unemployment by employing more young people. Furthermore, as Corporate Parents, the Council should do more to provide interview and work experience opportunities for care leavers.

It was clear to the committee that workforce policies and procedures at the Council should be reviewed and developed to support young people to work for the Council. This includes all aspects of recruitment and retention such as job adverts, the application process, interviewing, onboarding, training, development opportunities, etc. A particular focus should be on the Graduate Entry Programmes and Apprenticeship Programmes as it was clear that many of these colleagues are not utilised or managed to their full potential.

The committee has proposed twelve recommendations which we hope will transform the way the Council employs young people. We look forward to monitoring these recommendations and scrutinising the progress the Council makes over the coming months.

I would like to thank Cllrs Hunt, Morrall and Rai as members of the Task and Finish Group who committed so many hours to evidence gathering, reviewing key findings and editing recommendations. My gratitude to the Scrutiny Team, Amelia and Baseema, for their ongoing dedication and support.

Summary of Recommendations

Ref	Recommendations to Cabinet Members	Responsibility	Completion Date
R01	<p>Council asks the Executive to:</p> <p>a) Confirm the timeframe for when long term workforce planning for each directorate will be completed;</p> <p>b) Analyse key findings from exit interviews with leavers aged 24 and under to understand why 50% are leaving within their first 12 months;</p> <p>c) Provide both a corporate and directorate summary of how these workforce plans will deliver on corporate objectives, with a specific focus on how they will increase numbers of staff aged 24 and under and informed by exit interviews;</p> <p>d) Advise how this will be monitored in the future to ensure plans are on track and remain focused on delivering corporate objectives; and</p> <p>Ensure there is a corporate list setting out the number and directorate/ service for all early entrants including apprentices and graduates.</p>	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	<p>September 2025 (2 months)</p> <p>March 2026 (9 months)</p> <p>March 2026 (9 months)</p> <p>September 2025 (2 months)</p> <p>September 2025 (2 months)</p>
R02	<p>Council asks the Executive to:</p> <p>a) Advise when the review of the Attraction Policy will be complete and the timescale for the implementation of a new policy; and</p> <p>Implement a new Attraction Policy including refreshed careers content on the Council website; information to school, colleges and universities; attendance at Job Fairs, and with a focus on how local government careers can deliver social impact.</p>	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	<p>September 2025 (2 months)</p> <p>July 2025 (12 months)</p>

R03	<p>Council asks the Executive to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Review how work experience opportunities are accessed to ensure it is fair and equitable to all young people in Birmingham; and set out timeframes for how any improvements will be delivered; <p>Deliver refreshed work experience programme.</p>	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	<p>November 2025 (4 months)</p> <p>July 2026 (12 months)</p>
R04	<p>Council asks the Executive to provide a timeframe for when the Council will be able to guarantee interviews for care leavers and have appropriate support in place. This should include wraparound support for new starters.</p>	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	<p>November 2025 (4 months)</p>
R05	<p>Council asks the Executive to refresh the application process for roles at the Council including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Resetting the different roles in recruitment and in particular, the role of HR, OD and Transformation as Subject Matter Experts in support of individual hiring managers; b) Reviewing the time taken from advert to onboarding to enable joiners to start quicker; c) All future job adverts and job descriptions to be reviewed by HR, OD and Transformation in line with directorate workforce plans; d) All future job adverts and job descriptions are inclusive by ensuring any qualifications listed are necessary and all language used realistically sets out the role; e) the introduction of wider application tools including phone based applications; f) Reviewing managers' unconscious bias training to ensure age and care experience 	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	<p>January 2026 (6 months)</p>

	as protective characteristics are recognised; and Ensuring applicant data is available and used to baseline current recruitment of young people and monitor any future impact.		
R06	Council asks the Executive to map out the current employment programmes delivered through the Council or partners and work with partners to adapt or design courses which create a talent pipeline to meet our corporate needs.	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR/ Deputy Leader	April 2026 (9 months)
R07	Council asks the Executive to: a) Consider options for how a corporately led approach for early entrant programmes could be implemented; and If this is not possible, advise what mitigations can be put in place to enable these programmes to contribute more effectively towards corporate objectives	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	January 2026 (6 months)
R08	Council asks the Executive to consider introducing a challenge that all future recruitments should clearly state why this role could not be undertaken through an apprenticeship or other early entrant programme. This should be considered once the Workforce Strategy and Early Career Strategy have been completed.	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	July 2026 (12 months)
R09	Council asks the Executive to explore how further apprenticeship levy could be transferred to SMEs as part of new procurement arrangements	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	January 2026 (6 months)
R10	Council asks the Executive to set out clearly future career pathways supported by accredited training in the Council's long term workforce plans to create a talent pipeline.	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	April 2026 (9 months)
R11	Council asks the Executive to confirm a manager package is in place to support staff on early entrant programmes. This should include (but not exclusively):	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	January 2026 (6 months)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) ensuring all managers promote the Early Careers Network and provide time for their staff to participate in network activities; b) Surveying all early entrants to confirm how they are being supported by their managers and whether there are opportunities to improve this; and c) Reviewing working at home practices to ensure all staff have access to regular in-person working to support wellbeing and professional development. 		
R12	Council agrees that the Executive reports on its progress on these recommendations to the Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee every 6 months and with the first report in January 2026.	Executive	January 2026

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 The Economy, Skills & Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee decided to undertake this Inquiry on 27 November 2024. The [Terms of Reference](#) were, agreed at the same time.
- 1.1.2 A cross-party Inquiry Task and Finish Group was established comprising:
- [Councillor Katherine Iroh](#), Chair of the Economy, Skills & Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Chair of the Inquiry
 - [Councillor Jon Hunt](#)
 - [Councillor Simon Morrall](#)
 - [Councillor Esther Rai](#)
- 1.1.3 The key question the Inquiry Task and Finish Group asked was:
“What steps can the Council take to attract and retain young people in its workforce?”
- 1.1.4 In seeking to answer this the Task and Finish Group considered the following lines of inquiry:
- How are young people currently represented within the Council's workforce? How does the Council encourage recruitment and retention of young people in its workforce? How is the Council designing career pathways for young people?
 - What are the benefits for the Council, and Birmingham, as a whole, to increase the proportion of younger staff?
 - What are the barriers and challenges the Council experiences in recruiting and retaining younger staff?
 - What can the Council learn from previous and existing Council initiatives as well as from other Local Authorities or public sector organisations?

1.2 Outcomes

- 1.2.1 The key findings and recommendations from this Inquiry specifically contribute towards delivering upon the following Corporate Plan 2025-2028 missions: 1. Growth and Prosperity; 2. Knowledge and Opportunity, and 6. Improvement and Recovery. However, it also underpins all of the Corporate Plan's 6 missions by enabling the Council to be in a better long term position to deliver towards them.

1.3 Why the Committee decided to undertake this Inquiry

- 1.3.1 The Committee had been disappointed to learn that the Council employed very low numbers of young people (18-25). This caused particular concern as the Committee had also been advised that nearly half of the Council's workforce would be able to retire within 5-10 years. Without effective strategies and plans in place to bring through the next generation, this is likely to present a significant risk upon the Council's future capacity to deliver services to Birmingham residents due to loss of skills and knowledge. The Committee wanted to understand what the Council is already doing and what it plans to do to address this challenge. It also wanted to make recommendations which could support and add value to this work in the future.
- 1.3.2 The Committee also recognised that Birmingham is a city where 66.9% of the working age population is in employment, which is below both the regional and national position¹. The city's youth unemployment claimant rate (18-24) is 15.3%, which is almost twice the national average at 8%. As one of the largest employers in Birmingham, the Committee felt that the Council should lead by example as an employer of young people.

1.4 Evidence Gathering

- 1.4.1 Evidence gathering mainly took place between November 2024 and March 2025. The activities were:
- A [Committee meeting on 27 November 2024](#) – evidence was provided by Birmingham City Council.
 - An online evidence gathering session on 12 February 2025 – evidence was provided by Careers Matters, a social enterprise, providing career services and developing the future workforce through face-to-face and digital solutions. This is particularly across the education, health, social care and industry sectors.
 - An online focus group on 23 February 2025 – evidence was provided by 4 young people employed by the Council. The Inquiry also received two further written submissions from staff aged 24, who wished to remain anonymous.
 - Written submission on 26 March 2025 – evidence was provided by Birmingham Children's Trust.

¹ LG Inform Plus: Employment rate (16-64) – Birmingham Constituency, 12 months ending December 2024 (accessed 13 June 2025). The West Midlands mean position is 70.7% and the national mean position is 76.5.

2 Evidence and Key Findings

2.1 Theme 1: Risk to the Council

- 2.1.1 As of September 2024, the Council employed 167 people aged 24 or younger, which reflects as 1.74% of the total workforce. The Inquiry Group was advised that only 8 of these 167 employees were aged under 20. It was also highlighted that this had been the position for several years².
- 2.1.2 Table 1 below shows how this was reflected across the headcounts for different directorates. It is noted that the former Strategy, Equality and Partnerships directorate had a significantly higher proportion of young people employed (10.84%) compared to other directorates which all fell between 0.75% and 2.3%³.

Directorate	Headcount <=24	% of the total headcount
Adult Social Care	23	1.2%
Children and Families	8	0.75%
City Housing	20	1.72%
Council Management	65	2.3%
City Operations	26	1.25%
Place, Prosperity and Sustainability	7	1.79%
Strategy, Equality and Partnerships	18	10.84%
Total	167	1.74%

Table 1: Breakdown of workforce aged 24 or younger as % of directorate headcount

- 2.1.3 Table 2 below sets out how this was reflected across the head counts for different directorates within the Birmingham Children's Trust. While % of total headcounts are also similarly low, there may be opportunities to find out if there is any learning for the Council from the Trust's Finance and Resources directorate⁴.

² [Evidence Gathering – Council as an Employer of Young People](#), Report to Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 27 November 2024

³ [Evidence Gathering – Council as an Employer of Young People](#), Report to Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 27 November 2024

⁴ Birmingham Children's Trust as an Employer of Young People, Report to the Inquiry Group, 26 March 2025.

Directorate	Headcount <=24	% of Total Headcount
Commissioning & Specialist Services	7	1.14%
Finance & Resources	31	6.78%
Help & Protection	14	1.55%
Corporate Parenting	10	3.86%
Quality & Assurance	-	-

Table 2: Breakdown of headcount <=24 as a % of total headcount by Birmingham Children's Trust directorate

- 2.1.4 The Inquiry Group was also advised that 130 of these 167 roles in the Council were at managerial (including team leader) level⁵.
- 2.1.5 The Council does not have data on the number of young people applying for roles or their outcomes. The Oracle re-implementation may provide an opportunity to change this⁶.
- 2.1.6 Within the last 2 years, 138 people left the Council from this age group; 109 (79%) within the first 12 months. The table below indicates the number of people who have joined and left each directorate aged 24 or under in this same time period.

Directorate	Joiners <=24	Leavers <=24
Adult Social Care	33	16
Children and Families	38	22
City Housing	33	12
Council Management	198	55
City Operations	54	15
Place, Prosperity and Sustainability	7	13
Strategy, Equality and Partnerships	29	5
Total since 2022	392	138

Table 3: Breakdown of joiners and leavers aged 24 or under over past 2 years by directorate.

⁵ [Evidence Gathering – Council as an Employer of Young People](#), Report to Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 27 November 2024

⁶ [Evidence Gathering – Council as an Employer of Young People](#), Report to Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 27 November 2024

- 2.1.7 Over the past 5 years, 47% of leavers aged 24 or under resigned, and 41% left as their fixed term contract ended. 77.8% of the current workforce in this age range are on permanent contracts⁷.
- 2.1.8 By comparison, the Inquiry Group were advised that the respective figures from the Birmingham Children's Trust are significantly lower⁸.
- 2.1.9 As of September 2024, the Inquiry Group was advised that the Council had 42.1% of its workforce aged 55 or over and with an average of service of 14.8 years. Based on the current workforce profile at that time, this was projected to rise to 57.2% by March 2030. It was confirmed that the impact of this potential workforce 'churn' had been recently added to the Corporate Risk Register⁹.

Birmingham City Council									
Establishment headcount 30/9/24	Occupied Headcount	Unoccupied Headcount	Predictive resource risk to maintain 100% establishment	As at 30/9/24	Count 25/26	Count 26/27	Count 27/28	Count 28/29	Count 29/30
15045	9662	5383	Count of those age 55+ (57+ from 28/29)	4064	328	286	281	288	278
			Count of those to be eligible to claim state pension	447	169	231	2	304	349
			Count of those who will reach average retirement age 62.4 (Average age of those who have left on retirement in the past 2 years)	1137	353	369	404	374	364
			Average length of service (14.8 years)	5199	340	234	208	242	232
			Indication of FTC end dates (529 FTC's) *Placement end date up to end of financial year i.e. 31/3/25 where known	274	88	17	1	0	0
			Current turnover rate 26.58%						

Diagram 1: Birmingham City Council HR metrics, September 2024

- 2.1.10 The Inquiry Group was advised that an Early Careers Strategy was in development. There was no timeframe for when this strategy and its delivery plan would be in place. Further to this, the Council's People directorate is now working with each directorate to develop deliverable long term workforce plans to meet corporate objectives, and which maximise opportunities through programmes such as the apprentices. However, while acknowledging the challenge, it was also highlighted to the Inquiry Group that due to the current financial situation for the Council, full delivery of both the Early Careers Strategy and directorate workforce plans may need to commence only once there is greater financial stability¹⁰.
- 2.1.11 The Inquiry was also advised that the current needs of the Council to deliver the Improvement and Recovery Plan and at pace means it is focused on getting candidates who have the skills and experience already. This may make it more challenging for younger candidates¹¹. Despite this, the Strategy Equality and Partnerships (SEP)

⁷ [Evidence Gathering – Council as an Employer of Young People](#), Report to Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 27 November 2024

⁸ Birmingham Children's Trust as an Employer of Young People, Report to the Inquiry Group, 26 March 2025.

⁹ Economy, Skills and Culture Committee, 27 November 2024. The Chair of the Committee had requested that this was added to the Corporate Risk Register at the pre agenda meeting for this report.

¹⁰ Economy, Skills and Culture Committee, 27 November 2024.

¹¹ Economy, Skills and Culture Committee, 27 November 2024.

directorates had both recruited and retained relatively high numbers of people aged 24 and under in recent years. This was also reflected in a significantly higher ratio in their overall headcount¹². There may be learning for other directorates to consider as they move forward with their workforce planning. The Inquiry Group were also made aware of other positive examples from other directorates (such as Public Health)¹³.

- 2.1.12 The Inquiry Group considered there may be learning for other directorates from these two examples to consider as they move forward with their workforce planning. The Inquiry was subsequently advised that initial evidence suggests that degree related/graduate related roles within this space have had an outside of standard deviation impact in the former SEP directorate. As with any average based statistical review utilising an area outside of the median and with such a vast differential, it is not recommended to provide learning for other directorates¹⁴.
- 2.1.13 **Key Finding:** The Council is facing a real crisis to deliver its service within the next 5-10 years through a potential 'churn' of approximately 50% of its workforce to retirement while the number of staff aged 24 and under is correspondingly very low. With average length of service over 14 years for staff aged 55+, these staff members have extensive skills and experience which will be difficult to replace without effective workforce planning. The Council needs to act now to address this crisis by investing in its future and bringing through the next generation. This needs to be delivered through greater corporate oversight working collaboratively with directorates.
- 2.1.14 **Key Finding:** When young people leave the Council, they most often leave within their first 12 months of employment. This suggests that further work needs to be done to create a working environment which retains young people. This includes better supported careers pathways. This will be considered further in section 2.4.

¹² [Evidence Gathering – Council as an Employer of Young People](#), Report to Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 27 November 2024

¹³ Economy, Skills and Culture Committee, 27 November 2024.

¹⁴ '8 day rule' response from the Executive, 5 June 2025.

Ref	Recommendations	Responsibility	Completion Date
R01	<p>Council asks the Executive to:</p> <p>e) Confirm the timeframe for when long term workforce planning for each directorate will be completed;</p> <p>f) Analyse key findings from exit interviews with leavers aged 24 and under to understand why 50% are leaving within their first 12 months;</p> <p>g) Provide both a corporate and directorate summary of how these workforce plans will deliver on corporate objectives, with a specific focus on how they will increase numbers of staff aged 24 and under and informed by exit interviews;</p> <p>h) Advise how this will be monitored in the future to ensure plans are on track and remain focused on delivering corporate objectives; and</p> <p>i) Ensure there is a corporate list setting out the number and directorate/ service for all early entrants including apprentices and graduates.</p>	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	<p>September 2025 (2 months)</p> <p>March 2026 (9 months)</p> <p>March 2026 (9 months)</p> <p>September 2025 (2 months)</p> <p>September 2025 (2 months)</p>

2.2 Theme 2: Recruitment

- 2.2.1 In their evidence, Birmingham Children's Trust clearly set out the benefits of young people to their organisation, which could also be translated across for the services delivered by the Council¹⁵:

"Young people bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas, which can help drive change and modernization within the Trust. They are often more adaptable to new technologies, enabling the Trust to stay at the forefront of technological advancements.

Additionally, employing young people can enhance the Trust's image, making it more appealing to other young talent and helping to build a dynamic and diverse workforce. This can lead to increased employee engagement and satisfaction, as well as improved overall performance.

Furthermore, young workers can contribute to succession planning, ensuring that the Trust has a strong pipeline of future leaders.

Specifically, in social worker roles, young people can bring a unique set of strengths. Their fresh perspectives and innovative ideas can help identify new ways to engage with clients and communities, fostering better outcomes and more effective interventions. They are often more in tune with contemporary social issues, which can lead to more relevant and empathetic support for those in need."

- 2.2.2 The Inquiry Group listened to experiences from young people aged 24 and under who were working for the Council in its focus group. They suggested that the most significant barriers to considering a career at this Council are:

2.2.2.1. Understanding what the Council (and local government) can offer; and

2.2.2.2. Accessing and navigating opportunities¹⁶.

- 2.2.3 The focus group advised that they thought many young people did not know what roles were available in the Council, and information was not provided in the places where they would be looking. For example, the Council is not present at Job Fairs as a potential employer and it does not have a digital footprint on relevant social media where young people are looking for opportunities. The length of time to complete recruitment and commence employment was also highlighted¹⁷.

- 2.2.4 The Council's People Service directorate highlighted that the attraction policy for the Council needs to be reviewed. The current policy is currently focused on WM Jobs, which is not well known outside of the public sector. This view was also put forward by

¹⁵ Birmingham Children's Trust as an Employer of Young People, Report to the Inquiry Group, 26 March 2025.

¹⁶ Focus group (online) with staff (aged 24 and under), 23 February 2025

¹⁷ Focus group (online) with staff (aged 24 and under), 23 February 2025

the focus group who suggested other opportunities should be explored as WM Jobs is not the 'go to' for young people. Careers Matters also highlighted the 'digital divide' as some people don't have access to laptops¹⁸.

- 2.2.5 The Birmingham Children's Trust set out how they have already several targeted approaches designed to appeal to the unique strengths and interests of young generations. A key part of this strategy is to boost the Trust's presence on digital platforms including podcasts, YouTube and job boards popular with younger job seekers. They have also invested in search engine optimisation through Eploy to ensure our postings rank higher in search results for relevant job queries. By also utilising popular and often free platforms such as Indeed and Google Jobs alongside paid platforms such as Totaljobs, Reed and CV Library, the Trust aims to reach a broader and more diverse pool of applicants¹⁹.
- 2.2.6 The Trust advised that these steps have proven successful, evidenced by 1333 applications received from young people over the past 6 months. This surge in interest from younger job seekers underscores the effectiveness of the digital strategies. The Trust remains committed to ensuring the increased numbers of applications convert into job offers and young people succeed at interview stage²⁰.
- 2.2.7 There is also limited information available on the Council's website which could better market careers and opportunities through the Council and local government, unlike other Local Authorities. If in place, this could take advantage of national campaigns produced by the LGA.
- 2.2.8 The Inquiry Group learned that the Council is attending Job Fairs. However, in the examples it found, the Council is attending to promote access to particular employment programmes such as the [Pure \(Placing Urban vulnerable Residents in Employment\) Project](#) (funded through UK Government and the Shared Prosperity Fund). The Council is not attending to promote itself as an employer. The Council is currently working with partners on a range of different programmes and projects designed to reduce unemployment. One officer described how we 'don't see ourselves as the employer at the end of the journey' and the Council needs to 'explore how to take these initiatives and link them to employment opportunities in the Council.'
- 2.2.9 As set out in the [current statutory guidance for the Participation of young people in education, employment or training](#), Local Authorities should work in local partnerships with schools, colleges and other partners to help develop the careers guidance offer (all schools and colleges are required to secure independent careers guidance for young people in years 7-13). As part of this careers guidance offer, it does not appear

¹⁸ Evidence gathering session with Careers Matters (online), 12 February 2025

¹⁹ Birmingham Children's Trust as an Employer of Young People, Report to the Inquiry Group, 26 March 2025.

²⁰ Birmingham Children's Trust as an Employer of Young People, Report to the Inquiry Group, 26 March 2025.

that the Council (or careers through local government) are being offered as a potential career path.

- 2.2.10 The Inquiry Group was advised that the Council has ‘not got strong links with schools to ensure fair and equitable access to work experience opportunities or providing information on council careers.’ The Council’s website provides very limited information on work experience placements. There is information on opportunities in the [Parks](#) service for Year 10 and 11 students²¹, and information for older students in [Public Health](#)²². The Council is providing work experience opportunities though for 16-18 year olds across other departments. It is not clear how young people are finding out about these opportunities and accessing them. The Inquiry was assured that targeting careers advisors in schools, colleges and local universities will form part of the Early Careers Strategy. The Inquiry Group Chair (who works in a secondary school) spoke to her school’s careers advisor, who suggested the Council is seen as a ‘facilitator rather than a potential employer.’
- 2.2.11 The Council has previously committed to guaranteeing interviews for care leavers, and it receives funding to support this group. The Inquiry Group was informed that work is underway with Birmingham Children’s Trust to ensure there is an appropriate support model in place to support care leavers during any recruitment process and sign up to the Care Leavers Covenant²³.
- 2.2.12 The Council delivers a wide range of services, where better insight and lived experiences could support future transformations of these services. For example, candidates for roles at the Council (including aged 24 and under) could be, or have been, a council tenant or a young carer. The Inquiry Group discussed whether there is an opportunity for the Council to collaborate with organisations such as Careers Matters to evaluate and improve policies around recruitment, employment and supporting individuals with lived experiences. This is further explored in section 3.4.
- 2.2.13 The focus group highlighted how job adverts and descriptions ‘inflate the reality of the job to make it sound more appealing’ and ‘recruitment culture uses big glossy titles.’ They raised concerns that younger candidates may not be able to understand what the job actually entails and decide not to apply, while candidates more familiar with this language can ‘see through these inflated descriptions’²⁴. They suggested that the Council could offer sessions to help prepare these candidates who may not benefit from family or social networks including people have worked in local government²⁵.

²¹ [Birmingham City Council website, Volunteering and Work Experience in Parks](#) (accessed 13 June 2025)

²² [Birmingham City Council website, Public Health](#) (accessed 13 June 2025)

²³ Economy, Skills and Culture Committee, 27 November 2024.

²⁴ Focus group (online) with staff (aged 24 and under), 23 February 2025

²⁵ Focus group (online) with staff (aged 24 and under), 23 February 2025

- 2.2.14 Further to this, the focus group suggested that unnecessary qualifications are also included in some job descriptions. They shared concerns that this would deter people, and in particular younger people, from applying. They described this as ‘qualification discrimination’²⁶.
- 2.2.15 The Council’s People Services directorate also raised concerns. They explained how a traditional recruitment model was in place where the hiring manager led with limited involvement from People Services. They set out how they intend to change this to enable specialist People Services staff to act as Subject Matter Experts during recruitments. The directorate has also put steps in place which include automatic challenge to ensure only required qualifications are asked for, as well as checking language in job adverts. Managers have also received training on addressing unconscious bias in recruitment²⁷.
- 2.2.16 **Key Finding:** The Council has stopped thinking about itself as a potential employer for young people in this city. It needs to market and raise awareness of the different career paths across local government and what they can offer to encourage more young people to consider a career at the Council. It is currently not making effective use of available resources such as the Council’s website or careers advisors in schools, colleges and universities. It could also do more to match training in externally funded employment programmes which the Council lead (or play a role in) to future opportunities in the Council.
- 2.2.17 **Key Finding:** The Inquiry is concerned that work experience opportunities, which could help to attract people at an early point to careers at the Council, are not being accessed in a fair and equitable way. This is further reinforced by the current recruitment approach, which may mean young people who cannot access advice through their own family or social network, may not be able to understand fulfil the stages of the recruitment process. Links with schools, colleges and universities need to be strengthened.
- 2.2.18 **Key Finding:** While the Council remains committed to guaranteeing interviews for care leavers, the related support is not in place yet (although funded) and no timescale is available.
- 2.2.19 **Key Finding:** The Council has many roles where lived experience could prove to be an asset in delivering service transformation and supporting services to be more customer focused. The Council needs to consider how it can best harness this experience to deliver better outcomes for its residents while also ensuring staff are properly supported. Staff who are aged 24 and under may be able to play an important

²⁶ Focus group (online) with staff (aged 24 and under), 23 February 2025

²⁷ Economy, Skills and Culture Committee, 27 November 2024.

part in this. If this is taken forward, the Council should review its policies and procedures to deliver on this. The Inquiry acknowledges that this is an area to explore in the future, as it is not currently covered in the Council's collective agreement with Trade Unions.

- 2.2.20 **Key Finding:** The Council's application process is dated and traditional. Language used and unnecessary qualifications in job descriptions may deter younger applicants while not accurately reflecting the nature of the role. A new modern and quicker approach reflecting current best practice is required. The work undertaken by the Trust may be an example to follow. Unconscious bias training for managers needs to be retained.

Ref	Recommendations	Responsibility	Completion Date
R02	<p>Council asks the Executive to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Advise when the review of the Attraction Policy will be complete and the timescale for the implementation of a new policy; and c) Implement a new Attraction Policy including refreshed careers content on the Council website; information to school, colleges and universities; attendance at Job Fairs, and with a focus on how local government careers can deliver social impact. 	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	<p>September 2025 (2 months)</p> <p>July 2025 (12 months)</p>
R03	<p>Council asks the Executive to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Review how work experience opportunities are accessed to ensure it is fair and equitable to all young people in Birmingham; and set out timeframes for how any improvements will be delivered; c) Deliver refreshed work experience programme. 	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	<p>November 2025 (4 months)</p> <p>July 2026 (12 months)</p>
R04	Council asks the Executive to provide a timeframe for when the Council will be able to guarantee interviews for care leavers and have appropriate support in place. This should include wraparound support for new starters.	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	November 2025 (4 months)

R05	<p>Council asks the Executive to refresh the application process for roles at the Council including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> g) Resetting the different roles in recruitment and in particular, the role of HR, OD and Transformation as Subject Matter Experts in support of individual hiring managers; h) Reviewing the time taken from advert to onboarding to enable joiners to start quicker; i) All future job adverts and job descriptions to be reviewed by HR, OD and Transformation in line with directorate workforce plans; j) All future job adverts and job descriptions are inclusive by ensuring any qualifications listed are necessary and all language used realistically sets out the role; k) the introduction of wider application tools including phone based applications; l) Reviewing managers' unconscious bias training to ensure age and care experience as protective characteristics are recognised; and m) Ensuring applicant data is available and used to baseline current recruitment of young people and monitor any future impact. 	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	January 2026 (6 months)
R06	<p>Council asks the Executive to map out the current employment programmes delivered through the Council or partners and work with partners to adapt or design courses which create a talent pipeline to meet our corporate needs.</p>	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR/ Deputy Leader	April 2026 (9 months)

2.3 Theme 3: Early Entry Programmes (e.g. Apprenticeships and Graduates)

2.3.1 The Inquiry was advised that the current schemes in place to attract a new workforce are²⁸:

2.3.1.1. Apprenticeships – the Apprenticeship Levy was set up in 2017 as a 3 year initiative. (It was then extended). 29,000 organisations nationally have participated in the scheme. The Council pays 0.5% (equivalent to approximately 2.5million and on average £243-250k per month). The Council can then use these ringfenced funds within 2 years on apprenticeships. If the funds are not used, they are given to Government. In the latest Government report (2022), £3.5billion nationally had been sent to Government as unspent funds.

2.3.1.2. National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP) – a national programme introduced to the Council in 2021.

2.3.1.3. Ad hoc work placements devolved within directorates – these are local arrangements where they take place.

2.3.1.4. Cabinet Member shadowing – managed through the Cabinet Office and is currently a virtual offer.

2.3.2 The Inquiry was told that at a corporate level, it is still not clear how many staff fall into each of these programmes²⁹.

Apprenticeships

2.3.3 The Council currently have 270 employees on an apprenticeship since the Apprentice Levy was introduced. 30 had been recruited in the last 2 years including 14 new hire apprentices (2 in schools based roles) in 2023/24; the remainder are on an apprenticeship to upskill. The overall number of apprentices is low given the size of the organisation³⁰.

2.3.4 The Inquiry Group learned that the current arrangements for apprenticeships are devolved to directorates and led by individual hiring managers. Corporately, there is minimal sight or planning until requests for support are received from individual services. This devolved approach has led to a lack of consistency and support for apprentices. It has also meant that the programme has not been matched to clear corporate outcomes that are monitored to show impact³¹.

²⁸ [Evidence Gathering – Council as an Employer of Young People](#), Report to Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 27 November 2024

²⁹ Economy, Skills and Culture Committee, 27 November 2024.

³⁰ Economy, Skills and Culture Committee, 27 November 2024.

³¹ Economy, Skills and Culture Committee, 27 November 2024.

- 2.3.5 The current financial situation for the Council has meant that the programme has refocused on increasing apprentices through internal development opportunities. For example, a cohort was set up where staff developed better project management skills; this had been identified in the Improvement and Recovery Plan³².
- 2.3.6 The Council has returned £9.5million to Government to date in unspent funds; approximately £111k per month. Most employers are losing levy, in particular, from Councils. However, this Council is currently using 24.4% of its levy contributions compared to 55% national average. Factors which have contributed to this include lack of corporate and directorate investment and capacity to manage and deliver the programme. Due to recent initiatives, the Council has started to increase what it spends; it is now returning £96k per month. At this time, two members of staff in People Services have been working on this³³.
- 2.3.7 This increase has been achieved through using funds to upskill existing staff, as set out in 2.3.5, and also through maximising the Levy Transfer Scheme. This enables the Council to transfer up to 50% of its funds to offset to costs of apprenticeship qualifications for small and medium sized businesses³⁴.
- 2.3.8 The Inquiry Group was advised it will be very difficult to bring the returned levy to £0k per month. To achieve this, the Council would need to enrol 669 new apprentices every year, which would be equal to 55 new apprenticeships every month³⁵.

National Graduate Development Programme

- 2.3.9 In 2021, 8 graduates were recruited; 10 graduates in 2022; 8 graduates in 2023. Currently only 5 of the 8 graduates recruited in 2023 remain on the programme³⁶.
- 2.3.10 There are other graduate programmes across the Council, most notably in Public Health. In 2023/24, the cohort reduced from 9 to 4 due to financial pressures. They are managed within these respective directorates, and People Services have limited sight of these programmes.
- 2.3.11 **Key Finding:** A devolved approach does not enable these programmes to either meet the needs of the individuals or the corporate objectives. A corporately held approach with sufficient resources is required to link these opportunities with clear outcomes and demonstrate their impact. The Inquiry Group is aware that the resource supports the

³² Birmingham City Council, Corporate Plan 2025-2028

³³ Economy, Skills and Culture Committee, 27 November 2024.

³⁴ Economy, Skills and Culture Committee, 27 November 2024.

³⁵ Economy, Skills and Culture Committee, 27 November 2024.

³⁶ [Evidence Gathering – Council as an Employer of Young People](#), Report to Economy, Skills and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 27 November 2024

Early Careers work at the time of providing evidence has now reduced, and the recent progress towards increasing the apprenticeship levy spend may be at risk.

Ref	Recommendations	Responsibility	Completion Date
R07	Council asks the Executive to: b) Consider options for how a corporately led approach for early entrant programmes could be implemented; and c) If this is not possible, advise what mitigations can be put in place to enable these programmes to contribute more effectively towards corporate objectives	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	January 2026 (6 months)
R08	Council asks the Executive to consider introducing a challenge that all future recruitments should clearly state why this role could not be undertaken through an apprenticeship or other early entrant programme. This should be considered once the Workforce Strategy and Early Career Strategy have been completed.	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	July 2026 (12 months)
R09	Council asks the Executive to explore how further apprenticeship levy could be transferred to SMEs as part of new procurement arrangements	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	January 2026 (6 months)

2.4 Theme 4: Future Career Pathways and Staff Support

- 2.4.1 The Inquiry Group was advised we need to rebuild the career pathways for young people which had previously existed in the Council. Initial early entrant roles now are often Fixed Term contract roles, which do not direct open up to other opportunities. The focus group emphasised how staff need to have confidence that career progression is realistic. They felt that the Council would be in a better position to retain staff if there were opportunities for upward movement. They highlighted examples of how people had left to secure positions elsewhere³⁷.
- 2.4.2 The focus group highlighted they did not feel supported by the organisation around professional development or supported in terms of career pathways. They have not always felt that their managers knew what to do with them and how to support them. For example, one of them highlighted how they often ran of things to do. Another was offered training which is no longer available. They also flagged whether managers were aware of specific support in place such as the early Careers Network (set out in 2.4.4 below) to signpost them to³⁸.
- 2.4.3 The focus group also questioned the quality of the onboarding process and the length of time it took. One person highlighted important gaps such as not being aware they could request reasonable adjustments. They pointed out how when you join a large organisation, “You don’t know how things are going to work.”³⁹
- 2.4.4 Careers Matters highlighted how wraparound support will be essential to support members of staff with specific needs including care leavers. Their work shows that if there are inadequate support systems in place, organisations will not retain young people in employment⁴⁰.
- 2.4.5 While the focus group acknowledged benefits with current hybrid and working from home arrangements, they did highlight how it had potentially impacted upon opportunities to network. They described how “when you are in an office and you’ve got a team, you’ve got that morale of building each other up.” They also noted that “getting more people back into the office will help them learn about new opportunities and the ability to network.” They were also aware though that working from home can prove to be a more accessible and productive environment for some⁴¹.

³⁷ Focus group (online) with staff (aged 24 and under), 23 February 2025 and Economy, Skills and Culture Committee, 27 November 2024.

³⁸ Focus group (online) with staff (aged 24 and under), 23 February 2025

³⁹ Focus group (online) with staff (aged 24 and under), 23 February 2025

⁴⁰ Evidence gathering session with Careers Matters (online), 12 February 2025

⁴¹ Focus group (online) with staff (aged 24 and under), 23 February 2025

- 2.4.6 To address both of these challenges above, an Early Careers Network was set up a few years ago by two graduates from the graduate scheme. The network has both a professional development and social side. Activities have included information and guidance on preparing supporting statements and interviews. They have also set up a LinkedIn page to highlight careers within Local Government and the Council, in particular.
- 2.4.7 They also highlighted how there didn't seem to be any professional development available outside of the apprenticeship programme, or their managers weren't aware of it. They felt that this was an important way to feel valued and recognised⁴².
- 2.4.8 **Key Finding:** If the arrangements for early entrant programmes are devolved with no (or minimal) corporate oversight, this is likely to result in the current situation where apprenticeship, graduate or other programmes are not part of career progression pathways. Both corporate and directorate workforce plans need to introduce career pathways and supported by accredited training to enable apprenticeship funds to be used. This will give staff confidence that there is future career progression and increase retention.
- 2.4.9 **Key Finding:** All members of staff need to feel supported. Younger members of staff may have different needs as they would have a different knowledge level about the workplace. There feels inconsistencies in how managers are supporting staff on these programmes, and particularly around future career development. The Inquiry Group questioned whether there was a standard offer to support managers, so they are clear on what they need to do and the information they should provide. Supported mentoring programmes beyond direct line managers may be another idea.

⁴² Focus group (online) with staff (aged 24 and under), 23 February 2025

Ref	Recommendations	Responsibility	Completion Date
R10	Council asks the Executive to set out clearly future career pathways supported by accredited training in the Council's long term workforce plans to create a talent pipeline.	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	April 2026 (9 months)
R11	<p>Council asks the Executive to confirm a manager package is in place to support staff on early entrant programmes. This should include (but not exclusively):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d) ensuring all managers promote the Early Careers Network and provide time for their staff to participate in network activities; e) Surveying all early entrants to confirm how they are being supported by their managers and whether there are opportunities to improve this; and f) Reviewing working at home practices to ensure all staff have access to regular in-person working to support wellbeing and professional development. 	Cabinet Member for Transformation, Governance and HR	January 2026 (6 months)

Birmingham City Council

City Council

8 July 2025



Title:	DECISIONS NOT ON THE FORWARD PLAN AND THOSE AUTHORISED FOR IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION
Lead Member:	Councillor John Cotton, Leader
Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee:	Not Applicable
Has this report been shared with the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair?	Not Applicable
Report Author:	Elaine Newsome Interim Head of Scrutiny and Committee Services, Legal and Governance elaine.newsome@birmingham.gov.uk
Authorised by:	Anthony Cox Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Is this a Key Decision?	No
Reason(s) why not included on the Forward Plan and confirm who has authorised it to be considered:	Not Applicable
Is this a Late Report?	No
Reason(s) why Late and confirm who has authorised it to be considered:	Not Applicable
Is this decision eligible for 'call in?'	Not Applicable
If 'call-in' has been dis-applied, please provide reason(s) and confirm who has authorised:	Not Applicable
Wards:	All
Does this report contain exempt or confidential information?	No

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report, which is required under Part B6 of the Constitution, sets out any key decisions not included on the Forward Plan and any decisions which were authorised for immediate implementation.
- 1.2 Following amendments to the Constitution in 2022 this is the tenth report to be submitted, covering the period 1 March to 7 May 2025.

2 COMMISSIONERS' REVIEW

- 2.1 Commissioners have no observations in relation to this report.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the report be noted.

4 KEY INFORMATION

Context

- 4.1 The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 establishes the arrangements required by local authorities in relation to Key decisions to be taken. Issues for decision are required to be included on the Forward Plan not less than 28 clear calendar days in advance of the proposed decision.
- 4.2 Similarly, where there is an intention for Cabinet to consider matters in private, i.e. information that is confidential or exempt, 28 days' notice must also be given. This is to afford an opportunity for challenge and corporate response and final determination on the need for an exemption to be used.
- 4.3 There are provisions in the legislation, however, for "General Exceptions" or "Special Urgency" arrangements to be applied where requisite notice periods cannot be fulfilled but it is impracticable for the decision to be deferred, or where a decision is so urgent that an exemption from Call-in may be appropriate. These provisions entail the involvement of the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee and are set out in Part B6 of the Constitution.
- 4.4 There is also a requirement for the Leader of the Council to provide details on any reports authorised for immediate implementation: i.e. where the interests of the Council are jeopardised unless an executive decision is implemented immediately and when its implementation cannot wait until the expiry of the call-in period.
- 4.5 In an emergency, as set out under Part B6 of the Constitution, an executive decision may be agreed by the Chief Executive, following consultation with the Group Leaders, as long as the requirements set out in Part E4 are met.
- 4.6 Set out in the table below are details of decisions taken over the period 1st March to 7 May 2025 where general exception or special urgency arrangements have

been applied. It also provides detail on reports that were compliant with the notice of key decision and agenda publication requirements however, circulation as part of the agenda was delayed. There were no emergency or urgent decisions taken by the Chief Executive for the period in question.

Decisions taken where General Exception and/or Special Urgency Provisions were applied or reports were not published as part of the agenda

Decision Taken	Decision Taken by	Key Decision	Date of Decision	Exemption(s) Applied, associated reasons and authorisations
Appointment to Outside Bodies	Cabinet	No	18 March 2025	<p>Exemption Applied</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of 28 day prior notice of a key decision, <p>Reasons and authorisation</p> <p>A request was received to fill a vacancy on the Millenium Point Board in order that Board business could be conducted</p> <p>The urgent item was certified by Interim Monitoring Officer.</p>

Devolution of additional responsibilities and funding for new technical qualifications for adults aged 19 plus to the West Midlands Combined Authority	Leader Decision	Yes	7 May 2025	<p>Exemption Applied</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exemption from call-in due to special urgency provisions Provision of 28 day prior notice of a key decision <p>Reasons and Authorisation</p> <p>The decision enabled the Council to confirm its decision in accordance with the schedule required by the WMCA and central government in relation to the devolution of powers to the West Midlands Combined Authority. The Chair of the Economy Skills and Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee has agreed that special urgency arrangements are permissible, and that the decision should be exempt from call-in under Regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 and the Local Government Act 2000. Opposition Group Leaders were informed in line with constitutional requirements.</p>
Embedding the Council's Corporate Parenting Responsibilities	Cabinet	Yes	18 March 2025	<p>The report was listed on the forward plan and published agenda, however a series of changes to the report were identified as part of the internal governance and quality assurance arrangements. Officers were unable to finalise prior to the date of agenda publication, and the report was subsequently dispatched after the agenda publication.</p>

Permission to Consult on Draft Public Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy – Creating a Mentally Healthy City Strategy 2025 - 2035	Cabinet	Yes	18 March 2025	The report was listed on the forward plan and published agenda, however a series of changes to the report were identified as part of the internal governance and quality assurance arrangements. Officers were unable to finalise prior to the date of agenda publication, and the report was subsequently dispatched after the agenda publication.
Household Support Budget Proposals for 2025/26	Cabinet	Yes	18 March 2025	The report was listed on the forward plan and published agenda, however a series of changes to the report were identified as part of the internal governance and quality assurance arrangements. Officers were unable to finalise prior to the date of agenda publication, and the report was subsequently dispatched after the agenda publication.
Schools Capital Programme – School Condition Allocation, Basic Need Allocation 2025-26+ Future Years	Cabinet	Yes	18 March 2025	The report was listed on the forward plan and published agenda, however a series of changes to the report were identified as part of the internal governance and quality assurance arrangements. Officers were unable to finalise prior to the date of agenda publication, and the report was subsequently dispatched after the agenda publication.

Full Business Case – for the Extension Works at Hamilton School Revised	Cabinet	Yes	18 March 2025	The report was listed on the forward plan and published agenda, however a series of changes to the report were identified as part of the internal governance and quality assurance arrangements. Officers were unable to finalise prior to the date of agenda publication, and the report was subsequently dispatched after the agenda publication.
Award of Contracts for Toxicology and Pathology Services via Provider Selection Regime	Cabinet	Yes	18 March 2025	The report was listed on the forward plan and published agenda, however a series of changes to the report were identified as part of the internal governance and quality assurance arrangements. Officers were unable to finalise prior to the date of agenda publication, and the report was subsequently dispatched after the agenda publication.

5 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report.

6 IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS

Finance and Best Value

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Legal

- 6.2 This report, for consideration by Full Council, is required under The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

Equalities

- 6.3 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

7 APPENDICES

- 7.1 None.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Birmingham City Council

Report to City Council

8 July 2025



Title:	MOTIONS FOR DEBATE FROM INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS
Lead Member:	Not applicable
Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee:	Not applicable
Has this report been shared with the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair?	Not applicable
Report Author:	Ben Patel-Sadler, Senior Committee Manager Legal and Governance (Council Management) Ben.Patel-Sadler@birmingham.gov.uk
Authorised by:	Marie Rosenthal, Interim City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer Legal and Governance (Council Management)
Is this a Key Decision?	No
Reason(s) why not included on the Forward Plan and confirm who has authorised it to be considered:	Not applicable
Is this a Late Report?	No
Reason(s) why Late and confirm who has authorised it to be considered:	Not applicable
Is this decision eligible for 'call in?'	Not applicable
If 'call-in' has been dis-applied, please provide reason(s) and confirm who has authorised:	Not applicable
Wards:	Not applicable

Does this report contain exempt or confidential information?

No

1 COMMISSIONERS' REVIEW

- 1.1 Commissioners do not provide comments in relation to the City Council Motions reports.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

That City Council:

- 2.1 Considers the following Motions of which notice has been given in accordance with Council Procedure Rules (section B4.4 G of the Constitution).

3 NOTICES OF MOTION

A. Councillors Matt Bennett and Timothy Huxtable have given notice of the following Notice of Motion:-

Council calls on the Executive to consider the release of additional Highways PFI reserves - which grew by a further £46m in 2024/25 - to fund increased pothole repairs and road resurfacing across the local authority area during the current financial year, as well as committing to efficiently spending the full allocation of 2025/26 PFI funding (including credits and local indexed linked contribution.)

Council expresses its concerns about the changes in scope to the current PFI service level agreements and the lack of a proactive maintenance schedule which it believes will push up costs in the longer term and increase safety risks to vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. Council believes that the release of funding held back should enable more of this work to take place sooner, reducing long-term costs and improving safety.

Council also calls on the Executive to speed up the promised upgrades to street lighting using Clean Air Zone funds allocated in the budget.

B. Councillors Deborah Harries and Jon Hunt have given notice of the following Notice of Motion:-

The Council notes that on 17 June 2025 the corporate plan was approved which included The Birmingham Promise. The commitments are:

1. Be a reliable, visible partner, true to our word. Explain what we can and cannot do.
2. Ensure everything we deliver is of the highest standards and for the benefit of local people.
3. Commit to tackling inequality and publish data on the extent to which what we do is helping to close the gap.
4. Put Brummies at the heart of what we do, co-producing solutions and working in true partnership with organisations and citizens.
5. Listen to the people of Birmingham, act on what they say and be held accountable.

Council believes that, to fulfil these commitments, councillors and front-line council officers need to be visible in communities and be well briefed on strategic and local matters.

Council notes with regret that cutting ward meetings back to just 1 meeting per year is counterintuitive to the delivery of the Birmingham promise and good local democracy.

Council expresses its concern about the lack of priority given to neighbourhood policing.

Council further regrets the lack of progress on rethinking the shape of city council; the absence of a plan to devolve accountability to communities and the general lack of support for developing community and parish councils.

Council commits to:

1. Request an annual report from the Mayor of the WMCA, the Chief Constable and Police Crime Commissioner, and extend an invitation to attend 1 full council meeting per annum to report and take questions. These should be scheduled to take place before the pre-election period.
2. Reinstating 4 ward meetings per annum as statutory for all wards when budget pressures allow and ensuring that these meetings include the

councillors, local WM Police representatives and council officers and community representatives as appropriate.

Council calls on the executive to shape and deliver local council services such as street cleansing, tackling parking enforcement and anti-littering campaigns through decentralisation and accountability to local communities, providing genuine and meaningful opportunities for citizens to be informed, consulted and engaged in service development and delivery.

IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS

Finance and Best Value

- 3.1 There are none arising from this report.

Legal

- 3.2 There are none arising from this report.

Equalities

- 3.3 There are none arising from this report.

Procurement

- 3.4 There are none arising from this report.

People Services

- 3.5 There are none arising from this report.

Climate Change, Nature and Net Zero

- 3.6 There are none arising from this report.

Corporate Parenting

- 3.7 There are none arising from this report.

Other

- 3.8 There are none arising from this report.

4 APPENDICES

- 4.1 None.

5 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 5.1 None.

