

**WE ARE
SANDWELL!**



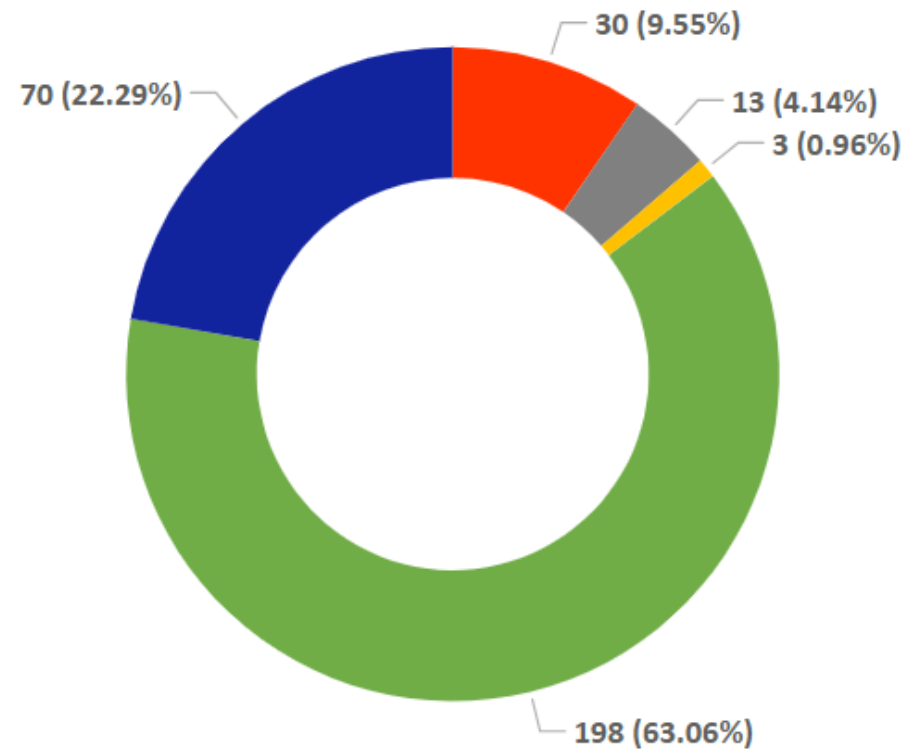
Assistant Director Business Plan Actions Q4 2024/25



DELIVERING THE COUNCIL PLAN

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR BUSINESS PLAN ACTIONS OVERVIEW

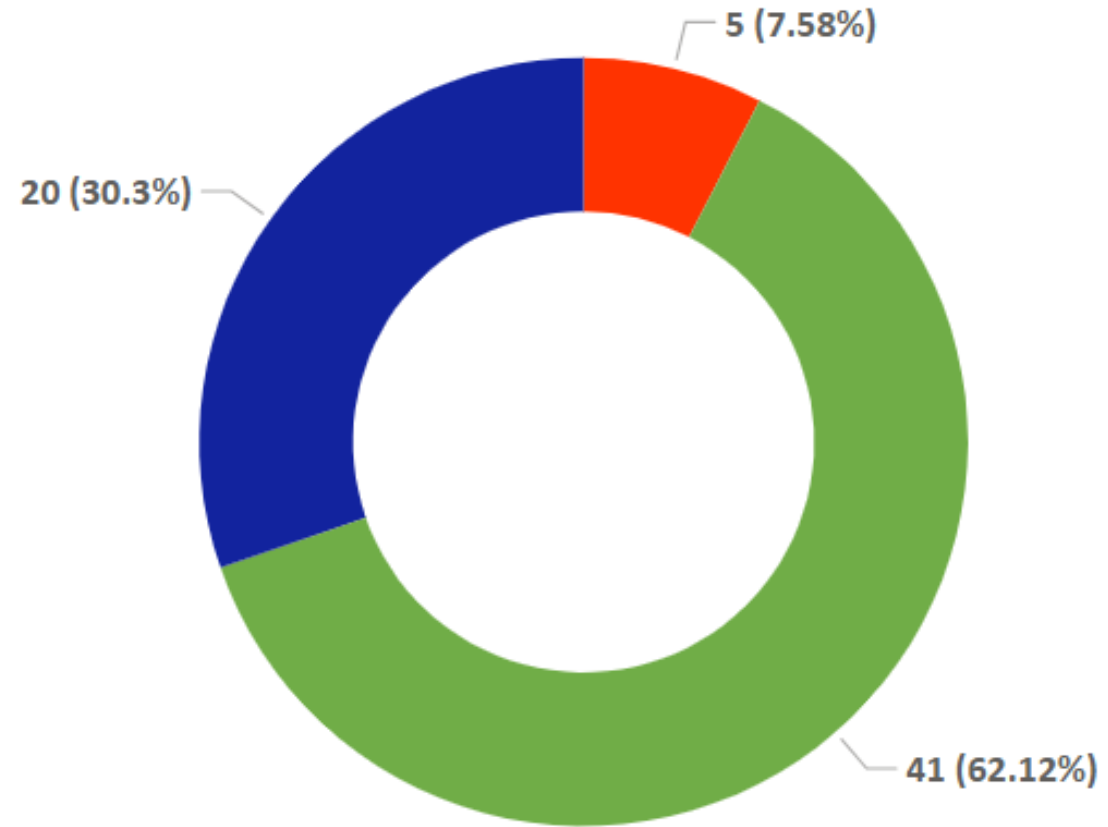
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ASSISTANT DIRECTOR BUSINESS PLAN ACTIONS

● Delayed ● No Update ● Not Started ● On Track ● Complete





ASSISTANT DIRECTOR BUSINESS PLAN RED ACTIONS

Directorate Action	RAG Rating	Q4 Commentary
We will use the new Youth Buses to target schools with violence reduction plans to ensure that vulnerable young people have access to good quality youth activity	Delayed in previous quarter	Both vehicles are now off the road following fixed electrical inspections carried out. These have identified issues with the original installation that are required to be rectified before we can put them back into service. Fleet services are in receipt of quotations to rectify both vehicles and Fleet Services anticipate a 4-6 week repair timeframe
We will work across the Youth Service, SRES, HAF, and Sandwell Valley to provide a single Sandwell youth offer for schools	Delayed in previous quarter	Marketing schedule ready but content still needed from Forge Mill. Schedule: Prep & alignment May-Aug, Launch & engagement Sept-Dec, follow ups / retention Jan to Apr



GROWING UP IN SANDWELL



Directorate Action	RAG Rating	Q4 Commentary
<p>Comprehensive Training and Development for ILS and Partners to ensure all involved in SEND provision have the necessary skills and knowledge to support high-quality EHC delivery. To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- a comprehensive workforce development strategy- a training evaluation tool and feedback method- a robust training and development plan for all local authority staff	Delayed	IPSEA has been booked for June. Training and induction plan is in draft and will need to be shared with Children's DMT. E learning module links need to be shared across wider services. Delay is due to capacity. With more support this could be implemented immediately
<p>Streamlined Systems and Shared Accountability for Efficient Decision-Making to remove time-intensive processes and establish clear roles and responsibilities across ILS. Plot out all statutory process, including all roles and accountability to develop seamless systems that improve timeliness</p>	Delayed	Interim decision making is still working but need now to move to multi agency approach. Draft terms of reference are available. Need to co produce a workflow with all partners. We will need a dedicated workshop to do this. Delay due to capacity issues



GROWING UP IN SANDWELL

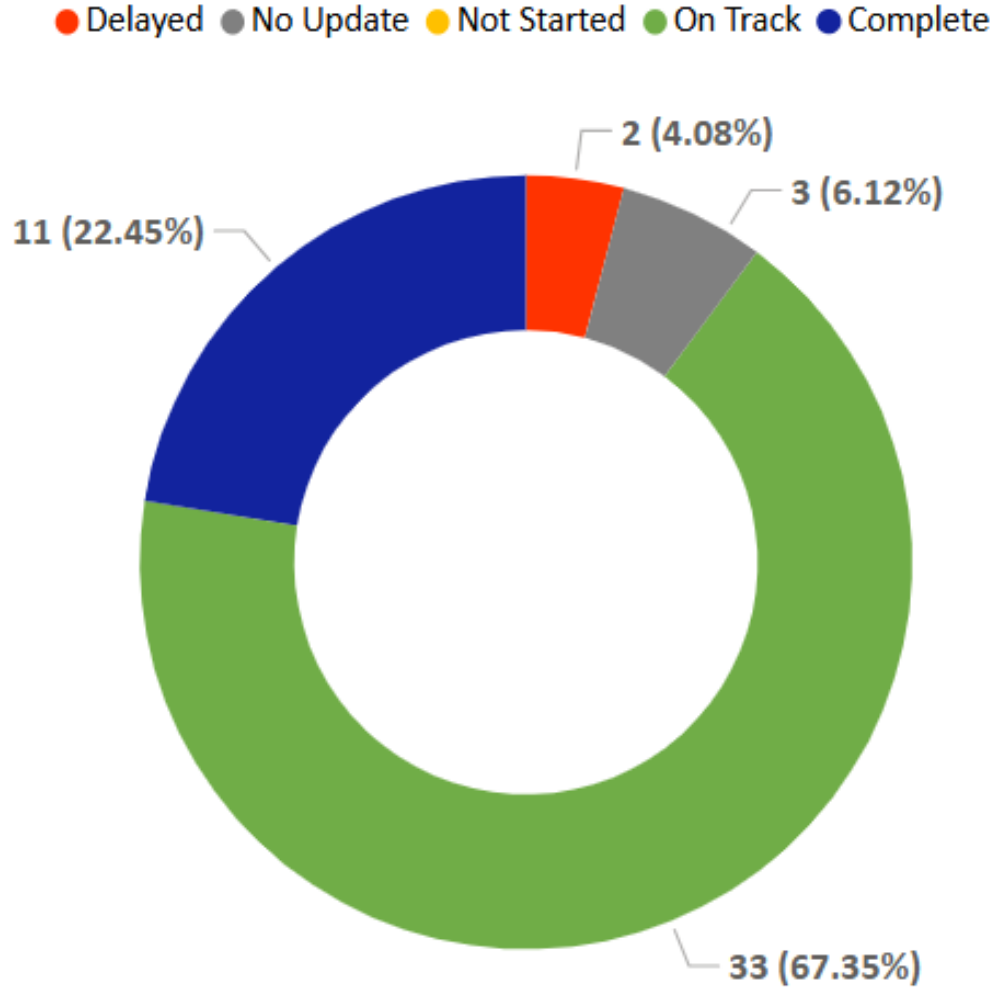


Directorate Action	RAG Rating	Q4 Commentary
To challenge and support schools to raise standards in all key stages to close the gaps with national - KS4	Delayed	91 schools have been worked with through the implementation of 11 different projects by SIA officers. All targeted schools, excluding a small group with valid contextual reasons for not doing so, are taking part in a Peer to Peer school improvement project. Closing the gap with national remains a challenge at KS4. PEIA funding from 2022-2025 has now come to an end. The funding totalled £3m and much of how that money was spent was determined by the DfE and channelled directly to Academy Trusts to provide support. The Directorate is looking at how support to schools can be widened and improved across the borough and is developing an Education and School Improvement Strategy. More resource has been put into Peer-to-Peer support for schools recently, alongside a focus on enhancing the training and support offer for schools. The Directorate are also in the process of updating webpages so that schools have clear guidance on what offer of support is available, both core (available to all) and enhanced (either grant funded or a small financial contribution required). Services are also investigating other sources of potential funding external to the council and looking at funding options internally. With investment channelled through the Council (rather than from government straight to schools) we could build on the current support offered to schools, capitalising on what we understand to work well (such as peer to peer support) to address prevalent issues in Sandwell such as education attainment at KS4





ASSISTANT DIRECTOR BUSINESS PLAN ACTIONS





ASSISTANT DIRECTOR BUSINESS PLAN RED ACTIONS

Directorate Action	RAG Rating	Q4 Commentary
We will deliver the capital improvements to Sandwell Valley Country Park, as detailed in the Sandwell Valley 10 year master plan and business plan	Delayed in previous quarter	Review of current operating model continues. Progress on Masterplan paused until review concluded
Roll out improved recycling offer to high-rise blocks	Delayed in previous quarter	Further roll-out to wider flats estate on hold to focus on AWC project. Will be a focus in Q1 & Q2 of 25/26

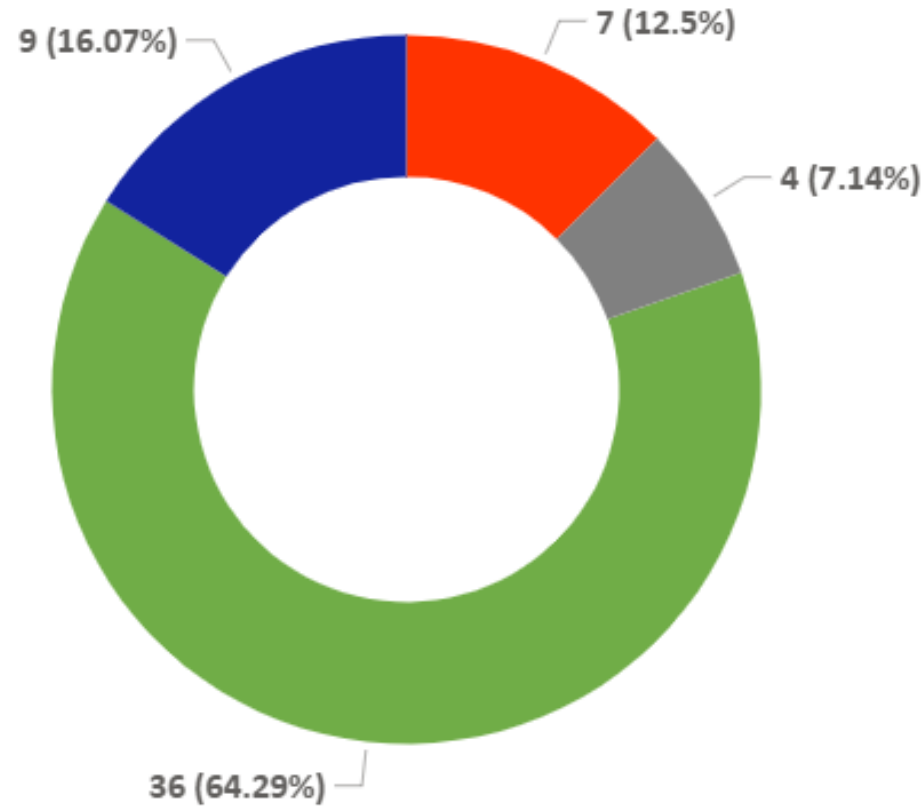


HEALTHY IN SANDWELL



ASSISTANT DIRECTOR BUSINESS PLAN ACTIONS

● Delayed ● No Update ● Not Started ● On Track ● Complete



HEALTHY IN SANDWELL

Directorate Action	RAG Rating	Q4 Commentary
We will work with partners to develop a refreshed THRIVE Strategy for Sandwell to ensure that partners are working together to meet children and young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health needs	Delayed in previous quarter	The new Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Group had their first meeting in February. The new group will commence work on developing a new EWB strategy and action plan
Go live with supported living framework	Delayed in previous quarter	Work has commenced to develop a specification for this framework and further input is required to define the tender and evaluation, provider evaluations, interviews and contracting. This is likely to take at least 18 months to conclude, we will use a programme board approach to bring to the table a number of key contributors including, procurement, contracts, finance, risk, and legal. The current work being undertaken by legal on revising contract terms and conditions will support this approach.
Develop Residential and Respite Framework	Delayed in previous quarter	This work is currently on hold as a Residential framework could result in significant cost implications to the Council and disruption to existing service users and their adopted homes. The approach to Respite will involve working with the market to create alternative and innovative forms of replacement care rather than creating a framework at this stage.

HEALTHY IN SANDWELL



Directorate Action	RAG Rating	Q4 Commentary
<p>To redesign STAR operating model to improve efficiency of resource and effective outcomes for people by focusing on reablement. The redesign will also look to expand the services hospital avoidance approach and integrate more closely with Health's community reablement service (iCares)</p>	<p>Delayed in previous quarter</p>	<p>A report is being prepared for Senior Leadership Team on the proposed service changes in terms of efficiency and savings. The proposal for the new management structure will be part of the report.</p> <p>Wider implications being considered regarding integration with health reablement services.</p>
<p>Develop Day Opportunities Framework</p>	<p>Delayed in previous quarter</p>	<p>There has been a focus on reviewing people receiving day services only to enable charging for these services to recommence in April 2025 which has been actioned. Work is on-going on the day opportunities framework and this will be underpinned by the current transformation programme which is addressing the access to and use of Direct Payments to support a more flexible approach to the provision of day services. A Direct Payment Board is commencing in May 2025 which will enable social care staff to work with Sandwell residents to access support in a more timely and easily accessible way.</p> <p>Commissioners will then work to shape the local market for Day Opportunities driven and paid for through Direct Payments. We are piloting a new funding model for existing Day Care which will remove the inconsistency and lack of transparency over rates for Day Care services. Once fully implemented within our Pilot provider the model will be rolled out to all Day Care providers.</p>



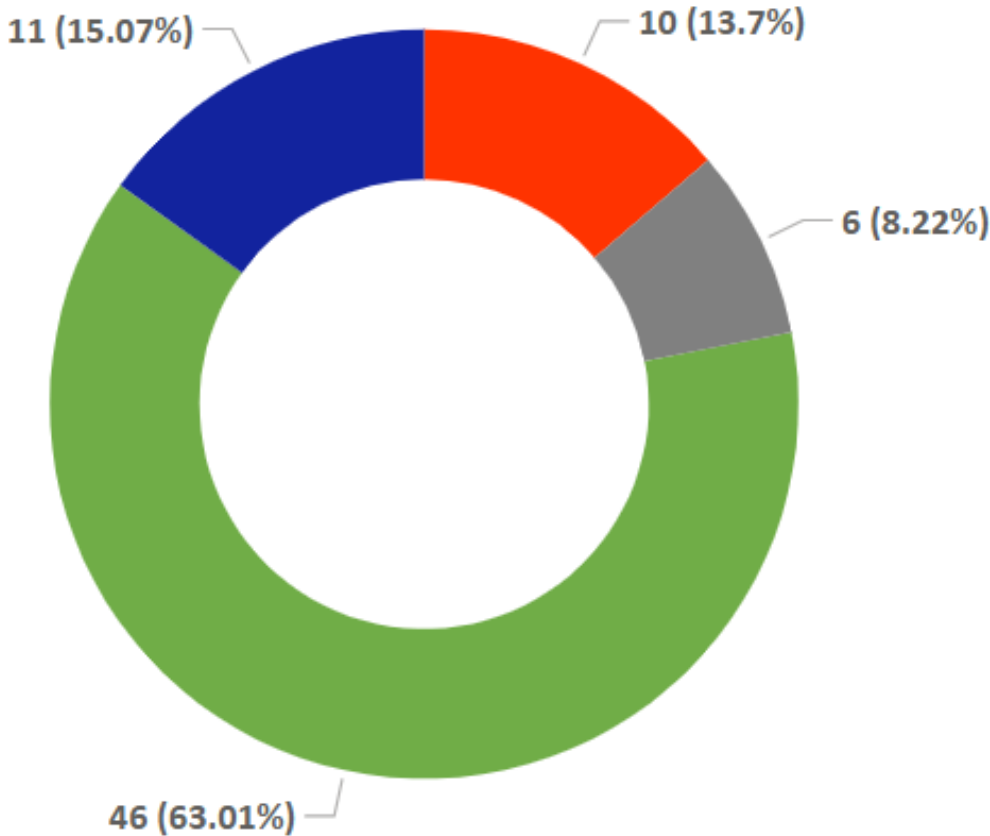
HEALTHY IN SANDWELL

Directorate Action	RAG Rating	Q4 Commentary
Develop a dynamic Market Position Statement to support a sustainable care and support market	Delayed in previous quarter	We are currently working on a new Commissioning Strategy for Adult Social Care. Once this is in place our focus will move to developing a dynamic market position statement which will support a sustainable care and support market in Sandwell.
We will expand the Emotional Health & Wellbeing charter mark across Sandwell education settings	Delayed	The Sandwell Whole School Approach to Well-Being is commissioned and funded by Public Health Sandwell, in partnership with the Educational Psychology Service who have taken a lead on the background research and design and delivery of the model. The programme is intended to be delivered universally through all schools, initially developed for Primary, but now extended to Secondary. Schools that opt into the programme are awarded the Sandwell Wellbeing Charter Mark if they can demonstrate that they take a whole-school approach to emotional health and wellbeing through a process of audit, action planning and review. Performance is below target at the end of the year 2 service level agreement. The Public Health team is working with Inclusion Support to increase uptake. It is also being reviewed as part of the Healthy Schools programme



ASSISTANT DIRECTOR BUSINESS PLAN ACTIONS

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ASSISTANT DIRECTOR BUSINESS PLAN RED ACTIONS

Directorate Action	RAG Rating	Q4 Commentary
Oversee the delivery of the One Public Estate for Brownfield Remediation Fund secured in August 2023 (£1.37m)	Delayed in previous quarter	One element of the OPE BRF related to Carrington Road Shops and the funding was secured at the point that the Council were looking to deliver a council house build scheme. That scheme was found un-viable, and officers are now investigating the potential of extra care - however, the timescales for this mean we are not able to meet the original programme set out in the funding agreement. Discussions are ongoing with MHCLG. The second element of the funding (Gas Showrooms) is progressing in line with the programme.
Work with landowners, investors, developers, businesses and partners (WMGC/ WMCA) to deliver the Employment Theme of the Regeneration Pipeline.	Delayed in previous quarter	Lack of gap-funding opportunities via WMCA to take forward employment schemes has resulted in some schemes not progressing as expected (Coneygree Industrial Estate). As of May 2024: 1 project is in concept stage, 1 project is on site, and 1 is completed.
Implementation of the grant management system across the Council and the Community and Voluntary Sector	Delayed	Training is currently being provided to the team to enhance their competence and confidence in using the system before its internal and external rollout. The pilot phase will resume once the training is completed



ASSISTANT DIRECTOR BUSINESS PLAN RED ACTIONS

Directorate Action	RAG Rating	Q4 Commentary
Develop strategy for reducing fuel poverty, cutting carbon and improving health outcomes for council stock	Delayed	Plans are in place for a programme of demonstrator homes to be delivered in 25/26 to help models measures to shape future strategy.
Progress the delivery of new council homes in line with 5 year (HRA) business plan/ rolling 5 year programme	Delayed	Crosswell's Road delivered 12 units in Q4 of 2024/25. The remaining Homes England sites have been delayed, but 6 units at Whitgreave Street have already been handed over with a further 43 units to be handed over in Q1 of 2025/26 across 4 projects. A further project is on site and will deliver 15 units as part of the 1-4-1 funded schemes. As part of the Council Refurbishment Programme 2 units were delivered in Q4 of 2024/25 with other projects progressing on site
Work with the WMCA secure a Joint Venture Partner to deliver the Friar Park Housing Scheme which will deliver 630 homes (25% affordable) and new/ improved public open space	Delayed	Ongoing discussion with EA has indicated progressive discussions which will overcome initial concerns re permit - with a view to securing consent by Dec 25. 4 Bids received (01.04.25); Evaluation and Recommendation for Preferred Bidder expected to be completed in July 2025. Planning Application to be progressed prior to confirmation of appointment.



ASSISTANT DIRECTOR BUSINESS PLAN RED ACTIONS

Directorate Action	RAG Rating	Q4 Commentary
Apply for funding to enable energy efficiency improvements to council and private housing stock	Delayed	Devolved Retrofit Funding - Sandwell's allocation decided. WMCA awaiting receipt of signed Letter of Intent (currently with Legal Services). Need to allocate internal staffing resources/Project team as a matter of urgency in order move project on, including strategy for delivery across all sectors (public/private housing, public buildings) ECO4 LA Flex applications continue to be received/processed. HUG now successfully completed - may be sensible to use similar delivery route (via WMCA/MEA) for private sector housing Devolved Retrofit funding stream
Programme of on-street EV charging points to be delivered	Delayed	First 7 installations are now live and in use. Some contractor delays have been experienced resulting in remaining installations taking longer than anticipated. Likely completion of Phase 1 (74 installations) in Q2 2025/26





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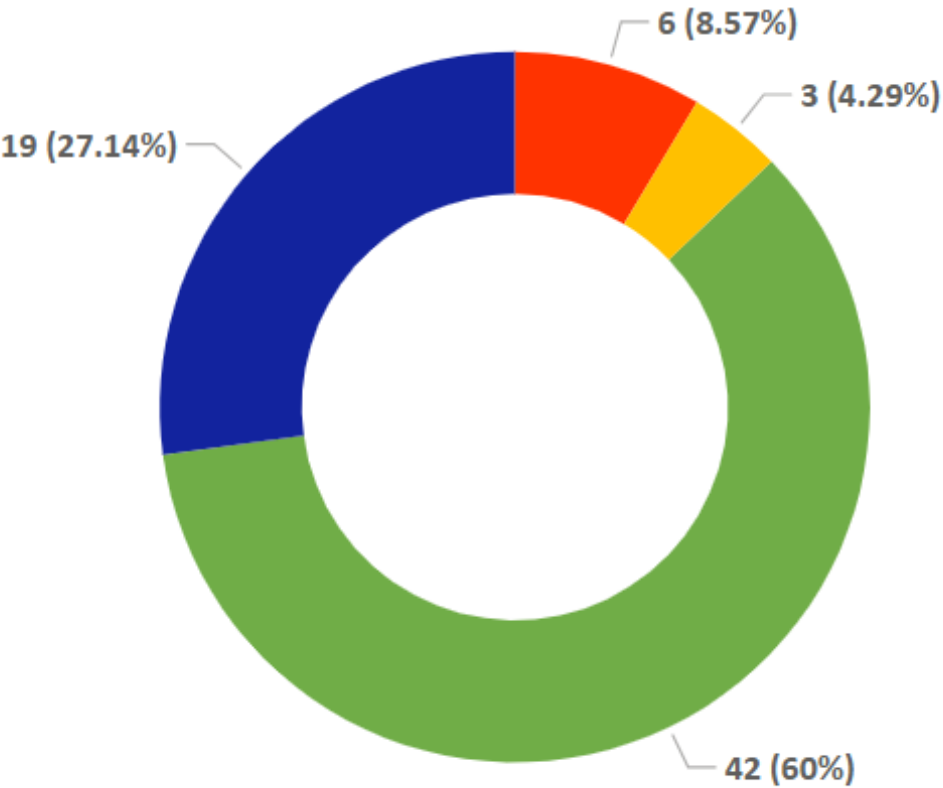
Directorate Action	RAG Rating	Q4 Commentary
We will refresh the Corporate Asset Management Strategy	Delayed in previous quarter	This is now due to be completed in 2025/26
We will keep our properties safe and compliant through the implementation of a well-managed and rigorous compliance regime, clear maintenance plans and efficient facilities management	Delayed	Appointment of new R&M contractors now complete. Premise management handbook being finalised with new premise manager list circulated to ensure all properties have an allocated Premise and Deputy Premise Manager. New training is being developed to support this in conjunction with H&S and L&D. Due to be rolled out Q1/Q2 2025/26





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ASSISTANT DIRECTOR BUSINESS PLAN RED ACTIONS

Directorate Action	RAG Rating	Q4 Commentary
To act as the lead service area to ensure the successful implementation of the new Contact Centre telephony platform	Delayed in previous quarter	Further comments on the LLD were submitted to MITEL, awaiting issue of new LLD. Plan to go live by end of June 2025
To work alongside the EDI team to implement an EDI data monitoring form within the Customer Service channels	Delayed in previous quarter	Awaiting further guidance from the EDI team





ASSISTANT DIRECTOR BUSINESS PLAN RED ACTIONS

Directorate Action	RAG Rating	Q4 Commentary
We will refresh and progress the EDI Workforce Action Plan	Delayed in previous quarter	While inclusivity/allyship work continues in L&D much of this is linked to the EDI team which is separate and the EDI strategy which is in development. We will review this in light of the HR reset
Development of Oracle Fusion to include remaining Finance functionality not anticipated to be in place for 'Go Live'	Delayed in previous quarter	Project Accountability and Contract Management modules are outstanding. All Oracle Fusion capacity currently dedicated to resolving issues relating to stabilisation phase of phase 1





ASSISTANT DIRECTOR BUSINESS PLAN RED ACTIONS

Directorate Action	RAG Rating	Q4 Commentary
Budget holders to become responsible for carrying out their own revenue budget monitoring projections, following implementation of Oracle Fusion	Delayed in previous quarter	All Oracle Fusion capacity currently dedicated to resolving issues relating to stabilisation phase of phase 1
Develop a narrative about Sandwell as a place that also has buy in from partners and stakeholders that allows us to tell a new story about Sandwell to regional and national audiences	Delayed	The Steering Group decided not to take forward the narrative presented by thinkingplace. Development of the narrative was brought inhouse, and an external consultant (Thread & Fable) engaged to support the council and partners in developing this. The Steering Group met in March 2025 and are happy with the direction of travel with the new narrative, and have agreed a new launch date of June 2025

