



Please ask for: Wendy Rowe
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4 July 2024

Dear Councillor,

Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee
6:00pm, Wednesday 17 July 2024
Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock

You are invited to attend this meeting for consideration of the matters itemised in the following Agenda.

Yours sincerely,

T. Clegg
Chief Executive

To: Councillors:

Todd, D. (Chair)
Hill, J. (Vice-Chair)
Bishop, L. Lyons, O.
Bullock, L. Mawle, D.
Haden, P. Prestwood, F.
Hill, J. Thornley, S.
Lyons, N.

Agenda

Part 1

1. Apologies

2. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members

- (i) To declare any interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct and any possible contraventions under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- (ii) To receive any Party Whip declarations.

3. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2024 (enclosed).

4. Introduction to the Role of the Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

Presentation of the Head of Economic Development and Planning.

5. End of Year Performance Report 2023/24

To receive the End of Year performance information for the Economic Prosperity Priority Delivery Plan (Item 5.1 - 5.9)

The documents included are as considered by Cabinet on 12 June 2024.

6. Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2024/25

Report of the Head of Economic Development and Planning (Item 6.1 - 6.14)

Cannock Chase Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the
Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee
Held on Wednesday 20 March 2024 at 6:00pm
in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock

Part 1

Present: Councillors:

	Mawle, D. (Chair)
	Dunnett, A.J. (Vice-Chair)
Bancroft, J.T.	Pearson, A.R.
Cartwright, S.M.	Prestwood, F.
Foley, D.	Sutherland, M.
Haden, P.	Theodorou, P.C.
Jones, P.T.	Wilson, L.J.

Also in attendance:

- Councillor J. Newbury (Regeneration & High Streets Portfolio Leader)
- Councillor O. Lyons (Leader of the Opposition)

24. Apologies

No apologies for absence had been received.

25. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restrictions on Voting by Members and Party Whip Declarations

No declarations of interests in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members Interests were made.

26. Minutes.

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2023 be approved.

27. Quarter 3 Performance Report 2023/24

Consideration was given to the Quarter 3 performance information for the Economic Prosperity Priority Delivery Plan 2023/24 (Item 4.1 - 4.9).

The Chair advised that the information in relation to the delivery of the Levelling Up Fund scheme for Cannock Town Centre (Item 4.2) would be discussed when the update on the scheme was provided under Part 2 of the agenda.

The Chair asked for further information in relation to the Youth Aspiration project. The Head of Economic Development and Planning explained that the Youth Aspiration project was part of the UKSPF programme. It was being delivered by Young Enterprise who would work with high schools and the college to raise the aspirations of pupils, develop life skills, and build confidence. Young Enterprise would be delivering a structured programme, including a series of workshops to both mainstream and SEN pupils. It was due to be launched on 1 April.

A member asked whether further details of the project along with costings and a list of the schools who sign up could be provided to members. Once the details of the project had been confirmed the Head of Economic Development and Planning advised that he would inform members accordingly.

A member asked why a detailed business case had not been developed in relation to the Cannock railway station. The Head of Economic Development and Planning advised that there were no active funding opportunities available to bid for external funding for the project. Although CIL money was available there was not enough to enable the project to be delivered. Discussions would continue with the County Council and West Midlands Railway to identify potential funding streams.

In response to a question from a member it was confirmed that no funding was available via the West Midlands Combined Authority to bid for railway stations. It was explained that although HS2 money would be released, it was unclear at this stage whether any of this funding would be available for Cannock. Officers would continue to have discussions about any funding streams and assess whether any opportunities were worthy of developing a bid.

In terms of the delivery of the UKSPF Investment Plan, a member asked whether any further information/figures were available in relation to the list of projects being delivered. The Head of Economic Development and Planning confirmed these figures would be detailed in the Q4 report. He added that it was important that businesses applied for the grants now that the projects had been launched.

The Chair asked when the McArthurGlen reserved matters planning application for phase 2 would be presented to the Planning Control Committee. He was advised that the reserved matters application had been submitted and was being considered by Officers. The aim had been to submit the application to the Planning Control Committee in March; however, there were some outstanding issues in relation to highways which would need to be resolved before the application went to Committee.

In response to a question about working with McArthurGlen to encourage overnight stay packages in the District, Members noted that this was an ongoing piece of work with the aim of improving the accommodation available in the district to encourage people to visit and stay over. Officers would need to work with McArthurGlen and join up marketing ideas to promote tourism in the district. However, the current focus for McArthurGlen was to progress the phase 2 planning application.

Arising from this a member referred to the recent Tourism Awards which had highlighted the good attractions and restaurants available throughout Staffordshire. However, it was disappointing to note that out of 100 nominations there was only 1 nomination for Cannock Chase District.

Reference was made to the legacy of the 2022 Commonwealth Games and how positive this event had been for the district. An update on this project was requested. The Officer advised that this was a Forestry England project, and they were looking at various options. There had been an email exchange, and a meeting would be arranged with them during Quarter 4.

In terms of the KPI's for Planning and Building Control as detailed at Item no. 4.9, the Chair asked why the target figures were so low. The Head of Economic Development and Planning confirmed that these were national targets and 60/70% was the minimum standard. It was pleasing to note that the Council was exceeding these targets, and this was a credit to the small team of staff involved. It was important to maintain this performance, as should they go below the 60/70% target, there was the risk of designation from the Secretary of State.

The performance in Quarter 3 was noted.

28. Update on closure of Amazon Fulfilment Centre

The Head of Economic Development and Planning advised the Committee that the Amazon Fulfilment Centre in Rugeley closed on 17 February and the new facility in Sutton Coldfield was now fully operational.

The Council had worked with key partners and a task force had been established involving Staffordshire County Council, National Careers Service, DWP and South Staffs College who had developed an offer of support to the affected workforce. Following the lengthy consultation process Amazon had asked a private organisation to assist its workforce.

He advised that the task force had delivered a drop-in session on 31 January to outline the careers opportunities available in the area to any employee not wishing to be redeployed at the new premises. This session was attended by 165 Amazon employees and positive feedback had been received. There would be a follow-up with Amazon to determine how many employees had taken up the opportunities available. He confirmed that the task force had fulfilled its role by mitigating the impact of the closure of Amazon.

A member asked whether any financial analysis would be undertaken to determine the financial effect the closure had on the district, and whether any staff were now unemployed as a result. The Officer advised that this data would be collated, and once it was available, it would be shared with members.

The Officer confirmed that he was not aware that the vacant premises had been put on the market and an agent appointed. However, the Council was keen to re-let the premises as soon as possible and the Economic Development Team would signpost any enquiries about empty units to the agent, once appointed.

The Officer agreed to make enquiries and clarify whether any business rates were payable on the vacant unit.

29. Scrutiny Review - Support for Businesses Working Group

The Chair of the Review, Councillor Mawle, gave a brief overview of the work of the Group explaining that they had looked at the support available for businesses in the district and had reviewed the business pages on the new website. The information

provided for businesses on the website was excellent and the pages were easy to navigate. A representative from the Chamber of Commerce had attended the Working Group meeting last week and had outlined the work the Chamber did to support local businesses. The Group acknowledged the importance of ensuring businesses were aware of how to access any funding opportunities or grants available to them.

He referred to the Business Support event held on 19 March organised by Cannock Chase Chamber to inform businesses about what was happening in the area and to provide advice on any initiatives or funding that was available.

He advised that no formal recommendations had been agreed by the Group, but he considered that a marketing campaign could be held to ensure businesses were aware that help and support was available.

The Head of Economic Development and Planning added that the timing of the meeting had prevented a paper outlining the findings of the Group being drafted and submitted to this meeting. However, a fact sheet could be prepared outlining the support that was available to businesses. He asked all members to encourage businesses to apply for the funding opportunities.

The Chair commented that he would pursue these suggestions with officers after the May elections, should he be re-elected.

30. Exclusion of Public

Resolved:

That the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3, Part 1, Schedule 12A, Local Government Act, 1972.

Cannock Chase Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the
Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee
Held on Wednesday 20 March 2024 at 6:00pm
in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock

Part 2

31. Levelling Up Fund Update

The Portfolio Leader for Regeneration and High Streets and the Leader of the Opposition remained in attendance for this item.

The Head of Economic Development and Planning explained that a report would be submitted to Cabinet next week to update Members on the progress made to date with the delivery of the Cannock Town Centre Levelling Up Fund (LUF) project. A time extension request had been submitted to the DLUHC who had been made aware of the challenges being experienced with the delivery of the project. Several meetings had taken place with DLUHC colleagues over the last few months to agree a deliverable amended scheme.

Following an on-site meeting in February 2024 DLUHC confirmed they are comfortable that a revised project scope could be progressed, and Cabinet would be asked to confirm the necessary permissions and delegations to support the first phase of development being brought forward at pace.

A press release had been issued, and subject to Cabinet's decision, the revised project scope for phase 1 would create a new Northern Gateway to open up the town centre from the ringway, create a new public realm and café unit, improve the Beecroft Road car park and demolish the former multi-storey car park and indoor market hall site. Cabinet would be asked to give permission to spend an initial £9m to progress phase 1 of the works.

Regarding the remainder of the project, negotiations would continue with landowners and an assessment of what could be delivered in phase 2 would be considered by Cabinet in due course.

In response to a question from a member, the Officer confirmed that the deadline for spending LUF grants was 31 March 2025. However, DLUHC had clarified that it expected the Council to be able to demonstrate it had entered into contracts for works by 31 March 2025.

The Officer clarified that, as the Council owned the multi-storey car park, the demolition was not dependent upon the CPO process. The demolition would be subject to a planning application and adjacent properties would be consulted. Any risks and concerns would be considered during the procurement process for a demolition contractor.

Following this, a member made reference to the UKSPF projects and asked whether an update could be provided at future meetings of the Committee. The Portfolio Leader for Regeneration and High Streets confirmed that representatives from the Green Party and the Conservatives were members on the UKSPF Board. As the Chair was the Green Party representative, he could update the Committee after the next Board meeting. The Head of Economic Development and Planning added that an update on the UKSPF projects could be included on the Work Programme when it was agreed by the Committee at the first meeting in July.





The meeting closed at 7:05pm.

Chair

Priority Delivery Plan for 2023-24

PRIORITY 1 - ECONOMIC PROSPERITY “To reinvigorate the economy and create a district that thrives”

Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 4

				N/A	Total Number of Projects
Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	Action not yet due	
15		3	2		20

Summary of Successes as at Quarter 4

Phase one of LUF project approved by Cabinet.

UKSPF year 2 spend fully committed with projects underway and delivering required outputs.



Rugeley Power Station - site now fully demolished and remediated and ready for development.





Local Plan regulation 19 consultation complete.

Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 4

Cannock Railway station - business case work on pause pending review of funding opportunities.

McArthurGlen phase 2 - delay to decision on planning application.





Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
Attract investment to develop the district's economy							
Deliver the Levelling Up Fund regeneration scheme for Cannock Town Centre, creating a new cultural hub and high-quality public realm	• Secure outline planning consent for LUF scheme	X				Outline planning consent has been granted subject to signing of S106 agreement.	
	• Approval of design and cost plan	X				RIBA 3 design and cost plan produced. Scheme has been reviewed in discussion with DLUHC Discovery team.	
	• Commence demolition and clearance of existing sites				X	Permission to spend for phase one of the LUF project agreed by Cabinet on 28 March; procurement of demolition contractor underway.	
	• Compulsory Purchase Order approval from Secretary of State				X	CPO process is continuing; Council remains in active discussion with key landowners.	
Work in partnership to secure investment in major projects to create confidence in our district	• Participate in the UKREiiF 2023 event to promote the district to developers/investors	X				As noted in the Q1 update, the Head of Economic Development and Planning attended UKREiiF event as part of the 'We Are Staffordshire' team. Preparation underway for the 2024 event.	
	• Re-development of former Rugeley Power Station as a Zero Carbon community - owner to commence build out of development scheme				X	Site sale process yet to conclude. Site is now fully remediated and cleared ready for development.	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannock Railway Station - transformational upgrade. Detailed business case and funding strategy. 	X				Council officers are currently reviewing funding opportunities and working with partners to identify what work needs to be done to develop a detailed business case.	
Identify a pipeline of future projects to support economic growth opportunities and the rejuvenation of our town centres across Rugeley, Hednesford, Cannock and the surrounding villages and maximise investment and funding into the district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of projects set out in the Council's approved UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Investment Plan 	X	X	X	X	Funding allocated for year 2 of UKSPF Investment Plan has been fully committed.	
Encourage entrepreneurship, promote apprenticeships, and support business							
Seek to identify and promote employment sites for new and growing businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New employment allocations to be identified via new Local Plan 		X	X	X	Regulation 19 Local Plan identifies new employment allocations.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop proposal for business workspace in Levelling Up Fund project 		X			This is currently being reviewed as part of a wider review of scheme delivery.	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
Work with established Growth and Skills Hubs to streamline and simplify access to business support services, access to training and apprenticeships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote availability of support from existing Growth and Skills Hubs to increase business referrals 	X	X	X	X	<p>The Economic Development team send out e-bulletins to businesses on their database as and when information is shared by the Growth Hub.</p> <p>As part of the UKSPF funding for the Enterprise Advice & Support Programme we have additional Growth Hub Services including a dedicated Business Advisor for Cannock Chase.</p>	★
Continue to work with partners to secure additional funding to be able to continue business growth and start-up schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission and procure new start up support provision utilising UKSPF funding 		X			<p>Agreement from UKSPF Board in July 2023 for Staffordshire County Council to deliver the Enterprise Advice & Support Programme funded through UKSPF which will cover Working for Yourself / Loans to step up businesses / Get started and Grow.</p> <p>West Midlands SME Grant Programme is providing grants for start-up and growing businesses.</p>	★
Attract modern, green and skilled industries, and create jobs							
Work with our colleges and training providers to equip young people and all residents with skills they need to access employment opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission and fund Cannock Construction Excellence project (South Staffordshire College) utilising UKSPF allocation 	X	X	X	X	<p>The facility is now completed and was formally opened in October 2023.</p> <p>The Council has also secured £73k of GBSLEP funding to finance the installation of an outdoor concrete construction pad to support learners.</p>	★

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
Work with partners to identify and support businesses to become more carbon efficient and identify opportunities to create green jobs in our district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission and fund Staffordshire Net Zero pathfinder project 	X	X	X	X	<p>The project has been launched and is being promoted to local businesses. Staffordshire University has planned a business breakfast event for early May for further promotion.</p> <p>Staffordshire Business & Environment Network's (SBEN) Green Solutions grant is also being promoted to businesses.</p>	★
Rejuvenate our town centres							
Identify opportunities to improve public realm in our town centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannock Town Centre - LUF investment in public realm enhancements - sign off of detailed scheme and cost plan 		X			Cabinet approved permission to spend for phase one of the LUF project on 28 March; this includes the refurbishment of the Beecroft Road car park, new pedestrian crossing across the Ringway, new Northern Gateway including improvements to public realm and a new café.	★
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rugeley Boardwalk - replacement scheme - review inflation and construction cost pressures and present options to Cabinet 			X		Reported to Cabinet in October 2023 and agreed to consider potential future funding for Rugeley Boardwalk as part of the Council's wider capital budget setting process.	★

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
Work with town and parish councils, local businesses and traders to support the development of initiatives to increase vibrancy of our town centres and increase footfall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular liaison meetings with town and parish councils to identify opportunities for joint working 	X	X	X	X	The Economic Development Team are in regular contact with the seven town and parish councils (Hednesford / Rugeley / Cannock / Heath Hayes / Norton Canes / Chadsmoor / Bridgtown) involved in the Thriving Communities UKSPF project, to share ideas and best practices.	★
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch the Thriving Communities project and invite town and parish councils to bid for funding 	X	X	X	X	The UKSPF allocation for the Thriving Communities project has been equally divided between the seven areas included in the project. Each area had £13,484.70 (£94,392.90 in total) to spend during 2023/2024. As at 31/03/2024 there is circa £40 left to spend across all areas. Spending has ranged from arranging community events, improving high streets with planters / plants / artwork, cleaning up areas, benches, speed control signs and much more.	★

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
Support the development of our visitor economy							
Work with Destination Staffordshire (DMP) to promote our key attractions, accommodation providers and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with DMP to deliver the county-wide visitor economy strategy 	X	X	X	X	Staffordshire Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) has been accredited by Visit England. The LVEP will act as the successor to the DMP and new governance arrangements and delivery structures are being put in place.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in joint marketing initiatives and development of themed campaigns 	X	X	X	X	Cannock Chase continues to participate in Enjoy Staffordshire marketing campaigns as part of its membership of the DMP.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of Destination Staffordshire investment 				X	Awaiting publication of the Economic Impact Assessment from Destination Staffordshire to inform future decisions on Council investment. LVEP accreditation will require the Council to review new governance and delivery arrangements.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with McArthurGlen on encouraging overnight stay packages in the district 	X	X	X	X	Regular meetings take place to discuss progress at McArthurGlen and opportunities for joint working. McArthurGlen has submitted a reserve matters application for phase 2 of the development and this will be presented to Planning Control Committee in due course.	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
Maximise the legacy of the 2022 Commonwealth Games by using the event to help boost the district's profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore options for new visitor accommodation / eco accommodation to encourage those visiting Cannock Chase Forest to stay in the district 			X	X	Forestry England is continuing to look at options and an update has been provided to Council officers to say that preparatory work is ongoing.	★

KPIs for Priority 1 - Economic Prosperity

Description	Symbol	Number of KPIs
Performance exceeds target	★	4
Performance on target	✓	
Performance below target	✗	

Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End	Symbol	Comments
Planning								
Major Planning Applications determined within time	60%	N/A	100%	100%	100%	100%	★	
Non-major Planning Applications determined within time	70%	96.6%	95.5%	92.4%	93.8%	95.58%	★	
Building Control								
Applications registered and acknowledged within 3 days of valid receipt	90%	100%	98%	100%	95%	98%	★	
Full plans applications with initial full assessment within 15 days of valid receipt	70%	95%	92%	93%	85%	90%	★	

Work Programme 2024-25

Committee: Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 17 July 2024

Report of: Head of Economic Development and Planning

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To set out the draft work programme for the Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee for 2024-25.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee review the draft work programme for 2024-25 and advise on what they wish to include for the forthcoming year (see Appendix 4).

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 The scrutiny committee is responsible for ensuring effective accountability for the delivery against the Council's priorities and strategic objectives as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-26.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutinising the element of the Corporate Plan that relates to the priority for Economic Prosperity. An extract from the Corporate Plan for 2022-2026 setting out details of the priority and strategic objectives is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The services or functions of the Council falling with the remit of the Committee are set out at Appendix 2.
- 3.3 The Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee is encouraged to identify corporate issues and/or ones that are a priority for local people and communities. If a matter is a recurring issue for the people you, as Councillors, represent, the likelihood is that it is something that the Committee should consider.

The more relevant the issue is to local communities then the greater the likelihood of engaging those communities in the scrutiny process and of producing outcomes that will be visible to those communities you represent. Guidance on selecting reviews is included in Appendices 3A and 3B.

- 3.4 Members are invited to comment on the draft Work Programme attached at Appendix 4. Members are also encouraged to propose issues that could be included for consideration in the work programme. The work programme may be revised during the year as necessary.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1 This report supports the Council's Corporate Priorities as follows:

- (i) It provides for effective scrutiny of the Council's priority for "Economic Prosperity".

5 Report Detail

Background

5.1 A new Corporate Plan for 2022-26 was approved by Council on 27 April 2022. The Plan sets out 4 priorities and this Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutinising Priority 1 - Economic Prosperity.

5.2 The Economic Prosperity Priority has 5 objectives:

- (i) Attract investment to develop the District's economy.
- (ii) Encourage entrepreneurs, promote apprenticeships, and support businesses.
- (iii) Attract modern, green, and skilled industries and create jobs.
- (iv) Rejuvenate our town centres.
- (v) Support the development of the visitor economy.

An extract from the Corporate Plan setting out details of the priority, the strategic objectives and actions is attached at Appendix 1.

5.3 The Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee also has responsibility for scrutinising the services of the Council as set out in Appendix 2.

Developing the Work Programme

5.4 To support Members in their Scrutiny role and in particular in developing a work programme a Scrutiny Toolkit has been produced; a copy of this has been circulated separately to Members. An extract from the toolkit relating to developing a work programme is attached at Appendix 3A and an extract from the LGA's guidance is attached at Appendix 3B.

5.5 In developing the work programme Members are encouraged to consider the following questions:

- Is the matter a concern to local people (you may wish to reflect on topics raised with you when canvassing)?
- Is the issue an identified priority for the Council or partners?
- Does the issue relate to an area of service with a trend in weak performance?
- What difference could scrutiny make?
- What would happen if you did not look at this issue?

5.6 The work programme can be revised during the year to reflect emerging priorities, but it is important to plan ahead and allow time for reports to be prepared and invitations to be sent to relevant parties.

- 5.7 Whilst it is for the Committee to determine what they want to include in the Work Programme, a draft work programme is attached at Appendix 4 to this report which includes some standing items (e.g., performance progress reports) and suggestions as to potential reviews.

Undertaking the Scrutiny Reviews

- 5.8 Once Members have identified the matters they wish to scrutinise, consideration should be given to scoping the subject in more detail including the timing and method of scrutiny to be used. Support in this process will be given by the Lead Officer for the Scrutiny Committee. A template to assist with scoping the review is also attached at Appendix 5.
- 5.9 Members may wish to:
- Allocate the work to a small working group of Members to investigate the issue over a period of 2-3 months (this may involve visits to see how services are working in practice).
 - Invite expert witnesses to give their views.
 - Seeking the views of service users and/or the general public.
- 5.10 Members should also consider what they can do to support the review e.g.:
- Undertaking research e.g., via the internet.
 - Seeking the views of ward members or specific interest groups.

Reporting on Scrutiny Reviews

- 5.11 In addition to reporting to the Committee on the outcome of any reviews, the Committee may wish to make recommendations to Cabinet or another Committee.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

Any costs to be incurred in undertaking any review will need to be contained within existing budgets.

6.2 Legal

None.

6.3 Human Resources

None.

6.4 Risk Management

None.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

The Council has a responsibility to undertake adequate Equality Impact Assessments to ensure services do not have a negative impact on any one section of the community and the scrutiny committees have a role in ensuring that this responsibility is fulfilled, particularly in regard to health impact. Scrutiny as a function must also comply with the relevant legislation. When considering work programme items, especially when undertaking reviews of policy, the scrutiny committees must always consider whether their recommendations may impact differently on various individuals/sections of the community.

6.6 Health

None.

6.7 Climate Change

None.

7 Appendices

Appendix 1: Extract from the Corporate Plan – Priority 1 Economic Prosperity

Appendix 2: Overview of services falling with the Committee's remit

Appendix 3A: Extract from the Council's Scrutiny Toolkit

Appendix 3B: Extract from the LGA Guidance on Scrutiny Work Programming

Appendix 4: Draft Work Programme 2024/25

Appendix 5: Template for Scoping a Scrutiny Review

8 Previous Consideration

None.

9 Background Papers

None.

Cannock Chase Council - Corporate Plan 2022-26**PRIORITY 1 - ECONOMIC PROSPERITY**

“To reinvigorate the economy and create a District that thrives”

We aim to:

- **Attract investment to develop the District’s economy.**
- **Encourage entrepreneurship, promote apprenticeships, and support business.**
- **Attract modern, green, and skilled industries and create jobs.**
- **Rejuvenate our town centres.**
- **Support the development of our visitor economy.**

We want to create an environment that supports and encourages growth and people’s ambition to set up and run their own businesses. Our aim is to attract investment and businesses that will create skilled jobs for local people and businesses that use green technology to support our commitment to reducing the impact of climate change. We want to encourage businesses and people into our town centres and attract visitors to the District.

Over the next 4 years we will:

- Deliver the Levelling Up Fund regeneration scheme for Cannock Town Centre, creating a new cultural hub and high-quality public realm.
- Work in partnership to secure investment in major projects to create confidence in our District.
- Seek to identify and promote employment sites for new and growing businesses.
- Work with established Growth and Skills Hubs to streamline and simplify access to business support services, access to training and apprenticeships.
- Continue to work with partners to secure additional funding to be able to continue business growth and start-up schemes.
- Work with our Colleges and training providers to equip young people and all residents with skills they need to access employment opportunities.
- Work with partners to identify and support businesses to become more carbon efficient and identify opportunities to create green jobs in our District.
- Identify opportunities to improve public realm in our town centres.

Item No. 6.6

- Work with town/parish councils, local businesses, and traders to support the development of initiatives to increase vibrancy of our town centres and increase footfall.
- Work with Destination Staffordshire to promote our key attractions, accommodation providers and events.
- Maximise the legacy of the 2022 Commonwealth Games by using the event to help boost the District's profile.
- Identify a pipeline of future projects to support economic growth opportunities and the rejuvenation of our town centres across Rugeley, Hednesford, Cannock and the surrounding villages and maximise investment and funding into the District.

**Services / Function Falling Within the
Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee's Remit**

Service Area	Sub Area
Economic Development & Planning	Economic Development & Regeneration
Dean Piper - Head of Economic Development & Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Prosperity Strategy • Town Centre Regeneration • Development of McArthurGlen Designer Outlet Village • Re-development of Rugeley Power Station • Promoting the development of key investment sites • Working with partners to increase skills of local people and reduce unemployment amongst 18-24 age groups • Engaging with local businesses; encouraging expanding businesses to employ local people; support new businesses to start and grow • Business support grants to local companies • Work with the Stoke and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and the West Midlands Combined Authority
	Development and Policy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the Local Plan • Conservation Area policy guidance and management plan • Administration of Community Infrastructure Levy • Neighbourhood Plans • Monitoring implementation of planning policy • Transport related issues • Development Management and Support • Planning Enforcement
Operations	Commercial Services
Joss Presland - Head of Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council owned car parks • Car parking strategy • Market operations
Regulatory Services	Building Control
Gabrielle Whitehouse - Head of Regulatory Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking of plans and inspection of work on site • Dangerous structures • Control of demolition

Extract from the Council's Scrutiny Toolkit

Developing the Work Programme

Members have a key role to play in developing the work programme for the Scrutiny Committees and it is important that manageable programmes are developed. The Scrutiny Committees will need to filter potential items of work; to be selective and to prioritise.

Given the limited resources available, in particular the constraints on member and officer time, it is unrealistic to select more than a few items for intensive review. Realistically, a single committee cannot undertake more than two in-depth reviews per year.

In developing the work programme Members are encouraged to consider the following questions:

Public interest – the concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen. Things to think about include:

- Any issues raised with you when canvassing.
- Have any surveys or research undertaken by the Council identified any concerns.
- Is the issue an identified priority for the Council or partners?

Ability to change - priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically influence. Think about what difference Scrutiny could make and what would happen if you did not look at this issue.

Performance: priority should be given to areas in which the Council and Partners are not performing well. You should consider, the scale of the underperformance, whether it is a one off or whether there is an ongoing issue. Has the service been flagged up in an external inspection report for poor performance?

Extent: priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or a large part of the District

Replication: work programme must take account of what else is happening to avoid duplication or wasted effort

Work programmes should be determined at the start of each municipal year and reviewed and revised regularly. Any reviews not started or completed by the year end can be referred for consideration as part of the following year's work programme. The best advice is to start small, learn what works well and what does not and then be more ambitious. It is far easier to add items to the workload than to remove them

Stage 1: Agree the Issue

The first step is for scrutiny members to be sure that the subject to be reviewed is significant. Undertaking in-depth reviews is resource-intensive – of member and officer resources. Investing such a high level of resources should only be undertaken for **high priority issues**. The following are criteria which could be used to 'check' a topic against, to ensure that it would make a worthwhile review:

- Issue identified by members as key issue (through members' surgeries and other constituency activities).
- Performance issues within a service (e.g., significant under or overachievement of targets).
- Service considered to be important by the community (through market research, citizens' panels and so on).
- High level of user/general public dissatisfaction with service.
- Public interest issue highlighted in local media.
- High level of budgetary commitment to policy/service area.
- Persistent financial issues e.g., significant under or overspends.
- Council corporate priority area.
- Central government priority area.
- Issue raised in Inspection Reports.
- Issue referred by the Cabinet or the Audit & Governance Committee.
- New government guidance or legislation.

Stage 2: Determine the nature of member involvement

The committee will need to decide how members will drive the review. There are three possible approaches to member involvement:

- The whole committee investigates the issue.
- A task and finish working group is established to drive the investigation.
- Individual or paired members drive the review.

Vital to the whole review activity is that members take full control of which policy problems and solutions are explored and how that exploration takes place. Members need to take responsibility for, and ownership of, the outputs and outcomes of reviews.

Stage 3: Scoping Exercise

There are 4 key issues to consider when scoping the review:

- What are the core questions the review is seeking to answer? (**no more than 3**)
- What is the purpose of the Review? (**in one sentence**)
- What will **not** be included?
- What is the timescale?

Extract from the LGA Guidance on Scrutiny Work Programming

The role of scrutiny is to achieve positive outcomes for local people by undertaking a thorough, targeted examination of the council's service provision and procedures. However, it is not possible to examine every service in detail, so it is important for the scrutiny committee to prioritise and plan its workload. Some councils do this at the beginning of each year and some do it on an ongoing basis.

Planned scrutiny

Work programming is the process for determining which topics scrutiny will look at over the coming year, either at committee meetings or

in task and finish groups. This involves evaluating a number of factors to decide which topics are to be investigated and when. The process will typically involve long-listing and then short-listing topics before making a final decision.

Responsive scrutiny

Whether planned scrutiny takes place at the beginning of the year or on an ongoing basis, the priorities for scrutiny need to be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis. This makes sure scrutiny can be flexible and responsive to high-priority issues or policy changes that occur throughout the year.



The scrutiny topic selection process

Each council has its own method for selecting topics for scrutiny; in some councils there may be a very structured selection process, whilst in others it may be more informal. Whatever level of detail is involved, the general process should include the following activities.

1. Identify issues

You can identify potential issues by:

- consulting with all members of scrutiny committees, senior officers, cabinet members and council officers
- looking at corporate priorities, business plans and the Forward Plan of the council (and the council's neighbours)
- considering events and decisions in the council's calendar that could require an input from scrutiny, such as setting budgets
- evaluating previous council performance and identifying any follow-up work required to previous scrutiny work
- carrying out work to engage with local people, for example through surgeries, local media, opinion surveys and online forums.

2. Prioritise topics

Identify and prioritise potential scrutiny topics, considering the resources they would require and the level of impact they could achieve.

3. Plan scrutiny work

Decide which scrutiny topics to review and include them in the work programme.

4. Review and evaluate

Review progress and evaluate outcomes to demonstrate the value added by scrutiny.



Criteria for selecting scrutiny topics

The following criteria provide a useful guide for prioritising and selecting which topics are suitable for scrutiny to review.

Topics **are** suitable for scrutiny when:

- scrutiny could have an impact and add value
- the topic is of high local importance and reflects the concerns of local people
- the resources are available that would be required to conduct the review, in terms of manpower and budget
- it avoids work duplication elsewhere
- the issue is one that the committee can realistically influence
- the issue is related to an area where the council, or one of its partners, is not performing well
- the issue is relevant to all or large parts of the local area
- the review would be in the council's interests.

Topics **are not** suitable for scrutiny when:

- the issue is already being addressed elsewhere and change is imminent
- the topic would be better addressed elsewhere (and will be referred there)
- scrutiny involvement would have limited or no impact upon outcomes
- the topic may be sub-judice or prejudicial to the council's interest
- the topic is too broad to make a review realistic
- new legislation or guidance relating to the topic is expected within the next year
- the topic area is currently subject to inspection or has recently undergone substantial change.

Defining scrutiny topics

For every item on the work programme/new referral, it should be clear:

- What is the issue/activity/project under consideration?
- What is scrutiny being asked to do?
- What are the reasons for/expected benefits of involving scrutiny in the matter?
- Is there a specific deadline for the piece of work?



Exercise 1 – prioritising topics

Consider the issues that are important to the people you represent in your ward. List the five issues you think are the most important, then put them in order of priority; make a note of your reasoning. Do you know all the information you need to handle complaints effectively? Consider these statements to identify any gaps. If you answer 'no' to any of them, take some time to find the answers from your council's website or your work colleagues.

1

2

3

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5

Think about how you would translate these into strategic issues. Here is an example:

The issue

A number of residents have been complaining that the trees in the local area are not being pruned regularly enough, becoming a hazard and presenting a potential danger to the public. Complaints include difficulty in walking on the pavement, damage to tall vehicles, trip hazards from tree roots and gardens being overshadowed by trees.

Strategic considerations

The council needs to consider how it allocates its Environmental Services' resources so that it can be efficient whilst also meeting the needs of local residents. It can look at:

- how services are procured, commissioned and contracted
- which are the most hazardous streets and where the biggest improvements can be made
- prioritising and planning a programme of work for tree pruning.

**Proposed Work Programme for 2024-25 for the
Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee**

Meeting Date	Item
17 July 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of Year Performance Report for 2023-24 for the Economic Prosperity PDP • Determine Review Programme for 2024-25
27 September 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Prosperity PDP – Qtr 1 Progress Report April to June 2024 • Scrutiny Review (to be determined)
6 December 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Prosperity PDP – Qtr 2 Progress Report July to September 2024 • Scrutiny Review (to be determined)
20 March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Prosperity PDP – Qtr 3 Progress Report October to December 2024 • Outcome of Scrutiny Review(s)

Suggested Items for Reviews:

- Local Plan
- McArthurGlen - economic/social impact
- Levelling Up Fund Cannock town centre
- Rugeley Power Station re-development
- Staffordshire Local Visitor Economy partnership - impact / return on investment
- Design and conservation



Scrutiny Review Template

Review Title
Scope of the Review / Terms of Reference
Reason for Scrutiny
Membership of the Review Group
Key Tasks / Review Plan
Sources of Evidence
Timescale