

# **Sandwell Local Area Agreement 2008/09-2010/11**

**5th June 2008**



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# 1 Sandwell's Transformation 2000 - 2008

## Introduction

Sandwell is a metropolitan borough in the West Midlands. It is made up of six towns: Oldbury, Rowley Regis, Smethwick, Tipton, Wednesbury and West Bromwich. Sandwell has a population of 287,600<sup>1</sup> and is culturally diverse (approximately 24.5%<sup>2</sup> of the population is from black or minority ethnic groups). It is an old industrial area, which has been significantly affected by the decline of manufacturing jobs from the 1970s onwards

Sandwell can be described as being on a 'journey of transformation', which began with the first Sandwell Plan published in 2001. Significant improvements have already been realised for people who live, work, invest and spend their leisure time in the borough.

Through the Sandwell Partnership, all public agencies are working with voluntary, community and business sector partners to maintain the pace of improvement in Sandwell. The new Local Area Agreement (LAA) is a means to further improve the quality of life and success of Sandwell people.

## Sandwell Partnership and 2001 Sandwell Plan

Sandwell Council and its partners in the Local Strategic Partnership (Sandwell Partnership) set out an ambitious plan for the transformation of the borough in 2001. The first community strategy set a vision for the social, economic and environmental transformation of Sandwell. We recognised that a commitment to regeneration was required, and set about creating the investment needed to tackle the deprivation and economic decline experienced in Sandwell.

In order to achieve this transformation, partners agreed:

- A set of transformational priorities with associated action (Sandwell 2020 vision and priorities).
- An ambitious strategy to involve local communities in decision making (neighbourhood strategy).
- A commitment to deliver change through effective partnership working, both in the borough itself and with neighbouring boroughs.

## Early Priorities

The initial transformation priorities were:

- Reversing population decline.
- Turning West Bromwich into a 'premier' town centre.
- Investing in improved housing, education and health facilities.
- Raising the aspirations and improve the self confidence of Sandwell people.

Implementing these priorities has brought improvements to services, better outcomes for local people and clear physical evidence of transformation across Sandwell.

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<sup>1</sup> 2006 Mid Year Population Estimates, Office for National Statistics (ONS) © Crown Copyright, September 2007

<sup>2</sup> 2005 Ethnic Population Estimates (Experimental Statistics) (ONS)

## Social Transformation

Recorded crime has drastically reduced over recent years, falling by 28% in the period 2003/04 to 2006/07<sup>3</sup>. Anti-social behaviour is also reduced, and well contained through our highly successful local neighbourhood policing, neighbourhood management and tasking schemes.

Educational attainment has been greatly improved. Improvements at all key stages are reflected in improvements in GCSE attainment from an average of 34% 5 A\*- C grades in 2003 to 52.2% in 2007<sup>5</sup>.

Sandwell's health has improved massively; the incidence of coronary heart disease has been drastically reduced. We are continuing to put in place measures to help people stay healthier longer and need to find ways to increase the pace of this change.

Towards 2010 is an ambitious programme (developed between the National Health Service (NHS), Sandwell Council and Birmingham City Council) which sets out proposals for bringing care closer to home, providing higher quality care and ensuring that there are healthier places for people to live and work.

A programme for the rapid modernisation of adult care services is underway as we work to improve the quality and range of services. There are six modernisation projects that make up the programme: Older Person's Residential Care; Extra Care Housing; Older Person's Day Care; Home Support; Localities Teams; and Learning Disabilities Day Services.

We are promoting social inclusion and improved access to mainstream services. Funding has been secured for the £13 million Oldbury Leisure Centre. An integrated health, social care and leisure facility for people with disabilities, mental health service users and the wider community providing an extended physical activity programme.

Our successful New Deal for Communities Partnership (Greets Green Partnership) has been recognised as an example of good practice. Lessons learned here complement other good practice being delivered through neighbourhood management work across all our six towns, helping to fulfil our commitment that local neighbourhoods are entitled to locally responsive, accessible and relevant services.

## Economic Transformation

Our economic transformation is integrated with the plans to transform the Black Country as outlined in the Regional Economic Strategy<sup>6</sup>. Our economic transformation involves the emergence of a modernised economy with a good mix of services and competitive manufacturing. We need a skilled workforce, able to adapt to the requirements of an increasingly knowledge based economy. To achieve this change we need a strong learning culture, where our schools, colleges and universities help our workforce to take up continuous learning and progression.

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<sup>3</sup> West Midlands Police Data

<sup>4</sup> 2003/04 and 2006/07 Recorded Crimes per 1000 population (2001 Census Key Statistics) Crime figures from West Midlands Police COSMOS, February 2008

<sup>5</sup> 2006/07, Department for Children, Schools and Families, [www.dfes.co.uk](http://www.dfes.co.uk), October 2007

<sup>6</sup> West Midlands Regional Economic Strategy, AWM, December 2007

West Bromwich is being transformed. Our high profile bus station, Metro line, arts centre and new town square are the first visible signs of transformation. West Bromwich will be one of four strategic centres in the Black Country. Future changes will see a new night scene, a new eastern gateway, new hotels and new quality office accommodation.

Further improvements to transport networks, notably through the Metro line have benefited not just Sandwell's economy but also the wider economy including Birmingham and the Black Country.

All our town centres are benefiting from new retail developments and new investment including schools, health, leisure, heritage and community facilities.

Our skills and employment rates have improved in the last 18 months. We are now better positioned to accelerate our progress through a strengthened skills and employment partnership. Also, the Sandwell Urban Regeneration Company (Regenco) provides a means of attracting investment to Sandwell. Through Regenco and other partnerships, our collaboration with the private sector is strengthening, offering the potential for stronger business leadership in the next phase of transformation.

### Environmental Transformation

We are collaborating with Walsall, Wolverhampton and Dudley on a Black Country Core Strategy that will be the foundation of the Local Development Framework for each of the four Black Country Partnerships. Preferred options for the environmental transformation of Sandwell and the other Black Country districts have recently been confirmed and consultation on those options has commenced.

In Sandwell the core strategy will lead to a new physical landscape. This will be seen by:

- Housing transformation, centred on the huge Windmill Eye area of Smethwick.
- The completion of West Bromwich as a sub-regional high-quality town centre.
- The creation of development corridors for housing and employment use.
- The development of a post-industrial heritage area utilising the canal network.

New higher-quality housing developments have already begun to transform the borough's towns and neighbourhoods. Large-scale developments, especially in Smethwick (Mitchells Brook) and Tipton (Alexandra Fields) are improving the reputation of these areas so that they are now attractive to a new generation of professional workers.

Environmental improvements including the refurbishment of parks, historic buildings and the tackling of environmental blight have been a feature of our work to create safe clean neighbourhoods that people enjoy.

The outstanding Sandwell Valley, our excellent parks and nature reserves are high quality, and our investment programmes have been recognised with two green flag and two green pennant awards.

## 2 Aspirations for Sandwell

### Our Renewed Vision

Sandwell Partnership has renewed its vision for Sandwell in the 2008 Sandwell Plan (the borough's 'Sustainable Community Strategy').

The new vision emphasises the characteristics of local people – their pride, confidence and hope in their borough; our towns and neighbourhoods; and a growing belief in the area's ambition and potential to be associated with success, good skills and business enterprise.

#### **Sandwell: Great People, Great Place, Great Prospects**

*People will choose Sandwell for their home, their job and their leisure.*

*An inspiring place, easy to get around, with quality homes, schools, shops and great places to go.*

*Sandwell will realise its abundant talent and potential through the success of its businesses, schools and communities.*

### Great People

Community cohesion – the Sandwell of 2021 will be a place where people get on well together. We will have successfully developed and established projects and events that have helped to break down barriers and encouraged people to get on better with their neighbours and colleagues. People from different age groups, different ethnic groups and different backgrounds will all have a shared pride and enthusiasm for Sandwell.

Attract and retain people – our population will have grown and will be more diverse. People will be choosing Sandwell as a place to live and work because there are noticeable improvements in schools, housing, hospitals, transport and leisure. People in Sandwell will be healthier and will feel safer. Our young people will have activities they can participate in and they will be better skilled to take advantage of well paid job opportunities on offer.

### Great Place

West Bromwich as the premier town – West Bromwich will have been firmly re-established as the borough's premier town centre, with dramatic visible changes on the ground. There will be new shopping opportunities at a major new retail development; improvements to Queen's Square; a new leisure centre; an exciting community arts project; new office developments at All Saints and the 'Eastern Gateway'; a new college will be serving people of all ages; improved highway and public transport access will make it easier to get around; easier access to Dartmouth Park and Sandwell Valley; and a new public square will be at the heart of this vibrant town centre.

*Strong town centres across the six towns* – the recent completion of revitalised shopping facilities and the new by-pass in Cradley Heath have demonstrated the transformational change that can be achieved in our other town centres. Significant new public and private investment will have been made across Oldbury, Rowley Regis, Smethwick, Tipton, West Bromwich and Wednesbury.

*Quality housing* – there will be a range of new housing opportunities for people to rent or buy. The quality of all housing – both social and private – will be high, with modern and efficient facilities and good standards of construction. Increasingly people will be living in homes that have been built or modernised with ‘green issues’ at heart. These affordable and desirable homes will be at the centre of good neighbourhoods with quality services – shopping, schools, doctors surgeries, health centres and leisure opportunities.

## **Great Prospects**

### *Major new investment* –

Sandwell will be contributing to the transformation of the Black Country through:

- Rebuilding or refurbishing every secondary school and the majority of primary schools.
- All public sector housing having modern facilities, being warm and being weatherproof
- Delivering high-quality housing development on a large scale.
- Producing more affordable homes.
- Building modern new health and care facilities across Sandwell and west Birmingham.
- West Bromwich town centre being completely transformed to act as a sub-regional centre.
- Other vibrant town and neighbourhood centres and job opportunities in Sandwell.

*Skills and employment* – Sandwell’s economy will have changed dramatically. Modern and efficient manufacturing companies will still be at the heart of the Sandwell economy. But we will be less dependent on the manufacturing sector, with a much wider variety of opportunities. Our renewed economic success will have drawn on skilled local workers and the commitment of long-term employers. Businesses and entrepreneurs will find Sandwell a place where the conditions and environment support business success.

*Sustainable Sandwell* – the area will have stronger communities and a more successful economy than it has today. Energy consumption in homes and businesses will have been reduced; reliance on imported fuels will have been cut significantly; the amount of secure locally generated low or zero carbon energy will have grown dramatically; and waste will have been minimised.

Services that support people’s lives – buildings, transport networks, drainage systems – will have been modified to help protect communities from hotter, wetter and stormier conditions. These changes and associated investment will have helped reduce the cost of living and will have opened up new opportunities for local businesses.

### 3 Evidence Base

#### Context and Key Data

A full evidence base for Sandwell is provided in Appendix A to this document. The key issues for Sandwell are set out below.

Sandwell is one of the most uniformly deprived boroughs in the country, with a high proportion of super output areas (SOAs) featuring in 2007 Index of Multiple Deprivation<sup>7</sup> (59 SOAs are in the worst 10% nationally).

Sandwell's population experienced a sustained decline from the 1970s onwards, but is now beginning to increase again (mid-2006 estimate 287,600 people<sup>8</sup>). Forward projections suggest that in the future Sandwell will have: -

- An older population (people aged over 65 to increase by 19.7% between 2006 and 2029<sup>9</sup>).
- A more diverse population (in 2001 20.3% of people in Sandwell were from BME groups this had increased to 24.5% in 2005. This trend is expected to continue<sup>10</sup>).
- A population and economy boosted by international migration (in the 18 months to June 2006, 1,400 EU migrants came to live and work in Sandwell)<sup>11</sup>.

Sandwell has 75,500 people who are aged 19 and under<sup>8</sup> (54,578 of whom are school pupils)<sup>12</sup>. Sandwell's under 19 population is diverse – 29.4% of which are from black or minority ethnic groups<sup>13</sup>, significantly higher than for the total population. All of Sandwell's minority ethnic groups have larger proportions of young people and fewer older people than the white population.

Despite recent population rises, net out migration from Sandwell continues to the rest of the UK. The 15-29 year age group is the only age group to show a net in migration from the wider nation.<sup>11</sup> New migrants, such as people coming here to work from the EU accession states, are therefore helping to reduce the impact of this outflow.

Sandwell's employment rate (65.5%) is well below the national rate (74.3%) and has remained static for a number of years<sup>14</sup>. One factor underlying the low employment rate is the high proportion of the population in vulnerable groups e.g. BME groups (24% compared with 15% nationally<sup>15</sup> and lone parents with dependent children (8% compared with 6.5% nationally<sup>16</sup>). Claimant count unemployment is almost double the national rate

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<sup>7</sup> Department of Communities and Local Government, Indices of Deprivation 2007, December 2007

<sup>8</sup> 2006 Mid Year Population Estimates, Office for National Statistics (ONS) © Crown Copyright, September 2007

<sup>9</sup> Sub-national Projections based on 2004 Mid Year Estimates, revised in September 2007, Office for National Statistics (ONS) © Crown Copyright

<sup>10</sup> 2005 Ethnic Population Estimates (Experimental Statistics) (ONS)

<sup>11</sup> 2006 Home Office: Registered EU accession workers database

<sup>12</sup> 2005/06, Department for Children, Schools and Families, [www.dfes.co.uk](http://www.dfes.co.uk), January 2006

<sup>13</sup> Office for National Statistics (ONS) © Crown Copyright, 2001 Census Standard Tables, ST101 Sex and Age by Ethnic Group

<sup>14</sup> Labour Force Survey

<sup>15</sup> Ethnic Population Estimates 2005 (Experimental Statistics) Office for National Statistics

<sup>16</sup> Office for National Statistics (ONS) © Crown Copyright, 2001 Census

(4.1% compared with 2.1% for Great Britain<sup>17</sup>) and there are also a large number (16,240 in May 2007) of people claiming Incapacity Benefit<sup>18</sup>.

Skills levels are also low, with 25% of the working age population possessing no qualifications – the highest figure in the region<sup>19</sup>.

Traditionally the local economy has been focused on the manufacturing sector and there is a smaller ratio of manufacturing to service jobs (1:3.2) than the national average (1:7.6)<sup>20</sup>. The manufacturing sector is forecast to decline still further, particularly the lower value-added parts of the sector which are most vulnerable to global competitive pressures, and which dominate the sector in Sandwell.

The productivity of the economy is also below the national average, 80% of the national value as measured by gross value added per head<sup>21</sup>, business success (measured by VAT registrations) is low, and self employment levels are low. Full-time earnings are also below the regional and national averages (hourly earnings are 18% below the national average).

The average house prices in Sandwell, £109,767 in 2006, are considerably lower than the national average of £167,312<sup>22</sup>. Even when average incomes are factored in, housing in Sandwell is more affordable than in neighbouring areas.

There is a legacy of poor quality housing in the public sector; however, significant recent progress has been made in addressing this.

There has been a history of high morbidity rates, together with high levels of infant mortality, long-term illnesses, mental health problems, and high (but now declining) levels of teenage pregnancy. Male life expectancy in Sandwell (74.4 years) is 2.5 years below the national average. Female life expectancy (79.4 years)<sup>23</sup> lags by 1.7 years. Cancer (25%), coronary heart disease (18.2%) and respiratory disease (14%) account for 57.2% of all deaths in Sandwell.<sup>24</sup>

The educational attainment of Sandwell pupils is improving fast, but admittedly from a low base. Performance at Key Stage 1 (age 7) for reading, writing and mathematics has begun to improve (2006-07), but there still remains a gap relative to national levels of attainment.<sup>25</sup> GCSE (age 16) pass rates have improved 9% in the last two years, with 52.2% of students gaining 5 GCSEs at grades A\* to C in 2007<sup>26</sup>.

Overall levels of crime in Sandwell have fallen by 28% between 2003/04 and 2006/07<sup>27</sup>, although public concerns about community safety remain. Violent crime is an area for concern – the rate is above average in a comparison group of similar areas<sup>28</sup>. Domestic

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<sup>17</sup> NOMIS, November 2007

<sup>18</sup> DWP Working Age Client Group, May 2007

<sup>19</sup> Annual Population Survey 2006

<sup>20</sup> Annual Business Inquiry 2006

<sup>21</sup> Office for National Statistics

<sup>22</sup> 2006 Domestic Property Values, Land Registry

<sup>23</sup> 2004 Life Expectancy, DCLG Floor Target Interactive, 2006

<sup>24</sup> 2002-2006 (5 year totals) Sandwell PCT, August 2007

<sup>25</sup> 2006/07, Data Intelligence Unit, Sandwell MBC, August 2007

<sup>26</sup> 2006/07, Department for Children, Schools and Families, [www.dfes.co.uk](http://www.dfes.co.uk), October 2007

<sup>27</sup> West Midlands Police Data

<sup>28</sup> iQuanta, Home Office

burglary has seen an increase of 34% in the year to date (April–December 2007) compared to the same period in the previous year<sup>29</sup>.

Sandwell is well located on the motorway network and national rail network. But most journeys in the West Midlands Metropolitan Area are by car<sup>30</sup> (70%), with only 15% by public transport and 15% by walking or cycling. Bus use in the West Midlands accounts for 90% of public transport journeys and are vital for a significant proportion of our population who do not have access to a car or who cannot drive.<sup>31</sup>

The high proportion of journeys by car, along with large volumes of private and commercial traffic passing through the West Midlands on the M5 and M6 motorways, has contributed to high levels of traffic congestion in Sandwell and associated poor air quality.

There are a large number of parks and green spaces in Sandwell, including the Rowley Hills and Sandwell Valley however, the area has a reputation for a poor environment, as a legacy of the industrial revolution. Major cultural facilities are easily accessed in neighbouring area however Sandwell itself lacks some key facilities, such as cinemas, theatres and live music venues.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> West Midlands Police Data

<sup>30</sup> Local Transport Plan

<sup>31</sup> [House of Commons - Transport - Written Evidence](#)

<sup>32</sup> [Select Committee report on Sandwell heritage and culture](#)

## 4 What is important in Sandwell?

Through the evidence gathering, consultation and debate process which produced the 2008 Sandwell Plan and the 2007 Local Area Agreement, we have agreed to focus on nine clear priorities over the next three years. These nine priorities encompass the issues which are critical for Sandwell to address on our continued journey of improvement.

Sandwell Partnership is committed to its work to 'narrow the deprivation gap' and will continue to focus on this through the LAA. For each of the priorities there will be specific groups we will need to target.

Crucial to our plans for changing Sandwell will be our proposed approach to Strategic Commissioning. Strategic Commissioning aims to collectively shape and steer the delivery of services across Sandwell to deliver value for money outcomes for Sandwell citizens. The approach aims to make optimum use of all the resources available.

In delivering each of our priorities we will:

- Promote equality & diversity
- Engage communities, listen to them and respond accordingly
- Promote community cohesion
- Promote sustainable development

Each of these 'critical factors'<sup>33</sup> will be integrated into our implementation plans for each priority. The effectiveness of delivery against implementation plans will be monitored by the Council as part of its scrutiny function.

### Equality and Diversity

We will test ourselves against national standards and good practice from elsewhere to make sure that people from disadvantaged groups or localities are receiving an appropriate level of support and assistance.

The council is striving to ensure it is addressing and mainstreaming equality into its day-to-day work and has adopted the Equality Standard<sup>34</sup> as a guiding framework for its work on equality and diversity. An Equal Opportunities Policy is complemented by equality schemes for gender, disability and race. The council is currently looking at how to extend equality schemes to address sexual orientation, religion and belief and age.

In order to enhance our approach to equality and diversity a review of the LSP approach is being prepared by a Neighbourhood Renewal Advisor.

### Equality of place.

All neighbourhoods are different, some suffer with more problems than others – our disaggregated evidence base tells us so. We therefore have an approach that focuses on these areas, whilst at the same time working on a borough-wide basis. We use data from many sources, including our ongoing dialogue with local people, as well as national data

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<sup>33</sup> Sandwell Plan, 2008

<sup>34</sup> [Revised Equality Standard 2007](#)

and intelligence so that partners can identify where to target particular services and initiatives and meet local needs.

Our aim is to improve the quality and coordination of core public services in Sandwell and, wherever possible, to deliver services closer to local people. Tackling issues at the right level – whether it is individual neighbourhoods, neighbourhood clusters, town or borough-wide – is critical to getting this right. Examples of locally delivered services include housing services, schools, libraries, refuse collection and street cleansing.

Our innovative ‘neighbourhood tasking’ approach has been used since 2005 to help reduce crime, improve the environment & public open spaces, and reduce anti-social behaviour. Tasking organises fast responses to problems and is helping provide public reassurance and reducing the fear of crime in the borough.

Service providers are committed to being locally accountable to residents of Sandwell, and we have established processes through which to hear and understand the needs and wants in every neighbourhood and community. We will explore new ways of allowing even more active engagement of people in decisions affecting their neighbourhood. Town charters were introduced in 2007 for each of the six towns. Town charters are designed to help improve services in neighbourhoods, forming an agreement between the council and its partners with local communities, to deliver services to an agreed set of standards.

Eight Neighbourhood Employment & Skills Plans (NESP)s have been completed, for the wards identified in the City Strategy. The NESP)s focus the work of partners to closing the employment and skills gap in these key wards.

### Engage Communities

Community engagement is vital to community confidence and satisfaction, and the Partnership is committed to helping communities be more effectively involved in local decision-making. Community networks in Sandwell are already excellent and there is good co-operation between community groups and public service providers such as the council, primary care trust and police. We are developing an Engagement Strategy and a tool kit & action plan to ensure its delivery.

### Promote community cohesion

As our population becomes older and more diverse, we will proactively manage this change. We will do this by implementing our Community Cohesion Strategy & Action Plan 2007-10.

Cohesion is linked to the vision; priorities; our way of working in towns and neighbourhoods; the work of our partnership teams; and our plans for the next 3 years.

Our approach to cohesion will be to empower people to maximise their involvement, giving them greater choice in the things that impact on their lives. We will make sure people have similar life opportunities and that they feel valued and part of our community in Sandwell. Partners support communities in becoming stronger and more actively involved through work in schools, neighbourhoods, local events, through community development and building stronger local leadership. We will build on existing good relationships between different communities in our borough, and look to deal quickly and effectively with any tensions that arise through working closely with the communities involved.

In Sandwell, we are developing stronger communities through strengthening community leadership amongst elected members and council partners (for example, primary care trust and police). The role of elected members as local leaders is particularly important at town and neighbourhood level. Their knowledge of local neighbourhoods is first class and is used extensively to improve local areas, solve local problems and engage communities in the community life of their own towns and neighbourhoods.

#### Promote sustainable development

We will create a strong, healthy and just society alongside a sustainable economy. This will involve.

- Using resources efficiently
- Recycling more
- Reducing the amount of energy that is used
- Using renewable and/or low-carbon sources of energy
- Reducing our impact on Climate Change
- Adapting to the localised effects of Climate Change
- Supporting environmental improvement and protecting the natural environment
- Creating resilient communities that are healthy, safe and socially coherent.

Not only will this make Sandwell a better place in which to live, work or play, but there will also be distinct benefits from adopting this approach, such as job creation and new business opportunities.

#### Strategic Commissioning

An approach to Strategic Commissioning is being developed by the partnership, which will turn the long-term vision of the Sandwell Plan and LAA into reality. In order to achieve this we will aim to:

- Be clear on the needs of citizens by producing Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and analysis that encompasses:
  - health and well-being
  - community safety
  - local economic assessment
  - strategic assessment for the Sandwell Plan
- Use the analysis to shape overall priorities and resources as part of the budget setting process.
- Involve Sandwell citizens in the service design, standards and decision-making process.
- Adopt practices that are fair and open between different types of providers and actively removing barriers to competition.
- Stimulate delivery capacity from all partners, including through market shaping.<sup>48</sup>

## Our Priorities

After a long period of decline our population is growing again, but household growth and inward migration mean that we need to provide **More and Better Homes (Priority 1)** for people in Sandwell. Our focus is on providing affordable homes, so that first-time buyers have a chance to establish themselves in Sandwell, but also building high-quality homes that will help attract and retain aspirational households. This will involve catering for different needs by building a range of new homes and improving the existing housing stock (especially public sector housing). It will also involve taking action to tackle fuel poverty.

The legacy of poor housing, together with a history of high morbidity rates, high levels of infant mortality, mental health problems and chronic conditions tell us that we have to tackle the causes of ill health in Sandwell. The rate of teenage pregnancy is also high, although reducing. Working towards **Improving Health (Priority 2)** by addressing health inequalities and the causes of ill health, such as diet, exercise, alcohol, smoking and poverty, will be a key challenge for Sandwell.

Helping people to maintain or improve their ability to live independently by lifting themselves out of dependency and into independence, employment and more fulfilling lives is a key issue in Sandwell. **Supporting Independence (Priority 3)** is intended to make a real difference to the lives of people living in Sandwell's most disadvantaged communities.

Over the last four years, Sandwell's crime rates, which have historically been high, have been radically cut and brought into line with regional averages. Maintaining the improvement in crime rates and improving public perceptions of both crime and anti-social behaviour is an ongoing challenge. Recent data indicates that **Reducing High Volume Crime (Priority 4)**, in particular violent crime and acquisitive crime (including domestic burglaries, vehicle crime and robbery), should be a priority in Sandwell.

We know the area has structural problems of poverty, deprivation, ill health and poor attainment. Working to ensure that Sandwell **Children have a Good Start in Life (Priority 5)** is key to breaking a cycle of poor attainment and low aspiration.

Developing **Successful Young People (Priority 6)** who can reach their full potential, requires a concerted effort by Sandwell Partners. This is especially the case for looked after children and young people. It is important to continue to drive up standards in schools and to forge a link between attainment and work. Listening to young people's needs when planning service delivery is an essential part of our approach.

Sandwell's socio-economic conditions have led to a number of challenges for service providers in their bid to promote community cohesion and respect, tackle high levels of anti-social behaviour, and ultimately create **Cleaner, Safer Active Communities (Priority 7)**.

Sandwell exhibits low levels of skill and high levels of worklessness. Educational attainment is also low, although improving. In order to compete in the global economy, skill levels need to be raised and benefit dependency reduced. Concentrating on **More People in Employment (Priority 8)** is therefore a key challenge for Sandwell.

**Educational Attainment (Priority 9)** includes the sixteen statutory attainment indicators defined by the Department for Children, Schools & Families (DCSF).

A set of indicators, from the National Indicator set, is being developed for each of the nine Sandwell priorities. The following section identifies the current proposals for LAA indicators in Sandwell.

In determining our set of indicators for each priority, a focus has been given to a core indicator for each priority. The core indicator will signal progress on achieving the whole priority.

A complete list of all indicators proposed for our LAA is attached at Appendix B to this document.

The development of priorities and indicators has been informed by the 2007/10 Local Area Agreement and its monitoring. Appendix C to this document explains how this LAA relates to the 2007/10 agreement.

#### Fit with the Black Country Strategy

The Sandwell Community Plan and Local Area Agreement proposals have an excellent fit with the Black Country Strategy for Growth and Competitiveness and the Black Country Core Strategy Preferred Options<sup>35</sup>. Appendix D to this document refers.

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<sup>35</sup> [Consultation on preferred options for the physical strategy for the Black Country published March 2008](#)

## Priority 1 – More and Better Homes

The rationale for this priority is that a good home provides the solid foundation that people rely on for all other aspects of their life. Extra provision of good quality homes needs to be achieved at the same time as making the best use of existing housing, recognising that 70% of current housing will still be in existence in 20 years time. This priority helps deliver the Government's agenda as laid out in the Housing Green Paper (Homes for the future; more affordable, more sustainable, July 2007). It is also consistent with the Black Country Core Strategy.

A fundamental principle of Sandwell's Housing Strategy is the recognition and acknowledgement that partnership working is the key to agreeing and delivering the outcomes required to meet the housing agenda in the borough. Consequently, the achievement of our LAA targets is dependent on the strong support and cooperation of partners. A critical success factor of the housing strategy is the ability for a multi agency approach to develop housing interventions, which support and promote economic competitiveness.

The housing markets in Sandwell are complex, requiring a comprehensive and cohesive strategic approach which delivers a variety of solutions to manage and deal with the resultant issues – there is no single answer to the many different housing challenges in the Borough.

### Key Data

#### Population

32% of Sandwell's population<sup>36</sup> live in Super Output Areas, which fall into the worst 10% nationally<sup>37</sup>.

Household growth and inward migration is and will continue to place pressure upon our ability to ensure housing supply meets with housing demand.

#### Housing Demand

Sandwell Homes' choice-based letting scheme indicates there is a strong demand for public-sector housing stock – each property advertised averages 70 bids (August 2006)<sup>38</sup>.

Urban Living data indicates the main reasons given for moving out of the borough include: wanting a different neighbourhood (31%); the quality or appearance of the local environment (27%); wanting a different type of property (25%); wanting a larger home (22%); and problems with neighbours (20%) or children (20%) in the area.<sup>39</sup>

#### Housing Supply

In 2001 around 60% of housing was owner-occupied; 30% was rented from the public sector (25% from Sandwell Council, and 5% from registered social landlords); and a small proportion was rented from private landlords or letting agencies.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> 2001 Census, Office for National Statistics (ONS) © Crown Copyright

<sup>37</sup> Department of Communities and Local Government, Indices of Deprivation 2007, December 2007

<sup>38</sup> Housing Strategy, Sandwell MBC, August 2006

<sup>39</sup> 2005 Urban Living Outmigration Survey

The Centre for Economic and Business Research forecasts a growth of 40% in the private rented sector over the next ten years nationally<sup>40</sup>.

The condition of the housing stock in Sandwell is poor but improving. In 2002/03 80% of council housing did not meet the Decent Homes Standard. By April 2007 this had reduced to 58%.<sup>41</sup> However, 60% of all properties still do not have a reasonable degree of thermal comfort, and over 40% fail on their state of repair.

The need to increase the supply of new houses across the Country is high upon the Government's agenda. In previous years Sandwell's annual housing target has been between 900 – 975 new houses per year<sup>42</sup>.

However, with household sizes becoming smaller due to changing family circumstances and the potential for increasing international migration from the European Union, the demand for housing continues to increase. This means that Sandwell's housing requirement is likely to increase to at least 1400 dwellings per year to 2026. To give an idea of the challenge this presents, this is equivalent to developing an area 3 times the size of Cape Hill Brewery every year for 20 years.

### House Prices

The average house prices in Sandwell, £109,767 in 2006, are considerably lower than the national average of £167,312<sup>43</sup>.

House prices in Great Barr are the highest in the whole of the borough, more than twice the value of prices in Friar Park<sup>43</sup>.

### Affordability

Average house prices in the Borough have increased by 67% over the last 4 years<sup>43</sup>, the increase in house prices has not corresponded with increases in household incomes and there are clear affordability implications for Sandwell's residents, especially for first time buyers.

The average house in Sandwell costs 4.7 times the average household income in the borough.<sup>44</sup>

### Vulnerable people

Supporting vulnerable people to maintain independent living has been chosen as the core indicator in the supporting independence priority. Looked after young people in leaving care leavers at age 19 who are living in suitable accommodation improved significantly from 75% in 2004/05 to 83.3 2005/06 although performance dropped to 80% in 2006/07.

## **Core Indicator**

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<sup>40</sup> Centre for Economic Business Research

<sup>41</sup> 2007 BVPI Survey, Sandwell MBC

<sup>42</sup> 2007, Regional Spatial Strategy

<sup>43</sup> 2006 Domestic Property Values, Land Registry

<sup>44</sup> Affordability of Housing, Research Sandwell, Sandwell MBC, November 2006,

[http://www.researchsandwell.org.uk/research/briefingnotes/Briefing\\_Note\\_1\\_Housing\\_and\\_Affordability\\_2006.pdf](http://www.researchsandwell.org.uk/research/briefingnotes/Briefing_Note_1_Housing_and_Affordability_2006.pdf)

- **NI 154 Net additional homes provided**

Since the late 1990's there have been dramatic changes to the housing market across all tenures both nationally and within Sandwell making supply and affordability key issues. Sandwell's Housing Needs and Demand Study recommends an affordable housing target of up to 40% of new build units<sup>45</sup>. It also notes that we need to make better use of our existing housing.

Given the changing market conditions, it is important that net housing supply is produced at a speed, which accommodates household growth and need.

### **Supporting Indicators**

- **NI 155 Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)**

Sandwell consistently lags behind private sector house prices nationally and in the region. Average house prices in Sandwell have increased by 55.5% between our 2003 2007<sup>46</sup>. Whilst this reflects the increase in the region overall, the relative gap remains between prices in Sandwell and our neighbouring areas. The increase in house prices locally has not corresponded with increases in household incomes and there are clear affordability implications for Sandwell's residents.

- **NI 158 % decent council homes**

According to the Government, A decent home is one which is wind and weather tight, warm and has modern facilities'. The Government made it their priority to reverse the decades of neglect and this standard was to be the cornerstone for improving people's quality of life in the home.

The condition of the housing stock in Sandwell is poor but improving. In 2002/03 some 80% of Council housing did not meet the Decent Homes Standard. Since then a major programme of work, much of which has been undertaken in partnership with the Council's Arms Length Management Organisation and a PFI Partner, has resulted in this being reduced to 57.81% by April 2007.

- **NI 187 Tackling fuel poverty – percentage people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low efficiency rating**

Fuel poverty is crucial in terms of preventing winter deaths, reducing CO2 emissions, reducing waste, reducing poverty and improving housing. Through its affordable warmth strategy, Sandwell already targets vulnerable households with investment being delivered through the warm zone team for occupants in fuel poverty.

Fuel poverty is defined as those households that cannot afford to keep adequately warm at a reasonable cost, generally spending 10% of their income on fuel bills. Successful delivery of this indicator will require a comprehensive approach across a number of thematic areas complementing existing efforts to ensure that fuel poverty is significantly reduced across the borough.

### **Key Actions**

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<sup>45</sup> Housing Needs and Demand Study, DCA, 2007

<sup>46</sup> Comprehensive Housing Needs Study 2003 and 2007

- Implement the Housing Strategy.
- Completion of the Decent Homes programme.
- Ensure supply of housing land for new build developments meets the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) targets.
- Making the best use of existing housing through initiatives to free up under occupied three bedroom homes.
- Balancing the supply of affordable and aspirational housing through effective use of 106 agreements.
- Develop the level of support provided for vulnerable people.
- Implement housing interventions, which support economic competitiveness.
- Further strengthen the role of Strategic Housing Partnership.

## Priority 2 – Improving Health

### Key Data

We have prioritised work on reducing premature deaths from coronary heart disease since progress has slowed in recent years and the England average continues to improve at a faster rate. A significant amount of work is underway in identifying those at risk, underpinned by the existing Local Area Agreement stretch targets on smoking quitters and alcohol interventions. Cross-cutting priorities are reflected in our work with other Sandwell Partnership themes on breast feeding, childhood obesity, fuel poverty and out-of-work benefits.

#### Life Expectancy

Life expectancy is improving but Sandwell remains in the bottom fifth of English Local Authorities and Primary Care Trusts (PCTs). Life Expectancy for men is 74.4 years (2.5 years less than England average) and for woman 79.4 years (1.7 years less than England average)<sup>47</sup>.

The majority of deaths in Sandwell are caused by cardiovascular disease (CVD) causing two out of five deaths (or 38.25% of all deaths)<sup>48</sup>, of which, coronary heart disease (CHD) attributes 18.2% and stroke 11.3% of all deaths. Men are twice as likely to die from CHD than women<sup>48</sup>. One in three people develop cancer during their lives<sup>49</sup>, and one in four die from cancer<sup>48</sup>.

Other causes of deaths are respiratory disease causing 14% of deaths, alcohol-related deaths 2% of deaths and the rate of accidents in the population aged over 64 is also notable at 1% of all deaths registered in Sandwell between 2002 and 2006.

Sandwell's death rate has fallen at a steady rate since 1999 (104 deaths per 100,000 population since 1999). However, the rate of improvement has been bettered in both the wider region and nationally. As a consequence the gap between Sandwell and the West Midlands and the National has widened.

We are proposing to use indicator NI 121 within the LAA as it directly addresses a primary cause of mortality in Sandwell and allows a focus to be given to inequalities apparent in Sandwell. The main driver for the inequalities in the All Age All Cause Mortality (AAACM) rate in Sandwell is Cardio Vascular Disease (CVD). Deaths from circulatory disease is main contributor to deaths in Sandwell; it kills 1 in 3 males and 1 in 4 females.

The reasons for choosing to focus on CVD rather than AAACM in the Sandwell LAA are:

- We believe that focussing on CVD will have short-term and long-term impacts on health in Sandwell.
- CVD is a local priority and is understood and owned by local partners. There is the potential to improve AAACM by targeting CVD interventions to close the gap on both an equalities and geographic basis.

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<sup>47</sup> ODPM Floor Target Interactive, Life Expectancy 1996 to 2004, January 2007

<sup>48</sup> Mortality Figures, Deaths Registered 2002 to 2006 Office for National Statistics 2007 and Research Sandwell 2007

<sup>49</sup> Office for National Statistics September 2006

- A focus on CVD is reflected in other national indicators selected for this LAA (child obesity, adult participation in sport) and in stretch targets carried forward from the 2007 LAA (Smoking Quitters).

Smoking contributes to high rates of deaths from cancer and heart disease. Efforts continue to reduce this through smoking cessation and tobacco control with emphasis on targeting specific groups (pregnant women, manual workers, young people). This has resulted in 1 in 200 children aged between 12 and 15 registering with the Stop Smoking Service by June 2005.<sup>50</sup> 1,341 people (71.48% of target) reached the 4 week quit point on the NHS Stop Smoking Service programme in Quarter 2 2007/08.

In addition to smoking cessation, tackling alcohol is a priority. Sandwell has higher rates of hospital stays for alcohol-specific conditions and is significantly worse when compared to England for male alcohol-specific hospital admissions. Sandwell's rate is 490.06, which is 1.4 times higher than the England average of 339.7. Females alcohol-specific hospital admission are not significantly different at 177.3 for Sandwell and 162.5 nationally<sup>51</sup>. Efforts to address this are through extended brief alcohol interventions and healthy lifestyle promotion.

Increasing rates of obesity contribute to type-2 diabetes, cancer and heart disease. 39% of the 16+ population in Birmingham and the Black Country Strategic Health Authority area in 2000-2002 are overweight (BMI 25 - 30)<sup>52</sup> (38.7% for England) and 24.9% of the 16+ population are obese (BMI over 30) which is significantly higher than the national average of 22.0%.

19.3% of the adult population takes part regularly in sport and active recreation<sup>53</sup> in the West Midlands region. Across the Local Authorities within the region the figure ranges from a high of 25.6% in Stafford to a low of 14.9% in Sandwell (the national figure is 21%)<sup>54</sup>.

There is an above average percentage of the total population with a limiting long-term illness, 21.7%<sup>55</sup>, when compared with the England & Wales figure of 18.2%.

### Fuel Poverty

At the time of the 2001 Census 18.1% of households in Sandwell had no central heating, this was exceptionally high when compared to England & Wales which was 8.5%<sup>56</sup>.

<sup>50</sup> Stop Smoking Service, Sandwell Primary Care Trusts: April 2004 to June 2005, Population numbers taken from Census Area Statistics 2001 Census, Office for National Statistics © Crown Copyright 2001

<sup>51</sup> Local Alcohol Profiles for England, <http://www.nwph.net/alcohol/lape/LAProfile.aspx?reg=f>, Persons admitted to hospital due to alcohol-specific conditions (all ages), directly standardised rate per 100,000 population, 2005/06. (NWPHO from Hospital Episodes Statistics and Office for National Statistics mid-year population estimates). Does not include attendance at A&E.

<sup>52</sup> 16 years and over age-standardised percent Source: NCHOD, The Information Centre for health and social care. © Crown Copyright. Compendium of Clinical and Health Indicators / Clinical and Health Outcomes Knowledge Base ([www.nchod.nhs.uk](http://www.nchod.nhs.uk)) Health Surveys for England - National Centre for Social Research

<sup>53</sup> Regular participation in sport and active recreation is defined as taking part on at least three days a week in moderate intensity sport and active recreation (at least 12 days in the last 4 weeks) for at least 30 minutes continuously in any one session. Participation includes recreational walking and cycling.

<sup>54</sup> Active People Survey 2005/06, Sport England, 7th December 2006  
[http://www.sportengland.org/index/get\\_resources/research/active\\_people.htm](http://www.sportengland.org/index/get_resources/research/active_people.htm)

<sup>55</sup> Key Statistics 2001 Census, Office for National Statistics © Crown Copyright 2001

<sup>56</sup> Key Statistics 2001 Census, Office for National Statistics © Crown Copyright 2001

Greets Green Partnership reported 33.4% households having no central heating, but according to a recent survey of the Greets Green area this has been reduced to 10.2% of households without central heating.<sup>57</sup>

### **Core Indicator**

- **NI 121 Mortality rate from all circulatory diseases at ages under 75**

Sandwell partners have chosen to include NI 121 as the most appropriate indicator to help improve mortality in Sandwell. Coronary heart disease is improving but the pace has slowed in recent years compared with the rates nationally. Deaths from circulatory disease is the main contributor to deaths in Sandwell; it kills 1 in 3 males and 1 in 4 females.

There is a strong evidence base of the benefits which prevention and treatment actions can bring to circulatory disease rates.

Partners have in place a strong set of partnership actions which will bring both short term and long-term benefits. Short term actions include stop smoking, support for public information, physical health of mentally ill people, carers and occupational health. Long-term actions include air quality, winter warmth, anti-poverty, food access, fitness and activity.

### **Supporting Indicators**

- **NI 8 Adult participation in sport and active recreation**

Only 14.9% of Sandwell residents take part in the recommended 30 minutes of sport/active recreation three times a week<sup>58</sup>. Sandwell is ranked 351 out of the 354 authorities taking part in the active people survey. Sandwell also performs poorly against national and regional averages for taking part in competitive sport. In Sandwell 10.7% of adults take part in competitive sport in comparison to 13.9% in the West Midlands and 15% nationally. Visits to gyms in leisure centres in Sandwell are also down by 10,000 visits between 2005/6 and 2007/8. The low levels of sport participation are reflected in Sandwell's poor ranking for the percentage of people who volunteer. Sandwell is ranked 334 out of 354 authorities.

### **Key Actions**

- Targeting priority wards - Closing the gap (in CVD and Cancer)
- Stress the important role of Environmental Health & Trading Standards in relation to underpinning work on tobacco and alcohol control.
- Increase awareness and access to smoking cessation services. Targeting higher risk groups.
- Work with Children & Young People Partnership to reduce childhood obesity and encourage breast feeding.
- Increase awareness and accessibility to schemes such as ANCHOR, Aquarius and other drug and alcohol help initiatives.
- Increase and promote child & adult physical activity In Sandwell.

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<sup>57</sup> Greets Green Partnership 'In-house' Household Survey 2006/07

<sup>58</sup> Source: 2006 Active People Survey

- Promotion of primary intervention schemes such as Sandwell CVD Risk Programme and Statin therapies.
- Work more closely with Warmzone, Supporting People, Housing Market Renewal Area and housing services, bring all homes (both public and private sector) up to an acceptable standard of warmth and general amenities.
- A new partnership Physical Activity Board chaired by the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure.
- The revision of the PE and Sport Strategy to encompass Physical Activity.

## Priority 3 – Supporting Independence

### Key Data

#### An ageing population

Using the latest 2029 sub-national projections from ONS it is estimated that the over 50s population will have risen by 16,800 from 2006 (an increase of 18.2% by 2029)<sup>59</sup>.

By 2008, it is estimated that in Sandwell there will be:

- Almost 15,000 people aged over 65 who are unable to perform at least one self-care activity on their own (these activities include: bathing, showering, dressing and undressing, feeding oneself and cutting toenails). By 2025 this will rise to 17,000.<sup>60</sup>
- 7,100 people aged 65 and over will be unable to manage at least one mobility activity on their own. Activities include: going out of doors and walking down the road; getting up and down stairs; getting around the house on the level; getting to the toilet; getting in and out of bed. This is set to rise to 8,300 by 2025.

There is an above average percentage of the total population with a limiting long-term illness, 21.7%<sup>61</sup>, when compared with the England & Wales figure of 18.2%.

10.6% of Sandwell's population provide unpaid care, of which 2.8% provide 50 or more hours per week of unpaid care<sup>62</sup>. The figures are 10% and 2.1% for the National average.

1.22% of Sandwell's Population receives Carers Allowance compared with 0.77% nationally.<sup>63</sup>

62.8% of the population aged between 50 and retirement age are in employment, this is low when compared to the West Midlands 72.4% and Great Britain 71.0%.

The latest claimant count for unemployment for Sandwell is 4.1 for the working age population, this is comparatively high against West Midlands and England 2.9 and 2.1 respectively.<sup>64</sup>

5.72% of Sandwell's Population are in receipt of Incapacity benefit (IB) or Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA). This compares with a national figure of 4.27% of the population. In Sandwell, over half (54.5%) have been claiming for over 5 years<sup>65</sup>.

#### Vulnerable Young People

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<sup>59</sup> 2029 sub national projections based on the revised 2004 Mid Year Estimates, Office for National Statistics (ONS) released 27th September 2007.

<sup>60</sup> Bridgwood, A. (1998) People Aged 65 and Over: Results of an Independent Study Carried Out on Behalf of the Department of Health as Part of the 1998 General Household Survey, page 46.

The prevalence rates have been applied to ONS population projections of the 65 and over population to give estimated numbers predicted to be unable to manage at least one of the self-care activities listed, to 2025.

<sup>61</sup> Key Statistics 2001 Census, Office for National Statistics © Crown Copyright 2001

<sup>62</sup> Key Statistics 2001 Census, Office for National Statistics © Crown Copyright 2001

<sup>63</sup> Carers Allowance benefit payments, May 2007, ONS Crown Copyright Reserved, Nomis 16/01/08

<sup>64</sup> Claimant count of unemployment, December 2007, Proportion of resident working age population estimates, ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 16 January 2008]

<sup>65</sup> Incapacity & Severe Disablement benefit, May 2007, ONS Crown Copyright Reserved, Nomis 16/01/08

The Sandwell Supporting People Strategy identifies supporting the independence of vulnerable young people as a priority. Groups targeted are substance abusers, offenders including young offenders, single people with complex needs and challenging behaviour. The Housing strategy seeks to meet the needs of these vulnerable young people to prevent underlying issues causing homelessness. Partners are targeting services (including housing) to these groups. Targeting cross-references to a number of indicators in the LAA especially: actions to reduce the level of young people Not in Education Employment or Training (NI 117); the rate of Proven Reoffending by Young Offenders (NI 19).

### **Core Indicator**

- **NI 142 Number of vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living**

This indicator measures the extent to which housing related support prevents service users from moving into institutional care. Most people want to live independently and maintain their independence throughout their lives. This indicator is aimed at measuring the percentage of people in receipt of Supporting People services who achieve and maintain independence, thereby preventing them from going into institutions in either the short or long-term.

This indicator is core to achieving the central goals of Supporting People services and is representative of the Council's objectives around independent living. Vulnerable people within the community are able to achieve a better quality of life which is measured through the Supporting People Outcomes framework. Current performance is good and meets government set targets. This performance will be affected by the introduction of more services for people with complex needs. Work will be undertaken jointly with the Safer Sandwell Partnership to ensure that service providers support successful move-on thereby enabling greater stability for those at higher risk.

### **Supporting Indicators**

- **NI 124 People with a long-term condition supported to be independent and in control of their condition**

The management of people with long-term conditions is critical to the 2010 modernising agenda, including the plan to reduce hospital beds. This is a significant issue for Health and Social Care and in engaging Primary Care.

- **NI 130 Social care clients receiving Self Directed Support (Direct Payments and Individual Budgets)**

The profile of Direct Payments and Individualised Budgets has increased considerably as the Government has issued policy guidance on a major push for Older People's services. This reinforces the centrality of this issue to independence i.e. personalisation.

### **Key Actions**

- Driving forward personalisation agenda in relation to direct payments and individualised budgets, underpinned by work on Advocacy, self directed care and public information.
- Progressing service modernisation plans for people with long-term conditions, vulnerable adults and older people, alongside other key developments in the 2010 programme.
- Development of Extra Care Housing.
- Placing greater emphasis on rehabilitation and developing a wider range of preventative services.

- Encourage unemployed people back to work, either through increased training, or even considering reductions in benefits for long-term unemployed, increasing support offered to vulnerable groups, such as older people and those with learning difficulties.
- Develop joint approach that will enable those with complex needs achieve greater stability.

## Priority 4 – Reducing High Volume Crime

### Key Data

Overall levels of crime in Sandwell have fallen by 28% between 2003/04 and 2006/07<sup>66</sup>. However, despite the falling pattern of recorded crime, local residents are still concerned about community safety issues. The consultation on the Sandwell Plan highlighted community safety as residents' key concern. Council 'Viewpoint' surveys have also indicated that residents rank 'crime' as the most important issue in Sandwell.

Violent crime represents one of the highest risks to the borough and accounted for 24% of all recorded crime in April – December 2007. Domestic violence represents 25% of all<sup>67</sup> violent crime in Sandwell. Sandwell's rate of serious woundings is higher than the average of most similar Crime Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) areas.<sup>68</sup>

Acquisitive crime constitutes another high volume crime in Sandwell. Domestic burglary, vehicle crime and robbery formed 25% of total crime during April – December 2007.<sup>69</sup> Following successive decreases over the past 5 years, domestic burglary has seen an increase of 34% in the year to date (April –December 2007) compared to the same period in the previous year. Sandwell's domestic burglary rate is also higher than the average in<sup>70</sup> our most similar CDRP family group.

In terms of robbery, whilst there have been reductions during 2007/08, the rate remains high compared to others in the most similar CDRP family group<sup>71</sup>. Sandwell is the third worst in this group.

### Core Indicators

- **NI 15 Serious violent crime rate**

Government Office expects a focus on reducing violent crime. Whilst crime reduced<sup>72</sup> in 2006/7 by 2.6% and there were significant decreases in key crime categories, violent crime actually increased by 4.5% in the same period. During April – December 2007, violent crimes accounted for 24% of all recorded crime in Sandwell. Our rate of violent crime is above average for our Most Similar CDRP Family Group. Approximately 25% of violent crime is domestic violence. Violent crime is also linked to alcohol issues and a significant proportion of violence relates to the night-time economy. Whilst there have been reductions year-to-date in violent crime, there has been an increase in the most serious of those offences.

- **NI 16 Serious acquisitive crime rate**

Whilst there have been significant decreases in domestic burglary and vehicle crime over<sup>73</sup> the past 5 years in Sandwell, these crimes remain high volume crimes for Sandwell and accounted for 22% of all crimes during April-December 2007. Furthermore, domestic

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<sup>66</sup> West Midlands Police Data

<sup>67</sup> West Midlands Police Data

<sup>68</sup> iQuanta, Home Office Website

<sup>69</sup> West Midlands Police Data

<sup>70</sup> iQuanta, Home Office Website

<sup>71</sup> iQuanta, Home Office Website

<sup>72</sup> West Midlands Police Data

<sup>73</sup> West Midlands Police Data

burglary has increased by 34% during this period compared to the same period previous year.

## **Supporting Indicators**

- **NI 19 Rate of proven re-offending by young offenders**

Work to reduce youth offending and prevent further re-offending is a key strand of the government's national crime strategy. Reducing youth offending is also a local priority. Young offenders often have a number of risk factors including mental health; drug or alcohol issues; employment; education; housing needs etc. Work with young offenders therefore links to other priorities in the LAA including "Successful Young People".

- **NI 30 Re-offending rate of prolific and priority offenders**

A small number of prolific and priority offenders are responsible for a disproportionate number of offences which cause significant harm to individuals and communities. Government's national crime strategy continues to focus on reoffending. Targeted work with this prolific and priority offenders will support work to reduce high volume crime and reduce repeat offending. Reducing reoffending requires work to address housing, employment and training issues for this target group.

- **Young offenders into education, training and employment (existing stretch indicator)**

In order to help reduce offending, young offenders need support with breaking any emerging patterns of offending behaviour. Access to education, training and employment opportunities for young offenders is crucial to reducing their future offending. This indicator supports work to reduce reoffending and ultimately helps to reduce high volume crime. It also contributes to the other LAA priorities of "More People into Employment" and "Successful Young People"

## **Key Actions**

- Robust supervision and management of prolific and other priority offenders – by Offender Management Teams
- Police/Probation/Partnership action
- Interventions to address alcohol – related violent crime
- Providing effective and accessible drug and alcohol services – SMBC/PCT
- Support to high risk victims of domestic violence (SOADA) – SMBC
- Providing effective youth offending services – SMBC
- Provision of positive activities for young people (SMBC)

## Priority 5 – Children Having a Good Start in Life

This priority recognises that to deliver Sandwell's ambitions in the long-term, children having a good start to life is critical and early intervention is preferable to remedial action later in life. This reflects our preventative strategy approach, which is to build into all our services early intervention where possible. The Every Child Matters agenda challenges us to ensure we deliver on five key outcome areas and this is a priority for both the Council and the Partnership.

The Annual Performance Assessment and our Priorities meeting with GOWM has helped us to clarify areas of challenge and focused our priorities. These are reflected in our Children & Young People's Plan and the actions contained therein. The indicators chosen will assist us in working with all partners to deliver our ambitious agenda.

Obesity is a key area to address and we have instigated a Sandwell-wide measurement programme in line with the national body mass index programme. We are currently analysing the data from the initial survey and are putting in place a strategy to encompass referral and treatment to reduce the current levels.

Sandwell has made significant and sustained progress in improving children's social care. Projections against our current performance show continued improvement.

### Key Data

#### Obesity

Obesity amongst children in Sandwell is relatively high compared to the rest of England. In the 2007/08 academic year, over 19% of all Year 6 children in Sandwell measured had a Body Mass Index of over 30 and are obese<sup>74</sup>. This links to a high adult obesity prevalence and indicates an area of concern for public health and the future well-being of our community.

#### Infant Mortality

Infant mortality rates within Sandwell remain high. In 2003-2005 the rate per 1,000 live births was 7.5, which is significantly higher than the England average of 5.1 deaths per 1,000 live births.

#### Teenage Pregnancy

The rate of teenage pregnancy in Sandwell is significantly higher than the England average at 62.1 (41.1 England and 45.3 for West Midlands). Encouragingly, improvements have been seen in both the rate, which has fallen by 10.1% since 1996 and also the age at first pregnancy, which has risen<sup>75</sup>. Overall there has been a slight decline in the under 18 conception rate of -10.1% between 1998 and 2005<sup>76</sup>. Sandwell exceeded its 2004 target to achieve a reduction of 15% with an actual 18.1% reduction. However the rate increased in 2005. This prompted a review of the Teenage Pregnancy

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<sup>74</sup> Sandwell PCT, October 2007

<sup>75</sup> LAD1 Trend analysis, Teenage Pregnancy Analysis Spreadsheet, April version 3.2, Teenage Pregnancy Unit, DfES

<sup>76</sup> [Teenage Pregnancy](#)

Strategy and further activity put in place to target the most vulnerable young people. It is recognised that Sandwell has a challenging target to achieve a 55% reduction by 2010.

### Exclusions from school

The rates of permanent exclusions from secondary schools has proved difficult to impact on and whilst we have seen a brief drop in this area during 2004/05 it has recently increased back to its high point of 77. However primary school exclusions have reduced during 2006/07<sup>77</sup> but there is a need to continue to ensure the trend is maintained.

### Child Poverty

The proportion of children living in poverty in Sandwell is high and this is spread across the Borough fairly evenly in line with Sandwell being overall a deprived area. According to the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index, for 2007, Sandwell ranks as 24<sup>th</sup> most deprived authority, based on the ranking of average local super output area (LSOA) scores for this index. Sandwell's position appears to have remained static since 2004.

### Breast Feeding

Current information locally on breast feeding at 6 weeks shows that there is a 34% rate based on available data of around 25% of the cohort that is available at this time. In comparison the West Midlands average is 44%, and nationally it is 50%<sup>78</sup>. The region is the third worst for breast feeding initiation rates and Sandwell is the worst performing PCT in the region<sup>79</sup>

The Department of Health has recognised the potential impact on public health to be gained by increasing rates of breast feeding with particular focus on socially excluded groups.

The "NHS Plan"<sup>80</sup> prioritises the reduction of health inequalities and so draws attention to the wide variation in breast feeding prevalence in the different socio economic groups. Lack of breast feeding contributes to the increased morbidity (ill health) and mortality seen in the lowest socio economic groups.

Research evidence suggests that increasing breast feeding rates could positively impact on cancer rates (in both the infant and mother), the long-term coronary health of the infant,<sup>81</sup> improve cognitive development in the infant and reduce the incidence of immune related diseases (e.g. Type 1 diabetes and inflammatory bowel disease)<sup>82</sup>.

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<sup>77</sup> [State of Sandwell Report, 2006](#)

<sup>78</sup> West Midlands Strategic Health Authority, 2006/07 figures for 6-8 week breast feeding status.

<sup>79</sup> ONS Infant Feeding Survey. Evidence Appendix NI 53

<sup>80</sup> Department of Health, 2000

<sup>81</sup> Extracted from "Infant Feeding Initiative" an evaluation of 79 practice projects 1999-2002 Dept of Health

<sup>82</sup> Long-term effects of breast feeding on the infant and mother. Nielsen, Larnkjaer and Michaelsen 2005.

## Core Indicator

- **NI 56 Obesity among primary school age children in Year 6**

Within Sandwell we recognise that there is a major problem with obesity in our children. We will be prioritising this area to address this problem through a number of initiatives. It is an indicator of how successful a range of other strategies are e.g. healthy schools, extended schools, PE/sport strategy, play strategy and school travel plans, all of which contribute to reducing obesity in our children and young people.

## Supporting Indicators

- **NI 112 Under 18 conception rate**

Research shows babies born to young parents are less likely to thrive and flourish. This indicator is complementary to 'successful young people'.

- **NI 114 Rate of permanent exclusions from school**

This is key to improving educational outcomes. This indicator is also a key measure of young people's prospects for the future – it is a predictor of later unemployment, low income and involvement in crime.

- **NI 116 Proportion of children in poverty**

Addressing poverty is a key action to ensure children have a good start to life. This indicator will give a picture of how well services and activities are co-ordinated to reduce worklessness and poverty and the tailoring of solutions to meet local needs. It is an indicator that will help drive multi-agency activity across local agencies.

- **NI 53 Prevalence of breast feeding at 6 – 8 weeks from Birth**

We see the prevalence of breast feeding at 6 – 8 weeks as an important indicator for health inequality and we need to invest to improve this to reduce infant mortality and health and well-being of children and young people.

## Key Actions

- Finalise and deliver the obesity strategy.
- Ensure early access to maternity care to support increased take-up of breast feeding.
- Ensure the Children's Centre roll out continues on timescale.
- Delivery of Child Care Guarantee.
- Deliver the revised teenage pregnancy strategy.

## Priority 6 – Successful Young People

This priority addresses the need to continue to support young people whilst also focusing on early intervention as a long-term priority. Some progress has been made within children's services to improve outcomes. Levels of participation by young people in positive activities have increased steadily since 2005/06 from 30% of the cohort with recorded outcomes to 39% having recorded outcomes in 2006/07. The picture is similar for young people with accredited outcomes where in 2005/06 10% of the cohort gained an accredited outcome this rose to 15% in 2006/07.

Young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) are seen as a core indicator as it demonstrates the success that interventions and services provided are having a positive longer term effect. This supports the aim of ensuring more young people move out of poverty and subsequently there will be fewer families living in poverty thus breaking the cycle of deprivation.

Some of our most needy young people are those who are looked after and those who end up committing offences. These groups are chosen as particularly needing targeting recognising the specific needs such young people have which need to be addressed to enable them to be successful.

Sandwell has established a Corporate Parenting Board to oversee the Corporate Parenting role. The intention is to prioritise the needs of looked after children and young people ensuring their care, education, leisure and overall well-being as well as supporting their transition to adulthood. A board of looked after young people, (the LAC Board) meets regularly to promote the views of those in care. Two members of this board also sit on the Corporate Parenting Board to enable looked after children and young people to participate in the development of services that affect them.

### Key Data

#### Education, Employment & Training

Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) in Sandwell is at comparatively high rates. This is as a consequence of a number of factors, including lack of success in learning, low local aspiration and a challenging economic environment. Success in reducing NEET will reflect success in raising attainment, improving health, reducing risky behaviour and improving the employment opportunities on offer to young people.

Level 3 qualifications at 19 figures show that in 2006, Sandwell was ranked in the bottom 2% of local authority districts nationally<sup>83</sup>. With employers demanding higher levels of skills than this there is a national push for at least level 3 and often higher.

In Sandwell, the number of Full Time Entrants (18 to 20-year-olds) entering higher education institutions has risen from 810 in 1999/2000 to 1,035 in 2005/2006. This is an increase of about 28%, which compares favourably with the Black Country as a whole (up by 21%), and the National picture (an 18% increase)<sup>84</sup>. Nevertheless, as a proportion of

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<sup>83</sup> Labour Force Survey

<sup>84</sup> DCSF, [In your area statistics](#)

young people aged 18-20 (based on 2006 mid-year estimates), Sandwell still performs poorly compared with the Black Country.<sup>85</sup>

Sandwell has the highest proportion of young people claiming Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) in the West Midlands<sup>86</sup>.

### Youth Justice

We have noted a recent increase against the target to reduce by 5% first time entrants to the youth justice system<sup>87</sup>. Local analysis of data suggests that our services are geared towards 8 to 13 year olds. However our most recent first time entrants are over 14, hence the need to refocus our services to respond to the trend analysis. This will be done within the context of the redevelopment of our targeted and integrated youth support service.

The number of first time entrants to the youth justice system in Sandwell has increased since 2005/6. In that year, there were 608 first time entrants (FTEs) in Sandwell. In 2006/7 the numbers increased by 16% to 708 FTEs. Whilst projections based on current year to date information indicate that the numbers in 2007/8 should have fallen slightly since 2006/7, it is anticipated that there may still be a 13% increase compared to 2005/6.

The age of FTEs has increased over the past 3 years. During 2005/6 and 2006/7, the largest numbers of FTEs were 14-16 year olds. During the first three quarters of 2007/8, the largest numbers were 15-17 year olds. There has also been a significant and steady increase in young women as FTEs in the past 3 years. In 2005/6, 26% of FTEs were female, in 2006/7 49%, and in the year to date 2007/8 66%. There has also been a decrease in the percentage of white FTEs. In 2005/6, 72% were white, in 2006/7 69% and year to date 2007/8 65%. Black and Asian FTEs have increased slightly over the three years and those whose ethnicity is unknown has increased by 5%.

### **Core Indicator**

- **NI 117 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, training or employment (NEET)**

This indicator links to Sandwell's cross-cutting agenda and is a key area for improvement as identified by our priorities meetings. It is also an area for improvement arising from the Annual Performance Assessment (APA). NEETs is a key measure of young people's prospects for the future, it is a predictor of later unemployment, low income and involvement in crime.

### **Supporting Indicators**

- **NI 106 Young people from low income backgrounds progressing to higher education**

This reflects targeting of the effects of poverty and reduction in poverty, and seeks both to raise standards and narrow attainment gaps. Levels of poverty are consistently high across the borough and this is also a supporting indicator of reductions in child poverty.

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<sup>85</sup> Evidence appendix NI 106

<sup>86</sup> Black Country LSC

<sup>87</sup> DCLG, [Floor Targets Interactive](#)

- **NI 111 First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10 – 17**

This indicator will measure the effectiveness of Sandwell's multi agency strategy to prevent youth crime. It is connected to truancy, low attainment, substance abuse and is hugely detrimental to young people's ability to achieve. Delivery is linked across to Safer Sandwell Partnership.

**Key Actions**

- Increase progression of young people into further/higher education and employment.
- Increasing young people's participation and engagement in education and training, and positive activities.
- Establish achievement of NVQ level 2 or equivalent as a minimum achievement at age 19.
- Deliver the integrated and targeted youth support services.
- Deliver the Corporate Parenting Strategy

## Priority 7 – Cleaner Safer Active Communities

Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) and street cleanliness feature regularly and consistently as priorities in resident consultation exercises. Community cohesion is also a high priority for local people; this is identified as a desire to live in neighbourhoods where 'people get on well together'<sup>88</sup>.

In the consultation on the Sandwell Plan, residents, partner agencies and political leaders identified the environment to be a strategic issue for us. Sandwell council has signed an environmental charter and is seeking support from other agencies in Sandwell to this approach.

This priority addresses issues of: street cleanliness; recycling; satisfaction with tackling antisocial behaviour; improving community cohesion; and engaging communities. Work on this priority complements the LAA priority of 'Supporting Independence', as improved perceptions of community safety enables vulnerable people to live longer independently.

### Key Data

#### Community Cohesion

A recent report on community cohesion in Sandwell has highlighted that, whilst there are not the same levels of problems here as elsewhere in the country, there are issues which the borough needs to address<sup>89</sup>. Our ASB Survey<sup>90</sup> has revealed that a high proportion (77% of respondents) agreed that their neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.

#### Anti-Social Behaviour

A third of people surveyed in the March 2007 ASB survey who don't walk alone after dark said it was because they were too scared to go out. The "Tell Us" survey of young people<sup>91</sup> highlighted that young people felt less safe around their area and on public transport than their national counterparts. The two things that Sandwell young people said would make their local area a better place to live were cleaner (less litter) and safer (less crime).

#### Clean Streets & Green Spaces

Residents' rank clean streets as the second most important issue in making somewhere a good place to live, and this is the second thing most in need of improvement in Sandwell.

The ASB survey found that although the majority of residents judge the cleanliness standard of their neighbourhood to be average or better, they are less positive about the standard of cleanliness in their local town centre.

Over a third of residents disagree that the Council is working to make the area cleaner and greener

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<sup>88</sup> Sandwell Plan consultation, 2007

<sup>89</sup> Review of Community Cohesion in Sandwell Final Report - All of Us. Institute of Community Cohesion 2006

<sup>90</sup> Sandwell Council Community Safety ASB survey, September 2007

<sup>91</sup> OFSTED, [Tell Us Survey](#)

In 2006/07, 20.5% of all Sandwell household waste was sent for recycling and composting; 13% for energy recovery; and 66.5% sent to landfill. The predicted outturn for 2007/08 is 26% for recycling and composting; 8.5% for energy recovery; and 65.5% to landfill<sup>92</sup>. The recycling and composting rate continues to improve annually, however, access to energy recovery facilities has been limited in the current year. The Waste Strategy for England 2007 requires that 50% of all waste must be recycled by 2020.

Whilst there is a large amount of green space in Sandwell (largely due to Sandwell Valley), the quality of all green space averages only 34 out of a possible 100 points<sup>93</sup>.

### Core Indicator

- **NI 5 Overall/general satisfaction with the local area**

In agreeing the 2007-10 Local Area Agreement an equivalent measure (satisfaction with the local area as place to live) was agreed as a stretch indicator. Partners recognised this as an indicator of broad satisfaction with the services provided and the outcomes achieved.

- **Satisfaction with local area as a place to live (existing stretch indicator)**

The delivery of this stretch target is central to work on the priority of Safer, Cleaner and Active Communities. The achievement of this stretch target is dependent upon work to address antisocial behaviour, cleanliness, cohesion and community engagement, all of which are key elements of what makes people satisfied that a local area is a good place to live.

### Supporting Indicators – Community Cohesion

- **NI 1 Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area**

Creating cohesive communities is a major government policy theme. Recent local community consultation has highlighted this as a priority and a recent report on community cohesion in Sandwell<sup>94</sup> identifies issues which need to be addressed. Partners are committed to an action plan to promote cohesion which is expected to result in a "statistically significant"<sup>95</sup> to NI 1. Work on cohesion relates to all areas of the LAA including education, housing, regeneration and economic development as well as community safety. Appendix E to this document outlines our approach to Cohesion in Sandwell.

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- **NI 4 Percentage of people who feel that they can influence decisions in their locality**

<sup>92</sup> 2006/07 Sandwell Waste Strategy, Sandwell MBC

<sup>93</sup> Green Space Audit, 2006

<sup>94</sup> The "All of Us – Building Cohesion Between Town and Neighbourhoods: A New Narrative for Sandwell" (December 2006).

<sup>95</sup> [Definition of Statistically significant to be agreed](#)

The partnership is keen to involve local people in addressing the issues which affect them in their areas. This indicator is a key indicator to reflect people's confidence about their abilities to shape and determine what happens in their area. Although Sandwell performs slightly better than the national average on this indicator (33% compared to 31.8% in 2006) the partnership sees this indicator as a key measure of our success in re-engaging the community in decision-making.

### **NI 35 Building Resilience to Violent Extremism**

This indicator is currently not confirmed but is subject to consultation with local communities. However Sandwell Council and Sandwell Partnership confirm their commitment to tackle terrorism and are actively preparing an action plan to build resilience against terrorism.

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### **Supporting Indicators – Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)**

- **NI 21 Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police**

Residents tell us that tackling ASB is a priority for them. Whilst there have been significant decreases in recorded crime in Sandwell, residents are still concerned about community safety issues. This gap in public perception seems largely related to issues of antisocial behaviour and low-level nuisance. Problems such as "litter and rubbish" and "teenagers hanging around streets" has consistently appeared within local surveys as being of major concern to the public.

### **Supporting Indicators – Cleaner, Safer, Greener**

- **NI 186 Per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the LA area**

Sandwell council has produced and endorsed the Sandwell Declaration on Climate Change which aims to deliver the action that is required. This is being discussed with partners in order to roll out this practice. Putting things into context, local authorities and their partners have an important but limited ability to secure the national carbon savings contained in the UK Climate Change Plan. For Sandwell, DEFRA estimate that between 2004 and 2010 there should be a 12% (314,600 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>) reduction in borough wide carbon dioxide emissions. Of this overall reduction, only 1.3% (33,800 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>) would come from local partnership measures alone. A further 3.3% (85,800 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>) will come from national measures with local partnership influence. The majority, 7.5% (195,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>) would come purely from national measures.

The estimated figures produced by DEFRA are the best available and quite useful when trying to identify the priorities for action and getting a feel for how things might be progressing locally. However it's worth noting the annual CO<sub>2</sub> figures produced so far by DEFRA for LA areas, only cover up to 2005. They also carry a 'health warning' that they are only indicative and 'stretch the information available to the limit'. They certainly shouldn't be used to compare relative performances between local authority areas.

The LSP recognises that this is a new area to deal with and we are therefore seeking a practical and incremental approach that can have an impact. Sandwell Partnership intends to seek the cooperation of key agencies to maximise the impact of working on

climate change. Sandwell's public bodies that emit CO2 in their own right for heating, lighting and transport areas are as follows:

- Sandwell Council
- Sandwell College
- West Midlands Fire Service
- West Midlands Ambulance Service
- Sandwell Leisure Trust
- West Midlands Police
- Sandwell Primary Care Trust

Put together they probably cause no more than 4% of Sandwell's CO2 emissions. It should be recognised that local influence is heavily outweighed by national factors.

- **NI 192 Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting.**

Sandwell has embarked upon an ambitious 5-year Waste Improvement Plan to develop a waste treatment infrastructure to deliver a 50% combined recycling/composting outcome by 2015 (some 5- years in advance of the 2020 target set by Waste Management Strategy for England 2007). The short-term plan includes reaching a 30% combined recycling/composting rate by 2010/11 with incremental growth up to 2010/11 and significant step change beyond then when the new facilities become available.

The most important feature of recycling/composting rates is that in addition to the hard-numbers of tonnes, is that the level of success relies predominantly upon participation by householders. Therefore increasing recycling rates will be dependant on additional households choosing to recycle their waste by separating out recyclable from non-recyclable waste. The delivery of this indicator therefore relies upon active community involvement.

- **NI 195 Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting)**

Street cleanliness and environmental issues are a priority for residents. By introducing improving waste collection services around recycling and maintaining an active presence in the trade waste collection sector, an improvement in street and environmental cleanliness is anticipated. The LGUSS shows that the perception of street and environmental cleanliness in Sandwell is improving at a similar rate to the national picture<sup>96</sup>.

- **NI 167 – Average Journey time per mile during the morning peak**

A key focus of the West Midlands Local Transport Plan (LTP) is tackling congestion. Congestion delays freight and people, pollutes our air and denies economic and social opportunities. Consultation on the LTP resulted in nine out of ten stakeholders asking for more to be done on traffic congestion<sup>97</sup>. Sandwell is one of a minority of West Midlands localities selecting this indicator, and has set targets aligned with those in the LTP.

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<sup>96</sup> BVPI survey 2007

<sup>97</sup> Local Transport Plan

The Department for Transport (Dft) definition requires that this indicator be measured at a West Midlands Metropolitan area level. There is no proposal to unpick it to District level and we shall be judged on overall West Midlands performance on the 19 sample routes. A programme of works and smarter choices measures on the 19 Routes has been agreed with Government<sup>98</sup>.

### **Key Actions**

- Neighbourhood Tasking – cross theme/sector actions
  - Clean up grot spots/fly tipping (award winning big spring clean for example)
  - Remove abandoned vehicles
  - Street cleansing
  - Flag and address problems with maintenance of green spaces
  - Identify and address issues in parks
- Pro-active enforcement of 'environmental crimes'
- Wardens service to increase patrols and enforcement activity
- ASB hotline
- High-profile Police presence
- Positive activities for young people
- Reassurance by feedback to communities when actions taken
- Community cohesion action plan
- Neighbourhood forums/walkabouts/community engagement activity.
- Delivery of the Waste Improvement Plan
- Local Transport Plan delivery

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<sup>98</sup> West Midlands Planning and Transportation Sub Committee as "Congestion Target Delivery Plan 2007  
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## Priority 8 – More People in Employment

This priority addresses Sandwell's broad economic transformation agenda, including enterprise, worklessness, skills and qualifications.

This priority supports the delivery of Gross Value Added (GVA) per head which is the core indicator of the West Midland Regional Economic Strategy (RES). The region has a £10 billion output gap against the UK average<sup>99</sup>.

### Key Data

#### Labour Market

Sandwell's labour market constitutes a major challenge with its unemployment rate remaining considerably higher than the regional and national averages. In November 2007 Sandwell's Job Seekers Allowance claimant unemployment rate at 4.1% compared with 2.1% nationally exhibited a gap that had only slightly reduced over the previous year.<sup>100</sup>

Benefits dependency is high with data for May 2007 showing 37,080 people claiming workless related benefits. Over 40% of these individuals were Incapacity Benefit claimants<sup>101</sup>.

The overall employment rate in March 2007 was 65.5%, below the national rate of 74.3% and the lowest of the four Black Country boroughs<sup>102</sup>. This exerts a considerable drag upon Sandwell's output, reducing the level of wealth circulating within the local economy and increasing the overall level of deprivation generally.

Sandwell has a net inflow of approximately 6000 people who travel into Sandwell to work<sup>103</sup>. The people who travel into Sandwell are particularly in higher paid occupations requiring higher-level skills and qualifications<sup>104</sup>. This suggests a shortage of suitably qualified residents.

Sandwell has recently received a large number of inward migrants from the new European Union accession states. Sandwell to be amongst the most popular areas in region for new migrants, probably reflecting the operative nature of many employment opportunities locally. A total of 1,370 people from overseas registered for National Insurance in Sandwell in 2002/3 and by 2006/7 this had risen to 3380<sup>105</sup>.

#### Skills and Qualifications

Sandwell's skills and qualification base needs significant improvement if local people are to compete for jobs in an increasingly globalised economy. Although qualification levels have steadily increased since 1999, Sandwell still has a higher proportion of people with no qualifications (25% compared with 14% nationally)<sup>106</sup>.

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<sup>99</sup> West Midlands [Regional Economic Strategy](#) , December 2007

<sup>100</sup> ONS November 2007

<sup>101</sup> DWP Working Age Client Group

<sup>102</sup> Labour Force Survey

<sup>103</sup> Census of Population 2001

<sup>104</sup> Census of Population 2001

<sup>105</sup> The Economic Impact of Migrant Workers in the West Midlands, November 2007, AWM

<sup>106</sup> Annual Population Survey 2006

Sandwell also has a very high proportion of men and women over 50 who have no formal qualifications and approximately half of men who are self employed are likely to fall into this category<sup>107</sup>. Low levels of literacy and numeracy are also a particular problem within this age group.

Sandwell has 28,900 residents aged 16 to 60 below literacy level two and 19,400 at level one<sup>108</sup>. For numeracy, 110,900 residents aged 16 to 60 are below level 2.

Attainment at NVQ levels 2, 3 and 4 plus has been below national levels although there has been some closing of the gap in recent years.

Post 16 Sandwell pupils are much less likely to continue studying than their counterparts elsewhere in England. Only 9% of Sandwell's young women and 7% of young men aged 16 to 24 have degree level qualifications, compared with 13% and 11% nationally.<sup>109</sup> A degree level qualification is the level at which the greatest contribution to increased GVA per head will be achieved by Sandwell residents<sup>110</sup>.

### Enterprise and Employment

Enterprise generation and growth is key to Sandwell's future prosperity. Enterprises contribute to increased opportunity for local people and greater output of goods and services for the Borough. Greater inward investment and supporting the organic growth of existing businesses are the means to enterprise growth.

Recently, the productivity gap (GVA per head) between Sandwell / Dudley and the Region / UK has been widening. Sandwell and Dudley delivered 84% of the UK figure in 2000, falling to 80% in 2004<sup>111</sup>.

As part of its commitment to delivering the Black Country Study and reducing the output gap, Sandwell is committed to generating at least 200 VAT registrations a year, over and above trend. We have consistently been well below the regional and national average on this measure. In 2006 Sandwell generated 27 VAT registrations per 10,000 adults compared with 39 for England as a whole. Self employment rates are also low, 6.4% of employees of working age compared with 11% regionally and 12.2% nationally<sup>112</sup>.

Enterprise generation depends to some extent on the availability of land designated for this purpose. As shown by the inclusion of indicator NI 170 there is a need to ensure that increased pressure for housing land is compensated for by the remediation of previously developed, derelict land. This will help ensure that a supply of sites are available to attract businesses looking for suitable locations in which to establish themselves.

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<sup>107</sup> Census of Population 2001

<sup>108</sup> Skills for Life Needs Survey, Black Country Learning and Skills Council (results disseminated in 2004)

<sup>109</sup> Census of Population 2001

<sup>110</sup> Cambridge Econometrics

<sup>111</sup> ONS November 2007

<sup>112</sup> DBERR, Table 1e., Census of Population 2001

## Core Indicator

- **NI 152 Working age people on out of work benefits.**

This measure lies at the heart of the government's agenda to reduce worklessness by moving as many people as possible from a state of worklessness, into productive activity. This will serve to reduce Sandwell's unemployment rate and increase the Borough's overall output (GDP). This in turn increases the level of wealth circulating in the local economy, thereby improving the overall level of economic well-being.

## Supporting Indicators

- **NI 161 Learners achieving a level 1 qualification in literacy**

No reliable, up to date statistical data currently exists for this measure. However, the Learning & Skills Council (LSC) are aware of the need for this nationally and it is expected to become available from summer 2008. In the meantime, qualitative data from partners delivering pre-employment courses in Sandwell shows that many targeted residents do not meet the minimum requirements to access these courses i.e. entry Level 3.

- **NI 164 Working age population qualified to at least Level 3 or higher.**

A level 3 qualification provides the gateway to technical and higher education for Sandwell residents. Local authority areas that are characterised by low levels of academic attainment are likely to gain most in terms of added GVA per head by focusing on this measure<sup>113</sup>.

- **NI 170 Previously developed land vacant and derelict for more than five years.**

Sandwell's industrial legacy means that most land remediation in the Borough focuses on land previously used for employment. The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) seeks the provision of 365,000 new homes across the Region over the next 20 years. Sandwell's RSS target is for at least 2,850 new homes to be built by 2011 and the Black Country Study requires Sandwell to bring forward 40 hectares of housing land per year until 2021 in order to fulfil Regional Spatial Strategy targets.

Increasing the remediation of derelict land is key to ensuring an adequate supply of housing. A balance of suitable employment sites is also essential if enterprise growth targets are to be fully realised.

- **NI 171 New business registration rate**

We are committed to supporting entrepreneurs and investors to create new businesses in Sandwell, as part of delivering our economic plan. We will also be monitoring NI 172 (Percentage of small businesses showing growth) once data availability issues have been resolved.

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<sup>113</sup> Work undertaken by Cambridge Econometrics for the West Midland Regional Observatory

## Priority 9 – Educational Attainment

This priority includes 16 indicators which Government require to be included in each Local Area Agreement.

- NI 72 Achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage with at least 6 in each of the scales in Personal Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy PSA 10
- NI 73 Achievement at level 4 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 2 (Threshold) PSA 10
- NI 74 Achievement at Level 5 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 3 (Threshold) PSA 10
- NI 75 Achievement of 5 or more A\*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths (Threshold) PSA 10
- NI 83 Achievement at Level 5 or above in Science at Key Stage 3 DCSF DSO
- NI 87 Secondary school persistent absence rate DCSF DSO
- NI 92 Narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest PSA 11
- NI 93 Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 PSA 11
- NI 94 Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 PSA 11
- NI 95 Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 PSA 11
- NI 96 Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 PSA 11
- NI 97 Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 PSA 11
- NI 98 Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 PSA 11
- NI 99 Children in care reaching level 4 in English at Key Stage 2 PSA 11
- NI 100 Children in care reaching level 4 in Maths at Key Stage 2 PSA 11
- NI 101 Children in care achieving 5 A\*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) at Key Stage 4 (including English and Maths) PSA 11

## 5 Other Performance Indicators

In addition to the LAA indicators (both National Indicators and Stretch Indicators), each thematic partnership will have lead responsibility for a number of other indicators from the NI set. Where the NI set offers insufficient coverage of local needs, other Sandwell Performance Indicators will be identified and managed.

Consideration is being given to the value of formally identifying “Local Indicators” in the LAA document.

Please see example from the Skills and Economic Regeneration Partnership below.

### Skills and Economic Regeneration (SERP)

The Skills and Economic Regeneration theme has considered all the relevant National Indicators as part of the process of selecting the LAA indicators which best reflect on Sandwell priorities. All indicators, whether NI set, Stretch or Sandwell Indicators will be subject to target setting, monitoring, reporting of progress and management of performance.

SERP have identified<sup>114</sup>:

NI	Description	Target Setting	Lead Agency
NI 151	Overall employment rate	SERP	
<b>NI 152</b>	<b>Working Age population on out of work benefits</b>	<b>LAA</b>	
NI 153	Working age population on out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods	SERP	
<b>NI 161</b>	<b>Learners achieving a level 1 qualification in literacy</b>	<b>LAA</b>	<b>LSC</b>
NI 163	Working age population qualified to at least NVQ level 2 or higher.	SERP	
<b>NI 164</b>	<b>Working age population qualified to at least NVQ level 3 or higher.</b>	<b>LAA</b>	
NI 165	Working age population qualified to at least NVQ level 4 or higher.	SERP	
NI 166	Average weekly earning (people working in the borough)	SERP	
NI 171	VAT registration rate	SERP	
<b>NI 172</b>	<b>% of small businesses in the area showing growth</b>	<b>LAA</b>	
<b>NI 170</b>	<b>Previously developed land vacant and derelict for more than 5 years</b>	<b>LAA</b>	<b>SMBC</b>

<sup>114</sup> SERP meeting 5<sup>th</sup> March 2008

## 6 Implementation

Sandwell Council will lead the delivery of the Sandwell Local Area Agreement through Sandwell Partnership (the LSP). The Council will use the new duty to co-operate and the new duty to involve, as well as building on many years experience of effectively working with its partners to deliver the LAA and its priorities.

Sandwell Council will determine clear protocols by April 2008, concerning how it will manage the LAA with its partners using the LSP and the duty to co-operate. The Council has worked closely with its partners to design and shape the LAA priorities and indicators, and will now prepare and confirm management arrangements and working protocols through negotiation with its partners.

The following management arrangements have already been proposed and are already being implemented.

1. The Cabinet as a whole will take direct overall responsibility for the LAA.
2. The two deputy leaders of the Council, having respective responsibilities for Strategic Resources and Performance Improvement have already been overseeing the preparation of the LAA through regular meetings with the LSP Director. It is expected that the Cabinet will continue to receive quarterly reports on the delivery and results arising from the LAA as part of the performance management arrangements that already are in place within the Council.
3. Individual named Cabinet members will take responsibility for each priority according to their existing portfolios of responsibilities.
4. The relevant Cabinet members will work in and through the five LSP partnership themes to personally lead the work of partners.
5. Corresponding Executive Directors of the Council will ensure that the Cabinet members are enabled to be effective in their newly strengthened partnership roles through working on their behalf and through full regular briefings.
6. Executive Directors will take lead officer responsibility for the achievement of the priorities in the LAA.
7. An Executive Director or a Head of Service will be allocated responsibility for the achievement of the individual indicators included in the LAA.
8. Sandwell's Public Service Board (PSB) will take responsibility for ensuring detailed management of the LAA working closely with the performance management Division of Sandwell Council and the performance management teams of other partners. The PSB will receive quarterly reports by exception on the progress of the LAA and they will report in turn to the wider local strategic partnership and to Cabinet.
9. The role of the Performance and Programme Group will be revised to enable it to focus on the performance management of the LAA.
10. The roles of officers in the LSP Secretariat are being revised to enable their focus on the performance and partnership arrangements to deliver the LAA.

11. An implementation plan will be prepared to deliver the LAA and each of its priorities and targets, (building on the existing arrangements within lead organisations rather than duplicating them). The five officer leads supporting the five partnership themes will meet regularly as a team with the LSP Director and Head of Performance and Best Value to manage the implementation plan and to further develop our ability to work as a partnership across themes to deliver better outcomes for local people and communities.
12. The new system, 'Performance Plus', is being designed and populated to enable the Council and its partners to manage the LAA. It will go live as the LAA begins in June 2008.
13. The role of Research Sandwell is also being further developed to provide good data support to the partnership themes and the Public Service Board in delivering improvement through the LAA.
14. Whilst it is recognised that each priority is cross cutting across more than one theme, Partnership themes will take specific responsibility for the eight priorities and the indicators and targets relating to them as follows:
  - a. **Safer Sandwell:** Reduce High Volume Crime, Cleaner Safer Active Communities
  - b. **Health and Well-Being:** Improving Health, Supporting Independence
  - c. **Children and Young People:** Children having a Good Start in Life, Successful Young People, (also Educational Attainment as defined by the 16 statutory DCSF indicators)
  - d. **Skills and Economic Regeneration:** More People in Employment
  - e. **Environment and Housing Partnership (through Strategic Housing Forum):** More and Better Homes
15. The LSP and its thematic partnerships will also appoint lead officers for each priority and each indicator/target to correspond with the persons appointed by the Council.
16. Officers in the LSP Secretariat will work with thematic partnerships to support their focus on performance improvement and achievement of targets in the LAA.

A process is to be agreed shortly with the Council so that the LAA and its priorities and targets are adequately recognised in the allocation of corresponding resources. In 2008/09 the main flexibility for backing the priorities and targets in the LAA will be the allocation of the un-ringfenced Working Neighbourhoods Fund. However, it is planned that in the latter years of the LAA the Council will work with the Partnership to review the allocation of all the total area based grant and the revenue support grant to support strong performance improvement against the LAA priorities and targets. The Partnership will be asking all partners in the LSP to move towards a similar position in their allocation of resources to achieve the shared priorities for the people and communities of Sandwell.

Processes put in place will reflect on our significant experience of managing programmes and performance. We have a culture of continuous learning which ensures that processes are continuously being improved. The experience of managing year 1 of the 2007/10 LAA will be incorporated into processes.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A - Evidence Base

Appendix B – Indicator Summary Table

Appendix C – Making the transition from the 2007 – 10 LAA

Appendix D – Fit with Black Country Strategies

Appendix E – Cohesion Statement

**Appendix A - Evidence Base (see separate PDF document)**

## Appendix B – Indicator Summary Table

<b>Priority 1 More &amp; Better Homes</b>	
NI 154	Net additional homes provided ( <b>core indicator</b> )
NI 155	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)
NI 158	Percentage of decent council homes
NI 187	Tackling fuel poverty – Percentage of people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low efficiency rating.
<b>Priority 2 Improving Health</b>	
NI 121	Mortality rate from all circulatory diseases at ages under 75 ( <b>core indicator</b> )
NI 8	Adult participation in sport and active recreation
Local Stretch	Alcohol interventions (existing stretch indicator)
Local Stretch	Smoking quitters (existing stretch indicator)
<b>Priority 3 Supporting Independence</b>	
NI 142	Number of vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living ( <b>core indicator</b> )
NI 124	People with a long-term condition supported to be independent and in control of their condition
NI 130	Social care clients receiving Self Directed Support (Direct Payments and Individual Budgets)
Local Stretch	Older people helped to live at home per 1000 pop. Aged 65 or over (existing stretch indicator)
Local Stretch	Households receiving intensive home care per 1000 pop. Aged 65 or over (existing stretch indicator)
Local Stretch	No. of people aged 65 and over admitted permanently to nursing or residential home care (existing stretch indicator)
<b>Priority 4 Reducing High Volume Crime</b>	
NI 15	Serious violent crime rate ( <b>core indicator</b> )
NI 16	Serious acquisitive crime rate ( <b>core indicator</b> )
NI 19	Rate of proven reoffending by young offenders
NI 30	Re-offending rate of prolific and priority offenders
Local Stretch	Young offenders into education, training and employment (existing stretch indicator)

<b>Priority 5 Children Having a Good Start in Life</b>	
NI 53	Prevalence of breastfeeding at 6 – 8 weeks from birth
NI 56	Obesity among primary school age children in Year 6 ( <b>core indicator</b> )
NI 112	Under 18 conception rate
NI 114	Rate of permanent exclusions from school
NI 116	Proportion of children in poverty
Local Stretch	% of 5-16 year olds participating in minimum of 2 hour PE per week (existing stretch indicator)
Local Stretch	% of 5-16 year olds participating in minimum of 4 hours PE per week (existing stretch indicator)
Local Stretch	% of Sandwell schools achieving National Healthy Schools Status (existing stretch indicator)
<b>Priority 6 Successful Young People</b>	
NI 117	16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, training or employment (NEET) ( <b>core indicator</b> )
NI 106	Young people from low income backgrounds progressing to higher education
NI 111	First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10 – 17
Local Stretch	% 15 year olds achieving 5+ GCSEs (inc. English & Maths) (existing stretch indicator)
Local Stretch	% of Foundation Stage pupils attaining sc 6 or above in communication language & literacy (existing stretch indicator)
Local Stretch	% of people in Sandwell with learning difficulties and disabilities (aged 16-19) NEET (existing stretch indicator)
Local Stretch	Number of care leavers aged 19 NEET (existing stretch indicator)
Local Stretch	% of young offenders in Sandwell aged 10-17 engaged in EET at end of their community based order (existing stretch indicator)
<b>Priority 7 Cleaner, Safer, Active Communities</b>	
NI 1	Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
NI 4	Percentage of people who feel that they can influence decisions in their locality
NI 5	Overall/general satisfaction with local area ( <b>core indicator</b> )
NI 21	Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police
NI 35	Building resilience to violent extremism
NI 167	Congestion – Average journey time per mile during the morning peak.

NI 186	Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in the LA area.
NI 192	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting.
NI 195	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting)
Local Stretch	Satisfaction with local area as a place to live (existing stretch indicator)
Local Stretch	Satisfaction with Council keeping land clear of litter and refuse (existing stretch indicator)
Local Stretch	Accidental dwelling fires/arson fires in non-dwellings/deliberate fires in vehicles (existing stretch indicator)
Local Stretch	Number of green flag awards (existing stretch indicator)
Local Stretch	Percentage satisfied with Council, Police and other organisations' efforts to tackle ASB (existing stretch indicator)
<b>Priority 8 More People in Employment (Reduced Worklessness)</b>	
NI 152	Working age people on out of work benefits ( <b>core indicator</b> )
NI 161	Learners achieving a Level 1 qualification in literacy
NI 164	Proportion of the working age population qualified to at least NVQ level 3 or higher.
NI 170	Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years
NI 171	New business registration rate
Local Stretch	No. unemployed people aged 17-64 from BME groups in priority wards helped into work (at least 16 hour per week for 13 weeks or more) (existing stretch indicator)
Local Stretch	No. unemployed people aged 50-64 in priority wards helped into work (at least 16 hour per week for 13 weeks or more) (existing stretch indicator)
Local Stretch	No. working aged people in Sandwell qualified at NVQ level 2 or equivalent (existing stretch indicator)
Local Stretch	No. Sandwell residents in employment achieving a Skills for Life qualification at levels 3, 1 or 2 (existing stretch indicator)

Local Stretch indicators have been carried forward from the 2007-10 Local Area Agreement

<b>Priority 9 Statutory Educational Attainment</b>	
NI 72	Achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage with at least 6 in each of the scales in Personal Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy PSA 10
NI 73	Achievement at level 4 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 2 (Threshold) PSA 10
NI 74	Achievement at level 5 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 3 (Threshold) PSA 10
NI 75	Achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths (Threshold) PSA 10
NI 83	Achievement at level 5 or above in Science at Key Stage 3 DCSF DSO
NI 87	Secondary school persistent absence rate DCSF DSO
NI 92	Narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest PSA 11
NI 93	Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 PSA 11
NI 94	Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 PSA 11
NI 95	Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 PSA 11
NI 96	Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 PSA 11
NI 97	Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 PSA 11
NI 98	Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 PSA 11
NI 99	Children in care reaching level 4 in English at Key Stage 2 PSA 11
NI 100	Children in care reaching level 4 in Maths at Key Stage 2 PSA 11
NI 101	Children in care achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) at Key Stage 4 (including English and Maths) PSA 11

## Appendix C – Making the transition from the 2007/10 LAA

In March 2007 Sandwell MBC and Sandwell Partnership agreed a three-year LAA with Government. Sandwell's was a round three LAA. Government announced early in the 2007/8 financial year that all local authorities would be required to prepare a new LAA to run from 2008/11, and issued subsequent guidance about the nature and requirements of these new LAAs. In response, Sandwell Council initiated a process to work with its partners through its LSP to prepare a new LAA based on a limited number of priorities and up to 35 indicators (plus statutory indicators required by DCSF).

Sandwell's 2007-10 LAA had been well received by partners in the borough and by Government. It was well aligned with the Community Strategy for Sandwell and created a strong and plausible response to local borough, sub-regional, regional and national priorities. Only the **Reward Indicators** in 2007-10 LAA are being carried forward into the new LAA, the remaining indicators will be incorporated within business planning arrangements relating to the priorities in the 2008/11 LAA.

In creating the new LAA, Sandwell Partnership took the decision to build the new LAA on the platform of the old LAA. However Sandwell Partnership had already commenced (in January 2007) a full review of the Sandwell Plan including a review of its vision, and priorities. We determined to use the Sandwell Plan review process which involved extensive consultation with partners and local communities to help reshape the priorities in the LAA as well as the Sandwell Plan itself. The priorities identified through this process have been further refined through the work done by the council and its partners as the detail of the LAA has been constructed.

The process has resulted in the confirmation of eight priorities to be included in the 'new' LAA. These are closely related to the 23 outcomes (and 120 associated indicators) presented in the 'old' LAA.

### 2007/8 Quarter 3 Reporting

The LAA is performance managed at a number of levels:

- The Local Public Service Board – receives regular exception reports and progress reports.
- LAA Performance Group will receive performance reports by each LAA Block and is supported by the councils Performance management system.
- Thematic Partnerships – Reports on LAA performance are reported regularly.
- All Performance reporting uses a traffic coding system with Green (Achieving or exceeding target), Amber (Within tolerance range-usually 10%) and red (more than 10% away from desired target).

### Summary of the Quarter 3 review

The overall progress of the LAA is currently rated as **AMBER**

Thus based on the available performance information at quarter 3 the overall assessment comes out as Amber across themes, mandatory measures and reward measures.

There are 139 indicators overall and they have assessed as:

- 40 (55.6%) indicators categorised as Green
- 15 (19.74%) indicators categorised as Amber
- 21 (27.63%) indicators categorised as Red

There are 40 Mandatory measures and they have been assessed as:

- 13 ( 61.90) indicators categorised as Green
- 4 ( 19.05%) indicators categorised as Amber
- 4 ( 19.05%) indicators categorised as Red

There are 23 reward measures and they have been assessed as:

- 8 ( 44.44% ) indicators categorised as Green
- 5 ( 27.78% ) indicators categorised as Amber
- 5 ( 27.78% ) indicators categorised as Red

There are a number of indicators that are annually reported or reliant on survey results.

### **Lessons learnt**

- A review of the partnerships governance and making it fit for purpose for the New LAA. The areas to be covered are a newly reformed Performance Board that oversees the LAA and led by the councils Head of Performance Management.
- The development of a single performance management framework for the LSP.
- The alignment of performance information between thematic partnerships and the newly reconfigured Performance Board.
- To agree a process for ensuring partners have access to Performance Plus via a license agreement.
- Ensure that work is undertaken on disaggregated data that allows equalities monitoring across all the targets.
- To review and make sure actions identified as areas of under – performance are implemented.
- To embed outcome focused approach in performance management and the use of tools such as results based accountability/ problem solving to deliver LAA outcomes at town/neighbourhood level.
- To set quarterly targets for annual targets and use trajectory planning.
- The data and evidence is strengthened and updated by Research Sandwell.
- A LAA Implementation Plan will deliver the LAA and each of its priorities and targets. The target setting will ensure baselines are prepared and quarterly assessment via proxy measures if there are annual targets.

## Appendix D – Fit with Black Country Strategies

### The Black Country Strategy for Growth and Competitiveness

Along with the other Black Country local authorities, Sandwell is committed to the Black Country Strategy for Growth and Competitiveness – a major plan for the future of the area. It focuses on two major drivers of renaissance of the sub-region (which is home to 1 million people and 450,000 jobs): lifting educational and skills performance; and a radical transformation of the environment. It sets out a clear spatial strategy of focusing growth in four strategic centres – West Bromwich, Brierley Hill, Walsall and Wolverhampton – and along corridors served by high quality public transport.

The vision-led Strategy was developed to achieve four key objectives: population growth to 1.2 million; raising incomes to the national average; achieving a better balance of resident households reflecting national average; and transforming the environment. Key outcomes are the elimination of the sub region's current output gap of around £3.5 billion (which represents around a third of the West Midlands regional economic underperformance compared to national average) and land use/transportation restructuring to create high-quality sustainable environments.

Seven programmes have been identified to guide action to achieve growth and competitiveness in the sub-region:

1. Accelerating growth of the knowledge economy.
2. Expanding four strategic and town centres.
3. Building a high quality housing market.
4. Transforming the environment: Black Country as Urban Park.
5. Creating a workforce for the 21st century.
6. Creating a prosperous, diverse and harmonious society.
7. Developing an integrated transport network.

Sandwell is committed to playing its part to achieve these aspirations for the Black Country. This LAA is a key component of how this agenda will be taking forward in the 2008-11 period.

The table below illustrates the strong relationship between the Sandwell LAA and the Objective and Programmes of the Black Country Strategy for Growth and Competitiveness. Sandwell's choice of indicators is well aligned with the strategy, with 12 matching indicators

BCS Key Objective		Suggested NIs	Sandwell
A	Population Growth	154 and/or 159	C
B	Raising Incomes	166	
C	Achieving a better balance	151 164 and/or 165 166	C
D	Transforming the environment	167 170 186	C C C

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	195 and/or 196	<b>C</b>
<b>BCS Growth Programmes</b>		
1 Accelerating growth of knowledge economy	117	<b>C</b>
	152	<b>C</b>
	164 and/or 165	<b>C</b>
	166	
	171 and/or 172	<b>C</b>
2 Expanding strategic town centre	167	<b>C</b>
3 Building a high quality housing market	154 and/or 159	<b>C</b>
4 Creating workforce for 21st Century	75	M
	163	
	164 and/or 165	<b>C</b>
	174	
5 Creating prosperous diverse and harmonised society	1	<b>C</b>
	151	
	164 and/or 165	<b>C</b>
	166	
6 Transforming the environment "Urban Park"	186	<b>C</b>
	5	<b>C</b>
7 Developing and integrated transport network	167	<b>C</b>
	175	
	176	
	178	

- A** GOWM priority indicator
- B** Locality priority indicator (but not GOWM)
- C** Priority for both Locality and GOWM
- M** DCSF Statutory Indicator
- L** Local Indicator

Source: Letter from Government Office, 18<sup>th</sup> March 2008

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**Black Country Core Strategy**

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The Black Country Core Strategy will be the main statutory plan which guides urban renaissance in the Black Country in line with the Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands. The Core Strategy proposes a series of Strategic Spatial Objectives for the Black Country.

The following table illustrates the close fit between the Sandwell Community Strategy (Sandwell Plan 2008/2013) and the Strategic Spatial Objectives proposed in the Core Strategy.

**Fit with Black Country Core Strategy and Sandwell Plan (March 2008)**

Joint Core Strategic Spatial Objectives	Sandwell (Sandwell Plan March 2008)	LAA NI
<p>1. Focussed investment and development in comparison shopping, office, employment, leisure, tourism and culture within the four strategic centres: Brierley Hill Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton, to retain and increase their share of economic activity and meet the increasing aspirations of their catchment areas.</p>	<p>Great Place: <u>West Bromwich as the premier town</u> – West Bromwich will have been firmly re-established as the borough's premier town centre, with dramatic visible changes on the ground. There will be new shopping opportunities at a major new retail development; improvements to Queen's Square; a new leisure centre; an exciting community arts project; new office developments at All Saints and the 'Eastern Gateway'; a new college will be serving people of all ages; improved highway and public transport access will make it easier to get around; easier access to Dartmouth Park and Sandwell Valley; and a new public square will be at the heart of this vibrant town centre.</p>	
<p>2. A restructured sub-regional economy, which provides sufficient high quality employment, land in the best locations within Regeneration Corridors to attract new high technology and logistics businesses and also recognises the value of local employment land.</p>	<p>Great Prospects: <u>Skills and employment</u> – Sandwell's economy will have changed dramatically. Modern and efficient manufacturing companies will still be at the heart of the Sandwell economy, but we will be less dependent on the manufacturing sector, with a much wider variety of opportunities. Our renewed economic success will have drawn on skilled local workers and the commitment of long-term employers. Businesses and entrepreneurs will find Sandwell a place where they can do good business; where the conditions and environment are supportive to their success.</p>	<p>NI 117 NI 164 NI 172</p>
<p>3. Model sustainable communities on redundant employment land in the Regeneration Corridors.</p>	<p>Great Prospects: <u>Sustainable Sandwell</u> –The area will have more resilient communities and a stronger economy than it has today. Energy consumption in homes and businesses will have been reduced; reliance on imported fuels will have been cut significantly; the amount of secure locally generated low or zero carbon energy will have grown dramatically; and waste will have been minimised.</p> <p>Services that support people's lives – buildings, transport networks, drainage systems – will have been modified to help protect communities from hotter, wetter and stormier conditions. These changes and associated investment will have helped reduce the cost of living and will have opened up new opportunities for local businesses.</p>	<p>NI 170</p>
<p>4. Enhancements to the character of the Black Country's existing housing areas.</p>	<p>Great Place: <u>Quality housing</u> – in 2021 there will be a range of new housing opportunities for people to rent or buy. The quality of all housing – both social and private – will be high, with modern and efficient facilities and good standards of construction. Increasingly people will be living in homes that have been built or modernised with 'green issues' at heart. These affordable and desirable homes will be at the centre of good neighbourhoods with quality services – shopping, schools, doctors surgeries, health centres and leisure opportunities.</p>	<p>NI 154 NI 155 NI 158</p>

Joint Core Strategic Spatial Objectives	Sandwell (Sandwell Plan March 2008)	LAA NI
<p>5. A network of vibrant and attractive town, district and local centres.</p>	<p>Great Place: <u>Strong town centres across the six towns</u> – by 2021, significant new public and private investment will have been made across Oldbury, Rowley Regis, Smethwick, Tipton, West Bromwich and Wednesbury. In Cradley Heath, the recent completion of revitalised shopping facilities and a new by-pass have demonstrated the transformational change that can be achieved in our local town centres.</p>	<p>NI 1 NI 5 NI 15 NI 16 NI 21</p>
<p>6. A high quality environment</p>	<p>Great People: <u>Attract and retain people</u> –our population will have grown and will be more diverse. People will be choosing Sandwell as a place to live and work because there are noticeable improvements in schools, housing, hospitals, transport, leisure; people are healthier; they feel safe because there is less crime and anti-social behaviour; young people have activities they can participate in; there are well-paid jobs and training opportunities on offer; local people are better skilled to take advantage of these opportunities; and our environment is significantly cleaner and greener through headline projects like the Black Country Urban Park.</p>	<p>NI 186</p>
<p>7. A first class transport network providing rapid, convenient and sustainable links between the Strategic Centres, existing and new communities, and employment sites.</p>	<p>Great Place: <u>West Bromwich as the premier town</u> – West Bromwich will have been firmly re-established as the borough's premier town center. Improved highway and public transport access will make it easier to get around.</p> <p><i>Improved Transport Networks and Services</i> is one of the Sandwell Outcomes which partners are working towards achieving.</p>	<p>NI 167</p>
<p>8. A sustainable network of community services, particularly high quality lifelong learning, healthcare and sports facilities.</p>	<p>Great People <u>Attract and retain people</u> –our population will have grown and will be more diverse. People will be choosing Sandwell as a place to live and work over other locations in the West Midlands because there are noticeable improvements in schools, housing, hospitals, transport, leisure; people are healthier; they feel safe because there is less crime and anti-social behaviour; young people have activities they can participate in; there are well-paid jobs and training opportunities on offer; local people are better skilled to take advantage of these opportunities; and our environment is significantly cleaner and greener through headline projects like the Black Country Urban Park.</p>	<p>NI 8 NI 53 NI 56 NI 106 NI 112 NI 114 NI 116 NI 121 NI 152</p>
<p>9. Sufficient waste recycling and waste management facilities in locations, which are the most accessible and have the least environmental impact.</p>	<p><u>Sustainable Sandwell</u> –The area will have more resilient communities and a stronger economy than it has today. Energy consumption in homes and businesses will have been reduced; reliance on imported fuels will have been cut significantly;</p>	<p>NI 192</p>

<b>Joint Core Strategic Spatial Objectives</b>	<b>Sandwell (Sandwell Plan March 2008)</b>	<b>LAA NI</b>
	<p>the amount of secure locally generated low or zero carbon energy will have grown dramatically; and waste will have been minimised.</p> <p>Services that support people's lives – buildings, transport networks, drainage systems – will have been modified to help protect communities from hotter, wetter and stormier conditions. These changes and associated investment will have helped reduce the cost of living and will have opened up new opportunities for local businesses.</p>	

## **Appendix E – Sandwell LAA Cohesion Statement (added 19<sup>th</sup> May)**

### **1. Introduction**

Sandwell is in the process of negotiating with Government Office West Midlands (GOWM) a Local Area Agreement for the 2008/2011 period.

To reflect on the Safer, Cleaner Active community's priority in the Sandwell Plan, two of the indicators selected for the Sandwell LAA address Community Cohesion.

The selected indicators are:

- NI1 People who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area.
- NI4 Percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their community.

Both of these indicators are to be measured using the newly created Place Survey. The Place Survey is to be conducted for the first time in September 2008, and results will then be available from January 2009.

As baselines will not be available until January 2009, targets for these indicators can't be set until the LAA refresh in April 2009.

Promoting and developing Community Cohesion is an important element of our strategy for Sandwell and whilst targets can't be set until baselines are available a number of actions will be undertaken during the 2008/09 year.

This note sets out:

1. The Sandwell context.
2. How we are approaching Community Cohesion and the links to selected indicators.
3. How we are ensuring that these measures are given the appropriate level of priority.
4. How implementation plans are being prepared.
5. Our approach to delivering the place survey and responding to the results.

### **2. Sandwell Context**

Sandwell has benefited from a comprehensive report undertaken by the Institute of Community Cohesion (iCoCo). The "All of Us – Building Cohesion Between Town and Neighbourhoods: A New Narrative for Sandwell" (December 2006).

Informed by this report and other evidence a Select Committee on Community Cohesion in Sandwell has made a series of findings and recommendations to the Council Cabinet. (October 2007)

The main finding of the select committee were:

- Community Cohesion is complex and a range of concerns must be included in any actions including, racism, cultural and religious beliefs; intergenerational issues; gender issues; addressing intolerance; inter-town rivalry and social exclusion.

- Building cohesive communities will take time and patience.
- There is evidence that Sandwell level of community cohesion is relatively positive.
- Residential segregation between communities is present and may have an impact on promoting future harmonious relationships. School populations are mirroring this isolation and separation of communities.
- Good community relations are essential to the transformation and regeneration of Sandwell.
- A new vision for Sandwell as a place where everyone respects, includes and values each other as equals

## **2. How we are approaching Community Cohesion and the links to selected indicators.**

Cohesion actions are being mainstreamed into Services and Partnership actions in Sandwell.

The Community Cohesion select committee recommendations have been agreed by the Council and are being implemented. These include for example:

- The Sandwell Plan vision and critical factors includes respect, cohesion and equality of opportunity.
- Cohesion is being mainstreamed in the Local Area Agreement
- Member training and development is being adapted to equip members with skills, confidence and support to play a proactive community leadership role.
- The role of Town Committee chairs is being strengthened with a remit to lead cohesion at a town level.
- Frontline staff and managers training will be devised to raise their awareness of cohesion. This training will be developed jointly with partners.
- A approach to combating common myths and misconceptions is being developed with voluntary sector partners.
- Web based and community based consultation to understand how interaction and engagement can be improved between communities.

The Executive Director of Adult and Community Services in Sandwell is leading an exercise to identify our approach to empowering and engaging communities. This exercise will be completed in Summer 2008 and examines: The Empowerment White Paper/Bill, Participatory Budgeting, Call for Action and Community Asset Transfer.

## **3. How we are ensuring that these measures are given the appropriate level of priority.**

Community Cohesion is central piece of the Partnerships Safer, Cleaner, Active Communities priority in the Sandwell Plan. The Council has reflected this priority in its Corporate Plan for the 2008/11 period. Cabinet Members have cohesion in their portfolios and the Chief Executive is regularly briefed by Executive Directors on progress being made.

The Executive Director of Adult and Community Services is the named champion for the local authority in terms of Community Cohesion, supported by the Head of Communities

and Regulatory Services and the recently mainstreamed position of Community Cohesion Manager. Following the recent approval of the Select Committee's report into Community Cohesion, the following actions have been implemented:

- Community Cohesion Strategy and Action Plan approved by Council
- Communications Strategy developed
- Community Cohesion Steering Group, led by the Executive Director established, reporting into both the Council's Executive Management Team and the Sandwell Partnership's Safer Sandwell Partnership Executive
- Tension Monitoring strategy developed and steering group established
- Projects delivered at a neighbourhood level where tensions are evident and have resulted in increased incidents of anti-social behaviour – community cohesion is closely linked with the borough's tasking processes
- Separate, but linked action plan to address the prevention of violent extremism developed
- Service based plans (housing, schools, policing) developed to address recommendations arising out of the iCoCo report
- Multi-Faith Trail developed for launch later this year
- Ongoing commitment by the Sandwell Partnership to develop the borough's Multi-Faith Network
- Events calendar developed to ensure local and borough-wide events in Sandwell are supportive of the cohesion agenda
- Re-focussing of community development officers work to lead on the development of relationships with faith communities in Sandwell
- Establishment of the Executive Director of Children and Young People's Services as Faith's champion for the borough

Over the coming 12 months, the Community Cohesion Manager will be responsible for driving the delivery of the various action plans, and for embedding links with communities through locality working (the Community Cohesion Manager is now co-located with our Town Managers and Community Development Officers).

#### **4. How implementation plans are being prepared.**

Each of the nine Sandwell Plan priorities is included in the suite of indicators selected for the Local Area Agreement. Each priority has a nominated lead Executive Director and Cabinet Member. An action plan for each priority is being prepared.

#### **5. Our approach to delivering the place survey and responding to the results.**

Sandwell has a dedicated Research Team (Research Sandwell), which works with Sandwell Partners to undertake, analyse and respond to information sources. This team works closely with policy officers, performance management, theme leads and communications to ensure that information is accurately interpreted.

The Community Cohesion portfolio sits with the Safer Sandwell Partnership. The partnerships receives and responds to information on cohesion from a variety of sources including a locally produced ASB survey, town team tasking and police data. Analysis is disaggregated to town and neighbourhood level where appropriate. The baseline data for the NI 1 and NI 4 will be available to partners for consideration in January 2009. This will be compared (where appropriate) with other available data and a trend analysis prepared. Target setting will be initialised by the Safer Sandwell theme partnership in the context of the trend analysis and resource decision-making. Elected members will scrutinise and challenge targets prior to final agreement.